

G. Hutchins

SOLENT R/C MYC

Newsletter 2/88

This Newsletter brings the Club almost exactly to mid-Season, with the Spring Series for mid-week racing just coming to the end, several of our major Club events behind us; sadly, the water level at Setley is disappearing almost as quickly as the days, and it has to be admitted, that if the current dry spell continues, the prospects for sailing in the early autumn are far from good. We must console ourselves that we are having some superb sailing weather, and have had some extremely keen racing, even if turn-outs for the major events continue to be disappointing, in view of the paper strength of the Club.

Here, our Membership Secretary records 63 Sailing Members and 23 Scale Members, but our trusty Mr MacThrifty says that up to mid-June, only 42 sailing and 14 scale members have ACTUALLY paid their Subs for this current year! So, you back-sliders, take heed there is an official 'dead-line' of 31st May for payment of Subs., after which you CAN be asked for a re-joining fee.

The Spring Quarter, oddly, has never been a good time for recruitment, but several new members since the last Members List was issued can be named and welcomed into the Club:-

On the Sailing side: CHA Ferguson ("Fergy", naturally ... if bearing little likeness to the Original in either sex, shape or age! Pax!) a newcomer to the game, who travels all the way down from Newbury to sail on Tuesdays and Fridays; has both a 'RM.' and a 1-m, hailing from the hi-tech firm of Carbon Craft;
E Crockford (Eric), who bought one of Bill Wright's fleet of 36's, first and has recently completed a RM to a French (Johan) design;
JK Harding (John) who bought "Shogun" from Bill Wright; another recruit from the full-size field, seen so far and regrettably, only seen occasionally mid-week;
W Wilford (Bill) again from the big-boat field, who bought 'RM' "Kermit" from Blake Pennell - who has now left Club and District.
Mrs Munday, Mark's wife, who has taken over Mark's 36, and makes history in becoming our first sailing Lady member!
and
M Mckeon (Malcolm) - rejoining with Ed Dubois' old RM; Malcolm is a Naval Architect, working with Ed Dubois, currently heavily engaged in the current "America's Cup" Challenge by Peter de Savary. Already he has several full-size boats to his designs racing successfully, and if time ever allows him to complete the RM on his drawing board the result could be very interesting indeed.

On the Scale side: JM Cook
GB Cannon and
WEG Maidment.

..... your scribe regretting he cannot give them the same introduction as the sailing members, having somewhat blinkered vision in his own approach to model boating and no information from 'other sources' but at the same time, offering them the same welcome to our Club and hoping they, too, will enjoy their time at Setley.

Apart from new members, there are several new boats to report, mostly in the RM fleet, with undoubted improvement in performance and sailing standards. There are now four "Sea-Scamps" in the Club, owned by Bill Wright, Norman Woodwell, Walter Newton and David James, all of whom seem to have benefitted from the change, and there can be little doubt that this is the best "value for money" Club boat currently on the market. Chris Thomas has acquired a GRP "Shogun" which is going very well, particularly in strong wind; Bill Wright has completed a C/F version of the same hull, which has yet to find its form, as, it seems at Setley, has Martin Houlton's C/F version bought from Norman Hatfield. Robin Wheeler-Osman has been sailing a "Rebel" from Nylet, in the development of which he has been involved; a very nice looking boat, she seems a marked improvement on recent RM's from this stable. However, the most interesting development is the decision of Tim Baker and John Ashurst to follow in Alan Ford's footsteps and build wooden boats from scratch, both to successful designs; coming, as does your scribe, from the old model yachting world where this was 'custom practise' if one wanted to sail at all, he knows the tremendous satisfaction and pleasure felt on launching such a boat. Good luck to 'em! The other new boat is Eric Crockford's GRP "Rajah" of which I feel we shall hear much more as Eric, a newcomer, gains experience. There are no new 36's, while the large collection of 1-m hulls owned by members grows very slowly into models afloat; however, Eric Shaw and Jack Fry have introduced a "Tempo" and an "Off-cut" respectively, both sailing thus providing variety and competition for the "Xtenshuns".

The first "Big" sailing event of the Season was, again, with our old pals from Ryde, at Setley as their water was not available so early; this was won convincingly by Solent, with a score of 129 against Ryde's 177, with the best three individual scorers all being Solent, but Ryde had two very inexperienced men in their team who accounted for much of their high score; 'up front' racing was very close, and things may not be so easy on our return match at Ryde, particularly if they put out some of their members not present on this occasion.

The first Club event was the race for the Shaw Trophy, sailed, as so often, on a very nice day with a clear wind. After some close racing, the Trophy was won by Tim Baker, sailing a "Tornado", from Norman Woodwell with his "Sea Scamp" and Martin Houlton third with his "Shogun 2".

Then, on the Bank Holiday, we had the first of our 'Match-racing' events for RM's, which sadly, only attracted nine entries, of which two fell by the way-side mid-way through the series which radio and mechanical troubles. However, the racing was closer than last year, and we finished with Alan Ford and Norman Woodwell both having the same number of wins, Alan winning the 'sail-off'. Results still seem to depend more on boat speed than tactics - and, maybe in boats of differing speeds and characteristics they always will, but it will be very interesting to watch the next event and see if the recent TV Series on the Lyminster Cup races will have had any effect!

Latest event has been our 3-Clubs match at Gosport, when for the third year in succession we won easily, our 5-boat team occupying the first 5 places. Guildford, in an unsettled period involving a change in sailing-water, sent only four boats, using our own 6th man as make-weight, while Gosport, so long renowned for vane "A" class sailing seem to to have come to terms with RM

racing as yet. They were noticed to be organising a petition in defence of their lake, and it must be admitted its loss would be a national disaster - in model yachting terms - and it would be nice to see this Club offer support.

On the National scene, quite a few Club members found their way to Gosport during the National RM Championships, when conditions varied from rough, through very rough, to wild. The event was won, in the end, by Chris Dicks, sailing a boat to his own design, chiefly notable for the deep "spray rails" and the extremely deep fin, both of which must have contributed to his success, but the result hung on the very last race, with young Martin Roberts hanging on to the end. Martin (who by the way, was sailing a standard "Sea Scamp") is another of the "second generation" sailors, his father Ken, having been a very successful competitor at National level in both "A"s and "M"s from their home port, like Bill Wright, of Birkenhead. The writer's mind, on hearing this result, went back 20 years, to an "A" Championship at Fleetwood, when the young Chris had to sail a single board to windward against the redoubtable Bob Burton for the Championship, when the result went to experience rather than youth;.. one wonders if Chris's mind went the same way? Another noteworthy, and hope-giving performance came from Barry Jackson, who managed to finish in the top six with his faithful old Seahorse, still using her original, single piece, sails, boat and sails going back to '80, if not '78, when he was World Champion. There's still Gold in them there thumbs! The Continentals fared badly, and it is a matter of personal regret that no American ventured over to brave our elements ... However, this Championship contained a bit of history for the Solent Club, as for the first time we had entries, our two 'bruvvers' Mark and Robin, both entering. That neither survived beyond the first day, through gear failure, is a matter of regret, but doubtless they both learned a lot in that short time, and can expect to do better another time. Meanwhile, it behoves the Club to say "Thanks, lads Well done ... and better luck next time".

Again, more on a National rather than purely Club front, while our RMs were engaged in the 3-Clubs race, Eric Shaw was allowed to purloin Setley for the afternoon, when he organised a rather restricted 'Open' event for 1-m models, managing to inveigle Oliver Lee, Chris Jackson and Tony Abel to turn up with their respective boats, pitting them against our small fleet, giving a 'field' of ten boats, with a testing breeze of around F.5. Results were interesting! Oliver came, properly prepared, his little boat 'in all respects ready for sea', used a 6lb fin and bulb at NAV GA depth spec., set a 2nd suit of around 500 sq ins, and finished with a score of $7\frac{1}{4}$ having been completely under control the whole time; Chris came with known problems in his running gear, an IMYRU spec fin and bulb, and a No 1 suit of 600 sq ins on a 60" hoist, was completely out of control almost all the time off the wind, finishing 7th with $34\frac{1}{4}$ points, while Tony also had an IMYRU keel, possibly an IMYRU No 2 suit, and a radio which appeared to have a "Greta Garbo" complex so didn't finish a single race; however, Trevor sailing a similar boat, which, incidentally is the prettiest of the lot, finished 9th with a score of 49. Eric's own boat, a Lee 'Tempo' being sailed by Dave Watson was second, with Walter Newton sailing Bill Wright's "Xtenshun" third, quite close together, proving the Club-level competence of these two designs - particularly as both were sailing these boats for the first time.

The IMYRU 1-m Rule has now been printed, but as Russell Potts points out in 'MB' it has NOT been adopted, either by IMYRU or the MYA. It prohibits the 'exotics' in all but fin and rudder, prohibits C/F spars; it does, however,

restrict "DRAFT" to 350 m/m., (almost 3" less than AMYA/NAVIGA), restricts fin and bulb weight to 2.5 kg and stipulates three suits of sails to fixed measurements, which give a top suit of around 840 sq ins., and a second suit of around 630 sq ins. The "DRAFT" is not yet clarified, and this writer, at any rate, sees this as requiring afloat measurement.

In this Club, Eric Shaw has been asked by the Committee to form a sub-committee to come up with a recommendation, so he will be glad to hear the views of any member interested.

Eric's correspondence reveals that there are now around 100 of these boats in the country, mostly to AMYA/NAVIGA specs., and interest is growing in many areas - mostly in the South, addresses revealing a marked North/South Divide!

As this Newsletter comes to its end, it is regretted that there is so little space devoted to the Scale Section. It can only be said that so little news comes from that Section, and not from any desire to ignore them. The Scale Captain reported a rather disappointing picture of their activities so far for this season, with Sunday am turn-outs numbering only 3 or 4, but your scribe, having occasion to visit the lake a couple of Sundays back was pleasantly surprised to find ten or a dozen boats busily chugging away, with all the old stalwart present along with a few new faces. He gathered that our famous submarine is presently going a "Dockyard Re-Fit" in the course of which alterations are being made to improve the surfacing characteristics, so it will be interesting to see her when afloat again. And, it would be interesting to see Ted Mace's 3-cylinder steam engine powering a boat ? ! Best wishes, chaps, anyway.

On the miscellaneous side, the Committee have agreed that the Club's Annual Bun Fight and prize-giving should be a Lunch again, feeling last year's event was both successful and an improvement on previous occasions, so a date and menus are being sought at the Avonmouth Hotel in Christchurch again.

On the personal side, all members will be extremely sorry to hear that Bill Wright, who has not been well for some little time, had to undergo emergency surgery on his main circulatory system last week; he is over the operation, making steady recovery, and hopefully, by the time this is being read he will be home and well on the way to recovery.

FOR SALE: Our President wishes to dispose of both his sailing models:-

1-m "Xtenshun", complete with one suit of sails, but no R/C gear - £85.

RM "Bee", complete with three suits, C/F masts and spars, and ALL gear, including "magic box". Price by negotiation. Contact Bob Jeffries direct.

And that is THAT ... for this time!