

A photograph of a white Comet sailboat on a trailer at a dock. The boat is white with a tall mast and is parked on a concrete surface. In the background, there is a white building, a body of water, and a large evergreen tree under a cloudy sky.

PERIHELION  **88**

**Autumn
2008**

**Comet Class Association
Newsletter**

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Comet Class Association Website:- www.cometsailing.org.uk

Retiring Chairman's Valediction

Greetings to you all!



You will probably know that I did not seek re-election at our recent AGM, either as Chairman or to the Committee. After serving a total of 18 years on the Committee, the last 11 as Chairman, I thought it high time that both I and the Association had a rest!

Thinking back, I first got into sailing in 1967 and right from the start was keen on racing. For many years I sailed mainly National Graduates – and what good times I had with that class in my younger days – but

20 years on and looking to go single-handed I bought my first Comet, Comet 100, in the Spring of 1987. At that time Comets had only been around a couple of years but were already gaining ground and popularity as a new class. I was Commodore of Kingsmead SC then and in a good position to promote Comets by encouraging club members to have a go and by being seen out on the water as often as possible. What heady times those early days were and we very rapidly had a fleet of 20 or more Comets at Kingsmead! The Association had only a handful of open meetings at that time but very soon I found myself and quite a few others from Kingsmead competing regularly at most of them. A few years later, 1991, and already active on the Comet Class Association Committee, I bought Comet 500 and in 1992 moved up to Ashby-de-la-Zouch where I joined Staunton Harold SC (and instantly became Club Secretary, but that's a different story!). From there I continued to campaign at the growing number of Comet opens and championships, did what I could to interest my fellow club members in trying the Comet, and soon we had a good fleet there, too, with enough regular interest to merit our own starts. Moving down to Devon in 2001, I still have C500 which I sail off the beach at Beer (what tough little boats they are and as far as I know C100 is still going strong somewhere) and bought Comet 800 which is the one I'm usually seen with away from home. Attending open meetings may involve rather more effort from down here than it did from either Ashby or Slough but I still manage to get to more than quite a few!

Sailing, my involvement with sailing, and particularly my involvement with the Comet Class, has then given me an immense amount of pleasure over the years. It has also given me many friends and acquaintances all over the country and even found me a wife, for all of which, especially the latter, I am eternally grateful.

I have felt very honoured and have enjoyed much satisfaction from my years as your Chairman: keeping an overall watch on things, chairing the committee, and sometimes representing the class at various events and on various RYA and other bodies. Undoubtedly there have been problems to overcome and the occasional difficult issue to deal with but I hope my stewardship has produced some good for our class and for our sport in general. My sincere thanks go to all the Comet sailors I have worked with, both on and off our committee, it is you that did the work, as I am sure you know!

The past 20 years have seen many cultural and economic changes all of which have had an effect on sailing, on sailing clubs, and indeed on peoples attitude to clubs and activities of all sorts. Nowadays more and more people seem to expect everything to be done for them rather than doing it for themselves. They claim not to have time to get involved. Their commitment is often minimal or short lived. What nonsense: they are surely missing a very great deal of the pleasure and purpose in life! But despite these changes, and the plethora of new and competing dinghies that are launched each year, the Comet – and looking to the future perhaps the Comet Xtra – remains remarkably yet deservedly popular. It still provides the "fast friendly fun" at all levels that it always has and with your help and support I trust it will continue to do so for many years to come. My time as chairman and committee member may have come to an end but not my love of sailing and of the Comet!

I strongly commend our new committee and especially our new chairman, Chris Robinson, to you all. They have my full support and I hope they will have yours.

Good sailing,

Henry Jaggers

New Chairman's Greeting

Hello



Before I introduce myself as your new Chairman I'd like to thank our outgoing Chairman Henry Jagers. Henry has been our chairman for the last eleven years, and was on the committee for seven years before that. At the AGM Keith Lamdin, our president, pointed out that he has served more years than our previous two Chairman (John Windibank and Keith) put together. I'd like to thank Henry for all his hard work on our behalf over those years, he will be a hard act to follow. As I stated when I was elected

I do not feel able to stand as Chairman for more than three years. I believe that a more frequent change will help bring new people onto the committee and encourage others to stand for Chairman.

It was good to see Keith at the AGM. It was Keith who first introduced me to the Comet when I saw him sailing it at Aylesbury SC in 1985. Keith brought the Comet Nationals to Aylesbury the following year and I watched from the bank as everyone struggled round the course in the windy conditions. The Comet looked much more exciting compared to the Topper so I bought 63 from Andy. Keith had become Chairman and he set up the first Comet Opens in 1987. The first one was Chipstead SC and I remember a brand new boat, number 100, turning up sailed by none other than Henry Jagers. Chipstead has held a Comet Open every year since then and as a result has hosted more Opens for us than any other club. Henry and I are still sailing our Comets too. The friendly nature of the class has kept me sailing Comets all this time. I particular enjoy the Open meeting circuit as it offers One Design racing. Sailing close to other identical boats you can immediately spot any gain or loss and know that it's down to your sailing. The competition at the front of the fleet is very strong, but sailing further down the fleet is equally close. I should know as I do both, just look at my National results! Whether at the front or back of the fleet I've always enjoyed the friendly racing.

The status of the Xtra rig was brought up at the AGM. At the Nationals the Xtras sailed as a separate class with a separate start. The current status of the Xtra rig was decided by the committee when the Xtra rig first came out. As it was the beginning of the season there was no opportunity for the committee to consult the membership so it opted to maintain the status

quo as much as possible and specified that the Xtra should be treated in the same manner as the Mino rig. i.e. it is eligible to enter Comet events, but races in a fleet of its own. Although this has been discussed at subsequent AGMs no motion has ever been put forward at the AGM. I'd like to see a motion at the next AGM to give you the opportunity to say how the Xtra rig should be included. But how should the Xtra be treated? We could keep things as they are, but some sailors have expressed a wish to have one start for all rigs. Andy designed the Xtra to have the same handicap as the standard rig, so sailing as one fleet is an option. This would also enable Xtras to be eligible for the Youth and Ladies trophies. What do you think? If you have any thoughts why not write an article for Perihelion. The newsletter editor would love to hear from you.

If you haven't realised already, reading the rest of Perihelion you will soon find out that we have a new newsletter editor. I'd like to thank John Windibank, the outgoing editor, for all his hard work over the last five years. John was Chairman before he became newsletter editor so he has served the Comet class for many years. It was a pleasure to be able to make a presentation of a book on maritime history and some book ends to him at the Nationals.

Our new newsletter editor is Brian Welham. I wish him well in the future, but I'll leave it up to him to introduce himself. We also have one new addition to the committee, which fills the vacancy left by Henry's resignation. I'd like to thank Rhian Bevan for agreeing to fill the gap. Rhian has been sailing Comets for many years, currently at Cransley SC, but before that at Merthyr Tydfil.

The end of the Open meeting season is not far away now. At the last Open of the year (Staunton Harold) two prizes, the Hossell Plate and the FATE plate, are awarded. The Hossell plate is awarded to someone, not on the committee, who has promoted Comet sailing and the Comet Class Association, while the FATE plate recognises Endeavour in the face of adversity. The winners are chosen by the Committee from nominations by the membership. Obviously the committee need some nominations! The committee cannot be everywhere or know everyone, so we rely on you for nominations. We would much rather have too many nominations than not enough, and even if we don't pick your nomination this year, we will consider them again next year. Nominations can be made to any committee member.

See you on the water

Chris Robinson

Secretary's Report

Notes from the Committee:

Your Annual General Meeting has been and gone, and you have a new look to your Committee. Chris Robinson was elected as Chairman, Henry having resigned after 11 years in the post, and Rhian Bevan was elected as a Committee member.

Your new Committee is:

Chairman: Chris Robinson

Secretary: Norah Jagers

Treasurer: Helen Leivers

Committee members: Paul Hinde (Results)
Clive Chapman (Trophies)
Brian Herring
Steve Harvey (Xtra)
Rhian Bevan

John Edwards continues as Auditor, Sue Coppenhall as Web Organiser and the new Newsletter Editor is Brian Welham.

2. John Windibank stood down as Newsletter Editor, and Brian Welham has volunteered to take up his pen and eyeshade.

3. Our thanks go to Henry for all his time and commitment to the Class. He has been a committee member since 1990. Henry has offered to help with posters, advertising material etc. if required, and he still anticipates attending Comet events.

4. John Windibank has made a number of changes to Perihelion during his time in office, making it even more attractive. The Class Association was pleased to be able to make a small presentation to him in appreciation of all his hard work.

5. Chris Robinson, Comet 63, has been a Committee member since 2005 and has done a lot of "behind the scenes" work such as organising the Dinghy Show stand and revising the measurement rules. He is currently our Association Champion, and is a regular competitor on the Open circuit.

6. Rhian Bevan, Comet 724, is a member of Cransley Sailing Club and is also an active helm at Open events. Rhian was originally a member of Merthyr Tydfil Sailing Club until work took her to the Midlands. We welcome her to the committee.

7. Brian Welham has been sailing Comets for many years, and is a familiar face at Comet events. He is based at Taplow Sailing Club (formerly ICI Slough). Like John, Brian will not be a member of the committee so that he can retain editorial independence. Thank you, Brian, for taking on the editorship of Perihelion.



8 By the next Annual General Meeting the Committee will consider a proposition to amend the Constitution to limit the Chairmanship to a set time period.

9 Your Annual General Meeting also passed the motion in respect of the Measurement Rule 11c. which now reads: "Self bailer. Maximum number - one. Maximum aperture in hull skin 112mm x 55mm." This will accommodate the new, slightly larger, self bailers which Andrew is fitting to new boats.

10 There was a discussion under "Any Other Business" of the best way of gauging the performance of the Xtra rig as it currently does not have a PY. Your thoughts on how to do this will be most welcome – please send your thoughts to Brian Welham.

11 There was also discussion about the fact that the Association has a healthy bank balance. This is partly due to the fact that our costs have reduced over the last couple of years because of the use of email rather than letters, our not having a stand at the NEC and having the stand next to Comet Dinghies at the Dinghy Show which has obviated the need for carpeting and electricity. Our recent Championships have been self financing and have subsidised the Aphelion and Orbital events. **SO**, now is your opportunity to suggest ways of using some of the capital to promote the Class. Please send your ideas to Brian, for discussion in Perihelion, or to any of the Committee members.

12 The AGM took place during the National Championships, a report of which you will find elsewhere. Congratulations to Ian Coppenhall who was triumphant again.

13 Our thanks go to Hunts Sailing Club – and to the Coppenhall family – for organising the Nationals and for giving everyone such an enjoyable weekend. Various members of the committee were "jockeys" for the Horse Racing, with varying degrees of success!

14 It seems a longtime since we gathered at Bexhill for the Association Championships. After two days of challenging conditions for the helms, Chris Robinson emerged as a worthy Champion. Congratulations.

15 Ian Coppenhall and his brother Mark will be representing the Class at the Endeavour Trophy in October. Good luck!

16 Your Committee will have a short meeting at Staunton Harold Sailing Club during their Open meeting on Saturday October 18th. Please let me know if you have any topics which you wish to raise.

17 At that meeting the Committee will make decisions about the Hossell and FATE plates. Please send me your nominations as soon as possible. We need your help to identify the winners.

18 The Photographic competition will also be decided at Staunton Harold. Please send your entries to Henry – by email if possible – before 4th October. Photographs sent to Perihelion should be included automatically.

19 Hopefully the email system has worked and you will be aware that the Open meeting at Kingsmead has been cancelled because of weed. This was the last event in the Southern Aphelion, the other three events having already taken place. Some helms had already qualified while others were relying on competing at Kingsmead. Paul Hinde has used the existing results to give an aggregated placing for Kingsmead for all of the helms who have attended 2 of the Southern Aphelion events. The Southern Aphelion trophies and mementoes will be awarded at Staunton Harold.

Norah Jagers
Class Secretary.



The new committee except for Steve Harvey

New Editor

Greetings

Taking on the editorship of the newsletter is daunting as both Alan Browning and John Windibank are hard acts to follow. I am very dependant on the members keeping me informed of the results and activities at the Open meetings and any other activity that would be of interest to Comet sailors. Please ensure that you send your reports to the Perihelion editor as well as the commercial magazines. Any words from someone who watched the activity will be greatly welcome.



Chris Robinson, our new Chairman, and Nora Jagers have asked for comments about the status of the Xtra rig. Please let us know your feelings. There are other matters that should be discussed. What about the stat7s of the Mino and other matters such as the proposed 3 boat circle at the marks!

I look forward to hearing from you by letter, e-mail or even phone.

I have included another Sailing Away feature in this issue and would welcome any other "sailing" stories from other members. I hope to attend more Open meeting next year now that my shoulder injury is healing.

Best wishes

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Comet Association Championships 2008

Bexhill Sailing Club 14 and 15 June 2008

Fourteen visiting Comets and three Duos joined four Bexhill sailors for the Comet Association Championship, held over two days at Bexhill Sailing Club. Race Office Clare Day and her team set a course that made the most of what turned out to be very differing wind conditions throughout Saturday afternoon.

The first of the three back-to-back races started with a sedate first lap in a light Force 2 westerly, increasing slightly for the second lap to give very pleasant sailing conditions, easily handled by all competitors. By the third lap the sun was still shining, the wind had veered slightly to a southwesterly, but increased dramatically to Force 5-6. This tested the nerve and skills of many of the sailors and led to some heroic work by the rescue boat crews. Fifteen of the single handers and two Duos completed the first race, won by Stephen Lemmon (168) for the Comets and Stephen Linton (150) for the Duos sailing single-handed.

Conditions were as exacting for Race 2, which only Frank Oliver (27) chose to race for the Duos. Six Comets enjoyed the increasing waves to be led home by Chris Robinson (63) from John Coppenhall (532). Barry O'Herlihy (247) was the only local sailor still representing Bexhill.

Race 3 saw a decreased fleet of just four Comets with Chris Robinson (63) again finding the conditions suited him well, gaining first place, followed by Michael Thompson (549)

Two races were held on Sunday, one morning, one afternoon, with a break ashore, sailed over a triangle – sausage course. The light morning conditions suited Henry Jaggars (800) perfectly who sailed serenely home well ahead of most of the fleet, with Richard Eagleton (580), sailing the dinghy of an ill Bexhill Comet Class member, in second place.

The sun disappeared and the wind increased slightly by the afternoon, to a Force 3-4, sadly dropping back after the squall passed through. Simon Thompson (809) took first place with Richard Eagleton (580) again gaining second place.

Thanks to everyone who helped over the weekend with organising the racing, running the bar, providing the food, and especially the competitors, who travelled from all over the country.

Wendy Morton

Association Championships Results

These results include an 'Xtra' rig (+ 1 for 2 races) and 2 non Association member competitors

	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Net	Position
C Robinson	4	1	1	9	4	10	1
J Windibank	3	3	DNC	4	3	13	2
S Thompson	9	4	DNC	5	1	19	3
J Coppenhall	10	2	3	7	7	19	4
M Thompson	11	5	2	16	8	26	5
B O'Herlihy	12	6	DNF	14	11	34	6
R Eagleton	14	DNF	DNC	2	2	36	7
S Harvey	7	DNF	DNC	12	5	42	8
J Smith	6	DNF	DNC	10	9	43	9
H Jaggars	DNF	DNF	DNC	1	6	44	10
S Lemmon	1	DNF	DNC	6	DNF	44	11
P Hinde	8	DNF	DNC	3	DNF	46	12
H Leivers	13	DNF	DNC	8	DNF	55	13
B Kietch	15	DNF	DNC	13	10	56	14
M Wilkins	2	DNF	DNC	DNF	DNF	58	15
G Wilkins	5	DNF	DNC	DNF	DNF	60	16
W Morton	DNF	DNF	DNC	11	DNF	65	17
D Thompson	DNF	DNF	DNC	15	12	72	18

Comet Nationals Championships 2008

Prior to the Nationals at Hunts Sue and I had been involved, along with other club members hosting, the British Moth Nationals a week earlier. This gave us a practice run prior to the Comet Nationals. However it was difficult to know what to expect and how many Comet members would attend.

Over the weekend of the 23rd to 25th August 2008 27 Comets and 5 Comet Xtra's from around the country arrived at Hunts Sailing Club to participate in the Nationals.

On day one they were met with a light westerly wind which was switching by about 30° across the lake leaving competitors with a difficult decision as to which way to sail the beats and runs.

Race 1 saw Clive Chapman leading at the first mark followed by Catherine Bellamy and Michael Thompson. The rest of the fleet spread out behind them. By the end of the first lap Bellamy had taken a long lead from the other 2 who were closely followed by Stephen Lemmon and Ian Coppenhall. By the end of the race Lemmon and Coppenhall had moved into 2nd and 3rd with Thompson in 4th.

Race 2 was run in similar conditions. This time Lemmon finished 1st and Ian Coppenhall 2nd with Ben Palmer a newcomer to the class in 3rd.

The Xtra fleet started 5 minutes behind the main fleet. During the 1st race there was close racing between them with each of them leading at some time during the race. The race was finally won by Paul Hinde with Steve Harvey 2nd.

The second race saw Steve Harvey win with Paul Hinde 2nd.

Day 2 dawned with a slightly stronger wind from a similar direction to day 1.

Race 3 saw a leading group of Ian Coppenhall, Stephen Lemmon and Steve Bellamy. After a slow start Mark Coppenhall slowly moved through the fleet to join the leaders. Ian Coppenhall took the lead and was left covering his brother Mark and Stephen Lemmon. By the end Mark had overtaken Lemmon with S Bellamy in 4th.

Steve Harvey won the Xtra race with Paul Hinde 2nd.

Race 4 was delayed, owing to a 45° wind shift, so that the race officer could move the course marks. Owing to the shape of the lake he was able to keep the general course design of beat, reach, run, reach, beat and run. In the leading group at the first mark was Brian Herring who had been near the rear of the fleet in the previous races. He eventually finished 9th. The first 4 were I Coppenhall, M Coppenhall, S Lemmon and Guy Wilkins.

The Xtra fleet saw Steve Harvey win with John Sturgeon taking 2nd.

Race 5 saw Mark Coppenhall take the lead during the second lap and slowly pull away from the chasing pack. Catherine Bellamy started to catch him up having pulled clear of the pack. They finished in that order with her father Steve Bellamy in 3rd.

The Xtra fleet had a new race winner John Sturgeon with Paul Hinde 2nd.

Day 3 dawned with a force 4 to 5 blowing with stronger gusts. A number of competitors decided not to sail, while others reefed their sails.

Race 6 was lead from start to finish by Ian Coppenhall. Stephen Lemmon was in second place for some time until he was overtaken by Mark Coppenhall who had again started slowly and had worked hard in the conditions to get to that position. However on a reach Mark went to sit out during a gust, missed his toe straps and fell head first into the water and his boat capsized. This enabled Stephen and other boats to get past him. The first 4 were Ian Coppenhall, Stephen Lemmon, Steve Bellamy and Guy Wilkins.

Only 2 Xtra's started with Paul Hinde winning with Diana Thompson 2nd.

Race 7 saw Stephen Lemmon capsize at the start line. This left him at the back of the fleet. Ian Coppenhall was again leading for a couple of laps. Stephen Lemmon was slowly working through the fleet and had moved up to 10th place by this time when he capsized on the run. After this he retired. Ian Coppenhall death rolled soon after this which enabled his brother Mark to catch up. Also moving through the fleet was Guy Wilkins who had been in the middle of the fleet at the end of the first lap. There were a number of capsize throughout the fleet and a number of boats found themselves in irons when gusts came through at different angles to the predominant wind. This also caused a number of capsize on the beats. The race finished with Mark Coppenhall winning with Guy Wilkins just beating Chris Robinson on the line. Ian Coppenhall finished 4th after another capsize, with Michael Ettershank another newcomer to the class in 5th.

From the results you will see that Ian Coppenhall is again our National Champion, Catherine Bellamy our ladies and youth champion. Hunts Sailing Club won the team trophy for the second year running. Paul Hinde won the Xtra fleet.

Throughout the weekend there were battles occurring throughout the fleet and a large number of competitors doing their penalty turns for rule infringements. This meant that no protests occurred and I did not need to arrange a protest committee.

I have now gone back to work for a well deserved rest after a tiring two weeks.

John Coppenhall

Results from the Nationals

Rank	No.	Helm	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total	Nett
1st	636	I Coppenhall	Hunts	3	2	1	1	-6	1	-4	18	8
2nd	427	MCoppenhall	Hunts	-7	4	2	2	1	-5	1	22	10
3rd	168	S Lemmon	Severn / LSC	2	1	3	3	-7	2	DNF	39	11
4th	248	C Bellamy	WFSC	1	5	9	5	2	-13	-11	46	22
5th	656	S Bellamy	WFSC	5	-8	4	-8	3	3	7	38	22
6th	561	G Wilkins	Chipstead	DNC	DNC	6	4	12	4	2	84	28
7th	63	C Robinson	Burghfield	-14	-24	8	6	4	7	3	66	28
8th	858	J Windibank	Chipstead	-10	-11	10	7	5	6	9	58	37
9th	650	P Hossell	Severn	9	-17	5	10	15	8	DNF	85	47
10th	704	C Chapman	Littleton	6	-15	-16	11	14	11	6	79	48
11th	532	J Coppenhall	Hunts	-21	13	11	-15	10	9	8	87	51
12th	597	B Palmer	Baltic Wharf	16	3	-17	14	-17	10	14	91	57
13th	549	M Thompson	CMYC	4	-23	-24	18	11	16	10	106	59
14th	323	A Walter	CMYC	15	6	12	17	9	-20	DNF	100	59
15th	812	R Lemmon	Severn	-25	12	-14	12	8	14	13	98	59
16th	84	M Ettershank	Eyott	17	-21	7	20	-23	12	5	105	61
17th	800	H Jaggars	Beer	13	7	13	16	-19	-17	12	97	61
18th	820	R Stevenson	WFSC	8	14	22	26	13	DNF	DNF	139	83
19th	518	R Ballam	CMYC	24	10	15	13	21	DNF	DNF	139	83
20th	735	D Jobling	N S / Chester	11	9	19	24	22	DNF	DNF	141	85
21st	420	A Bevan	Merthyr Tydfil	-20	19	20	-23	18	15	15	130	87
22nd	724	R Bevan	Cransley	12	20	18	19	20	DNF	DNF	133	89
23rd	857	H Leivers	Severn	19	18	21	-22	16	19	DNF	143	93
24th	730	B Herring	WFSC	-26	-25	23	9	24	18	DNF	146	95
25th	614	C Butcher	Hawley Lake	18	22	25	25	26	DNF	DNF	172	116
26th	299	A Keynes	CMYC	23	-26	26	21	25	21	DNF	170	116
27th	633	J Edwards	Chester	22	16	DNF	DNF	DNF	DNF	DNF	178	122

XTRA & MINO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS 2008

Rank	No.	Helm	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	Total	Nett
1st	844	P Hinde	Severn	1	-2	2	-3	2	1	1	12	7
2nd	764	S Harvey	Stokes Bay	2	1	1	1	4	DNF	DNF	21	9
3rd	649	DThompson	CMYC	3	3	3	-4	3	2	DNF	24	14
4th	400	J Sturgeon	Hawley Lake	5	4	4	2	1	DNF	DNF	28	16
5th	856	A Simmons	N Devon YC	4	5	5	DNF	DNF	DNF	DNF	38	26

Photos from the Nationals



OPEN MEETING REPORTS

Comet Open Bewl Valley Sailing Club –

Bright sunshine and a wind varying between F5 and F6 greeted Comets, Trios and Versas from as far afield as Devon. This was also the Comet Versa Inland Championship event.

The course was a "reverse b" (which was probably a d in disguise) with plenty to keep the fleet occupied – with a committee boat start and an almost neutral start line ably set up by Jeff Warley, race officer for the day, and his team.

In the first race Mark Wilkins took the honours in his Comet after a close race with Chris Robinson, crossing the line just three seconds ahead. Race two featured a number of capsizes, mainly due to the strengthening wind (now F6 gusting F7), and a number of retirements. This time the Comets were led home by John Windibank followed by Chris Robinson.

In race three, a reduced fleet, probably enjoyed the closest race of the day with a wind that had most boats either in the water or reefing to keep control. The Comets were led home by Chris Robinson beating John Windibank by 12 seconds to the line.

Mike Wilcox

Pos	Boat Type	Sail No	Helm	Club	Pts
1 st	Comet	63	Chris Robinson	Burfield	3
2 nd	Comet	555	John Windibank	Chipstead	3
3 rd	Comet	657	Mark Wilkins	Chipstead	4
4 th	Comet	704	Clive Chapman	Littleton	6
5 th	Comet	532	John Coppenhall	Hunts	8
6 th	Comet	84	Michael Ettershank	Eyott	11
7 th	Comet	31	Jeffrey Smith	Crawley	12
8 th	Comet	518	Robin Ballah	Crawley	15
9 th	Comet	800	Henry Jaggars	Beer	18

COMETS AT CHESTER

There was an excellent turnout of 8 Comets for the Northern Area Aphelion Trophy event held on the river Dee on 12th July. With visitors travelling from Peterborough, Sheffield and Stoke on Trent competitors were faced with testing force $\frac{3}{4}$ variable north westerly winds which provided an entertaining days sailing for participants and spectators alike.

In the opening race Steve Bellamy established an early lead from daughter Catherine and the ultimate winner Mark Coppenhall. The difficult conditions resulted in numerous capsizes and retirements.

With the Race Officer deciding on an unchanged course for the second race Catherine established an early lead before finally being overtaken by Mark in the blustery conditions with Stephen in third place.

With only six boats coming to the line for the final race and with the lower positions yet to be decided there was everything to race for. Again Catherine took the lead from a tight bunch to win in convincing style from Andy Todd and Stephen.

John Edwards 633 Chester (Tel 01829 781234)

Final Results:-

1.	427	Mark Coppenhall	Hunts S.C.	2 pts
2	248	Catherine Bellamy	Winsford Flash S.C.	3 pts
3.	330	Andrew Todd	Chester S & C.C.	6 pts
4.	656	Steve Bellamy	Winsford Flash S.C.	6 pts
5.	532	John Coppenhall	Hunts S.C.	9 pts
6.	735	Dave Jobling	North Staffs S.C.	11 pts
7.	730	Brian Herring	Winsford Flash S.C.	18 pts
8.	633	John Edwards	Chester S & C.C.	18 pts

Cransley 2008

No report on going to press but it must have been a good wind!
See photo below



Cransley

Mudeford 2008

Either the weather or the price of fuel must have put off the Comets, as only 6 made the journey to the South Coast.

In steady F 4-5, Chris Robinson took all 3 races, with Ben Palmer 2nd and John Coppenhall 3rd. Annie Hooper was first Lady and 4th, Annette Walker 5th and Henry Jaggers 6th.

Mike Roach



First Six at the Opens

North

Chester

M Coppenhall	1
C Bellamy	2
A Todd	3
S Bellamy	4
J Coppenhall	5
D Jobling	6

South

Crawley Mariner

S Thompson	
P Luttmann	
A Walter	
B Welham	
J Coppenhall	
T Best	

East

Chipstead

G Wilkins	1
M Wilkins	2
J Coppenhall	3
J Windibank	4
C Chapman	5
M Ettershank	6

East

Bewl

C Robinson	
J Windibank	
M Wilkins	
C Chapman	
J Coppenhall	
M Ettershank	

Central

Cransley

N Austin	1
C Robinson	2
M Coppenhall	3
J Coppenhall	4
R Bevan	5
A Mathews	6

Central

Hawley Lake

J Windibank	
M Wilkins	
C Robinson	
J Coppenhall	
C Chapman	
H Jaggers	

West

Mudeford

C Robinson	1
B Palmer	2
J Coppenhall	3
A Hooper	4
A Walter	5
H Jaggers	6

Perihelion Sailing Away Series.

Narrow Boating on the Oxford Canal

The world has lots of heroes, but mine is Ratty. Ratty is a character in Kenneth Grahams story "Wind in the Willows", he is an all round good egg and action man (water vole) who loves boats and has provided me with a life long philosophy that "There's nothing absolutely nothing half as good as messing about in boats".

I have pondered about my fascination for boats and my first memory of a boat ride was when I was about 5 years old and my Nan took me on a boat through the tunnel of love at the Barry Island funfair. The boats were clinker dinghies which floated on a stream through the man made tunnels, but its not the tunnels I remember its the boat and how it moved. I remember it was a bit tippy as we swayed along in the dark, the boat seemed to be alive with movement but I new things were all right as my Nan was smiling and laughing with pleasure.

Boats can be as small as coracles or as big as a block of flats, but they have one thing in common, they are practically friction less and can be moved in any direction with practically no effort (I new my level one physics would come in handy). Mankind took this floating platform and stuck a sail on it and bits to make this floating platform controllable and called it a boat or ship and there you have it, the most environmentally friendly way of moving any amount of things or, just something to mess about in.

My latest adventure with boats are the Narrow variety. These started as vessels for transporting vast amounts of goods but instead of sails they used horses to move them about, think about that, one horse power to move tones and tones of practically anything.

I have had a romantic idea of Narrow boats and canals since my childhood days when we visited Abergavenny for picnics, lots of running about some cricket and if we were lucky a row on the canal. But now its probably an age thing to get away from the rush of life and have time to see and ponder ("What is this life if full of care we have no time to stand and stare" (William Henry Davies) and contemplate the beautiful situation you're in.

Well narrow boating is all about situation, as you watch the scenery slowly unfolding. You have time to watch the birds feed the ducks, pass the time of day with passers by, wave as the joggers overtake you and slowly, slowly wind down. You still have boaty things to do like mooring steering windage and going bump of course but its all in slow motion.



For our first experience we chose a root up the Oxford Canal that had very few locks and lots of places to replenish our supplies. Arriving at the boat yard we were greeted by an enormous man with a great white beard who filled the doorway to the boatyards reception and my immediate impression was, that Father Christmas was on his summer job! Father Christmas of course was warm and welcoming and patiently showed us the video and handed us a manual the size of an encyclopaedia and said "its all in there if you have any problems". The next half hour we packed everything away into our 64 ft (19.51m) boat which included hot and cold running water and the children were probably running hotter than the water.

The Oxford Canal is the oldest of the canals and meanders around worrying about avoiding hills and dips, so straight runs are rare which adds to your need for concentration on the helm but also adds to the interest. The banks and towpaths are mostly overgrown which can make mooring interesting as you jump ashore with the painter hoping there is solid ground underneath you. Passing other boats can be interesting as the wash sucks the boats together as they pass and bow swings towards the centre of the canal which keeps you focused on the friction less monster you are trying to pretend you control.

Starting from Napton we fired up the diesel engine, cast off and gently edged our way out past the pontoon into a right angle turn to the canal "give her a bit of welly" father Christmas advised "she'll respond better to the helm and will rotate around the centre of her length". Its remarkable how manoeuvrable these great long boats are, but they are strongly built and are able to absorb a few knocks as you try to master the skills. The Oxford and Grand Union Canals merge at Napton and here we said goodbye to father Christmas.

On our own now, the weather was beautiful warm and windless as we gently meandered along the canal past fields hedges and manoeuvred our way beneath the bridges. There are lots of bridges along the canal and

most are footbridges, the canals had obviously cut across farms and estates and the bridges are a necessary allow the continuing movement of animals and people and goods, a lot of the bridges are in poor repair and some have been demolished.

After a few hrs. we arrived at Braunston where the canals go their separate way. The canals are spanned at this point by a beautiful double arch Iron bridge made at Horsley Iron Works when Britain supplied the world. We moored a little further on and enjoyed a walk across the fields into Braunston to work up an appetite, the narrow boats are a regular home from home with a well furnished kitchen and dining area and plenty of storage.



Sleeping in is not something you can do with children on board and they had had an eventful night of falling on the floor from their narrow bunks, so literally things went bump in the night accompanied by shuffling as they climbed back into bed.

Off again we encountered our first locks and as dire warnings had been issued by father Christmas we were being particularly careful. Canal locks are just big enough to take our 64 ft boat and standing in the bow, your on the edge of a cliff as you look down to the canal below. The locks on the canals are extremely efficient and emptying and filling only take 4 minutes, which is massively quicker than the huge Thames locks which I have used

in the past. We meandered our way up to Rugby who are immense proud of their heritage and have decorated their bridges with Rugby ball and information about their cement industry. We spent the night in a quiet spot near Rugby and much to our surprise a deer paid us a visit, but was only just visible pushing its way through the long growth on the bank

Pressing on the next day we passed through the Newbold tunnel which which is well lit and quite spacious which is not what I was expecting. We stooped off at Brinklow to look for an old castle but we eventually found a steep hill with earthworks which were once fortified, the views were very good at the top where we disturbed the local wildlife who just weren't expecting visitors. Well our short canal holiday was drawing to a close and it was time to start back, we found a turning circle which is not much bigger than the boat and we were very impressed as we nudged the boat against the bank and the boat just kept on turning, I found it just amazing this great long boat could be so well behaved. Boating in all its forms is just a different world from the general bustle of life, it takes you (almost) to a parallel universe with different physical laws and experiences and for me great pleasure.



John Windibank C858 / 700

Departing Editor

Three years after the Comet Class was formed Keith Lamdin was elected Chairman of the Class and he set about improving the things which included the introduction of a Class news Letter.

Keith was our first Editor and since then the news letter has been an important part of the Comet Class keeping us up to date with class events, sailing tips and items of interest. It all started in 1986, which was still the age of the typewriter, but each of the class editors have contributed to the success of the class and have seamlessly adopted the changes in technology that have been developed over the past 22 years.

With the 4th edition, the news letter became the Perihelion and after 12 editions in 1989 Keith handed the responsibility to Stuart Lines who had been helping with the layout of the publication for a while. Stuart produced 14 editions and in 1993 the quality of the publication was greatly improved with the introduction of a new printer. Later in 1993 Stuart handed over to Alan Browning who enthusiastically promoted Perihelion and was editor until 2003 producing, 41 editions with many innovations and personal contributions. I took over and have contributed 20 editions and with the introduction of colour in 2006, Perihelion does the class proud.

Thank you all for your contributions over the years. I have had wonderful support from the class, Henry and Norah, all the committee, Andrew Simmons and of course everyone at Comet Boats.

I look forward to being a member of the Class for many years and receiving my next edition of perihelion.

John Windibank



Notice Board

Comet Dinghies : South Molton, Devon Tel 01769 574358 Fax 01769 574358
email info@cometdinghies.com www.cometdinghies.com

Dates for your Diary 2008:

27-Sep	Sat	Central Banbury	John Comfort 01926 815080
28-Sep	Sun	West Merthyr Tydfil	Mark Govier 02920 778459
4-Oct	Sat	South Kingsmead	CANCELLED (DUE TO WEED)
5-Oct	Sun	North Redesmere	Jeff Smith 01625 525891
18-Oct	Sat	Central Staunton Harold	Josie Adams 01159 328182

Photographic Competition entries in before 4th October

COMETS FOR SALE

Comet 346

Excellent condition, Launching Trolley. Cover, spare sail £800
Jeff 01227 361220 / mob 07968 500208
Road Trailer Galvanised in excellent condition for comet or similar.

Comet 779 - 1 careful lady owner

Deep purple with silver grey deck. 2 Hyde sails - 1 virtually new. Ronstan race rigging pack, telescopic tiller extension, roller bearing cleats, padded toe straps, footbar, cockpit grab rails, inspection hatch and storage bin, praddle and little Hawk wind indicator. Sovereign launching trolley. Very good condition (but could do with a new cover) £1300
Location: Fishers Green SC (Waltham Abbey, Essex)
Tel: 0208 360 9815

Comet Cascade 575

Violet/mauve/silver grey hull, silver deck, race pack, keelband, telescopic tiller, praddle, launching trolley, top cover. £750.
Located Chipstead SC, Sevenoaks
Fiona Cauter Tel: 01732 463334. email: fiona@cauter.com

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Please send your contributions for the next issue of Perihelion by

18th November 2008

To Brian Welham, Class Editor, 19 Lake End Way
Crowthorne Berks RG45 7LP e-mail bwelham@sky.com



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association