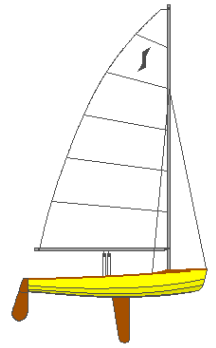


DRAYCOTE WATER SAILING CLUB

SOLO FLEET NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2009



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

As a result of reading this newsletter you need to:

1. Put the dates of the Fleet Championships and End of Season Championships in your diary and compete in them!
2. Tell me if you can provide any of the help required over the next few months (see page 2).

AN ACTIVE FEW MONTHS COMING UP

As usual, after a slight lull in the summer, the Autumn sees a period of heavy activity for the Draycote Solo fleet – every weekend in September and October with a special event!

5 th / 6 th September	Solo Inland Championships (Rutland)
Sunday 13 th September	Rugby Solo Open
Sunday 20 th September	Draycote Solo Fleet Championships Day 1
Sunday 27 th September	Bartley Solo Open
Saturday 3 rd October	South Staffs Solo Open
Sunday 11 th October	Draycote Solo Fleet Championships Day 2
17 th / 18 th October	Draycote Flying 15 Open (Solo's running)
Saturday 24 th October	Solo End of Season Championships (Draycote)
Sunday 6 th December	Draycote Solo Fleet AGM

Of all these events, the most important to note are:

Draycote Solo Fleet Championship

This will take place over two Sundays: 20th September and 11th October, held as part of the normal club racing. The details are:

- Consisting of 6 races.
- To qualify, you need to complete 4 races.
- Your best 4 finishing positions will count towards the results.
- If only 4 or 5 races are completed, 3 will count.
- If 3 races are completed, 2 will count.
- If 1 or 2 races are completed, all will count.
- These races will also form part of the Summer Series.

This is a great event to see who is the Fleet Champion, without needing to turn up most weekends to qualify for the longer series.

I note that 3 of our fleet members are down for OOD duty on 11th October (Mick Clay, Richard Munday and Jon Clarke). It is up to you, but I am sure you could change the duty away from this event if you wanted to – provided you talk to the office know quickly. (Unfortunately now the OOD duty is not done by the fleets, I have no control over clashes like this).

National Solo End Of Season Championships – Saturday 24th October

We are really privileged to host this national Solo event at Draycote, when we attract around 70 boats, including the best Solo sailors in the country.

It is great to have a good home fleet competing at this event, and I do encourage you to enter. There will be 3 races – briefing at 10.30am, first start 11am. Entry fee £12.

Solo Fleet AGM – Sunday 6th December

Please make a note of this in your diaries. It will be held after sailing in the clubhouse wet bar. No further formal notice will be provided.

It is your chance to voice your opinions (although, please don't feel you have to wait till the AGM to do this – most people don't!) and appoint a new fleet captain (or give me another year to badger and cajole you!!).

HELPERS REQUIRED

With so much going on, I need to appeal for help to make some of these things happen. It is far better if all members of the fleet can contribute a bit, rather than the bulk of the work being left to a few. Please look at the following things and let me know which you can help at.

Flying Fifteen Open Meeting

The Flying Fifteen fleet run our two, 1 day, open events, and we run their 2 day open meeting in October (17th / 18th).

We need at least 5 people each day. I will probably be Chief OOD, so we need at least 4 others per day (and some with qualifications to drive the motor boats). This will be the first open I have run at Draycote, so I would appreciate strong support and help for this event. Please volunteer as soon as possible – either just for one day or for both days.

Solo End Of Season Championships

For this event we need to:

- Man the reception and take entries
- Supervise the arrival of visiting boats and car parking at the open meeting boat park

Pat & Gerry Walters have once again kindly volunteered to do the reception, but we do need 2 people to do the “car parking” duty. (You can do this and still compete, you just need to get your boat ready early and then “be on duty” till the briefing).

LOOKING BACK (& FORWARD)

While the primary purpose of this newsletter is to remind you of forthcoming events, it also provides the opportunity to make sure everyone knows what has been going on since the last newsletter – so here goes!

Draycote Inter-Fleet Championships

This year the Solo team put in their best ever performance at the Interfleet Championships, with everyone on the team contributing to our very creditable third place.

A significant contribution to our success was the participation of younger, lightweight crews – Dennis Slack (well, young at heart!), Jacob Evans (Lance's grandson) and Tristan & Philip Warren (Robin's sons).

It did not seem auspicious when one of our potential stars, Richard Byne, arrived with his wrist bandaged and unable to sail. But he took on the mantle of team manager and directed operations from the shore – advising of the best way up the beat, which undoubtedly gained us some places.

John Coleman kindly stepped in for the first race (crewing for Jon Hughes), which brought our team up to the required 10 participants. He then left the core team to get on with it for the rest of the day – returning at the end to pick up his prize!

There were some notable performances – in the battle of the spouses, Sue McCrea came out on top with a (slightly) better record than Pete and was our third best helm. And we had the now standard occurrences of Robin sailing the wrong course when miles in the lead, and me stalling a Vago and letting everyone sail past!

The Solo family's achievements were not limited to the water, with second and third places in the fun run for Izzy Hughes and Catherine Byne, and third place in the raffle for Sue McCrea.

My thanks to all the willing volunteers, and John Coleman, in helping us to achieve this success – I was really chuffed by the team's performance!

Draycote Solo Open Meeting

21 Solos faced some testing conditions at the Draycote Solo Open Meeting on 13th June. The generally light and particularly shifty winds gave most competitors experience of the back and the front of the fleet.

The first race saw Richard Siggers take an early lead which he maintained throughout the race, while those behind him shuffled around. Greg Irish was lying second at one stage, but finished 16th, while Robin Warren rounded the first windward mark second last, but pulled his way up to second by the finish.

In the second race, Greg Irish did not have the same difficulty and got into first place and held it for a convincing win from Chris Brown, with David Liddington third. Meanwhile first race winner, Richard Siggers, could only manage 15th.

In the deciding race, Neil Wilkinson made it to the first mark ahead, pursued by Jon Clark, but on the second reach they let through Greg Irish, Chris Brown and Jeremy Atkins who finished in that order, clear of the pursuing bunch.

Having clearly won on the water, Greg Irish withdrew because he was sailing with an unmeasured sail, giving Chris Brown yet another solo Open Meeting win.

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| 1 st | Chris Brown, RYA, 2pts |
| 2 nd | Richard Siggers, Shustoke Sailing Club, 4pts |
| 3 rd | David Liddington, Rugby & Daventry Sailing Club, 7 pts |
| 4 th | Jeremy Atkins, Draycote Water Sailing Club, 9pts |
| 5 th | Robin Warren, Draycote Water Sailing Club, 10pts |
| 6 th | Neil Wilkinson, Shustoke Sailing Club, 10 pts |

BBQ & Handicap Pursuit Race

After last year's inaugural event, there were high hopes for this year's weekend. It was again a great success, but, in every other way, it was a complete contrast to the previous year.

For the BBQ, instead of sitting outside on a balmy summer evening, we had rain and most of the food and drink was consumed inside, apart from a few hardy souls who braved the cold before the rain really set in. But it seemed a good party, with over 30 of the fleet enjoying themselves, learning their handicap for the next day and draining the beer!

Sunday saw a strong wind (last year it was a drifter) which was set to challenge a number in the fleet – from the less experienced to the much more experienced! Setting off from the shore in a timed Le Mans style start (with the slowest starting first), the competitors set off on a fairly long and hairy run down to mark H – not the ideal first leg, but interesting none-the-less.

Unfortunately the squall that came through around the start meant a lot of help was needed to get everyone on the water at the right time and, perhaps inevitably, this left the later starters launching even later than they should have, having helped everyone else get off on time.

Mike Furner got into the lead and was looking fairly convincing, but the chasing pack were closing in on him fast at the end of the race. On the final leg between J and the finish line, there were 7 other Solos on the same leg as Mike when he took the winning gun.

The wind was not much less strong, but the starting more organised, for the second and final race. The few who decided not to race because of the conditions helped everyone else start and things were much smoother. But this didn't change the same first tippy run down to H which they all had to endure without help!

Mike Furner was again in the lead, but was closed down by Andrew Smith and who finally finished in front of him. Again, 6 boats were on the final leg of the course together confirming the success (or luck!) of the handicapping system.

Mike Furner finished a worthy and popular victor of the trophy kindly presented by Mike Burgoine. Andrew Smith was second and Jon Hughes third.

Open Meeting Circuit

Although for the first time in my time as a member, there was no-one from the Club at the Nationals, some, and, in particular, Jon Clarke, have been active on the open meeting circuit.

Jon currently lies 1st in the Southern Travellers' Series and 2nd in both the Midland and Thames Valley Series. Looking like a good year for him!

Richard Pye and Nigel Davies attended the Pre Championships event at Weymouth, with Richard getting 6th and Nigel 16th – an excellent result.

The Summer Series

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, we have been having some great racing over the summer. While top of the leader board may look fairly similar to last year, I can assure you that both Richard and I have found it much harder to win races this year.

Nigel Davies is really going well this year and could still easily win two of the series. And throughout the fleet there are close battles going on, as can be seen from the points scores below.

Unofficial, and provisional, results and points, up to Wednesday 19th August are as follows (for those who are currently qualifying, having completed about a third of the races):

	Sunday am		Sunday pm 1		Sunday pm 2		Wednesday evening	
	18 races, 6 counting		18 races, 6 counting		17 races, 6 counting		20 races, 7 counting	
1	Jeremy Atkins	7	Jeremy Atkins	6	Jeremy Atkins	6	Richard Pye	7
2	Nigel Davies	9	Nigel Davies	12	Lance Evans	12	Jeremy Atkins	9
3	Lance Evans	14	Lance Evans	13	Sue McCrea	16	Nigel Davies	11
4	Mike Clay	17	Mike Clay	16	Mike Partington	17	Robin Warren	12
5	John Coleman	19	John Coleman	17	Pete McCrea	18	Andrew Smith	19
6	Mike Partington	20	Mike Partington	17	Hamish Brown	21	Mike Partington	22
7	Jon Hughes	30	Pete McCrea	25	John Coleman	22	Pete McCrea	26
8	Graham Marshall	40	Sue McCrea	31			Gary Molton	32
9	Hamish Brown	40	Hamish Brown	32				
10			Graham Marshall	54				

But there are still 9 Sundays, and 3 Wednesdays left – a lot can change in that time. So come out and have a few more attempts to improve your position (or qualify if you aren't doing so yet). The Wednesday series finishes on 9th September, and Sundays' on 18th October.

Club Series

We are again reporting great positions for the fleet in the all-in club series.

- In the Pursuit Races, Greg Irish holds the leader board, with Mike Partington in second.
- In the Sunday 3rd Race Handicap, we took the first 4 places in the "Spring" series: Jeremy Atkins, Lance Evans, Mike Partington, Sue McCrea.
- In the "Summer series", less good attendance in July and August has resulted in a poorer performance currently, but I am sure we will be back in our rightful dominant position by the end of the series.

Jeremy Atkins, DWSC Solo Fleet Captain

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