



PERIHELION 133

Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association



Perihelion 134

Please send your contributions for the next issue of
Perihelion by

1st Oct 2021

To Nigel Fern
3 Cheltenham Drive
Ashby de la Zouch
Leics
LE65 2YE

newseditor@cometsailing.org.uk



Comet Class Association

Summer 2021

NEWSLETTER NUMBER

Contents

		<i>Page</i>
Association Officers		3
Reports	Author	
Editorial	Nigel Fern	4
Chair	Peter Mountford	5
Secretary	Liz Hossell	7
Builder	Andy Simmons	12
Articles	Author(s)	
40th Anniversary Speech	Peter Mountford	14
Comet Training	Nigel Fern + Phil Roberts	18
Thoughts on the Kicker	Ben Palmer	32
Where are they now - C31	Jeff Smith	39
Comet trophies 2	Norah Jagers	48
Open Reports	Author(s)	
Carsington	Nigel Fern	25
Fishers Green	Godfrey Clarke	27
Frensham Pond	Steve Gregory	28
Baltic Wharf	Richard Price + Peter Mountford	34
Cransley	Nigel Austin	40
Association Championships	Joe Clearly + Martin Loud	43
Photograph Caption Competition		33

new for old

Ever broken your old mast or ripped a sail and been told by your insurance company that you're not covered for a new replacement?

At Noble we know how important it is to replace your breakages quickly with new gear so, with our standard new for old policy on all spars and sails damaged beyond repair,

you need never miss a weekend's sailing again.

call: 01636 707606

apply for cover or make your claim online now

www.noblemarine.co.uk



Authorised and regulated by
the Financial Services Authority

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 / Sails and Spares - a selection is always in stock.

Comet	£5400
Comet Xtra	£5500
Comet White Xtra	£5470
Standard Sail	£360
Standard Sail with Zipper	£390
Zippered Sail Conversion Kit	£30
Mylar Xtra Sail	£430
White Xtra Sail	£390
White Xtra Sail + Reefing kit etc	£465
Bottom Mast	£175 - £195 depending on Rig and Specification
Top Mast	£100 - £115 depending on Rig and Specification
Boom	£160 - £165 depending on Rig and Specification

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*

Devon EX 18 7 ND

Tel 01769 520545 Mobile 07860 847845

e-mail cometdinghies@btconnect.com

OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

President

KEITH LAMDIN

8 Second Avenue
Clacton-on-Sea
Essex
CO15 5AN
Tel: 01255 421862

Chairman

PETER MOUNTFORD

11 Cleave Close
Folly Gate
Okehampton,
EX20 3FG
Tel: 01837 847682
E-mail: chair@cometsailing.org.uk



Secretary

LIZ HOSSELL

3 Crump Way, Abbey Vale
Evesham, Worcs, WR11 3JG
Tel: 07801 656662
e-mail: secretary@cometsailing.org.uk



Events

STEVE GREGORY

33 Abbey Road
Medstead, Alton, GU34 5PB
Tel: 07977 215581
e-mail: events@cometsailing.org.uk



Treasurer

RHIAIN BEVAN

2 Hall Lane,
Kettering, Northants, NN15 7LJ
Tel: 07834 186247
e-mail: treasurer@cometsailing.org.uk

Membership

EDDIE POPE

Flat 6, Penhallow Court, Well Way,
Newquay, Cornwall TR7 3LR
Tel: 07903 350261
e-mail: edwinpope@btinternet.com



Results

BEN PALMER

18 Gloucester Road,
Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 4SD
Tel: 07751 814294
e-mail: results@cometsailing.org.uk



NewsEditor

NIGEL FERN

3 Cheltenham Drive
Ashby de la Zouch, Leics, LE65 2YE
Tel: 01530 469691
e-mail: newseditor@cometsailing.org.uk



Committee member

CHRIS ROBINSON

86 Scrivens Mead,
Thatcham, Berks, RG19 4FQ
Tel: 01635 865733
e-mail: robinsoncm69@gmail.com

Committee member

JOHN STURGEON

6, Adams Drive
Fleet, Hants, GU51 3DZ
Tel. 01252 623253

Trophies

NORAH JAGGERS
(Non Committee)

Editorial

Is normality really back? The reopening of changing rooms, showers, galleys and bars is around the corner if not already there.



It felt really strange meeting up with fellow Cometeers at Carsington1. That strange feeling had eased by the time Cransley came around and had just about disappeared at the Association Championships. Yes I have been out and about and my view has remained the same 'from the rear'. Sailing for me is so much more than the activity and is, in many ways, summed up by Nigel Austin's report on the Cransley Open.

Carsington1 was later replaced by Carsington2 as Carsington1 was called off at lunch due to no wind. Carsington2 took place but only 3 Comets were able to attend, mainly due to the amount of notice given.

It is so easy to pop down to your club and cruise or race on 'home' water but it takes just a little more effort to hook up the road base or fit the roof bars and travel to an Open or attend an 'away day' training event. By doing so you, hopefully, will find a group of like minded sailors who had the good sense to buy a Comet and who are ready and willing to help you improve your boat, if required, and or your sailing. Later in this edition you will find instances where the social side is mentioned as much as the sailing. We are not normal sailors, we are Comet sailors! - to paraphrase a well known ad campaign.

Nigel Fern
Comet 845

Along with his Builder's report Andy has forwarded the new Spares list which now resides on the Home page of the website.

there came a time when there were too many! One year Mudeford gave vouchers to be spent at the off-licence down the road, which worked well. Useful prizes have included burgees, wind-hawks, beach towels, caps, waterproof bags, thermos jugs and water bottles. Liz produced a picnic themed series of prizes one year which went down well.

For this year's championships I've tried to find something which can be on show, or can be used every day – plates! I wonder how many will find their way onto the table on a regular basis.

Norah Jagers

Comet Trophies: Trophies, prizes and mementoes: Part 2

Prizes always pose a challenge. Some people like to receive something which they can put on the mantelpiece as a daily reminder of their achievement. Others prefer to have something useful. So the first rule for the trophy buyer is to assume that they will not be able to satisfy everyone.

Among the prizes which are on show permanently at home are some paperweights, including those from Winsford Flash (2000) and Bexhill SC (2008). Henry also has a fleet of “dinghies”, some from Open meetings such as Sutton Bingham (1991), Severn (2014) and Attenborough (2014), and one from the Nationals at Sutton Bingham in 1992.

Glassware has always been popular. Chester Sailing and Canoeing Club used to give cut-glass vases and bowls as prizes, and these get used on a regular basis in the Jagers household. For the first year of the Aphelions I found some elegant decanters for the winners and the Association has given a variety of glassware over the years, including water and wine glasses as well as whisky tumblers. Some years ago we were bemoaning the fact that we didn't have any decent glasses for whisky or G&T. However, a trip to Henry's trophy cabinet produced at least two dozen cut-glass tumblers! Having a drink now reminds us of a raft of venues: Brightlingsea (1998), Redditch (particularly 1995/6), Hampton and Burghfield in 2008, Banbury (2009), Redesmere (1994) and Littleton (especially 2002).

We were at an Open meeting at Redditch when the RO put the prizes out on show. First prize was a lovely piece of cut-glass. Some time later, with no-one anywhere near, the glass fell off the table. Ian Coppenhall, who won the event, was presented with a dustpan full of glass shards.. Some clubs, such as Mudeford, have a tame potter who produces lovely plates, dishes and mugs. Pride of place (in the bathroom!) is a mug from the Inland Championship at Grafham Water in 1991 (1st place too!)

Bottles of wine are popular prizes at Open meetings and Henry used to keep the empties with the date and venue written on the label. Sadly,

Chairman's Report

Chair's mutterings

At last the long-awaited 2021 Comet Events Calendar has started, but unfortunately, it turned out to be a bit of a damp start. Those of us who made it to the season's first open meeting at Carsington were greeted with thick mist, drizzle and no wind. At one point, the clubhouse shore disappeared from sight in the mist. After half an hour the race was abandoned, we returned to the shore (paddled, towed, or by any means to obtain forward movement!) and after lunch, with no sign of an improvement in the weather, the whole event was called off.

Since that disappointing start, six open meetings have been held, including a re-organised one at Carsington. Not surprisingly attendance at some of them has been a bit less than in previous years, probably because of a reluctance to travel in the current circumstances. I managed to also get to the Baltic Wharf and Hawley Lake events, where there was plenty of wind. Not only did I enjoy the day's racing, but it was good to see familiar faces after nearly two years, renew friendships, and catch up on news. As my protracted house move from Cornwall to Devon has at long last been completed, I celebrated the fact that I now live closer to the rest of England by travelling to both events, there and back in the same day.

On the day before the Carsington open meeting, an open training day was held at Staunton Harold Sailing Club, which I had the pleasure of attending. This was a well-organised event attended by Comet sailors from three different clubs. It was held as an attempt to answer the question often posed by those who are not Association members and who do not travel to events:- “what is the benefit of membership?” The Association Committee has agreed to provide limited funding to clubs organising a training event on the condition it is opened to Comet sailors from outside the host club. Training events used to be held more often in



conjunction with a club's own Comet open meeting. I would encourage you all to consider holding such an open training event at your own club, and perhaps contact Nigel Fern (organiser) and Alan Bennett (coach) to discuss their experience of the SHSC training event.

The last minute delay to the complete lifting of the lockdown did not stop the Committee, at a Zoom meeting requested by Steve Bellamy, from agreeing to ask Winsford Flash Sailing Club to continue to hold the Association Championships with whatever restrictions they considered to be appropriate. Winsford Flash rose to the challenge to provide one of the most memorable of these Championships, and to stage a celebration of the Comet's 40th anniversary. The weather was hot, with some wind, and there was a high turnout of 30 entrants, including Andy Simmonds in a brand new boat with a ruby red hull to mark 40 years of building Comets. Although the lack of wind forced a cancellation of the second day's racing, the three races held on the first day produced some close racing throughout the fleet with three different winners - congratulations to Eddie Pope for winning the Championships, and our congratulations and thanks to Winsford Flash for their superb organisation.

Because the lockdown has forced a compression to the events' calendar, the open meetings will be coming "thick and fast". It is unfortunate that Burghfield have had to cancel their event, but it is understood that they are keen to stage their open meeting again next year. It is now only a few weeks until the National Championships at Bala Sailing Club. It is a very large stretch of water which should offer terrific sailing conditions, while at the same time giving us all a well-earned break in stunningly beautiful surroundings. I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you there.

Peter Mountford
Comet 864

Comet Class Association Championship 2021								
Winsford Flash Sailing Club								
Results are final as of 20:39 on July 18, 2021								
Overall								
Sailed: 3, Discards: 0, To count: 3, Entries: 30, Scoring system: Appendix A								
Rank	SailNo	HelmName	R1	R2	R3	Total	Nett	Award
1st	377	Eddie Pope	2	1	4	7	7	
2nd	597	Ben Palmer	5	3	1	9	9	
3rd	47	Pete Coop	3	6	2	11	11	Top WFSC member
4th	869	Bob Dodds	1	8	5	14	14	
5th	126	Alan Bennett	4	4	7	15	15	Ancient Mariner
6th	800	Henery Jagers	7	13	3	23	23	
7th	864	Peter Mountford	14	5	8	27	27	
8th	888	Jonathan Latham	11	2	15	28	28	Veteran
9th	877	Charlotte Coop	8	16	6	30	30	1st Lady
10th	311	Steve Bellamy	12	7	11	30	30	
11th	867	Chris Robinson	10	19	9	38	38	
12th	746	Lucas Sproul	13	12	13	38	38	1st Youth
13th	400	John Sturgeon	6	25	10	41	41	
14th	705	Martin Loud	9	24	14	47	47	
15th	610	George Coop	22	10	16	48	48	
16th	697	Janet Gaukroger	17	18	20	55	55	
17th	236	Peter Chambers	16	9	OCS	56	56	
18th	745	Fiona Niddrie	18	14	25	57	57	
19th	190	Lee Purslow	19	17	23	59	59	1st Newcomer
20th	844	Paul Hind	29	11	21	61	61	
21st	857	Helen Leivers	23	26	12	61	61	
22nd	235	Derek Armstrong	15	22	24	61	61	
23rd	382	Roger Harrison	25	21	17	63	63	Committee prize
24th	293	Catherine Whittaker	24	15	26	65	65	
25th	727	Nigel Miller	20	28	18	66	66	
26th	845	Nigel Fern	26	23	19	68	68	
27th	321	Dominic Oakshott	27	20	22	69	69	Committee prize
28th	643	Linda Shaw	21	29	28	78	78	
29th	896	Andy Simmons	28	27	DNC	86	86	
30th	98	Claudie Black	30	30	27	87	87	

Secretary's Report

WFSC's own Ros Stevenson had prepared a superb cake celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Comet Dinghy.

1st place went to Eddie Pope of Ogston SC, a well deserved win after a consistent performance over the three races on Saturday.

Second place was taken by Ben Palmer from Baltic Wharf SC with a valiant third going to Winsford's very own Pete Coop.

Thanks and congratulations to all involved in delivering this event under considerable difficulties with a special mention for Winsford Flash Sailing Club Comet Fleet Captain Martin Loud whose tireless efforts and indefatigable spirit carried the whole team through months of planning and re-planning.

Joe Cleary and Martin Loud

The sailing season is well under way at last! We have already had the Association Championships at Winsford Flash. What a hot weekend with little wind! So much so that Sunday had to be abandoned. It was so nice to see everybody after a long break of nearly two years.

Unfortunately Burghfield has been cancelled this year but we will welcome them back next year.

Our Annual General Meeting will be at Bala Sailing Club on Sunday 29 August. This meeting is open to all Members of the Association. If you are unable to attend please send your apologies to me at secretary@cometsailing.org.

The Agenda is on the next pages along with the accounts (you might like to print them out if attending the AGM) and you will note that there is a space on the General Committee, as John Sturgeon leaves after he has finished his year on the Committee, after his Chairmanship. If you would like to join our happy band of organisers please let a Committee member know by the AGM. See me for nomination forms.

Hope to see you all at Bala Sailing Club over the Bank Holiday weekend.

Liz Hossell



COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Sunday 29th August, 2021

At Bala Sailing Club

17.30hrs or 1 hour after the end of the last race, whichever is the later

AGENDA

Apologies

Minutes of the AGM 2020 are on the Comet website in the members area.

Reports by Officers

Chairman – Peter Mountford

Secretary – Liz Hossell

Membership Secretary – Eddie Pope

Events Co-ordinator – Steve Gregory

Results Co-ordinator – Ben Palmer

Newsletter and Website Co-ordinator – Nigel Fern

Treasurers Report and Adoption of Accounts (Accounts circulated) –
Rhian Bevan

Builder's Report

Consideration of Motions:

Election of Officers and Committee

One place for a Committee member, as John Sturgeon leaves the Committee as completed his year after his Chairmanship, is available. No nominations have been received at the time the Agenda was published.

After a short break the feast of Comet fun resumed in the third race, yet again almost unbearably hot, with 3 or 4 knots of wind at the start. First to the windward mark was Ben Palmer of Baltic SC with Henry Jaggars of Beer SC and WFSC's Charlotte Coop hot on their heels.

A leading pack of 6 boats developed with everyone else seemingly using the same piece of the Flash at the same time around the gybe mark at 2, the ensuing pandemonium saw a number of boats either doing turns or going back to round the mark, and a spectacular capsize as Linda Shaw pushing hard downwind was hit by a gust that nearly caught out half the fleet.

After that the fleet spread fairly evenly but with good close racing right the way through and the second beat up to Four saw every millimetre of the Flash being used as competitors tried every imaginable line.

Eventually building another storming lead Ben Palmer took the honours from Pete Coop in second and Henry Jaggars in third and the wind yet again changed down a gear as the fleet crossed the line.

A great days racing in glorious sunshine.

Sunday 18th July 2021

Competitors woke to another radiant day on Sunday with even more sweltering heat and no wind at all, not a breath of air to break the surface. Sadly racing was abandoned but it takes more than a cancelled race to dampen a Comet sailors spirits.

Before the prize giving ceremony there were excellent speeches from our Chairman Peter Mountford and long time former chairman Henry Jaggars and of course Andy Simmons celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the Comet dinghy. Andy had travelled up from Devon with urgent Comet supplies and Comet 896.

It was really an honour to have Andy at Winsford Flash Sailing Club and great to see him competing in Comet 896, 40 years after he created the boat we all love so much.

The course remained the same after lunch and after the wind dropped again at the start it rose steadily through the race, with Peter Mountford and Pete Chambers making great starts, again on the Committee boat end of the line.

After a tricky initial leg the windward mark rounding order was Eddie, Bob and a strong start from another local competitor Jonathan Latham. Two distinct groups formed with 8 boats battling for the lead and the rest of the fleet fighting hard with some great battles all through the midfield.

Local sailors Pete Coop, Pete Chambers and Steve Bellamy lead the chasing pack and had a good dice on the upwind leg on the second lap, while at the front of the race Eddie pulled out a big lead as the breeze rose to around 6 or 7 knots before dropping once again to near zero setting all helms a real challenge.

As Eddie Pope coasted over the line followed by Jonathan Latham, 7 boats battled it out for third place with honours going to Ben Palmer.



Steve Gregory has resigned as Events Co-ordinator and taken on Membership Secretary post.

Eddie Pope has resigned as Membership Secretary and taken on the post of Events Co-ordinator.

Appointment of Auditor/ Independent Advisor – Helen Leivers has resigned as Independent Advisor

Rhiain proposed the appointment of Mark Govier, seconded by Chris Robinson to conduct future annual audit of accounts and to extend thanks to Helen Leivers for fulfilling this role for several years.

Any Other Business

Liz Hossell

COMET CLASS ASSOCIATION

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2020

INCOME	NOTES	2020 £	2019 £
Membership		1,206.00	1,608.00
National & Association Championship			136.00
Insurance Commission			350.00
Website Donations for Adverts		24.00	30.00
Donations from Clubs		17.00	32.00
Sale of Comet No.1			375.00
Other Income			22.90
TOTAL		1,247.00	2,553.90
EXPENDITURE			
Prizes & Engraving		181.80	717.35
Perihelion Costs			1,242.58
Exhibition Costs			499.98
RYA Affiliation		130.00	125.00
Website Costs		246.35	245.99
TOTAL		558.15	2,830.90
Surplus / (Deficit)		688.85	(277.00)

Notes

1 Movement in Cash and Bank Balances

	£
Cash and Bank 1 Jan 2020	5,672.19
Cash and Bank 31 Dec 2020	<u>6,411.04</u>
Movement	738.85

Represented by:

Surplus for year	688.85
Receipts in Advance	<u>50.00</u>
	738.85



Comet Class Association Championships 2021

Winsford Flash Sailing Club

Saturday 17th July 2021

Competitors were met with radiant sunshine and glorious 28 degree temperatures at Winsford Flash for the 2021 Comet Class Association Championships. Race one start was delayed for lack of wind until the northerly filled in down the lake giving 3 or 4 knots by the time the hooter sounded in anger.



© C Bosomworth

With the wind coming straight down the lake the 30 competitors had a wide choice of lines and Bob Dodds of Crawley Mariners SC, Peter Mountford of Staunton Harold SC and John Sturgeon of Hawley Lake SC got the best of the scrap for the windward mark from the eastern side of the Flash after a massive lift from the committee boat end of the line.

As the fleet became strung out, Bob consolidated the lead with a great downwind leg sailing by the lee, adding distance to a fiercely competitive chasing pack consisting of ten boats. In the middle of the fleet there was close racing between Pete Chambers and Steve Bellamy. With the wind rising slightly to around 6 knots and light gusts working down the lake Bob took race one by some margin from Eddie Pope of Ogston in second and our own Pete Coop in third, a great third place having initially rounded the windward mark in 7th.

Cransley SC Comet Open								
Rank	Sail No	Club	HelmName	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total	Nett
1st	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	1	-2	1	4	2
2nd	377	OSC	Eddie Pope	-2	1	2	5	3
3rd	875	CrSC	Nigel Austin	3	3	-6	12	6
4th	323	WGCSC	Annette Walter	-6	6	3	15	9
5th	597	BWSC	Ben Palmer	-5	4	5	14	9
6th	126	SHSC	Alan Bennett	4	5	(DNC)	30	9
7th	433	ESC	Andy Dale	-7	7	4	18	11
8th	875b	CrSC	Tom Chapman	-9	8	7	24	15
9th	718	CrSC	Sarah Austin	8	-9	8	25	16
10th	724	CrSC	Rhiain Bevan	10	10	-11	31	20
11th	845	SHSC	Nigel Fern	11	-15	10	36	21
12th	827	CSC	Julie Aves	12	11	-14	37	23
13th	715	CrSC	Jane Townsend	-16	16	9	41	25
14th	43	CrSC	Gretta Davies	-14	13	12	39	25
15th	423	CrSC	Georgie Hinde	-13	12	13	38	25
16th	718b	EPSC	Gary Hogan	15	14	(DNC)	50	29
17th	218	CrSC	Sophie Guyett	-18	18	15	51	33
18th	18	CrSC	John Townsend	17	17	(DNC)	55	34
19th	388	CrSC	Tim Fawkes	(DNC)	20	16	57	36
20th	64	CrSC	Cave Ellson	19	19	(DNC)	59	38

Comet Class Association Balance Sheet

	31/12/2020	31/12/2019
Fixed Assets		
Comet No. 1	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Prize stock	£ 100.00	£ 100.00
Current Assets		
Current Account	6411.04	5,672.19
Cash in hand (Inc. Uncashed Cheques)	0	£0.00
Payments in Advance		
RVA Dinghy Show	£ 6,411.04	5,672.19
Receipts in Advance		
Membership	£ -	499.98
	£ 50.00	499.98
	£ -	200.00
	£ 6,461.04	6,072.17

Rhiain Bevan
Treasurer



Helen Levers
Auditor



Builder's Report

I'm writing this late July and Comet life seems almost back to normal.

I had the first week's holiday this year straight after Winsford but I'm afraid I'm keeping an eye on the long range forecast ready for the next week off!



Winsford was great but very hot for me and most others I imagine. It was great to meet everyone and put faces to names. Well done especially to Martin Loud, who along with the Coop's has really helped "re-invent" the Comet there, if you know what I mean.

I even entered and managed the first two races on the Saturday. What with my personal handicap of excess ballast I wasn't terribly comfortable in the really light winds but regretted not sailing in the last race that day when the breeze picked up. I used a new Comet from stock and if it isn't sold before Bala, I'll enter there. The previous stock Comet was delivered to Ogston, adding to the growing fleet.

A new Comet fleet has suddenly grown at Bowmoor in the Cotswolds. There's always been one or two there but after delivering the new one in November its' suddenly taken off. Secondhand boats have been bought and converted to White Xtras. What is interesting at Bowmoor is that it's all women. No, not a woman only club but its women who are converting to Comets. Without wishing to over egg it the Comet gain has been at the loss of a Byte, Solo and Supernova.

On a technical note, we have been trying to improve some instruction sheets, centre main conversions etc. but still have a lot to do. As part of that, we have "rediscovered" the RWO Ball Bearing blocks as a good value-for-money option.

A potential source of worry is that Automatic Ratchet Blocks with a becket have become extinct. The recent one we used was available with

- We had a happy duty officer and assistant in a wonderful new Duty Hut, ably helped by a relaxed Safety crew.
- The reservoir was as weed free as it could be, thanks to those who have tirelessly prepared it.
- The racing on the water was 99.9% of the time competitive but hugely friendly with lots of banter!

Everyone gained something from the day - and the Cransley spirit lives on!

Nearly forgot the results and the sailing conditions – well the latter was Force 0-2 mainly with very occasional tasters of stronger stuff and 2 folk slugged it out in close combat for the top honours (Bob Dobbs and Eddie Pope). Whilst the rest of us watched as they sailed into the sunset, we all had alternating happy and not so happy moments as the variability of the winds at Cransley kicked in big time. I think if there had been a 4th race Andy and Annette would have been up a little higher....

There were very few who didn't do all 3 races, even though the Euros Final was on in the evening. We even had Gary from Emberton SC turn up just for a look, and we persuaded him (although he didn't need much) to jump in a boat, and now we hear he is 99% likely to buy one (possibly new!).

Great day, top sailing and we hope that we see all (and a few more next year).

Nigel Austin

Comet 875 (now with converted rig "borrowed" from Sarah!)

Commodore, Cransley Sailing Club
Eagle Lane, Thorpe Malsor, NN14 1PR

Cransley SC Comet Open

On Sunday 11th July 2021 we hosted the Comet Open (as we have done for annually for many years) but this years was wonderful on so many levels.



- We had 20 entrants!!
- We had all the Comets we have at the club out on the water (12 of them).
- Those who have Comets and couldn't sail let others borrow them - thank you that was extremely kind.
- Those who sailed were all there to enjoy, savour and learn from the experience.
- Our visitors absolutely loved it (I think!), helped many of you rig and tweak your boats - this was the biggest turnout of boats at an Open for a little while on the national circuit I suspect!
- We had Andy Simmons, the boat builder of the Comets and Comet Duos here on Saturday and Sunday, enthused and helping folk (as well as having a few words!)
- We had wonderful food prepared by many of you and served by many of you.

or without a becket but its new replacement is becketless! Even the old Australian Riley ones on the older Comets aren't available as the company went under, down under.

Of course, "switch on" ratchet blocks can still be had but Comets have always liked the auto ones. The answer, and I tried it at Winsford, is to put a non-becket one on the end of the boom and use a new becket block at the bottom. The cheapest one I can find is the new Allen one at £63, so be careful. If you lose your whole mainsheet a complete replacement is over £100!

Last but not least, is it really 40 years since the Comet was born? After Peter and Henrys' speeches at Winsford there wasn't much more I could say. They had already said it all and it was much appreciated. I don't mind writing this nonsense but public speaking even with friends is a horror to me. I also blame the heat!

If you try to phone work and get no answer, please feel free to try the mobile and I can even pick up emails and maybe answer them as well.

I was even recently trying to sell a Comet over the phone whilst passing Daphne du Maurier Frenchman's Creek on the River Helford, without success I add, so there is a very lightly used Comet still available in Ruby Red (40th anniversary).

Regards
Andrew Simmons

Comet 40th Anniversary Celebration

Speech given by the Association Chairman

I would like to welcome you all to our celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Comet Dinghy and Comet sailing, and the 35th anniversary of the Comet Class Association.

I am very pleased to see you all here and I would also like to mention that there are several Comet sailors who have been members of the Class Association over many years but are unfortunately unable to be here this evening. One person in particular is Jean Wilkins who often attends championship events as a stalwart supporter of the Comet but has stayed at home on this occasion to celebrate her 90th birthday with her two sons, Guy and Mark, from Chipstead Sailing Club. I am sure you would like to join me in wishing her a happy birthday.

Before we cut this superb birthday cake prepared by Ros Stevenson, two other speakers are going to join me in saying a few words to help celebrate the occasion:- Henry Jaggars is going to reminisce about his long association with the Comet class which includes 11 years as chairman of the Association, and Andrew Simmons will talk about what the last 40 years has meant to him.

My own involvement with the Comet dinghy started more than 20 years ago when I saw one for the first time at a small watersports centre at Market Bosworth in Leicestershire. I had previously sailed a Solo at Staunton Harold Sailing Club, wanted to get back into sailing, and I realised that largely through Henry's efforts, there was a Comet fleet at my old club. I thought that the Comet looked like an ideal boat, so I bought Comet 780, rejoined Staunton Harold, and so to speak, took it from there.

The first open meeting I sailed at was at Aylesbury SC in 2001 (the Foot and Mouth year – its impact on sailing provided the nearest precedent we have had to the difficulties created by the current pandemic). This proved to be an interesting and memorable introduction to the Comet circuit. I

Comet 31

Comet 31 is still going strong, although looking a little worse for wear these days. The boat was given to Crawley Mariners in 2004 to be passed on to a family where the children would benefit, we were the lucky family. There was no sail or cover and the running rigging was basic and needed replacing.

My children both sailed it and raced at CMYC until they moved away. My daughter returned home after university for a couple of years and we then acquired Comet 50 as well, which is still at CMYC.

The original daggerboard and rudder were formed from two fibre glass mouldings. The daggerboard suffered from osmosis and became a very tight fit, eventually it broke during a capsize recovery.

I converted C31 to centre main, not because I thought it a particularly good thing, but I needed to improve my technique for teaching our Topper sailors. I did find it beneficial when sailing on the sea and in heavy winds, but in light winds it was more of a hindrance, however I have stuck with it.



It has had two new sails since I acquired it and is probably due another, although it seems to be going pretty well so far this season, which makes it difficult to justify the expense.

C31 has performed reasonably in a number of the Comet National and Association championships and races regularly at CMYC.

A hairy moment at the end of 2019, it ended well. (Photo by Alison Larkin)

Jeff Smith C31

Hawley Lake Comet Open

As yet, I have not received a report on the Hawley Lake Comet Open but if one is forthcoming I will publish it in P134.

Hawley Lake Comet Open									
Rank	SailNo	Club	HelmName	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Total	Nett
1st	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	1	1	1	(DNC)	13	3
2nd	864	SHSC	Peter Mountford	-4	2	3	1	10	6
3rd	597	BWSC	Ben Palmer	-3	3	2	3	11	8
4th	867	BuSC	Chris Robinson	-5	5	4	2	16	11
5th	323	WGCSC	Annette Walter	2	4	-6	5	17	11
6th	433	ESC	Andy Dale	6	(RET)	7	4	27	17
7th	400	HLSTC	John Sturgeon	7	6	5	(DNF)	28	18
8th	847	BuSC	Tim Higgs	-9	7	8	6	30	21
9th	614	HLSTC	Carol Butcher	8	8	9	(DNC)	35	25

remember arriving at the club, rigging the boat in a layby, wheeling it on its launching trolley across a busy road, pulling it up the side of the dam, over the top, and launching down the other side into the water. I was then towed across by a motor boat to the clubhouse while clutching my kitbag.

However, I did come away from that event struck by how friendly and welcoming everyone was, but without losing a feeling of competitiveness on the water. Since then, I have travelled up and down the country to Comet events, and have never failed to experience the same impressions from the Comet fleet and from the host clubs. To my mind, this is one of the strengths of the class, and perhaps makes it stand out from other fleets.

I felt very honoured to be elected last year as the 8th chairman of the Comet Class Association, and at the same time, somewhat surprised since I could think of only two claims to fame, or perhaps that should be notoriety:- The first one is about the type of personal calamity we have probably all experienced in one form or another around trying to get to an open meeting. However, I am not going to talk about changing a trailer wheel on the hard shoulder of a motorway, something I am sure many here today have experienced – my particular one is arriving for the open meeting a few years back at this actual club (Winsford Flash), rigging my boat, and then realising that I had left the daggerboard and rudder at home. The club members kindly rallied round and tried to find me replacements, but to no avail, and it was only then that I realised that later versions of the Comet (by this time I had bought Comet 864) had a narrower daggerboard slot. Luckily, it all worked out OK as home was close enough for me to fetch my foils in time for the second race. My second claim to Comet notoriety – I think you have all finished eating – is that I am perhaps the only person to admit publicly to having been seasick in a Comet at an open meeting. Andy Simmons may suggest I have a third claim to notoriety in that I may hold the record for the highest number of broken luff zips.

There are many reasons why the class has continued to enjoy success over the last 40 years. I would like to mention a couple of them here:- The first I think is something for which we should all be grateful – and that is the continual unswerving support and involvement of the boat's designer

and builder, Andy Simmons, and for his desire to try and keep the boat up-to-date without losing its appeal as a one-design. As an example of this, I would cite the introduction in the last couple of years of the White Xtra sail, and even more recently, its reefing version, which I feel have breathed new life into the class, and about which more than one person has said to me, have given the boat a more modern appearance.

The second reason, and here I am going to quote from a Comet sailor always found at the front of the fleet, is that the association has always enjoyed the support of a very strong Committee, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognise the contributions made by all past Committee members over the last 40 years. Of those members, I would like to make special mention of Norah Jagers for her support sustained over more than 20 years as the Secretary, and who continues to provide discrete support from the sidelines.

Evidence of this continuing success is that the Association has always managed:-

- to stage over 20 open meetings and two championships each year;
- to participate in the annual RYA Dinghy Show including this year's Virtual Show;
- to produce an Association magazine (Perihelion) at regular intervals throughout the year, and now as an on-line publication.

I am in no doubt that recovering from the impact of the pandemic, maintaining this programme of open events, and generally getting Comet sailing back on its feet remain the biggest challenges that we face. I am most grateful indeed for the hard work put in, and the support I receive, from the current members of the Committee to try and achieve these aims. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them publicly, and in particular, to thank them for their willingness to participate in Zoom meetings, sometimes at quite short notice.

However, there is one effect the pandemic has had on the Association I would like to mention, and that has been on the level of membership renewal. A couple of years back the membership stood at over 90 members. At the start of this year, it had fallen back to 46 members. Thankfully, it has crept back up to around the mid -70's. It is obvious

paddle board (lots of them!) lessons, rowing skiffs, a dinghy sailing school, canal barges, sightseeing cruisers, but not the Matthew! A newcomer on view this year was the Jubilee Sailing Trust's 3-masted barque, *STS Lord Nelson*, moored at the eastern end of the dock and now up for sale. To me, all these sights and sounds add to the overall enjoyment of the day, no matter how well the racing is going. In previous years, I have known members of the public stop to watch the racing and then come up to us while de-rigging on the dockside and show their interest by asking questions such as about how the racing is organised and about the Comet dinghy.

The club are to be congratulated on not allowing the local restrictions currently in place to stop them putting on such an excellently organised event this year. This is an open meeting not to be missed, so if you have never been, think about coming next year when the club are considering changing the event to run on a Saturday.

Peter Mountford
Comet 864

Comet Open

Baltic Wharf SC

Results are final as of 20:34 on June 27, 2021

Overall

Sailed: 3, Discards: 1, To count: 2, Entries: 9, Scoring system: Appendix A

Rank	SailNo	Club	HelmName	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total	Nett
1st	377	OgSC	Eddie Pope	1.0	(3.0)	3.0	7.0	4.0
2nd	597	BWSC	Ben Palmer	3.0	1.0	(4.0)	8.0	4.0
3rd	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	(2.0)	2.0	2.0	6.0	4.0
4th	864	SHSC	Peter Mountford	(5.0)	4.0	1.0	10.0	5.0
5th	800	BeSC	Henry Jagers	4.0	(5.0)	5.0	14.0	9.0
6th	580	BWSC	Nigel Osbourn	6.0	6.0	(7.0)	19.0	12.0
7th	830	BASC	Mick Parnell	(7.0)	7.0	6.0	20.0	13.0
8th	294	BWSC	Mark Pilgrim	(11.0 DNC)	11.0 DNC	8.0	30.0	19.0
9th	105	BWSC	Mark Hicks	(11.0 DNC)	8.0	11.0 DNC	30.0	19.0

Sailwave Scoring Software 2.28.1
www.sailwave.com

beat-run-beat to the finish line. As ever, with this venue, the first race provided an enjoyable experience unlikely to be repeated anywhere else on the Open circuit.

The two afternoon races were sailed back-to-back over several laps on a much shorter course at the western end of the dock where the wind was more steady (well, relatively speaking as compared to the first race!), consisting of a beat, a short reach, followed by a downwind leg to a gate consisting of two buoys spaced about 50 yard apart and set about equidistant from the start/finish line, then a beat back up to the line. I have never encountered this type of leeward gate at a Comet event, and personally, I thought it was an excellent feature which worked well. It helped to reduce the possibility of several boats arriving all together at a single leeward mark, with all of the furore which can develop over calls for water at the mark, collisions etc. It seemed to me that any advantage offered by one of the leeward marks with regard to wind direction and strength over the other mark changed from lap-to-lap! I would love to see more clubs use this type of leeward gate at Comet events.

For someone who had not raced since the Open meeting at Staunton Harold in October 2019 because of the pandemic restrictions and because of moving house, this was just the right conditions and venue to realise how rusty I was, and to try and get back into the swing of things! I was reminded throughout the day how important it was at this venue to make the most of wind shifts when sailing upwind and downwind and keeping an eye out on the surface for where there was more wind. My difficulty was in deciding whether or not to tack on the shifts, in other words, trying to decide if a header would be sustained, or whether, as seemed to happen quite often, it would be followed by a persistent lift. I also realised after a while that beating right up to the side of the dock sometimes found a helpful lift, but could also put one into a most unhelpful wind shadow. The results show that I must have absorbed some lessons as the day went on and a certain person on the shore told me that my boat handling had got smoother during the last race.

The entire harbour and its surroundings are open to the public and hence there are other users of the slipway and landing stage. This year, as always, the harbour was busy with other waterborne activities – stand-up

that maintaining a healthy level of membership is crucial to the success and even survival of the Association.

This is the point at which I should mention the recent staging of a very successful boat handling and race training session organised by Nigel Fern at Staunton Harold for Comet sailors from nearby clubs, with coaching provided by Paul Williamson and Alan Bennett. It was held as an attempt to provide an answer to the question that we often hear from non-members of:- what is the benefit to them in joining the Association?

Training events used to be held more often, usually in conjunction with an open meeting, and I would encourage all of you to think how you could run a similar open training event at your own club, as I would also encourage you to think what else the Association can do for its membership.

So, on that perhaps thoughtful note, I will wish the Comet Class and its Association members another 40 years of success, good friendship, and close but enjoyable racing.

Peter Mountford
CCA Chairman

Comet Training at SHSC

For some time I had been mulling over the idea of having a dedicated set of Comet training sessions, not just for SHSC Cometeers but for those in the locality. I mentioned this at one of our recent 'Zoom' Association Committee meetings and got the go ahead. Similarly the committee at SHSC were keen.

In order to choose whom to invite I decided on any Cometeer from clubs that were around 30 miles from SHSC, 12 in all including SHSC. I chose 30 miles as a reasonable and tempting distance for those who do not usually travel.

Alan Bennett (Comet126) and Paul Williamson (SHSC Vice Commodore and one of our top Laser sailors) volunteered as trainers.

Emails were sent out; some clubs only have an 'info@.....' email address which made life a little interesting but all in all I had positive responses to the initial 'please pass on / invitation' email.

As the day got closer it became evident that only 3 of the 12 clubs invited were going to attend, a little disappointing but each to their own, – Nottingham Sailing Club, Swarkestone Sailing Club and SHSC. Nottingham sailors were especially keen to attend to experience wide open water and the variety of sailing it brings as they sail on the River Trent.

Four of the six Nottingham's boats arrived via a double stacker and a very novel cradle provided by Andy Simmons, that allowed 2 Comets to be trailed deck to deck! Several of the attendees were soon casting envious looks at the cradle, Andy – yet another little earner!!

The day started with an in depth briefing by Alan and Paul, firstly getting Covid safety tidied away and then moving onto boat set up. The practical session moved on to tacking and gybing but in hindsight a demo of how to get into the Comet from shallow water should have come first. NSC have the use of pontoons to launch from into the Trent so were soon caught out by a 'wet' launch, some getting into quite deep water and then

However, it also meant I got a good view of the River Avon as I drove alongside it. This is a stretch of the river which Victorian engineers had diverted to allow the dock to be constructed along the old bed of the river. This was followed by an easy drive up Cumberland Road to the harbour master's office. I swung past the big green gates into the car park to be greeted by the rest of what Norah subsequently described as the "West Country contingent" - Henry and Norah Jagggers and Eddie Pope, by the lovely sight I have already described, and by.....plenty of wind!!! The joy at seeing the latter is explained by the fact that this was to be my second attempt at sailing at a Comet Open meeting this season, the first at Carsington (entailing nearly a 500 mile round trip!) having been called off on the day because of a complete absence of wind.

Another difference this year was that because the current restrictions meant the club's changing room and facilities were closed, we had to use the public facilities at the far side of the Underfall Yard. However, this also meant walking past several information boards relating to the Victorian dockside installations – the Hydraulic Power House, the Patent Slip, etc which turned a necessary journey into an informative occasion!

Following the usual tradition, the first leg of the first race was a beat right up to the eastern end of the harbour, a distance of about 1 mile! Entertainment on this upwind leg was provided by trying to dodge the other water traffic and a rowing coach warning us by megaphone that his trainee was a novice with little control over direction of travel! For the first two-thirds of the leg, one's skill was tested by the wind shifts created by the dockside structures and local topography, but at about this point, one entered a very short region which we learnt later from the local club members was known as the "Doldrums" – on both sides of the harbour were two large multi-storey buildings opposite each other creating sharp variations in wind direction and strength (horizontally and vertically!). Judging by the appearance of the wind blowing in opposite directions across the harbour, both buildings seemed to act as wind reflectors! Although I was being closely followed by a canal barge over the last stage of this leg, I was fortunate as the skipper had the patience to wait until I had rounded the windward mark before passing. I then had the tricky prospect of getting through the short length of the "Doldrums" on the long return downwind leg. The race finished with a very much shorter

Baltic Wharf Sailing Club proudly hosted, The Bristol Comet Open 2021.

We saw good conditions for the Comet Open with North Easterlies of 12 to 16 mph.

In the morning we did the Heads of the Harbour race with the usual doldrums to the east of the SS Great Britain, which spread the fleet out. Two back-to-back races in the afternoon saw close racing. For most of the afternoon the wind was coming straight down the course. However, on some laps this wasn't the case, a downwind gate produced an interesting tactical race. Some competitors took advantage of the bias and gained valuable time on those laps.

We were pleased to welcome Comet members from a total of 6 clubs.

Rich Price
Commodore
Baltic Wharf Sailing Club

Baltic Wharf Open Meeting 27th June 2021

A great event and a great venue!

Baltic Wharf Sailing Club in the Bristol Floating Dock is a venue quite different to others on the Comet circuit. The backdrop of the different coloured houses rising above the far side of the dock, the Victorian industrial buildings associated with the various marine dockside activities, the astonishing range of old and modern watercraft, the distant view of part of the suspension bridge all add to the stunning vista which meets one's eye on arrival and always make me take a sharp intake of breath on first sight.

This year, helpful warning on the Association website provided by the host club of a road closure on the last part of the western route to the dock meant I took a different and slightly longer final route than usual.

finding it difficult to get aboard!

A little follow my leader followed to get the attendees moving. Advice was given throughout by Alan aboard his Comet and Paul in a RIB. I followed on in a separate RIB as overall safety.

A drinks / comfort break was taken but the training did not stop as a thorough debrief plus Q and A soon developed.



©Ann Nugent SHSC

Back out on the water, Alan and Paul moved into race start procedures, something very new to the NSC sailors who seemed to have their own method on the Trent but they soon got the hang of it. A couple of 'there and back' courses were used to keep the 'starts' in prime focus.

As we were about to finish for lunch Peter Mountford, our chairman and SHSC Country member, arrived to help out and present NSC with their Comet pennant before moving onto Carsington the following day.

Lunch was then taken, boosted by the supply of fresh cream cakes supplied by a NSC sailor.

Officially the day ended there but all took up the offer to join in the club racing after lunch. Alan Bennett stepped in as OOD and gave the trainees a separate start after the two usual SHSC starts – Laser then Handicap.

Based on the comments given at the time and since, everyone learnt a lot and most importantly enjoyed the day. Such training days are definitely a

way forward. NSC are looking at organising one at some time once their Calendar is settled.

It is possible to 'just about' cover the whole of 'Comet England' using 7 such 30 mile radius circles. I hope other Comet clubs will look to organise similar events. Remember, the day we die is the day we stop learning!

Nigel Fern

I am indebted to Phil Roberts of NSC for his take on the day.

Comet Training Day – Staunton Harold SC

A sunny Saturday 5th June saw six NSC members and their Comet dinghies at Staunton Harold Sailing Club, in Derbyshire for a 'Comet Training Day'. Attending were Comet sailors Rose, Jan, Hazel, Ellie, Nick & Phil. The preparations for this had taken some time as the number of Comet owning members with tow-bars and towing trailers was limited. Thanks to the generosity of the Comet designer, Andy Simmons, who lent jigs that could be used to mount two boats (one inverted) on a trailer (using a towing trailer lent by Sue) and the availability of a double stacking towing trailer at the Club (thanks Nigel), the delivery to Staunton Harold became possible. The double stacking trailer, required a bit of swapping around of launching trailers, and a fair amount of careful tying down thanks to a lot of effort by Nick, who then delivered this to Staunton Harold on the evening of the 4th. Ellie had her Comet on a trailer collected from the Club Friday evening and delivered to Staunton as well.

The morning of the 6th saw Nick, Phil & Rose at the Club early to hitch up another trailer and Comet (Rose's), then drive to Staunton Harold with Rose & Phil on board, arriving around 8:30 to unload and rig their Comets. Meanwhile Jan had arrived with the two Comets on one trailer (hers and Hazels) with Hazel and Ellie arriving separately around the same time.

Photo Caption Competition



Steve Boud, SHSC Comet Captain, has had his season curtailed by 'mother nature'.

The nest is believed to be that of a Wagtail.

The 'best' caption as decided by Peter our Chairman will be awarded a prize, as yet to be chosen from Norah's vast store.

Entries via email to newseditor@cometsailing.org.uk by the end of August please.

Ben Palmer - on the kicking strap.

Steve seemed to be struggling upwind in light air at the Frensham Open during the morning race. It looked like he was not using much kicking strap if any and we discussed it over lunch. This is not what I have found to be fast. If you ever get and lay out a sail flat you will see it has a curve built into the mast sleeve. This is the curve I try to recreate upwind in light wind. I also find that without the kicking strap on the mainsail will move towards the middle of the boat. This creates the wrong angular relationship between the sail angle and the centreboard in the water. Having a tight horse helps this as well and keeps the boom to the edge of the boat.

What Steve did not see is I have managed to mark my kicking strap to make it easier to set. My works with spaced out whipping twine (about 25mm apart) on the single line and I align this with the triple block on the other side of the system. Below are what I have been using but I can end up between two settings.

Wind	Downwind	Upwind
Light	Top green	Second green down
Medium	Top white	Second white down
Strong	Top white (No more)	Second white down/ third green down



There then followed a frantic period of reassembling and rigging the boats, while admiring the sunny scene across Staunton Harold reservoir, noting that there was little or no wind, and wondering how we were going to launch (no nice landing stage obvious). The changing rooms and toilets were open (under Covid restrictions) so those who needed to could use the facilities. We, plus the attendees from other clubs (we were about 10 altogether), were all called together at around 9:40 for an opening briefing of safety and Covid rules etc. with introductions to the host 'instructors' and SHSC officials Alan Bennett (Comet 126), Paul Williamson and Nigel Fern.



The first session of the training day consisted of advice on sailing, in particular 'roll tacking' and 'roll gybing' given by Paul. Then, taking Nick's Comet as an example, Alan discussed the rigging on the Comet and how it can be improved for racing. Particular points emphasised were the need to have the sail tight, but still leaving a small amount of 'bow' excepting in extreme conditions, like very low wind and very strong wind. The need to keep the boom horse line on the stern tight, to have the clew end of the sail as tight to the boom as possible, and depowering using the cunningham were emphasised. The useful scheme of putting markers on the kicker and outhaul so that appropriate settings can be restored easily was also pointed out. There followed a detailed description of roll tacking and gybing given by Paul and the way this was to be practised on the water.

Following the onshore instruction and briefing, a session of sailing trying

to put some of the roll tacking and gybing information into practice. Firstly, we had to tackle the unfamiliar technique, for many of us, of launching into a lake with a shallow sloping shore. This involved wading out up to at least knee level, pushing the boat off the trolley, as soon as depth allowed, then somehow getting the trolley back to shore without losing the boat (or getting someone else to pull the trolley back). Once the boat was floating free the centre-board could be inserted (but not lowered) followed by clambering into the boat. The rudder and centre board could only be lowered fully once the boat had floated into deep enough water. Once all this had been sorted out sailing out into the lake could be done. I have no idea how all the processes can be achieved if it is windy!



Images ©Ann Nugent SHSC

Working from one of the safety boats (a rib), with Alan in his Comet leading the way, Paul gave commands via shouting and a whistle on what and when we should carry out manoeuvres. So a whistle to then attempt a roll tack or a roll gybe, with the whistle commands sometimes happening so fast that the boat had scarcely stopped moving from the previous manoeuvre, when we had to go the other way. It's fair to say some of us were better than others at actually rolling, though in the light winds prevailing it was difficult in any case. At the end of this session we broke for drinks around 11:30. This meant, of course, going through the procedure of arriving at a shallow shore which meant pulling up the centre board, trying to raise the rudder (it was certainly trying for me), then hopping out of the boat, finding the trolley and hauling it on. At least one of our number managed to jump out into a deep hole, and ended up to the armpits in water! Landing was by no means an easy exercise. We were allowed to leave the boats on the trolleys just on the shore fortunately (there is quite a long slope up from the water at SHSC). Hot

Comet Open Frensham Pond SC

Results are final as of 19:46 on June 14, 2021

Overall

Sailed: 4, Discards: 1, To count: 3, Entries: 7, Scoring system: Appendix A

Rank	SailNo	Club	HelmName	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Total	Nett
1st	869	CMYC	Bob Dodds	(2.0)	1.0	2.0	1.0	6.0	4.0
2nd	377	OgSC	Eddie Pope	1.0	(2.0)	1.0	2.0	6.0	4.0
3rd	597	BWSC	Ben Palmer	3.0	3.0	3.0	(5.0)	14.0	9.0
4th	800	BeSC	Henry Jagers	(4.0)	4.0	4.0	3.0	15.0	11.0
5th	400	HLSTC	John Sturgeon	(6.0)	5.0	6.0	4.0	21.0	15.0
6th	867	BuSC	Chris Robinson	5.0	(6.0)	5.0	6.0	22.0	16.0
7th	57	FPSC	Steven Gregory	(8.0 DNF)	7.0	7.0	7.0	29.0	21.0

Frensham's organisation during the lockdown has been very efficient and a one way system for collecting food and drink, plus an open veranda outside means we are able to enjoy a hot meal, within the rules. A passing question to Ben, proves to be valuable: "Are you using much kicker in these light airs ?", I had assumed that not too much, if at all, was best WRONG Apparently it's good to put quite a lot on when beating, to get some mast bend, which improves the leading edge and helps to flatten the sail, so the air doesn't separate. Ahah!

Race 3 – Armed with the new information and revitalised with pasta, I make a good start and find myself rounding the first mark with the leaders! Ben remarks that he might have been a little too free with his advice as he breezes past. Regrettably there follows an object lesson on snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, as one by one, the entire fleet sneaks past, and I take my rightful place at the back again.

Race 4 – Well it would be rude not to come 7th again, so 10/10 for consistency.

I think the others enjoyed their day at Frensham Pond, in challenging light airs. As he collects the winner's trophy, Bob Dodds thanks the organisers, – for the hospitality, organisation and course setting, which have all made for an excellent event. Particular thanks are given to John Haine, the Solo Class captain who navigated all the Covid regulations and organised a perfect day.

I sip a pint of Hogsback T.E.A, (brewed just up the road) savouring the last moments of my first open for over a year; the Comet crowd catching up on news and putting the world to rights, as you do.

The pond is now empty of boats and swimmers and the birds are returning. A couple of Orinoco geese have taken up residence, escapees from the local bird park, and honk triumphantly as they reclaim the jetty.

As someone once said: "It's not the winning, it's the taking part".

Steve Gregory

water for tea and coffee was available along with water and squash. Rose surprised us all by producing a mixture of cream cakes, apple turnovers and doughnuts (courtesy of her Mum's work) for us all to sample, boosting morale greatly.

Following drinks, we were all then instructed on the intricacies of starting races on start lines that can be adjusted to allow for the prevailing wind direction – something we don't really experience in Nottingham where our start line usually is fixed. In particular, the manoeuvring for the 'better' end of the start line and how to do this effectively, plus the rules that applied and what mistakes and rule breaking moves to avoid. Then we were encouraged to try all the advice out for real on the lake by practising starts. So, going through the challenging launching routine again, we proceeded to practise starts on lines set out with a buoy set from the safety boat and from which Paul shouted instructions with a 3 minute countdown for each start. Surprisingly there wasn't too much chaos and mostly we started almost immediately and sometimes all in the same direction.

At the end of the starts session we broke for lunch, with a repeat of the routine to try and beach the boat without doing too much damage to centre-board and rudder. After lunch, again finished off with more cakes from Rose, came the 'formal' bit of the day. All the NSC sailors gathered together and the chairman (Peter Mountford) of the Comet Class Association presented us (and Jan in particular) with the official Comet pennant (to be used at our Comet Open in July).



We were then invited to join in the 2pm race (starting less than 30 mins later, although the Comets start 3 minutes after the general handicap racers with Lasers starting first at 2pm, so we had a bit of time to panic and prepare). After some prevarication and gauging the still fairly light wind, we all joined the race. We were faced with the novel (for those of us used to just racing on the Trent) concept of having more than two marks and remembering the order round. Basically though, we just followed the other boats as far as possible. Having successfully negotiated that race, taking around an hour, we were then invited to join the second race of the day starting at around 3:30pm. A certain amount of ‘I’m knackered, not sure I can manage’ followed, but I think all the NSC sailors joined in again. Just to confuse us they changed the course as well, but again mostly we managed to get round ok – though there was a noticeable increase in wind over parts of the course, but rather like our home sailing the wind came and went rather, and one corner of the course was almost Trent-like with shifty winds.



Image ©Ann Nugent SHSC

Once ashore from this we were able to give votes of thanks all round to our hosts, to whom we were very grateful, for an interesting and active day. Then the process of loading boats tying them on to trailers etc. followed, which took about an hour with Nick, Rose and I the last to leave. We arrived back at the Club at around 6:30pm and unloaded boats before Nick set off to drop Rose off at around 7:15 and I drove home in my car.

A tremendous day which I think we all benefitted from – look out other fleets we will be coming through! Well, some of us perhaps.

Phil Roberts (Comet 784)

filling up with early comers keen to claim their spot on the golden sand of Costa del Surrey. In recent years it seems that half of South London has become aware of the delights of this local ‘resort’, complete with sand and wild swimming, such that most of the lanes are now girded with ugly double-yellow lines, and the sailing club needs a sentry at the gate!

As we drift out for the first race, the wind has swung around to SW variable S, so the committee boat sets us off from near the beach. The safety boat is mainly employed in discouraging more adventurous swimmers from straying outside the buoyed area, (using ‘nudge’ tactics, rather than coercion), but a couple of beefy lads get quite close while I am waiting to start : “Ere mate ! Does that thing have a motor?”



Two back-to-back races before lunch – glad I’ve remembered my sun hat and water bottle.

Race 1 – still half asleep, so dreadful start and watch the fleet disappear as I struggle to make any headway in the light winds. By the end of the race, I notice some of our leaders have caught up with the Solos, who were started 5 minutes ahead!

Race 2 – Better position on start line, but manage to foul Bob Dodds by getting too close upwind, so again, after my turns, stuck at the back. Then the embarrassment of being towed back to the jetty, so I don’t miss lunch.

Frensham Pond Comet Open Meeting 12th June 2021

I was discussing the attractions of open circuit sailing with a GP14 owner at the club and we agreed that there is a lot more to opens than just the sailing, and that makes them a treasured experience.

Once you have mastered the art of trailing (or roof-topping with a Comet!), attending opens can be a really rewarding experience:

Trying out different waters, lake/river/tidal with different local character.

The opportunity to sail with fellow Comet owners and learn something new (I always do!)

The hospitality of different clubs and friendliness of the Comet clan, who are a really sociable crowd.

Regular readers will know that my reports are a bit thin on details of the racing. This is due to the practical problem that from the back of the fleet, it's impossible to give account of Bob, Eddie and Ben, because typically they are too far in front of me! So if you're interested in a blow-by-blow story of race-winning tactics, then look away now ...

The atmosphere at different waters first thing in the morning can be quite magical and Frensham Pond is no exception. I arrive early – as the sole FPSC Comet sailor, I am hosting our fleet for the day. A solitary grey wagtail is pecking around one of the slipways and the terns are swooping around using the sailing marks as convenient perches, a promising gentle North Easterly ruffling the surface over half the pond area.

Six Comet travellers from six counties – Devon, Cornwall, Bristol, Berkshire Hampshire and Sussex – arrive as well as two Solos. Frensham has a large Solo fleet and seven local boats make up their fleet of nine for the day.

As boats are rigged, a strange noise of seaside jollity begins to disrupt the tranquillity as the beach – yes, beach – on the far side of the Pond is

Carsington Comet Open - June 6th

Unlike 77 years ago D-Day at Carsington was a true damp squib, unfortunately for them our forebears had to battle high winds and rough seas whereas the 7 hardy Comet entrants were met with light to moderate drizzle with 0 to 3mph winds. The race team sent out their recce teams and the all important 5mph minimum wind speed was recorded. Launch was the cry.

We sauntered down the beach and into the awaiting boats, a very slow run / reach to the start line began. Once both fleets had gathered, we were sharing with the Supernovas, we proceeded to plod up and down awaiting the start gun, in my case trying to stay off my bruised knees caused by launching a Miracle on a slippery slipway! 2 grand kids (9 and 7) in a Comet is a bit of a squash!!

Suddenly a sound signal, hurrah we are off, but no it was immediately followed by a second one and up went the postponement flag! Back to shore in next to no wind! Rock and roll to increase the speed was the order of the day until I remembered my Praddle and relative Supersonic speed was reached. All around, boats of both fleets were being towed back by the willing safety crews.

Lunch was under a welcome large open air tent / awning.

The wind such as it was came and went and until eventually the OOD called it a day.

It was good to get out and about, meet up with fellow Cometeers and have a natter, even if we did not get to compete but it did feel NORMAL, something we have all craved for.

The magnificent 7 were:

Peter Mountford, Bob Dodds, Ben Palmer, Eddie Pope, Steve Bellamy, Richard Whitehouse and Nigel Fern.

Note – Alan Bennett had entered but on checking the weather thought better of it!

Fishers Green Comet Open

Carsington are looking into running the event later in the year.

Nigel Fern
C845

The event was rerun on Sat 10th of July with very little notice and so only 3 Comets were able to attend.

Fishers Green SC held their Comet Open meeting on 12th June, as part of their Eastern Aphelion series. The forecast of NE wind is usually considered a good direction but the wind would be up and down all day with big shifts creating a snakes and ladders affair.

Thankfully this year the lake is weed-free, so at least all the area could be used as needed. The competitors asked for four races so that is what they got, with a beat the full diagonal of the lake and a combination of reaches and a run to bring them back to the starting area.

The two races in the morning were won by Bob Dodds and Mike Ettershank who seemed to have the measure of the conditions, choosing best how to work the shifts up the beat and how to choose the best route downwind past the island to the bottom mark.



A leisurely lunch (this year with a curry theme) prepared by Jane O'Brian, was followed by two more races but the wind was becoming ever more patchy and unpredictable. In these conditions Eddy Pope came into his own winning both heats but lost out in the final reckoning on tie break.

Carsington SC Comet Open								
Rank	SailNo	HelmName	Club	R1	R2	R3	Total	Nett
1st	377	Edwin Pope	OgSC	-1	1	1	3	2
2nd	869	Robert Dodds	CMYC	-2	2	2	6	4
3rd	400	John Sturgeon	HLSTC	-3	3	3	9	6

Overall Results:								
Pos	Sail No	Helm	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	Pts
1st	869	Bob Dodds	CMYC	1	-2	2	2	5
2nd	377	Eddy Pope	OgSC	-3	3	1	1	5
3rd	323	Michael Ettershank	EySC	2	1	-3	3	6
4th	867	Chris Robinson	BuSC	-4	4	4	4	12
5th	41	Mark Smith	FGSC	-5	5	5	5	15