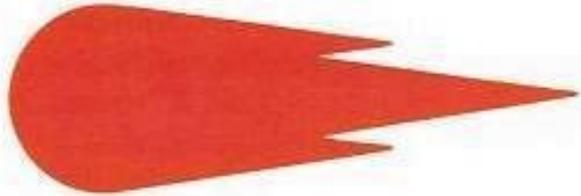


PERIHELION 128



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association



The calm before the storm!

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Perihelion 129

Please send your contributions for the next issue of Perihelion by

November 7th

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***Comet Class Association
Newsletter***

Summer 2019

NEWSLETTER NUMBER

Contents

		<i>Page</i>
Association Officers		3
Reports	Author	
Editorial	Nigel Fern	4
Chair	John Sturgeon	5
Secretary	Liz Hossell	7
Builder	Andy Simmons	9
 Articles		
Carsington Capers - yet another view from the rear!	Nigel Fern	10
Attenborough Comet Open	Malcolm Davidson	12
Hawley Lake Comet Open	John Sturgeon	14
Cransley Comet Open	Nigel Austin	16
National Championships	Vicky Hill / Godfrey Clark	18
A Personal comment on the Nationals	Nigel Austin	20
National Championships - yet another view from the rear!	Nigel Fern	22
Mudford Comet Open	Michael Ettershank	26
Transports of Delight	Norah Jagers	28

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Editorial

Life happens and life gets in the way of so many things I, and probably you, enjoy; suffice to say that I have not competed in one of SHSC's Wednesday evening races this season! Even whilst working I managed to be a regular attendee! This low turn out has also been quite noticeable for some of our Open meetings. Hopefully the host clubs will look kindly on us for next season when Steve contacts them regarding the 2020 season. If you have any comments on the number and or location of our Open meetings and their organisation please let us know.



I am indebted to Malcolm Davidson, John Sturgeon, Vicky Hill, Godfrey Clark, Nigel Austin and Michael Ettershank for their reports plus Norah Jagers for her on going Comet Tales.

Apologies for the lack of the 'Classifieds' page. If you are in the market for a Comet please see the website. To print Perihelion economically we need multiples of 4 pages - the draft edition was 34! By squeezing items and cutting the 'Classifieds' page, 32 pages were achieved.

In a change to the previous editions all photographs will be credited on the page to protect the copyright of the photographer, rather than list them in a table in the back of Perihelion, where it could be forgotten about and credit taken for someone else's efforts. Hopefully this extra text will not detract from the article.

Nigel Fern
Comet 845

launching trolley, tied onto a flat-bed farm trailer. I think that the record for towing the highest number of Comets at one time is still held by Helen Leivers. It was at the time that Severn SC would take their whole Comet fleet to Championships, setting up camp under their club flag and generally having a great time. Helen had a bright red powerful sports car and loaded 6 Comets onto a trailer designed for canoes. I hasten to say that she only took the hulls – the spars were transported by their owners.

Mr. Evans used to carry his Comet inside his VW van, and Numero Uno has just been moved in such a way from Wales to Kingston-upon-Thames. Josie Adams cracked the problem of having a camper-van and then needing to tow, rather than car-top. She and Keith bought a campervan with a door in the centre of the back. Her Comet, when turned onto one side, slid neatly in through the door, with the bow resting just above the hand-brake.

I wonder how long it will be before all electric cars will be powerful enough to tow or have a boat on the roof. Alan Browning used to tow with his Reliant Robin which always seemed such a light, delicate car and it looked the same shape as the boat!

Henry and I prefer to car-top, even though it takes longer to ensure that all the ties are done correctly than it would to pull the boat onto a road trailer. Neither of us likes towing or having to remember the differing speed limits. However you travel with your Comet, you're always welcome at events.

And, of course, you CAN arrive at some venues by water. Paul Hinde and Dave Harris did just that by sailing from Severn SC to Arden....

Norah Jagers

Comet stories – Transports of Delight.

Having bought Comet 426 (“Frayed Knot”) we realised that we needed an easy way of taking her to events. Our car had built-in rails on to which we fitted an extra long set of Paddy Hopkirk bars and lifted the boat up onto them. On the nearside of the bars we built a set of wooden “stocks” into which the spars fitted. The sails went inside the car and the folding trolley fitted across the boot once the wheels had been removed. All very neat and efficient.

Once we started to travel around the circuit we realised that this wasn’t the only way to transport a Comet. The majority of sailors preferred to trail their Comet. Usually it was just one Comet per trailer, but sometimes a double trailer appeared. The first one which I remember seeing was at Shearwater when the (very young) Govier brothers arrived to compete. Several people subsequently arrived at events towing two Comets on one trailer, with the top one upside-down. The filling between them varied from lumps of foam to old cushions to a mattress.

Andrew was clear from the outset that helms could carry their Comet on top of the car with ease. Obviously it needed more than one person to lift the boat up, until the Easi-Loader was designed, specifically for the Comet. Barrie and Margaret Hylton used to demonstrate that a Comet would fit on top of a Ford Fiesta. However, Will Taylor (?) took things to extremes when he put his boat on top of his old Mini. One sailor used to arrive with his Comet on top of his campervan. Usually boats are carried up-side down, but we have seen the occasional situation where the boat has been right-way up, looking very precarious.

As you will know, there are rules about tying loads down when transporting them on the roof of a vehicle and it’s important to make sure that boats are secured fore and aft. A young lad from Rudyard Lake was keen to compete at an Open meeting at Staunton Harold. His dad was driving and they were running late. As they came over the twisting causeway at Swarkestone, Dad had to brake hard on one of the bends. The car went left round the bend. The boat went straight on!

Chris Weston from Naseby drove to several events with his Comet, on the

Chairman’s Report

Chair’s mutterings

I know they say that as you get older the years go by more quickly and you never seem to have the time to do everything you want to do. Well that has been happening to me this year. Nevertheless, I have managed to go to a few Opens. Carsington was a venue I particularly wanted to visit and I made it. As a boy the area, a few miles up the road from where I lived, was just fields.



Then the dam was built and rebuilt after a landslip. Now it is a splendid lake, a major tourist attraction, and perfect for sailing. There are other opens I wanted to go to but family pressures will prevent me. I had been hoping to go to Tewkesbury but a grandson’s 4th birthday will prevent that and Arden too. I have done some sailing locally at my club Hawley Lake. Comets have been doing well here. The regatta was won by Carol Butcher in her Comet with me in second place. Not a bad result for Comets in handicap races against RS300, Solos, Super Novas, Lasers and other classes.

Once again we have had extreme weather this summer. Baltic Wharf was particularly hot. In Fleet, this past August Bank holiday, was far too warm to sail comfortably in very light winds.

This leads me on to the excellent National Championships at Fishers Green. The club members had made valiant efforts to clear an unexpected and certainly unwanted early blooming of weed at the lake. It was touch and go in the last few days, whether it would go ahead, but Fishers Green were certain there was enough lake clear to run the event and it went ahead. Twenty-one Comets arrived to be greeted with pouring rain and no wind, but after a while enough wind built up to run the two Friday races. Over the next two days the wind increased so that on Sunday it was quite strong. The weed, though challenging, was manageable so we had a great Championships. Notable for the evening’s entertainments were the Friday

Quiz with a brilliant quizmaster Clive Gladwin dressed in an orange suit. The Championship dinner after the AGM provided by Genevieve Braas another club member was a stand out affair. It was without doubt the best meal we have ever had. Andy Simmons came along with spares and other bits and pieces to provide ongoing maintenance. He will have been pleased to see his new white Xtra sail in such large numbers and doing so well. Bob Dodds was crowned Champion after a protest. Bob had interpreted the rules differently from the rest of us and was exonerated. (Note to myself - read the SIs carefully in future to know what marks are to be rounded and which are to be passed.)

Numbers entering events seem to be a little down on previous years perhaps due to the increasing cost of travel and overnight accommodation. We see the numbers down at Hawley too where less helms are entering races. But, on the bright side, there are far more juniors in the youth training squad. Chris Maine, a Comet and Trio sailor helps in the training. We hope some will start racing before they leave home to go to university. Please encourage any new Comet sailors at your Club to join in races and the association so they come to our events too.

I hope you have had a good summer and I look forward to meeting more members in the next two months.

John Sturgeon
C400

Ben then proceeded to sail away from the rest of the small fleet to decide the final race between themselves. In the end Chris took line honours while Ben was 2nd. Michael trailed some way behind in 3rd. After the racing the results revealed that Chris managed 2nd and Ben came in 3rd.

Once again Mudeford Sailing Club provided some excellent sailing, it seems to be almost guaranteed to get a good strong breeze and if there's any part of the harbour with the chaotic wind shifts that we normally see at events I haven't found it yet!

Michael Ettershank
Comet 84

Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Mudeford

Date: 12 August 2018 Aphelion: East West South

Helm	Boat No.	Sail	Club	R #1	R #2	R #3	Total	Disc.	Pts	Final Pos.
Bob Dodds	869	Comet	CMYC	1	1	8	10	8	2	1
Chris Robinson	867	Comet	BuSC	2	2	1	5	2	3	2
Ben Palmer	597	Comet	BWSC	3	4	2	9	4	5	3
Mike Ettershank	84	Comet	URSC	4	3	3	10	4	6	4
Annette Walter	170	Xtra	WGCSC	5	5	4	14	5	9	5
Henry Jagers	800	Xtra	BeSC	8	8	8	24	8	16	6
Phil Walters	911	Comet	WGCSC	9	8	8	25	9	16	7
RTD =	9									
DNS =	8									

Mudford Comet Open Report

6 Boats ventured to the Christchurch harbour for the Mudford Comet Open at the windy end of a windy Mudford Week. So windy in fact that there was even a consideration to cancel the day's racing the day before but as the forecast moderated the decision was made to press ahead. As usual the race officer laid a course that included plenty of screaming reaches, possibly making the best the windy conditions.

Race 1

In the first race the 4 larger helms of Bob, Ben, Chris and Michael all got good starts and quickly sailed away from Annette and Henry. Ben managed to capsized after the only gybe mark of the course giving the others the chance to get away. However a canny decision on the last beat saw Ben get back past Michael and sail into third place, while Bob took the win and Chris came in second. At some point Henry decided that he definitely prefers the lighter winds and headed back to the club house early.

This was followed by a cake based lunch and the discovery that Norah had forgotten her hat!

Race 2

In the second race the same 4 heavy weight sailors got a good start again but at some point Ben fell back to 4th to the extent that Annette fancied her chances of getting by. This race finished with Bob in 1st, Chris 2nd and Michael 3rd. Ben held off the light weights to come in 4th. Henry decided that it was still too windy with his black Xtra rig and retired early.

After 2 race wins Bob had won the event, so somewhat exhausted by his efforts decided to put his boat away and eat more cake rather than enjoy high speed conditions in the harbour. After a quick drink the rest of the fleet headed back out the committee boat.

Race 3

In the 3rd race only Chris and Ben got a good start as Michael was squeezed out at the committee boat end by almost everyone. Chris and

Secretary's Report

The National Championships at Fishers Green were very well organised with amazing meals. The sailing I will let somebody, who was on the water comment on. It was nice to see Jean Wilkins come along with son Guy and Grandson Joe who were sailing and on the Sunday to see Mark join in on the land and rescue boat. Congratulations to our new National Champion, Bob Dodds.



During the Nationals we also had our AGM on the Saturday evening.

Here are some notes from the AGM.

Comet No. 1. After being wintered at Hawley Lake free of charge it was sold to somebody who refurbished it and then sold it on to a Lady who is sailing it on the Thames. Keep your eyes out, you may see it near you.

Motions carried with no objections were:

Membership to include a Junior Membership at half Ordinary Membership fee from 2020. Proposed the Committee, Seconded Bob Dodds.

That the CCA accepts that the Standard Comet, Comet Xtra, White Xtra and Mino rigs to be one fleet and share the same start line. Proposed the Committee, Seconded Carol Butcher.

New members to the Committee are Eddie Pope and Steve Bellamy, Nigel Austin retiring at the end of the season so a Trophy Buyer needed. Mark Govier to retire next year. The rest of the Committee were elected en block.

The Builder reported that two new Comets were built this year which have been sold now. Comet repairs were quiet.

The trophies have all been collected together for the Prize Giving at

Staunton Harold in October. We seemed to have misplaced the Fate Trophy, so if anybody has it, could they return it to me or a Committee member ready for the end of year.

Also we haven't been able to locate the Comet Pop Up banner that we used a few years ago at the Dinghy Show. If anybody has it can they return it to Chris Robinson please.



It's that time of year to nominate participants for the Fate and Hossell Trophies. Here is a quick recap what they are presented for.

The Fate Trophy for **fortitude in the face of adversity.**

The Hossell Trophy for **a person or Club outside the Committee who has contributed most to the development and growth of the Comet Class.**

Any member can nominate, but could I have them emailed to me no later than 13th October, please.

Enjoy the rest of the season and hope to see you all at Staunton Harold for the finale.

Liz Hossell
secretary@cometsailing.org.uk

ready and I didn't get a finish, a rather strange one, I hasten to add, until later!

Race 8

The course was set as M, Y, X, F, 7 and Z (if memory serves) - this used virtually every w*** free mark available.

I was brain dead from the previous race and quickly fell towards the back of the fleet. Approaching Z for the 2nd time I could not, even, remember which side to pass on, so I fell even further back!

All in all, an extremely enjoyable event from the social side but equally woeful from my sailing point of view – just too many silly mistakes!!

Nigel Fern
Comet 845

p.s. Can someone please tell me how I managed 18.5 for race 7??

Rank	Sail	Club	HelmName	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	Total	Nett
1st	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	1	-10	1	3	-13	1	4.3RDGa	1	34.3	11.3
2nd	886	ChiSC	Guy Wilkins	-3	-7	2	1	1	3	3	2	22	12
3rd	875	CrSC	Nigel Austin	-6	1	4	-7	4	2	1	5	30	17
4th	597	BWSC	Ben Palmer	-10	4	5	2	2	-12	2	4	41	19
5th	377	OgSC	Eddy Pope	2	-5	3	5	3	-6	4	3	31	20
6th	323	WGSC	Annette Walter	-9	2	-8	4	7	5	5	6	46	29
7th	311	WFSC	Steve Bellamy	5	-13	12	-14	6	4	6	13	73	46
7th	806	ChiSC	Joe Wilkins	4	3	-11	10	10	9	10	-11	68	46
9th	84	EySC	Michael Ettershank	-12	9	9	-11	5	7	7	10	70	47
10th	800	BeSC	Henry Jagers	14	-15	7	6	-15	8	9	7	81	51
10th	867	BuSC	Chris Robinson	7	8	6	8	-14	-14	13	9	79	51
12th	532	HSC	John Coppenhall	-13	6	-15	12	9	11	8	8	82	54
13th	412	TSC	Scott Waterland	-15	-17	10	9	8	10	15	12	96	64
14th	849	BuSC	Tim Higgs	8	12	-16	13	11	-18	12	14	104	70
15th	400	HLSTC	John Sturgeon	16	11	13	17	-19	15	11	(DNF)	124	83
16th	57	FPSC	Steve Gregory	-19	16	14	-19	12	13	16	16	125	87
17th	830	BASC	Mick Parnell	11	14	17	18	17	17	(DNC)	(DNC)	138	94
18th	614	HLSTC	Carol Butcher	-20	(DNF)	20	16	16	16	14	17	141	99
19th	845	SHSC	Nigel Fern	18	-19	18	15	18	-19	18.5	15	140.5	102.5
20th	41	FGSC	Mark Smith	17	18	19	20	20	20	(DNC)	(DNC)	158	114
21st	383	ChiSC	Cliff Webb	-21	20	21	21	21	21	17	(DNF)	164	121

attempting to regain the ground lost I hit two marks that lost me any ground I had made up - derrrrr!

Race 4

The course was set as Zp, Fs, 7s, Yp with Z moved to east of Wand Y moved west of 4.

This race began with a start line fracas, lots of calls and boats milling about.

Yet again an excellent lunch was provided of various baguettes, sarnies or Paninis.

Race 5

Course Xp, Zp, Ms and Yp, X was east of 6, Z was west of 'Race island', M was 2/3 way towards Pylon island from 4 and Y south of F.

Race 6 – same course letters but different course! M was moved to east of W and Z was moved to east of race island.

The AGM quickly followed the end of racing. See the minutes elsewhere. The AGM was time limited as a Championship Dinner had been prepared. I echo Nigel A's comments on it.

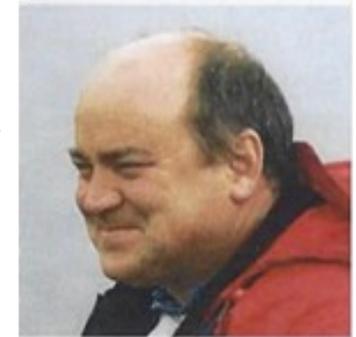
A cooked breakfast was a welcome start to the day but it must be noted that the same team of two were there in the galley having worked through Saturday! Two stalwart and extremely talented FGSC members!

Race 7

The course was set as M, Y, X and Z. Positioned as the previous day.

The Pin end again was crowded but instead of quickly tacking onto port as most did I continued further left before tacking to find that I was almost on course straight to M and hence for once I was 5th / 6th to the mark with clear water behind. I held this position until 30m from M on the 2nd lap when I hit my own personal hole in the wind allowing half a dozen by. From then on everything went from bad worse – a last place finish! I was so far back that the race team was already getting race 8

Builder's Report



Since I last wrote, things have picked up a bit. Unusually I've only just had the first repair of the year in, a well-used Exmouth Trio that had an argument with a channel buoy. Not an easy repair, over the waterline colour change and on top of previous repairs. Another Comet repair is being picked up on the way home from Chipstead and delivered back the following weekend on the way to a week's babysitting the granddaughters at Dover.

I managed to look in at the Nationals at Fishers Green. An "interesting" quiz compère wore a suit and tie far brighter than a Comet insignia on a new sail! I only saw Saturday's racing, but I could see the fleet was a real mix of ages and sizes plus a good mix of the new sail and original rigs.

That evening the club did us really proud with the most amazing meal. Well done Genevieve, son, husband and helpers. I'm not usually good with ladies' names but then I like old cars and films, so I remember that one!

As for sails, we are down to just one standard, but a new batch are due in October. A few more White Xtras have gone and I'm converting masts and handing over two more at Cotswold Open Meeting. I'm also looking in at Crawley and Chipstead Open Meetings.

The Dinghy Show has been booked but this time as a Class Association stand, so I won't be able to sell any spares etc. I'll bring the Comet which hopefully will be sold by then and set up the stand.

At the time of writing the summer hasn't been great but I'm about to have a holiday on the boats at Falmouth and the forecast for the August Bank holiday is looking good!

Andy

Carsington Capers—a personal view

The Carsington Comet Open was too close to home to miss and it enabled me to catch up with Comet colleagues from around the country. The Open was being shared with the Supernovas, who numbered roughly twice as many as the Comets. Having commented on my preference for the wide open space of SHSC in comparison to the Avon at Severn; Carsington makes SHSC look small. Hopefully this will become a regular on our circuit.

It was, for me, clearly an Xtra day (black that is), with strong and blustery winds creating sizeable waves and heavy rain squalls.

Once on the water I followed Chris Robinson (sailing the only Standard rig) down to the start area which was almost a run. I was more than a little concerned as to my safety in the shifty and gusty breeze, which was not helped when Chris wore around to get to the start rather than gybing. If Chris is not gybing what chance do I stand! I followed suit by wearing round! Very probably and with hindsight he was playing it safe. To cut a nervous story short I survived to the start - just!

As is usual practice at double fleet Opens the faster fleet i.e. the Supernovas went off first.

The RO had stated that each course would be an Olympic course - i.e. a Triangle / Sausage course. He also stated that there would be an offset mark to separate the 'triangulars' from the 'sausagers' at the windward mark, if the need arose, but I forgot when this mark should be used, so used it every time! Read the SIs carefully in future!

The racing now is a blur but everything went off very well with few incidents if any, helped in no little way by the wind easing a little. In fact it was a 'blast' and just for that afternoon I felt really in control and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially on the reach back to the start mark.

During the races I, as nearly always, was near the rear but not on my own. I had the pleasure of the company of Steve Bellamy, Henry Jaggers and

difficult to turn back to the line. My luck stayed until about 50yards from F when the **e* got me! Game over!

Race 2

Marks were rearranged and this time the course was Zp, Fs, 7s and Yp with Z being moved to be east of W and Y placed west of 4.

Whilst waiting for the course to be set Nigel Austin produced a large inflatable ball to provide light entertainment which was passed around the fleet with varying degrees of success!

Again the "Pin end" was popular and even more crowded than race 1. My performance proved no better than Race 1.

A large number of the fleet had to be towed back to the clubhouse.

After a welcome shower the usual "fat" was chewed during which Nigel A asked me to inspect his bed! Then he informed us all that he slept with his dog the night before!! Nuff said!

Whilst asking for the courses sailed I was informed that the wind throughout the afternoon had been consistently inconsistent by covering every point of the compass and some more than twice!!

There then followed an excellent quiz hosted by an Orange suited question master which team "Inflatables" won, followed by team "3 chairs" with team "Steets" in 3rd – all Comet sailors, the 3 home teams bringing up the rear.

In the morning the same excellent galley crew were on hand providing tea and coffee whilst preparing a cooked breakfast – Nigel A getting preferential treatment in having crispy bacon prepared for him!

Race 3

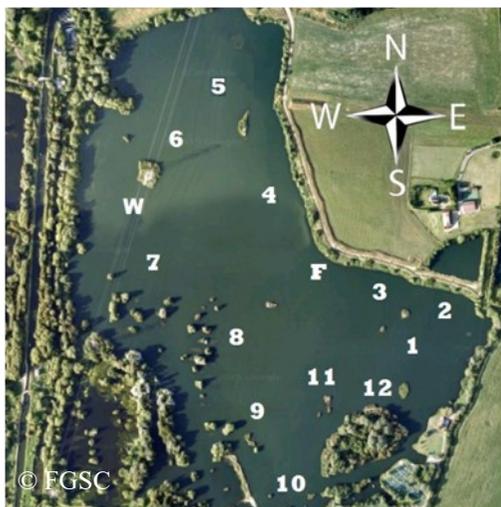
The course was set as Fp, Xs, Zs, 7p with X south of 6, Z north of 4.

Whilst attempting to keep clear of John Sturgeon I dropped the newly fitted mainsheet and to my horror saw the boom become a bow spit! In

2019 Comet National Championships at Fishers Green S.C. – another View from the Rear!

M1 and M25 successfully navigated, onto A10 when the heavens opened, some lightening and flash floods made things interesting. Fishers Green entrance found and the SATNAV gave way to good old MK1 eyeball navigation; excellent notes together with good signage brought me ‘bumpily’ to FGSC.

Signing on over and the rain had stopped so up went the tent.



A comprehensive briefing plus QnA was arranged – the “W” word was mentioned for the first and only free time as future uttering would mean a £1 fine for the RNLI. Race 1 was postponed due to no wind.

Eventually out onto the water, a welcome tow was provided through the w****, even so it was a real struggle to get into clearer water.

Race 1

This was held in the Northern end of the lake where the *e** had not taken hold as much as around the clubhouse.

The course was set as Fp, Xs, Zs and 7p. X and Z being moveable marks used to create a figure of 8 course. X being set a little way south of 6 and Z a similar distance north of 4.

The “Pin end” proved popular and with a huge dollop of luck I managed to squeeze through right on the pin. John Coppenhall was not so lucky as he was OCS and jammed in the fleet and found it



John Sturgeon at some point in all 3 races but could only manage to keep John behind for any length of time. Sometimes I was able to get by Henry on the beat, but he always managed to get back in front just before we got to the windward mark and then pull away down wind.

A special mention should be made of Jenny Chuen, sailing her first Open in somewhat challenging conditions and finishing every race. Hopefully we will see her at more Opens in the future.

Pity there was not a ‘Club’ trophy - SHSC would have walked it! Perhaps that’s an idea to increase traveller numbers?

Rank	Fleet	SailNo	Club	HelmName	R1	R2	R3	Total	Nett
1st	Xw	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	1	-2	1	4	2
2nd	Xw	126	SHSC	Alan Bennett	-2	1	2	5	3
3rd	Xw	864	SHSC	Peter Mountford	4	-5	3	12	7
4th	Std	867	BuSC	Chris Robinson	3	-4	4	11	7
5th	Xw	800	BeSC	Henry Jagers	-8	3	8	19	11
6th	Xb	780	CooSC	Richard Whitehouse	6	-8	5	19	11
7th	Xb	377	OSC	Eddie Pope	5	-6	6	17	11
8th	Xw	311	WFSC	Steve Bellamy	-7	7	7	21	14
9th	Xb	845	SHSC	Nigel Fern	-9	9	9	27	18
10th	Xb	400	HLSC	John Sturgeon	10	10	(DNC)	32	20
11th	Xb	839	NoSC	Jenny Chuen	-11	11	10	32	21

Nigel Fern
Comet 845

Attenborough Sailing Club Comet Open

Five visitors joined with seven of our own club boats fought his year's Comet Open at Attenborough SC.

The fleet got away to a clean start in light shifty conditions for the first race and soon Bob Dodds sailing 869 was pulling away from the fleet. The course was roughly a figure of eight around five marks with one leg having been planned as a beam reach along the whole lake. A significant shift however meant the first two boats, which had pulled well clear, had to put in short tacks to make the mark. Those behind had various luck with the wind, some making the mark whilst others had to put in a tack. This resulted in a large number of place changes. The wind direction changed several times and varied from about 8mph to nothing and the race was shortened to 4 laps. Bob Dodds finishing first followed by two more visitors, Chris Robinson (867) and Tim Higgs (849).

After lunch two races were held back to back and by the time race two started the wind had filled in a little and settled down in direction. A new course was set involving six marks but again a rough figure of eight. In race two Chris Robinson rounded the windward mark in the lead closely followed by Bob Dodds and Tim Higgs. At mark 3, Bob decided to take the windward side of our largest island group, which was a much longer way to the next mark and he lost a lot of ground and was in the middle of the pack at the next mark. Race two finished with Chris Robinson in the lead followed by Tim Higgs, who beat Bob Dodds by less than a boat length.

Race three was held in the best wind of the day at about 9mph and far fewer lulls. Again a clean getaway by the fleet and once again the visitors showed our local sailors how it should be done. Some small changes in position took place, but after four laps Chris Robinson took a commanding first place followed by Bob Dodds and as you've guessed Tim Higgs in third. With two wins from three, Chris took overall honours with Bob and Tim taking second and third respectively. With four Ladies taking part Jenny Chuen was presented with first Lady.

Malcolm Davidson

readers!. It was a great shame that Race 7 was marred by a dispute – my take on it was that we all knew the course was set wrong but we all sailed the course the race officer showed and envisaged on the first lap so why not continue to all sail that for the other laps? Still lessons learnt all round but it would have been more rewarding for the National Championship to have been won on a results on the water I think. Saying that I completely blew any chances in the last race by wandering off to the wrong buoy whilst dreaming of glory – I did tell the duty officer beforehand that putting 8 buoys in a lap would be a challenge as I have no memory!.

Full credit to the tireless safety boat crews who spent most of the days clearing the weed (apart from helping Michael Ettershank when he capsized in 0 wind!), loved the fact that none of us mentioned the weed as we were all too tight to give a £1 to the RNLI! (*Wrong - it slipped out of my mouth just before the prize giving and I paid up! - Ed*)

The undoubted highlights were the quiz on Friday and the dinner on Saturday. Hats off to both the quizmaster, a real hoot all dressed in a Tango orange suit (Merlin Rocket sailor) who kept everyone amused for 2.5hrs. However the Dinner was another level – with 3 sumptuous courses for 30 or so folk. It featured a wonderful sharing platter, a Coq au Vin (with a sublime sauce) and then 5 exquisite desserts on a plate – something Master Chef would have been proud of – well done Genevieve and team.

Overall, a great 3 days – thank you Fishers Green Sailing Club – you have set the bar extremely high!

Nigel Austin, Comet 875

A personal comment on the Nationals

Sometimes the script has to be re-written. The 3 days at Fishers Green were looking to be jinxed. The hottest spell in history and the bleak warnings that the weed may be the winner possibly meant that some folk would stay away.

However the 21 who did turn up were bowled over by the fantastic Fishers Green folk who provided marvellous entertainment, unbelievable food and interesting and challenging sailing with varying degrees of wind.

On the Friday the heat wave was still occurring with temperatures not quite at the 38 degrees of the day before at 28ish and there were those who perhaps rued the wetsuit and splash top approach in Force 0-1 winds! I certainly found my mid afternoon dip into the refreshing waters perked me up, although the giant inflatable ball I bought along for entertainment in the likely event of a long drift was perhaps a step too far (and was “confiscated” by the safety crew after Day 1).

The racing was, as always in Comet Class competitive but respectfully polite and full of banter and chatter, something sadly lacking in other fleets I have sailed with historically. Yes there were some interesting situations arising due to repeated lifting of the centreboard to clear weed – particularly poor Ben Palmer who was desperately trying to hold onto a lead from Guy Wilkins in Race 5 but drifted on to him after the needed lift just before the line! – but for most of the time it is your personal battle against the wind that comes first I find.



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This is the after Race 2 start chaos that ensued following on from the front page image! Ed.

The courses were excellent with a combination of figures of 8 and Z course, the latter allowing 2 beats and 2 runs, great for tactical wind shift

Comet Class Association Results Sheet								
Event:	Attenborough					North		
Date:	22/06/2019							
Helm	Boat No.	Sail	Club	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Points	Final Position
Chris Robinson	867	Std	BuSC	2	1	1	2	1
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	1	3	2	3	2
Tim Higgs	849	Std	BuSC	3	2	3	5	3
Andrew Beaumont	556	Xb	ASC	5	4	4	9	4
Jenny Chuen	839	Xb	NoSC	9	5	5	10	5
Jill Reid	81	Std	ASC	4	6	6	10	6
Malcolm Davidson	856	Std	ASC	6	7	8	13	7
Saul Tendler	807	Std	ASC	7	8	7	14	8
Reuben Tendler	441	Xb	ASC	8	10	9	17	9
Don Bishop	648	Std	ASC	10	9	10	19	10
Iona Reid	356	Std	ASC	11	11	12	22	11
Miranda Cook	627	Xb	OrSC	12	12	11	23	12

Hawley Lake Comet Open

The day of the Hawley Open dawned clear but overcast. I got to the lake early. There was not a lot of wind but, very unusually for July, the wind was in a favourable direction, North-Easterly. We could have a reasonably long beating first leg to the windward mark. Not only that but the route to the first mark meant that helms could, if they wished, go either side of an island which added variety and an element of chance to each race. The wind was not always consistent so it was a throw of a die which side to choose. (No hints, even Hawley helms are never sure which route to take.) We had our usual race officer, Andy Pearce, helped by Mike Ogle who stood-by in the rescue boat. We ran the same system as last year with two races before lunch and two after it. There were ten helms and they all completed every race.

Race 1

Race 1 began with light and initially steady winds. Ben Palmer got ahead and rounded the first mark in the lead. Chris Robinson rounded second. Third place at the mark was a battle between Annette Walters, Scott Waterland and Henry Jagers but Annette got through to take third. They held these positions at the end of lap 1. Given the wind conditions, there was only time for two laps. By now the wind had dropped. During the second lap those who stayed close to the bank lost out so there was much changing of positions. However at the finish Ben still held the lead, Chris was second with Annette third.

Race 2

Race 2 began with Henry over so he had to go back to the start. John Sturgeon was first to the first mark with Annette and Tim Higgs close behind. Later on the run leg down to the starting mark John chose to stay out in the lake whilst the rest of the fleet took the route behind the island. Often John's line would have been favourable but not today and he dropped back into sixth place. Annette was first at the end of this lap, Bob Dodds second with Chris Robinson third. During the next lap Bob got past Annette and moved into the lead and Ben moved into third. This is how they finished at the end of the third lap.

The fleet then adjourned to the club house for lunch.

On Friday evening the social program got under way with a sailing themed quiz, the highlight of which was the appearance of Quizmaster Clive Gladwin, in a dazzling orange suit, a literal eye opener to visitors and club members alike.

On Saturday, no further weed patches appeared and the gradually strengthening wind to 10 mph made racing much better and a full program of four races was completed.

The Comet Association held their AGM and the day was completed with an absolutely delicious 3 course meal, planned and produced by Club member Genevieve Braas, which will go down in the annals of Club history.



By Sunday morning the wind speed had further strengthened to 12 mph with possible gusts, which promised to make racing much livelier than at the beginning of the event with Mike Ettershank performing a spectacular capsized before the start.

Due to a dispute over interpretation of the course a hearing was held to resolve the case which decided the result of the 7th race and thus the championship. The outcome was to award redress to Bob Dodd from Crawley Mariners SC who finally finished .7 of a point ahead of runner up Guy Wilkins from Chipstead SC.

Our Lady champion is Annette Walter.



The team prize was won by Chipstead team of Guy Wilkins, Joe Wilkins and Cliff Webb.

Vicky Hill / Godfrey Clark



Comet Class Association National Championship at Fishers Green Sailing Club



Fishers Green Sailing Club hosted the Comet Class National Championships in the Lee Valley Park.

As the July weekend approached, plans were in place for three days of racing and a program of social events. However, in common with many inland sailing venues, the emergence of large patches of weed threatened the viability of holding a Championship. The weed appears quickly and unpredictably under certain conditions, and for three days beforehand the Club members were manually removing boatloads of weed from the course area. Because the lake was originally dug in two halves, the north half is much deeper and therefore relatively weed-free but the struggle remained of sailing there from the club shore.

On Friday morning everyone was met with a scene of pouring rain, random patches of weed, and not a breath of wind; the worst possible scenario for a flagship event for both the club and the Comets. However as the day progressed, conditions began to improve sufficiently for races 1 & 2 to be held during the afternoon, albeit in extremely light and shifty wind conditions.

Race 3

The third race was held in rather trickier wind but three laps were sailed. Ben once again got into the lead followed by Tim in second and Annette third. On the second lap Ben's lead was hauled back after he sailed into a dead spot which allowed the fleet to catch up. This was the first of several dead spots, which made life interesting. Annette, Ben and Tim had many skirmishes throughout the race but in the end Ben maintained his position to win. Annette got past Tim to come second and Tim was followed by Bob in fourth place.

By now the sun was shining very pleasantly but the wind was very fickle and light.

Race 4

At the start of the fourth and last race the breeze lifted so the fleet got away from the line before the wind dropped back. Bob and Henry managed to get away and stayed in that order to the finish. Other places were hotly contested in the light winds until the race officer ended the race after one and a half laps. Annette finished in third place with John behind in fourth.

All in all a pleasant day with Jacqui Sturgeon providing the lunch and afternoon teas. The final positions were Ben first, Bob second, and Annette third.

John Sturgeon
Comet 400

Event:	Hawley Lake									
Date:	July 14th		Apheleon:		East		South			
Helm	Boat	Sail	Club	R #1	R #2	R #3	R #4	Points	Final Position	
Ben Palmer	597	S	BWSC	1	3	1	5	5	1	
Bob Dodds	869	Wx	CMSC	5	1	4	1	6	2	
Annette Walter	323	S	WGSC	3	2	2	3	7	3	
Chris Robinson	867	S	BuSC	2	4	5	6	11	4	
Henry Jagers	800	Wx	BeSC	7	5	6	2	13	5	
John Sturgeon	400	Wx	HLSTC	6	7	7	4	17	6	
Michael Ettershank	84	S	URSC	4	10	8	7	19	7	
Tim Higgs	849	Wx	BuSC	9	8	3	9	20	8	
Scott Waterland	412	S	TeSC	8	6	9	8	22	9	
Anne Stephen	397	Wx	HLSC	10	9	10	10	29	10	

Cransley Comet Open

On a perfect sailing day – Force 2-3 with occasional 4 and bright skies, a fantastic turnout of 20 Comets assembled at the picturesque former reservoir, where Cransley SC is.

With 10 visitors and 10 members, it promised to be an interesting battle with a number of former National Champions present. The wind, as you would expect from a small enclosed water, was shifty and meant that local hustler in 875 (me) was able to be very close to Eddie Pope in R1 – after that not so good!

Consistency was difficult to maintain and there was a lot of close but friendly racing and swapping of places throughout the fleet, but the cream always rises to the top and the likes of Alan Bennett and Bob Dobbs put together 2 good results to achieve 2nd and 3rd overall behind Eddie.

Whilst there were many familiar faces it was good to welcome Elaine Laverty from Leamington Spa, who had only recently bought 132, (usually sails British Moths) and from the look on her face at the end loved the event. Also Will Etherton from Welwyn Garden City was sailing his first Open I think and whilst he was further down the fleet, also had a broad grin at the end – because the wind was such and the courses were just what Comets like, there was no reason to not enjoy the day wherever you came!

At Cransley we do like our Comets (singles or Duo's), they just seem to go well here – managing to skip between the pockets of wind when it gets patchy and able to pick out the wind shifts quickly.

Some of us put our lack of performance down in the afternoon to the great lunch that was put on, but at the time the temptation was too much. Others blamed some of the weed round the edges however everyone said it felt like a mini Association or National Championships without the pressure; just how we like it.

It was lined up as a training session for the Nationals at Fishers Green the following week and from the racing there I think everyone who came to

Cransley learned a lot and put it to good practice at that event.

Hope to see you all next year!!

Nigel Austin
Comet 875

Rank	Sail	SailNo	HelmName	Club	R1	R2	R3	Total	Nett
1st	Xw	377	Eddie Pope	OgSC	1	-3	1	5	2
2nd	Xw	126	Alan Bennett	SHSC	-4	1	3	8	4
3rd	Xw	869	Bob Dodds	CMYC	-7	2	2	11	4
4th	S	875	Nigel Austin	CrSC	2	-5	5	12	7
5th	S	867	Chris Robinson	BuSC	3	4	-6	13	7
6th	S	84	Michael Ettershank	URSC	5	-6	4	15	9
7th	Xw	800	Henry Jaggars	BeSC	6	-7	7	20	13
8th	S	323	Annette Walter	WGCSC	8	9	-10	27	17
9th	S	423	Peter Stein	CrSC	-11	10	8	29	18
10th	S	875 (y)	Charlie Guyett	CrSC	9	-11	9	29	18
11th	Xw	556	Andrew Beaumont	AtSC	-12	8	12	32	20
12th	S	724	Rhiain Bevin	CrSC	10	-12	11	33	21
13th	S	132	Elaine Laverty	LSSC	-14	13	13	40	26
14th	S	718	Sarah Austin	CrSC	13	14	(DNC)	48	27
15th	S	827	Julie Aves	CrSC	-15	15	14	44	29
16th	S	18	Peter Little	CrSC	-17	16	15	48	31
17th	S	417	Ian Pidd	CrSC	16	-17	16	49	32
18th	S	90	Will Etherton	WGCSC	-18	18	17	53	35
19th	S	715	Niamh Lockley	CrSC	20	19	(DNC)	60	39
20th	S	205	Sophie Guyett	CrSC	19	20	(DNC)	60	39