



NEWSLETTER

Sailing Events/COVID19

It was intended to concentrate on the various big racing events and all the local news about Radio & Free Sailing in the UK - but, as many will have noticed, there hasn't been any due to the awful COVID19 virus.

The MYA website carries the up to date position on how soon we can expect to resume sailing - but of course, the actual dates will depend on local circumstances and vary club to club. Whatever the result, all possible measures are being taken to keep us all safe. Later in this issue there are some helpful (at least they are intended to be) suggestions about how to restart sailing both securely and enjoyably after the COVID lockdown.

Future editions

It is planned to issue a Newsletter about every two months or so to link to significant events etc - so the next/fifth edition is scheduled for just after the Council meets in early September 2020.

The next edition will look a little different too - with the MYA logos all refreshed a bit.

This is the fourth issue...

.....of your new(ish) MYA Newsletter. As ever, contributions from members or Clubs are always welcome and in this issue you will find the next two introductions to the Clubs roughly in the middle of each half alphabetically - that is Clapham MYC and Redesmere SC.

There are contributions from the key areas of the MYA and there will also be a Letters page with various contributions from individuals and Clubs.

If anyone spots a photo that either tickles their fancy or seems especially relevant to our sport, please do forward it to the Editor. Incidentally, the small (no, very small!) competition at the end of the last issue was won by Mike Ogle from the St Mary Bourne IOM club and his magnificent (almost) gold medallion was presented to him in early June.

In this edition you will find reference to the EGM planned for July to approve the new MYA Constitution. **Your club's vote needs to be in by 23.59 on 24 June 2020..**

A lovely Six Metre (right)





Above; A Trimaran struggling with the windy conditions at Gosport in 2011

MYA Marketing strategy 2020

It was noted at the 2019 AGM in November that there are plans to try harder to promote the MYA and what it does. The first meeting of the small group of five charged with suggesting how we should proceed was on 6 February 2020.

Firstly, we agreed that the prime responsibility is to look after the current membership and we will use the membership numbers as a measure of performance over time. The current number of affiliated members was **1,657** when we met **in February 2020**.

Secondly, we have a job to do to recruit new members - but heavy TV advertising is not currently planned. The best way to seek to enlarge the membership numbers is therefore being carefully considered.

If anyone wishes to contribute to this thought process please do so to the Editor or direct to the MYA Racing Officer. Thank you.

Did you know.....?

Firstly, there are **103 Clubs** affiliated to the MYA and of those, **36** have between 0 and 10 members, **56** have between 10 and 30 members, **10** have between 40 and 60 members - leaving just **one** with over 60 members.

The total number of MYA members shown on the website at mid February 2020 was 1,684 - **it is 1,715 at 28 June 2020**.

Our Roving reporters x 2

This publication has engaged (at zero cost to everyone) the services of two seasoned roving reporters. Firstly, we have Quentin Lettuce who comes from a distinguished family of sailors both big and small. With his pal Nigel Dumpster (who has a similarly splendid background - or so he says) they have been delving into the murky recesses of many activities for years. It must be emphasised that they do have a tendency to subordinate the facts to the sensationalism of a story - but they do try hard.

They have been hard at work for a while now and are close to revealing a wonderful piece about.....

They should have contributed something to this edition but they are locked down apparently.

What Clubs can do to help

Reference is made (left) to membership numbers. It is not until all renewals are completed each year that any sort of accurate number can be established for total membership and at that time it is pretty key that the associated email addresses and contact details are correct.

So a heartfelt plea from our Digital Comms Officer (Austin Guerrier) is for every Club to please ensure that the **full email/address/phone number details accompany the renewals sheets**. If there are missing items, the next month or so is taken up with correcting and completing the data, which Clubs don't like - and neither does Austin! Many thanks in advance.

PS If Clubs are aware of any of their members not having access to email, it would be greatly appreciated if they could be provided with a copy of this Newsletter - or perhaps one could be circulated to minimise printing?

If any Club rep or member has a good idea to help members or other clubs enjoy their sailing even more, please do forward it to your Editor for future editions. Thank you.

MYA Council chat

Welcome to the Council Peter Wilkins of the Hampton Court MYC. Peter comes on to Council as the district councillor for the Met & Southern district and it is fantastic news for the district and MYA that the largest numerical district now has representation. Thanks for stepping up Peter and we are sure that you will find the role interesting and rewarding.

2020 has been an unusual year for us all so far, and we hope that all MYA members continue to be safe and well; unfortunately, and despite constant review, at the time of writing (28th June) your Council does not consider that the relevant government's guidance allows the MYA racing calendar to resume. Things are getting better and the position may change in coming weeks but at this moment the national calendar has to continue to be suspended. On a brighter note it is great to see that social sailing at club level is being reintroduced with risk assessments and local guidance being considered. For anyone who is still unsure there is plenty of information on the MYA website. If you have any concerns please contact your district councillor who will be able to help you, and even put you in touch with other people who have been through similar concerns.

The lack of activity in the sport over the last few months has led to reduced Council activity, but there are still items that are moving forward - not least is this newsletter. It is now a few editions into the reintroduction of an MYA newsletter and each one is getting better, with more content being written and presented, so please, if you have any news or information that you would like Paul to consider do send it in - directly to Paul or via any officer of the MYA.

Despite the cancellation of the planned RYA measurement training course in March, Graham continues to work on certification and measurement ready for the times when we can go racing again. It has been great to see the many boat building and rebuilding projects that have been on the go during the lockdown period, a selection of these can be found on the MYA Downwind Facebook group with videos and discussions as varied as foiling Una rigged multihulls through to rebuilding of vintage vane boats and other great stuff from around the globe. Having the boats is great but what we really want to do is test them against other boats and skippers, and although 2020 has been impacted there may still be chance later in the year to meet up with our mates and have some fun. Beyond this, the 2021 calendar is being built with some classes wishing to rollover their 2020 dates and others planning something a bit different. 2021 is looking like it's going to be a good bounce back year.

Coming back to 2020, Treasurer David Rose, is working with the other members of the Council on the proposal for the 2021 affiliation fees. Council is very aware that this year has seen little sailing and wishes to do what it can to provide value to the membership. This along with plans for the 2020 AGM will be made available soon. Keep a look out for updates as this year's AGM may have to take a different format to account for Covid19 restrictions. Please keep looking for the updates and timelines for any proposals that your club may wish to put forward. Please also note that, at this year's AGM, the **Racing Officer** will be standing down. This position is a vital and rewarding role within the Council and has a direct impact on the sport. If you are interested please contact Jen Hand (Secretary to Council) or any other member of the Council.

Whilst mentioning this there are still two districts that have no representation on the council - the Eastern and South West districts. Volunteers for these roles will be welcomed, so if you're interested please contact Jen Hand.

Finally, for this edition of "Council chat" you should by now have been contacted by your club representative about the EGM being held for the revised Constitution. Your Council hopes that you will take time to read this and give your vote to your club rep. It is important that everyone has a vote on this as it will be the document that this and future Councils will use to build our great sport. **All votes must be in by 23.59 hours on 24 July 2020 to be eligible to be counted.**

If you haven't seen the revised constitution documents they can be downloaded from the members' area of the MYA Website.

Please Stay Safe and we look forward to seeing you all at the lakeside in the future.

Focus on Clubs

Here is the latest article which give all MYA members an insight into how other clubs, work, prosper and overcome difficulties. An arbitrary decision was made by your Editor to start with the first and last Clubs alphabetically, and now we are into the middle regions of the alphabetical club list.

Firstly we have Clapham MYC.

CLAPHAM MODEL YACHT CLUB

cmyc.wordpress.com

I have been a member of Clapham MYC since the 1980s and in that time I have seen much change - sadly not all of it good. I will not go into the club's early history, as that is well covered on our excellent website shown above.

When I joined forty years ago, the club was very active with top sailors and designers competing in national and international events in all classes. The club hosted many events including the Pugwash 36 Vane and the Omnibus - a five hour team race organised by the late Ian Taylor, as well as national championships around the early 1990s.

The 1 Metre class was then becoming popular and it was decided that Chris Dicks would design a club boat and the members would purchase twelve at a cost of £90 each. This boat was named the Comik. This boosted the club racing fleet to the extent that we ran out of radio crystals and sailed A and B fleets. Racing was more popular among the less skilled sailors - as we were sailing a one-design and they started to feature in the results.

This was short-lived I am afraid, as newer IOM boats were introduced and the old order returned as the core membership did not have the resources to purchase new boats each year to stay competitive.

In the late 1990s the Six Metre was introduced and many of these original boats are still sailing today. One of the most popular from a spectator's point of view - and another one-design - was introduced to level the playing fields as well as being an alternative when water is too low for 1 Metres - it was the Soling. Once again, close racing has returned and the main membership now sail for pleasure, mostly being retired - but without the membership numbers to organise any national racing.

Another blow to the club has been the ongoing dispute with Lambeth Borough Council, who want to turn the club into a Cafe. Since the the rough-sleeper law has changed, the club has also been a magnet to them. This is a shame, as the Vintage Model Yacht Group have been prevented from having their events outside the club - especially as it was one of their favourite venues.

Although we have lots of public interest on race days, no new memberships result. Our hobby is mainly a generational activity and, as such, the demographic dictates that our membership is made up from people who have always had an interest - but time and other commitments prevented full participation until retirement arrived. Some members also fly model aircraft and the same applies there.

I am sorry this report is not as upbeat as previous MYA clubs - but being an old club our heyday is now a distant memory. With the current COVID19 social distancing etc the future looks even more bleak!

Jim Robinson
Secretary

.....and now to Redesmere SC.

Redesmere Sailing Club – a different way?

Radio Controlled sailing at Redesmere is organized on a different basis to other clubs featured so far in this series. We are not a separate RC club sharing the water with a host sailing club – we are a fully integrated part of the sailing club itself. We are all full members of the Club who choose to sail RC boats, often as well as dinghies and/or stand-up Paddleboards. We are recognised as a “fleet” within the Club in the same way as, e.g. Laser or Comet etc, and have our own “voice” on the Club’s Sailing Committee.

Redesmere Sailing Club was established over 60 years ago as a dinghy sailing and racing club. We sail as the name implies on Redesmere, a 42-acre tree lined lake just off the A34 near Siddington in East Cheshire, some 6 miles south of Wilmslow and 5 miles west of Macclesfield. The club (having approximately 400 members of all ages), is extremely active with a wide range of dinghy sailing and training activities, not only at weekends but also on most evenings in the week for much of the season. There is a strong ethos and culture of a single integrated volunteer run club with all members contributing equally in supporting the operation of the Club, e.g. duties, working parties etc. and mingling socially and in other ways irrespective of the extent and type of activity in which they participate.

Although the primary focus of the Club remains dinghy sailing and related activities, the range of members’ activities has been extended over recent years to encompass RC and more recently SUP's

Radio Controlled sailing at Redesmere arose from a number of club members expressing an interest in trying RC as something to augment their dinghy sailing especially during the winter months when the club is normally shut down. Following a demonstration on site, the Club agreed that members might try sailing RC boats on a trial basis provided that it did not interfere with the other activities of the Club. The DF65 was recommended as a relatively inexpensive “starter” boat suitable for all ages at Redesmere. The end result being 10 DF65's sprang out of their boxes at a building session conducted by Tim Long in the clubhouse just before Christmas 2014. Quite a lot of early Christmas presents!

Despite this flying start, RC sailing developed very slowly and haphazardly. Over the first year or so there was no set RC programme. It was more a matter of members trying to identify dates when two or three were able to get to get together, usually at the weekend, when there might be space in the main sailing calendar. There was little organized racing as such. It was not until late 2016 that things became more organized, when a regular session was established on Tuesday mornings. Some weekend sessions were also planned, but these faded away through lack of support.

We were fortunate at that time to have the help and support of a long-standing Redesmere member, Peter Baldwin (now Northern District Councillor), who was very much instrumental in getting us organised. In between his more competitive sailing in a range of classes, Peter still gets down for the Tuesday sessions when he can and is a constant source of advice on trim and other matters. He remains the one to beat!

Prior to lockdown we have now been sailing as an RC fleet every Tuesday morning (and into the early afternoon if there is demand) particularly over the winter months when other activities on the water close down. It is then that we particularly appreciate the ability to retire into a fully equipped clubhouse for a warmup and a hot brew!

Sessions are not as organized or formal as they may be in many clubs. We do set courses and have timed starts and indeed there is some close racing, but these races are not currently organized into a more formal series. We take time out between races for tweaking and advice, starting again when everyone is ready! More “social” racing rather than highly competitive. Good rule (RRS) observance is however encouraged at all times.

Redesmere SC - continued

Of the ten original boats/sailors (with two being purchased for Junior members), six still turn out quite regularly. Heavily disguised though, with new sails, B-rigs, more sophisticated transmitters and the rest of the gear nobody warned us about at the start. Mind you, as current and ex dinghy sailors we should have guessed! The club has not adopted the A+ rig and some of the regulars still do not have a "B" rig leading to an early drink if the wind gets too strong. There has also been a trickle of new sailors/boats, four of which have become regulars. Before lockdown we often had a fleet of 6-8 at our sessions, although we've yet to break into double figures.

We have always encouraged other Club members to come down and try RC sailing. Before lockdown, anyone who came down on a Tuesday morning to check on their big boat was likely to end up with a transmitter thrust in their hands to try it out. There was usually a spare boat at the club and with a bit of notice we could often rustle up a couple more. Nothing like a bit of sailing with the fleet to arouse an interest! However, despite the examples of several of our group who still sail dinghies, we have yet to crack the idea that sailors only turn to RC when they can no longer sail their dinghies. Or is it simply a question of time pressures doing both? We are all working on it, but it has not been helped by this year's lockdown due to Coronavirus. We may possibly need rethink how we use or offer our spare boats for people to try and get hooked.

Currently there is little demand for formal weekend sessions even if they could be slotted into the overall programme of Club activities during the main season. However, individuals can now sail their RC boats as part of the frequent "social sailing" Saturday afternoons during the spring and summer months, although it does mean dodging dinghies and SUPs to find some weed free water-space!

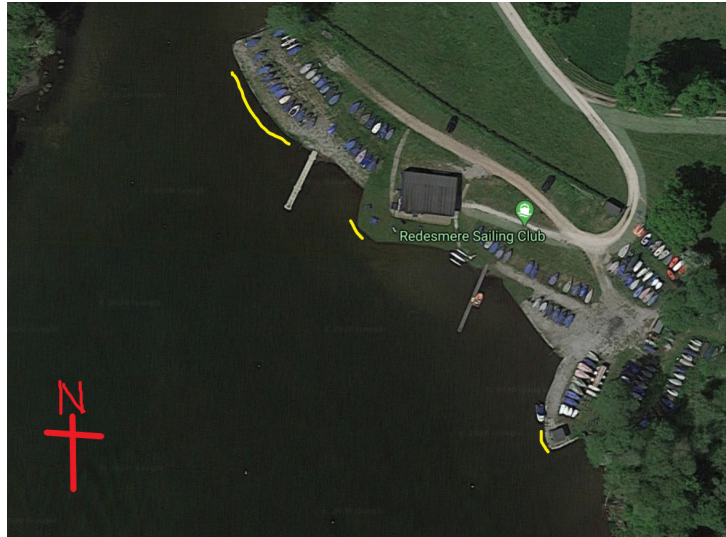
We have up to now been a bit of a stay at home (i.e. club) crowd (despite Peter's attempts to persuade individuals to try events elsewhere).

The Club grounds from which we sail run some 150m along the E side of the lake, roughly on a NW-SE axis. We are open to a wind from a S-SW direction and to a lesser extent from the N-NE but winds from the E in particular can be a bit of a pain – the south end in particular is overshadowed by the OD hut and 40 feet high trees! Add in trees and bushes on the far bank and you quickly learn to respond to wind shifts! We have no access to other parts of the lakeside, so sailing is strictly from one side only.

For much of the Club's shoreline the water is too shallow to launch and recover a DF65 leaving three spots from which we can sail, one at each end and one in the middle. The area opposite the most northerly of these is little used by dinghies and we have been able to put in an arc of buoys which stay in all year round. If for any reason we are sailing off the more southerly spots during the dinghy racing season (mid-March to mid-December) we either use the dinghy racing marks or put in our own marks recovering them after sailing (or leave them in place in the winter). We are helped in this by having full access to the Club safety boats which are also useful for chasing down and retrieving wayward boats off on voyages of their own!

Unfortunately, the whole area of the lake in front of the Club (our sailing area) is relatively shallow and we do suffer badly from weed in the summer. Even the dinghies and powerboats struggle to sail or power through. The DF65's just stop. Effectively we cannot sail in our favoured areas with bank access from mid-May to mid-August or even September. Sometimes there may be a clear channel right at the S end out into the deeper water but not particularly satisfactory for RC sailing and racing. We did once try mooring a safety boat in deeper water and sailing from that, but it was not a great success and also limits the number that can sail!

We do not have a separate category of membership or reduced rates for those who only wish to join the Club specifically for RC sailing (or indeed for just SUP) and everyone is expected to participate in duties etc. Although this does limit the ability to recruit RC members direct from outside the Club it does preserve the principle of one integrated Club with all the benefits that brings both to the Club and to RC sailors.



Redesmere SC - above.
Top left the aerial view of the sailing areas. Top right the original clubhouse sailing area and bottom right & left two general views.

Corona Virus/COVID19/Lockdown tales and experiences

A number of Clubs and individuals have useful tales to tell about the recent problems and how to coped with them - and in most cases how to exit the restrictions both safely and in good order.

Firstly this month we have a novel way employed by one Club to keep their skippers safe when restarting sailing after the lockdown. This is **Lincoln RSC** where they not only, of course, practise social distancing while having their coffee (below right) but also have a one-way skipper walking system (below left).



Emsworth Radio Sailing found a way to cope by reverting to **Match Racing** - while abiding by social distancing rules. Reducing the number of active sailors to two in each race helps!

When HMG allowed one-on-one outdoor competition to take place (the most quoted example being two ball golf), someone had the bright idea to emulate the squash ladder approach and set up one-on-one match racing for both the IOM (14 boats) and DF95 (16 boats) fleets. Full social distancing could be maintained ashore and by using '**rabbit starts**' two skippers could challenge and race at a time of their choosing and report their result in to the ladder controller. An on-line booking system was quickly set up so that challengers could avoid clashes by booking a slot on the water for their match. And so it took off and who knows, it may outlive the virus?

It so happened that three challenges on the IOM Corona Ladder (with consecutive slots on the water) faced up for their shoot out at the Slipper Sailing Club end of the Emsworth Mill Pond.

Their 'best of five' races produced fine match racing with studied concentration and consummate skill in perfect conditions. First up was the Battle of the Pinks, Richard sailing 169 versus John sailing 37. Richard has taken some stick over his pink yacht but guess what, up turns John with his new boat and co-ordinating cap in what colour

Jousting at the rabbit start, John on starboard, Richard on port. The rabbit start used is where one yacht sails across the line on starboard with the other crossing behind its transom on port. This sounds like a disadvantage for the port boat but it means it will be on starboard when the yachts next cross. Timing is all - try it!

After two “heats”, we came to the third challenge, the Battle for the Podium - that is second and third places on the Ladder. Two well matched combinations, Chris sailing 06 and David sailing 84, they produced some classic match racing being never more than a metre or so apart from start to finish - the yachts that is.

David gave a master class in rabbit starts, recalling the starboard yacht 06 twice as he was entitled to do until he was happy with this the third attempt to just clear 06’s transom at full speed. It paid off because David was able to call starboard on 06 when the yachts met again at their first crossing and hence gain the crucial advantage to be first to the windward mark.

Below top left The final sprint for the line (No 84 won!). Top right the two skippers with appropriate pink cap to the fore. Bottom left & right - more IOM on IOM action



.....and now Manor Park near Rugeley, Staffordshire.

We have returned to sailing at Manor Park after three, protracted, 90 minute, ZOOM committee meetings plus multiple Risk Assessment draughts.

The club insisted that everyone confirm by email their compliance with the new Byelaws, which required chas-ing of the usual two culprits. Laminated signs have gone up about following the guidelines.

However, it has gone so well, with everyone delighted to return, and the older they are the keener. The toilets were seen as a problem and we tried using the bushes until the lady mentioned that this was inappropriate. So the disabled toilet is unlocked and working well, with a cone in the doorway (to show when it is occupied) and hand sanitiser outside. John Lewis Store toilets are also now open and unmodified.

The standard of sailing seems to have improved during lockdown. The weather has held up reasonably with some breathy days, giving Don Charlesworth from Leicester the advantage. Today (June 24) the last member came out of isolation and sailed well, warning us all of his starboard tacking ability.

All the skippers have been sensible of course. While I have put 2 metre markers along the lakeside, people are now used to social distancing in their daily lives. I also maintain a register of sailors attending in case contact tracing is ever required.

I recommend Radio Sailing to everyone and hope that we can race at District and National level in due course. We taken advantage of the lack of holidays, which keeps everyone at home, plus the generous offer of some surplus concrete panels, as an opportunity to improve our steps and landing areas still further. The floating jetty landing area is now 300mm higher and so less prone to flooding. We hope to construct some 3 metre benches following a donation of timber lengths. This will enable us to provide an even better welcome when visitors come to Manor Park. Happy sailing/racing.

Colin Walton

Below: Social distancing of 2 metres enforced at Frensham by plastic chairs



Focus on Classes

Six Metre Class - or what I did in the lockdown (Son/Grandson) - from Mike Ewart

Well since the last newsletter we have all been shut up in our own little area, and various things have been going on across the classes, but in the six metre class there has been quite a bit of boat building going on. At least 2 Romanzas a couple of Jewels, some Cerberus and a few Rococos ready to start coming out of the mould down in the West Country.

One of the Australian designers/ racers, Frank Russell has started building 6 metres and is attempting to start a racing class down there on the other side of the world (holiday when you win the lottery?)

This is all very good but when can we get back to racing them? I am hopeful still that the 6 Metre Nationals at Norwich will still go ahead but only time will tell. We are looking at putting together the calendar for 2021 and assuming that we will be racing as normal and we in the six metre class are looking to hold the same races as we planned for 2020 at the same corresponding time of year. We are also hoping to get more of you out there to the races.

All these boats that have been built need to be out there racing as by the time next year comes we will all be a bit fed up with sailing round on our own or with limited compatriots.

There are hopefully some pictures of some of the builds in progress and I look forward to seeing you all out on the water very soon. Do keep an eye on the various sailing related facebook pages UK Six Metre Owners Group, MYA Downwind Group, Australian Radio Six Metre Class Owners Group. Wooden RC and Model Yachts and £D printed radio sailing yachts.

Lots to keep you occupied.



One Metre Class

As noted in a recent note from the MYA Racing Officer, the IOM Class is without a COG captain. Please think about whether you could offer to do this role and if so, please contact Darin Ballington. Thank you.

Other Classes

Our two roving reporters were sent out to obtain contributions from other Classes but they have not so far returned. Hopes remain high however that they will get back in time for the next edition!

Below: Another shot of the steps taken to maintain 2 metre gaps while still getting ready for sailing - at Norwich this time

