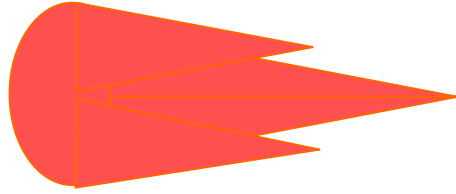


# PERIHELION 137



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***Comet Class Association  
Newsletter***

**Autumn 2022**

# ***NEWSLETTER NUMBER***

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## *Editorial*

Well that's it for another year, 20 plus Opens and 2 Championships have been and gone but the work continues. Later in this edition you will find that Eddie Pope is already hard at work getting the events ticked off for next year and Chris Robinson is dotting the i's and crossing the t's with regard to the RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show.



The use of Zoom to hold 'virtual' face to face meetings makes developing ideas so much better than by email, text or even telephone. Ben Palmer and I are in the process of developing a new Results template for our future Open meetings and Championship events to cut down on the time taken to create the results and to pre-prepare it for Perihelion and the Website.

As always I am deeply indebted to the many contributors to Perihelion, over the year, whether that be in text or image form. If you venture out in your Comet over the cold and blustery months to come please make a note and inform us of your exploits.

In my last 'Update' I mentioned passing on Useful Hints and Tips. Please see page 25 for some wonderful tips on 'How to Succeed', kindly provided by Pete Coop, it is refreshing to have a top sailor freely passing on their 'secrets'.

Here's one from me - of late I lost one of my Dagger board bump stops somewhere in the SHSC car park! Having found and fitted a replacement I thought about how I could stop the loss in the future. Having tightened the nut and bolt as much as I could, I filled the hole to the nut with some mastic that would, hopefully, solidify around the nut. Then, as belt and braces, I used 'leccy tape' to add several layers in a figure of 8 over the dagger board and around the bump stops to hold it all together.

Nigel Fern  
Comet 845

## Chairman's Report

### Chair's mutterings

As the first full season of racing since the end of lockdown has drawn to a close, this is perhaps a good occasion to reflect on a few aspects of the state of Comet racing. The number of Open Meetings and the number of Association members have returned more-or-less to their pre-lockdown level. It has always seemed remarkable to me that a class consisting of only about 900 boats has been able to support more than 20 Open Meetings and 2 Championships each season. However, as I mentioned in my last report, it is noticeable from the results that although some of the clubs staging an Open Meeting have had a good turnout, it has been because of good local support. The number of sailors travelling to events has been fewer than in previous years and it must be hoped that the cost of fuel does not make this a permanent downturn.



This season has seen the replacement of the Association's website. Nigel Fern and Paul Hinde have worked hard to design and develop this new facility. It has given us an up-to-date presence on the internet and I am sure you will join me in thanking them for their efforts. I hope you will all continue to enjoy using the features of the new website.

It seems to be part of the natural flow of events that in each season, a few clubs are sadly no longer able to host an Open Meeting, but this is usually balanced by the appearance of new clubs in the calendar. In this last season, we welcomed Silver Wings as a new venue and there was the equally welcome return of Redditch after an absence of a few years.

Congratulations to all the winners of the trophies awarded at the end of the last Open Meeting of the season held at Staunton Harold. They are listed in Liz Hossell's report in this issue of Perihelion. The last Committee meeting of the season is usually held in person at this last Open Meeting. However this year, it was held on-line via Zoom during the week before that event. For what I believe represents the first occasion this type of request was considered, it was decided to issue special dispensation to Nick Baber to display the Prostate Cancer Awareness logo on the sail of his new boat (C904) and it is hoped that this boat and sail will be on display at the Association Class stand at the 2023 RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show.

Also discussed at the meeting was the topic of illegal and unfair means of propulsion during racing. This is an issue which has regrettably come up from time-to-time and has figured in the Chairman's report in previous Perihelions (for instance, see Clive Chapman's report in P110 and John Sturgeon's reports in P124 and P127). Such methods of propulsion include sail pumping to produce forward motion, repeated tacks and gybes unrelated to changes in wind direction or to tactical reasons, exiting a tack faster than the speed at entry, sudden body movements to "ooch" the boat forward and sculling with the helm.

To echo what past Chairmen have written, Comet racing to me has always been great fun, highly enjoyable and very fair and we should all strive to maintain these standards. If you see any of the above happening during a race, then express your concern to that person. If it persists, warn that person that you will protest, and finally, if that does not work, then protest.

It has been a matter of deep regret to me that my health has prevented me from joining in this season's racing. I am very grateful indeed to those Committee members who have stood in for me on all the various occasions when the Chairman's presence is normally expected. My date with the surgeon is coming up soon, and I hope to have recovered sufficiently to join in all the fun as

early as possible next season.

As usual, the first event in next year's calendar is the RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show to be held at its new venue at Farnborough over the weekend of the 25 – 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023. The show is an excellent opportunity for us to promote the Comet dinghy and Comet sailing. If you would like to help out at the class stand and talk to potential new Comet sailors, then please contact Chris Robinson.

In the meantime, if you are the type of sailor that does not let a bit of cold weather stop you from indulging in your favourite pastime, then don't forget the 2023 Bloody Mary Pursuit Race to be held on the 7<sup>th</sup> January.

I hope you all have a Happy Christmas and I send you best wishes for the New Year. I look forward to meeting you at a Comet event next season.

Peter Mountford  
C864

## Secretary's Report

The sailing season has now finished for the year and yet another different year for wind and some low water levels at the end.

The Prize giving was held at Staunton Harold on 22 October and here are the prize winners for the yearly trophies.

The **Pingewood Trophy** for the most Open meetings attend in 2022 was won by Chris Robinson of Burghfield SC



The **Travellers Team Trophy** was won by Winsford SC.

The **North, South, and West Aphelions** were won by Eddie Pope of Ogston SC who also won the **Orbital Trophy**.

The **East Aphelion** was won by Bod Dodds of Crawley Mariners SC.

### **FATE plate:**

The nominations were **Mike Allen** (nominated by Nigel Fern) or **Bala Sailing Club** (nominated by Chris Robinson and Nigel Fern) After discussion it was voted on and Bala Sailing Club is to be awarded the trophy for not only their loyalty to the Comet Class for sticking with us for three years, but also for staging an informal Championships in 2021 despite the actual event having to be cancelled. They then held a successful National Championships in 2022 at the third attempt.

### **Hossell Plate:**

**Paul Hinde** was nominated by Nigel F and Peter M for his tireless work on updating the Comet website and is still in the background (although not on the Committee) for website help for Nigel.

A late nomination came in from Guy Wilkins for **Chipstead Sailing Club** for their work with WOW (Women on Water) which has helped develop a stream of new women sailors and expand the Comet fleet at their Club.

After discussion and voting Paul Hinde was the nominated for the Hossell Plate for this year.

### **Jaggers Trophy**

The nomination for **Carol Butcher** (nominated Peter Mountford) was the only nomination for the Jaggers Trophy for her article "White Xtra – Transformational" in Perihelion 135 describing the effect her new reefing White Xtra sail has had on her racing at Club and Open meeting level.

The Committee also had a Zoom Committee meeting in October. Here are some notes from it.

**Sail Branding** Nick Baber from Nottingham SC had asked for dispensation from the Committee to have the Prostate Cancer Awareness Logo on his sails for his new boat Comet 904. This was passed and noted that dispensation was given on an individual basis.

**The RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show at Farnborough** arrangements are all in place and Chris Robinson would like volunteers on the Stand during the weekend of 25/26 February 2023.

**AGM** The Committee to discuss the timing of the AGM at the Nationals.

**Nationals 2023** at Ogston SC over the August Bank Holiday.

I think that is all the news from the Committee for now. I hope you all have a lovely Christmas and Happy New Year all ready for a new sailing season in 2023

Liz Hossell  
Hon. Secretary  
[secretary@cometsailing.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cometsailing.org.uk)



## ***Builder's Report***

Another Comet was built early October, this time for stock, a lovely Sea Blue one with a waterline. It was the sixth one built this year which was better than the last few years. Although new Comets seem a bargain compared with the similar single-handers, they are a lot more than the average second-hand Comet. Any Comets for sale seem to get snapped up very quickly and a lot then get converted to the new rig!



The Dinghy Show Comet has been ordered and may be built later this year.

Talking of the Dinghy Show, please spread the word. It is really worth the trip and with easier parking etc. so much nicer than the old venue. This year I will have my own small stand (4 sq m!) opposite the Class Association stand and I am planning to bring and sell spares and covers etc. Anyone wanting sails and covers to save postage please give me plenty of notice.

Talking of sails, we are quite well stocked up with White Xtras at the moment but only have a few standard Comet Sails. These are on the 2019 price, when we received them but a new batch arriving in the Spring can only be a fair bit dearer, we don't know how much until the new year.

Currently, I'm finishing off repairs on three Chipstead Comets, all damaged at different times, not as a result of some Comet carnage!

Even "off season" Comet fleets are still growing. The first Comet (I think) at Shustoke near Birmingham, bought another for his wife and just before Staunton Harold's Open, I handed over two new White Xtras for two experienced Mirror sailors who'd recently added more Comet's to Shustoke.

Another growing Comet club is Bowmoor where I called in back in September while the Byte Inlands were happening. I've now heard that Comets will also be there for the Association Champs next year.

The climate, political, economical, and weather wise have now turned cold and nasty but as ever, Spring and fair winds will come again! Try and have a good Xmas and hopefully I'll see a good few of you at the Dinghy Show in February.

Andy

## **Committee Notes**

### **COMET EVENTS 2023**

I am pleased to report that both Comet Championship events have been fixed for 2023, so please make a note in your diaries. Further details follow:

#### **National Championship - Ogston SC - 26-28 August**

Ogston is a reservoir of around 200 acres in a beautiful part of Derbyshire (Amber Valley). There will be camping on site. Ogston SC is experienced at holding successful open and championship events, and the food is first class. Ogston has held Comet opens for the last 2 years, and entrants really enjoyed themselves. There are about 15 Comets at Ogston including a few club training boats, and the Commodore (ex-Comet helm) will be pressing members to try and ensure that all 15 are used. There are lots of great things to see and do in the local area, so why not make it part of a holiday?

#### **Association Championship - Bowmoor SC - 23 & 24 September**

Bowmoor SC is a thriving club on a large lake of some 120 acres in rural Gloucestershire (Southern Cotswolds). There will be camping on site. Bowmoor is experienced at holding successful open and championship events. There is a growing and enthusiastic Comet fleet well into double figures, with a Comet fleet captain and healthy entries of Comets in club races. A particular feature here is the Comet's popularity with lady helms. A Comet open was planned in 2022, but a date clash meant it had to be dropped from the calendar. The 2023 Comet Association Championship will be shared with the Byte Inland Championship, and it should be a very interesting and sociable weekend. We can expect to see about 50 boats on the water. Maybe this could be part of a late summer holiday, because the Cotswolds are special and quieter at this time of year?

#### **Open Meetings**

I am busy setting up the 2023 Open circuit. 10 Opens have confirmed dates and 6 Opens have provisional dates. I am hoping that there will be at least 20 Open meetings in the final programme, split into the 4 regional Aphelions. In the next week or two I will be adding details of confirmed opens to the Comet website. If your club does not normally have a Comet Open, but would be interested in holding one in 2023, then please get in touch with me.

#### **The Future**

Championship events are best arranged well in advance. If your club would be interested in holding a Comet Championship in 2024 (or later) then please contact me.

#### **Eddie Pope**

### **RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show 2023**

As in previous years we will have a Comet Class Association stand at the RYA Dinghy and Watersports Show displaying a Comet supplied by Comet Dinghies. Comet Dinghies will have their

own stand opposite ours. We will need some volunteers for the stand, so if you are interested, please let me know. You will get an exhibitor's pass to the show and there will be time to look around the show during the day.

Like last year the show will be at Farnborough International Exhibition Centre and the dates are 25<sup>th</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

Chris Robinson  
Comet 63 & 867

## Comet Open Severn Sailing Club

There were 9 competitors of which 6 were visitors. The weather was fine with 6-9 mph winds.

### Race 1

With keen starters Trisha Peacock and Ben Palmer over the line, Dave Turtle had a clear start, closely followed by Henry Jagers. When the race settled down Dave led Henry until the last lap when Ben Palmer past Henry.

### Race 2

Dave Turtle again had a good start and Ben Palmer was over the line again! With keen racing the race settled once again with Dave, Ben and Henry leading. On the second lap Andy Griffin in his first sail in a Comet passed Henry into third place.

### Race 3

Dave Turtle again took the lead at the start by using the same method of being above the line and dropping below then sweeping around the fleet who sat on the line to windward. With wind increasing this allowed Chris Robinson and Nick Moon to have a better race.

Throughout the day all racers gave there all and with positions keenly contested.

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

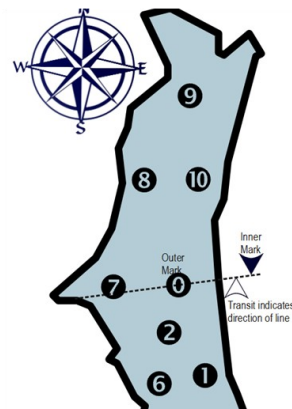
Event: Seven

Date: Aphelion: South

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Dave Turtle	815	Xw	ShuSC	1	1	1	2	1
Ben Palmer	597	St	BWSC	2	2	2	4	2
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	3	4	7	7	3
Chris Robinson	867	St	BuSC	5	7	3	8	4
Nick Moon	687		SeSC	4	8	4	8	5
Andy Griffin	782	Xw	SeSC	7	3	9	10	6
Tricia Peacock	882	Xw	SeSC	8	5	5	10	7
John Coppenhall	523	St	HuSC	6	6	8	12	8
Roger Harrison	382	Xw	ReddSC	9	9	6	15	9

## Comet Class Open Meeting Merthyr Tydfil Sailing Club

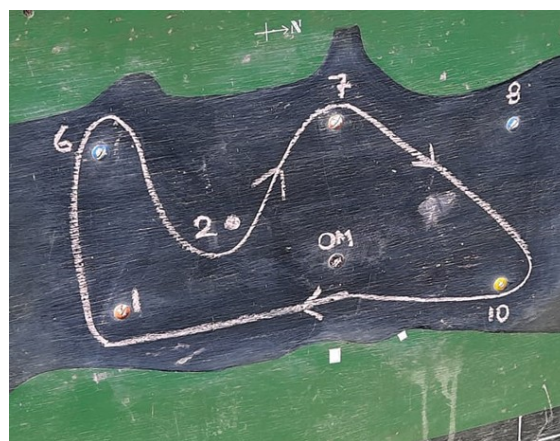
The forecast was for stronger winds from the south with occasional showers. When I left home in Cardiff to head north to the club, the wind was rather gusty. I was surprised as we headed north and inland that the wind strength seemed to reduce. Thankfully we only had one significant shower and the stronger gusts generally stayed away. But we did have a good strong (f3 to f4+) southerly wind which is straight up the reservoir and ideal for setting a great windward leeward course. We had a relatively low turnout for our event with just seven entrants this year including three visitors; maybe the forecast kept people away after such a lovely summer. However, for those who came we enjoyed some exhilarating racing and some spectacular capsizes.



### **Race 1**

The wind was strong from the south. So, a course was set, 1, 6, 2, 7, 10, Line (see chart). The briefing was held and everyone launched.

The wind remained strong for the start and first away from the line was Ben Palmer (597, Baltic Wharf SC) fractionally ahead of Chris Robinson (867, Burghfield SC). Alun Bevan (694, Merthyr Tydfil SC) followed close behind. As the beat progressed the front two pulled ahead slightly and Robert Wookey (165, Merthyr Tydfil) overtook Alun to gain third place. There was an exciting flat out planning reach before the downwind legs began.



Comets are “fun” downwind in a blow, needing careful trim and balance. There were a few capsizes. Chris and Ben fought over the first two places for the four laps, but Ben stayed ahead to take first, followed by Chris and then Robert in third.

The boats then all returned to shore for a lunch break.

After lunch the course was reset to be 1, 6, 10 (moved up slightly), Line. This gave a course with fewer gybes and hopefully fewer capsizes.



### **Race 2**

This time Alun Bevan got away from the line first as behind him there was an incident at the outer mark. By the end of the first lap Ben Palmer had overtaken Alun and Chris was on his heels. This race was “exciting”, with the wind rather strong in the middle, as a squally shower passed overhead resulting in significant waves. By the fourth lap Chris had caught up with Ben and at the end of this managed to squeeze ahead for a win. Ben was second and Robert Wookey in third.



© Amanda Williams

The fleet stayed out on the water to enable a back-to-back race over the same course as the wind was steady at this time.

### Race 3

There were only four starters for the final race of the afternoon and the start got away with no incident this time. The fact that positions recorded for each lap were constant hides the fact that Ben and Chris were battling hard for the front spot as they both had a first and second from the earlier races. But in the end, after four hard, fast laps in the strong wind that resulted in some exciting planning reaches and runs and capsizes in the lovely warm water. Chris crossed the line ahead of Ben by a few seconds, followed a little while later by Mark Govier (460, Merthyr Tydfil SC) and Alun Bevan.



© Amanda Williams

Congratulations to Chris for a hard-fought win in strong wind conditions.

Tea and cakes were then enjoyed by all in the recently refurbished clubhouse.

### Thanks

Thanks go out to the organisers, caterers, and safety boat crew and all who helped at the club on the day and earlier.

Mark Govier (Comet 460) and Honorary Secretary MTSC

## Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Merthyr Tydf

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Chris Robinson	867	St	BuSC	2	1	1	2	1
Ben Palmer	597	St	BWSC	1	2	2	3	2
Robert Wookey	165	St	MTSC	3	3	RTD	6	3
Mark Govier	460	St	MTSC	4	5	3	7	4
Alan Bevan	694	St	MTSC	5	4	4	8	5
Andrew Williams	426	St	MTSC	6	RTD	DNS	13	6
Henry Jagers	800	WX	BeSC	RTD	DNS	DNS	-	7



## Comet Open at Silverwing SC

Silverwing SC held their inaugural Comet open meeting on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September. We contested the newly re-purposed 'Comet Trophy'. Originally used as an inter-club Fireball trophy back when Silverwing was British European Airways' works club We think it is part of an old propeller from a de Havilland Heron. It is probably heavy enough to sink a Comet.

12 boats, including 4 from the home fleet of 5, showed up to a gentle North West wind and rather a lot of weed. The weed was somewhat a nuisance, limiting course options for the race officer as a large chunk of the leeward side of the lake being un-usable.

Four 40-minute races were planned with one discard, two before and two after lunch, each pair back-to-back.

**Race one** got away on time, slightly more starboard bias on the line than the RO would have liked, but everyone behaved. The first beats saw an initial good performance by a Silverwing Solo sailor (who shall remain un-named) sailing a borrowed Comet. Unfortunately, in a Solo you can easily tell if you have forgotten to put the transom bung in while sailing – you can see it. Not so in a Comet. I have seen swamped Salcombe Yawls floating lower in the water, but only just! We had the rescue boat escort him back to the slipway just in case.

The lead boat then peeled off after the first lap. The first 3 boats then promptly forgot to use the windward mark of the second beat and headed instead for the gybe mark. They corrected this error without any loss of position.

One or two people struggled with the weed initially, but with a half up rudder and the occasional lifting of the dagger board if the boat felt dead, the intrepid Comet sailors overcame adversity. Eddie Pope C377 won ahead of Izac Dodds C701 and then local sailor Ken Baker C695 third.



**Race 2** started as soon as the last boat was finished and ready. Helen Evans C868 spotted that the wind was starting to shift right as predicted. This had her well placed for most of the first beat.

However, shifts and a hole at the windward mark enabled Ken Baker C695 to lead a couple of visitors round in front of her. Ken was able to hold two pursuers off for the first run, and was only pipped int 4<sup>th</sup> by Ben Palmer C597 on the finish line. Eddie Pope finished first again, followed by Izac Dodds.

After this we convened for lunch. The Comet fleet are a keen bunch. The wind had been steadily shifting to the right so a re-setting of the course was required. They were all on the water and at the start line before the RO even had the chance to go back in and draw the new course on the board! Fortunately, the race team displayed mark numbers for the new course on the back of the committee boat and there was an eager crew in a Jaffa waiting to lead the fleet around.



**Race 3** started with the line now biased a bit too much to port. The wind had swung back a bit – such is a race officer's lot! One competitor got a flying start right at the pin, only a mainsheet width from being over. Izac Dodds was second with Ken Baker in third. Steve Gregory C231 was able to follow the lead bunch in fourth for the first two of the three laps, but ended up dropping to 6<sup>th</sup> on the last lap.

**Race 4** started in a little less wind and only 8 competitors. It also saw a change of scene at the front. Ben Palmer C597 led for most of the race, sometimes by quite a big margin, although he was reeled in towards the end by Izac Dodds. Ken Baker C695 was second for the first and most of the second lap but was passed on the penultimate beat by Izac Dodds. Eddie Pope could only manage a fourth, which was to be his discard. With 35 minutes gone the RO decided to finish on two laps as it looked like the wind would die. At which point, the wind filled in nicely! Still there was the consolation of a big Comet chocolate cake and scones for afternoon tea.



© Phil Berquist

Adam Wickenden with additions from Ken Baker and Helen Evans.



© Phil Berquist

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Silver Wing  
Date: Aphelion: South

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Points	Final Position
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	1	1	2	4	4	1
Izac Dodds	701	St	CMYC	2	2	1	2	5	2
Ben Palmer	597	St	BWSC	5	3	4	1	8	3
Ken Baker	695	Xw	SWSC	3	4	3	3	9	4
Michael Ettershan	323	St	URSC	4	5	5	6	14	5
Steve Gregory	231	Xw	FPSC	9	8	6	5	19	6
Helen Evans	868	Xw	SWSC	7	9	7	7	21	7
Timothy Higgs	849	Xw	BuSC	8	7	8	8	23	8
John Sturgeon	400	Xw	HLYC	6	6	RET	DNC	25	9
Peter Phillips	300	Xt	SWSC	RET	10	RET	DNC	36	10
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	RET	DNC	DNC	DNC	39	11
Clive Rogers	220	Xt	SWSC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	39	12



## Crawley Mariners Comet Open September 2022

Crawley Mariners held their annual Comet Open meeting on 17th September on a beautiful sunny day, with a light and shifty breeze. Seven boats participated.

### Race 1

This started with Bob Dodds getting an early lead with Izac Dodds chasing. Mike Thompson got past Izac but not for long. In fact, a late charge by Izac resulted in getting past Bob at the last leeward mark, however Bob was not to be beaten! Further down the fleet, Alan Todd pipped Jeff Smith on the line despite being behind for the rest of the race proving the adage never give up!



### Race 2

The wind went haywire for a few minutes before the start but fortunately settled back to the forecast direction just before the start. Everyone was tight to the line but Bob was a good boat length over and had to return. This left Izac to get a good lead, however the fleet compressed with Bob pulling through to second downwind. A hard-fought beat on lap two then resulted in Bob getting through to first and back to third two tacks later with visitor Nigel Austin up to second. In the middle of the fleet the tricky North Westerly over the trees caused a few problems and capsizes with the sudden gusts and shifts. It looked like Izac has got away but again the fleet compressed into the last leeward mark. Nail biting last beat resulted in just 20 seconds between first and fifth, but again Bob sneaked through making it two from two at lunchtime.



### Race 3

After lunch with the wind shifting more to the North, the race started from the Committee boat instead of the Maid of Kent. Mike got a flyer with a healthy lead around the first mark. This continued throughout the first lap with Jeff and Nigel following, with Bob and Izac having ground to make up. Mike fell into a hole down the next run with boats unfortunately overtaking on both sides. Bob sneaked through to leeward of everyone but hit the mark and had to take a penalty. Bob however battled back and eventually pulled out a decent lead to take the third race and the event.



### Race 4

With Bob sitting out the final race we had an extremely competitive last race. Four boats converging on the first windward mark, two had to take a penalty. Izac was one of them, but he still pulled through into first down the run.

Izac sailed off into the distance to take a commanding win from Nigel and Jeff despite a final twist when a squall came through resulting in a couple of broaches, death rolls and a capsize.

It was a thoroughly fascinating day for the race committee watching some very close and tactical

racing, with the odd bit of luck thrown in. At the end of the day Bob's consistency shone though, with his first CMYC Comet Open win for a few years. Well done to Bob.

Geoff Larkin

## Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Crawley Mariners Yacht Club

Date: 17th September 2022



Helm	Boat Number	Sail (Comet, Mino, Xtra)	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Points	Final Position
Bob Dodds	869		CMYC	1	1	1	DNS	3	1
Izak Dodds	701		CMYC	2	2	3	1	5	2
Nigel Austin	875		CrSC	RTD	3	2	2	7	3
Mike Thompson	518		CMYC	3	4	5	4	11	4
Jeff Smith	31		CMYC	5	5	4	3	12	5
Alan Todd	725		CMYC	4	6	6	5	15	6
Caroline Whittle	299	X	CMYC	6	7	7	6	19	7
Michael O'Driscoll	289		CMYC	RTD	DNS	DNS	DNS	24	8

Unfortunately no report has been forwarded for the Littleton or Redesmere Comet Open but here are their results.

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Littleton  
Date: Aphelion: East

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Bob Dodds	869	Xw	CMYC	1	3	2	3	1
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	2	1	5	3	2
Ben Palmer	597	St	BWSC	3	2	3	5	3
Andy Dale	788	St	EySC	7	8	1	8	4
Annette Webster	323	St	WGCSC	5	4	4	8	5
Stephen Lemmon	805	St	LiSC	9	5	6	11	6
Peter Sroia-Williams	134	St	LiSC	4	9	8	12	7
Michael O'Driscoll	701	St	CMYC	6	6	7	12	8
Tim Higgs	849	Xw	BuSC	8	7	9	15	9
Helen Evans	868	Xw	SWSC	10	10	10	20	10

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Redesmere  
Date: Aphelion: North

Helm	Boat	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Race #4	Points	Final Position
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	1	1	1	1	3	1
Chris Robinson	867	St	BuSC	2	2	2	3	6	2
Steve Bellamy	311	Xw	WFSC	3	4	4	2	9	3
Jeffery Smith	508		ReSC	5	3	5	4	12	4
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	4	5	3	DNS	12	5
Martin Loud	705	Xw	WFSC	6	6	6	5	17	6
Guy Benson	438		ReSC	7	7	DNF	DNS	22	7

## **Ogston SC Comet Open**

Andy Dale's initial thoughts on his Ogston Open trip..

I travelled up to Ogston from Essex the night before and camped in the dinghy park when I arrived it was so dark there I couldn't even see where the water was!

After pitching my tent by head torch I was joined by Ben Palmer who had driven up from Bristol, we decided to get the torches out and have an explore around the dinghy park and to locate the water. From what we could see it looked like a great size sailing area and then we found a map of the buoys attached to a small hut where we realised we could only see a very small part of it as it stretched out around the corner.

I wanted to check out the venue as it's where next year's National Championships will take place and the next morning as I opened the tent to reveal a fantastic view that certainly won't disappoint, with a great sailing area, camping on site and a very nice club house overlooking the race course. Three close races with lots of place changes and wind strengths it was a good day of playing on the water for all.

The OOD indicated that there would be two back to back races before lunch to complete the Challenger and General Handicap Open that was running alongside the Comet Open. He caused Martin Loud (WFSC) some consternation by announcing that although the start routine was 5, 4, 1 the Comet start would effectively be at 7 minutes after the first gun! Nigel Fern (SHSC) thought he had solved the issue by setting his watch at 7 only to find that his watch was set at 7 hours!!!

### **Race 1**

Martin Honnor (OgSC) had a good start and led for the first 2 laps. On the 3rd lap he was overtaken by Ben Palmer (BWSC) and Eddie Pope (OgSC). Eddie crossed in front of Ben on the final beat to the finish, but misjudged his approach to the line. Ben crossed the line just in front of Eddie, closely followed by Martin H.

Meanwhile in the mid field to rear of the fleet a running battle ensued throughout the race between Martin Loud, Chris Robinson (BuSC) and Nigel Fern with these three swapping places on a regular basis.

Just after Nigel crossed the line he felt no increase in wind strength but an increase in weight on his right hand and on looking back saw to his horror that the shackle pin holding the block to the horse had disappeared! As race 2 was to be back to back with race 1 he had no option but to return to the shore to refit the shackle. After sailing and paddling some 200 yards he was amazed to see the shackle pin rolling around the transom deck. A few seconds later he was back on the water but massively missed the Comet start.

### **Race 2**

Thankfully the race Officer kept the same course of a long beat with a gate followed by runs and reaches. Alan Bennett (SHSC) got his act together and started on time reaching the windward mark first, very closely followed by Martin H. Eddie was now threatening moving up to second. Martin H was getting away nicely but he found some light wind which enabled the leading four boats now including Steve Bellamy (WFSC) to close up ready for the final beat to the gate. Eddie won this race closely followed by Martin H then Steve and Alan in 4th. The rest of the fleet had close racing but at a distance from the leading group.

The competitors had a delicious lunch and then out for the final race.



### Race 3

A rather complicated course was set for the Comets but fortunately a lead boat took the competitors round for the first lap.

Eddie, Alan and Martin H broke away from the pack with Eddie leading. Alan got into the lead but then had to try to remember the course! This worked out quite well in the end with some planing happening on the long reach across the lake. Martin H dropped back and took a third place. On the penultimate lap Eddie wanted the race to finish asking the Race Officer as we went behind the stern of his boat! Going into the final long reach almost to the finish Eddie had a narrow lead but Alan managed to pass him. The rest of the fleet again had close racing. Eddie won the event with Martin H and Alan tied on 5 points. The win in the final race decided the second place went to Alan.

Many thanks to Ogston Sailing Club and we look forward to returning for the Comet Nationals next August.

Report compiled by Andy Dale, Eddie Pope, Alan Bennett and Nigel Fern

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Ogston

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	2	1	2	3	1
Alan Bennett	126	Xw	SHSC	8	4	1	5	2
Martin Honnor	895	Xw	OgSC	3	2	3	5	3
Ben Palmer	597	S	BWSC	1	7	5	6	4
Stephen Bellamy	311	Xw	WFSC	4	3	6	9	5
Andy Dale	788	S	EySC	6	6	4	10	6
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	7	5	8	12	7
Mike Heap	108	S	OgSC	5	RTD	9	14	8
Chirs Robinson	867	S	BuSC	10	9	7	16	9
Martin Loud	705	Xw	WFSC	9	8	11	17	10
Nigel Fern	845	Xw	SHSC	11	11	10	21	11
Santos Dsousa	208	S	OgSC	12	10	12	22	12

At the time of going to print I have not received a report from Bristol and Avon on their Open. The results are below.

### Comet Class Association Results Sheet

Event: Bristol Avon

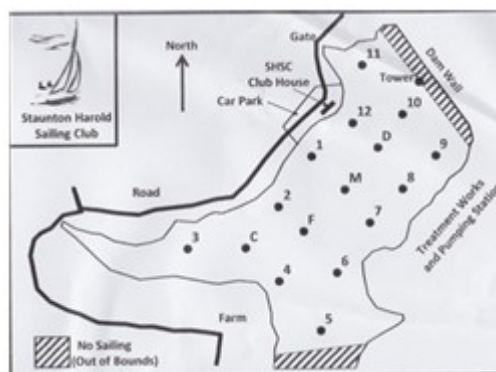
Date: Aphelion: West

Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Ben Palmer	597	S	BWSC	5	1	1	2	1
Chris Robinson	867	S	BuSC	1	3	4	4	2
John Coppenhall	532	S	HuSC	3	2	2	4	3
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	2	5	5	7	4
Tim Hughes	599	S	BASC	4	4	3	7	5
Mick Parnell	830	S	BASC	6	6	6	12	6
Adam Strawbridge	713	S	BASC	7	7	7	14	7



## Staunton Harold SC Comet Open

Low water levels at Staunton Harold Reservoir, only about 40 % of capacity, did not deter 18 entries to the Club Comet Open and the last event in the Comet Association Northern Aphelion Series. It was a bright sunny day with good south westerly wind perfect for making the best use of the limited amount of water and enabling a good long beat to the windward mark. The necessity to spot appropriate wind shifts on the tricky beats and find stronger wind channels on the runs were important features of the racing throughout the day. The racing was close, competitive and fair at all levels of the fleet. There were no recalls or protests.



### **Race 1, course 5(p), M(p), 1(p), 4(p), 11(s) Gate. Wind strength F3-4**

Ben Palmer from BWSC led throughout, achieving a good lead at the first mark. He was followed by Andy Dale, EySC, and Kris Kenmuir-Hogg, Alan Bennett, and Nigel Fern, all SHSC. By the second lap Eddie Pope, Ogston SC, had climbed his way up the fleet achieving 5<sup>th</sup> at mark 5. Kris and Andy were fighting it out going down to 11 on the first lap and went wide allowing Alan to squeeze through to 2<sup>nd</sup> place. Nigel slowly fell away but was soon joined by the recovering Chris Robinson BuSC and Nigel Austin CrSC. For the next lap and a half these three fought a running battle that was not decided until the last tack when Nigel F fluffed his lines allowing Chris through.



© Kate Whittlesey

The final result was Ben 1<sup>st</sup>, Kris 2<sup>nd</sup> and Alan 3<sup>rd</sup>.

It was energetic sailing with brisk winds and a course of beats and runs. There was one capsized and some gear breakages in this race.

### **Race 2, course 5(s), 2(s), 7(p), 10(p), 11(p) Gate. Wind strength F2-3.**

Once again the race started with a good long beat down to 5. This time the course had been amended to include more reaches. The racing was much closer with slightly less wind than race 1.

Alan led at the first mark followed by Ben then Eddie. Positions changed at each gybe mark as people battled for overlaps. On the very broad reach to 10 the wind filled in enabling the fleet to close up.

The second and third laps were very close with the final result being Ben 1<sup>st</sup>, Kris 2<sup>nd</sup> and Eddie 3<sup>rd</sup>. Alan hung on to the 4<sup>th</sup> place, closely followed by Chris Robinson..

### **Race 3, course 6(s), 1(p), F(p), 7(p), 10(p) Gate wind strength F1-2 and dropping.**

The Race Officer set a shorter course as winds were lessening. Kris made it first to the windward mark closely followed by Alan, Ben and Eddie. The next leg to 1 was a part reach. Alan overtook Kris to the leeward mark. Close racing continued as the wind dropped. Henry Jaggars, BeSC

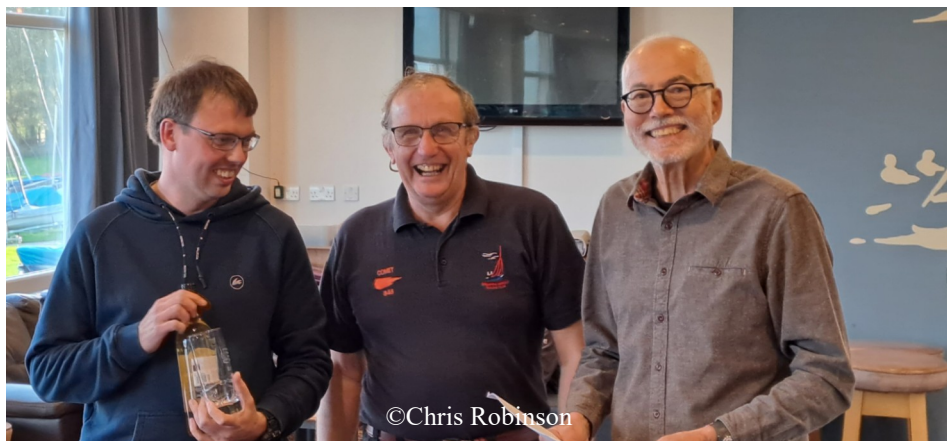
joined the leading group and went into the lead on the run down to 10. As the wind dropped Eddie made it through to the front followed by Alan, Ben and Henry following. The Race Office shortened the course as the wind dropped. The final positions were Eddie 1<sup>st</sup>, Alan, 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ben 3<sup>rd</sup>, Henry then Kris.



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It was a great day's sailing enjoyed by all. A big thank you goes to the Race Team and also the Galley for providing delicious great baked potatoes and fillings with homemade cakes.

Report compiled by Steve Boud with contributions from Alan Bennett, Eddie Pope and Nigel Fern



Comet Class Association Results Sheet								
Event:		Staunton Harold						
		Aphelion		North				
Helm	Boat Number	Sail	Club	Race #1	Race #2	Race #3	Points	Final Position
Ben Palmer	597	S	BWSC	1	1	3	2	1
Eddie Pope	377	Xw	OgSC	5	3	1	4	2
Chris Kenmuir-Hogg	683	Xw	SHSC	2	2	5	4	3
Alan Bennett	126	Xw	SHSC	3	4	2	5	4
Andy Dale	788	S	EySC	4	6	7	10	5
Chris Robinson	867	S	BuSC	6	5	9	11	6
Henry Jagers	800	Xw	BeSC	9	10	4	13	7
Nigel Austin	875	Xw	CrSC	8	9	6	14	8
Sue Jones	835	Xw	NSC	11	8	8	16	9
Chris Fowler	895	Xw	OgSC	10	7	10	17	10
Nigel Fern	845	Xw	SHSC	7	11	13	18	11
Marie Marshall	83	S	NSC	13	DSQ	11	24	12
Martin Loud	705	Xw	WFSC	12	12	12	24	13
Steve Boud	740	Xw	SHSC	14	13	14	27	14
Dave Waymont	527	Xw	SHSC	16	15	15	30	15
Helen Leivers	857	Xw	SeSC	17	14	DNC	31	16
Nick Baber	402	Xw	NSC	15	17	DNC	32	17
Hilary Weatherdon	688	Xw	SHSC	DNF	16	16	32	18



# How to Succeed

Comet Nationals 2022 – Bala Sailing Club.

Summary of Plan, Strategy and Regatta Execution.

## Boat Preparation -

1 week before the Championships

### Sail

610 has a Comet White Xtra which is reefable. I ordered this main with an eye on my 2 grandchildren being able to use the boat.

The sail is in good condition (18 months old) and still has a great shape.

The purist would say a White Xtra without reefing patches and holes would be better – while I agree, the performance difference would be tiny and given the variables of the Bala weather.

Remember the sail is the ‘engine of the boat’ – if you have an old, tired sail you will struggle in a straight-line speed race.

Hull - Buffed the hull with fibreglass cutting compound to clean off all grime and lake residue followed by Polishing the hull with grp polish.

I believe a clean polished hull is an advantage. (This view is not shared by everyone – some claim that a shiny hull can add slight drag to its flow).

**Centre board and rudder blade** sanded with 1500 grit to remove small scratches then polished.

**Mast and boom** - I checked all rivet heads for signs of wear (loose) and corrosion.

**Control lines and mainsheet** all checked for wear.

**Rudder pintails** – 3 boats had screws that were loose.

Another of our boats had loose screws which would not re-tighten. So, they were removed, holes drilled out, teak plugs epoxied in – then when hardened new holes were drilled which rectified the problem.

A rudder failure is to be avoided as it can be regatta threatening.

**Jamming cleats** all cleaned and checked for sticking cams etc.

### The Venue

I was fortunate to have sailed at Bala just 6 weeks earlier – a mixed handicap open Borders Counties Midweek Sailing Regatta (26 boats) - which I won in my Supernova. However, on this regatta we had 12 knots of wind from the favourable Southwest direction. So, while it was helpful to be familiar with the club and the surroundings our Comet event primarily had Easterly winds in 0 – 5 knots – A significantly different challenge!

Despite this, one good tip is to talk with local sailors. I had numerous chats with locals who were sailing in both the asymmetric and fast handicap fleets. Asking their opinion about what is likely

to happen out there is valuable information.

### **Expectation**

It is important to go into any regatta with some goals –

e.g. for Bala mine were –

Minimum – to achieve a top 10 place

Realistic – to get on the podium (top3)

Optimistic – To win it!

### **These goals should be based on fact not emotion!**

So, mine came from looking at my last 3 Comet regatta performances – with a 3, 3 and 2. I knew I was going into Bala with additional improvements to my boat speed and technique, combined with some knowledge of the venue.

### **Weather**

7 days out the forecast was taking shape – it was going to be light and from the East.

This direction was going to mean shifty conditions - not ideal to try and plan for.

Personally, I would have liked 15-20 knots from the South, but this was not going to happen! Once I had the forecast clear as we approached the weekend, I started to think about:

### **Key areas to focus on**

Boat speed would be less important than good starts and going the right way up the first beat. (If you had good boat speed but missed the wind pressure on the favoured side then you would be in trouble).

In the Bala conditions we experienced the phrase, “**get and keep your head OUT OF THE BOAT**” was key to success. I spent the 3 racing days constantly looking 200 metres in front of me – left and right side of the course. I was looking for primarily wind pressure, the clues were darker patches on the water and other sailing boats - racing or pleasure dinghies – they will all move in wind!

### **Strategy**

Start the regatta well – meaning on day 1 you should aim to get good scores on the board – if you take big risks or get a DSQ you put huge pressure on yourself for the rest of the regatta.

So linked to my expectations I would not have a problem with being close to the podium after day 1 – it means I am still in the game with 2 days to go – bigger risk plays can come later when I have a discard(s) to fall back on. So, leading after day 1 with a 1,4,1 was a bonus as I did not over gamble.

### **Clothing**

Feeling cold in a boat is the worst situation. However, the temperature forecast for the weekend was well above 20. Combine this with light winds made my decision **not to wear a wet suit** a good one.

I sailed in lightweight board shorts and a fisherman's shirt which I bought in Australia. The shirt is loose fitting has a collar and pockets and is factor 50 sun protection.

I was really comfortable all weekend. I did hear feedback from other sailors that they were too hot in wet suits etc.

Roll tacking and lots of tacks on wind shifts quickly increases temperature and the Comet does

require you to sit forward and on an angle in light conditions. The more easily you can move around the boat without overheating the better.

### **Starts**

Absolutely key to my success was starting well.

So, I arrived as early as possible at the committee boat in order to do the following –

**Establish the bias on the line** – boat or pin end. Sometimes this was not clear cut due to wind shifts.

On the final 2 races it was clear at the 3-minute gun the wind had gone soft and headed on the starboard tack – simply put the line had huge port bias.

I sailed to the pin end (it was telling that so few boats were there!) – when the gun went on race 5, I was pin end boat, tacked and crossed the whole fleet never to be headed.

Race 6 was also port biased but then quickly getting to the right was the next play.

**Practice beats** – I lost count of how many I did.

A practice beat gets you into ‘**race mode**’ and should give you information about what is happening left, right and middle.

My practice beats also allowed me to work out wind cycles and direction changes and how long were they lasting. The answer was no more than 2-3 minutes. So often just before the start I would have an idea of the next cycle which helped me decide where to start and whether to go left or right.

However, my greatest source of information came from the 2 fleets that went before us.

I worked out that the 2 RS100 sailors were both competent and local.

Once they started, I was obsessed with watching which way they went and who got the greatest gain. Most races they did what I prayed for!

They split tacks.

This enabled me to clearly see which side had gained – really valuable information.

In addition, I was asking them about their tactics for the conditions. You will be amazed what people will share with you if you ask!

### **Sail Setting / Upwind –**

During prestart I was also optimising the sail setting –

There are 4 adjustments –

**1.The main sheet** – In light and variable conditions it is critical not to ‘over sheet’ (pulling the main too tight).

I was adjusting mainsheet pressure throughout the upwind legs – once the boat has momentum then you can tighten the main sheet a little – this produces a flatter sail and allows higher pointing angle.

But....

As soon as the wind goes soft you must ease the main and put the bow down (point lower).

I noticed many boats close to me would try and squeeze higher when the wind went soft and still had their mains in too tight. This cripples the boat speed.

My goal when it went light was to keep as much boat speed going as possible in order **to get to the next wind pressure before my competitors** – so I kept easing the main and sailing low.

If you have a choice between height and speed in a light wind regatta – choose speed.  
You can get your height back when the wind increases.

**2. Kicker** – The White Xtra likes kicker – approx. 2 inches from neutral to get a good shape / leech tension. Again, I would only ease this if the wind went very soft.

**3. Outhaul** – I sail with approximately 1 fist gap on the foot in light winds.

I noticed many boats were sailing with quite baggy foots on their mains (2/3 fists) –

If you look at the main from behind (when on the shore) with a big gap on the foot, the wind has to go into the sail, down a valley to the lowest point, then climb back up and out to the leech of the sail to escape.

This acts as a handbrake on the boat – the wind has too much to do – flow is disrupted. I learned this from my Australian sail maker.

Had the wind had built to 10 knots and I was sat out on the toe straps / hiking then I would release the outhaul to 1.5 to 2 fists in size?

Why – because at that point you would be going through a slight chop / disturbed water and would need more power to drive the boat upwind. In addition, as the boat would now be creating more apparent wind (wind created by the boats speed) the wind flow would be less ‘sticky’ while flowing over the sail.

Above 15 knots (and now possibly overpowered) I would bring it back in to 1 fist, with a lot of down haul and kicker on.

**4. Downhaul / Cunningham** – this is the easy one. I spent most of the regatta with it hand tight only or off. This control has huge benefit in strong winds but not in the light stuff.

### **Down Wind –**

Kicker 1-2 inches on – a few people sail with more kicker than me on a run.  
More kicker means a tighter leech and slightly larger area to catch the wind.

Less kicker means slightly less area but main can fill out quicker and behave more like a spinnaker.

Outhaul off – let the sail ‘bag out’.

Downhaul off.

Occasionally at Bala I turned down wind in a run to find the main was reluctant to go out and stay out without me pushing the boom. When I eased the kicker suddenly the boom moved forward on its own – my boat had more pace in this mode.

The original Comet sail does seem to be more effective than the White Xtra when sailing on a dead run/by the lee – (by the lee means it is possible to sail beyond the 180-degree line of the following wind). In trials at Winsford we found that the White Xtra is better sailing on a higher angle (slightly closer to the wind)

If the legs are short (most Comet clubs have short legs), then sailing straight for the mark without having to gybe can be a quicker option.

However, at Bala the legs were longer – my downwind strategy was to drive low when I had some pressure in the rig but as soon as the wind went soft and boat speed was collapsing, I would head up 10 degrees. This would mean inevitably I would have to gybe to make the mark.

On the penultimate race (Sunday race 2) with 1 run to go, I had Bob Dodds approx. 10 boat lengths behind me, with Eddy Pope a further 10-15 behind Bob. Bob is very effective at ‘kiting’ and sailing low, as is Eddy. For the first half of the run, I could see they were slowly eating into my lead. I decided to change modes by sailing higher and play the angles – this meant sailing further and having to put in 2 gybes, but the boat picked up pace and at the leeward mark I had maintained my original lead distance from the windward mark.

Finally, when sailing downwind you must be looking over your shoulder for the next pressure.

Is it left, or right?

What is happening to the other boats?

Where are the dark patches on the water?

Sometimes you ignore the next mark to get into pressure, then course correct when you have speed.

Final message - **KEEP HUMBLE** – sailing has so many variables that can trip you up, so never **be overconfident**.

Most of the above I have picked up from 60 years of racing dinghies.

I have been blessed to have got good advice and wisdom from other sailors – so if this has been helpful, **please share it with others**.

Fair winds and happy sailing.

Pete Coop

p.s. if you would like any more help or clarification from the above, please feel free to contact me.

e-mail [pete@petecoop.com](mailto:pete@petecoop.com)

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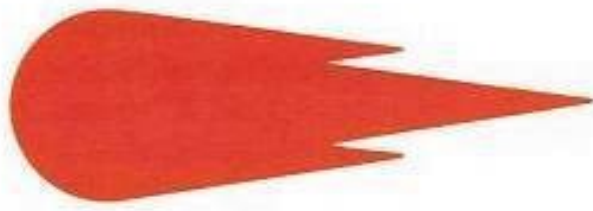
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## **Perihelion 138**

Please send your contributions for the next issue of Perihelion by

*To be decided dependent on next year's Event Calendar*

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