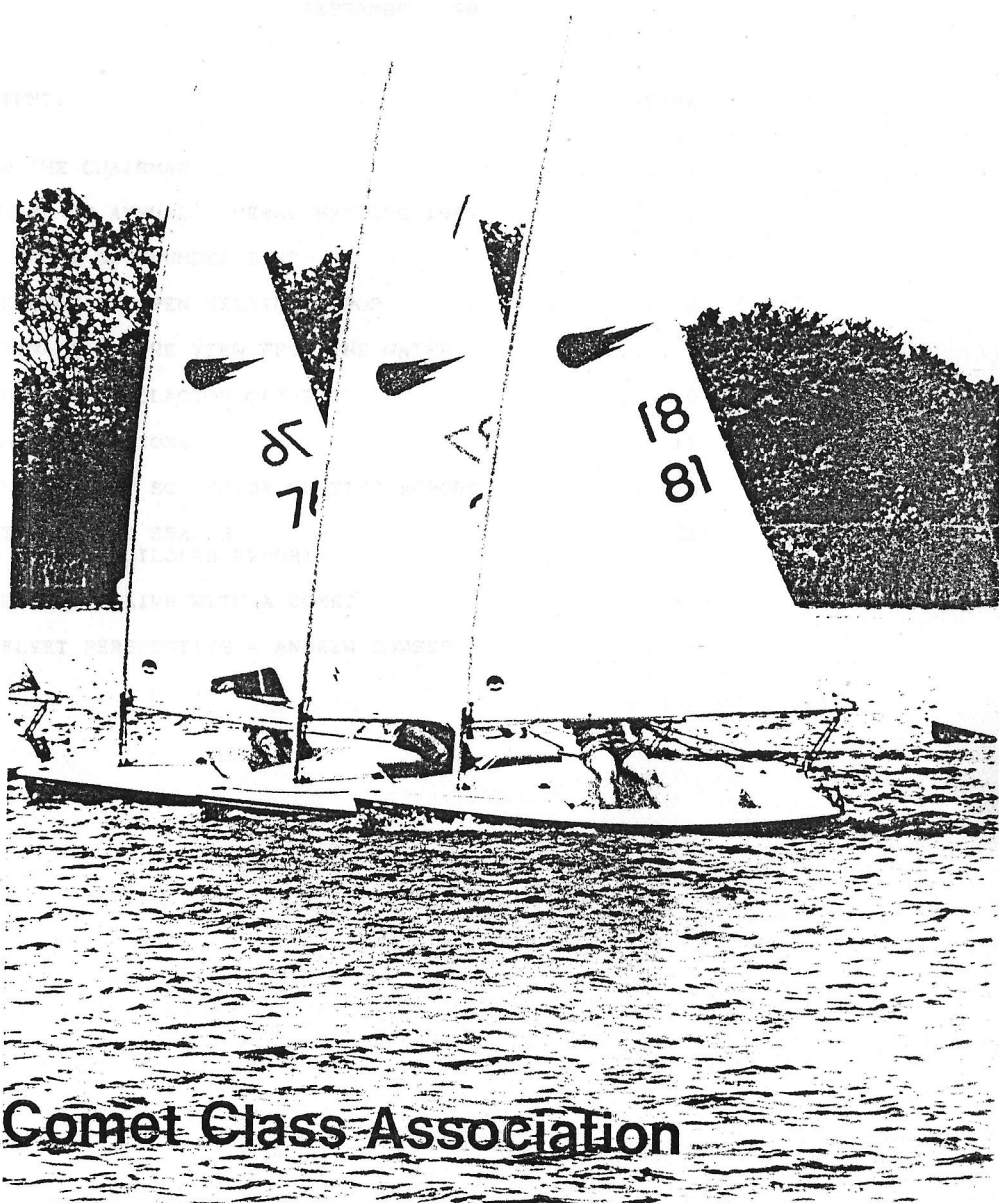


FILE

# PERIHELION

## Newsletter 4



**Comet Class Association**

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 4

SEPTEMBER 1987

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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

At last, you will notice, your Newsletter has a name! Whilst he was waiting for his new Comet number 125, David Edgar of Kingsmead S.C. read the previous newsletters and has provided us with:-

PERIHELION - point of comet's orbit nearest to the sun.

David suggests that "nearness to the sun" might convey something of a Comet sailors' aspirations! Others may feel that any member able to include the name of the Chairman's boat in the definition deserves reward! Many thanks and welcome to the Class to David and all new Comet owners who have received their boats since the last Newsletter.

The most important event recently has been a successful Open and National Championships held at Gunfleet SC in August and including the first Annual General Meeting of the Comet Class Association. Both events are well recorded in this Newsletter and I would just like to welcome Mrs Jackie Hudson, Carr Withal and Mike Crawshaw to the Association Committee and also those of you who heeded my plea and sent contributions to this newsletter - keep it coming!

I would also like to congratulate those Junior Comet sailors who attended the Kennet Valley meeting on a really awful day and provided the bulk of the entries, winners and entertainment for the day.

May I also remind you all of our additional Open Meeting on 25th October at Kingsmead SC near Slough. We have the beginnings of a fleet at Kingsmead which is a pleasant water to sail and easily accessible from the M25/M4. Please do come along and make this a highlight day to complete our '87 season.

I know that it seems as if a lot of our activities centre around racing and that a lot of Comet owners use their boats for pleasure only without the pressure of racing, enjoyable though that may be! I would like other news items besides racing and I thank Will Turner for his story of "Number Six" - there must be many more stories worth telling. Hazel Adlington has contributed a word search for your amusement! A small prize for the first complete correct answer received by the Chairman.

I am also planning a series of technical articles on boat tune and handling techniques which might answer some questions commonly being asked and will approach Andrew Simmons for similar hints on maintenance of our boats.

We are close to starting our second full Association year and if you have any requests, ideas or suggestions to improve the Association please do not hesitate to let myself or the Secretary know.

We are already planning our Open Meeting events for next season and if you think your Club would be able to entertain us in some way then please discuss it with your Sailing Secretary and let me know as soon as possible. I am particularly interested in events in the Midlands and the South coast areas in order to expand from our strongholds near London. Also please remind your Club Secretary to send a Comet handicap return (PY 125!) to the RYA this Autumn.

Finally, stop press news! Keep the weekend 23rd/24th July 1988 for the Nationals at Sovereign SC, Eastbourne - details later.

Keith Lamdin - Chairman.

MINUTES OF THE FIRST A.G.M. OF THE COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

HELD AT GUNFLEET S.C., CLACTON-ON-SEA, AT 1930 ON 22ND AUGUST 1987

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: No apologies for absence had been received by the Secretary.

2. SECRETARY'S REPORT: The original committee of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary was formed at a small meeting at the Dinghy Boat Show at Crystal Palace in 1985. At that time there were about 45 Comets built. By the end of 1986 there were about 87 Comets and at the time of this AGM there were 120 boats on the Class Register.

A forum for Class Associations was held by the RYA in London during December 1986. The Secretary was due to attend but unfortunately could not attend due to illness.

The three Class Newsletters so far published have resulted in a modest increase of Class membership from owners of the older boats and the membership stands at 73 out of the total possible of 120.

To conclude, my thanks and appreciation are expressed to the Chairman for his unstinting efforts in organising both the Class Association and the Open Meetings and National Championships.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer presented a balance sheet for 1986/87 which showed a credit balance of a little over £300. As required by the Class Constitution, a copy of the balance sheet is presented with the minutes of the AGM.

The Treasurer commented briefly on individual items of income and expenditure and that it should be appreciated that a substantial amount of the income was due to the AMS Marine practice of paying the initial membership fee for all new boat owners. The Association has also benefitted substantially through AMS Marines' assistance in printing and distributing the Newsletters.

It was pointed out by the Chairman that our Credit balance did not include a further income of £90 from late entrance fees paid that day for the National Championship Meeting.

In view of the healthy financial state of the Class Association the Treasurer recommended that the Annual subscriptions remain without change.

4. CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS: This year has seen effectively the start of the Comet Class Association from scratch after the Nationals held at Aylesbury SC last year early in August.

The first and most important action was to obtain affiliation to the RYA and this required the presentation of a Class Constitution (see Newsletter 1) and Class Measurement Rules (see Newsletter 2). Andrew Simmons provided the necessary drafts and our submission to RYA was accepted in the Autumn, effective 1st January 1987.

Affiliation enabled us to obtain a stand at Sailboat '87, Crystal Palace in March from which we successfully promoted the Comet and its Association to a wide range of people over a busy weekend. The stand was quite professionally presented with screens, photographs, boat and video and attracted a lot of interest.

Having got the season off at Sailboat '87 and following a series

of demonstration days organised by AMS Marine and Dinghy Leisure, the next major activity was a series of Open Meetings arranged through the summer for the Comet Class at locations around London.

Denham in May on a rather cold wet day attracted a slightly disappointing 7 boats who had some good racing on a sheltered water. However in June and early August with improved weather, two excellent turnouts of 15 at Chipstead and 21 at Aylesbury gave us really good and competitive racing throughout the fleet. The number of good keen young sailors is most encouraging for the development of the Class.

We were unable to make the arrangements for a meeting at Weston SC on Southampton Water but Kingsmead have offered us a meeting in October which together with the Gunfleet Nationals and Kennet Valley Junior meeting will have given us the beginnings of a thriving Open Meeting circuit. We are already being offered other venues for next year and it will be important to maintain enthusiasm for owners to travel and support these meetings which take considerable effort to organise.

An ongoing and key activity was the production of a regular Newsletter to keep members informed of events and developments. Three newsletters have been issued, with thanks to AMS for free printing and distribution, containing a variety of articles hopefully of interest to the members. My thanks also to the contributors of the articles, usually the same few people, and a plea for more members to put pen to papers and tell us all about their Comet Sailing. A fourth newsletter is planned for September and so any items would be welcomed.

These have been the main items of activity although we are acting as a clearing house for an increasing number of enquiries about the Comet which shows that the market awareness of our boat is growing.

As Chris reported, our membership is now 73 and it was pleasing that of the original 80 boats prior to 1.8.86 who were required to join exactly 40 boats or 50% did so and hopefully we will retain a similar percentage of those boats pre-paid by AMS when they have in turn to re-join.

Andrew, our Treasurer, has shown us a very encouraging set of accounts with a reasonably healthy balance which enables us to undertake more ideas for the growth of the Association next year.

I would like to thank Chris and Andrew for the work they have done on your behalf and also AMS for their support which has contributed particularly to our healthy accounts.

Thanks are also due to a number of other members who have helped on exhibition stands, open meetings and who by their enthusiasm have made the work of the year worthwhile.

Finally, I believe it is fair to say that this first year has been a successful one for the Association in a number of ways and that the Comet has finally arrived as a notable dinghy class with a future. That in turn means much potential growth of activities under the banner of the Association and it is in our own hands as to how we take this opportunity.

There is nothing very difficult about running such an Association and of expanding its activities in a number of areas.

It just takes time and effort!

This Association cannot grow with just three people doing all the work. We need you as Committee members, newsletter contributors, event organisers and enthusiastic participants.

You have a framework from which the Association can grow but it is

up to you to contribute something to make it happen.

It has been an enjoyable year - I hope next year will be even better.

In response to the Chairman's address, Carr Withal commented that it would help to promote the class if a copy of the current AMS sales leaflet was included with the next newsletter. Members could use this to answer any questions from the public about the Comet.

5. ELECTION OF OFFICERS: The present incumbents of the offices of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary were asked to remain in office for the next year, as follows.

Office	Nominee	Proposer	Second	Voting
Chairman	K.R.Lamdin	C.Robertson	B.Hylton	Unanimous
Treasurer	A.Cowser	M.Crawshaw	J.Franklin	Unanimous
Secretary	C.Robertson	K.Lamdin	J.Nell	Unanimous

6. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS: The following members were voted unanimously en-bloc as Committee Members.

Nominee	Proposer	Second
C.Withal	B.Robinson	P.Adlington
M.Crawshaw	"	"
J.Hudson	"	"

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Mike Crawshaw made a mild criticism regarding the bow fitting for the boat painter. He felt that it was too small and flimsy, and that it would be better to fit a full-sized grab handle. The general conclusion was that this was a matter for consideration by AMS Marine and that it should not lead to changes in the rules.

(b) Geoff Adlington apologised for speaking at the meeting as it was his son who was the member. It was pointed out that he had the option of becoming a Full or Associate Member in his own right.

The point he wished to raise was that since the sail measurement was fully specified in the rules, could any sailmaker be approached to make sails for the Comet. It was pointed out from the floor that the Topper Class had suffered from variation in performance from a number of sailmakers and Andrew Simmons expressed concern that any new sail design might not satisfy the requirement for reefing. The meeting concluded that the one-design aspect of the Comet Class precluded any further sailmakers although the Chairman pointed out that there were in effect two licensed sailmakers already as the early boats were supplied with a Banks sail.

(c) Peter Adlington complained that the rubber stops on the daggerboard tended to become detached. A simple solution to the problem was offered from the floor and AMS Marine asked to consider a permanent solution.

(d) The Chairman informed the meeting that he hoped to produce in

conjunction with AMS Marine a new Owners Manual which would include the Class Constitution, Measurement Rules as well as rigging, sailing and tuning hints.

(e) It was suggested that it might be possible to hold a combined Mirror/Comet Open Meeting at Kennet Valley, near Reading, next year.

(f) It was suggested from the floor that a list of dates and venues for future Open Meetings be published as soon as possible in order that members could book them in their diary. It was known that a group of 4 boats from Pool Hall SC would attend given such notice.

There being no further business, the Chairman thanked the members for attending and closed the meeting at 2030 hours.

Chris Robertson  
Secretary.

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION - BALANCE SHEET 86/87

INCOME

Payment from AMS Marine at inception	£ 110.00
Receipts from membership	£ 188.00
Receipts from AMS Marine on account of membership for new boats sold.	£ 175.00
Entrance fees received for open meetings.	£ 92.00
Entrance fees received for National Championships.	£ 52.50

Total Income

£ 617.50

EXPENDITURE

Sailboat '87 expenses	£ 58.12
RYA Affiliation	£ 28.00
Class Association expenses (stamps, postage, stationery & sundry).	£ 19.17
Bank Charges	£ 6.44
Open meetings	£ 20.00
Nationals, Gunfleet Sailing Club.	£ 100.00
Trophies & prizes	£ 79.65

Expenditure

£ 311.38

Balance held in Credit

£ 306.12

Total Expenditure

£ 617.50

## THE STORY OF "NUMBER SIX"

Bought by JCB SC member, John Vyse, off the exhibition stand at the NEC 1982/3; it has remained a JCB boat ever since. John, inexperienced in such things, found righting a capsized Comet more of a challenge than he liked and the boat lapsed into occasional use by other members and John's two children aged 15 and 16.

Number six then passed to John Skinner, a computer engineer with a passion for getting wet at high speed! The Comet was to be seen on the roof rack of John's Range Rover alongside a couple of windsurfers and assorted masts and booms. John is not into racing, just speed. He would note the weather forecasts for the weekend in great details, planning to be at the lake which had the most wind. Thus the Comet saw action at most venues within 150 miles of Stoke on Trent! However the Comet was unable to satisfy John's lust for pure speed; and number six passed to me freeing cash for much needed larger masts and sails for John.

This somewhat travel stained Comet now became part of the racing fleet at JCB lake in August '86. Bow logo's of a pennyfarthing with an integral sunshade (anybody remember Patrick McGoohan in "The Prisoner" TV series?) resulted in the boat becoming officially "Number Six".

Our race series, back end of '86 was distinctly breezy, so I learned all about capsizing. NB DO NOT FALL OFF, walk along boom to mast, step astride hull, shin up to centreplate etc.

This is the old man's "do not get wet" route!

I did not seem to make much impression on the points series, but became aware of the necessity to balance the boat fore and aft as well as laterally.

Winter '86, a set of glass fibre foils appeared out of John Skinner's garage. Both had split at the seam, perhaps their sudden flexibility explains Mr Vyse's abhorrence of capsizes. The plywood bits fitted were getting frayed at the bottom; so an attempt was made on the GRP. A large hole was drilled in the top, both halves carefully pressed together and insulating tape was run all around the seam. 0.2 litres of activated resin was poured in and the board stood on its leading edge, allowed to cure before repeating for trailing edge and bottom. The result has been very serviceable and looks very smart.

1987 Spring series has been one of light airs and breezes and I can say that a Comet seems to sail well above handicap in these conditions. I have not got a lot of patience for this sort of sailing and in spite of this, me and "Number Six" achieved a most pleasing result.

Please will someone write an article in this wonderful newsletter on stiff breeze sailing techniques, so that my efforts in the autumn series may be in the right direction?

May the spray be with you.

Will Turner

## COMET OPEN MEETING - AYLESBURY SC 2ND AUGUST 1987

With 14 visitors from 11 different clubs joining 7 boats from the home club, a competitive fleet of 21 boats came to the start line for the first race in a light variable northwesterly wind.

Peter Adlington made a clean start at the leeward end of the line and led to the windward mark followed by Craig Moffett and Damon Perrin. On the run down the lake the fleet bunched in a flat spot allowing the lightweight Philip Robinson to sail round the outside of the fleet into the lead whilst Adlington dropped disastrously to 14th. Robinson held the lead for several laps with Henry Jagers and Ian Hylton joining the leading group and Adlington recovering from his earlier problems. On the final two beats places swapped continuously in close tacking contests and the finishing order was Perrin, Jagers, Robinson and Moffett adjudged equal third, Adlington and Hylton.

With the early drizzle replaced by clearing skies, the second race started in a freshening breeze with Perrin and Moffett leading Alex Leslie and Andrew Crawshaw up the first beat. Perrin soon established a clear lead up the second beat with Moffett being pressed by Adlington and Jagers with Robinson and James Hawkins breaking clear of the fleet to join the leading group. During the remainder of the race, with Perrin well clear in the lead, positions changed in the leading group with Robinson pulling through Adlington and Moffett and Hylton joining the group after struggling through the fleet from a poor start. At the finish the order was Perrin, Adlington, Moffett and Robinson having another close finish, Jagers and Hylton.

Although the overall result was now decided in favour of Perrin, there were four boats in contention for second place giving a final interesting race.

With a new course setting some problems at the start and first mark Ralph Rowe, Will Turner and Hayley Penfold showed well up the first beat but at the end of the first lap Jagers and Hylton were through and clear of Perrin, Rowe, Robinson and Moffett. With Perrin retiring to rest on his laurels and Adlington leading Chris Robinson and Bryan Robinson through to the front runners for the first time, it was Jagers who won to take second overall, followed by Hylton, Moffett and Adlington.

Overall Results:	1st Damon Perrin	Aylesbury SC
	2nd Henry Jagers	Kingsmead SC
	3rd Craig Moffett	Walton on Thames SC
	4th Peter Adlington	Kennet Valley SC
	5th Philip Robinson	Aylesbury SC
	6th Ian Hylton	Aylesbury SC

NATIONALS '87 - THE VIEW FROM THE WATER

It may have rained all the way from Watford, and half of Essex was daggerboard deep in flood water, but Clacton earned the accolade of East Coast Sunshine Capital (!) during the third weekend in August, and the Comet National Championships.

Assorted helms and families contemplated the murky North Sea chop as they rigged their boats. Keith had 'Orbit' ready to go, and if he felt any nerves about handing over his immaculate boat to 'one of those Laser nutters', then he certainly wasn't showing it. Up in the clubhouse Mark casually flicked through the latest Yachts and Yachting and was clearly the man to watch. "With all those beans, he's bound to go," quipped an anonymous helm, and so it proved.

It was a shame that I wasn't watching him at the start of Race One. "What do those flags mean, Dad". "They mean that the race started ten minutes ago, Son" as the leaders vanished over the horizon towards the first mark. Oh well, bang goes the first discard.

Race Two, and now we're getting the hang of these flags. That chequered one and three sound signals means - postponement. "Try again at low tide," said the Race Officer. Off we go one hour later and this time I get it right. The wind arrives bang on cue to blow the light weights away, and Keith looks suitably pleased as I cross the line in the lead.

Saturday night, and time for the AGM. A number of Association worthies are keeping a low profile at the back of the room, but enough 'Volunteers' are found to enlarge the Committee. With the serious business over, Gunfleet lay on the hospitality - a good job too, since the rest of Clacton is, on later inspection, found to be shut.

Sunday dawns bright with just the right amount of breeze blowing. The highlight of Race Three comes at the end. With the tide still rising we get the instruction to land back on the slipway. The trick is to line yourself up with the waves, and shut your eyes. Fortunately, someone is there to catch you. The "Two Andrew's" from AMS Marine have done well, and there are mutterings about 'professional' sailors. Andrew Simmons is accused of putting off the opposition by wearing the silliest hat of the weekend. He does, however, win first prize for the most co-ordinated competitor.

Race Four, and the less said about this one the better. A good start and a narrow lead thrown away as I merrily sail off to the wrong mark. The only consolation is that half of the fleet follow me into oblivion. Retirement is the only honourable way out. This race is discard number two.

Race Five, and the best conditions of the weekend. Surfing on the run and a good close battle for the places. Adlington Snr. is out there practising what he preaches, and that man in the hat is close by. The inside berth at the last mark enables me to just fend them off.

And that's it - time to pack up and head for home. Congratulations abound as the prize winners are announced, in the best Miss World tradition, in reverse order. The Verdict? - a thoroughly enjoyable weekend with good competition between a friendly bunch of people. Thanks are due to all at Gunfleet, and, of course, to Keith for the use of his boat for the weekend. I'll see you all at Kingsmead, where I'll be the one in the Laser who always looks out of control!

Anyone know of a Comet going cheap somewhere?! - Colin Wilcox

## SAILING

THE GUNFLEET Sailing Club were hosts of the 1987 Comet National Championships last weekend, with 18 entrants from as far afield as Devon.

Saturday's first race was an introduction to sea sailing for the majority of visitors who up to then had only sailed on inland waters. Mark Laity soon took the lead, and with a series of reaches maintained this position to the end, followed by A. Dickinson and J. Penfold.

With minutes to go before the second race the wind died leaving the fleet fighting to make the start line against the tide. This proved an impossible task and the start was postponed for an hour.

As the wind picked up Peter Adlington made a break from the rest but by the first mark Colin Wilcox had managed to overtake him. On the second lap there was a sudden gust and the wind swung round 180° causing a couple of capsize, but most helms managed to gybe successfully. Laity by then had slipped through the fleet to take second place behind Wilcox with Adlington third.

Saturday evening saw the clubhouse full for the Comet Class Association AGM followed by a social evening, the Gunfleet Girls providing a fine array of food for members and guests.

A force 3 south westerly greeted the fleet on Sunday and while Andrew Crawshaw led the fleet away in race 3 he found early competition from local Simon Clarke and the boat's designer Andrew Simmons. The latter slipping into first place and holding it while once more Laity went through the fleet to finish second, Dickinson third.

The wind had dropped a little by race 4 and reared southerly. A new course was laid to ensure the need for good tactics but unfortunately this proved the stumbling block for a number of competitors who either misread the course, or decided to make it up as they went along.

Both Colin and Alex Wilcox managed to play pied piper and lead a number of boats astray while Laity, seeing the confusion took full advantage of the situation, so building up a commanding lead. Although two boats subsequently retired, those on the wrong course corrected themselves and completed the race, albeit a long way behind Laity, Crawshaw and Penfold, the first three home.

With the best 3 out of 5 races counting it was obvious to Laity he could not be beaten so he sat the last race out and watched as C. Wilcox and Penfold fought it out. As the wind increased so the positions changed and it was the turn of Dickinson to win followed by C. Wilcox and G. Adlington.

Final results were: Open: 1 M. Laity, Walton-on-Thames SC; 2 A. Dickinson, A&MS Marine; 3 C. Wil-

cox, Denham SC. National championship: 1 J. Penfold, Sovereign SC; 2 P. Adlington, Kennet Valley SC; 3 S. Clarke, Gunfleet SC. First lady: M. Hylton, Aylesbury SC.

CLACTON GAZETTE  
28<sup>th</sup> AUGUST

## FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Until the Nationals my experience of Comet sailing was that of chauffeur and agitated spectator of Peter's successes and failures on the water. Having proved to myself that I am too unfit to sail Lasers I was nicely settled into racing proper boats (a wooden Enterprise!). But at Clacton I was seduced into entering a couple of the races by the challenge of tidal waters and the good weather.

It was a bit off having to get wet even to get into the boat but I was soon to learn that sea sailing is a lot wetter than lake sailing.

Being well on the wrong side of 14 stone and in only a moderate breeze I knew I would have to work the boat if I were to get anywhere in the race. Working the boat I quickly found out two key features: there is no water deflecting moulding on the foredeck and the plastic side deck is relatively slippery. So 14+ stone wrapped accidentally around the mast meant too many "greenies" over the bows. A rather less aggressive style of sailing was soon adopted. However I was impressed with the efficiency of the self bailer to cope with the ballast.

Sailing later in the afternoon I was very surprised to find that over 14 stone is needed to keep the boat flat when beating in a fresh F5. Also although 6 foot tall I was struggling to hike out as far as I wanted to, the "little" boat is beamy isn't it! I would loosen the toe strap, Margaret!

My first gybe in a single-hander in strong winds wasn't textbook stuff at all but I did stay upright. My performance offwind wasn't too good either judging by the fact that certain boats (which didn't have 14+ stone helping them on the beats) began to make me look, as if I was going backwards.

It may have been my weight but Andrew is no Twiggy either and he was going faster. More probably it was that the Comet doesn't have a proper sail, its one of those loose footed things which are a bit more sensitive to how much outhaul is used. Also I was more concerned about staying upright on a dead run than worrying about the finer points of sailing! A certain Laser sailor who was also "mucking about" in Comets that weekend remarked that feeling comfortable and safe on a downwind leg was a luxury keen single handed racers could not afford. Death or glory stuff!

A week or two later on my own "puddle" and back in a proper boat I was struck by two facts, the Enterprise is slow to get up on a plane and took ages to tack. I thought back to the afternoon at Clacton and began to wonder if I could loose a couple of stones and find a few hundred pounds from somewhere! No, not for the boat Andrew, (that's a justifiable investment) but for the double road trailer and, of course, a dry suit. Some things don't change - I still don't like getting wet!

Geoff Adlington  
Kennet Valley SC.

P.S. Many thanks to Andrew and Margaret for the chance to have a go in such a super event.

## KENNET VALLEY S.C. JUNIOR OPEN SEPTEMBER 12TH 1987

This event was planned to encourage the younger helms both Comet and those in our locality. Sadly on the day, the weather forecast was most discouraging. Strong winds and rain made it a day for experienced helms only and the turnout was correspondingly low. The Comets raced as a class within the overall general handicap event.

The first race started in dry weather but the wind was F5 gusting 6 and shifting badly around the islands. The fact that it wasn't raining was purely academic since the Comet sailors were soon showing their prowess at capsize recovery.

The first race was led from start to finish by Peter Adlington and Jeff Penfold in an Enterprise instead of their Comets! Good survival instincts and experience enabled them to keep upright despite the weather. However, they were hotly pursued by Chris Robinson who battled on capsizing only occasionally. Hayley Penfold, revelling in the fresh water dips instead of her usual salty stuff, was also coping well with the unaccustomed gusty and shifty blasts of wind that inland sailors suffer all too often. The rest of the fleet struggled being either too lightweight or insufficiently experienced for the Comet dinghies they were sailing. The result of the first race was an unusual dead heat on corrected time between the Enterprise and Robinson in the leading Comet.

In the second race the weather conditions deteriorated further. First the rain started and then wind increased to a gusty F6. Despite some hefty reefing Philip Robinson, at 6+ stone, managed to capsize 5 times before the race started! However only one Comet sailor declined the challenge so on a simplified and supposedly easier course they set off again. The course included a broad reach on which the boats planed at very exciting speeds. There were some equally exciting and spectacular high speed capsizes. Two boats were eventually forced to retire as the weather conditions became really foul. The race pattern was as before with the Enterprise well ahead of the field and Robinson and Penfold battling on behind in their Comets.

The third race was abandoned by the OOD who correctly decided that the conditions were too rough and that the Junior sailors had done enough swimming for one day.

Overall Winners: P. Adlington and J. Penfold - Enterprise.

Comet Class: 1st Chris Robinson Aylesbury SC  
2nd Hayley Penfold Sovereign SC  
3rd Philip Robinson Aylesbury SC

Geoff Adlington  
Kennet Valley SC



NAUTICAL WORD SEARCH

L K M Z Y T R E T N I A P  
S D A G G E R B O A R D N  
O A I D L H Y S O O K J S  
W I N D W A R D X A C D T  
T W S Y Z O L O E F L C A  
P P H H V R O U A Z E F R  
Q T E J T O Q B F R A L B  
L E E W A R D E A F T S O  
M X T F C O M E T R Q M A  
W S O L K H J P O R T N R  
S E L F B A I L E R S O D

The above block of letters contains a number of words with a nautical connection. The words may be found horizontally, vertically, diagonally or backwards! Have fun!

Hazel Adlington.

AMS MARINE - BUILDERS REPORT

At the time of writing we have just returned from the Southampton Boat Show. I think it was a successful Show with good weather although a bit of rain never deters the serious "looker".

Before the show started, a lot of demonstrations by Dinghy Leisure had resulted in a flurry of orders. We had a terrific amount of real interest shown on the stand and several orders. At the moment we have orders for 15 Comets out of the 24 we are building in the rest of the year.

By the end of the year 67 Comets will have been built in 1987, a very large increase over previous years! We are now thinking about an increase in production to 3 and maybe 4 Comets a week next year. This will require another building and some extra staff. 1988 looks like being another exciting year for AMS Marine.

Before long I must plan some new brochures for the London Boat Show. As usual I am short of good colour photos of the Comet so if you have any, whether fast "racey" shots or pottering with a passenger, I would be pleased to use them. I will obviously return all photos as soon as possible but please do not be offended if they do not appear in the leaflet as I may not be able to use them all!

I must say thank you to all the Comet owners that have patiently shown and demonstrated their Comets to friends at the sailing club or even complete strangers on the beach. It is certainly true that the best salesman is a satisfied owner so keep up the good work!

See you all at Kingsmead.

Andrew Simmons.

FOR SALE: COMET 8, new sail, 3rd at Gunfleet. Contact Simon Clarke at "High Seas", 119 Marine Parade East, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH A COMET

There's me, proficient mini-sail pilot; and my new Comet. We are both a long way from the rest of the Comet world.

Let's learn together. There's a stiff breeze blowing, get it launched; wow! it capsizes without me, goodness knows what's going to happen when I get in it!

Set off, leech flapping, surely that's not right? Into wind, heave-ho on the kicker, don't they turn round quick! Sail now setting better, we try pointing, I can see the bow wave and am surprised how easily the bow lifts as I move back.

Other boats are now zooming along on planing reaches. Why am I producing a big bow-wave but not lifting onto the plane? Still, she's very responsive, lacks on a sixpence (that's how old I am!) and points very well.

I found that running could be quite exciting (!) Our lake has some abrupt wind shifts and perhaps I did have the sheet too far out..... Suffice to say that I was perfecting my capsize drill faster than my sailing technique!

So anyone out there prepared to advise on maximum boom angle? Will it dig in when running in a stiff breeze if I move at all forward from my position squatting on the transom? Perhaps this stability thing is getting to me.

In light airs my Comet talks to me..... (I told you it's getting to me) as I move forward the bow wave chuckles and as I move rearwards the transom starts to gurgle. Get in the middle, the sounds calm down and the boat goes faster.

The Laser pilot gave me some tips about bendy mast rigs. This seems to involve doing a Bullworker act on the kicking strap before tweaking sail fullness on the outhaul and downhaul ropes. Anyone recommend a good book on the subject?

When scratches run deep into the gelcoat is there some repair technique to restore my gleaming blue shine?

Indeed is there a go-faster wax for polishing out minor blemishes?

Aside from all the silly questions which are easily answered if you are with a lot more Comets, let me say that learning to sail a Comet has been a most rewarding process. Being so light and easily driven, the boat responds to every movement or adjustment, making the helm aware of the boats' potential.

I look forward to learning some more.

May the spray be with you.

Will Turner

