



Feb 2010

COMMODORE'S LETTER

Hopefully when you read this newsletter the weather has become a little milder and the reservoirs icebergs have thawed. It was quite amusing in January watching ducks apparently "walking on water" until you realised they were standing on a sheet of floating ice that had become detached from the icepack at the northern end of the reservoir.

Unfortunately the very bad timing of the Llandegfedd Water sports centre project has again been forced in another direction. With the recent announcement from the water regulator Ofwat that utilities needed to rein in spending budgets – little hope is now seen in further funding and support of this project from Welsh Water.

The project team have again had to regroup and review their options with the main obstacle being funding of the construction. This project is far from dead and the team will continue to work towards our common end goal of improved facilities for all to enjoy.

As a club we need to move forward and look to improve not just our facilities but also the way we operate as an organisation. 2010 will see the introduction of a new automated OD system that Tony Tucker has been hard at work configuring on the web base.

The trial system should prove to be fair and easy to use, allowing members to schedule their unavailable dates. It will self generate a calendar of duties notifying the membership with the minimum of intervention.

I'm sure Tony and the rest of the team will welcome any feedback of the new system to try and improve an always unpopular topic among members.

Please support this system by logging onto the members section and filling in the required details.

The forthcoming 2010 season will see a full and exciting programme of both club and open racing. The quality of our racing far outweighs our limited facilities and again we will look to build on our membership for 2010 with the promotion of our club, its strengths and together with our successful training and coaching sessions I look forward to meeting new faces both on the water and ashore.

In this issue:

- Club house update
- Sum pour spelin (probably)
- Smoe snaramga
- Some fun bits!
- Some not so fun bits...
- First Deggy RS100 on it's way



Dave Timson - Commodore

Looking forward to 2010

OD Training

At this juncture there are no scheduled OOD training sessions, however if you express an interest I'm sure one of our more experienced race officers will be happy to explain the task to you. Drop a line to a committee member and if we have enough interest we could set something up.

Safety boat training

We are slowly working our way through the membership to get everyone trained to attain PB2 certification - a prerequisite before taking the helm of our boats. Many members have said that although happy to drive the boats they are unsure of how to effect a rescue when called upon to do so and we have looked at some solutions.

At our AGM our visitors from the Welsh Yachting association said they may be able to set up some "uncertified" training FOC. Lets see if anything comes of that... Failing that, or in addition to it, if you fancy doing the official course there are often courses run at Cardiff bay and elsewhere.

Race Management Equipment

As is often the case, the end of last season left us a few buoys short of a full set. Volunteers required to correct that situation at the start of the season.

Training

It is likely that the club will be laying on Level 1&2 training again this year. If you know of anyone who may be interested in taking the course and following it up after the fact then please pass on names to Sarah & Alan at training@llandegfedd.org.uk

To date nobody has volunteered for the post of first aid trainer. Once again if you fancy the challenge contact a committee member. You do not need any medical background, but if you have it may help! I suspect that the club would fund this in return for some cascaded training.

Llandegfedd Water Sport Centre

You will see many references in this issue to the delays we are experiencing with the water sports centre. Sorry about that, but the centre does impact many things we do. Please bear with us. I will not elaborate further this matter, but please see Gareth's report on page 7 for further details.

Newsletter

The newsletter is falling on hard times and at risk of becoming an editors commentary rather than an eclectic document. A final cry for input has resulted in a few articles at the last minute and I agreed to compile it. Everyone tells me they enjoy it, but getting material is like the proverbial blood from a stone. Please do your bit to support the newsletter.

Website

A bit of an update on the website was needed as committee members have moved around and there are a few new features. It has recently come to light how a few members don't ever use the website or know how to log into the members area. This year you will have to make a concerted effort to log in as the new OD roster being trialled by Tony is web based. Please give it a try. If you find errors or have a suggestion for content or links please submit your idea to webmaster@llandegfedd.org.uk

Results

We all look forward to checking our performance in Tony's results tables again this year. I wonder what analytical tools he will come up with this year?



Looking forward to 2010

New Page 3 Boy!

Club Veteran John Regan came on board this year overtaking our club Commodore and vice-commodore to the grand old title of President, and will hopefully provide a regular contribution to page 3. No topless shots yet, but give me time...

Thank you John for stepping up to the mark.

President's port end.

Welcome to 2010. Sadly no sign of the new clubhouse, the considerable hard work of 'the 3 Muskateers' and others, capsized by funding issues. They are on the centreboard trying to right the project. Full update to follow soon, [on page 7 -Ed] but for this season we will see what we can do to improve what we have. But we are a racing sailing club with a great programme well run which really counts and I am really looking forward to the start of the new season and seeing you all on the start line.



Please support the pre rigging/prizegiving bash

and *reply* to Jeremy. We have a very good website and please make sure you respond to the *OOD* duty calender preference. Impressive turnout for the AGM and thanks again to the many who do so much work. I would like to see *Doris* more attractive and spend some funds on her so any bright design ideas let us know. There is a plastic owl on the way to help scare off the birds, perhaps we can call it *Ben Ainslie*. For such a small membership we really do travel afar in so many of the classes and not just our talented juniors. I am pleased to say this aged president last year finished every race in the *vareo* nationals and the inlands and did not capsize once...perhaps I should put the *spinnny* up more ! So best of luck to all you travellers and let us know how you get on to go on the website and in the newsletters maybe.

S-T-A-R-B-O-A-R-D.

Safety inspired request

In a bid to help prevent an accident waiting to happen, would everyone please make an effort to remove their trolleys from the water after launching, especially on race days when the beach can be very busy. If necessary single-hander helms could ask a fellow sailor for help with this or worst case capsize their boats whilst they move their trolley out of the water. It can be hard enough trying to return to shore when it's windy without having to negotiate submerged obstructions but ironically, it is in these very conditions that trolleys are most likely to be left in the water. It's only a matter of time before a boat gets damaged or another water sports user, whether Club member or otherwise falls foul of this.



Thank you for your consideration.

Racing secretary's locker:

Your Racing Committee for 2010 comprises:

Martyn Osborne – Asymmetric Fleet Representative

Nigel Tinkler – Single Handed Representative

Neil Sharrat – Conventional Fleet Representative

Tony Tucker – Results Secretary

Simon Stanley – Youth Fleet Representative

Mark Williams - Racing Secretary

Keith Sykes - Committee member (and top flag expert!)

The recently re-badged racing committee, formerly known as sailing committee deals with all issues relating to racing—hence the decision to rebrand the job. It was thought that as and when the LWSC comes to fruition it was important to identify this function versus any committee which may grow from members who simply want to cruise. The objective of the Race committee is to facilitate, promote, manage and administer inclusive, fair, enjoyable and well run dinghy racing. If you have an observation, suggestion or comment on any aspect of the club's racing please speak to, or email, a member of the Racing Committee.

Racing Secretary - Pre Season Update

The new season is just around the corner with the first race on Sunday 7th March. I would expect the water to be warm by then - well perhaps not.....

The Dinghy Show is on the same weekend so some of us will be buying warmer kit on the Saturday. If you haven't been to the Show it is a good day out and a great place to buy kit/rope/gear at discounted prices. Also of course there are loads of nice boats to look at. It is at Alexander Palace off the North Circular and you can pay on the door.

The racing programme, which is on the website, has been updated and now includes the Topper Traveller on 12th/13th June, and the CYRC on Saturday 26th June.

The quality of club racing is vitally important to the Club and it is important that we maintain or increase the number of boats racing each Sunday and Wednesday. We need to encourage others to join in and I urge current members to race as regularly as possible.

This year the main prizes will again be focused on the overall Championships and you actually don't need to complete too many races to qualify. The reality is:

Championship	Total Number of Series	Minimum Series to Count	Minimum Races to Qualify
Overall Club (Sunday Pursuits and Wednesdays)	8	5	18
Conventional Fleet (Sunday Handicaps)	5	3	22
Asymmetrical Fleet (Sunday Handicaps)	5	3	22

Eighteen races over a whole season should be achievable for most so please join in! Tony will doubtless update the Championship tables after every series is complete so you can chart your progress. In competitive sport there is no pleasure to compare to beating someone who used to beat you!

Mark Williams

Racing Secretary for 2009



Training

As the Watersports centre plan hits hard times the club, in a bid to increase membership will once more be putting on training this year. Sarah, under the watchful eye of Senior instructor Alan will likely be mustering the troops soon to formulate the plan. As always we will undoubtedly be indebted to the Sea Cadets for the loan of some equipment to do this, though Tony Tucker has now volunteered use of his craft for the cause. The Laser 2000 is without doubt one of the best double handed training craft around and this will be a great benefit as long as the instructors don't fight over who gets to use it instead of the Bosuns. That said, these past two years have seen some winds which may have stopped play in anything lighter so they're not all bad news.

Alan will be running the Adult Training Course so please spread the word. The provisional dates are 25/26 June 3, 10 and 17 July. Applications should be made to training@llandegfedd.org.uk and the forms will be available shortly on the website.

In addition to adult training and following the success of the Beginners Youth Training Sessions we are going to run the Thursday evenings again. Provisionally the first date will be Thursday 21/4/10 starting at 6.00 for the first session as the light will be limited. The cost will be £5.00 per session.

New members are welcome and should contact me by email david.green7@btinternet.com or 01291673779. If you know of anyone who would like to join in please give them my contact details. Also Volunteers for some or all of the sessions are required as instructors, PB drivers and beach minders. Come on, join us. It is really worthwhile and you never know, you might enjoy yourselves on the water.



Bill Jackson is also running his sessions for Race Coaching on a Tuesday evening for those with a Stage 2 Certificate or racing experience. Applications should be made to billclockbarn@aol.com

Sarah Green Training Co-ordinator

And finally for those competent adults wishing to improve :-

Adult advanced coaching for 2010 from Andy Howard;

Who wants to improve their sailing this year? Andy will offer coaching on Saturdays. Dates will be agreed with the rest of the training committee. Probably we will run;

- Lots of starts; very, very short race and run the sequence again
- Boat-handling and upwind work
- Mark rounding – how to gain and keep places
- Video debriefing – although this might have to be later – due to limited technology on site

Please mail Andy at saildev@llandegfedd.org.uk to let him gauge interest and get your ideas

Llandegfedd Sailing Club

Pre-Rigging Party and Prize Giving

Saturday 27th February 2010

At the Raj Gate

Well I am back in the seat for another year!

As you may all know the pig and Jig did not take place, which is unfortunate as the event was well run last year and whilst the band was a little loud, a few of us had a really good time. This year's event would have had a jazz band but without sufficient support from members the risk of substantial financial loss was unpalatable.

Now, the good news is that we will be having the prize giving at the pre-rigging dinner at the Raj Gate on 27th February. We will have a little speech beforehand, then the prizes, followed by a meal with a choice from the whole menu to cater for those who do not fancy Indian cuisine.

This year I am hoping to arrange for meal tickets in a nearby pub for the events ie Asymmetric Open, Vareo open, and Presidents weekend. I will have a Regatta event and there will again be a BBQ and some free refreshments sponsored by the club.

I remain keen to arrange a standard treasure hunt in cars and would welcome any particular views. I would also like to have a family fun day for the kids with silly races depending on the enthusiasm during the season.

At the end of the year we are going to put the prize giving back to November, following the end of the season and coinciding with the final fling. That means I can badger more people for ticket sales during September and October. Any ideas are welcome, but I feel we will look to a meal rather than entertainment.

Good luck to everyone for the new season and any feedback or ideas for new events are very welcome.

VC

Jeremy Symons



Watersports Centre Update

We've had a very frustrating winter. In early December we thought that everything may go to plan, and that we could start building work on site during the first week in January. Unfortunately, it wasn't just the weather that prevented this from happening.

Our plans had been drawn up, and we successfully negotiated with a builder who showed that he was able to build the Centre on time and to budget. We began to turn our thoughts to the formidable challenge of running the sailing, and running the building. As those of you who attended the Sailing Club AGM may remember, we had been promised some money, and we had arranged to borrow the rest if we could give some security for the loan. We knew that it made financial sense for Welsh Water to guarantee the loan, and we were quite optimistic that they would do so.

There were great advantages to Welsh Water if they would guarantee the loan. Our business plan is robust, so it seemed unlikely that they would never be called upon to honour the guarantee. However, even if the worst came to the worst, and they had to pay the guarantee, they would inherit the building. They would receive the building which they would probably not be able to build for less than £3/4M, but only pay about £200,000 for it. And they would be complying with their obligations to provide leisure facilities, and would gain great kudos as a result of having a well used building and a thriving site.

We don't know why they turned it down (We weren't invited to meet the Board), but without the loan we didn't have enough money to pay the builder, so we couldn't sign the contract. However, we then hit another snag. We had agreed with Welsh Water that the building would sit astride an old pipeline that hadn't been used for years. Some time after we gained planning permission, they decided to re-commission the pipeline. As it would run at a very high pressure, we had to move the building forward about 7 metres. We spoke to the planning authority, and thought we had persuaded them that we could vary the planning permission. Then, in December, they changed their mind, and demanded that we reapply for planning permission, and pay a new fee of nearly £4,000. We have put in the new application, and we are waiting for it to be granted.

These issues have left us a bit depressed, and we haven't been able to go sailing to get it all out of our systems by taking a cold bath in the reservoir!

However, we're not downhearted! We will be granted planning permission, and we will raise enough money. Our new time table shows that we will open the Centre on 1st March 2011 and we are hoping that we will be permitted to start construction before June 2010.

However, we need more help from members to cover our deficit in funds. We intend to call a meeting of the Watersports Centre in February, and we ask that all members of the club attend, and bring your friends. In the meantime, we still have a grant application pending which will help us reach our target. We missed it last time as we did not demonstrate adequate support from the community. I therefore need as many letters of support from you and everyone you know to show that there is great demand for a new watersports centre.



Gareth Edwards Secretary
Llandegfedd Watersports Centre

Membership Secretaries Update

Dear members

Your membership renewal forms for 2010 were be posted out to you by 2nd class post on Monday 25th January 2010. If you do not receive yours by post you can print one off from the web site.

Would all members please post cheques and forms to me by 1st March 2010. Last year was the worst year ever for returning forms!

Please amend anything on your form that may have changed, such as e-mail address, power boat qualification etc. These details are recorded in the clubs data base and used by the committee.

Anyone wishing to change their membership type, the prices are as follows:

Full £90

Senior Citizens £35 (state age pension)

Cadets £20

I have heard of 2 people not rejoining in 2010- Charlie Chandler and Mike Walker. 89 renewal forms are going out to include all 2008 members who did not rejoin in 2009. Maybe some will return?

If any member knows of anyone who wishes to join we offer half price membership for the first year.

Mandy Sykes

Membership Secretary

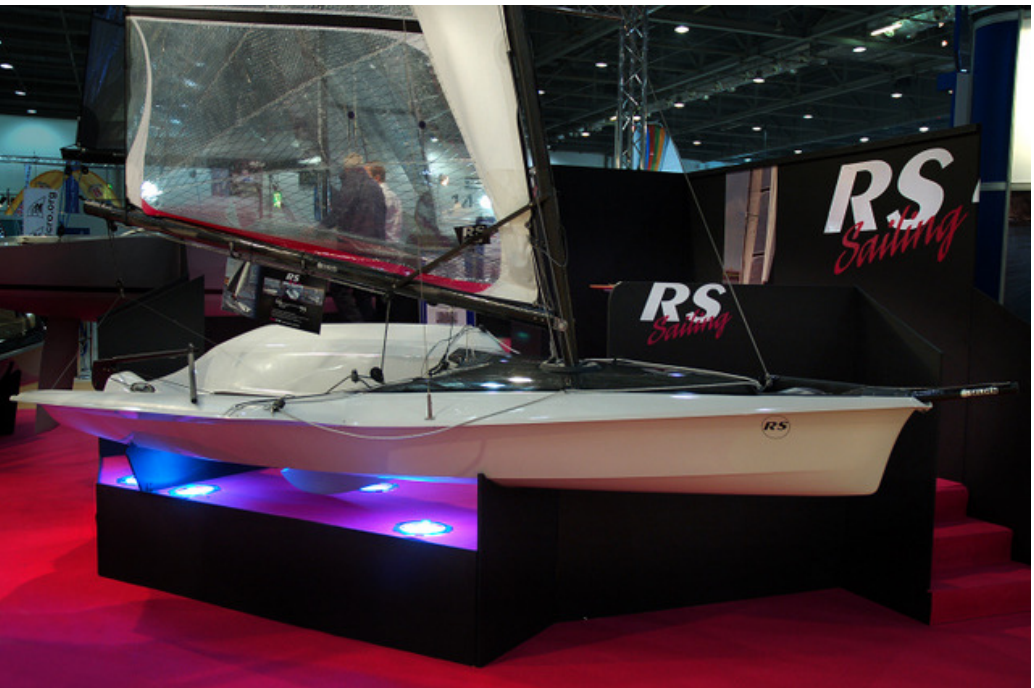
Llandegfedd Sailing Club



Recycling gone mad: Those hoping for warm shelter and new toilet facilities when we return, fear not. I was up the lake at the weekend and took this picture. Excellent!



The first RS 100 destined for Llandegfedd waters is on order but who's buying it? Find the answer buried in another article.



The Bosun's Locker

Equipment and Facilities

Un – packing of the club boats from the containers has been arranged for Sunday 28th February, starting at 11 am. There will be enough things to do for all members who are able to make it.

An inventory of each item will be recorded in order to keep track of our property through the season. Also, our Committee boat Doris will be cleaned and preparations made to repair damage and improve protection from bird droppings. We are buying a model Owl, fitting lines of CD's, and discussing a removable cover over the deck, which can be painted with the anti – slip deck paint which we already have.

The Race Markers will be checked and repaired, and re –placed if they have drifted off. The Rangers will be asked to make extra time to clean the changing rooms, and if they are unable to do so, we will give it a power wash – inside and out ourselves. The service of the Rescue Boat Outboard Engines has been arranged for late February ready for the new season. There is apparently a problem with the gearbox of one of the engines which may require a bit of money spent, but nothing too serious hopefully. The roof of the rescue container was meant to have been fixed professionally over the winter but for some reason it has not–yet. That will get chased up. Additional lighting and ventilation is being arranged and fitted to the container also to make it a more pleasant home for the Rescue Boats, equipment and tools. The First Aid kit, Accident Book and Maintenance Folder will be in the container – please use. By the day of the first race, after some grunt and gas (if I may borrow these rugby terms) we should be ready to hit the ground running so to speak.



Martin Phillips

Bosun - Fuel and General

Hold the press - W to be renamed!

Many will note that the 11 buoys representing marks around the periphery of the lake are numbered 1 to 10 and finish up with W. There's probably a logical historical reason for that, but as nobody at the last General committee meeting could recall it, and as it has caused some confusion for visitors in the past, a vote was passed to rename W and make it–you guessed it AB. Just joking - it will obviously become 11. We will endeavour to update all documentation with this detail, but please be considerate of this until it's done.

There has yet again been no submissions for the star letter prize so the club once more gets to keep the prize money. Come on kids. - Or mum's and dads for that matter - It's easy money!



Wanted posters?

Nobody wanted to play my game of who's who last issue. Here we have Robin wood in 1971, your editor Dave Brannigan in 1979 and Phil Weston in 1982. All were Lucas Girling apprentices at Grange road Cwmbran.



Volunteers Wanted

At the AGM it was revealed that a few committee members wished to step down and volunteers were sought to replace them. Although our secretary Julie Boswell has asked to step down these past two seasons she remains on the committee, and we're really grateful that she has not left us without. She really would appreciate a replacement if anyone fancies the task. Rather more pressing however is the need to find a new treasurer. Unfortunately, David White, who has done a sterling job of looking after our finances needs to step down for personal reasons and we really do need to find someone fairly numerate to take up the baton.

Please speak to the Commodore if you think you can help.

A Big Thank You

For the past couple of years one of the most unpopular jobs on the committee has been performed by Dave Green– that of the OD roster. It is a difficult role that can lead to occasional conflict which is possibly why Tony who has taken over the role this year has entrusted the task to his computer. I can hear, "Take it up with Dell" being the retort when someone gets rostered on their wedding anniversary! Seriously though, a big well done to Dave for carrying that load, and well done to Tony for taking up the challenge going forward. Lets see how it works out and please support Tony through the teething stages.

2010 Sailing Season looming

At our last AGM I was accredited for having helmed the most number of races last year. I must be honest it did seem that I was in the boat a lot. Most of you only saw us on race days, but we sailed a lot of Saturdays a few weekdays and the odd evening too. I don't think I ever tired of it, but I'm not sure my crew was quite so keen by the end of the season. We'll have to see how many I can get away with this year! I count myself really lucky that Sandra has embraced sailing in the way she has. When she was unable to sail following her operation last year she really missed it. Luckily for me I was able to recruit a former outsider in the form of Nick Lattey from Llangorse for a few weeks to keep me racing. Abigail and Ben also stepped up to the mark a few times too which was good experience for them and good fun to boot. Of course it had the added bonus that my results didn't suffer! I believe Nick said at the time that he may actually migrate to Llandegfedd this year as he liked the race format as was fed up with Llangorse's obsession with flying 15's. I'm pleased to be able to report that he has already sent in his application form and will bring the first RS100 to the club when he comes. Look forward to seeing you Nick!

I have fond memories of last year. The winds were generally more moderate than the previous two years, and most races were well supported, though there were the odd exceptions where extremes or weather prevailed. The May day race also suffered from poor support though the few that turned up had a good blast.

So, that was last year, and by the time this newsletter hits your doormats or email in-boxes most, (though not all of us) will have gone through the cycle of putting our boats into hibernation, and taking up some other activity to while away a Sunday. Laying in bed a while longer is always popular, followed by something like serial movie watching, decorating, or excessive shopping. Those with wooden craft will likely be planning some essential pre-season maintenance tasks. I'm not sad to see the end of those days personally, though I do understand why people have wooden boats. They have characteristics you just don't get from Plastic.

We have also come out the other side of Christmas 2009 and will undoubtedly be keen to try out that new "must have" accessory that you received as a present to enhance your sailing experience. For me this year it's a cranium insulator (aka beanie hat) and some nice warm waterproof socks, though I hope not to test the waterproof attributes of the socks too early in the season.

So then folks, it's almost time to start sailing again. Whoopee! Those of us that hike should perhaps start hiking off the settee to get those muscles in shape again and those that trapeze can – well, you can stay in bed even longer!

Of course, not all of us hang up our sailing gear for winter. There are a few hardcore individuals, mostly children (whether in body or just in mind), who use the opportunity to go off training or indeed to train others. You have to admire the enthusiasm and wonder at the lack of feeling their extremities endure to serve our sport, but it stands them all in good stead for the season ahead.

You will have already read about the latest hurdle in the quest for some accommodation for the club. Everyone is disappointed, but please continue to give your support to Gareth, Steve and Martyn. They are doing all they can and then some, and confidence is still high that they will succeed.

In closure, let's hope that this year's winds will be kind to us once more, that the rain holds off - especially on event days and that a season of great racing lies ahead. See you all at the pond!

Dave

Ship Shape

After seeing James May's very ambitious, amphibious Triumph Herald rigged with an RS400 mast on Top Gear with the intention of sailing across the English channel, I was compelled to experiment with a previous employer's company car. Here we are in a campsite on the River Frome preparing for launch into Poole Harbour. I don't work for them any more!



Look at the chart and say the **COLOUR** not the word

YELLOW	BLUE	ORANGE
BLACK	RED	GREEN
PURPLE	YELLOW	RED
ORANGE	GREEN	BLACK
BLUE	RED	PURPLE
GREEN	BLUE	ORANGE

Left – Right Conflict

Your right brain tries to say the colour but your left brain insists on reading the word.

Those with only half a brain should be able to do it no problem. Give it a try...



After sustaining regular incoming fire from Jeremy, Abigail and Ben asked me to get them something more formidable with which to fight back. This was us at the boat show test driving one solution.

Think you know your boats do you?

If you do, you're not saying...

Last issue's teaser was a somewhat distorted image of a Laser Vago, but I didn't get a single suggestion from the readership. To that end I have decided not to play that game anymore. Does anyone have an idea for a better game?



Your 2010 committee members are:

President	John Regans	Senior Officer
Commodore	Dave Timson	Chief Executive of club
Vice Commodore,	Jeremy Symons	Social activities, commodore in waiting
Racing Secretary	Mark Williams	All racing matters, calendar and events
Membership Secretary	Mandy Sykes	Membership applications and payments
Treasurer	Vacancy	Looks after the money
Secretary	Julie Boswell	Administration, minutes of all meetings
Webmaster	Andy Howard; Tony Tucker; Chris Stanley	Looks after the website
Newsletter	Dave Brannigan	Compiles Newsletters and Yearbook
Bosun (main)	Martin Phillips	Maintenance of all equipment
Bosun (Topper)	Neil Williams	Maintenance of Topper dinghies
Bosun (Oppie)	Pat McLeod	Maintenance of Optimists
Bosun (420)	Bill Jackson	Maintenance of 420
Bosun (Enterprise)	Vacancy	Maintenance of Enterprise
Bosun (Rescue)	Dave Brannigan	Maintenance of rescue boats
Conventional Fleet Rep	Neil Sharrat	Captain of Conventional fleet
Senior Instructor	Alan Bolton	Main instructor for RYA training courses
Asymmetric Rep	Vacancy	Captain of asymmetric fleet
Youth Reps	Vacancy	Promote junior sailing and social events
Child Protection Officer	Gill Williams	Child protection policy manager and adviser
OD Roster	Tony Tucker	Decides who does duty and rescue
Training co-ordinator	Sarah Green	Organises training events
Results Secretary	Tony Tucker	Publishes and collects events
Social Committee	Jeremy Symons	Members of socialising committee
Race Development Officer	Andy Howard	Development of club racing skills
W.Y.A Race Coach	Bill Jackson	W.Y.A area representative and junior race coach

This years sailing plan for Abigail & Ben - (maybe)

In the January 09 issue I wrote about how the Brannigan family got into Sailing and how, after selling the big "Tippy Topper" Cruz Classic day boat, we ended up with the 400 and the Feva.

The 400 has proved to have been a great decision and we love it. If you haven't tried one then do! It can be a bit of a beast at times and is able to get the better of us if we let it, so for us it's a great challenge but very rewarding when we get it right. The Feva though, has only been a partial success. Let me say from the start it's not the boat's fault, it's more of a crew issue!

We've learned the hard way that younger siblings simply don't work well together in a double hander. I'm told by many that this recipe rarely works out, and our two are living proof of that. I hope one day they'll prove us wrong. They may grow out of it and because of that and other factors we are reluctant to sell the boat. We have decided instead to keep hold of it for the odd occasion when they are getting along and for those times when we sail recreationally with family & friends when a double hander really comes into it's own.

We also take the boats away for camping holidays each year along with our small powered inflatable and can usually get all five of us plus a friend or two on the water at the same time which is useful.

As a solution to those days when the ying and yang are out of phase we have recently bought a Laser 1 which will eventually mean that each can sail alone if they want to, one in the Laser and one in the Feva in solo configuration.

I say eventually because the Laser we bought is a work in progress and needs a little work. We bought it from United Utilities. It was one of the boats left abandoned by it's owners and was owing several season's rent. They tried contacting the owners but failed to do so, so after some discussions with their legal department they agreed to sell it to recover some of the rent due. It was not complete so we need some parts to get it on the water, initially a radial sail with possibly a 4.7 rig to follow. This will make our sailing very configurable. If anyone has any sails (of any size) or rigging they would like to sell or donate please let me know.

The laser as we all know is a tried and tested single hander, however the Feva was primarily intended as a double hander and it shows when you try and sail it competitively by yourself.

There are three recognised sailing configurations, each with their own PY number. These are:

- i) Two up, Mylar Mainsail, Jib and Spinnaker with a PY of 1189 and pursuit time of 3:31
- ii) Two up, Soft (un-battened) Mainsail and Spinnaker with a PY of 1240 and a pursuit time of 1:46
- iii) One up, Soft (un-battened) mainsail with a PY of 1280 and a pursuit time of 0:20

There is facility to cant the daggerboard rearward when sailing single handed to help rebalance the rig when the jib is not there, however it remains a bit heavy on the helm. There is unfortunately no recognized configuration for using the mainsail and spinnaker only as per Vareo. This is a shame, as with a little modification to the standard fittings the mechanics actually work quite well.

In heavy winds things can become a handful and we thought the soft un-battened main could be a solution. As we don't own one we borrowed one to try, unfortunately on a light wind day and Abigail found it very underpowered.

We only ever really saw the soft main as a means to get the boat on the water single-handed in heavier winds so we don't yet know how useful that could be. As we now we have the laser to fit out the Feva soft sail purchase has taken a lower priority. Lets see what unfolds.

Rostering and Resulting - By Tony Tucker

Back to BCR's

You will no doubt remember that for each race I calculate a BCR for each finisher. It's usually shown as the last column on the race timings page. The BCR or Back Calculated Rating is the handicap you would have needed to be allocated to draw with the race winner, and of course, since the race winner did draw with the race winner, their BCR is in fact their official RYA handicap value, while all other finishers have a BCR that is higher than their official RYA handicap value, since a higher handicap gives you a better corrected time.

I have also calculated the average of every sailor's BCR from each race of the regular season. That average can be found here:

<http://www.llandegfedd.org.uk/results/bcrs.htm>

On that page I display the BCR averages sorted in two ways, the first is sorted on the ratio of your average BCR to your official RYA handicap. Now if you take part in only one race and win it, then your seasons average BCR is equal to your official RYA handicap, and the ratio of the two is 1.0, and you end up at the top of the table. You will see that the top three on the table did in fact only sail in 1, 1 & 3 races. So we need to look a little further down to pick out the real star performers. One other point to mention is that for Llandegfedd, it is easier to place highly in the Conventional fleet simply because there are less of them. You can use the column headed BCR/PY, as a measure of how well you sailed against your handicap.

The second table on that page is sorted by the ratio of your 2009 average BCR against your 2008 average BCR, any ratio smaller than 1 represents an improvement year on year. Those at the bottom of the table did not sail in 2008, so no ratio calculation was possible. Interesting to see that 39 sailors improved, while 14 turned in worse performances. Again we need to be careful of those results with a small number sailed, since one days good or bad sailing can give you a ratio at the edge.

The other point to mention here is that it is very difficult for someone who frequently wins or is close to the winner to show a good improvement, so you will see most sailors who starred in the first table, all huddled together around .98, and showing only a small improvement on the year.

One other thing to note is that the big winners in the Improvers Series feature strongly on this table. However their new improved average BCR will make it much more difficult to feature in the Improvers Series this year.

OD Roster

There are two web pages in the members section of the web site that allow you to set your task preferences and unavailable dates. At the moment everyone is marked for all tasks, so if there are any tasks you do not wish to undertake then you must go and set your preferences before the first roster is generated on the 10th Feb. At that time I will generate the roster for the Spring Series, so again if there are some dates you cannot make, you must exclude those dates by going to the members area and marking those dates as unavailable.

I am still looking for conventional fleet volunteers for the Asymmetric Open on 24th, 25th April, so far I have Mike Dean & Simon Collinson. If any others are happy to provide cover for that event, they will not be included in the Spring Series roster.

View from a 400 cockpit

The Phil Morrison designed RS400 first came to market in 1995 sold under the marketing umbrella of new boy on the block RS Racing LDC Racing Sailboats. There are roughly a thousand boats out there now, and though sales had taken a dive for a while, the class is currently experiencing a bit of a revival. The Merlin rocket (on which the 400 is based) is a development class so there are lots of different looking ones around, but the close resemblance to the newest incarnation is obvious, though not surprising given Morrison's links with the Rocket's evolution. Unlike his Rocket though, the 400 got an



asymmetric kite, largely maintenance free construction and pioneered a moveable bowsprit that can be canted to windward whilst sailing downwind - theoretically allowing you to go deeper than boats with fixed poles. The 400 is a very purposeful looking design. There are no bench seats to relax on, storage compartments or any such paraphernalia. Everything about it has been designed to optimise racing performance. The boat is beautifully formed. I can look at it for hours – well, minutes anyway, and not get bored. Though not as attractive as a beautifully varnished wooden boat it does sport some lovely lines. If you put it on it's side and look at the underside, the curves flow seamlessly from a really pointy bow to a large saucer like shape at the back.

A latter generation of wooden Merlin

Though not the most technical of rigs, there are quite a few adjustments and control lines available to keep the crew on their toes. All bar the shroud pins can be adjusted on the water. That task is best left to a shore based activity owing to the risks of dropping the pins and flying a sail on an un-stayed mast.

Aside from the sail sheets, there are controls for adjusting mast bend (via a deck level ram), Cunningham, Outhaul, Kicker, Rig Tension, bowsprit pole launching and gybing lines and the kite halyard/ downhaul. Ergonomics are top class with many of the control lines falling to hand of both helm and crew. Compared to a daggerboard design, what the pivoting centreboard loses in efficiency it more than makes up for in convenience and it does not noticeably take up room in the boat. It does create a maintenance need however in the form of slot gasket replacement. The only real downside to the layout is that the cleats for the jib sit proud atop the thwart and the crew can sometimes catch themselves on them. After a few painful reminders they soon learn to avoid them!

Owing to the saucer-like hull shape and low displacement there is little inherent stability and at launch the boat rolls readily from side to side. Once under way this becomes less of an issue, though you do still need a fairly dynamic crew to keep the boat flat.

A function of boat design combined with our weight, we find that in order to control trim well we need to get our weight well forward unless it's anything greater than a Force 3 downwind. This can lead to some odd seating arrangements for us depending upon the point of sail and wind strength and when Sandra sits ahead of the shrouds to lift the stern clear upwind others have often commented that we must have had a row. Happily not always the case! This probably suggests the need to lose some weight in the boat.

I wont say which end, suffice to say that I didn't really need the turbulence off the transom to tell me that! Not that it happens often, but when we "get it right", it is quite satisfying to pull away from a Vareo or 200. We can make large gains over them upwind, however, after rounding the windward mark they often quickly catch up again. Downwind is definitely an area we need to work on this coming year.

The Vareo's in particular seem to soak much lower than us even though we're the ones with the moveable bowsprit. It may be that I need to simply follow their lead and go deeper, but I'm always tempted to luff-up a bit to get the speed at the expense of the increased distance. That's just the balancing act I need to refine.

The 400 carries quite a bit of sail for a hiking boat and a few times this year we have found ourselves overpowered on tight reaches. The key is knowing when to leave the kite in its chute. The 200's and Vareo's seem to handle this situation better despite lower crew weights. It could mean that in proportion to sail area their weight is greater, or it could simply be down to technique. We need to work at methods to allow us to de-power the boat in these situations and stop bearing off so much. Sandra's hands have been in shreds trying to hold the kite at times and we've had to bare off below lay lines quite a few times only to have to sail back upwind to get to marks. Any suggestions that don't involve burger king or more beer are welcomed.

Gybing can be a risky process in any dinghy, but the 400 adds it's own bit of flavour to the manoeuvre. As well as the usual stuff there's the moving bowsprit to contend with and care is needed. You must strive to keep the boat flat through the gybe, or at least limit the roll. The tack end of the pole moves quite a way off the boat centreline and if you combine dropping the pole to leeward prior to the gybe (so that it is already to windward after the manoeuvre) and then allow any roll to leeward, you risk burying the tack of the kite in the water. At speed this acts as a great anchor and can lead to a spectacular capsizing.

Speaking of capsizing, the 400 inverts fairly quickly if it goes over. If one of the crew can get to the centreboard as it goes over to prevent inversion it significantly reduces the recovery time, but getting it back up is nigh on impossible with any sheet or kicker tension on. If it does invert it typically takes both crew stood on the gunwale to get her back up to half way, at which point one of you will need to release sheet and kicker tension to stand any chance of recovery. If you are unfortunate enough to get trapped under the inverted boat there is lots of breathing space, and with no trapeze lines to worry about it is reasonably safe on flat water. I did however read of someone getting their head stuck in the mainsheet horse once. Not quite sure how they did that?

We're thinking of taking the boat away this year and sailing some new venues. As much as the salt and sand irritates me I'd really like to do some more sea sailing as it adds a whole different dimension. The 400 is a great boat to sail in a swell.

As always I would like to promote 400 sailing at Llandegfedd. It would be great to see some of the Laser 2, Laser 2K, RS200, or Enterprise crews take up the challenge, or anyone for that matter and if anyone would like to have a try I'm sure one of the fleet would sort you out with a go.

Dave Brannigan RS400 1106



And an RS400 - you would not believe how hard it is to get a matching picture from a similar angle. Sorry it's not great but you should get the idea!

Maintenance Tips

It can be a real pain having a day on the water or a race ruined by failing equipment unless you've sailed poorly and are looking for something to blame? This article has been put together to help you prepare for the coming season and hopefully find potential problems before they find you.

Andy Howard came up with the idea on which I've elaborated with his permission. Some of this will be obvious to the old timer but we have a few newcomers to the site so bare with us. Here goes.

Hulls. If you have a wooden boat make sure it's well protected before you go afloat afloat - sounds obvious, isn't to everyone. Only apply coatings on completely dry materials or you'll waste your time and money. If you have a fibreglass boat, again it's better to repair sooner than later as it won't get better by itself and may lead to further problems later on. Most manufacturers sell colour matched gelcoat repair packs and for bigger repairs glass matting and resin is readily available at most good chandlers and at many motor factors and spares outlets such as Halfords.

Many boats have vent holes – very small holes in strategic places above the normal waterline which allow air to enter and leave the hull as it expands and contracts with ambient temperature. During a capsize, they can also allow a small amount of water into the buoyancy tanks. You should regularly drain these air spaces via the transom bung, but with GRP and wooden boats it is recommended that you also remove the inspection hatches regularly to allow the hull to dry completely. This will help prevent the hull gaining weight through water absorption. If you've used the boat in salt water it does not hurt to flush this space with fresh water prior to drying as salt water does not dry as readily.

Hull colouring pigments can be adversely affected by sunlight. If your hull has faded T-Cut and elbow grease will restore it to it's former glory and a coat of polish will help retard further problems as well as help the hull slip through the water quicker. It will also help stop the crass cuttings sticking to the hull on the rare occasion it gets cut.

Rigging. Someone once asked me if I knew how to stop ropes coming apart after cutting them. I said, "I'm a frayed knot!" Sorry, couldn't resist that one. Look out for frayed ropes, oxidised or corroded metallic parts, loose rivets, screws, weld breaks, fractures & sticking blocks. Blocks can sometimes be revived with a squirt of WD40 as it's often just a bit of salt or sand build up causing the problem. Alternatively, use of a dry PTFE based lubricant may stop them collecting sand in the first instance.

Rope used in a modern performance dinghy is not cheap, but there are a few key ropes which disable your boat and it really is worth investing in replacements occasionally, if only from a safety perspective. Halyards seem to be the biggest problem. By virtue of the task they perform they always lie in the cleat at the same point and the cleat slowly eats away at it. When buying your next halyard buy it few feet longer than it needs to be, then, at the earliest signs of wear at the cleat point cut a few inches off the Sail head end of the line. This will move the cleating point along a few inches each time and give you many times greater service life from your rope. Don't wait too long to do this or it will break at the weakened spot anyway. As you hoist your mainsail you may not think there's a lot of strain on the halyard. Actually the forces are great when you start applying Cunningham and kicker tension. Each of these pulls against the halyard and employs multiple pulleys giving massive mechanical advantage. You may be surprised as to how much tension there is. I have our boat rigged with a 2:1 halyard, which means that as well as being easier to hoist, the strain on the halyard itself is halved and is thus *theoretically* half as likely to break – maybe! Furthermore, if your halyards run down the inside of your mast it can be a real pain trying to thread a new one without having the original to pull it through. Weigh up £20 for a halyard versus a day lost sailing, and it's really no competition – literally so on a race day!

After time the cleats themselves can become worn and require replacement. If you find lines slipping occasionally it is time to replace the cleat. They're cheap enough and easy to change.

Foils are often neglected. The rudder and centreboard are the item most likely to get damaged when launching and retrieving your boat. They are submerged to, on an average, about three feet when in use. Here the water pressure is about 1.5 PSI and that really helps it get into damaged areas further and more quickly. Many composite boards contain non-stainless steel rods to provide strength. These can corrode leading to swelling, blistering and rust staining if allowed to get wet. As with the hulls, repairs are often quite easy but best done sooner rather than later. Foil shape can have a marked effect on boat performance so you really ought to maintain these parts from a performance perspective as well as for aesthetic and longevity reasons.

Spars, along with other metallic parts can suffer corrosion or fatigue failures. Just keep an eye on areas where cleats, hooks and pulleys attach and you won't have many surprises, especially in fresh water areas where galvanic corrosion is much less of an issue. Keep an eye out for small hair-line fractures which can lead to catastrophic failures under load. section – Many high performance boats use carbon fibre in the construction of spars and in some cases hulls too. Epoxy Glues can be used to repair minor damage, but anything under load is best left to a professional.

Modern **sails** are made from rot proof materials and require very little maintenance. Try and pack them away dry, if it's going to be for longer periods. But if you intend using them again soon, storing them wet will not hurt them. More important is to try and avoid creasing them as this will not only spoil the shape of the sail, but can lead to weaknesses that can result in a tear. Some sails, particularly spinnakers, are pulled around a lot and can suffer from stitching failure. A regular inspection, looking for pulled stitching can increase the working life of a sail tremendously. Pulled stitches can often be fixed by simply using a blunt needle to pull them back whence they came. It is sometimes difficult to accommodate all the excess yarn. In this case, try to tuck it under an adjacent stitch and possibly stick it down with a smear of clear silicone sealant. Never cut it! If you find any missing stitches you should get it sewn right away. There are special stitch patterns used on sail cloth, and most domestic sewing machines do not have it. You can hand stitch small pieces but if you have a large seam failure it's best to take it to a sail-maker. On many modern craft the spinnaker is retrieved via a chute with a narrow mouth at the front of the boat. Regular application of a dry lubricant such as Harken McLube Sailkote will help the sail slide in and out and reduce the stresses put upon it. Your crew will love you for it also as it makes retrieval of the kite so much easier. Beware - it's quite pricy, but then, so are spinnakers.

Finally, **trailers** and **trolleys** need loving too but are often neglected. A smear of grease on the trolley axles and some air in the tyres makes pulling the boat back up that slipway much easier. I've seen some folk having to stop every few feet to push the wheel back on because the retaining clip – often a simple pin costing just a few pence is missing. Others have the wrong wheels on the trolley and as a result suffer severe "toe-out" while pulling the boat resulting in a massive increase in effort for the sake of either re-bushing the wheel or buying the correct ones. Even if you've rarely needed to move your road trailer, you could do worse than spin the wheels every so often. It will redistribute the grease in the bearings and help protect them, reducing the likelihood that they will seize when you next tow it. Keeping trailer tyres inflated will help prevent the walls cracking and save you money in the long term.

That's about it. Hope some of you will find bits useful

Dave & Andy

Know your flags

Keith Sykes put this flag guide together for the last issue but I thought I'd leave it in without the descriptions. Go on. Get a pen and see how well you can fill in the blanks. Answers in the last newsletter.

Flag	Description	Use
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.Next Potty Harry Movie to be filmed at Deggy!

Warner brothers recently announced that the next instalment of the hit Potty Harry series is to be filmed at Llandegfedd. Following on from "The chamber of secrets", a story about Steve Clarks Garage, they will be shooting "Potty Harry and the previously unconsidered high pressure water pipe" at Llandegfedd.

A cast of local actors was chosen in place of the usual cast and will include Alex Howard as "Potty Harry", Andy Howard as "Dumbledore" and Sue Howard as "Hermione". They can be seen here at rehearsals. I get a sense of nepotism at work here!

Don't you just love Sue's dual purpose sailing/flying boots?

The game of Quiddich is going to be replaced by "Racing around the cans" the rules of which will be equally as hard to understand by the general public.

Tony Tucker craved the roll of Hagrid but despite a very impressive vocal audition, he failed to impress the director with his beard density, (as did Jeremy by the way). If you look carefully you can just see Tony muscling his way in. He even tried to use the reflection in his car door mirror to try and get on film. Maybe next time Tony!



CLASSIFIEDS

Anything for sale or wanted can, within reason and the rules of common decency, be advertised here. Send it through to news@llandegfedd.org.uk

WEBSITE

Visit our website for all current and archive club information including newsletters. It has news, weather, diary, results, photos, video, and lots, lots more. www.llandegfedd.org.

DIARY

Notable dates coming up:

Curry Night @ the Raj Gate

Saturday February 27th

Working Party

Sunday February 28th

First race of the Season

Sunday March 7th 13:30

Asymmetric Open and IC/AC event

April 24th 13:00 & 25th 10:30

Please remember to register your email address with the membership secretary to allow us to keep in touch. Also make sure you are registered with our yahoo chat group as all results are now distributed by email across this group. To register send an email to;
Llandegfeddsailingclub-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

