



Scotland

starboard

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Newsletter of RYA Sailability Scotland

Issue No.5 Summer 2008

WELCOME ABOARD

Welcome to another edition of Starboard, behind schedule, but better late than never!

The training event in March went very well and everyone seemed to enjoy it. I have been asked to arrange another one.

I haven't been able to attend many Travellers this year, but I hear they have gone very well. Duncan's was a very special one, (see report).

The Taster Days have been well supported, and we are introducing lots of new people to sailing. It is great to share this wonderful sport of sailing with new people and see their smiles. The challenge will be following these up to give people the opportunity to carry on sailing locally.

We would like to congratulate Liz Eaton on her achievements this year. She came 11th in the International in Portugal. We are all proud of her for flying the flag for Scotland.

The Multi- class event at Rutland, in August, had 62 boats competing in Challengers, 2.4mR's, Skud's, Squibs, Martin 16's and Access Dinghy's. There was a Scottish Contingent of Liz Eaton, Alec Hodge and Graham Ritchie. Liz was top Scot, finishing 4th, Alec 6th and Graham 23rd. Congratulations to them all.

I would like to get some feedback on whether the cruising event I would like to arrange will be supported by the sailors and helpers. The idea is to have a weekend of cruising round Shuna, taking in the lovely scenery, and a meal ashore on the Saturday evening.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this newsletter. I would love to get more contributions for the next edition of Starboard. So please get writing and e-mail me with what you have been up to this year.

Fiona Morrison
Hon Secretary
Sailability Scotland.

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CHALLENGER TRAINING WEEKEND

Saturday 29th March.

We started arriving at Bardowie Loch, Milngavie, for 9:00am for a weekend of Challenger race training. With a not very promising forecast of lots of rain and strong winds, I wondered how much sailing we would get in.

We started off in the morning with theory in the classroom on rounding marks and the rules involved. After a short coffee break we all went outside to learn about tuning the boats.

Martha Leonard, our coach from Port Edgar, had got a Challenger on its side and John Heron raised the mainsail. Martha demonstrated what affect the kicker, outhaul and downhaul had on the sail. It was easy to see how these controls affected the sail looking at it like that and everyone learnt what they should be doing!



We had a lunch break, and everyone got kitted up, the boats were prepared, the safety boats launched and 10 boats were launched. 2 Sailors went out as buddies and a boat was shared by two sailors due to the high demand.

It was a Southerly breeze, which was unusual, apparently, at Bardowie Loch, so the locals told us. There was a bit of rain and some gusts to make it interesting, but not like the terrible forecast predicted.

Martha set a course and everyone practised mark rounding. (I was buddying for a blind person who hadn't been out sailing before, so we stayed out of everyone's way and did our own thing.)

The training ended with a debriefing session after everyone came ashore to thaw out and warm up. The soup was very welcome which had been made for us!

The evening session saw 11 of us go for a Chinese meal at Milngavie and a great day came to a close.

Sunday 30th March

After losing an hour with the clocks going forward, some of us struggled to get out of bed. It was well worth the effort though. At 9:30am people started to arrive and the training started at 10:00am, with a recap of yesterday's mark rounding and questions answered.



Martha then looked in depth at starts. She felt there was much room for improvement, so we all listened hard to know what we should be doing. We had a coffee break and then some theory on windward tactics. After another excellent lunch prepared by the volunteers in the kitchen, Marjorie, Elspeth and Anna, we went out for an afternoon session on the water. We had some wind at last and the rain had eased so people were more enthusiastic to go out.

We had a series of short races so we could do many starts. John was busy, as race officer, blowing whistles and raising and lowering flags. The starts seemed to get better over time and Martha jumped aboard various sailors' boats to help them. I think we need more training on rules, but the starts improved!



All the boats headed for the shore and we had a good decent wind for a final sail. After a debriefing by Martha and thanks from me to Martha, CCC, John Heron, all the helpers and sailors, the training came to an end.

It was a very successful weekend and everyone seemed to appreciate it and said it was long overdue to have training. It was amazing how it all started to make sense when Martha explained things. Martha was an excellent coach and gave us a lot of food for thought and lots to practise. She answered lots of questions and cleared up a lot of uncertainties. We had 13 sailors and 27 people taking part, so the turn out was excellent. What a great start to the season.

This event was funded by RYA Sailability UK and the Seamanship and Pilotage Trust and our thanks go to both these organisations.

Fiona Morrison

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

We are off and running! Sailability Scotland's long delayed development project "Getting on the Water", aimed at providing opportunities for young people with a disability or from a disadvantaged background has finally started. Under its new snappy title of "GET WET" the first event took place at Strathclyde Loch on 19th June and was a great success.



The 'Get Wet' project is managed by Alex Campbell, a visually impaired sailor from Bellshill, near Glasgow. Alex is a recent appointment to the post of RYA Sailability Scotland Development Officer, and brings to the role a ton of enthusiasm for sailing, and the eagerness to get as many disabled people in Scotland to try sailing as possible. 'Sailing is one of my passions,

as it gives me the freedom not normally experienced in everyday life by disabled people - I'd definitely suggest that everyone gives it a go!', says Alex, who currently sails on Loch Lomond, and is a speed freak at heart.



Alex managed to attract 8 people from all over North Lanarkshire with a variety of disabilities, out on the water, even though rain threatened through much of the day, and it was really pretty windy. With the help of volunteers from the Clyde Cruising Club, Strathclyde Loch Sailing Club, and instructors Robin, Douglas and Gary from James Hamilton Heritage Park, everyone got out on the water in Challenger sailing dinghies for a real good blast, before heading back to shore soaking wet and dying for a cup of tea.

Jason, a new participant to the sport of sailing, said 'I've loved every minute of today, when can I go back out again?!', and the leader of his group, Claire, found herself really emotional about the fun that everyone had had throughout the day. She's understandably keen to have access to the sport on a regular basis, something that is being looked into now that a core of sailors has been developed.

Many thanks to all the volunteers and instructors who helped out on the day, and to the new sailors for attending the event - we look forward to seeing you all again soon!

And that's not all!

DEVELOPMENT NEWS 2

Sunday 13th July saw the latest event of RYA Sailability Scotland's "GET WET" project being held at Craignish Boat Club.



We were very lucky with the weather, having a sunny, warm day with a nice steady breeze. The local village hall was booked for the facilities, but not used much due to the lovely weather. We had a Challenger, a Wayfarer and a Flying Fifteen out.



We had people from Craignish Boat Club in the safety boat, building the Challenger and helping launching and retrieving the boats. The Challenger was kindly brought down by a member of Lochaber Challenger Group -their boats were funded by the RHYC Sail Training Trust some years ago. We also had members of the RHYC come along to support the event, so it was a team effort.

There were three instructors from RYA Scotland along to take people out on the water.

In total we had 8 sailors out, who came from as far as the Isle of Lismore and as local as Ardfern.



We had three sailors out in the Challenger, a wheelchair user, a profoundly deaf person and someone with short limbs, so it showed how versatile the Challenger is. We had someone who was visually impaired out in the Flying Fifteen and four people with learning difficulties out in the Wayfarer. Everyone who went out came in with a big smile on their faces, and keen to have another go.



Mac Armstrong of RHYC commented:

"Excellent, my congratulations to all concerned and my best wishes for the remaining events. Katie and I were able to be at the Craignish event and I know how much fun and stimulation it was for all the disabled people involved".

It is hoped that we will be able to run at least three more events before the end of the season.

Watch for reports in the next edition of Starboard

CLASS MATTERS (or does it?)

The keen eyed amongst you may or may not have noticed a change in the way we run our Challenger travellers over the last couple of seasons. For those of you who are members of the Class Association you will note that there are three classes - Gold, Silver and Bronze - based on ability and past results. It was not always the case. In theory, there have always been three classes - or fleets as we prefer to call them in Scotland. Two, Gold and Silver, were for solo sailors whilst Bronze was reserved for those sailors who by the nature of their disability or lack of experience have to sail with a pillion or buddy. This was the case until the Class Association started to allow "less experienced" solo sailors to compete in Bronze, much to the chagrin of the regular participants who were now being beaten by "lighter" craft. In Scotland we insisted that entrants in Bronze fleet had to have a buddy regardless of what they did in England. If they wanted to sail solo then it was "Silver for you my lad"! It wasn't until September 2006 that the Class Association relented and agreed that all entrants in Bronze fleet had to have a pillion.



One of the functions of the pillion is to act as an instructor to beginners. Hopefully, where possible, the helm improves until the pillion becomes a passenger or ballast, is discarded and the sailor goes solo. There are one or two sailors who sail solo at club sessions but feel the need for a buddy when racing.

The other change is that for the foreseeable future there are only two fleets, solo and pillion,

in Scotland. This is simply because there are not enough sailors to allow good competition. The largest entry so far has been ten (split five and five) at Loch Earn. There were only eleven entries at SOCC and that included three from England! There is probably a stockpile of trophies that Sailability Scotland and other clubs have bought for Silver fleet entrants to find that only one took part. There shouldn't be any satisfaction in going home with a "1st in Class" just for turning up!



Is it fair for a solo sailor of lesser experience to race in the same fleet as the very best? Some would say no because they possibly believe that they are not going to win and thus their confidence is going to suffer. Is that the point of taking part? As organisers we see it as a case of sailing together on the same water, of sailing with the best and concentrating on bettering yourself by watching and learning from what the others do rather than being concerned only with beating your classmate - if there is one! Once the racing is over go back and practise at your club (yes clubs have a responsibility too) and then come back more determined to do better. You might be surprised at the results.

Gary Phillips



Photo - Michael Gotz

TRAVELLING LIGHT

Each year the Travellers series seems to throw up new challenges and those curious incidents that are outwith the remit of most fiction writers. Last year we had the "missing event" and a handicap race where the handicaps were measured not only in minutes but in one case - days! Anything to make it fair! So as we rolled up at Loch Earn what adversity lay in wait?



We soon found out as due to a threatened shortage of fuel (Grangemouth) and a definite shortage of towing hooks (holidays) there were ten sailors and only eight boats!! How would we get round this situation - well it was surprisingly simple as it turned out. The ten sailors were split evenly between bronze and gold fleets so we decided that one member of each fleet would sit out each race giving eight sailors per race and everybody getting a valid series of three races - though not necessarily in the same boat! Once the race officers had worked out that they only had to note down sail numbers and the names would be added after the race it all became easy. Everybody ended up happy. Even the rain held off for most of the time. Gold fleet was won by Alex Hodge whilst Graham Ritchie took the honours in Bronze.



The next event saw the gang make a welcome return to Loch Venachar, an event which was especially welcomed by the local midge population who seemed to make a special effort to show their teeth! For some reason or another we managed to have more sailors than boats again - I hope it's not going to become a habit or we'll have to start drawing lots! This time there wasn't a rota system so some sailors got more races than others - ah well!



Photo Michael Gotz

To make matters potentially worse the results were provided in fleet order which makes it impossible for us and the class association to assign points for the overall championship or national league table in the case of the class association. A search party was set up and eventually - some weeks later the original race sheets were found in a drawer in the race hut - never throw anything away! The winner was Tony Flinn from the north of England who was taking part in his first Scottish event. Bronze fleet was won by Graham Ritchie.

Don't forget you will be able to read the full story in Travellers Tales when it is published.

Captain Morgan

"COMING OF AGE"
for Clyde Cruising Club, Bardowie Challenger
Flotilla.
By John Heron

Disabled sailing members and their able-bodied helpers were hosts to well over 100 special visitors and guests when they held their Annual Duncan Yacht Chandlers' Challenger Regatta on Saturday and Sunday 23rd and 24th August. The Challenger Flotilla is now in its 21st year since formation in 1987.



D McLean

Three fine races on Saturday in extremely variable winds, typical of the inland Bardowie Loch conditions, saw a keen entry of Gold and Bronze Class Challenger sailors from across Scotland. Sunday brought stronger force 4-5 WSW wind and an early heavier rain squall to enliven the conditions for the final race of the event for all boats. This gave added excitement, especially for the pillion assisted Bronze sailors.

A closely fought competition in **Gold Class** resulted in Liz Eaton from Cramond BC, Edinburgh, taking first and winning the Duncan Cup for 2008; Second was Alex Hodge of CCC; Third was David Chalmers, CCC

The variable weather conditions produced a special battle for first position line honours in **Bronze Class**. The result was First - Graham Ritchie CCC, Scotstoun; Second - Ruth Foley CCC, Glasgow; Third - Lorna Turnbull CCC, Kirkintilloch; Fourth - Jamie Scott Loch Venachar SC.



D McLean

A Helpers race on Sunday was enjoyed by nine enthusiastic buddies over three laps. Ian Taggart CCC, Challenger Flotilla founder, surprised himself with the advantage of a prompt start and managed to keep all others behind him to come home ahead of Elspeth Mann, CCC who took 2nd place. 3rd position was held by Ronnie Cameron, CCC.

Principal visitor, The Lord Dean of Guild of The merchant House of Glasgow, John Chapman with his wife Judith, and Craftsmen Deacons of The Trades House of Glasgow Drapers Fund were among the special guests and former members present.

After the racing all competing sailors, including our visitors from Cramond, Helensburgh, Lochaber and Loch Venachar, joined in a Sail Past for the Commodore Howard Morrison CCC, to the accompaniment of the pipes of Iain MacLeod.

Then it was time to join in a celebration - our "Tea Party at the Loch". This was ably organised by willing Shore Buddies and supported by co-sponsors Thomas Tunnock Ltd, the Uddingston chocolate biscuit maker and A.G. Barr plc, producers of IRN-BRU, Scotland's "other national drink".



D. McLean

Feedback

All good newsletters have a column at the end reserved for comments and opinions relating to previous editions positive and/or negative your suggestions are welcome. As this is the first edition for some time there are no comments or letters to publish. We hope, though that this edition of *starboard* will generate enough material for Feedback to become a regular feature. The editor will always attempt, providing it's legal and physically possible to respond to or incorporate your suggestions. The key to the future of *starboard* is the input from you the readers. **It is your newsletter not just a mouthpiece for the Trustees - there are other places available.**

The editors welcome suggestions and contributions for future issues. The subject matter can cover any issue relating to disability with a leaning towards sailing but that is up to you. Articles can be serious or light-hearted.

We would like to know what you think of *starboard*. Are there too many or too few pages? Are there enough pictures? Remember if you don't take them we can't print them!

How often would you like to see *starboard* issued? The current intent is to publish quarterly but that will depend on the quality and quantity of material submitted.

As with all newsletters the editor reserves the right to edit articles before publication due to space restrictions and is not bound to agree with the views of the authors.

Feedback from Issue 4

"Many thanks for this Gary, and many thanks to Fiona also for a superb bit of editing. I think you should send a copy by email to Jean Nicholson so that the Flag Officers and perhaps the RHYC committee might see it."

Mac Armstrong

Got Something To Say?

Articles and letters for publication should be submitted to the editor no later than two weeks before the scheduled issue date. Articles should be prepared in Word format. Photographs to be used to illustrate the articles should be supplied in jpeg format.

Articles are submitted on the understanding that *starboard* will be published on the RYA Scotland website (www.ryascotland.org.uk\sailability).

A contribution is accepted on the basis that its author is responsible for the opinions expressed in it and such opinions are not necessarily those of RYA Sailability Scotland.

Articles should be sent to the Editor at sailability.scotland@tiscali.co.uk

Membership

Membership of RYA Sailability Scotland is open to all properly constituted clubs or groups providing sailing exclusively for people with a disability, any sailing club or group that accepts people who are disabled into membership and any individual who is not a member of a club or group affiliated to the Association.

For further details on the benefits of membership and current fees please contact:

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That's All Folks!

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