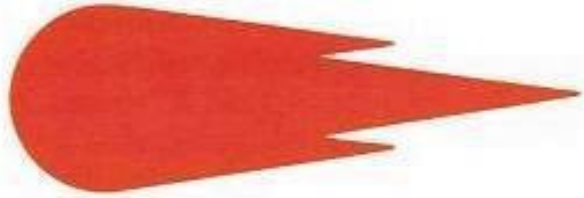
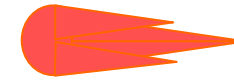


PERIHELION 135



Comet Class Association

Affiliated to the Royal Yachting Association



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Perihelion 136

Please send your contributions for the Perihelion 136 by

31st August 2022

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**Comet Class Association
Newsletter**

Spring 2022

NEWSLETTER NUMBER

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Editorial

The sailing season comes around again, firstly with the Dinghy Show which, now, has been renamed to the 'RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show'. Chris Robinson, has produced his usual report see page 12. Whilst at the D+WS I met up with fellow Cometeers from around the country whom, due to the dreaded Covid19 I not seen for a couple of years. It made a good day out even better.



It is pleasing to welcome two new clubs to our Open circuit - Silver Wing SC and Redditch SC but unfortunately the regular outing to Frensham Pond SC is not possible nor is Up River SC due to tidal changes this year, hopefully both will return next year.

In a previous communications I have mentioned the Side Deck Jamming Cleat trial and debate, as far as I know only 4 members have registered to fit the cleats. Up to date no one has voiced their opinion on the fitment and I would like to remind members that a binding decision on the use of such cleats will be made at the AGM which in many respects is just around the corner! So if you have any opinions for or against please let me have them.

Please look out for the 'almost' monthly updates arriving by email plus, if you get up to anything memorable (!) in your Comet please share it with the Comet community. In this edition there should be seven 'official' race reports but unfortunately only four have been forwarded. I have filled a gap by reporting on my performance at Attenborough. The title is yet another of my attempts at a sub - editor pun!

Nigel Fern
Comet 845



Photo: Lesley Gooden



Photo: Brian Herring
From Left: Rosemarie Benson, Chris Robinson, Pete Coop, Eddie Pope.

compression of boats arriving at the windward mark.

Eddy just got round in first, Pete was back in 7th and despite climbing back to 2nd it was not enough to deny Eddy outright victory.

Rosemarie Benson sailed another good race finishing 4th and securing the prize for first lady Helm.

Our race officer John Close and his team did a great job and the day finished with plenty of homemade cakes.

Report by Pete Coop WFSC.

Comet Open 2022								
WFSC								
Rank	SailNo	Helm Name	R1	R2	R3	Total	Nett	
1st	377	Eddie Pope	1	-2	1	4	2	
2nd	610	Pete Coop	-2	1	2	5	3	
3rd	867	Chris Robinson	3	-6	3	12	6	
4th	311	Rosemarie Benson	-8	3	4	15	7	
5th	126	Alan Bennett	4	4	-7	15	8	
6th	877	Charlotte Coop	5	-8	5	18	10	
7th	293	Catherine Whittaker	6	5	-8	19	11	
8th	800	Henry Jagers	-7	7	6	20	13	
9th	895	Chris Fowler	9	9	-10	28	18	
10th	382	Roger Harrison	-11	10	9	30	19	
11th	697	Janet Gaukroger	10	-11	11	32	21	
12th	745	Fiona Nidri	-14	12	12	38	24	
13th	235	Derek Armstrong	12	-13	13	38	25	
14th	705	Martin Loud	13	-14	14	41	27	
15th	98	Claudie Black	-15	15	15	45	30	
16th	690	Carl Ellis	16	16	DNF	49	32	

Chairman's Report

A huge welcome to you all to the 2022 season of Comet sailing. The first “event” for some of us in 2022 was the RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show held at the end of February at its new venue in Farnborough.



Congratulations to Chris Robinson for organising such a successful stand and my thanks to those members who helped to support the stand over the two days of the show. In my opinion, the new venue was a huge improvement – the car parking was right next to the venue which was easy to find and the entire exhibition was staged in one large hall. I had the impression of a higher attendance than previous years and I have a vivid memory of seeing quite a throng of visitors gathered round the Comet stand late on the Saturday morning.

We are now well into the 2022 season, and at time of writing, 6 Open Meetings and the Association Championships have been held. Congratulations to the winner of each event and especially to Eddie Pope for winning the 2022 Association Championships. Special congratulations also to Nigel Fern who obtained two notable “firsts” at the Attenborough Open sailed in very strong winds:- for the first time in his racing career, he finished “on the podium” (in 3rd place overall) and secondly, he achieved the distinction of – I believe – being the first Comet sailor to have obtained such an overall finishing position after using a reefing White Xtra sail which had been reefed for the entire event – surely a vindication of Andy Simmons’ efforts in conceiving and designing the reefing version of the White Xtra and getting it into production.

Congratulations are also due to Andy Simmons for reaching a significant milestone in the boat’s history – he has recently built and sold the 900th Comet dinghy!

There have been two Committee meetings so far this year, both held on Zoom. This is a method which now appears to be working well for us. As well as the obvious benefit of allowing each member to participate in the meeting from home, it seems to have the unexpected benefit of

helping to keep the meeting short.

Following a proposal made by Pete Coop at the 2021 Annual General Meeting, a trial of side deck centre mainsheet jamming cleats has been set up. The background and details of this trial are given on the Association website. In parallel, Andy Simmons has come up with proposals for mounting a swivel jamming cleat for a centre mainsheet and for a jamming cleat for a transom mainsheet block. Pete and Charlotte Coop have loaded some very helpful short video clips onto YouTube demonstrating the installation and use of the side deck and transom jamming cleats. Any member can participate in the trial, but you must register your participation with the Association Secretary and contact Andy Simmons for technical advice before installing the cleats.

Hopefully you will all have tried out the Association's new website and appreciated that it is such an excellent advance on the old one. Our thanks go to Nigel Fern and Paul Hinde for spending so much of their time and effort in designing and setting up this new website. It will provide a superb means of promoting the Association and the Comet dinghy and for keeping the membership abreast of news and developments.

I hope that if you have never travelled to an Open Meeting or Championships, you will take the plunge sometime this season and come and join us at an event. Not only will you find it enjoyable and stimulating to race at a different venue to the one you are accustomed to but you will encounter a group of very friendly "Comet people" who always turn these occasions into such a delightful social event.

Peter Mountford
C864

Comet Open Winsford Flash Sailing Club June 4th 2022

A total of 16 Comets made it to Winsford made up of 10 Local boats and 6 visitors.

Very positively, we had 7 lady helms competing.

Conditions – The sailors were met 12-14 mph easterly wind with occasional gusts up to 17 /18. This ensured a challenging day of racing sailing with hiking, planning and wind shifting up to 50 degrees.

Race 1:

Within 30 seconds of the start, we had our first couple of capsizes. As the fleet worked its way towards the first mark Eddy Pope led Pete Coop and Chris Robinson. By the third lap Pete had got past Eddy only for Eddy to re-take the lead on the final lap.

All competitors reported close racing with lots of position changes.

Race 2:

Alan Bennett rounded the windward mark first followed by Pete and Chris.

Pete overtook Alan and built a good lead which he maintained to the finish.

A great race by Rosemarie Benson saw her climb into 3rd place.

Eddy had been as low as 7th but made a good recovery to finish 2nd.

Race 3:

So, with Eddy and Pete both sharing a 1st and 2nd, it was all to play for going into the final race and with the strongest wind of the day.

On the first leg Eddy went left, Pete was in the middle and several boats chose the right.

Surprisingly all 3 choices were reasonable which resulted in big

Comet Association Championships - SHSC May 14th/15th

HelmName	Club	Sail	SailNo	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total	Nett	Rank
Eddie Pope	OgSC	Xw	377	1	1	2	-6	2	12	6	1st
Ben Palmer	BWSC	Std	597	-4	3	1	2	3	13	9	2nd
Bob Dodds	CMYC	Xw	869	2	5	-8	1	5	21	13	3rd
Izac Dodds	CMYC	Std	701	3	2	-4	4	4	17	13	4th
Andy Dale	EySC	Std	788	5	4	5	3	-6	23	17	5th
Chris Robinson	BuSC	Std	867	-10	6	7	5	1	29	19	6th
Steve Bellamy	WFSC	Xw	311	6	8	3	7	-9	33	24	7th
Henry Jagers	BeSC	Xw	800	7	-14	6	8	7	42	28	8th
Tobias Hancox			358	-12	7	9	9	8	45	33	9th
Nigel Fern	SHSC	Xw	845	9	-12	11	10	10	52	40	10th
Martin Loud	WFSC	Xw	705	11	11	10	-14	14	60	46	11th
Dave Waymont	SHSC	Xw	527	16	-19	14	11	11	71	52	12th
Mary Starkey	UWSC	Std	754	-20	15	15	12	12	74	54	13th
Steve Boud	SHSC	Xw	740	17	-18	13	13	13	74	56	14th
Joanne Hill	SwSC	Xw	522	14	16	12	-17	15	74	57	15th
Steve Dale	EySC	Std	433	-19	9	17	16	DNF	78	59	16th
Sue Jones	NSC	Xw	835	8	10	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	84	62	17th
Andrew Simmons	OgSC	Xw	900	13	(DNC)	16	15	DNC	88	66	18th
Lee Purslow	OgSC	Xw	190	15	13	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	94	72	19th
Nick Baber	NSC	Xw	402	18	17	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	101	79	20th

Apologies to Tobias for not recording his 'home' club and sail number.

Secretary's Report



What a lovely start to the sailing season. I've managed to go to Nottingham SC and Attenborough SC (in a non sailing capacity, of course) both with different wind strengths but both thriving Comet fleets and very friendly Club members. They really made us very welcome. Also I attended our Association Championships at Staunton Harold where again there were different winds on each day, typical Championships weather. We had 20 sailors from all over the country. Lovely food and entertainment on the Saturday night. I must give a big thank you, again from us all to Nigel and Lesley Fern and team for keeping us all fed and watered during trying circumstances. The oven wouldn't light!

We are coming up to that time of the year and looking forward to the National Championships at Bala on the August Bank Holiday weekend. Third time lucky!

Hope to see you all there. Get your accommodation booked now. Bala is a very popular place over that weekend. Look out on the website for information.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held on Sunday 28 August 2022
At Bala Sailing Club

As a Member of the Association you are invited to attend the Annual General Meeting

The AGM is YOUR meeting, YOUR opportunity to have YOUR say in how the Association is run. YOUR chance to tackle the Committee about decisions made on YOUR behalf. It is also the time when the Association takes stock of what has happened over the previous year and looks at plans for the future.

Please come and have your say. If you are unable to attend, please send me your apologies and any comments which you wish to put forward.

Any motions to be put for the AGM must be with me by 31 July 2022

Liz Hossell- secretary@cometsailing.org.uk

trailing group were also at each others' throats throughout!

The range of helms at the Championships was amazing, from junior to 70+, with weights from circa 8 to 13 stones plus and heights from circa 5 feet to over 6 feet. It was good to see the 3 ladies on the water too.

A special note must be made that Andy Simmons was racing his latest immaculate boat, Comet 900, and he is still making minor changes (within the rules) to improve the boat.

It was a great event. Staunton Harold Sailing Club was pleased to welcome sailors from all over the country to share its water and facilities.

The first 3 were – 1st Eddie Pope (C377), 2nd Ben Palmer (C597) and 3rd Bob Dodds (C869).

The other awards were to

First Veteran - Andy Dale

First Ancient Mariner - Steve Bellamy

First Youth - Tobias Hancox

First Lady - Mary Starkey

First Newcomer - Steve Boud

First SHSC - Nigel Fern

Committee Prize - Andrew Simmons - for having a boat that was usually and respectfully kept a good distance from any other as nobody wanted to scratch it!

Report contributors

Eddie Pope (C377), Steve Boud (C740) and Nigel Fern (C845)



Eddie receiving his prizes from
Steve Boud.
©Nigel Fern

by Sue Boud. This was followed by some splendid music provided by Madison Blues, supported by Steve Boud showing his unknown, extremely, talented side!

Race 3 – Course 9, 12, 7, C, Gate to F

Sunday's wind was much stronger than on Saturday causing a few competitors to don head protection, but was quite shifty. There were a couple of capsizes prior to the start. Steve Bellamy (C311) started brilliantly and led until the final mark, when Ben gained an overlap. Steve was caught in Ben's 'dirty' air and was passed by Eddie just before the finishing line.



Close action throughout
© Paul Williamson

Race 4 – Course 8, 1, D, 2, Gate to F

The wind was still building with nice planing conditions on the reaches. Bob led from start to finish, though Ben managed to close up at times. Andy Dale sailed really well to clinch 3rd place in a tight finish with a couple of other helms. One discard was allowed at this stage, but the 5th race would determine the overall results. This was held back-to-back with race 4.

Race 5 – Course 8, 1, 6, 2, Gate to F

The wind was similar to race 4. Chris Robinson (C867) made the best start at the pin end, followed by Eddie. Ben was caught in dirty air, but managed to extricate himself as the beat progressed. Chris led for about half the race but Eddie eventually overtook him on a run. However, Chris rounded just behind Eddie at the final mark and sailed a better course to the finish, beating Eddie by a couple of feet. Ben was a comfortable 3rd.

It is fair to say, especially on Sunday, that the races were of two halves, the top 8 or so in close competition whilst some distance behind the

Builder's Report

As usual it seems ages since I last wrote a Builders Report and quite a bit has happened since then. The New Year saw orders for two Comets, one went North to Redesmere. The other was for an ex-duo sailor at Poole who also wanted a folding trolley or "easily made smaller" launching trolley. I made a "one off" for him which seemed much lighter than the steel ones but won't be compatible with a combi trailer. Next winter I'll make patterns and moulds for a production version.



The Turquoise Comet in stock went to the Dinghy Show which was a good show and has room to grow and develop. An extra day added to it would really help and make it more worthwhile but that's only my opinion! At the show the Comet had a proper Centre mainsheet swivel jammer fitted as detailed elsewhere on the Class website as well as a rear mainsheet with a jammer. The centre swivel looked impressive, and the rear jamming block seemed ok to me on dry land.

Just before Easter, the Turquoise Comet was sold and delivered to Maldon in Essex via Poole. I then decided to build a boat for stock as it was now time for it to be Comet 900! This was to be a special one off colour I mixed that was darker than our usual red and those who saw it at Staunton Harold were, I think, impressed.

At Staunton Harold's Association Championships, I tried out the centre mainsheet swivel jammer which was great. A bit awkward when sat there in light winds but then you'd pull the sheet direct from the boom. As for the jammer on the rear mainsheet block, I wasn't really comfortable with it but a few who use them are happy with them.

The week before Staunton Comet 900 was sold, no wonder people gave me a wide berth on the water! A gent from Shotwick S.C near the Dee estuary came down and collected it.

The White Xtra sails continue to sell and are now some are being bought as replacements by the “early adopters” who have had them four years now. We have had supply issues and delays but about 25 are on their way but that is it until the autumn. If you want one this season or for Bala nationals let me know A.S.A.P.

I’ll build a new stock boat before Bala and if not sold, I’ll tag along near the back taking in the beautiful scenery.

Andy Simmons



©Paul Williamson

The fleet then adjourned for lunch! Lunch had been planned as a ‘hot slice’, plus sandwiches etc as a meal deal but unbeknown to the galley staff, vermin had attacked a gas pipe overnight and the gas had run out. Fortunately the race officers were on hand to remedy the problem using a gas bottle and pipe donated by Nigel Fern from his caravan!

Race 2 Course – 4, 6, 1, D, Gate to M

Bob Dodds, in his correct efforts to get to the line, caused some competitors to cross over it and or into each other at the Committee boat end of the line leaving a nice hole for Nigel Fern (C845) to slip through. Meanwhile at the Pin end Sue Jones (C835) and Lee Purslow (C190) had a real flyer and led from Eddie at 4. Not far behind them, also at 4, Nigel Fern



Battling at the back!
© Paul Williamson

forgetting the full water at the mark rule got in Bob’s way and had to do 2 sets of turns as on completing the first set grazed Joanne Hill’s Comet (C522) dropping him from well inside the top ten to second last!

Eddie was then closely chased by Izac and Ben Palmer (C597). They nearly caught Eddie at the penultimate mark of the last lap, but he managed to catch a puff of wind to move away again. Izac finished 2nd, followed very closely by Ben.

After a lot of changing positions Joanne Hill beat the other boats at the back of the fleet to come in 16th. Dave Waymont and Steve Boud fought tirelessly for last place!

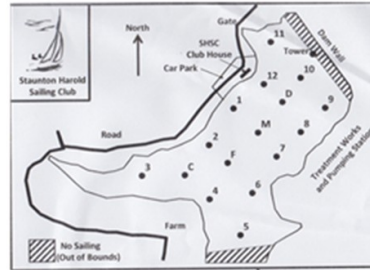
The fleet were grateful to have their positions recorded from the rescue boat rather than having to go all the way to the finish line.

After 2 very long and arduous races we were glad to come ashore to the welcome bar, a lovely 3 course meal cooked by Lesley Fern ably assisted

2022 Comet Association Championships

Staunton Harold Sailing Club 14th / 15th of May

21 competitors were signed on from across the country but only 20 took part following the late withdrawal of local favourite Alan Bennett due to a swollen face following an insect bite!



Saturday dawned bright, warm, and with very little wind. What wind there was, was very fickle in that it did not stay for very long and also, often, changed its mind as to where it was coming from!

Race 1 Course – 2, F, 8, Gate to M

OOD Colin Davis, having discussed the lack of wind, decided to postpone the start of race 1 until the wind was more cooperative.

Eddie Pope (C377) led at every mark, having started close to the committee boat. He was chased very hard by Andy Dale (C788) for the first lap or so, but then Andy was passed by Bob Dodds (C869) and his son Izac Dodds (C701) on the dreaded downwind leg which pushed the catching boats along. The low wind speed caused some bunching and consequent calls for starboard and water leading to penalty turns around the marks especially at 8. The long beat back to 2 was just that 'long' as the wind dropped away to virtually nothing on lap 2. As third lap progressed the wind filled in, but swung around so that the finish for some was a run giving the rear of a group the opportunity to close up and the Race Officer a headache due to the 'blanket' finishes. Bob stayed in 2nd and Izac was 3rd. The fleet was widely spread out and Eddie even lapped a couple of boats.



Attempting to catch the breeze!
© Paul Williamson

A NEW COMET AT GUNFLEET

The 40th Anniversary Ruby Red demonstrator Comet has been bought by a Gunfleet SC member bringing the Class up to 5 boats long after the original group of Comet numbers 7, 8 and 9 were sailing here.

The new owner, Eddie White, is 86 years old and very well regarded within the Club for his determination and enthusiasm. He only started sailing when in his 70's and progressed through a Topaz and Solution to a Laser which, even with it rig options, was proving rather too much for him. He only seriously considered the Comet when one of our members fitted a centre main which is his preferred option.

Many thanks to Andy, and Jackie, for delivering the boat and spending much time in explaining everything to both Eddie and the rest of us at Gunfleet.

A few weeks in and Eddie is delighted with his new boat and recently got a light wind second place in a Club handicap race.

This prompted the picture of him which also appeared in the local press.



Keith Lamdin

RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show

After the virtual show last year the RYA Dinghy Show returned to its normal 'real' format on 26th-27th February. However, it was a new normal, with the show now including water sports and hence re-named as the 'RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show'. In addition, the show, as announced in 2020, moved to a new venue at the Farnborough International Exhibition Centre.

The Comet Class Association has had a stand at the show since the formation of the Association, so the committee decided to continue with the show. The new show had slightly different rules to contend with, but Covid was a far bigger impact. Most of the planning occurs during the Autumn before the show and at that time it was unclear what the Covid situation would be the following February. Therefore, contingency plans had to be put in place. In the event Covid restrictions were relaxed just before the show, so the show seemed very normal and we only had one person having to drop out due to Covid.

A number of people helped to put the stand together. Andy Simmons brought a new Comet for us to display, and along with Jackie, set the stand up. They were also on the stand during the weekend. Henry Jaggars provided the literature and updated some of his pictures, while Paul Hinde provided the display boards for these pictures. These people have helped in this way for many years (decades in fact) and we are very grateful for their help during this time.

We usually have spare Perihelions to give out on the stand. But now the magazine is digital the only editions we have left are getting rather old. In its place we re-used the articles we extracted from Perihelion for last year's virtual show, although of course they were printed out.

The stand was manned throughout the show with volunteers from the Association: John Coppenhall, Henry Jaggars, Norah Jaggars, and Peter Mountford on the Saturday with Ben Palmer, Steve Gregory, Meg Warren and Chris Robinson on the Sunday.

Whether the new venue is easier or harder to get to depends very much on where you live. However, for those driving it was generally easier as it

Comet Class Association Results

Event:

Hawley Lake



Aphelion: West

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	1	1	3	2	1
Izac Dodds	701	Std	CMYC	2	2	1	3	2
Ben Palmer	597	Std	BWSC	5	3	4	7	3
Andy Dale	788	Std	EySC	3	5	5	8	4
Henry Jaggars	800	Xw	BeSC	4	4	8	8	5
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	RTD	9	2	11	6
Carol Butcher	614	Xw	HLSTC	7	6	9	13	7
Ken Baker	695	Xw	SWSC	8	8	7	15	8
Chris Robinson	867	Std	BuSC	10	10	6	16	9
Helen Evans	868	Xw	SWSC	9	7	10	16	10
John Sturgeon	400	Xw	HLSTC	6	RTD	RTD	18	11

FGSC and HLSTC

At the time of writing no report had been submitted by FGSC or HLSTC for their Opens, if one is received it will be published in the website.

Comet Class Association Results

Event: Fishers Green
Date: Aphelion: East



Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Points	Final Position
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	3	1	1	1	3	1
Ben Palmer	597	Std	BWSC	1	4	4	2	7	2
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	2	2	3	RET	7	3
Chris Robinson	867	Std	BuSC	4	6	2	3	9	4
Izac Dodds	701	Std	CMYC	5	3	5	4	12	5
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	6	5	7	6	17	6
Ken Baker	695	Xw	SWSC	7	7	6	7	20	7
John Coppenhall	532	Std	HuSC	8	9	8	5	21	8
Helen Evans	688	Xw	SWSC	10	10	9	8	27	9
Mark Smith	41	Std	FGSC	9	8	DNS	DNS	28	10

wasn't necessary to go into London and there was plenty of free parking.

Arriving by public transport was harder without the London Underground. The parking was right next to the exhibition centre and unlike Alexandra Palace there is no hill to climb from the car park to the venue!



© Chris Robinson

The Show is in one hall, which makes it easy to get around. It is also easy to get disorientated and lost! The change in location and Covid didn't seem to affect the number of exhibitors. The number of Associations at the Show and the number of dinghy manufacturers were similar to when the show was at Alexandra Palace. However, there were fewer Chandleries, although we suspect this is due to the

rise in online shopping. The number of stands related to general water sports was quite low, but presumably this is something the RYA will try to expand on in future years. The show didn't use the full length of the hall, so there is room for expansion.

The show was busier than we remembered it during the last years at Alexandra Palace. Although Sunday, as usual, was the quieter day, it was busy. Mid-morning is always the busiest time for the show. However, unlike the last few years, footfall remained high right until the end. We don't know why this was. The new venue may have brought the show into reach of more or different people or maybe everyone is keen to get out and about after two years of Covid restrictions!

The RYA have announced that next year's show will return to Farnborough on 25th-26th February 2023.

Chris Robinson

White Xtra – Transformational?

I have been happily sailing with the black Xtra rig for years. Loving the shorter mast (being able to put it up and take it down without help), the see-through sail and the greater controllability compared to full sail. I also used my Mino sail whenever the wind was a bit gusty. Requiring a different mast and having to thread the mast through the Mino sail was a bit of a faff. Once the White Xtra came on the scene I took an interest, but couldn't see a reason to change until the Reefing White Xtra came along. I was still not convinced.


Back at Hawley Lake, Anne Stephen started sailing her recently bought Comet which had the White Xtra rig. A couple of the evening races early last Summer she pipped me to the post and I started to wonder if it was faster in the light fluky airs that feature at Hawley.

Then came the club's Comet Open meeting and at lunchtime I asked how people had found changing from the Black Xtra to the White Xtra. Someone (sorry, can't remember his name) said he had found it "transformational".

Several weeks' later I was on the phone to Andy to order my Reefing White Xtra sail plus mast-top fitment. I had found out from Andy that my current mast should be fine with an extra attachment at the top of the mast to raise the height of the masthead pulley so the boom wouldn't be too low. So Sunday 1st August saw Mark (my husband) helping me to fit the new mast-top fitment. So called "easy" tasks like this never go smoothly. After a bit of struggle with it we finally completed it after 12, so I had missed the 12 o'clock race.

I then rushed down to the sailing club to try out my new sail. No time to try it out though prior to the 1.45 race – I left the shore after the 5 minute had gone. Conditions were very light wind and almost drizzling.

Immediately I loved the sail – so easy to read and set in light winds and I could hear it flapping as soon as I was too close to the wind – it "spoke" to me. Much to my surprise I won the race. Just at the start of the next race the heavens opened and my new sail got a wash; as I was cold and

Comet Class Association Results Sheet							
Event:	Attenborough						
Date:	23/04/2022		Aphelion:	North			
Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Points	Final Position
Chris Robinson	867	S	BuSC	1	1	2	1
Eddie Pope	377	X	OgSC	2	2	4	2
Nigel Fern	845	Xwr	SHSC	3	4	7	3
Jenny Chuen	839	X	NSC	5	3	8	4
Malcolm Davidson	856	S	AttSC	4	13.0 DNF	17	5
Rose Wilkinson	83	M	NSC	6	13.0 DNS	19	6
Martin Load	705	Xw	WFSC	7	13.0 DNF	20	7
Roger Harrison	382	X	ReddSC	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	26	8
Don Bishop	648	S	AttSC	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	26	8
Iona Reid	627	S	AttSC	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	26	8
Nick Bober	402	S	NSC	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	26	8
Jan Walsh	664	S	NSC	13.0 DNF	13.0 DNS	26	8

I eventually caught and passed Martin Loud on the way to 3, the run to F proved tricky as a gybe had to be put at some point, ahead of me Malcolm wore round at F and I followed suit but much tighter which closed the gap. On the next 3 to F leg I got too close to the Outer Start Line buoy and snagged it's mooring line swinging me around to starboard together with an enforced but safe gybe! Somehow the mooring line had wrapped around the dagger board which I soon cleared. On the next lap I realised that Martin and Malcolm were not in sight and I was in 4th place with only Chris, Eddie and Jenny for company. By this time Chris and Eddie were closing rapidly so I eased off to allow them to overtake before the line as the 'Shorten course' flag was flying and I did not want an extra lap – knackered or what!



Eddie is in there somewhere!
© Liz Hossell

Over a welcome drink and a hot cross bun a discussion took place as to whether the third race should take place. Chris had won with two 1st places, Eddie was in Second with two 2nd places, and I was in Third with a 3rd and a 4th with Jenny in Fourth with a 5th and a 3rd. The overall result was not in doubt but the minor places were still up for grabs. A vote was held and the third race was abandoned, very much to my relief!

A third place in an Open! More by good luck than skill. The only real skill used was not capsizing!!

Nigel Fern (C845)

wet (having not had the forethought to put on full waterproofs) I retired.

The following week conditions had changed. I went out in the 1.45 race but got jittery and retired. Whilst the others were finishing the race I reefed my White Xtra. I then entered and completed the 3pm race and even came 4th. I found the reefed White Xtra set better than my old Mino sail had done so I was pleased with it's performance.

The following week though saw me retiring even though I was reefed. A couple of Friday evenings with light airs saw me win the races.

Late September saw me at the Littleton Open, where I actually won one of the races for the first time ever!

Early October saw me swimming in stronger winds despite being reefed (just after I passed the penultimate buoy – very annoying). I think I need to improve my sailing in stronger winds as I still find the White Xtra a bit difficult in those conditions.

So, the White Xtra, has it been transformational for me? – yes, definitely.

In lighter wind conditions I do well and am currently leading in the "Perishers" Sunday series – let's hope the high pressure and light winds continue!

Carol Butcher (C614)

Comets Return to Burghfield

After a two-year absence due to Covid (or three years for those not prepared to race during storm Hannah in 2019) the Comets returned to Burghfield Sailing Club for the first Comet Open of the year on Saturday 2nd April.

The twelve competitors arrived to find a cold day with a light westerly wind coming straight down the lake. This allowed the race officer, Peter Blackman, to set a figure-of-eight course with a long beat and three reaches or runs.

In the first race the line was biased and the pin end was very congested. Eddie Pope and Nigel Austin were pushed over the line and there was an individual recall. Peter Mountford took the lead followed by Annette Walter. Eventually Annette caught Peter and then on the approach to the finish Eddie, who had recovered well from his recall at the start, caught Peter near the finish.



©Peter Blackman

Race two started immediately after race one. The line was biased again, but this time the fleet got away cleanly. The wind continued to back so that it was almost possible to make the first beat on one tack. Henry Jagers was first around the mark followed by Eddie. However, they then sailed towards the wrong mark which resulted in them sailing towards the bank and out of the wind. This allowed the rest to catch up. Ben Palmer, followed by Chris Robinson, headed very low and got past. The wind dropped, but these two were able to get around the wing mark on the last of the wind and sailed into a substantial lead. The dropping wind resulted in the fleet becoming very spread out and so the race officer elected to shorten the course after one lap. Ben won, followed by Chris. Annette led the rest of the fleet and took third place.

Race three started after lunch. The change in wind direction required a change in course. A long beat was still possible, but this time the

Race 1

The fleet got away well, with Eddie Pope and Chris Robinson soon showing at the front, followed by Roger Harrison, Jenny Cheung and Malcolm Davidson with the rest of us following on. Several helms came to grief in the extremely gusty conditions with retirements happening virtually immediately. On the 2nd lap I decided that mark 5 (further round to the right of 4) was mark 4 which allowed Roger and Malcolm to increase their lead over me! Roger managed to pull away from Malcolm so that by the end of the lap the fleet were fairly and equally spread out other than Chris and Eddie who were trading places at the front. Going across from 2 to 9 both Jenny and Roger capsized and then Malcolm had 3rd, cruelly, taken away from him as he got into irons and was going backwards when I passed him into a joyous 3rd place - more by good luck than skill!

The run down the creek was interesting but not as fraught as first thought. On arrival in the club house for lunch we were greeted by personalised 'goody bags' of our pre-ordered food so it was 'grab and go'; something for others to consider.

During lunch the wind moved round causing a change of the windward mark and overall course.

You will remember that I mentioned the creek as the launch point, well that stretch of water nearly had an immense effect on the results as Eddie got himself well and truly tangled in a tree with his mast and sail caught up and I, for one, was concerned that his sail would be torn. Somehow he extricated himself, thankfully without damage.

Race 2

I 'poodled' around waiting for the fleet to assemble and on hearing a hoot started my watch, a minute later, as expected, there came a second hoot but on looking up I realised that what I had assumed were the 5 and 4 minute hoots were in fact the 1 minute and Go hoots. Six of the fleet had decided not to enter the 2nd race and the RO had got the race under way, leaving me a good 40 yards astern!! Note to self – 'Stay closer to the start line!'

Attabuoy Attenborough!

In the absence of an official report I enclose a personal report on the Attenborough Comet Open.

I arrived at Attenborough SC to find Martin Loud (WFSC) just going through the gate with Chris Robinson (BuSC), already in the car park, looking for suitable volunteers to lift his Comet from the roof! We were eventually joined by fellow travellers, Eddie Pope (OgSC), Jenny Cheun, Nick Baber, Jan Walsh and Rose Wilkinson (all NSC) plus, a late arriving, Roger Harrison (RedSC). The fleet was completed by 3 'home' boats Malcolm Davidson, Don Bishop and Iona Reid

The first decision – to race or not? The wind was howling virtually straight down the lake towards the club house from the North East with some white horses apparent, all around us rigging had that ominous singing noise! Martin made my mind up for me with “I’ve not come all this way just to turn around and go home!”

Decision made; now to remember Andy’s teaching on how to reef the White Xtra, if I had a Mino that would have been used and reefed!! Talking of sails, every type of Comet sail produced was in evidence at Attenborough.

Second decision, where to launch from? The slipway in front of the club house was straight into the teeth of the wind or the alternative was to use the creek / bay behind the club house – a beat out and a run back in. Which one would be the better of two evils?

The creek / bay option proved to be the most popular, with swift tacking practise to get out into open water.



Tight or what!!
© Liz Hossell

downwind legs formed a rectangle. On the first leg the wind dropped away, but the sun came out which warmed the competitors. As they approached the windward mark the wind began to return, but from a different direction, so the leg was now a reach. Eddie was first around the first mark followed by Izac Dodds. The change in wind direction changed the second leg from a reach to close hauled. The wind then veered further, changing the leg to a beat, which favoured the leaders and the fleet spread out. As the fleet beat or reached back up the lake the wind dropped again so the race officer elected to finish after one lap. On the final leg the wind returned to its original direction, and as Eddie and Izac crossed the line it picked up allowing the rest of the fleet to finish quickly behind them.

After three races Eddie was leading with 3 points followed by Annette (4 points) and Ben (5 points). However, the final race would require them to count an additional race and with different discards the places could easily change. In addition, a win in the final race would allow Izac or Peter to win overall, while Henry and Chris could still claim second overall.

With the wind returning to its original direction no change of course was required for the final race. Like race three the wind began to drop again. This time Izac beat Eddie to the windward mark. As they finished the downwind legs it began to rain and the wind increased to its strongest strength of the day. The fleet were able to plane into the leeward mark and the race officer elected to sail a second lap. The change in wind also resulted in a change in fortune throughout the fleet. Izac was passed by Eddie and then Ben, Peter and Nigel. However, a couple of 720s prevented the latter three from catching Eddie, who increased his lead to take the win. Nigel was second, followed by Peter. Those further down the fleet had to contend with a couple of capsized Streakers and Solos. Eddie’s win in the final race gave him first place overall. Annette’s good results from the first three races were enough to give her second place, while a fourth place in the final race put Ben on equal points with Annette. However, he lost on count back having a first and fourth compared to Annette’s first and third.

Chris Robinson (C63)

Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Burghfield
Date: 02 April 2022 Aphelion: South

Helm	Boat Number	Sail (Comet, Mino, Xtra,	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Points	Final Position
Edwin Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	2	8	1	1	4	1
Annette Walter	323	Std	WGCSC	1	3	5	7	9	2
Ben Palmer	597	Std	BWSC	4	1	6	4	9	3
Peter Mountford	864	Xw	SHSC	3	5	7	3	11	4
Izaac Dodds	701	Std	CMYC	5	7	2	6	13	5
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	6	4	4	DNC	14	6
Chris Robinson	63	Std	BuSC	10	2	9	5	16	7
Nigel Austin	875	Xw	CrSC	9	9	8	2	19	8
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	7	10	3	Ret	20	9
Joanna Loveland	879	Xw	BroSC	8	12	11	9	28	10
Roger Harrison	382	Xw	RedSC	12	11	10	8	29	11
Timothy Higgs	849	Xw	BuSC	11	6	DNC	DNC	31	12
Mick Parnell	830	Xw	BASC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	42	13

Competitor Comments

Marie (C83) adds, the reason for my low position in the second race was a shackle failure leading to a collapse in my mainsail! I had to go back to the Club to re-rig and start again but managed to avoid finishing last – just.

Phil (C784) also adds, I was sailing pretty much the first time this season, so just pleased to take part and finish. The first race was unusual for our stretch of river in that thanks to the wind direction, it could be sailed both upstream and downstream without tacking. However, the downstream mark proved tricky to get round with tricky wind, in the first race a loss of momentum as I turned led me to drift around 30m downstream before getting moving again.

Phil Sheppard C784

Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Nottingham
Date: Aphelion: North



Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	R#1	R#2	R#3	Points	Final Position
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	1	2	1	2	1
Alan Bennett	126	Xw	SHSC	2	1	4	3	2
Ben Palmer	597	Std	BWSC	3	3	3	6	3
Sue Jones	835	Xw	NSC	11	5	2	7	4
Martin Loud	705	Xw	WFSC	4	9	5	9	5
Chris Robinson	867	Std	BuSC	7	4	7	11	6
Tom Fletcher	397	Std	NSC	5	6	6	11	7
Jenny Cheun	839	Xb	NSC	6	7	9	13	8
Malcolm Davidson	856	Std	AtSC	8	12	10	18	9
Marie Marshall	83	Std	NSC	12	14	8	20	10
Nick Baber	402	Xw	NSC	9	11	14	20	11
Rose Wilkinson	804	Std	NSC	10	10	11	20	12
Jan Walsh	664	Std	NSC	DNC	8	15	23	13
Hazel Clark	685	Std	NSC	13	13	12	25	14
Ellie Kitewood	351	Std	NSC	Ret	16	13	29	15
Phil Roberts	784	Std	NSC	14	15	16	29	16

Everyone then enjoyed a fantastic homemade lunch cooked by Zeny Roberts, wife of Phil (784), and homemade carrot cake made by Rose Wilkinson (804).

Over lunch the wind dropped a bit and swung to SSW more frequently. The second race got underway at 13:25 with 16 boats now taking part. 867 Chris and 126 Alan led the way on the first beat. By the end of lap 1 126 Alan led followed by 867 Chris and 597 Ben. On lap 2 377



Congested start line © Peter Staples

Eddie moved up to 2nd and 867 Chris dropped back to 5th. Again, the race officer shortened the race to end on 3 laps. 126 Alan took the honours, followed by 377 Eddie and 597 Ben. First NSC boat was 835 Sue in 5th.

After a cream tea break, the race team shortened the course quite a bit moving both the windward and leeward marks. With both 377 Eddie and 126 Alan tied on 3 points; each with a 1st and 2nd place, it was all down to the final race to decide the event winner. The final race got underway at 15:00. 377 Eddie got away well and led throughout, with 126 Alan back in the pack and only 6th after lap 1. Sue 835 had a poor start and was last across the line, but then moved through the pack to eventually finish 2nd. Ben 597 was a consistent 3rd again, with Alan 126 finishing 4th.

There followed a prize giving in the Clubhouse with more tea and cakes. The NSC Vice Commodore, Shad Jawad presented prizes to the first 5 overall, and the first junior helm Rose Wilkinson.



Eddie takes the victory spoils
© Jim Harms

NSC Comet Open meeting report 10th April 2022

A good turnout of 16 boats took part in the Comet Open held at Nottingham SC on Sunday 10th April. Six of the entries were visitors from as far afield as Bristol, Reading and Cheshire; joined by ten home club entries of which two weren't regular Comet sailors.

On arrival at the club at 9 am there was very little wind, but it was mild and dry, however by the time of the briefing at 10:30 there was a light 4-6 knots wind from the SSW-SW. The river-based venue provided a simple windward leeward '*sausage*' ~1.6km length course; and with the wind on the day being mostly SSW-SW resulted in a nearly entirely port beat to the windward mark.

The format was for 3 races of approx. 60 minutes long, with one race scheduled in the morning, and two after lunch.

The first race got underway at 11:10am, with 15 boats taking part. A clean start saw a competitive first beat with 8 boats in close proximity rounding the first mark, led by 867 Chris Robinson. Unfortunately lead NSC Comet sailor Sue Jones (835) managed to tangle her boat in the riverbank growth on the



Hazards of river sailing!
© Peter Staples

way to the first mark, dropping her from 6th to last place. By the end of the first lap 597 Ben Palmer led, followed by 377 Eddie Pope and 867 Chris. Over the next couple of laps boats were changing positions throughout the fleet with a group of 3 boats breaking free ahead. As the fleet became spread-out the race officer shortened the race to end on 3 laps. The top 3 after race one were 377 Eddie, 126 Alan Bennett and 597 Ben. First NSC boat was 397 Tom Fletcher in 5th.