



Hoylake Sailing Club Newsletter

Issue 6
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2010



A message from the Commodore Ian Hoatson

Dear members of Hoylake Sailing Club,

I would like to thank you for your support and help this last year. Jane and I really appreciate it. We have made a start with the much needed refurbishments to the Club, there is still a way to go, but we are making progress. Please bear with us as getting the right solutions at the right price is time consuming.

Your continued support is needed now more than ever in these tough times; all clubs are finding it hard, so please support your sailing club. Let us all look forward to a successful sailing year and many enjoyable social evenings here at Hoylake Sailing Club.

Thank you,

← Ian Hoatson, Commodore

Annual General Meeting

Please note the change of date for the AGM from 23rd February to Tuesday 2nd March 2010.

A message from the Rear Commodore Gavin Melling

I have thoroughly enjoyed my first year as Rear Commodore. My wife Nikki and I have enjoyed 'being in charge of the house' and preparing food for many functions. We were lucky enough to have the help and support of our House Committee who have been a great help – we couldn't have managed without them – thank you.

We started 2009 with catering for the 150 Club, then preparing scouse for eighty people at the launch down of the boats and then, after a few successful barbeques throughout the season, we finished with a sit-down meal for sixty at the prizegiving dinner.

We hope everyone has enjoyed the functions so far and will continue to support the events we have arranged to look forward to in the coming months (see list of events, below).

Gavin Melling, Rear Commodore



Sailing

It will soon be spring and time to 'dust' off the boats. Last season we had some sailing disappointments, but we also had many successes. Team racing suffered with neither the Coronation Salver nor the Falcon Challenge Cup being awarded, the Sandhey Cup also succumbed, due maybe to class racing programmed by West Kirby SC, although adequate Hilbres had travelled to Hoylake and were available. We didn't manage the Point of Air Race / Commodores Cruise to the West Hoyle Bank, with only a handful of dinghy's and cruisers from other clubs braving the initially poor weather, however some members did venture out to the bank by foot and rescue boat later on, just to check up on the other sailors of course. The second week of the Menai Strait fortnight, usually the most popular with our members, lost most racing due to gales, however on the upside, five Operas were present the first week, enjoying mostly excellent racing.

On a brighter note, we won the Star team race, most inshore and offshore class races were held, we had a successful open day and club regatta, and - the high point of the season - we had a fantastic 'voyage' to Blundellsands Sailing Club near Formby, where their hospitality was second to none. Four Operas also visited the West Kirby Marine lake to join a hastily arranged parade of sail following the belated reopening of the lake after refurbishment.

This year the sailing programme is almost finalised and again it includes a varied mix of events (see list below). We are planning a cruise and overnight stay to Dee Sailing Club for 3rd July, however this remains to be confirmed.

Given these varied times and ever reducing attendance levels, we remain under pressure to concede our regatta at Hoylake, to allow consolidation of the Wirral regattas series to two weekends, one on the Mersey and one on the Dee. However, the Committee has decided that this

would not be in the best interest of our club. Amongst other things, our regatta is a sailing focal point and an opportunity to welcome visitors and friends to share 'our' waters and club. The Wirral regattas committee still regularly meets in an attempt to stimulate greater coordination and attendances; however, large attendances by the ever aging tidal boats and, dare we say it, aging crews, is unfortunately not going to happen. For many members of all clubs however, visiting other clubs continues to be most enjoyable.

One thing has become apparent, that we must better involve any new faces at the club, and certainly get them sailing or socially involved whenever possible, if they so desire. This year, the Sailing Committee will take a more assertive role to ensure that members new to sailing and members without boats but wishing to sail find the opportunity. With this aim, the list of names on the clubhouse notice board of those seeking to crew will be reviewed monthly by the Committee. The Club is only what we all make it and any suggestions are always heard. We have excellent facilities with the club: two sheds, the yard and green, the shed at West Kirby marine lake, and use of the slipway at Meols, where launching is good when the weather and tide permits. It also remains comparatively safe to keep your boat on the beach at Meols given protection from the bank.

Finally, junior sailing and cadets nights / games on the beach. These need to be reinvigorated after last year's lack of the West Kirby marine lake facilities during repair. We hope to commence mid-April, Friday evenings 6pm-ish, and run to late September. Redevelopment of the area remains likely eventually, however we have a shed full of boats, canoes, windsurfers and junk etc, and this is ripe for our own development of what we provide. We'll display a notice on the board of planned dates, however I remain the primary contact at present and all help and suggestions would be appreciated.

Steve Stratton, Sailing Secretary



**Lyndon
Bodger and
Richard
Stratton sail
Country Girl
in the R Alt**

Cruise to the River Alt, 4th-5th July 2009

The R Alt trickles out through the dunes of the Lancashire coast into Liverpool Bay about five miles beyond the mouth of the R Mersey. The tortuous nature of the channel, winding between steep banks through tidal flats dark with the remains of primaeval forest, provides a good defence against raiders, who would find it awkward to negotiate without connivance of the locals. On this occasion the locals, Blundellsands Sailing Club, were uncommonly hospitable and the raiders, Hoylake Sailing Club accompanied by a few members of the Dinghy Cruising Association, came to renew old and form new bonds of friendship.

The fleet set sail from Dove Point at 8am on Saturday 4th as soon as the boats were afloat. It consisted of six Operas (*Fidelio*, *Country Girl*, *Orchid*, *La Tosca*, *Iolanthe* and *Gioconda*), *Grace III* and *Fidget* in support, and three DCA boats (a GP14, a Wayfarer and a Shipmate Senior).

The visiting DCA members had anchored in the lower channel and slept aboard on Friday night ready for the early start. Given the choice of the perfect breeze, we would have chosen the one that blew on this morning: a light to moderate southeasterly broad-reaching spinnaker breeze that carried us from the Wirral coast to the Altmouth in something less than two hours. There, local boats came out to meet us and escort us in, and it was a pleasure to see so much sail in single file gybe first one way and then the other at each bend in the channel, then round up into the wind to moor on the trot, which had been laid for us especially, in sequence without mishap. Blundellsands Sailing Club mobilized a fleet of tenders to ferry us and our goods ashore. Other HSC members arrived by road to join us.

Once ashore, we were feasted sumptuously, gifts were exchanged, speeches were made, prizes were given, and there was dancing late into the evening. We slept in the clubhouse or in tents on the lawn outside, overlooking the sands. The Commodore's tent had been flattened during the course of the afternoon when, to the astonishment of all, a flying gazebo, lifted by a freak squall, landed upon it before taking off down the beach. The Commodore was not inside, fortunately, and was able to sleep soundly after the Commodore of BSC generously provided a replacement tent.

In the morning at 7am we were served a hearty Lancashire breakfast (the BSC chef had arrived at 5.30am to start cooking for us!) We were then ferried back to our boats as the tide filled the channel. The breeze, which had veered slightly and was light, determined that towing was necessary in order to get out over the flood, and *Grace III* towed the Operas a large part of the way back to ensure getting home on one tide. The DCA boats did well to sail most of the distance and still arrive (just) in time to recover at Meols before losing the water.

Most of us had not sailed to the R Alt before so it was an adventure to explore new waters and the cruise was considered by all to be a gem of an enjoyable weekend. The pleasure, however, was largely due to the generous hospitality of the Blundellsands Sailing Club who provided such a warm welcome and to them we offer our heartfelt thanks.

John Hughes, Vice Captain



***Grace III* towing Operas from the R Alt**

Snooker

With the snooker season past the half way stage, there is still much silverware to be determined. With all our home matches now complete, we have already retained one trophy against Dee and, at the time of writing, we look forward to our toughest challenge at West Kirby. With only three points between us, it would be nice to reclaim the one trophy that we missed out on last year.

On 10th February, we enjoy the hospitality of Wallasey where we take a relatively slender lead of twenty eight points to their full-sized table. We then wrap up our inter-club program on 17th March with billiards back at West Kirby for the

Frank Jones Salver. Here, we look to avenge the defeat at their hands in December for the other billiards trophy.

That just leaves our in-house Billiards and Mixed Snooker competitions that have both recently commenced, and I would remind competitors to arrange their matches by the scratch dates posted in the Clubhouse. On the subject of in-house competitions, congratulations to Andrew Stratton for his success in the Snooker Handicap in December, where it was also nice to see some different faces involved on finals night, including two new/returning members.

With snooker remaining a popular pastime in the Clubhouse, I would like to thank those members who support this facility, the tournaments and the matches, both team members and supporters, and hope that this tradition of our Club and our interaction with Kindred Clubs continues for some years to come.

Robin Stratton, Snooker Captain

The Clubhouse

Although the clubhouse is now closed on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings unless otherwise specified we are open Mondays, Thursdays and Friday from 19.30hrs and Saturdays and Sundays from noon. Please SUPPORT your club and our friendly staff by making use of the club facilities as much as possible. It is imperative that we raise revenue via the bar to help maintain and improve the clubhouse.

The clubhouse is available for hire by members on Saturdays and Sundays at a cost of only £50 and for non-members on Saturdays at a cost of £150 and on Sundays at a negotiable price dependant upon the function. Hiring out the club, although not to the liking of some members, has helped raise vital funds without which we would be in financial distress with the necessity to raise subscriptions by a considerable amount.

Andrew Stratton, Honorary Treasurer

Events in 2010

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| Tue 2nd March | Club AGM (note change from February 23rd) 8pm |
| Sat 6th March | Race night – buy a horse! – list on noticeboard, 8pm |
| Sat 27th March | 150 Club £500 prize draw & social with 'Sounds Acoustic' 8pm |
| Sat 17th April | Operas launch down plus Inshore Saturday race series, 1 & 2 |
| Sun 18th April | Inshore series A, 1 & 2, Davies Memorial Trophy |
| Sat 24th April | Launch down social, 8pm |
| Sat 1st May | Ladies' Race |
| Sun 2nd May | Offshore series A, 1 & 2. Barbeque after sailing, weather permitting, 5pm |
| Sat 15th May | Open Day, sailing off Dove Pt from 10am, plus refreshments in the Clubhouse afterwards |
| Sun 16th May | Inshore series A, 3 & 4 |
| Sat 22nd May | Challenge Cup v West Kirby in Operas, plus evening after-race social |
| Sat 29th May | West Kirby Sailing Club regatta |
| Sun 30th May | Dee Sailing Club regatta |
| Mon 31st May | Dee estuary joint clubs' regatta |
| Sat 26th June | Hoylake Sailing Club regatta, plus evening with 'The Reverb Brothers' |
| Sat 3rd July | Cruise to and overnight at Dee SC |
| Sat 10th July | Commodore's Cruise and Point of Air Race |
| Sun 25th July | Menai Strait regatta fortnight commences |
| Wed 4th August | Hoylake Sailing Club regatta in the Menai Strait |

Photo Competition 2010

Entries must be photographs taken in 2010 of members or activities of the Club. There will be two categories for judging: Sailing and People. Closing date for submissions (to any committee member): 31st October 2010. Prizes will be awarded!

Opera Crossword Puzzle

