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

Chairman's Report

Chair's Final Mutterings

The new season is nearly upon us and as in previous years we have a busy calendar of events, including 22 open meetings and the national and association championships. Many thanks to the clubs for offering to host these events for the class association. For a number of years, Noble Marine have made a donation to the class association and this year it is being used to offset the cost of the prizes and mementoes at both championships.



This year's National Championships, and Annual General Meeting, will be at Burghfield Sailing Club at the end of May and will also be shared with the other Comet classes. Following a number of positive comments at last year's nationals at Rutland, the format will again consist of pairs of shorter races sailed back to back. Further details can be found on the Comet Class's and Burghfield Sailing Club's websites.

As in previous year's the class has also exhibited at the Suzuki RYA Dinghy Show held at Alexandra Palace at the beginning of March. Many thanks to those members who spent a few hours on the stand promoting the class association and the boat, special thanks also to John Sturgeon for organising the stand and volunteers, Henry for his art work and Andy for providing the boats.

As all those helms that race regularly should be aware, the ISAF issued new edition of the Racing Rules of Sailing on 1st January this year. As in previous editions there have been a few changes, including additions and deletions, and I recommend all those helms to familiarise themselves with not only these updates but also to re-read the rest of the racing rules as reminder before the new season starts.

At the recent committee meeting, there was some discussion about the nomination of the rig of choice for an event. This follows a number of competitors changing their minds between signing-on and launching at last year's championships at Rutland. Following these discussions, the decision was to leave the nomination on the entry forms but that the choice doesn't become binding until the start signal of the first race of the event.

I would like to thank a couple of people who have decided after a number of years to retire from their posts. These are Norah, who has been taking minutes and organising the event calendar for many years, and Brian, who has been editing Perihelion since edition 108 (Autumn 2008).

Finally, Angela Smallwood has ask the class association to pass on her thanks for all of the cards and messages that she has received from members of the association following Richard's memorial service.

Hopefully I will see some of you on the water at an open meeting or one of the championships.

Paul Hinde C844

The password for the members section of the class website has changed, it will now be:

Gibbs2017

Perihelion 122

Please send your contributions for the next issue of Perihelion by

July1 2017

To Nigel Fern, Class Editor, 3 Cheltenham Drive Ashby de la Zouch Leics LE65 2YE e-mail n.fern@ntlworld.com

Secretary's Report

Notes from the committee:

We're already well into 2017 and the sailing season will soon be upon us. Time to check out the sheets and make sure that everything is shipshape. Don't forget to have a good look at your trailer and launching trolley too.

Chris Robinson was our only representative at the Bloody Mary which turned out to be good Comet weather. Chris was 63rd out of 244



finishers (287 boats entered). Many congratulations. Nigel Austin once again competed in his D-Zero but It wasn't quite the best weather for the boat.

Many thanks to John Sturgeon for sorting out our stand at the Dinghy Show and to everyone who turned up to help. With a small stand we only need a couple of people in attendance at any one time, so there is plenty of time to look around the rest of the show. Thanks too to Andy for providing the boats, one of which was built for a long-time Comet sailor. Andy plans to use the other one as a demonstrator. We asked visitors to the stand if they would like a trial sail, so please be ready to help if we ask if you would be prepared to let someone try out your boat.

Once again there are 22 Open meetings this year, in 4 areas. You'll find information on how to qualify for the Orbital Trophy elsewhere in this edition of Perihelion. All of the events are on the website, and we've sent you your credit-card sized programme card again. Many thanks to Henry for producing these for us. They do seem to be popular.

The National Championships will be at Burghfield SC on May 27th – 29th. For those of you who haven't been to Burghfield before, it is situated on a gravel pit beside the M4 at Theale. Chris Robinson is our contact there and he has been working hard with the club and the other Comet classes who will be joining us.

The Association Championships will be at Attenborough SC over the August Bank Holiday weekend. The dates are August 26th and 27th. Nigel Fern is liaising with Malcolm Davidson and Andrew Beaumont from the club and we're looking forward to an interesting weekend. Attenborough is at Long Eaton, very close to the M1. The club members are currently putting the finishing touches to their brandnew club house.

Your Annual General Meeting will be at Burghfield on Sunday 28th May. You will find the paperwork for the AGM with the edition. Please send any motions for consideration by May 7th 2017.

The Committee will look rather different after this Annual General Meeting. Paul will be standing down as he will have completed his 3 year stint, and I have decided that it is time to retire. You will recall that the committee decided last year to split some of the responsibilities. You, as members, will still vote for the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, as well as committee members.. The roles of Membership Secretary, Results Co-ordinator, Trophy Buyer, Website Co-ordinator and Sailing Programme Organiser will be allocated to members of the committee.

Brian Welham is also planning to stand down having done sterling work at Newsletter Editor. Perihelion has flourished under his leadership and we are extremely grateful to him for all his hard work over the years.

Your committee met recently and discussed a range of subjects including various ways of communicating with you and potential members.

We were very sorry to hear of Richard Smallwood's death. He was a stalwart of the racing circuit for many years and served as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. He subsequently worked tirelessly with disabled sailors, sailed a 2.4mR, and was an active member of their committee internationally as well as at home. His memorial service was a fitting tribute to a wonderfully kind gentle man who has influenced a wide range of sailors and sailing activities over many years.

Secretary's Report (cont.)

We have also said farewell to Bill Webster who was our contact at Cransley for many years. He had a unique Comet, identifiable by its colour scheme which came about after a co-incidence with the dam. Bill was a great character and some of his habits when sailing will never be forgotten!

Derek Coleman is receiving good support from his medical team. Nigel Fern and Steve Gregory are both returned to full health, so will be back on the circuit this year. Helen Leivers is waiting to hear when the plates will be removed from her leg.

Please continue to make use of the website especially the members area. You can send reports and photographs to cometresults@yahoo.co.uk. If you have another Comet at your club, perhaps you could persuade the owner to join the Association — or at least come out to an Open meeting.

This will be my last "Notes from the Committee". Looking back, I first took the minutes at a committee meeting in 1993 which seems like a lifetime ago. Thanks for reading my ramblings. I'll see you at various Comet meetings and will continue to be a trolley-dolly.

Norah Jaggers Class Secretary

COMET SPARES, REPAIRS AND ACCESSORIES

Don't forget all spares and accessories are held in stock and can often be with you in less than 24 hours if you order in the morning.

New Dinghies	A selection always in stock
Comet	£4550
Comet Xtra	£4650
Comet Mino	£4500
Standard Sail	£330
Standard Sail with Zij	oper £360
Zippered Sail Conver	sion Kit £30
Mino Sail	£290
Xtra Sail	£395
Xtra Conversion Kit 8	Sail £430
Xtra Bottom Mast	£175
Xtra Top Mast	£100
Xtra Boom	£145

A full spare parts price list is now available to download from our web page. www.cometdinghies.com

Repairs Accident damage and refurbishing gladly undertaken. Write, phone or e-mail but include a daytime phone number

Comet Dinghies

Unit 4 Valley View Business Park

Ashreigney

Chumleigh

Devon EX18 7ND Tel 01769 520545

e-mail cometdinghies@btconnect.com

The photographs in this issue were printed with the kind permission from the following.

Front Cover Comet archives
P12 & P25 Brian Welham
P20,P21,P22 & P23 Steve Gregory

Builders Report

Just returned from the Dinghy Show where despite having a new stand location lots of owners and prospective owners visited. As usual the stand was a combined Comet Dinghies and Class Association stand with a Comet Xtra and a standard Comet on display. The stand was more "enclosed" than usual with screens on three sides so Norah



and Henrys excellent photos and graphics were well displayed.

One Comet left straight after the show with its' new owner to Winsford Flash S.C. The other will be used as a demonstrator for now.

There was a bit of a run on new sails before and at the show. Hydes lead time is currently longer than usual and the next batch wasn't due to dock until well after the Nationals but I'm having some air freighted over early. I'm planning on coming to the Nationals so let me know.

There is a new Spares Price List enclosed with this newsletter and some of you will notice a larger than usual price increase on new boats. Due partly to the move we didn't do a price rise last year and the new boat prices had fallen "behind the times". They used to be spray laminated alongside other dinghies but are now hand laminated on their own, plus in recent years materials like GRP and aluminium have taken a steep hike. Checking with similar dinghies I still believe the Comet is good value.

I look forward to seeing some of you at the Nationals.

Andy Simmons



For those who did not get to the Dinghy Show, this is the new place for the comets. In some ways it was much better as we had three walls to put our literature but it was not seen by those visitors who where going from the West Hall to the Great Hall.

The ones who came to the location to talk to us were genuinely interested in Comets rather than just passing.

We had 2 boats both with the sail number 888. This was because Ros Stevenson had been bought a new hull with all three rigs.

Rumour has it this was part of a birthday present but I might be wrong!

Ed

Ros and Malcolm admiring the new boat



Bloody Mary 2017

I've sailed in the annual Bloody Mary pursuit race for many years now. It's a good chance to get out after Christmas, and to get back into sailing so that I've had some practice before the start of the Open meeting season.

I've had a long term aim of getting into the top one hundred, but have never managed to get close. This year light winds were forecast, which aren't usually to my liiking, so I wasn't expecting to do well. I arrived at Queen Mary early to find the expected light winds. Arriving early ensures a car park space near the club, and plenty of time to get the boat ready and have something to eat. Two other Comets sailors were sailing, but not in Comets! Nigel Austin was sailing his D Zero, while Paul Jago was sailing a Streaker.

For the past few years the boats have been assigned launching areas, which ensures that the slower boats such as the Comets are the front of the queue, so there is no worry about missing the start. However, you do have to launch when you are told, and consequently I was on the water early and had a chance to sail the first beat before the Toppers started. After a short gap I started, and then got caught by the Fireflys before the first mark and by the lead Enterprise on the second beat - not a good start. There was then a long run to the far side of the reservoir. I elected to sail low to try and keep out on my own as I have found most people tend to sail high on runs and reaches trying to keep clear air. The wind dropped away to nothing. which suits the Comet just fine. I have found that on a run in no wind the Comet will sail faster than its handicap due to the short length and fine bow. I caught up the tail end Firelflys by the end of the run, and then tried the same sail-low tactic on the reach back towards the clubhouse. I wasn't sure this was as successful as Paul in his Streaker, much further upwind, sailed past. However, the lead GP14 took the same course as I did, so I was in good company, although judging by the speed at which it overtook me it seemed to have its own wind.

The next legs of the course were upwind, with a couple of reaches to get us around the bund which almost divides the reservoir into two parts. The Lasers were beginning to catch me now, but with a bit more wind I was able to get past one of the Laser 4.7s on the reach. He luffed to try and stop me overtaking, so I overtook to leeward

instead! The two Thames A Raters then caught up. These three person keelboats are huge, with their tall masts dwarfing everything else on the water. I used the Laser 4.7s tactic, and luffed to encourage them to overtake to leeward.

I dared to look at my watch. The Bloody Mary is much longer than club or open meeting races, and I have found that it's like long haul travel – you fly, or sail, for what seems like forever, but when you look at your watch you find you're not even half way there. However, this time I was pleasantly surprised; there was less than half an hour to the finish. Time flies when you are enjoying yourself!

On the last beat of the first lap I finally caught the tail end of the Toppers. One of the disadvantages of sailing the Comet is that, being one of the slowest boats on the course, there aren't many boats to catch. The race has several finish lines, and once the end of the race is signalled you keep going until you reach one of them. There was a finish at the end of the beat, and if I could get through it before the finish gun went I would then have a run and another beat to catch some more Toppers with the luxury of no one else behind being able to catch me. This happened the past two years, and it had allowed me to catch a few more boats. However, this year the wind dropped again and I was becalmed about thirty yards short of the line when the finish gun went. However, once I had finished I was close to the clubhouse, which meant I was one of the first boats ashore. I took full advantage of this and got changed and the boat into the car park ahead of most people, which meant I was home in good time.

It wasn't until a saw the results the following morning that I realised how well I had done – 63rd out of 243 finishers. Paul did even better with 17th. The wind definitely favoured the slower boats, with first place going to a Firefly, while Nigel was left with many of the other faster boats languishing at the back.

Chris Robinson Comet 867

Comet National Championships 27th May – 29th May 2017

The 2017 Comet Nationals will be held at Burghfield Sailing Club over the late May bank holiday weekend, Saturday 27^{th} May-Monday 29^{th} May.

A ten race series is planned, with the first start scheduled for 11am on Saturday, with a finish about lunchtime on Monday. Full details are in the Notice of Race, which is available on Burghfield's website.

Meals, including evening meals on the Saturday and Sunday, will be available at the club. Evening meals will need to be booked on the club website nearer to the event. The AGM will be held on Sunday evening. For camping nearby (including motorhomes), please contact the club manager. If you wish to leave your boat at the club on Friday please contact the Club Manager to ensure you know when the compound will be unlocked. Further information about the club is available on Burghfield's website.

Entry is via Burghfield's website, and closes on 21st May. Early entry, which attracts a discount, is available until 30th April. The club manager can be contacted at: manager@burghfieldsailing.org

The website address is: www.burghfieldsailing.org/comet championships

The website address leads to Burghfield's webcollect page where you can enter and find the Notice or Race, Sailing Instructions and other information about the club.

This is a poster for your club notice board

COMET EVENTS

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	Shearwater	Burghfield	Sutton Bingham	o the	Fishers Green	Hunts	Attenborough	Winsford Flash	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	& AGW at BURGHFIELD	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS	
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7	Sat	Sat	Sat	Ut 11	Sat	Sun	Sal	Sat	Sat	Sun	Mon B	9
April	œ	22	29	May	9	2	13	20	27	28	29	June

Race with Us!

Baltic Wharf

Cotswold

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Chipstead Frensham

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	16	30	Aug	12	19	26

CIATION CHAMPIONSHIPS

at ATTENBOROUGH Severn Ser Sat

Merthyr Tydfil **Bristol Avon** Up River Littleton X ON X ≥ wzz October Sun Sun Sat Sun 10

N=Northern, S=Southern; E=Eastern; * Aphelion areas. W-Western.

The final venue in each region is shown Dates correct as at 25" Feb 2017 in bold where we intend to present the mementoes. Orbital prizes, merce and end of season trophies will be appropriate Aphelion prizes and Confern before fravelling presented at Staunton Harold.

www.cometsailing.org.uk

Staunton Harold

Redesmere

Sat Sot

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 28th May 2017 at Burghfield Sailing Club

Agenda

Apologies

Minutes of the AGM held on 13th August 2016

Reports by Officers

Builder's Report

Adoption of Accounts

Consideration of Motions:

Election of Officers and Committee

Appointment of Auditor

Any Other Business

Norah Jaggers, Class Secretary

London Regatta – Greenwich Yacht Club – October 2016

I cannot remember where I got wind of this, but every year the London Dinghy Regatta is held at Greenwich Yacht Club. It is usually timed to coincide with a scheduled all-day closure of the Thames Barrier, when the river just upstream of the barrier becomes a lake for the day! The regatta takes place in Woolwich Reach Upper and Bugsby's Reach — nearly level with the O2 Arena and approximately 100 dinghies from a number of London clubs participate.

I had phoned the race organiser to check if Frensham Pond, in Surrey, counted as 'Greater London' and to my delight, he was totally relaxed about this. I had always wanted to sail on the Thames, so this was my chance.



On the appointed Sunday morning, I was up at stupid-o'clock, trailing Comet 57 down the A3 towards central London. Massively overestimating the time needed to reach Greenwich, I whistled through the suburbs and had the surreal sensation of compressed space, where Wimbledon, Colliers Wood, Tooting, Balham and Clapham all seemed much closer together, as there was none of the usual traffic to impede progress. Round the Elephant & Castle and a small accidental detour to Greenwich Maritime college, but still arrived a good 2.5 hours before the first race.



The club compound and changing rooms are crammed into a tight fenced area on the riverside, but the clubhouse is a curious 'oil-rigesque' affair on stilts, stuck out across a raised gangway over the tidal mudflats.

Apparently this was financed from the sale of some prime real estate further upstream – the site of the previous clubhouse.

Just as I had completed rigging, my good friend John Marriott, swung into the yard with his Solo. His boat had been at the chandlers the previous day, having a cracked centreboard casing repaired, so it had been touch-and-go as to whether John would be able to make the event. The organiser had put the Solo in the Fast Handicap fleet, and my Comet in the Slow. There was a separate race for the well-supported Bosun fleet too.



The barrier had not been closed long, so it was quite a way down the huge slipway to launch. I got out with plenty of time to explore the reach – downstream to take a look at the barrier, then back up nearly to the Emirates cablecar near the O2. The Slow Handicap course was set right next to the clubhouse and I soon realise that the average age of the rest of my fleet is about 16! about 6 Toppers 3 RS Fevas and me! The wind was light/ variable 1-3 and comprised five races back-to-back (too difficult to recover and launch, so no break!)

Embarrassingly, I only managed to win two of the races 'on the water' spending most of the time surrounded by Toppers, buzzing around me like pesky wasps. An interesting obstruction on the beat were two huge rusting Thames barges and the wind shifts meant that choosing which side was a key decision (as their bluff sides created a considerable wind shadow)

Overall, I was soundly beaten by three teenagers in Toppers, watched by their proud parents, but nonetheless a very memorable event. John fared much better in the fast fleet and came away with 2nd prize (but he is a very good sailor).



At the end, after the presentations it was getting dark so we decided to return via the M25 – rather than Central London, which was the right decision, as the world and his wife were all travelling back from their Sunday outings. Arrive back 13 hours after leaving, but a thoroughly worthwhile experience,

Steve Gregory C57



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association **2017 AGM**

NOMINATION FORM

FOR OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Notes: 1. Nominee must be a Full Member of the Class Association.

Proposer & Seconder must be Members of the Class
Association.

2. <u>Print</u> names <u>and sign</u> in spaces below. One nomination only per form. Blank forms may be copied.

Nomination for (delete as required):

CHAIRMAN SECRETARY TREASURER COMMITTEE

Nominee:	
Print name	
Proposer:	
Print name	Signature
Seconder:	
Print name	Signature

Drying your wet boots

It has been my practice over the years to offer advice to other Comet sailors such as my notorious "walking on water" piece so I intend to go down with all flags flying in that glorious naval tradition.

For many years my wife has complained bitterly about the smell of wetboots drying in the utility room or shower room. This was less of a problem when I sailed at Taplow and at Maidenhead as both had or have jetties and with careful launching and recovery I could keep my feet dry. I have moved house and am now a member of a "wet launch" club and every week I return home with soaking wet boots.

I have been looking for a solution to this problem and found that the shed can work in the summer but I sail all year round and it is cold in the winter. However, I have found the solution and it works brilliantly and is not expensive. In Scandinavia it snows a lot and is cold and people still want to go outside in proper shoes so they have found that to dry things you need a little warmth and some air movement to take away the water vapour. I got this boot dryer in October.

My wife is now very comfortable for me to dry my boots in most rooms in the house. It take about 3 hours and there is no smell!

This drier from Clas Ohlson which cost me £20 has been discontinued but others are available from other makers at about £50.

Brian Welham C801



2017 Portsmouth Number List

Those of us who regularly race in handicap fleets will probably have investigated the RYA Portsmouth Number List for 2017 but if you have not you will see that the Comet has got "slower" over the last year. Now this could be other classes getting faster or us Comet sailors going slower or in my case getting older!

In 2016 the PY for Comets went up to 1200 and this year it is increased further to 1204.

The actual PN is not as important as the relative number of the classes that we sail against. I don't know which they are at your club but at Hunts we have Lasers, Solos, British Moths. Devoti D Zeros, Supernovas, and the odd Lightning, Fireball and Topper.

Class	PN	Change
British Moth	1155	-3
Comet	1204	4
Devoti D Zero	1039	-4
Fireball	959	-5
Laser	1097	2
Laser4.7	1200	5
Laser Radial	1139	3
Lightning 368	1170	6
Solo	1143	3
Supernova	1075	0
Topper	1347	6

class captains!

This will make my fight with the British Moths and the D Zeros a little easier but the Lightnings and Toppers will be more difficult to hold off. The Solos are always a threat and the new number will not make it easier to beat them.

However, do remember that your club is perfectly in its right to set any PN number it wants for any class. Good luck in trying to get a higher number than published by the RYA accepted by the other

Ed (for the moment)

Northern Southern 13/05/17 Attenborough 06/05/17 Fishers Green 20/05/17 Winsford Flash 03/06/17 Cotswold 30/07/17 Cransley 25/06/17 Frensham Pond 14/10/17 Redesmere 16/07/17 Hawley Lake 21/10/17 Staunton Harold 12/08/17 Mudeford 10/09/17 Littleton

Western

07/10/17 Bristol and

Avon

APHELIONS 2017

22/04/17	Burghfield	08/04/17	Shearwater
07/05/17	Hunts	29/04/17	Sutton Bingham
10/06/17	Chipstead		Baltic Wharf
19/08/17	Crawley Mariners	02/09/17	Severn
	Up River	17/09/16	Merthyr Tydfil

Eastern

Events marked in **Bold** will be the area prize givings events

How to qualify for the Travellers' Trophies

This year there are currently 22 Open meetings in 4 Aphelion areas. There are 2 discards available in each Aphelion. Therefore, in order to qualify for a regional prize you need to enter a minimum of 4 events where there are 6 Opens, and 3 where there are 5. Your best results will automatically be counted towards your overall place.

The Orbital Trophy is our overall Travellers' competition. To qualify, you need to enter a minimum of 6 events which include events in at least 2 regions (Aphelions) and one of the national events (National or Association Championships).

Your best 6 results will be counted towards the trophy. If there is a tie, the tie break will be determined by your result at the National Championships.

If an event is cancelled, the results for those events will be determined by calculating the average results in that series.

Editorial

Hi, for the last time.

I have been doing this job for about eight years in some ways I am glad it is passing into good hands and in some ways I shall miss the thrill (fear) of meeting the deadline with interesting items. Firstly I must say thank you to all those members



who have diligent sent me reports of open meetings and more importantly features that they have composed themselves about nautical events or even comet name related subjects. I am very grateful for all the photographs that have been sent to me and I apologise for the many that I have never included.

Thank you for all those who took part in my 20 question series. It was good to understand a bit more about where these sailors had come from and what drove them on without too taxing questions.

In this edition you will first have noticed a very striking portrait on the front cover of Norah Jaggers who has been my most admired CCA member since I first came across her at her original club Pingewood near Reading, where she was a significant leading light. I went to my first away open meeting here where I encountered Robin Ballam for the first time. Having endured his "shouting" at me and the subsequent capsize I came back at him and proceeded to pass him to leeward much to his ire. That was one up to me but we came to love him and how to avoid his unusual tactics.

I included the photo of Norah on the front cover to acknowledge her continuous work for the Association for more that 25 years. Without her diligence the class would not be in the state it is today with 22 opens plus 2 national championships. In this issue, I must thank Chris Robinson for his continued presence at the Bloody Mary and for his piece on the event for our entertainment. Steve Gregory has gone out of his way to enter his Comet in the London Regatta and took his chance to sail on the Thames where it almost meets the sea. However, whenever I got something from Steve it has always been accompanied by some superb photos. He has not missed out this time. Thank you Steve.

Your new editor is likely to be Nigel Fern who will need all your support to ensure he maintains your standard. Without your input the editor will very soon run out of things to include. There is only so many "I went on a cruise for my holidays" stories that he can compose from his own experiences. One thing about sailing dinghies is that we often get the opportunity to try other classes. I am sure that most of our members would be interested in your experiences. I am sure that there will be pluses and minuses with these boats or you will have dropped sailing your Comet and moved on. Perhaps you have returned to the friendly Comet people after the aggression seen in some other classes. Tell us about it.

I will continue to sail my Comet at Hunts (St Ives) and come to as many opens as I can. I will then let Nigel chase the organisers for the reports and perhaps write something for you as a stringer for Perihelion.

Bye

Brian Welham C801

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