
National
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December 2004
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Bumper Christmas Edition
Full Nationals Coverage

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Editorial

A **MERRY CHRISTMAS** and a Happy New Year to everybody. I hope you've all had a successful season and, like me, are looking forward to the next one. I also hope you've got this bumper 32 page edition of *National Osprey* in time to have a good read over the holidays.

When I look back over the two years that I've been your magazine editor it seems like no time at all since I first started doing the job. I suppose that's a sign of incipient old age - two years seems like a couple of months. We all know what that's about.

In that time I've learnt quite a bit about putting the thing together. The main thing I've learnt though is that no matter how far you stretch the deadline for submissions, a good proportion of the copy will come in at the last minute, so it's always going to be a rush. If you've never been the editor you have no idea of the feeling of utter peace that descends once they've all been taken to the Post Office and sent off. I can return gratefully to my guitars, giving them the attention they deserve and which they've been missing. Recently I started playing my banjos again after many years of neglect, so with the magazine put to bed I should be able to get Earl Scruggs's *Foggy Mountain Breakdown* and *Ballad of Jed Clampett* back up to full speed.

Once again, many thanks to all the contributors. Without your willingness to sit down at a word processor and put your thoughts down we wouldn't have a magazine. If no new writers come forward for the July issue I'll be on the phone to you again. We have got several brand new contributors this time, most of whom told me that they actually enjoyed the experience of writing for the magazine, even though they had considered it a chore before they started, and of course several of the usual names kept me going with their high quality reports and stories. The thing about writing, like everything else, is that it does get easier the more you do - ask Stephen King. I have to say that people do seem more willing to write something now than they were when I first took on the job. Perhaps that can be some consolation for whoever takes over from me when I've had enough. Maybe you should start discussing that among yourselves, because I won't be doing the job forever.

So, what's in this 'Bumper Christmas Edition'?

There are all the Open Meeting and Championship reports from early July to the end of the season; technical articles from Oscar Chess, Will Odling and Gareth Caldwell; reminiscences on their Nationals experiences from Claire Sharp and Don Pipes, and the latest edition of Malcolm Clack's wonderful 30+ years at the Nationals; Dragan Brankovich, from Canada, has sent us his story of finding an old Osprey and refurbishing it; Maureen Carroll tells us about all the Opens from the shoreside perspective, and husband Ken is characteristically forthright about the Class as he sees it - and as usual Alec Mamwell gives us some good reading.

There's more, but you'll have to turn the pages to find it all. And while you're reading it, think about writing something yourself (especially if you've never written anything before), if only to give back a little to the Association.

So read on, enjoy it and best wishes to you all.
Dave Metcalfe.

Chairman's Report

Mark Hartley, through Hartley Laminates, to produce new FRP Osprey

I AM VERY pleased to be the Chairman who is finally able to announce that we have a new FRP builder. The new boat will be on the stand for the 2006 Sailboat. There will be slight, but not earth shattering changes to the hull, all of which can quite easily be made to existing wooden boats.

This is a new horizon for the Osprey Class and I feel sure that with support from the membership it will bring the boat firmly into the 21st century. Because I am confident that the new boat will have a longevity that earlier plastic boats lacked, I have already placed an order for myself – leading by example! The boat will be built from brand new moulds costing the association not a penny. This means that the deck will no longer need to be twisted to fit the hull. I know there will be questions about the changes but I don't want to cover them in this report. Suffice it to say that the boat will most definitely still be an Osprey.

Ken Carroll and Will Odling are leading the liaison with Mark and I am sure you will receive regular updates from them through your fleet reps who, I hope, will keep you informed.

Another piece of breaking news is that we are having a carbon mast trialled this year. Jamie Lea and Peter Frith will be using a carbon prototype, and the committee has given dispensation for its use in all events except the National Championships. I feel it is important that we keep abreast of developments in the technology of the sailing world to keep the Class moving forwards. Carbon is the future of spar construction, so I see this as a natural progression for the class.

The last two months of the sailing season have been very active for me. Although lack of crews prevented me from competing regularly I have attended every open meeting since the Nationals. Generally turnouts were good, but as always it would have been better to have had a few more.

Next year I am sponsoring a Mk 2 prize for every open meeting, so come on all you Mk 2 owners, come and compete - 'cause if you don't Don Pipes will end up with a very full wine cellar.

With the appointment of a new builder we must now get support rolling for him and the best way of achieving this is to improve Open Meeting turnouts and most particularly attendance at our National Championships.

Next year the Nationals will be at Pwllheli, so please make a date in your diary. Being in late July they don't clash with Cowes Week. The sailing area is superb, in my opinion as good as anywhere in the country.

I could say more but the headline should suffice, so all I shall say to one and all is have a great Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Nick Jones,
NOCA Chairman

Secretary's Report

AH WELL! THE end of another sailing season, won't be long before next summer. I've thoroughly enjoyed our nationwide tour 2004. Everywhere we have been the people and the Clubs have been welcoming and friendly and I am looking forward to more of the same next year plus a visit to the Principality for the Nationals at Pwllheli. Highlights of 2004 for me have been the evening socials at the Nationals, Blithfield and Hornsea, the shopping at Poole, the walks at Netley, the fun atmosphere at Coniston, and looking up the Black Cock Inn near Kielder on the internet - try it if you're not easily shocked!

Please let me have your boats, masts, sails & bits for sale so if anyone contacts me I can put them in touch with you. You can put them on the website gossip column yourself, but tell us when the article is sold. I particularly need to know when a boat changes hands.

Regarding the website, I must thank Huw Pearce for his sterling work on the site during the past year, for collating the Wilkinson Sword results and keeping us all up to date. Please keep up with the gossip column, it's your forum and has lots of interesting bits of news and discussions.

Another superb magazine from Dave Metcalfe. He needs all sorts of articles, especially technical bits, so if you've enjoyed this issue, get writing for the next one. The Association has nominated Dave for an RYA Communications Award for his work on the newsletter - fingers crossed.

When we went to the Netley Open in 2003 we were the only campervan; this year there were 14 of them, mostly belonging to the Scorpions. Is this a new trend? We shall be keeping up with the Jones's (Nick and Hilary) next season as we too have bought a larger motor home for a bit more luxury.

The National Championships are at Pwllheli in 2005 from the 23rd to the29th July. There is lots to do in and around Pwllheli. Contact the local tourist website at www.pwllheli.tic@gwynedd.gov.uk for info on accommodation and things to do. For the campers, caravanners and motor caravanners amongst us, the nearest site is Abererch Sands Holiday Park which is 10 minutes' drive from the sailing club, a little longer by bike or a nice stroll along the beach. They will give a discount on their nightly rates if you quote the Osprey Nationals at the time of booking.

Their website is www.abererch-sands.demon.co.uk , tel: 01758 612327. Bring the family as the site is right next to the beach and there is a heated indoor pool on-site. Unfortunately they don't have chalets or mobile homes for hire but there are lots of different types of accommodation within a short distance of the sailing club. Book early for any type of accommodation as this is the first week of the school holidays. Pwllheli has excellent sailing so support your Class by being there.

I will look forward to seeing some of you at the Dinghy Exhibition at Alexandra Palace on 5/6 March. We are sharing the stand with our Fastsail colleagues again after last year's successful Show. Any volunteers to man the stand for a couple of hours on either day will be most welcome, contact Graham Mant if you can help.

We need to get all the publicity we can, preferably of the free kind, by getting our Opens reports in the sailing press. If one person could do this that would be ideal, failing that perhaps the fleet rep of the club could ensure that this gets done. Reports of open meetings need to be with *Yachts and Yachting* within 2 days of the event, old news is no news and if the report is late it tends to get left out. Any offers?

Our open meeting programme is already finalised for 2005, check it out in this issue or on the website, hopefully I will get to meet lots of you next year. If you need to know anything 'Osprey' please do not hesitate to contact me, if I don't know the answer I know someone who will!

Maureen Carroll



Two Pints Of Lager And A Packet Of Crisps

Recently returned to sailing after several years out as a member of Great Britain's triathlon team, **Gareth Caldwell** *is International Canoe European Champion.*

TWO PINTS OF lager and a packet of crisps. And if you finished in front of me at Penzance this year, you can add Cornish pasties, Mars Bars and copious amounts of beer to your diet. There, that should give us mere mortals at the back an edge next year! If you finished behind me – a) what were you playing at?! b) you're allowed to read on.

After providing Nik Daily-Hunt with the necessary skills to guide Oscar to three National Championships (quote from Nik: 'after sailing with you, Gareth, I don't half appreciate sailing with someone who knows what he's doing!'), I sold *Return of the Pink Panther* and concentrated on Triathlon, representing GB in Japan, Sweden and France. As in sailing, with ability levels of most athletes being so close, everyone was looking for 'an edge'. Even after spending up to £3000 on a bike, £1000 on wheels, and a similar amount on kit, dietary requirements always remained top of the list.

After spending over £1000 a year on new sails, and loads on boat and fittings (sshhh, don't tell the wife!), can the same be said of the Osprey fleet? I went, with camera and best Crocodile Hunter technique, on a search through the wilds of a Penzance dinghy park…

An Osprey Nationals race is very similar in length to an Olympic triathlon – under two hours for some people, but most just over the two hours. Very seldom is the competitor out of breath and so most activity is aerobic. There is therefore a need for continuous slow release energy. Obviously, this energy comes from food and drink (and CAN come from Mars Bars and beer, but unfortunately there are better alternatives). In the spirit of true Osprey indoctrination, lets look at drink first.

It is VERY important to drink *before* you feel thirsty. If you feel thirsty it's too late and your performance will suffer. Working hard, especially within a wetsuit or a dry suit, causes loss of fluid by perspiration, since the sweat is not evaporated effectively. A 2% body weight loss due to sweating can result in a 10% dip in aerobic performance. That's less than two litres for most Osprey athletes. And if you're sailing 10% slower than the rest in a Nationals race, you're giving everybody over 10 minutes head start. Clearly, even relatively mild dehydration will significantly hamper athletic performance. Losses of 5% in body weight can result in heat stroke. Appreciation money gladly received if this article improves your bedroom performance! (It's obviously done Nik good – congratulations on becoming a dad).

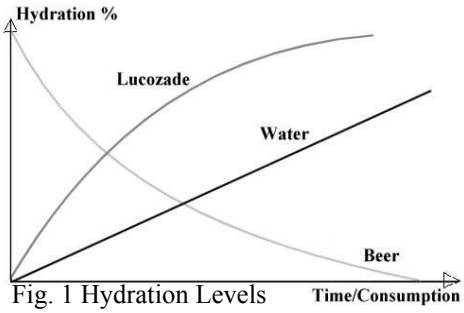


Fig. 1 Hydration Levels

The graph above shows that water (or beer) isn't the easiest liquid for the body to absorb quickly. There are many performance drinks available off the shelf - Science in Sport, High 5, Lucozade etc - that do a better job. These will re-hydrate quickly and are in a variety of flavours. It is important to try these before any competition as the tastes do sometimes linger when mixed with a little salt water, and vomiting over your helm or crew isn't the best way to share fluid replacement! To speed absorption the beverage should probably not contain more than 6-8% carbohydrate. Fruit juice should be avoided as it contains fructose, a sugar known to increase complaints of stomach upset. The optimal carbohydrate drink composition during exercise is probably one that provides a small amount of salt (sodium) and sugar (glucose, a glucose polymer or sucrose). Drinks containing less than 6% carbohydrate are unlikely to extend performance, while those that contain greater than 8% are associated with intestinal upset. So look for a drink that contains about 15-20 grams of carbohydrate, or 60-80 calories per 8 ounces. Marston's Pedigree doesn't quite fall into this category.

It is also important to be hydrated as you approach the start line. The colour of your urine is one of the best ways to determine your hydration level – very pale straw = hydrated. Therefore, when sailing out of Poole it would be a good idea to have enough fluids on board for the sail out. Also be aware that beer, tea and coffee are diuretics – working against what you are trying to achieve. It seems crazy to me to pay thousands of pounds on a decent boat, spend hours polishing hull and foils, spend not a small amount of money to enter a nationals, then hit the bar and drink to dehydration the night before! In triathlons it is common to see athletes carrying drinks bottles around the day before competition, and I think that liquid preparation needs to start at least a couple of hours before a sailing race, if not before, in hot weather.

An ideal answer would be to wear a 'Camelback', filled with a sports drink for little and often consumption, but as these aren't allowed by the RYA an easy to access sports bottle will have to suffice.


Bottled tap water in Dave Metcalfe's boat.


Who's this with the 'quick fix' Mars Bars?


Lucozade. Well done!



Steve hits the bottle - but it's only water!

So what's on the food menu, then?

Convenience is again the key word, as, if it's difficult to get at, you're not going to bother. During the race you'll probably have to boost your depleting energy levels if you want to hit the last beat hard. You have a couple of options – solids or gels. Before Ian Mac gets excited, this has nothing at all to do with infant experiences, but is about personal preference. Some of the energy bars are a little chewy, but fat content is low and energy content high. The gels come in a small plastic sealed bag that you squeeze into your mouth. These are absorbed into the blood more quickly than solids and are easy to fit into any pocket. Most people find that they need to wash the solids down with a little fluid, so make sure you've got some left. Little and often is again the key, and this should complement the slow-release-energy producing, complex carbohydrate, pasta meal you enjoyed the night before. I used to mould pieces of *Powerbar* onto my bike's crossbar and force myself to eat a piece every 5 miles. It made my fingers a little messy, but at least in sailing there's plenty of water to wash them!

	Big Mac Cheeseburger	Burger King Cheeseburger	Snickers Bar	SIS Go Bar	Power Bar
Fat	38%	43%	45%	2%	5%
Carbohydrate	44%	35%	50%	67%	65%
Protein	18%	22%	5%	12%	13%

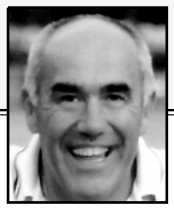
This table shows you where calories in different foods come from

So what about dessert?

The good news is that it could be chocolate. Chocolate gives you a 'quick fix', followed by a 'down'. So you could enjoy the last beat by timing the detox until after the finish. Nik's experience suggests you can always blame the helm for sailing too slowly if you misjudge your timings!

So roll on Pwllheli. Armed with less than twenty quid's worth of sports nutrition to last the week, energy levels will be increased enabling you to hike harder, shout louder and be more obnoxious to your crew/ helm/ other helms/ other crews (delete as appropriate). It will also enable you to focus and sail with your head out of the boat, concentrating on the strategic and tactical picture. A definite speed advantage, and saving thousands of pounds over a new set of sails! Now, how about investing all that money saved in a gym subscription…..?!

Going Forward



In the last issue of the magazine **Ken Carroll** *looked back to his previous times in the Osprey Class. This time he looks forward to what he hopes will be a brighter future.*

HAVING RETURNED TO the class and completed a full season I feel that I can now comment on my experiences.

I think it has been a very successful year; Maureen and I have attended all the open meetings and the Nationals, only missing out on Marconi which, ironically, was the nearest to home. We have travelled over 6000 miles, and I do not think that I can single out any one open meeting as being better than any other. I can only say that each meeting has its own individual character.

If I were to pick Hornsea as an example, I would have memories of the excellent B & B at £15 per night, the Italian meal on the Saturday attended by all the competitors, tea and buns after sailing, a clinker-built committee boat rowing to the start, testing courses and some of the friendliest people you would ever wish to meet. I could do a resumé of all the events but you will have to go and see for yourselves.

As you may know I converted 854 in the winter of 2003. It has stood up well to its season's sailing, no damage or major alterations required, considering it has sailed in some exceptionally strong winds. We have changed very little from her original refit last winter and results-wise we had some success but nothing outstanding.

David, my eldest son, helmed at the Inlands and I crewed. We did OK, finishing 5th, and we both felt we could have done better. It should be said that David hadn't sailed an Osprey since 1996 so he was a little rusty. Likewise I hadn't crewed since '96. For the major open meetings in 2005 this arrangement will be the order of the day. I've just ordered new Kevlar sails and started moving all those fittings that I thought were in the right place. It appears that it is now 'our boat' and not 'dad's boat', but who cares as long as we go fast!

Steve is big boat sailing again and I must thank him for all his efforts this year. He is not a dinghy sailor or crew but he did very well and tried hard at all times - he had some lovely coloured bruises.

With reference to the Class itself, I think all is well albeit a little disjointed in parts. I have been very disappointed with the lack of reports in *Yachts and Yachting*. This is free advertising and publicity and we need to grab it. The low-ish turnout at some open meetings has been disappointing but with the cost of travel and lack of free time this may reflect the age in which we live.

The Nationals had a very disappointing 34-boat turnout at what must be one of the best venues in the whole country. It is possible that the decline in numbers is due in part to the cost of travel and attendant expenses. Of the 34 boats only 2 GRP boats sailed. The other 32 wooden boats represented a good percentage of the remaining competitive boats within the Class. I can say that not only are the older glass boats not competing but many of the older wooden boats are becoming tired. People are not spending money on upgrading these older boats; therefore they see no point in travelling, being content to sail at Club and local level. This, unfortunately, has not been highlighted over the past years and in my opinion is responsible for the resultant low numbers.

However, a new builder has now been appointed and, along with the introduction of carbon spars, a brighter future may be on the horizon. It will probably need existing Osprey sailors to upgrade to the new boat and sell their boats to increase numbers, or the new boat will have to be sufficiently attractive to pull in new blood.

What can we do to stem the tide? I think 2005 will be a good season, as was 2004; however we all need to be a little pro-active in promoting the Class. We need to attend as many open meetings as possible and most certainly we need to increase the Nationals entry numbers. Pwllheli offers excellent sailing and perhaps if you can't go – offer your boat to a friend. If you have no crew, partner up with someone else. Likewise with no helm get together through the website. We are members of Fastsail. There may be sailors in the other member-classes wanting to crew or helm or even to borrow a boat. It is possible you could charter your boat! Don't make it an excuse not to attend; the Class really does need the numbers to increase.

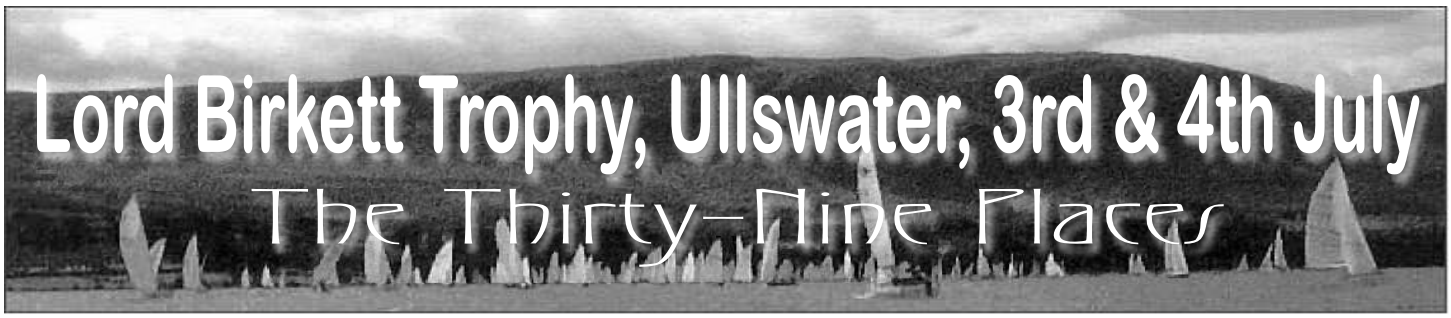
The new boat will not be the all singing, all dancing answer to total success, we all need to make that little extra effort. I don't want to sound as though I am preaching but the value of your boat depends on a successful, active class – it is down to us all to ensure that our investment is safe.

I think that not only should we be looking to the new boat, we should also be looking at the old Mk 2s. There are many out there and it seems that people are starting to sail and race them again; there were four at the Nationals. Nick Jones is sponsoring a prize at each open meeting for the first Mk 2 or 2A, so give it a go, let's see you on the circuit, increase the value of your boat and, for sure, some of you will beat much newer boats.

If you have a view and want to have your say the website offers an excellent gossip column. Please use it for any issue - someone should have an answer or the same problem or view as you. Don't hesitate to contact me or Maureen, your Class secretary, on any Association issue. Remember, book early for the Nationals, let's have a party and good sailing for 2005.

The views expressed in this article are solely my own.

Website www.ospreysailing.org.uk



Lord Birkett Trophy, Ullswater, 3rd & 4th July

The Thirty-Nine Places

The overall attendance at the Birkett weekend is holding steady at around 200 boats, but the Osprey representation has been falling steadily over the past few years. With only four Ospreys this year we didn't have a separate class for the first time ever. **Alec Mamwell** *sent this report.*

A **GRIM DAY** in early July, and heavy rain pursued car and boat as I drove over Alston Moor in Cumbria. Through the flapping wipers a sign welcomed me to the "Hills of the North - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty" to which some wag had added "and land of widespread incest". I had always wondered what they got up to around here when the sheep lost their attraction - could this be a clue? Threading my way through Alston I tried to be a little more observant than usual but came to the conclusion that the weather had driven any signs of rampant inbreeding off the streets and behind closed doors. I motored on thinking it a pity that a possible means of increasing income from tourism was being squandered.

A few miles later I passed the café at Hartside Top and soon dropped out of the cloud. The Eden Valley spread out before me and there were even patches of sunshine. In the distance the Lake District hills beckoned. Instantly the spirit of the morning changed and I was looking forward to a day on the fells and the Birkett. Later as I was blown along High Street it started to dawn on me that, for once, we might have a bit of wind for this event. Ian had said it was going to blow this year but, after numerous past drifters, I had been inclined to put this down to wishful thinking. Despite getting a little excited at the thought of a couple of windy races I was a little more cynical and thought that the breeze might blow itself out over the Friday night.

After a satisfying round of Fusedale I came down off the fells and went back to the club for a beer, some food and the usual rigging session. Once the stick was up and the other bits sorted I went for another beer and watched the boys and girls with their Musto Skiffs playing out. They were very impressive and given that there were several ex-Osprey sailors involved and I was struggling to find any other Osprey sailors around I had a vision of the future that was not particularly pleasant. I decided to have another beer - this one for absent friends, bumped into some mates from Glasson and promptly became much less morose and morbid as I was carried along on the tide of alcohol that characterises a good Friday night at the Birkett.

Sleeping in the car is not the best way to prepare for a big event but it does avoid the crowded campsite and the need to drive. It also pays, in my opinion, to treat the Birkett as a fun event or even a penance, because if you take it seriously the frustration created by the large number of boats on the start line, or the annoying way the wind inevitably rises to bring the slower boats home fast will, no doubt, get to you - sooner rather than later. This year, however, Saturday came in bright and breezy from the start. Ian arrived and we joined the other 197 boats on the start line. Unfortunately there were only three other Ospreys (compared with 15 in 1997) but, as we avoided 18' Skiffs on port shouting "GANGWAY" and cruisers suggesting that dinghies should move because "WE ARE CONSIDERABLY BIGGER THAN YOU", we had little time to worry about this downturn in fortune.

As the fleet got underway we breathed a sigh of relief that the boat had escaped unharmed and, realising that our start could have been better, spent the next ten minutes or so looking for clear wind. With the slower boats disappearing backwards it became apparent that things could have been worse. We were in contact with Robert and Anthony Shaw (1292), Steve Sharp and Dave Beck (1288) and could see that John Lang and the young lady standing in for Malcolm (1178) had sneaked a cracking start up by the far shore. Coming into the Howtown narrows the wind began to show its teeth, and with the help of a couple of fortuitous shifts we popped out the other side with a clear lead and plenty of breeze to drive us up the beat as the little people slipped further behind. Approaching the island we caught up with the tail end of the leading group in the form of a Merlin Rocket which we promptly passed. This was, to our shame, short lived as the Merlin picked a couple of good shifts and rounded the island 50 yards in front.

"We'll get him downwind," I said.

Stupid boy - this was Ullswater. 200 yards from the island he was half a mile in front and at 400 yards over a mile away. In truth we never got near him again but thought he was the likely winner of the race. Pity he'd forgotten to sign on!

We continued to plod down the run, through the narrows, along the reach and up the final short beat more or less by ourselves, but all the time keeping a watchful eye behind for familiar kites, especially "Big Red" because we've been bitten at the death before in this race. Fortunately 1292 went for a swim and we finished in glorious isolation.

"Quick, lets get the boat packed up before Bob gets back," I said to Ian.

Needless to say a quick smoke and a beer got in the way of that ambition and, given that it had been a quick race, there was plenty of time to chill out with more drinks before heading for Penrith with Robert and Anthony for a good Italian meal. Just before we left the results were posted and we found that we were 16th - our best result ever in this race. Confident in the fact that the next day would bring a return to normal we quietly celebrated. Robert, however was praying for lighter winds and the opportunity to stuff us on the morrow. Back at the club Robert decided that Anthony and he were going to get legless, so at 10.25p.m. when they went to bed after a couple of lagers we just smiled at each other and carried on.

Robert must have done something right because his prayers were certainly answered on the Sunday and the weather was just right for the lightweights. We raced with 1288 all the way up to the second island as first 1292 and then 1178, this time with a more stylish but less attractive Malcolm aboard, sailed away from us. On the way back the two leading Ospreys anchored off Norfolk Island allowing the other two to catch up and for a time all four ran down the lake in company. Coming out of the narrows 1292 and then 1178 sailed away again and the original order was restored. This time we managed to keep the Merlin behind us but only just! *(Digressing slightly this team went on to win both the Merlin Nationals and their very popular Salcombe Week and I believe that the crew might be the son of a chap called Roger Mee I used to team race against in the 60's. So, Roger, if by any chance you should happen to read this - greetings - and I promise that any promiscuous connotations attached to your name escaped my attention until very recently.)*

All that remained was to pack the boat up and go home hoping that we had done enough on the Saturday to make up for a poor Sunday. It was mid week by the time the results were posted and it transpired that Robert had come 39th and we had sneaked in at 38th. I took great delight in phoning Rob up with some prepared quip about meeting him at the 39 steps but he was out at work and, apart from giving me a slightly different title for this report, the point was lost. Such is life.

FINAL RESULTS
(Ospreys and Overall)

1. Alec and Ian 1276	16	6	**38**
2. Robert and Anthony 1292	38	42	**39**
3. John, Malcolm & lady 1178	61	53	**51**
4. Steve and Dave 1288	99	85	**81**

At the present rate of attrition there will be no Ospreys at the Birkett in 5 years time or possibly sooner. Class members please take note.

Two Girls In An Osprey? Yeah, Right!



One of the big surprises at this year's Nationals was the sight of two teenage girls sailing together. Their combined ages didn't add up to as much as just one of the sailors in most of the other boats. The crew, **Claire Sharp***, tells us what it was like.*

I AM CLAIRE SHARP and I have been sailing Ospreys for around 2 ½ years with my dad Mel. I've always crewed as I have never been a great helm. I've done my bit in a Laser, but seem to get a bigger buzz from crewing and trapeze time! When I decided to take part in the Nationals I thought I would sail with my dad, but it was a case of "services not required" as he had already teamed up with another club member of the male variety. This meant my dream of sailing in the Nationals at my home club could go out the window.

So I asked my friend Charlotte Kent if she would helm for me - we'd sailed together in Mirrors when we were younger. She agreed, although she had never helmed a boat with a trapeze before, let alone anything as large or fast as an Osprey. We knew we wouldn't be "in it to win it", we just wanted to have fun and represent our club. When we told people we were doing the Nationals they didn't believe us. "Two girls in an Osprey? Yeah right! You won't even make it through the start gate let alone finish."

Even when we were in the boat pen, the visitors would see us rigging the boat up and say, "So where are the helm and crew of the boat?"

"We're here," I'd say, "Charlotte's the helm and I'm the crew!" You could feel their disbelief.

On the first day we were slightly nervous but happy to be there among a lot of top class sailors. We were given encouragement from the fleet in the pens, on the water and in the bar. The guys were tweaking the boat and giving us pointers constantly (thank you Ken Carroll and Mike Grieg). We can honestly say that throughout the event we did not break one thing on the boat. The week was testing for both of us, but we made it through, finishing every race bar two - the first and the last.

We didn't check the buoyancy tanks before leaving the slip for the first race. They were full of water, so when, during the race, the boat filled up, we couldn't drain it. (It's a girl thing).

Heavy winds prevented us finishing the last race. That morning the wind was gusting 25 knots plus and the men were looking at it saying "Nah, not for me," and packing their boats away, then sitting in the clubhouse watching the others go out. Charlotte and I took a look at it and said, "What's the worst thing that can happen? We can get very wet!" Charlotte's parents waved us off the slip worried that we may not come back in one piece. My dad was already out on the water with his helm, Ryan.



We made it to the start line and were going well then said to ourselves, "We can do this. Let's just take it slowly."

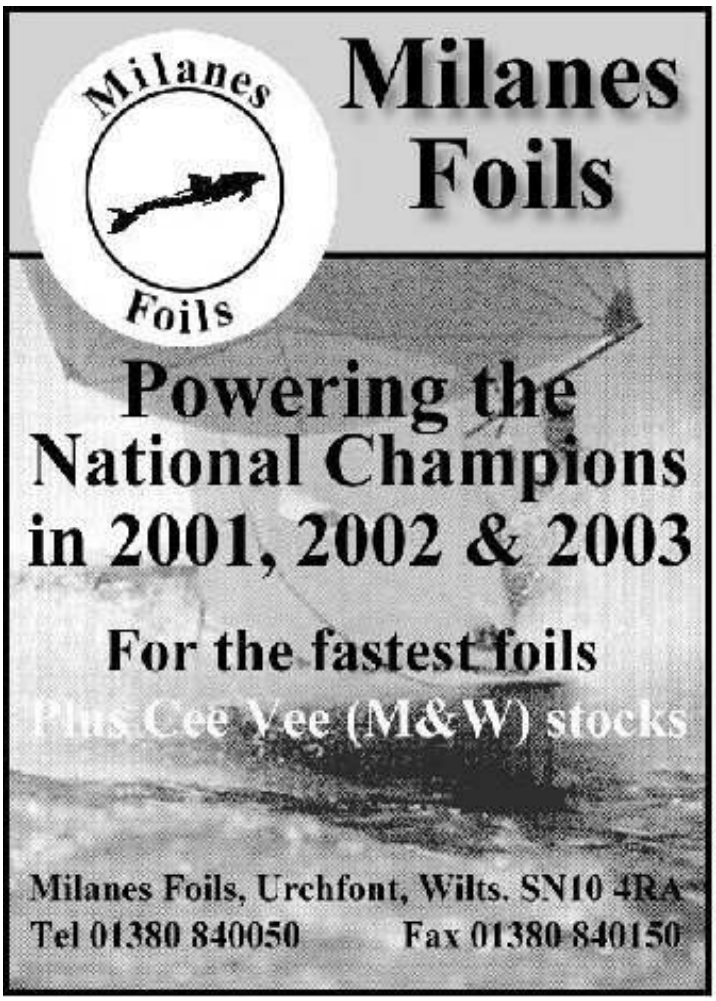
At the start I was petrified, and just after the gun went I heard this sudden bang. Thinking it was our mast I started to scream, (another girl thing), then realised it was the boat behind us! Their mast was brand new, and ours was about 6 years old. We were going well, and at every mark we were getting cheers from the escort boats and counting the boats heading for home. Even the pathfinder sailed straight in to the harbour as soon as he had done his job! And these were the good sailors. Did they know something we didn't?

Charlotte and I were getting tired by this point, she didn't have enough strength to pull the kicker on or sheet in the mainsail so the ropes were being passed to me. We made it around the whole of the course and had the finish line in our sights. Charlotte had given me the main sheet and when a gust hit us I couldn't uncleat it. Over we went – our first capsize of the week. Neither of us had any energy left by this point. We had the rescue boat crew screaming at us, trying to encourage us, but the boat just wouldn't move. So we had to admit defeat. I was hauled out of the water and taken in.

If we had finished we would have come 13th and coincidentally, all this happened on FRIDAY THE 13th!!

We enjoyed both the sailing and social side of the Nationals so much that Charlotte is now in the process of buying her own Osprey so that we can do the Nationals again next year wherever it may be, and we proved that two girls in an Osprey can work! We didn't come last, which was our first aim for the week, but we failed to a degree as we had also set ourselves the target of finishing every race and we didn't quite manage that.

At the prize giving Charlotte won the Lady Helm prize and I received a bottle of champagne for being part of the only all-female team. Our thanks have to go to John "Tank" Pearce who allowed us to use his boat *Kissing the Pink*, as without it we would probably have been relegated to galley slaves or bar wenches for the week!





SGP 2004 - Grin Factor 10

Numbers were down at this year's Symmetric Grand Prix, but the fun factor was higher. **Cath Barrett** *from the Javelin Class, and one of the event's founders, sent in this report.*

RUTLAND WATER SAILING Club hosted the Symmetric Grand Prix this year and after the Datchet event in 2003, it is a Regatta that has high expectations, promising to provide a unique mix of high-quality sailing, advice and technical support, wonderful prizes from sponsors and off-water entertainment that is almost as keenly anticipated as the racing.

The event began on Friday evening as sailors arrived from all over the UK. With most sailors opting to camp, plans were made for a campfire party and the singing was led by Peter Blanchard and his guitar. Peter, an Osprey sailor, was unable to compete in the SGP due to work commitments but came to Rutland to meet up with friends made on the Fastsail.org website. Peter, Steve Greenhalgh and myself started the singing off in reasonably decorous fashion, but it would appear that each of the Fastsail classes has its own resident entertainer and we were treated to "turns" by Strangler (Hornet), and Corin Westwes (FD). Mike Pickles (Javelin) and Alex Rogers (Hornet) helped each other stagger through various very rude sailing songs.

Saturday morning, and sailors who hadn't camped arrived to register. The Osprey fleet led the financial administration this year and Ian Madeley, Janet and John Shenton processed all the entries, T-shirts (supported by Pinnell & Bax), food vouchers and prize eligibility criteria with such efficiency that they may well have found themselves a job for life.

The sun shone whilst people prepared their boats, renewed acquaintances and nursed hangovers. For some people this was the time to meet their sailing partners for the weekend. Lucy Lingard, a fireball sailor and by now a legend from the first Symmetric Grand Prix, travelled from a Scottish oil-rig to meet up with her helm for the weekend Gavin Johnson, chairman of the Javelin fleet. Joe Moore, promised a crew "come what may" should have been a little daunted when introduced to his crew, 11 year old Laz Cockeram. Laz, formally an Optimist sailor (now a fully fledged Fireball crew) showed little trepidation as he learnt to trapeze on the way to the first start line, and Joe should be commended for the huge grins that would not leave Laz's face.

As the boats left the boat park and headed for the start line, clouds rumbled in, the wind picked up and the first race was delayed by a squall and a huge downpour that threw itself down as the 5 minute signal sounded. The squall sent several boats over and had the majority of the underdressed sailors shivering as the wind shifted and shifted again. Being a Race Officer is an arduous task. Being the OOD for the SGP takes courage and Ralph Tingle possibly would have wished for an easier first start. Before the end of the first race, the rain stopped and sailors had warmed up and dried out. The next two starts went without a hitch and the mild bulge in the centre of the line in Race 2 was rightly ignored in the spirit of this essentially fun event and the fact that everyone wanted 3 races on both days.

Inevitably the youngsters in the fleet were worst hit by the squall and some of the adult helms with young crews headed back to the shore, perhaps resigned to sitting it out. However, as the weather improved, youngsters like Tom Greenhalgh in Fireball 14185, Liam Packham in Javelin 563, William Hall in Flying Dutchman 383 and Jamie Whittaker helming FD38 grabbed several more layers of clothes and were all back out to take on World, European and National Champions from across the fleets. Peter Murphy and Becky Cross (both under 16) in Javelin 430 perhaps define one of the key elements of the Symmetric Grand Prix. The technical challenges of a large fleet of 7 different dinghy classes, pus a huge range of sailing abilities means that the event has to have not only first rate Race Officers but extremely experienced safety teams. Perhaps this was why Peter Murphy and Becky Cross felt confident enough to be in the mix of things on the start line of Race 2. With less than a minute to go to the gun, they found themselves right at the front of the line, jostling for position with some of the best sailors at the event. Unfortunately, with 30 seconds to go they were over the line and in text book fashion attempted to rectify the situation and in the process annihilated many a "rock-star's" attempt at the perfect start! Good humour prevailed and the consensus of opinion off the water was that they were to be commended for getting into the action, rather than hanging back.

Because of the huge level of sponsorship support the Symmetric Grand Prix attracts and also to give the organisers the opportunity to acknowledge as many performances on the water as possible, it was decided this year to hold a prize-giving ceremony after each day's racing.

As is becoming a tradition now with the Symmetric Grand Prix, competition right through the fleet is encouraged and the top sailors who attend are magnanimous and supportive of the fact that this is perhaps the one event of the year where they may go away with simply the respect of their peers and a certificate. The prizes are all awarded for achievement, but not always for winning. There is also a simple rule that in general, competitors can only win one prize. The first race was sponsored by Gill Clothing and vouchers were presented down to the 5th placed boat in each fleet. The second race was sponsored by Marlow who offered a new rope system to the top placed boats over 15 years old in each class. The last serious prizes of the evening were awarded by CraftInsure.com for the top boat under 15 years in each class. In addition to jackets and bags each of these boats will compete against each other at next year's SGP to win boat insurance in the future.

Almost as keenly sought are the spot prizes given to those sailors mentioned in despatches. The spot prizes; hats and gloves from the Dinghy Store and goodies from Wet and Windy were distributed for remarkable vocal performances, feats of bravery and simple achievement. Virtually the entire Javelin fleet were in humorous disgrace with the Race Team as they almost all were sporting a sail numbered 559, 529 or in one case… both! In true Fastsail spirit, they had a great excuse. Both 559 and 529 have recently bought new sails. In common with other classes, their old sails were lent to anyone who needed a better sail for the event. It has to be said that the other classes were more successful with their duct-tape adaptations to the numbers. Most of the Javelin numbers slid off in the downpour!

The final organised part of the evening was the paper boat competition which saw naval architects pitting their wits against six year old children in an attempt to build a paper boat capable of holding 100 pennies. The "sink off" final to establish the last boat floating was a noisy affair and eventually won by Mike Davis.

The SGP is both a serious and a good humoured event, where real battles occur right through the fleet. The cream does rise to the top and the best sailors seem to consistently post good results. But further down the fleet, personal challenges become more significant. Aiming to be at the front of the start-line, completing all the races, being in the top 20 to the windward mark, beating the 505 which beat you at last year's event, these factors make the event one that truly appeals to sailors of all abilities.

There is no doubt that right across the Fastsail classes there are some brilliant sailors. Hornet 2132 helmed by Strangler and crewed by Lou Asman destroyed the fleet in the fourth race. Perhaps it was Strangler defying the Hornet handicap that caused chaos but he steamed off leaving confusion in his wake. With the exception of the current Fireball World Champion Dave Wade and current National Champion, Rob Gardner sailing in 14809, none of the other top Fireballs was placed better than 19th. A series of "Keystone Cop" antics at various marks as they all desperately struggled to catch up with the Hornet just made things worse. As the Hornet crossed the line just behind Andy Williams / Charlie Walters in their 505 and three Flying Dutchman there were some rueful smiles from those scrambling after them and rather large grins from those who benefited. As Paul Jefferies, crewing in *Jessica*, a 1970s narrow Fireball remembers, "In race 4 we had a cracking start, got away with the leading group and didn't look back. We managed to (just) hold on to 3rd Fireball and were definitely helped by the huge pile-ups at various marks behind us. For those that saw us after the race we had huge smiles. OK, so it came out that we were actually 18th in that race but to have the likes of Mark Maskell, Vince Horey and co. finish behind you is a good feeling."

Oscar Chess and Tony Rees in Osprey 1085 (almost an antique and a work of art on water) were pipped into second place in Race 5 by Sunday racers Wade / Gardner. It is a pity that Wade and Gardner were only able to take part in the second day's racing as they posted a 3rd and two wins. Of those finishing in the Top 10 over both days, Richard Sims / Simon Ward (505) and Mike Pickles / Richard Fisher (Javelin) posted the most consistent results, both discarding a 16th place, whilst all the others discarded "disasters" – mostly from Race 4!

There were other notable results throughout the 6 races where crews got a great start, found the changeable weather conditions to their liking, met with good fortune or sailed particularly well. "Grin factor 10" was in evidence from many sailors including the light air specialists, Katrin Deinhardt and Olav Schluter in Javelin 510 who showed many of those above them how to do it when the wind dropped, finishing 9th and 11th in Race 4 and 5. Terry Forbes and his son, Simon came 9th in Race 5 which brought them up to 26th place overall. Vicky Parry / Ben Stirrup (FD) and Ben Fisher / Ian Williams (Javelin) achieved top 20 finishes which belie their mid-forty overall results.

Melissa Heppell and Rebecca Marriot sailing in their first SGP, started quietly on the first day. Something happened overnight however. Whether it was an incredibly efficient team talk, a night in the bar (there is a rumour that they only drank lemonade unlike the rest of the fleet!) or simply rising confidence, on Sunday morning, according to Charlie Walters, 505 National Champion, "They came roaring off the start line in each race, sailed 3 top class beats which put them right in the mix at the windward mark." Unfortunately, they roared a little too soon in the second of the day's races and were black-flagged but came 4th and 12th in Races 4 and 6.

Prize-giving after Day Two saw prizes awarded from Musto, for achievement - observed by Class Chairmen - and by Harken for the top mixed crews. There were also awards for those who came last in their class but completed every race. *Yachts and Yachting* gave Olympic Subscriptions to the Junior Competitors who "sailed out of their socks." They all utterly disproved the theory that Fastsail boats are unsuitable for young sailors. Corin Westwes was the star of the despatches, frightening the rescue crew by howling and hollering as his FD flew on one of the last spinnaker reaches of the event. The final prize of the event was the award of a Superspar mast and vouchers for two runners up, which was awarded to the top boat overall with an existing Superspar mast. It was won by the Olympian and former commodore of Rutland Water SC David Wilkins and his crew, 17 year old William Hall, sailing in a borrowed FD.

Club sailors who don't often travel come to the SGP for the social occasion and the fact that there is someone to race against whatever their ability or age of their boat. Aaron Lowe from Thornbury sailing club is typical, "Hopefully everyone learned loads. In my case it was, if you want to split a fleet, capsize right in the middle of the start-line in the first race! We did have our own moment of glory – a perfect pin end start in race 3, when the rescue rib had to duck! We can't wait for next year, we'll be there for sure!" Regulars on the Open circuit come to hone their racing skills, find out how, individually, they measure up against other good sailors and how the quality of their fleet rates against the other Fastsail classes. Semi-professional sailors come to represent their class both on and off the water, help and support less experienced sailors and ultimately, to win. Although the individual handicap competition was won by Vincent Horey and Vyv Townend and the Fireball fleet again won the Team Competition, the Symmetric Grand Prix is far more than the result of six races.

As Stan Cockeram, sailing with his wife Helen said, "Well, that was just a great weekend - we can't stop grinning."

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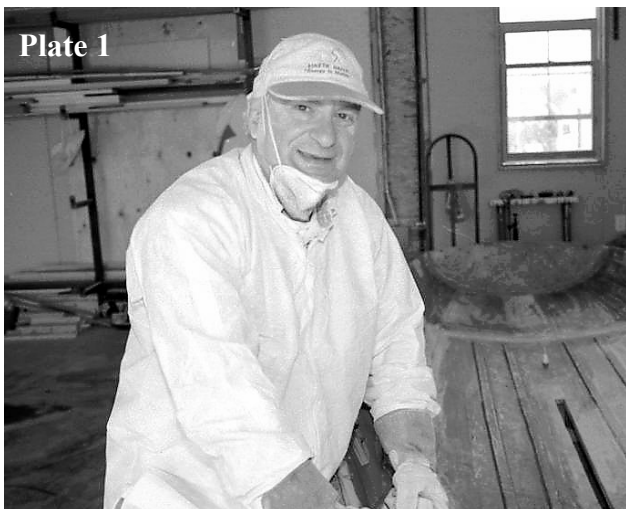
The Search For The Perfect Boat

Apparently not all the Canadian Ospreys are on the west coast. **Dragan Brankovich**, *from Alberta, has recently bought number 411 for renovation.*

GROWING UP ON the Adriatic in the early '60s, my childhood dream to own a sailboat was fuelled by the view of the port of Split that I woke up to every morning. I spent my childhood underfoot at a nearby marina, asking questions, helping out on the boats whenever an owner would let me, and watching Flying Dutchmen and Dragons in action (the popular classes of the time). Later, as a youth, I spent summers sailing with a neighbour from the island of Braè, who imbued me with the competitive spirit of Adriatic sailors. Although my life circumstances changed considerably, the dream of owning my own sailboat never died.

Three decades later, and now a Canadian, I was living in Calgary, Alberta, 1100 km away from the closest salt water. However, there was a fresh water reservoir nearby and an active sailing club, and this rekindled my dream of owning a boat. I started exploring the options: the International 470, Wayfarer, and Fireball… when my interest was caught by an article on building a Lightning in the *Wooden Boat* magazine. I had almost decided to build a Lightning when a colleague walked into my office one day to ask for advice. Knowing of my woodworking hobby and interest in boats, he wanted to know how to fix his sailboat as the centreboard casing was delaminating and rotting at the seam. I advised that he couldn't fix it, that he would need to cut it out and make a new one. Having gone home and taken another look, he returned the next day and asked if I would like to buy his boat. $700 later and I was the proud owner of a boat, sight unseen, with an unknown history. All I knew from my friend was that it was "18 feet long and fast as stink". It wasn't until I took the sails out of the bag that I knew it was an Osprey. The sail number was 411.

At the time, I was crewing on another friend's Santana 23. He thought I was crazy to even consider restoring the Osprey – that for about the same amount of money I could buy a second hand Santana. But my experience crewing had taught me that a boat of that size was laborious to launch and de-mast, difficult to transport, and dependent on a 3-4 member crew to race. At that point, I realized that my perfect boat may have found me.



Dragan works on the hull



Glenmore Lake, where Dragan sails

Rolling up my sleeves, I went to the Osprey website and then gave the boat a thorough inspection. I realized belatedly that there was a reason for the old adage, "You get what you pay for". Having removed the decks, I discovered that the transom plate had started to delaminate. In the original construction the deck was nailed into the stern plate, which allowed moisture to penetrate over time. The only way to get it out was to grind it out. I then cut out the centreboard casing and widened the slot to allow for a new case, followed by removing the floor battens. Much to my wife's amusement, by the end of the demolition, the only thing worth keeping was the fibreglass hull (Plate 1)! Having gutted the boat down to the hull, I decided it was a good time to stop, recuperate, gather my thoughts, and rethink my friend's argument for buying a Santana 23. In the meantime, my wife was silently beginning to stress that we were going to have a VERY large canoe sitting in our garage for the foreseeable future. However, with the wood having arrived for the restoration, I began to look forward to putting things on, rather than taking things off.

The Osprey website was useful in getting organized for restoration, finding out where to find plans, and determining which model to build, etc. I decided on the Mark 2A. The presence of a rear deck appealed to me aesthetically as it reminded me of the rear decks of the class boats sailed on the Adriatic in my childhood, while also gaining some of the advantages of the Mark 3 design. Later on in the construction, I realized that there could be another advantage of the Mark 2A due to the modified rear bulkhead frame creating additional stiffness at the back of the boat.

The boat plans, in conjunction with the class rules, were indispensable in the reconstruction. I read the class rules over and over again, keeping one copy in the shop and one on the bedside table. The materials I decided to use were: Okoume marine plywood BS1088 for the deck surfaces, bulkheads and centreboard casing; spar grade Sitka spruce for structural elements because of its strength/weight ratio; African Mahogany for trims and wherever hardwood was needed; the WEST system epoxy for bonding material, and 6 oz. fibreglass cloth. Other items required were: a table saw, thickness planer, band saw, mitre saw, jig saw, grinder, finishing sanders, routers, hand planes, files, chisels, clamps, full face mask for work with epoxy, … and my wife says to add a very supportive wife to the list.

Finally, on to the restoration!

Bulkheads were made first as complete assemblies and inserted according to the plans and rules with the help of spreader clamps able to fit the fibreglass to the shape of the frame at those locations. After conducting numerous measurements to ensure the correct shape, the bulkheads were firmly epoxied into position (Plate 2). Work then continued on the rear and front deck beams and framing for the side buoyancy tanks. (Plate 3)

The centreboard casing was assembled of marine plywood, fibreglassed on both faces, and framed with mahogany. The inside surfaces of the centreboard casing were treated with an epoxy and graphite mixture and polished to a near mirror polish. This surface treatment provides a water seal as well as a low friction surface so the centreboard will slide smoothly. The centreboard was made of 1 x 4 inch mahogany strips epoxied edge to edge and planed down to finish thickness with the help of block planes and the indispensable spoke shave. The centreboard blade was shaped as a foil, fibreglassed, epoxied and wet-sanded to a smooth surface. When it came to locating the centreboard position, precision and patience were required (Plate 4). The messiest part of the reconstruction was shaping and epoxying the bottom edge of the casing to the hull, which made it integral with the hull. This was accomplished lying on my back on the garage floor, applying layers of epoxy and sanding for hours until I got the shape and quality of the joint that I wanted.

Deck skins were made of 3/8 inch plywood which was fibreglassed and epoxied on both sides, increasing the thickness up to 4.5 mm. This required a LOT of clamps. Family and friends came to know that any question as to what I wanted for birthdays, Christmas, etc. would be answered with "clamps, clamps, and more clamps: C clamps, bar clamps, spring clamps, pipe clamps, edge clamps"… a boat builder can never have enough clamps.

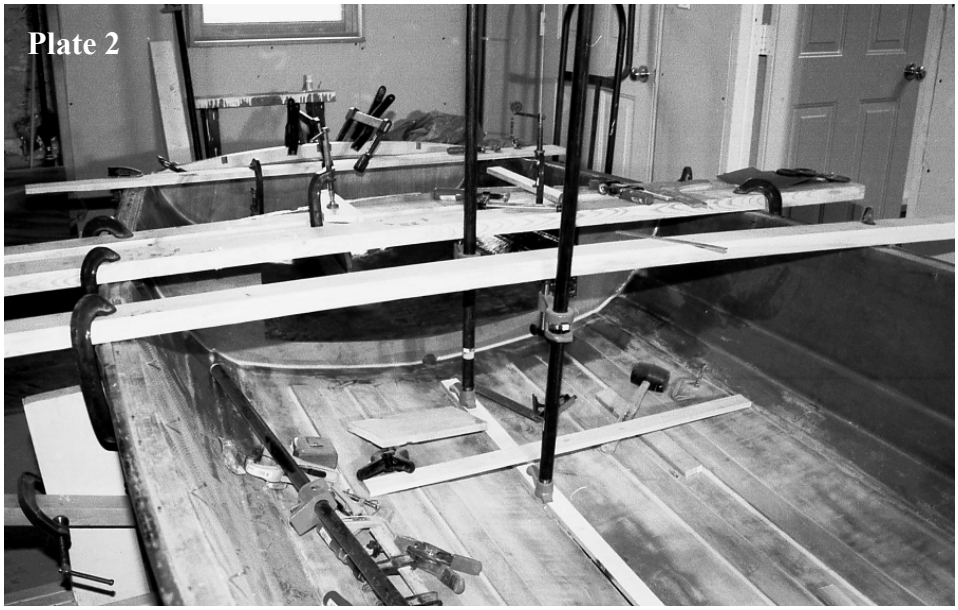
Having started putting on the deck surfaces, I found I was close to the point of needing information on different rigging systems. A number of books were very informative. The ones I found most useful were: *Rig Your Dinghy Right* by Mark Chisnell and John Hodgart, and *This is Tuning for Speed* by Fred Imhoff and Lex Pranger (somewhat dated but very informative). I am also very appreciative of Osprey sailors in the U.K. and the Canadian ones in Surrey, British Columbia for the information they provided. Last summer my wife and I spent a weekend in Surrey, B.C., where I was able to take photos of different rigging systems and talk to some of the owners. These discussions were useful in making the decision to put in a spinnaker chute. This wasn't in my original plan, but after talking to several people, their unanimous conclusion was that the chute simplifies spinnaker handling, compared to the bag system. This decision resulted in additional engineering, delays, and hours of work as it required building a model first. I decided to make it of marine plywood with a generally square cross-section and a trapezoidal mouth fitted between deck beams and the king plank on the front port side.

So, that's where construction is at today, and work continues with an anticipated first launch in the summer of 2005. To follow my venture to date and ongoing progress, you can check out **http://community.webshots.com/user/dbrankovich** .

Seeing Ospreys in action last summer confirmed that this is the perfect boat for me; it's fast, easy to set up and launch, can be raced with only two people, and it is very towable. This is convenient in Canada where you can go from lake to lake and out to the coast. The only unfortunate part is that the Osprey is so rare here. The origins of my perfect boat and how she came to be in Calgary remain a mystery.

Would I do it again? Absolutely. Financially, my friend was right. Buying a Santana 23 would have been an easier use for my money, but I would have missed out on a wonderful experience. The personal sense of satisfaction at seeing the boat emerge under your hands as a result of your workmanship is incalculable. I now understand why boat builders and sailors have always personified their boats as women. A boat isn't so much an object being built as it is something being born, with an emerging soul (reading this, my wife says she always suspected there was a poetic soul underneath my engineer's exterior).

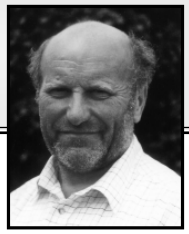
The name of my perfect boat? I wanted her name to reflect my attitude toward racing. Friends and family suggested *La Boheme* (way too pastoral for my taste, evoking images of being gently buffeted by the winds on a sunny Sunday afternoon), and *Draganfly* (a play on my name). Finally it came to me: *Klingon Justice*. Anyone who is/was a Star Trek fan will remember Warf and his "They are without honour; they deserve to die" attitude... I never said my perfect boat was a perfect lady.







Geronimo Rides Again

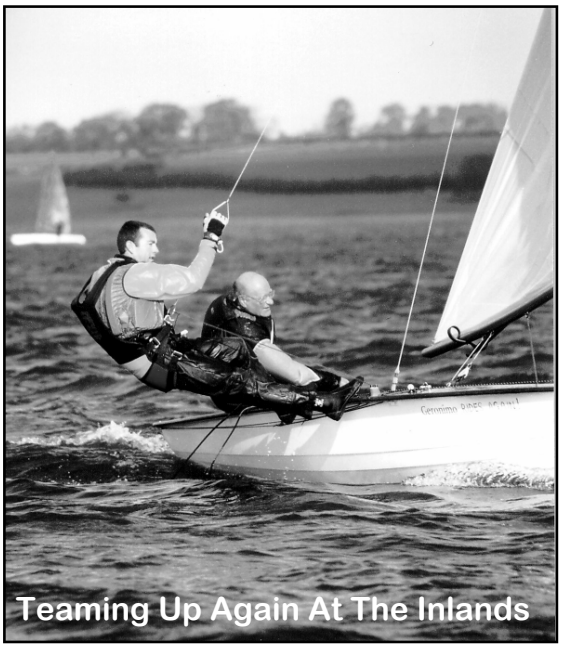


It took a young man from New Zealand to get Geronimo *back on the water after sleeping in the garage since 1979. But, says* **Don Pipes**, *it was well worth the effort*.

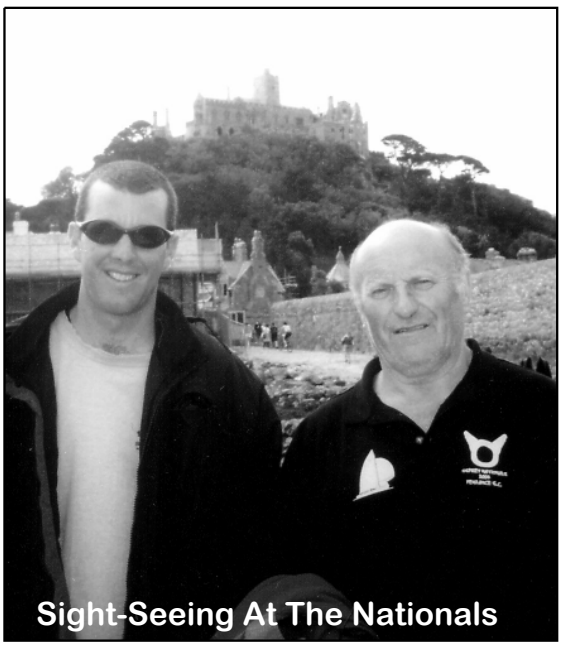
LAST JULY MY daughter Susan and her husband David Shaw came from New Zealand to help celebrate my 70th birthday. They are keen Tornado sailors at Nelson Sailing Club in NZ and live on their own yacht, which they race and cruise. I mentioned that the Nationals were to be held at Penzance in a few weeks time. They immediately said it was time to get Osprey 521 and me back on the water (after 26 years away). I appreciated this very much, because with Dave crewing for me it meant that Sue would be hanging around without him, but knowing how much it would mean to me she didn't hesitate.

There was work to be done on the old girl before I could put her afloat again. We re-decked the stern tank, converting to Mk 2A at the same time. After lots of other work to bring the boat up to a reasonable standard we managed to get it sorted (sort of) on Friday morning eight days before the Nationals were due to start. We had two hours sailing at Carsington Water that afternoon, then it was back home to make modifications before going to Blithfield on the Sunday afternoon. As we launched for the first race I said: ***"GERONIMO RIDES AGAIN!"***

A few days later, after more modifications, Dave and I set off for Penzance. As we travelled down the A30, Mount's Bay and The Mount looked fantastic in the sunshine and Dave was well impressed. To say that it was good to be back is the understatement of the year. Next day, Friday, we went into Penzance, made friends with the parking attendant, and after looking at some of the other Ospreys, did yet more modifications. Things have changed a lot in 26 years - both boat layouts and car parking . We were given numbers to stick on each side of the bow for extra identification. Ours was number 6 and I suggested that we should put them upside down, for when the boat was! I asked Dave to stick the boat's name on to each side of the hull at the same time. Meanwhile I went off to the van. When I got back I had a good laugh. Dave, remembering my remark at Blithfield, had stuck on ***GERONIM0*** and added ***-RIDES AGAIN*** in thick felt-tip. So next season you will see that modification to her name.



Teaming Up Again At The Inlands



Sight-Seeing At The Nationals

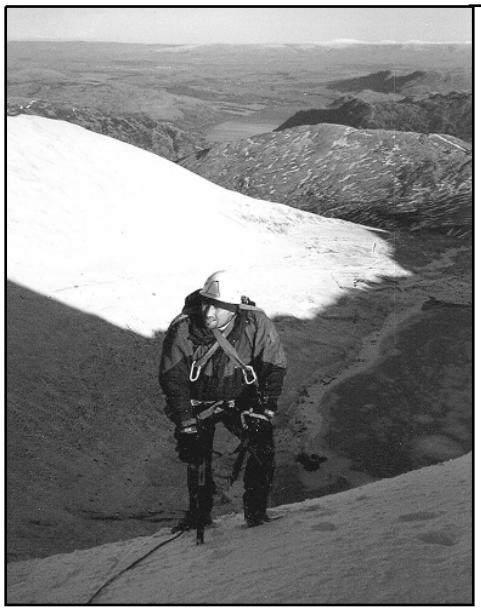
So, what of the sailing? It was great fun, with lots of memorable moments. For example we set the outer end of the spinny pole higher but didn't take into account that the other end, when stowed, was a tad lower due to the loop on the boom not being in the ideal position. I have always managed to keep my big head out of the way of the boom, (famous last words?) but during one gybe I did a neat header over the side and went straight down in the "oggin". I quite enjoyed the dip and when I surfaced with a big grin there was Dave standing on the upturned hull looking very concerned. We soon righted the boat and went on our merry way. I couldn't understand what had gone wrong and Dave explained that the pole-end had neatly inserted itself under the back of my life jacket and swung me out of the cockpit as if I were on a crane. If he hadn't seen it happen we would never have known - I never felt a thing. The boat capsized, so he thought I could be still hooked on the pole-end and trapped under the boat. He was just about to dive in to try to rescue me when I surfaced. He said that he was having visions of having to go back home to tell his mother-in-law about my burial at sea.

During another capsize Dave leapt off the board to stuff the kite back into its chute and damaged the trailing edge. After all his hard work I'm glad it wasn't me! Because of this the board came up when it shouldn't. On one occasion it came up completely and over we went. Dave immediately dived under the boat and pushed the plate up (she ***was*** upside down) to applause from the rescue boat standing by.

I love a good blow and on the last day I got my wish. (The inshore lifeboat from Newlyn came out just in case it was needed.) On the beats I left the tactics to Dave as without glasses I couldn't see the black marks until we were close to them. Towards the end of the race it blew up even more and I could see even less because of the spray. (Sailing by the seat of your pants you might say.) I loved every moment but the board just would not stop down on the runs and reaches. After several capsizes, during one of which *Geronimo* and I were swept so far apart I was beginning to wonder if the rescue boat... "Don't even think about it," I said to myself. Eventually *Geronimo* and I got together.

I was feeling somewhat tired by this time and as Dave prepared to drag me aboard he looked at me and said, "Don't give up Daddy!" I replied "I'm *not* giving up dear boy. Please help me get back in the boat and let's go!" - well perhaps the language was a bit stronger but it was said in private and we always shook hands after every race. We persevered, and given time would have finished the race, but a rescue boat came chasing after us when we were enjoying a screaming reach, a little man waving his arms at us telling us to go home. So that was the week that *Geronimo* rode again and, I hope, will continue to do so for some time yet.

I'd won "nowt" before and was amazed at the prize-giving to hear that we had won the over 100 cup and also the trophies for the first Mk 2. I'm hoping to at least defend the latter next year, although this will depend on getting a crew as I don't expect Sue and Dave will be travelling over from NZ so soon unfortunately. Thanks to them, Doreen (the Mrs) and everyone who made this old codger feel so welcome. I had a superb week. ... "sniff sniff". That's enough of that Pipes - pull yourself together man. It would be great however to see more Mk 2s both at the Nationals and at open meetings. To encourage us Nick Jones, our worthy chairman, has presented a bottle of wine to the first Mk 2 at this year's Nationals, Inland Champs and Open meetings and, I believe, intends do so at Opens up to August next year. So come on folks, let's get out there and show that there's plenty of life in the old sea dogs yet! See you next year. Good Sailing and Happy Christmas.



Letter To The Editor

I recently received this letter from **Alec Mamwell**. *I thought it worth printing.*

Hi Dave,

Another Time, Another Place.

This is a picture of Ian topping out after climbing a gully on the Red Tarn face of Helvellyn some years ago. In the background you can see Ullswater and, also capped by snow, Crossfell, the highest point in the Pennines. When Ian saw the photo, he remarked that it almost looked as though he knew what he was doing.

Now, as most helms know - at times to their discomfiture - crews are always right, always know what they are doing, always do it in style and, especially, always know they could have done your job better than you given half a chance. I was so taken aback by his display of apparent modesty that, even though this is not a climbing magazine, I thought it worth commenting on this unusual phenomenon and sharing it with fellow Osprey crews (and helms).

Five months later as we drifted round Ullswater again there was a plaintive voice from the front end.

"I wish I was on Helvellyn."

I have to agree that his analysis of the situation was accurate but took the opportunity to point out that if he could manage to almost look as though he knew what he was doing we might start to move again. The conversation at this point deteriorated considerably.

The Bird's Eye View - Part 2



What were all this year's Opens and Championships like - if you went to just about every one but never sailed once? Class secretary **Maureen Carroll** *can tell you.*

Well, what can I say about Penzance and the Nationals? Mount's Bay has to be one of the most picturesque venues in the country, the town has good shopping and eating and the Club provided probably the best social programme of any Nationals I have ever been to in any Class.

Arriving on the Wednesday before Champs week we had absolutely glorious weather which was unfortunate for the Lasers at Mounts Bay SC as they had hardly any wind all week.

On Saturday evening we had wine and nibbles at the Commodore's reception, followed on Sunday evening by a classic rock band called 'Roosters' who were very good but wouldn't let Dave Metcalfe do his stuff. On Monday we had 'Not the Beatles', who, not surprisingly, were a very good Beatles tribute band. Tuesday evening we had the AGM early and finished in good time for the Disco and Karaoke. We will gloss over Ken Carroll's attempt at the Full Monty and concentrate instead on the girlies' rendition of 'It's raining men', Steve Carroll's 'American Pie' and the Commodore's stirring interpretation of Elvis. The hog roast on Wednesday evening was superbly cooked by none other than Geoff Stubbs assisted by Des. Unfortunately I missed the Cornish folk group on the Thursday evening owing to 'burning the candle at both ends' and therefore missed Dave Metcalfe's star turn. After a hectic day on Friday sorting out the prizes we had the prize giving and an excellent dinner at the Queen's Hotel. I left straight after the dinner and therefore missed out on Graham and Carl's cabaret piece which raised a very creditable £140 for the local RNLI. An exhausting week but so enjoyable. Just one thought though, the social events were not well attended by the Tasar people which was perhaps as well, as the Clubhouse would have been well overcrowded.

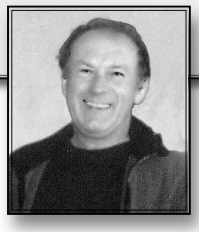
I didn't go to Kielder on the 10/11 of September but have heard that it was wild and windy but the beer and food made up for it.

I did go to Netley on 25/26 September as this is always a good venue with lovely walks, camping on site and very welcoming club members. Bob Thomas, as always, made sure we all enjoyed it. The food in the Prince Consort is to be highly recommended as is the Club's own daytime catering. Last year when we went we were the only campervan there, this year there were 14, most of them belonging to the Scorpions. Is this a new trend?

The Inlands at Rutland on 23/24 October rounded off the season nicely. I slept in one of the bunkrooms with hubby and son which was considerably warmer than the campervan. We had an excellent dinner on the Saturday evening organised by the FDs.

So ended 2004. Good luck to all those who sail in winter series, and hopefully you'll be out on the circuit next year. I believe I have a new suit of sails coming for my birthday at the end of February. Yippee! (Ken is having a new frock for Xmas but he won't like it so I'll get to wear it!)





The Nationals, Penzance, 8th - 13th August

No wind, a bit of wind, too much wind, just enough wind, too much wind again - the story of the 2004 Nationals. **Dave Metcalfe** *gets you up on the lowdown from Penzance. Photos by* **Ken Carroll**. *Many thanks to* **Huw Pearce** *for invaluable assistance.*

Saturday the sixth of August was a bright, glorious day. I arrived just after nine, and with the whole day ahead of me while I waited for Richard my crew to arrive, I could take it easy and chill out, or rather 'hot out', because it certainly was hot. Richard was stuck in traffic the whole way through Cornwall with wife, sister, 9-year-old son and two-year-old daughter. The journey from Hull, which he'd started at 11 p.m. the night before, took over 16 hours.

We were all optimistic of a good turnout after last year's Championships when we had over fifty boats, but by about six o'clock we knew we would be disappointed. There were only 34 boats, one less than our partner fleet, the Tasars, who had expected only 25.

The first race was postponed until late afternoon because of a lack of wind, but eventually we all piled into our boats and set off – not an easy task with seventy boats in the two fleets to launch down one narrow slipway and the wind on the nose. After a short practice race won by Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder, the first race got underway.

Oscar Chess, 1085, was first to the windward mark, followed by Martin Lewis, 1207, and Angus Hemmings, 1198. Martin managed to pull through into the lead at the first gybe mark after Oscar fluffed the gybe. Angus and Adam Bowers were soon through into second and thereafter Oscar slipped back somewhat, finishing ninth. Andy Barker and Phil Angrave, 1298, pushed hard in third place, but Angus crossed the line for the win. Martin held on for second, while Andy was third. It was after six when we got back, but with the racing area so close to the harbour it never took long to return.

Another postponement for race 2 kept us ashore for 2 hours, and again the race was held in a light breeze. The beat was set at 150°, but the direction varied between 150° and 180°.

Oscar Chess and Tony Rees obviously hadn't got their heads into gear by the start, because they were 200m away from the line, heading away under spinnaker when the gun went. The waiting Tasars advised them that the race was underway!

At the first gybe mark Alex Morcumb and Roger Curnow in 1296 were the leaders, followed by Andy and Phil, Will and Simon Odling, Jamie Lea and Peter Frith, and Angus and Adam. At the end of the second windward leg Andy and Phil had pulled through into the lead, with Alex and Roger now second. 1298 managed to hold on to take the gun, followed by Will and Simon Odling, 1295, Jamie and Peter, Angus and Adam, with Alex and Roger fifth.

Tuesday morning saw happier scenes in the compound as a good wind was blowing. The wind was force 3 - 4, 150°-180°. The race officer set the beat at 180°. There was some talk in the bar afterwards that the beat should have been reset for the second and subsequent beats. Racing took place in sunny conditions following the heavy rain showers whilst competitors were rigging.

Pathfinder for this race was past National Champion Oscar Chess in 1085. This duty did not seem to disadvantage him as he was in fourth place rounding the windward mark. The leading 6 boats went high on the first reach with 1298 (Andy Barker) spotting the gybe mark first and pulling through to third from sixth at the start of the reach. Some of the boats ended up running or gybing to the wing mark.

Unknown to the competitors the main committee boat was having problems in raising its anchor, which had caught in a dumped fishing hawser, with the anchor fluke through an eye. The anchor winch was just able to pull everything to the surface so a safety boat crew could get to the mess and sort it out.

At the end of Race 3 the order was 1198, 1298,1290 and 1116, sailed by Colin Stephens and Mike Grieg.

There was a rumour that the leading Tasars were only 2 minutes a lap slower than us. But with a PN of 1023 they are surprisingly fast.

Wednesday arrived with more wind and larger seas than the Race Officer thought we could handle, so a lay day was called. People dashed off to see the Eden Project and other fine sights that Cornwall has to offer.

The wind stayed for Thursday, which was good because we had to fit two races in. Race 5 was sailed first and was won in fine style by Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder from Angus and Adam, with Will and Simon Odling coming third. Martin reached the first leeward mark in the lead, then went out to sea when everyone else went inshore. This paid off handsomely as he was well ahead at the next windward mark.

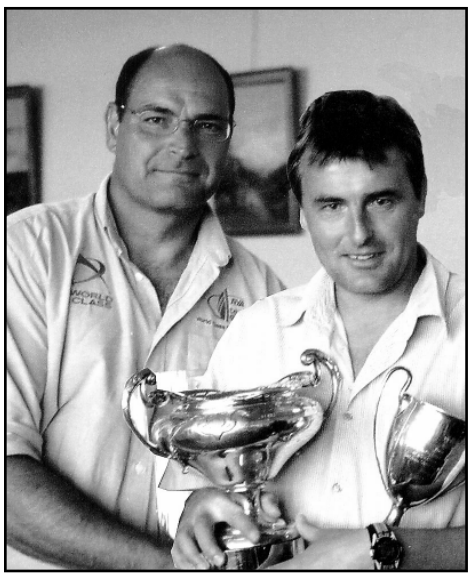
The wind increased for Race 4 and an early start through the gate looked to be right. Angus and Adam were first out, followed by myself with Richard Blowman, then Jamie Lea and Peter Frith. Angus and Adam rounded the windward mark first, followed by Jamie and Peter. I was about 5th, and dropped no lower than 8th, my high point of the week, until I sailed over my kite at a drop, and turtled as Richard tried to retrieve it. Curses!

1198 built up a significant lead over the pursuers and looked to have the race in the bag, but unfortunately for them the bag was in the race as a plastic one caught on their rudder in the later stages. This dropped their speed significantly, and lost them first place to Jamie and Peter, with Andy and Adam third. But Angus and Adam had by now done enough to win the Championship, and although they went out and won the last race the next day in 35 miles per hour winds, the race was only for the minor placings. Jamie and Peter were second, with Andy and Phil third, Colin Stephens and Mike Grieg fourth and Des Menear and Peter Grieg fifth. Only 14 boats finished this race. Many tried and failed, and many others didn't try in the first place, including myself. I stayed ashore with a broken genoa fixing.

So that was it. All that remained was to strip the boats down, pack our gear up, wash and brush and get out to the prize-giving dinner at the Queen's Hotel. This was held in conjunction with the Tasar Class, although the actual prizes were dished out in separate rooms.

So, a thoroughly enjoyable week, with good humour all round. One of the best National Championships I can ever remember attending. The social events in the clubhouse were all of a high standard, the ladies and gentlemen behind the bar and the galley were always pleasant, and the young and not-so-young people looking after our trolleys on the slipway were very efficient and good humoured.

Thank you Penzance sailing Club and all its members, we'd like to come back soon, and thank you Tasars for being the nicest partners we could have wished for.



Angus Hemmings and Adam Bowers, National Champions 2004



Oscar Chess and Malcolm Clack receive a special award from secretary Maureen Carroll for 30 consecutive Nationals each

The Nationals Gallery



All the photographs in the Gallery were taken by **David Harding** *of Sailing Scenes. These pictures and many more can be viewed on his website at www.sailingscenes.com. They can be ordered on-line in various sizes.*



In The Shadow Of The Mount



The Start. Race 2



The Champs - Angus And Adam



The Pointons Of Poole - Osprey 936



Les Girls - Charlotte And Claire



On The Crest Of A Wave
Adam Ellery And Jeremy Gilbert



Funky Gibbons

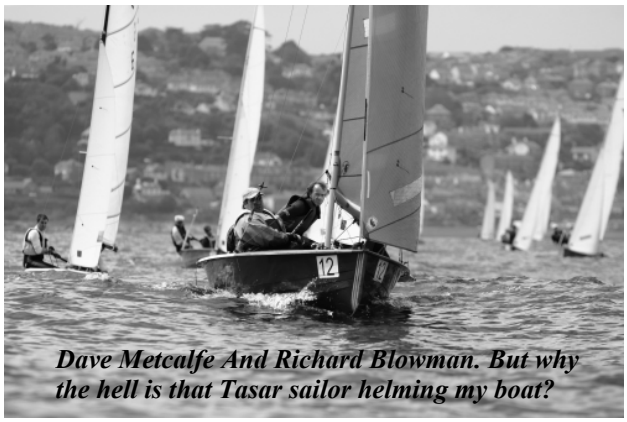


Pieces Of Eight
Phil Holt And Malcolm Shakesby



Race 2 - Leading The Pack

Scenes From Penzance, August 2004



Dave Metcalfe And Richard Blowman. But why the hell is that Tasar sailor helming my boat?



The Reach

2004 Nationals Results

Six races, five to count

Pos.	Boat	Helm	Crew	Club	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Net
1	1198	A Hemmings	A Bowers	Stokes Bay	1	4	1	2	2	1	7
2	1298	A Barker	P Angrave	Rock / Poole	3	1	2	3	7	3	12
3	1290	J Lea	P Frith	Mount's Bay	DNF	3	3	1	4	2	13
4	1207	M Lewis	S Maunder	Poole	2	13	8	5	1	6	22
5	1295	W Odling	S Odling	Maylandsea Bay	7	2	9	6	3	DNF	27
6	1116	C Stephens	M Grieg	Penzance	8	9	4	7	5	4	28
7	1280	D Menear	P Grieg	Penzance	4	14	5	4	12	5	30
8	1085	O Chess	T Rees	Mumbles	9	11	6	11	6	DNF	43
9	1234	S George	H Somers	Mount's Bay	5	7	11	14	18	7	44
10	1296	A Morcumb	R Curnow	Mount's Bay	10	5	14	8	9	DNF	46
11	1299	A Ellery	J Gilbert	Penzance	11	8	12	13	21	9	54
12	1178	G Caldwell	M Clack	Blithfield	16	10	15	9	8	DNF	58
13	1276	A Mamwell	I Little	Kielder Water	6	20	12	DNF	17	8	63
14	1284	J Batt	N Broomhall	Blithfield	14	15	10	DNF	16	10	65
15	1199	G Odling	M Atherton	Royal Signals	13	6	18	10	20	DNF	67
16	922	J Sadler	M Candy	Mount's Bay	DNF	12	7	12	10	DNF	76
17	854	K Carroll	S Carroll	Felixstowe Ferry	12	25	17	DNF	11	11	76
18	1286	D Metcalfe	R Blowman	Hornsea	18	16	16	21	13	DNC	84
19	1004	P Cormie	L Crawford	Penzance	20	23	24	16	23	12	94
20	1205	K Gibbons	J Gibbons	Blithfield	15	24	21	17	24	DNF	101
21	1141	R Crawford	M Sharp	Penzance	17	26	19	15	25	DNF	102
22	1167	J Shenton	A Treadwell	Wilsonian	19	29	23	22	26	13	103
23	413	S Crebo	M Britton	Mount's Bay	22	22	22	19	19	DNC	104
24	521	D Pipes	D Shaw	Blithfield	26	21	30	23	15	DNF	115
25	1181	W Crichton	J Osgood	Ribble	21	27	25	20	22	DNF	115
26	1112	K Gorner	G Mant	RYA	DNF	31	20	18	14	DNC	118
27	888	P Holt	M Shakesby	Poole	24	18	28	24	27	DSQ	121
28	936	R Pointon	N Pointon	Poole	25	30	DNC	25	32	14	126
29	1203	M Richardson	D Bourne	Poole	23	33	26	DNF	29	DNF	146
30	1251	J Marks	B Roskilly	Mount's Bay	DNF	19	27	DNC	31	DNC	147
31	1240	N Jones	Various	RYA	27	32	DNF	26	30	DNF	150
32	1258	C Kent	C Sharp	Penzance	DNF	28	31	27	33	DNF	154
33	1285	I McDonald	M Bower	Blithfield	DNC	17	DNS	DNC	DNC	DNC	157
34	853	S Allen	P Madeley	Penzance	DNF	DNF	29	DNF	28	DNF	162

Nationals Prizewinners

Plycraft Trophy for the Practice Race:	1207 Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder, Poole YC
Mount's Bay Trophy for Points Race 1:	1198 Angus Hemmings and Adam Bowers, Stokes Bay SC
Martini Trophy for Points Race 2:	1298 Andy Barker, Rock SC and Phil Angrave, Poole YC
Points Race 3:	1198 Angus Hemmings and Adam Bowers
Ian Proctor Trophy for Points Race 4:	1290 Jamie Lea and Peter Frith, Poole YC
Marlow Ropes Trophy for Points Race 5:	1207Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder.
Saundersfoot trophy for Points Race 6:	1198 Angus Hemmings and Adam Bowers.
Ken King Tankard for best under-21 crew:	Harry Somers, Mount's Bay SC.
Douglas Gill trophy for best under-21 helm:	Ryan Crawford, Penzance SC.
Tubbs Trophy for the best over-40 helm.:	Adam Ellery, Penzance SC.
Masters Trophy:	1298Andy Barker, Rock SC.
100 Plus Trophy:	521 Don Pipes and David Shaw, Blithfield SC.
Best Lady Crew:	Melissa Atherton (now Odling), Royal Signals YC.
Best Lady Helm:	Charlotte Kent, Penzance SC.
Stubley Trophy:	922 James Sadler and Mike Candy, Mounts Bay SC.
Creeksea Trophy:	521 Don Pipes and David Shaw.
Filey Novice Trophy:	1234 Steve George, Mount's Bay SC
Stubbs Potential Trophy:	1205 Keith Gibbons, Blithfield SC.
Offer Team Trophy:	Poole YC.
Endeavour Last Man Trophy:	1167 John Shenton and Adam Treadwell, Wilsonian SC.
8th Overall:	1085 Oscar Chess and Tim Rees, Mumbles YC.
7th Overall:	1280 Des Mennear and Peter Grieg, Penzance SC.
6th Overall:	1116 Colin Stephens and Mike Grieg, Penzance SC
5th Overall:	1295 Will Odling and Simon Odling, Maylandsea Bay SC
4th Overall:	1207 Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder, Poole YC.
Mumbles Trophy for 3rd Overall:	1290 Jamie Lea and Peter Frith, Poole YC.
Stone Challenge Cup for 2nd Overall:	1298 Andy Barker, Rock SC and Phil Angrave, Poole YC.

Association Rosebowl for the Winning Crew: 1198 Adam Bowers.

Daily Telegraph Trophy and the City of Plymouth Trophy for the National Champions:
1198 Angus Hemmings and Adam Bowers, Stokes Bay SC.

Special Awards:

The Chairman's Tankard:	Dave Metcalfe for his work as newsletter editor.
Special award to:	Phil Angrave for 25 consecutive National Championships.
Special awards to:	Oscar Chess and Malcolm Clack for 30 consecutive Nationals

Nationals Top Twelve Gear

Boat No.	Crew Weight	Hull	Mast	Boom	Spin/Pole	Mainsail	Genoa	Spinnaker	Centre-board	Rudder	Mainsheet
119	27½ st	Creasey	M2	Proctor	S/S Al	North	North	North	Creasey	Rondar	Adj. strops
129	24½ st	Barker	Gamma	Proctor	Proc. Fat Al.	Rellings	Relling	Hyde	Milanes	Milanes	Aft
129	29½ st	Chipstow	Epsilon	Proctor	Claridge C	North	North	North	Bloodaxe	Thomas	Aft
120	25 st	Claridge/ Smart	M2	Proctor	Claridge C	Rell/North	Hood	Hood	Bloodaxe	Bloodaxe	Adj.centre
129	23½ st	Barker	M2	SuperSpar	Chipstow C	North	North	North	Milanes	Winder	Centre
111	28 st	McCutcheon	M2	Proctor	S/S Al	Ullman	Ullman	Ullman		Bloodaxe	Aft
128	29½ st	Robertson	Epsilon	Proctor	Chipstow C	Hyde	Hyde	Hyde	Milanes	Milanes	Aft
129	23 st	Barker	Epsilon	Proctor	Selden C	Sanders	Sanders	Sanders	Milanes	Milanes	Aft
108	26 st	McCutcheon	M2	Proctor	S/S Al	Relling	Relling	Ullman			Adj. centre
123	26 st	Hewitt	M2	SuperSpar	S/S Al	North	North	North	Milanes	Milanes	Aft
922	28 st	Westerley	Gamma	Proctor	Proc. Al	Ullman	Ullman	Ullman	Thomas	Rondar	Aft
117	25 st	Greaves	M2	Proctor	Proc G/S	Relling	Relling	Rellings	Winder	Winder	Aft



My One Hundred Best Sailing Days - Minus Ninety-Six

Here, from beneath a cloud of blue-grey smoke, are four tales from a store of hundreds, from the Class's resident philosopher and chief pipe-smoker, **Alec Mamwell.**

THE OTHER NIGHT I finished gardening and came in with a view to having a brew and watching the box. As usual there was nothing that really caught my fancy and, almost by chance, I ended up watching one of those "hundred best" programmes. It could have been about the hundred best left-handed opening batsmen for all I remember but with our esteemed editor soliciting copy, *any* copy, a connection was made and the germ of an idea created. The literature of some of the sports that I am involved with - climbing, skiing and walking - are littered with articles that have similar lists. Indeed they seem something of a national pastime at present and I thought I might as well have a list and that it might as well be about sailing.

One hundred seemed a great deal and, given that it would probably be beyond the scope of my memory, the readers' patience and the space available you will see from the title that I have curbed the original idea somewhat. I had thought originally to write simply about racing situations but that seemed too narrow and of limited interest so the list is a little bit wider and cheats a bit because it involves some actual "sails" which have been duplicated at various times with equally pleasant results which are mentioned in the article.

So for what it is worth, and bearing in mind that next week it could be completely different, here is my list:-

OUT FROM NEWLYN

It had taken the best part of a week to drift down the Irish Sea and round Lands End. The engine had been well used and we had had many opportunities to catch up on maintenance. I hoped never to see another wire brush and my knuckles agreed with me. The trip had been, so far, well removed from the advertised excitement and adventure but nevertheless we had managed to swagger ashore in Penzance as if we had crossed the Atlantic in wild weather. Most of us chose to wear our navy blue sweaters with *Sir Winston Churchill* emblazoned across our chest. In 1967 the words were perhaps more significant than today and there is no doubt that pride played a part in dictating our fashion sense as, like many before, we headed for the bright lights in search of entertainment and refreshment.

The next day, especially for those who had not over indulged, was a cracker. Sun and fluffy clouds as we took the schooner to sea on the afternoon tide in a brisk North Westerly. Newlyn quickly receded as we set full sail and creamed across Mount's Bay and out past the Lizard. The mainsail alone was 2,000 sq. feet and the boat responded to our display of canvas averaging 8 knots. This was more like it!

As we headed south into the Channel bound for Cherbourg the wind shifted into the North and increased in strength. It was dusk when we handed the square topsail and proceeded under fore and aft sails alone. Our gaff topsails followed shortly afterwards as the wind and following seas continued to build. Average speed was now 10 knots and rising. There was something definitely exciting about sailing at this speed on a dark night and when it came my turn to take the helm about 11 o'clock the experience became much more intense. The only thing I could see was the light of the compass but I could feel the boat through the wheel and my feet. The wind by this time was well into Force 6 and as I struggled to maintain the course we were sailing you could feel the boat lift on the waves and surge forward. Not bad for a vessel over 100' long and well over 100 tons. At times we were touching 12 and occasionally 14 knots and although the boat was well balanced it was a mighty struggle to maintain the proper course. When I was relieved after half an hour I was wringing with sweat and ready to stand down. Normal stints were an hour long and nowhere near as exhausting as this one. Although this list is in no particular order helming the "Sir Winston" at this speed on a pitch black night and feeling it surf down the waves has to be my personal number one.

LAST TWO DAYS OF THE OSPREY NATIONALS 1998

Pwllheli is one of the great venues - open water, minimal tide and great views back to the mountains of Snowdonia. After 4 days of our first Osprey Nationals when the sailing had been pleasant if unremarkable we suddenly discovered on the fifth that it had waves and once adjusted we began to relish the thrill of driving the Osprey off what felt like the top of a house into the next trough. We swam several times as the waves tripped us up but the downwind legs on the last two days of this event opened our eyes to the thrill of racing the Osprey in a seaway.

There might be many faster boats on the market nowadays but, I suspect, few that can deal with big conditions in open locations as well as an Osprey. If someone had not lathered the boat with sufficient lubricant to make standing up impossible we might have enjoyed the first 4 days too!

MORECAMBE BAY BLAST

Walk the course then sail it goes the old wisdom with respect to competing at Morecambe - sometimes with tragic results for the unwary.

Once a very popular holiday resort and sailing venue Morecambe has fallen on hard times and very few experience the unusual method of approaching the launching spot dragging a boat along the main road and then the promenade. At one time the club boasted a fleet of 20 Ospreys racing regularly on the bay and at various times in recent years we have returned as a class to try and kick-start some modern enthusiasm. The first time I sailed a dinghy on the sea was at Morecambe in about 1962 and I was impressed. In more recent times this had not been the case and on our last visit with just the last race to go I still thought it a mediocre venue at best.

For the last race however they sent us, after



a short beat and a reach alongside the prom, right out into the middle of the bay on a very broad reach. We were struggling to keep up with a well-sailed RS400 and hold off an equally well-sailed Scorpion and not particularly enjoying the situation. However once we turned the corner right out in the middle of the bay circumstances changed rapidly. We were so far out we could hardly see Morecambe. It was just a detail in a view that swept North along the Pennines from Winter Hill and Darwin Tower, past the Bowland Hills and Ingleborough to the Howgills before swinging west to include all the southern Lakeland Fells as far as Black Combe. Better still the wind had picked up to a good force 5, the sun was out and, as Ian lowered his adjusters, the Osprey came into its own on the long beat back. We quickly overhauled the RS400, driving under his lee as they hiked vigorously but to no avail.

As we rode *Jennifer* over the waves admiring the view and watching the other boats recede, everything felt just right. Although we were working hard the boat had taken over and was doing the business without us. Unfortunately for *Jennifer* all good things come to an end and as we approached the windward mark and the short blast to the finish by the prom we let her down by getting the tide and the shifts wrong and had to settle for 3rd place on handicap behind the Scorpion and a Contender. Position did not seem to matter on this occasion. It would have been a privilege to sail this course with these conditions and come last. We had also been given a timely insight into why Morecambe was once such a popular venue.

We shall definitely be back.

DAM TO DAM

Kielder Water is a fabulous place to sail. I think our members are very lucky to have access to such a venue. Not least of its attractions for me is the size of the place and the fact that once you sail past Leaplish you could be in a different world. It offers scope not only for long distance racing, which we exploit regularly, but also great cruising with just a hint of excitement. Similarly, a lazy day pottering up to Leaplish for a drink or an ice cream can be just the panacea for a difficult week at work.

I have many vivid and usually pleasant memories associated with sailing the length of the lake although the one where I was becalmed up near 14 for three hours in the pouring rain is not at the top of these. Just when I thought it could not get any worse my pipe, tobacco and lighter fell into the puddle in the bottom of the boat. I arrived back just as the sun was going down and although Ken would have been proud of me these were not the sentiments expressed by Angela when I eventually returned home!

Some years ago there was a mild, sunny day in early March on my midweek day off. I suddenly had the urge, the first of the year, to go sailing, so I threw the gear in the car and set off. The only boat available, given the time of year, was my old Finn. This was the "Black Pig", which is now enjoying life as a planter outside the Anglers Arms in Kielder Village. Although the sun was out there were low clouds hugging the forest which, as I sailed up the lake drifted out over the water. At times when I sailed into the cloud they were so thin that you could still see a hint of sun and everything was suffused in a golden glow. The whole experience was surreal and disorientating, particularly up past Hawkhurst and, after going to Bakethin, was further enhanced when a Hercules started to fly low over the lake and in and out of the clouds. Whilst exploring the creeks around Leaplish I pondered whether my identification had been correct. The plane kept flying very low over the water and I had recently read something about Sunderland Flying Boats and their conservation. I decided that a course along the shore might be prudent! After a few more passes though the plane disappeared and I enjoyed a series of planing reaches back down the lake which fully motivated me for the new season.

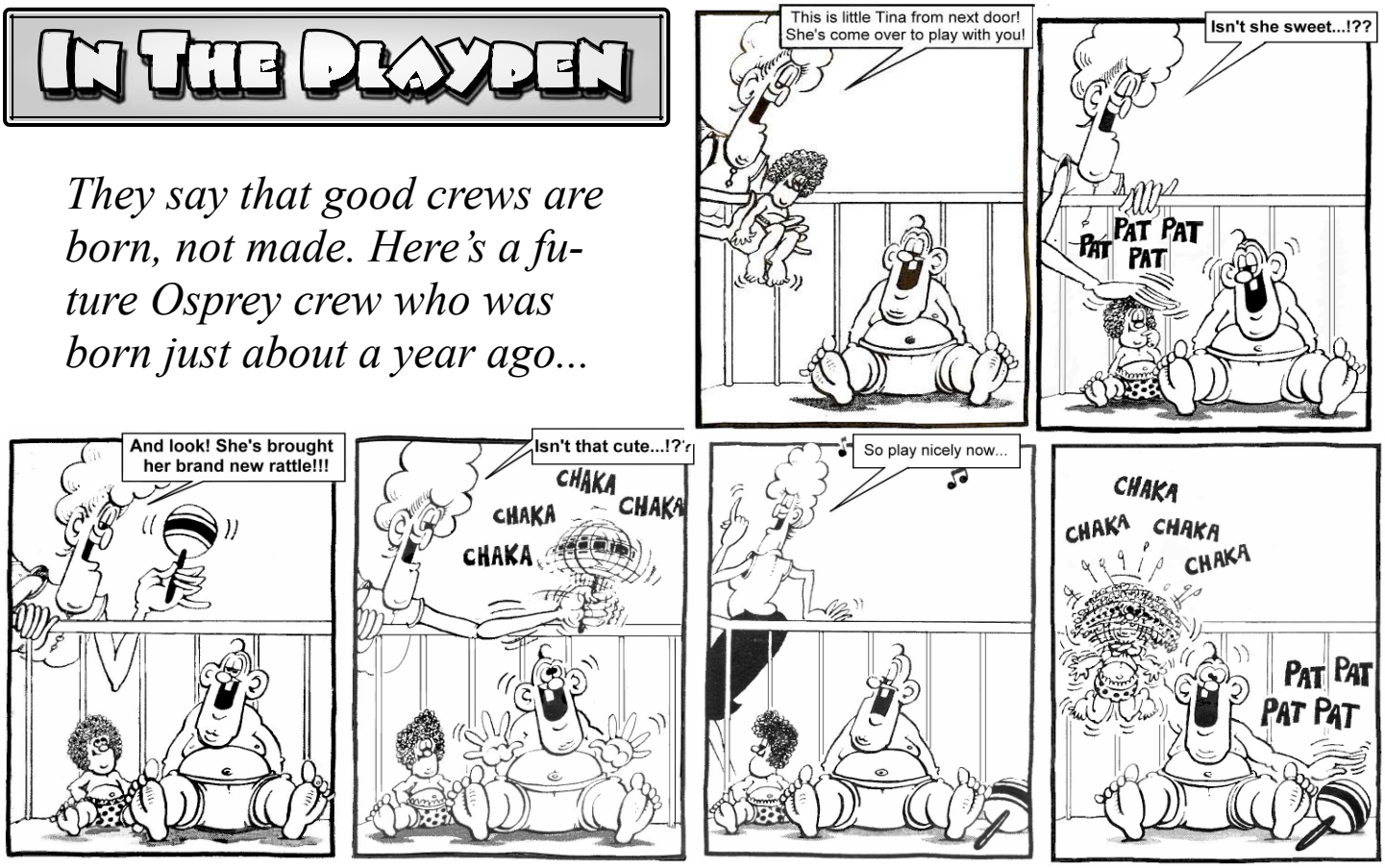
As a postscript it was a sad day when the Finn was retired because in an old tub you can go places on the lake you wouldn't dream of going with a decent boat. One of the most unusual that we did together was to sail up the Lewis Burn under the bridge and out of sight. It took time but we went right up to where the burn was running over cobbles. What a pity you can't sail uphill! (Also incidentally the island by the bridge is a great picnic spot with some convenient reeds for beaching the boat)

The best memories of sailing the length of the lake are, for me, associated with racing. Not in "Mickey Mouse" conditions but when a full-on westerly boomer is coming through. Broad reaching back down the lake from the corner at Leaplish with the kite in the Osprey set heading for 2,3,4,5,or 6 and home is always something else. Ask those who sailed as recently as last weekend. Sometimes you even get the chance to race, and overtake, the ferry!

Yes, we are very lucky.

In The Playpen

They say that good crews are born, not made. Here's a future Osprey crew who was born just about a year ago...



Kielder Open, 11th and 12th September

High winds spoilt this great Open this year, but still it attracted plenty of entries. **Mike Scott** *is here to tell us about it.*

FOURTEEN OSPREYS CAME to Kielder Water for what was forecast to be a breezy weekend, and was to turn into a full-on appointment with the tail end of Hurricane Frances.

Long distance travellers included regular Kielder visitors David Smart and Peter Hayward from Aberdeen with their Mark 2, and Nick Jones who made the long slog from Brighton to link up with Jon Osgood (Jon tells us Nick slept most of the way). Davey Lyall made a welcome reappearance to sail with Bill Crichton (who drove in cool and calm with 10 minutes to get to the start line), and Don Flannery and Roger Woodhead completed Team Ribble. Philip and David Beck were the sole Hornsea representatives this time, but the Blithfield contingent included Jon Batt and Nick Broomhall and Osprey and climbing living-legend Don Pipes teaming up with local Laser giant Mark Hawes. Ken Carroll came, representing Morecambe this time and crewed by Keith Byers. Ogston sent Chris Dickinson and Brian Kelly, and John Lang and Malcolm Clack came from West Riding, in what John threatens will be his final visit in 1178 – pending the delivery of a new Fireball and a new hip.

Race 1 started promptly in a deceptively manageable breeze, only slightly complicated by an upside-down Cherub on the line. Half-way up the first beat the scale of the deception started to become apparent as a number of crews fell victim to huge gusts and violent shifts, punctuated by brief intervals of eerie calm on the approach to the windward mark. Front runners 1292, Rob Shaw and Alaistair Smith were among the swimmers, allowing heavy weather specialists 1276 Alec Mamwell and Ian Little to pull out a lead on the first reach. However, they capsized shortly after the gybe mark, opening the way to 854 Ken Carroll and Keith Byers, until they too succumbed. Viola and Mike Scott, 1261, were briefly hopeful of capitalising on the carnage ahead but were overwhelmed and had to watch from their upturned hull as 1292 surfed past in a glorious display of force 7 three-sail reaching.

The conditions exacted a heavy toll on gear and bodies. The approach to the leeward mark was always brutal, with a number of sailors seeming tempted by the short route to the Blackcock Inn straight over the dam wall. With the gybe mark close to the clubhouse, retirement often seemed the only sane option. Bill Crichton and Davey Lyall in 1181 managed a creditable two circuits before yielding to spinnaker entanglements. Don Flannery had prudently brought walking boots and resisted the temptation to get wet.

On the second beat 854 managed to retake the lead but unfortunately missed the gate and had to back-track, allowing 1292 and 1276 through. 1276 led at the completion of the sausage leg but alternate capsizes left 1292 with the win when the race was shortened after the next triangle. 1276 managed to hold off 854, and 1261 finished 4th.

With the wind continuing to build, the rest of the day's racing was abandoned. Sunday morning brought no relief. There were some very battered looking tents and a clubhouse full of evacuees. The Race Officer regretfully but rightly brought things to a close. Although too little sailing was managed, the social side of things took up the slack, and it was mercifully too windy for the midges.

Results

1	1292	Rob Shaw	Alastair Smith
2	1276	Alec Mamwell	Ian Little
3	854	Ken Carroll	Keith Byers
4	1261	Viola Scot	Mike Scott

Southern Area Championships, Netley, 25th and 26th September

As usual, Netley Sailing Club hosted a superb event which was closely fought. **Will Odling** *tells it.*

SATURDAY'S RACING WAS scheduled as two races back to back. Conditions were benign with a westerly wind varying 2-3 on an ebbing tide. Wind shifts of twenty degrees were combined with varying strength, making it high risk to 'hit the corners' of the course alone.

The first race saw us fighting the tide and a strong port end bias on the line. At least three boats had to gybe away within the last thirty seconds before the start. In theory the fast ebb tide favoured inshore starts to the beats, and the windward mark was tricky as it lay just into the main channel with a fierce flow carrying us towards the mark as we approached on starboard. The tide theory didn't work on the first beat as George and Melissa Odling stood out offshore with Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder and arrived nice and early at the first windward mark. Will and Simon Odling were next to arrive, followed by Rob and Antony Shaw and Mick Taylor and Jon Willey. Rob and Antony enjoyed fast broad reaches, sailing with the lowest crew weight combined with the largest spinnaker, but found the tighter second legs of the reaches problematic. George and Melissa were passed by Martin and Will on the second leg of the reach and at the finish the order was Lewis from Will Odling, with George Odling third and Mike Taylor fourth.

For the second start the line bias had shifted to the committee boat end, but Martin Lewis had decided on the outer end. This gave him quite a challenge, but he climbed from 5th at the first windward mark to second at the finish. Will and Simon Odling took an early lead and enjoyed a calm and trouble-free race while the following pack fought, with a particularly exciting arrival for three boats at the leeward mark at the end of the run. The final positions were Will and Simon Odling followed by Martin Lewis and Stuart Maunder, Rob and Antony Shaw and Mike Taylor and Jon Willey. Oh and it rained a lot at one stage during the race.

Sunday morning dawned with little wind, and the race officer wisely kept us ashore, delaying the start from 10.30 to after 12.30, by which time the wind had filled in again with similar speed and direction to the previous day. Will and Simon decided on a start at the committee boat end, intending to tack and dodge the tide, while George and Melissa opted to sail out, and they were right. George arrived first again at the windward mark, closely followed by Mike Taylor, Will Odling, Kevin and Steven George, and Martin Lewis. A luffing match between the Odling brothers didn't help them down the first leg of the reach, and left Mike Taylor and Jon Willey clear air to sail away, which they did to great effect, and were never seen again until the finish. Will Odling and Martin Lewis, joint meeting leaders, met regularly through the race, at one stage close reaching away from the leeward mark on the run. Interestingly both made the mistake of not covering closely enough on the beats and losing to the other each time. However at the finish Mike Taylor was well clear, with Will Odling just ahead of Martin Lewis and Rob Shaw fourth. This decided the meeting because time had run out and the final races were not sailed.

Our thanks as always go to Netley Sailing Club and the supporting team for their kind hospitality. We enjoyed the company of the Scorpion fleet who shared the event with us, and look forward to going there again next year.

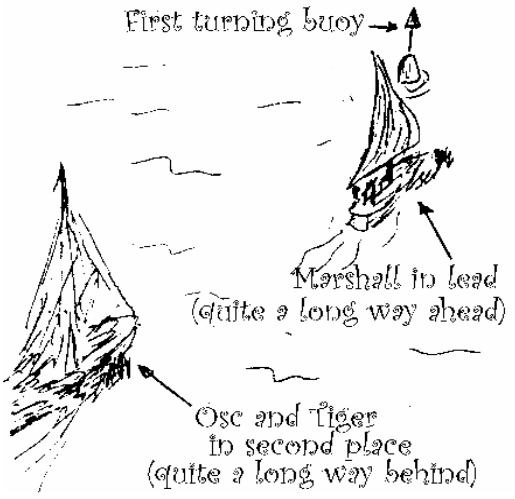
Will and Simon Odling successfully defended their Southern Areas title from 2003, which was just as well, because Will had forgotten to bring back the trophies. Was this the incentive he needed to go out and win?

Oscar Wins Through!

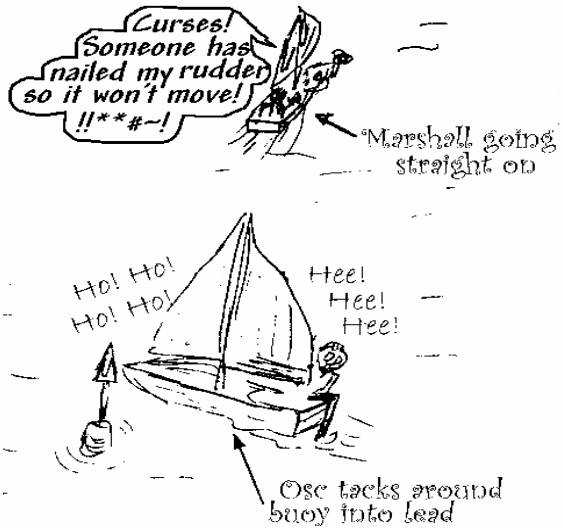
A heroic tale of victory against all odds, and just plain cheating.

In the 1980s Oscar Chess worked for Marconi Space and Defence Systems Ltd. Of course, as the British Government bought all their weapons systems from the Americans nobody there had very much work to do, which is why Oscar's friend and colleague,* Martin 'Manky' Saegert *had time to produce this cartoon. Although Manky knew nothing about sailing, he was obviously something of a prophet, because this was written in 1981 - Oscar didn't win his first Nationals until 1982 - spooky or what? A great deal has been left out for the sake of propriety, but here is the only slightly censored ending.

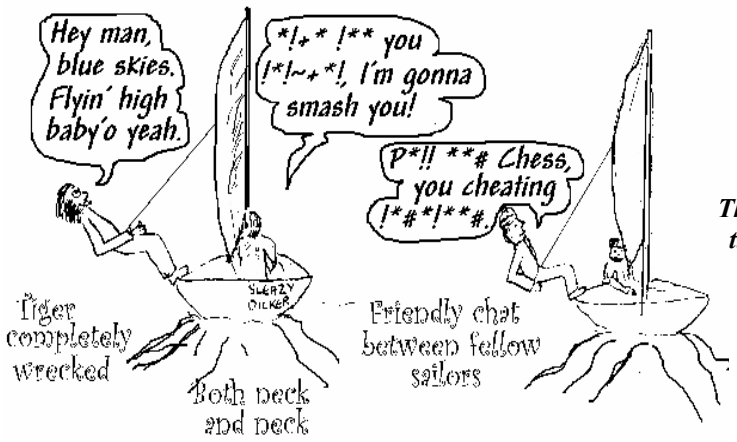
During the first race it looks as though Marshall is going to win...



however...



So Oscar wins the first race with Marshall finishing 25th. But Marshall's no mean dude, and through determination (and guarding his boat day and night), with only one race left Oscar and Marshall are neck and neck... If Oscar wins this race he wins the Osprey Nationals. With everything at stake the starting gun fires and the race is underway. By the halfway stage it's clear that it's a 2-boat race.



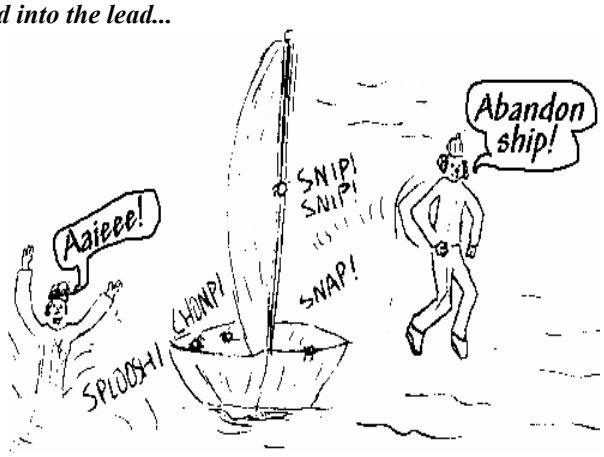
This continues until, with only 200 metres to go...



With only 200 metres to go Marshall has edged into the lead...



A good shot and Tiger's Y-fronts land in Marshall's boat. The jolt disturbs Tiger's 'pubic menagerie' who become agitated and leave the warmth and safety of the underpants to attack Marshall and his crew.



They abandon ship, and Oscar and his hippie pal Tiger sail to a narrow victory. Oscar's dream has finally come true.

Oscar Chess has won the Osprey National Championships

THE END

Inland Championships, Rutland Water, 23rd and 24th October

With a very bad weather forecast for the weekend it was no surprise that the numbers were down on last year. But it turned out much nicer than expected, giving everyone a great meeting. This report was written by **Will Odling** *and* **Peter Frith**. *Photographs by* **Nick Jones**.

THE NATIONAL WEATHER forecast was horrible for the 23rd October, with talk of high winds and torrential rain in many places. A trip to the national weather forecast website showed wet and windy up to Yorkshire, but a more detailed local forecast showed Rutland and nearby areas caught between the various bits of bad stuff. In the event we started with about force 2 winds which had dropped to force 1 or less by late afternoon. As a result only two of the three scheduled races were started, with regular downpours throughout. Thank goodness Sunday dawned bright with rising winds concluding in a stonking ride for the final race in sunshine and a force 4-5 blow. What a way to finish our calendar of open events for 2004!

The first beat of the first race answered one question – which way to go up the beat. A long starboard tack was favoured, and generally seemed to be the way all afternoon. First to the windward mark were Richard/ Mark Hartley in 1114 *Just Pogo*, pursued by George/ Melissa Odling in 1199 *Merlyn* and Jamie Lea/ Peter Frith in 1290 *Swiftwun*. This order remained until the second beat, when the Hartleys went right, the Odlings went left and Lea/ Frith followed the Hartleys. Left was good, and George/ Melissa Odling were easily ahead at the start of the run, a position which they successfully maintained to the finish. This was their first open meeting race win since pairing up at the beginning of the season, when Melissa's dinghy experience had been quite limited, so a brilliant result for them. Second were the Hartleys, third Mike Taylor/ Jon Willey in 1297 and fourth were Will/ Simon Odling in 1295.

The second race saw dying wind. Will/ Simon Odling in 1295 *Big Girl's Blouse* picked the right way up the first beat this time, and just pipped Jamie Lea/ Peter Frith to the first mark, pursued by Richard/ Mark Hartley. The front of the race became a minor battle between Odling and Lea. Will Odling's failure to cover Jamie Lea on the third beat proved a big mistake. The last reach though had turned into a quiet run. Lea went right so Odling gybed left and had better luck or judgement in finding the elusive vanes of wind, involving six or seven gybes before coming out on top to win from Jamie Lea/ Peter Frith in second, Richard/ Mark Hartley third with Rob Shaw/ Anthony Shaw in 1292 securing fourth place.

It is great to see so many family teams in Ospreys. Nearly half the fleet had family teams on board for this event, by no means slouches on the water either. Either the Osprey is truly family friendly or it is hard to persuade anyone else to risk it – almost certainly it is the former because of the fantastic flexibility we can offer in terms of experience, fitness and weight when going out to enjoy ourselves. Both lightweight and heavier crews were at the front this weekend in all wind strengths.

The format for Sunday was to be three races sailed back to back, each race three laps. After the atrocious light winds and continual rain of the previous day, Sunday dawned with a light but freshening wind and brilliant sunshine. Will and Richard led with five points, whilst Jamie Lea and Peter Frith were just behind on seven points.

At the start of Race 3 Jamie and Will both went for the favoured pin-end. Jamie just led off the line. Will and Simon, being six stones lighter, soon climbed above Jamie and Peter, threatening to overtake. Both boats, pre-occupied with each other, failed to notice a wind shift, which allowed Mike Taylor and Jon Willey to come in from the right-hand side of the fleet to lead at the windward mark. After a quick hoist, Jamie powered over Mike down the reach and gradually opened up a lead, meanwhile third, fourth and fifth places battled each other, with places changing several times. Jamie and Peter went on to win, with Mike and Jon taking second. The nail biting climax to the race saw David and Ken Carroll coming into the last mark in third place with John Batt and Nick Broomhall just behind, only for both to be pipped in the fifty metre dash to the finish by Richard and Mark Hartley and Will and Simon Odling. The race officer needed a photo to establish finishing order. This must have been one of the closest finishes – nobody knew who had beaten whom!

The wind continued to increase, rising to a gusty force 4. Will fully raked back his rig. We went to our medium position. Again, we felt the pin-end was favoured. Will started just above us. This time with the increase in wind we were able to foot slightly, sailing with more speed, less pointing. Guess what, the wind shifted again, once again favouring the boats from the right hand side. David and Ken tacked under us and looked clear ahead. Extra speed upwind meant we just



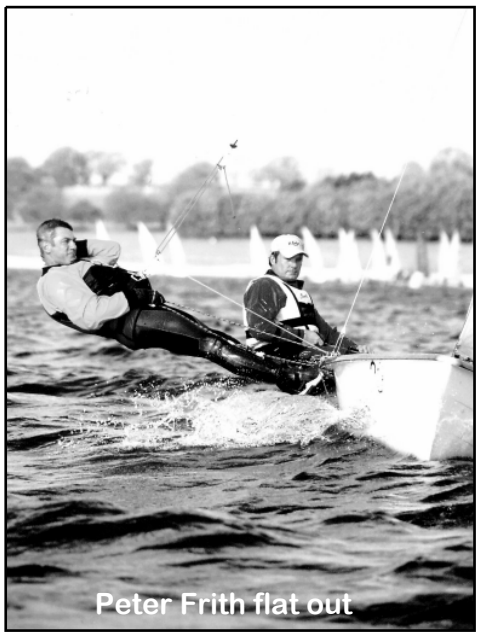
Jamie and Peter sailing away from the rest of us



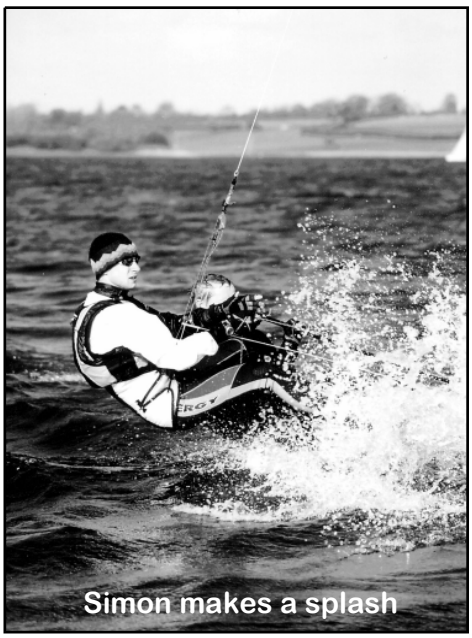
Will and Simon on the second reach

Results

1	**1290**	**Jamie Lea**	**Peter Frith**	**Poole**
2	**1295**	**Will Odling**	**Simon Odling**	**Maylandsea Bay**
3	**1114**	**Richard Hartley**	**Mark Hartley**	**Blithfield**
4	**1297**	**Mike Taylor**	**Jon Willey**	**Marconi**
5	**854**	**David Carroll**	**Ken Carroll**	**Felixstowe Ferry**
6	**1199**	**George Odling**	**Melissa Odling**	**Royal Signals**



Peter Frith flat out



Simon makes a splash

rounded ahead at the windward mark, hoisted the spinney and cleared our wind before the main fleet were able to climb over us. The reach had become broader and the short legs kept everyone very close together except for Jamie who accelerated away. The beats became more predictable with obvious shifts, the wind oscillating 10-15 degrees. David and Ken did a sterling job of keeping ahead of the Odlings, and putting the nightmare of the previous race behind them. At the finish, Jamie won with David second and Will third.

The final race saw Jamie and Peter round the windward leg in the lead. Dave Metcalfe and Richard Blowman in 1286, *Kindred Spirit* managed to get this beat right to arrive at the windward mark in second place, just to windward of Will and Simon. Unfortunately, Richard and Mark Hartley were coming in fast on starboard and were out of sight to Dave behind Will's sails. Although there was no collision after Dave's crash tack, Richard had to bear away severely, so turns were done. Will just managed to keep ahead of David and Ken and with his light weight, flew down the first reach. The tighter second reach proved more challenging with David and Ken clawing some advantage back. Again the windward leg proved predictable with boats tacking as they were headed. The wind was now up to a 5, and the racing was close and exciting with Mike and Jon mixing it with Will, David, and Richard, who had dropped back from second to fifth. But the final round saw Jamie win with Will second and David third.

The race left over from the previous day was then binned so we all went home. By this time the wind was blowing a good five with some vicious gusts, enough for both of us to have to dump sails together.

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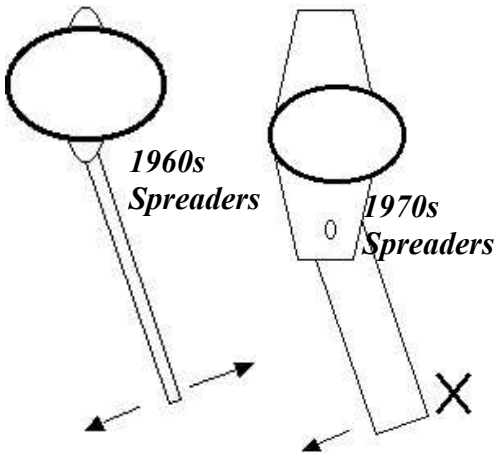
Osprey Mast Bend Control



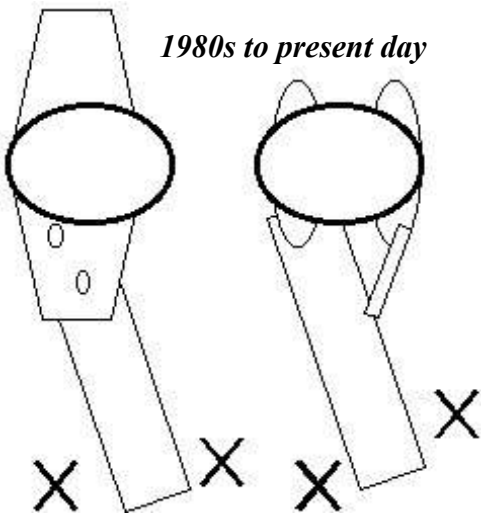
Many experiments and changes have been made to the National Osprey during its 50+ years. Some have been successful and have stayed, but most have fallen by the wayside or led on to some other development. **Oscar Chess** *was often to be found at the forefront of many of these (sometimes wacky) ideas. Here he gives us the history of the many attempts to increase speed by controlling mast bend.*

Ospreys have been using aluminium masts since the earliest days, as Ian Proctor, the Osprey designer, was the founder of 'Ian Proctor Metal Masts'. This firm developed to become 'Proctor Masts' and dominated the dinghy mast world for many years. Proctor masts these days are trading as Selden Masts.

Rigs in the 1960s and early 1970s were dominated by the philosophy of: choose a stiff mast and then give it virtually no support from the rigging to allow



it to bend. Masts were generally Proctor E section, with only a small amount of taper towards the tip. Spreaders were allowed to swing free in the Sixties, and this progressed to forward swinging, backward



fixed in the Seventies.

Manufacturers such as Z-Spar, Needlespar and Elvstrom led the way towards fixed spreader angles.

Each progression was accompanied by the mast section becoming slightly lighter. Back in the Sixties and Seventies there were quite a few Proctor Fs around. This was a truly man-sized section, ideally suited for supporting security cameras. Jumpers, forward-prodding diamonds at hounds height with two wires starting half-way between the gooseneck and the hounds and terminating two-thirds of the way between the hounds and the mast tip virtually eliminated mast tip bend.

Some memorable rig combinations from Osprey history were Nat Eynon's Proctor F with no spreaders fitted, on 198, *Blue Moon* in the early 1970s, John Marsh's Elvstrom razor mast with a flattened top section making it extremely stiff fore and aft, and very bendy side-to-side. None other than Rodney Pattison had championed this mast in the Flying Dutchman fleet. John fitted his to 1159 *Moonshadow*. The ultimate in my book was Mike Corbin's monster proportions rig of a Proctor F with jumpers on 1165 *Movie Star*.

Osprey jumper struts and the spinnaker halyard cranes that went with them are now fetching huge sums on eBay.

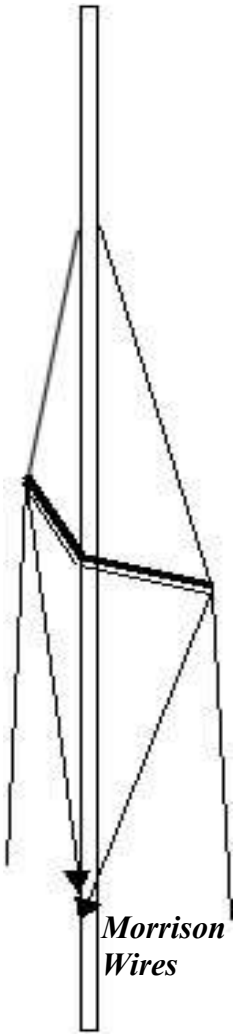
Until the abolition of free-swinging and limited-swing spreaders, and the class's adoption of the extended, closed-off mast gate, introduced by Andy Barker, after a windy race there was a regular sight in the dinghy park of the 'inverted' mast. This used to happen when the spinnaker was up and was due to a combination of the spinnaker pole pushing the lower mast backwards, the spinnaker halyard pulling the top of the mast forward, and the spreaders swinging merrily forwards allowing the whole mast to to bend uncontrollably over the bow of the boat. It was a bit like jack-knifing lorries and you don't hear much about them these days either.

A number of helms had great fun making life on their boats very complicated for a while, including Alfie Hawksworth and myself. We both decided that spreader angle was so vital that it had to be immediately adjustable from the cockpit. This was achieved by fitting levers to the inner ends of the spreaders, and a block and tackle system running down the mast. Mine involved a kicking strap lever bolted to the inner end of the spreaders. Hours of fun followed while we were piddling about pulling strings when we should have been looking around at what was going on in the race. As reality set in the systems were consigned to the spare parts box, but it does go some way to explaining my love affair with the kicking strap lever.

Another system of trying to persuade an overly stiff section to bend, (in my case a Proctor Beta Plus bought from Alaistair Mackay) which he had been using to support his runner beans, was to fit 'Morrison Wires'. These had been introduced to the Merlin Class by Phil Morrison and consisted of the addition of a pair of lower shrouds connected to the main shrouds at the spreader tips, then coming together at deck level on a magic box on the front face of the mast.

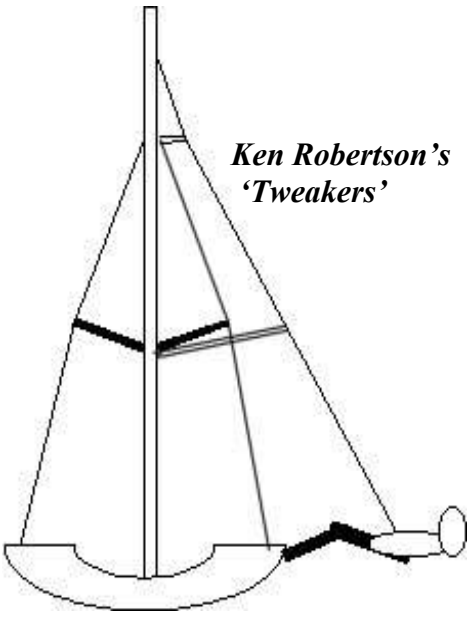
I fitted Morrison Wires to *Easy Picker* as my secret weapon for a Lymington Town Easter Regatta, and before the start strapped the main in hard, then pulled on the wires to 'lock in' the pre-bend. The swept-back spreaders act like jumpers in

reverse, forcing the middle of the mast to bend forward. As Tiger and I approached the start line, I released the mainsheet. The Morrison wires now had the unenviable task of keeping a Beta Plus bent with no help from the mainsheet. There was a mighty bang as they gave up the ghost and showered us in stainless steel wire. They were never used again.



Morrison Wires

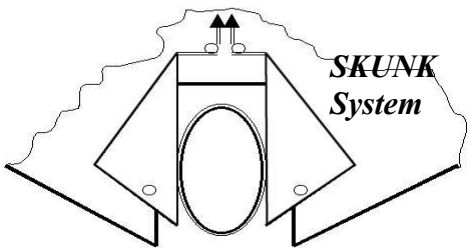
As the modern Osprey rig of Proctor Epsilon/ Superspar M2 or M6, heavily tapered top, fixed but adjustable angle spreaders and no jumpers is now standard, other ways of adjusting the bend characteristics have more recently been explored. Osprey history relates how Ray Jebbett, while crewing for Ken Robertson in a particularly windy race, went out on the trapeze



Ken Robertson's 'Tweakers'

with the wire wrapped around the spreader tip. Ken detected an increase in speed and followed this experience up by fitting 'tweakers' to the trapeze wires. These were control wires that allowed him to pull the spreaders to windward, increasing the sideways bend of the mast at will. The idea is to open up the slot width, de-powering the rig upwind in a blow.

A variation on this theme was the 'Skunk' system I designed and fitted to 1161, *Easy Picker.* This allowed me to control the width of the mast gate whilst sailing. The system used the same two kicker levers I had used for spreader control. The only clever thing about this system was the name: **S**ide-bend **K**ontrol of the mast **U**si**N**g **K**icker-levers, or **SKUNK** for short. On reflection even



SKUNK System

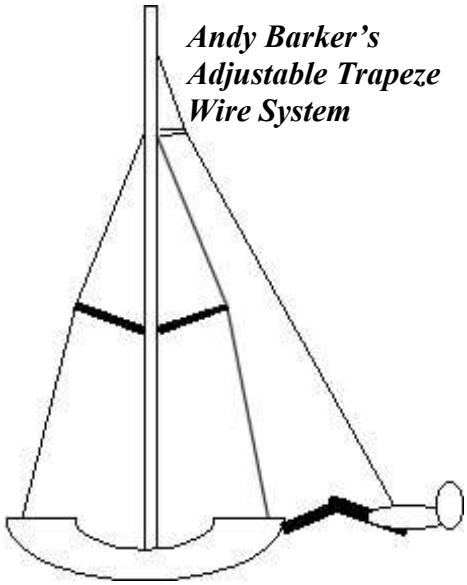
the name was a bad idea. What SKUNK did teach me though, was how important it is to completely *eliminate* any sideways play in the mast gate. There was only one setting that was fast – full on. From the day that the kicking strap levers returned once again to the spare parts box, I have always fitted hard plastic shims taped inside the mast gate at deck level to ensure that side play is never more than about 1mm.

The modern philosophy is to use a lighter section, and then get maximum support using the standing rigging. The spreaders are a bit longer and the rig tension higher.

There is another area of experimentation that has recently opened up. This follows on from the theme of Ken and Ray, but instead of encouraging the mast to bend more, this method attempts to keep the mast straighter. Traditionally trapeze wires were fixed to the same attachment point as the shroud wires, the hounds. The position of the trapeze attachment point had been taken higher up the mast during the 70s/80s to try to reduce side bend of the otherwise unsupported topmast.

My Sovereign mast had a trapeze wire attachment point about six inches above the hounds.

Andy Barker has been experimenting for the last two years or so with an adjustable trapeze wire system. Again this involves two tweakers, made of Dyneema, pulling in the trapeze wires at hounds height. The upper attachment



Andy Barker's Adjustable Trapeze Wire System

point of the trapeze wires is moved massively up the mast to a point approximately 18 inches above the hounds. By then pulling on the tweakers, Andy could adjust the effective attachment point anywhere between those two points. This gives him a powerful tool to control sideways bend of the mast higher up.

Enjoy your fiddling.

Adjustments of a modern rig

Problem	Method of Correction
Mast bends fore and aft, mainsail too flat. Not enough power in marginal conditions.	Increase mast ram pressure and/or Fit stiffer mast section and/or Angle spreaders more forward and/or Change to strut, to raise the 'push point'.
Mast bends too much sideways - look at pix of your boat beating, taken from head on.	Fit more shims to the inside of the mast gate to reduce or eliminate sideplay and/or Lengthen spreaders.



A Weight Off My Mind

Lard or Lean? Most of us who sail Ospreys seem to prefer the former on the wire, but **Will Odling** *can beat most of us in a Force 6 with the all-up weight of a Firefly crew. Here's how.*

Scene One – At Home - Spring 1996
"I'm fat," she said, climbing off the scales. "I'll have to lose some weight before we go on holiday, I can't look like this by the pool".

"Well I don't think you look bad at all," I said with the frisky little smile that doubles for *and I'm feeling a bit like helping you to work some weight off.*

Scene Two – In the Garage – Spring 1996
"Mmm," said George climbing off the scales after we weighed the boat, "I'm fifteen stone and unlikely ever to be less than fourteen and a half."

"Well I don't think you look bad at all," I said with that little half smile that doubles for *and I hope Ospreys really do go well with big crews.*

Scene Three – Pwllheli Osprey Nationals 1998 - after last race
"Wow!" we both said. "Awesome!" we both said, after the last race when it blew a force 5 plus and Osprey 425 *Bluebird* stormed up the beats such that we were just a couple of hundred yards off the winning boat at the finish. "Not bad for a thirty five year old," said George. I thought he meant himself, but he was referring to the boat. "A triumph for lard," I thought, recognising the benefits of weight on the wire in those conditions.

Scene Four – Penzance Osprey Nationals 2004 – Last race, blowing force 6+
"We don't need to stay out here," I told Simon, shouting to make myself heard. "We won't be able to improve our overall position." Which was true as retiring would force us to count a ninth, and to move up a place to fourth in the series meant beating Martin Lewis who was well ahead, and significantly improving on our discard. We were being blown all over the place, and Simon's ten and a half stone plus didn't seem hugely effective even on tip-toes.

Scene Five – Osprey Inland Nationals 2004 – Last race, blowing force 4 to 5
"Blimey," said Simes, "we made a chunk on that beat."

"You were really footing and blasting up the beats," commented another helm after we came a convincing second in that race behind Jamie Lea/ Peter Frith.

Scene Six – Blithfield Osprey Open Meeting 1999
"How much do you actually weigh?" I asked Steve Watson. Cruising out to the start in his boat, Osprey 1175, I became aware of the sunlight being eclipsed by the incredible bulk up front. He admitted to seventeen stone, but said he would have to kill me if I told the boat. The strange thing was that we still seemed to be going as fast and trapezing about as early as other boats, and finished a happy third overall in force 1-3 conditions, despite it being our maiden sail together.

By now you will have gathered that this weight thing does take up some of my valuable thinking time. You will also have gathered that my experience suggests that it is not just a case of 'Lard Wins' in a blow and 'Shrimps Triumph' in the calm stuff. So when I was asked to write this article I thought it would also help me to sort out how I approach crew weight on and off the water. I am no sailing professional, but I have progressively learned since my teenage Fireball days that we can do things to compensate for relative weight differences between crews. And on reflection I have more often sailed with light crews than heavy crews - my wife Gill in the Fireball, my mate Max the eleven stone Kiwi in 505s (when we could use weight jackets) and both of my sons in the Osprey. But three years ago the muscle- and bulk-endowed George bought his own Osprey and I have been sailing since with my sons, first Tom, then Simon (Simes).



Melissa, Will and Simon

So what about weight in Ospreys? With apologies to the gurus for any garbage, my thoughts are given below, based on experience and listening to tips that other sailors have freely given (never be shy to ask people, they are almost always more than helpful!).

The boat weighs about 135 kilos unrigged, and I suppose about 200 kilos with all the stuff on board including water in our boots etc. Add an average helm and crew with damp clothing and you get to about another 200 kilos, so say 400 kilos on the water. The difference between a combined lightweight 24 stone stripped crew weight (excuse the mixed units) and a heavyweight 29 stone is about 32 kilos, so say 8% of all up weight. Is this a big deal? Well, yes and no. Read on.

1. In really light stuff, weight doesn't seem to make much difference. We flatten the sails to avoid stalling by inducing mast bend with nil kicker and a loosely sheeted genoa, so we are hardly going for power sailing. It is all about keeping airflow over the sails and pointing in the right direction, while grabbing every opportunity for some acceleration, including tacks and gybes and finding puffs of wind. A heavier crew weight implies greater momentum after acceleration to counter the lesser effect on speed of the accelerating manoeuvre. I have usually done well in drifters regardless of crew weight, I think because I am naturally fairly calm and also because I am happy to let all the strings out while others keep tightly sheeted in. So in the doldrums I don't see much weight effect.

2. In a bit more wind, with marginal trapezing on the beats, I am sure there is a difference. With Simes as a crew our boat speed definitely flatters our tactics. Likewise with the heavier George on board we found it tougher. This seems to show most on three sail reaches, I guess because lighter boats get to plane earlier, and less so on beats and runs, when we are displacement sailing.

"So what to do?" you may ask.

The genoa is easy. Bring the cars forward in the tracks or pull on barber haulers so the sail is fuller with a tighter leach, until you aren't pointing high enough any more. Oh and get the plate fully down upwind. As for the main, both sailing with George and in Steve Watson's boat, the answer lay in the rig. Stiff and upright she should be, just as the actress ordered. If you were to look at Steve's mast, the spreaders were angled further forward, and were relatively long. With the mast upright this gives reduced bend, both fore and aft and also sideways. Spreader height on the mast varies so it is hard to give precise measurements so I measure what I call side 'deflection' and forward 'poke'.

Deflection affects sideways mast bend and

is the amount that the shroud is pushed out sideways when viewed from behind. For my light crew I have very little at all. It is pretty much unadjustable on the water in an Osprey. I recall about 75-100mm on Steve Watson's boat and a bit less on *Merlyn*.

Poke, however, varies as the mast is raked, and reduces as rake increases. Poke limits fore and aft bend. Again I have less 'poke' than others (I am talking solely about my spreaders here). I wouldn't choose this for light/ moderate conditions but rather for the blowy stuff. So I am compromising in that I don't think I get maximum power from my rig in these moderate conditions. I am working on this, but am not too worried because we have great boat speed as a result of our lower crew weight. I have two final thoughts to offer on these conditions. One is that it is easy to dump the bow or stern, so I encourage the crew to watch the bow and tell me if we need to move around to compensate. Also because of our low weight, Simes and I can get to plane earlier when luffing into wind on broad reaches/ runs, so it is worth doing and we can be less radical in our deviation from the direct course to get the desired acceleration.

3. A bit more wind again - trapezing up the beats and on three-sail reaches, but manageable. No sense of doom approaching gybes, aahh the joy of sailing! For the heavier crews this is all about power still, booms centred upwind, kicker cranked on, sheeted-in genoa, virtually full plate, leaches tight with the top main telltale just flicking forward a bit. Happy days. For Simes and I power is already being dumped on occasions. The mast is bending sideways a bit reducing power because of the shorter spreaders, but it is mainly through playing the main and lifting the plate a bit. I don't get the boom central and will let it drop away in gusts, to avoid losing speed by luffing up or allowing the boat to heel. I will still luff a bit in gusts if I don't induce heel as a result or end up 'stuffing'. Experience has shown that with a light crew it is easier to end up pointing too high and going slow. So I have to work hard and keep playing the main.

On three sail reaches I have to get the plate lifted early, so mine is adjustable by the helm. I also automatically drop off a foot of kicker string on rounding the windward mark, and then more to suit. The other tactics for staying flat and in control include regular use of the main Cunningham on reaches. I want to keep the spinnaker pulling and the Cunningham is great at flattening the top of the main. Our final weapon in these conditions is using the weight that we do have. I neglected to mention that although Simes weighs ten and a half to eleven stones, I on the other hand am nearer to thirteen stones, and six foot two as well. So I hike out as far as I can. It is a bit like Laser sailing in that it hurts at times and sometimes the beats seem endless, but looking around I rarely see other (slower) helms getting the same leverage. I have three positions: legs straight; feet crossed, and knees bent (Finn sailor style) which I vary to reduce discomfort. The above said, in youthful Fireball days I would watch Lawrie Smith and Andy Barker sail away from us at speed with Lawrie apparently sitting comfortably rather than hiking out, but this doesn't seem to work in the Osprey with its larger rig.

These are the conditions where Simes and I have made real progress in our two seasons together. Learning how to progressively drop and recover power faster than I needed to before, not to stuff it upwind, and getting to plane earlier off wind. And I just remembered – we have probably the smallest cut of spinnaker currently available. It's great in wind and doesn't seem to be a serious handicap in the lighter stuff.

4. More wind again or to use the technical term 'blowing old boots'. My first thought is pragmatic. It is not going to be easy against heavier crews in this stuff, so the solution is in part to have secured decent results in the lighter conditions. For us this means expecting to win the odd meeting when it is not very windy, despite our limited sailing (about six opens plus the Nationals each year and no club sailing). Discarding the 'expect to lose in a gale' mentality for a moment, we have in fact been getting better and better in a blow. Why? I believe because we are working better together and learning more. We all know that bad tacks, bad gybes and poor buoy approaches can cost hugely. This is accentuated in strong wind (to the point of capsize). So we have learned to prepare better, checking the boat, setting up for reaches on the prior beat, talking through the next manoeuvre and working together. We are not perfect but I do try to avoid starting the spinnaker hoist until I see Simes is really ready with the pole half out, because he doesn't have the physical 'grunt' of others. I am totally led by his progress across the boat through tacks because it is vital he gets out on the wire before I allow power on the new tack. The boat is wind friendly in that I can raise and lower the plate and ease or tighten Cunningham, outhaul, kicker, strut and rig tension without sitting in too much (strut and rig adjustments reflect a change in average wind strength during the race, I don't 'play' them). So what do we do? More of the things progressively identified above i.e: -

~ Simes out straight and low whenever possible on the wire.

~ Mast raked back, reducing spreader effect, opening slot between main and genoa. I will drop off a bit of rig tension (on the genoa halyard) as it blows more.

~ Genoa sheeted way back (I just found that it's best so far back that I can't get at the Cunningham cleat, so that will be moved this winter). This helps tight sheeting low down, but spilling wind high up.

~ Cunningham on for the reaches (not the runs) and when overpowered on the beats.

~ Kicker on for beats and off for reaches, but not so much as to give the amount of mainsail twist that feels unstable.

~ Plate halfway up on the beat, and even more on reaches (back down to half on the run to avoid flip-flopping). It is amazing when you look over the side that it is still nearly all out of the box, just angled back.

~ I hike out flat, especially on beats and fast two sail reaches, and we move back (way back) on reaches.

~ I let the main out on beats until I am comfortably in control. Once the boat starts to plane, the sideways drift drops away compensating a bit for the lower beating angle, with greater boat speed as well. I have worked on this in 2004 and we are definitely improving.

~ Simes lets the genoa out a bit anyway, and eases it briefly in strong gusts as I play the main.

So that's a weight off my mind. Now back to planning major paintwork on the boat. Have a great Christmas and a successful New Year. See you in 2005.

Cornering The Market

It seems to have been a long time since we had a wedding announcement in the Association magazine, so let's all congratulate these two keen Ospreyites.

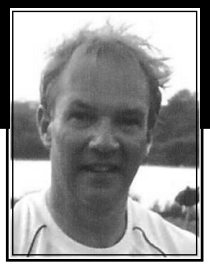
Simon Odling and **Melissa Atherton** were married on the 4th September in Solihull. The church where the ceremony was held has great connections for both sides - Simon and Will have both been choristers at the church, and Melissa's parents were married there.

Simon crews for his father on 1295, *Big Girl's Blouse*, and Melissa crews for Will's brother George in 1199, *Merlyn.*

If they're trying to create a family monopoly at the front of the Osprey fleet, it looks as though they've succeeded.

We wish them well for the future.





A Sailing Pen Portrait - Part 4

Here is the fourth, but not yet final part of **Malcolm Clack***'s thirty plus years of National Championships attendance. Is he bringing back fond memories for you? He is just beginning to for me. Photographs by the late* **Jenny Colloryan**.

EAGER TO BUILD on our success from the previous year we arrived at Poole for the 1985 championships. We had never sailed at Poole before but were hugely impressed by their magnificent clubhouse. We had done the usual round of early season open meetings and arrived in confident mood. Mike (Mooney) was still very active in his sailmaking and was picking up orders and making deliveries almost everywhere we went. In fact, Mike is the only person I know who came back from an open meeting with a fatter wallet than when he went.

We left the slipway for the practice race and the first of our lengthy sails down Poole Harbour to the racing area in Bournemouth bay. Once there, one thing was certain, it was blowing - force 6 perhaps, with a very lumpy sea. Without too much delay the fleet were away and much to our surprise we arrived at the windward mark third. I don't remember too much about the first reach except for the clouds of spray, but the wing mark rapidly approached and a strategy for rounding it was required. The leader gybed and capsized, Ian Porter in second place gybed and capsized. Our strategy was now clear, a nice slick gybe and we'd have the lead, but being absolute chickens we opted to wear round. This we did successfully and blasted off down the second reach with the fleet hot on our heels. By now there were capsized boats all over the racecourse and the shortened-course signal was sounded as we rounded the leeward mark. A nice steady beat, keeping the fleet loosely covered and very quickly we crossed the finishing line to take the winners' gun. Another race win under our belts, but it was the practice race and you know what they say about winning the practice race.

We never troubled the winners' rostrum again that week but a steady series of results saw us again lying 4th overall by Thursday night. The championship title was being fought out between Ian Porter and a new contender, Jeff Stubbs, from Blithfield, crewed by Paul Green. They were tied on points with Ian just having the edge by virtue of a better discard. The scene was set for a real shoot out on Friday, a bit of a David and Goliath, between Jeff the true 'Corinthian' amateur and Ian the semi-pro. Secretly, I think most people were rooting for Jeff, but sadly the shoot-out never occurred with bad weather curtailing all of Friday's racing. Ian took his second championships and we picked up the Little Ships Trophy for finishing fourth, the third time I'd now finished in this position. I was beginning to think the top three would always evade me.

About this time a fleet of J24s was establishing itself at the Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club in Bridlington. There were two reasons why Mike took a very keen interest in the development of this fleet. One being a new sailing challenge and the other being an opportunity to break into a new fleet with his sailmaking. He wanted to campaign a J24 alongside his Osprey during the following season and had agreed to go into joint ownership of a J24 with Paul Wright, (the original owner of *Psycho*). They spent much of the latter part of the season trying to locate a suitable second-hand boat. Mike asked if I'd be one of the crew and when he dangled the carrot of a share of the helming, I eagerly accepted.

It wasn't until the winter months that Mike found a suitable boat, which he duly took delivery of. After spending some time refitting and refurbishing, *Nitro* was launched in the spring of 1986, complete with a new suit of Leadersails. The rest of the crew consisted of another, very average, Osprey crew and a chap who had never sailed before. Needless to say, we didn't take the fleet by storm and made plenty of mistakes. This really was a different style of sailing, where teamwork was just as important as tactics or boatspeed. Gradually, we made progress from being 'tail end Charlies', into a comfortable mid-fleet position, but rarely troubled the leader board. More significantly for me though was the fact that it wasn't a very happy ship. It became apparent that the co-owners had very different ambitions. Mike was keen and competitive, whilst Paul was happy to just sail around. This, combined with the lack of sailing experience in some of the rest of the crew resulted in lots of petty bickering. For the first time in my life sailing wasn't very en-



John and Malcolm sailing **Psycho** *at Pwllheli 1989*

For the first time in my life sailing wasn't very enjoyable,

It was somewhat of a relief therefore when we were able to hitch up the Osprey again and head south to join 87 other boats at the 1986 Nationals in Mount's Bay. As usual *Hokey Cokey* was immaculately prepared, complete with suitably updated sail wardrobe. Not quite so well prepared were Mike and I who had hardly set foot in an Osprey all season. By our own high standards the week wasn't going as well as expected and by Thursday we were lying 8th overall, but still with the possibility of improving on Friday. Thursday evening was spent at a sherry party as guests of Lord and Lady St. Leven on St. Michael's Mount. When the time came for us to return, the tide was in and we had to take one of the ferryboats to get back. It was a beautiful summer evening, calm and sunny when the ferryboat man looked to the sky and said "I don't envy you lot tomorrow." How do they know that?

Friday dawned, windy, wet and grey, with a rough sea and a forecast to deteriorate further. A course was laid as the race officer tried to squeeze the last race in, and with some trepidation the fleet made its way to the starting area. Mike and I got there safely but decided discretion was the better part of valour and rather than risk damage or injury elected to return to the safety of the shore. By this time the starting sequence was underway and moments later so was the final race. Our decision however was fully vindicated when the race was abandoned shortly after the leaders reached the windward mark. No change therefore to our overall finishing position and for the first time, we set off on the long journey home a little bit disappointed with our performance.

Once home it was more J24 sailing, with only the Lymington open meeting to look forward to as far as the Osprey was concerned. By now Mike was putting together his plans for the following year's J24 season and I thought it only fair to tell him that I did not wish to be included in his crew for next year. Mike accepted my decision but also made it clear that if I wasn't sailing on the 'J' then I wouldn't be sailing in the Osprey either. This put a bit of a strain on our remaining Osprey plans, so effectively we parted company there and then. Mike did however know of someone who wanted to go to Lymington and didn't have a crew so suggested I contact John Lang.

John had been sailing with his eldest son Miles. Although Miles enjoyed his sailing, he had got to that stage of his teenage years where other distractions interfered with his sailing. This inevitably caused a bit of conflict between father and son and they chose, (amicably, I think) to stop sailing together. Instead, Miles went off playing rugby and after years spent training and in the gym he'd still make a magnificent Osprey crew.

John and I first sailed together in *Psycho* in the first race of the Lymington Open. We were second to the windward mark, second all the way round and even had the privilege of being covered up the final beat by the leader Ian Porter. It wasn't quite as good as that for the rest of the meeting, but I certainly felt I'd been able to haul John into a part of the fleet he'd not been used to, which was very satisfying.

On the long drive home we discussed our respective plans for 1987. We seemed to have similar ambitions, open meetings, Nationals, etc, etc, so agreed to mount a campaign together for the following season.

Sailing with John was to be a whole new experience. Certainly at first we had neither teamwork nor boatspeed and *Psycho* needed a bit of updating. Instead of being at the front of the fleet, we were to be found battling it out in the middle. Believe me it's much tougher there with confused water, dirty air and crowded mark roundings to contend with. We made mistakes, lots of them, but very early on agreed a 'no blame' culture. This means that when he drops the tiller I don't blame him, and when I misjudge an approaching right of way boat he doesn't blame me. We simply accept that these things happen and get on with it. We congratulate each other when we've done well and have a short inquest about what went wrong when we don't do so well. The important thing is we don't dwell on any of these when we get ashore and that's what keeps the partnership solid. Besides, there are far more important things to do when you get ashore, like drinking, and believe me John likes a drink or two!

We made a return to Tenby for the championships in 1987. Slightly lower turnout with 76 entries. Good week's sailing, decent weather and at last a full racing programme completed. We had a great time, we didn't win anything, but we did get our best result of the week with a 10th in the last race. Suddenly I was sailing for fun again, with no pressure to do well for either personal or commercial gain, and I enjoyed it.

It was around this time that John and I returned to Burnham to take part in the weekend open meeting that formed the start of Burnham Week. We enjoyed this event so much that we returned year after year for quite some time. The mixture of unusual courses, open water and river sailing, combined with strong tides and a whole range of wind strengths was very much to our liking. Generally we did very well in the racing and picked up a magnificent collection of glassware from the Burnham trophy counter. Of course it wasn't just the sailing, the social side was pretty good too. One year we bumped into Jonathan Clarke, (Ian Porter's original Osprey crew). He wasn't sailing in the Ospreys with us, so I presume he was crewing on one of the yachts. Anyway, he was dressed in black tie and wellies and looked a bit of a plonker. Some of the Osprey crowd spotted him and called him over. Proud to be recognised, he stuck his chest out and marched over. With a pint in each hand five of them surrounded him and poured them over his head. He was soaked, but I'm sure he saw the funny side. We certainly did.

Psycho was to undergo a slow and gradual upgrade to her main systems. Her layout was much the same as when she'd



John and Malcolm Approaching the Windward Mark

ing was required. New sails were bought and although John has always been the owner of *Psycho*, I've generally contributed 50% to any sail replacement programme. Replacing sails is a significant cost and this policy always meant that we had a decent engine.

So, fully prepared, off we went to Paignton for the 1988 championships. A new venue, and 68 entries. Early signs looked promising, with a magnificent lawned area, called The Green on which to store the boats. From a personal point of view this was about the only good thing about the venue, as this turned into one of my most disappointing championships.

I guess the week didn't get off to a good start when we returned to our digs on Saturday night, to find the natives kicking lumps out of one another on our forecourt.

On Sunday we found the clubhouse which was some way from the dinghy park, tucked away in the harbour, and with a magnificent view, of well, not much really. Hence, no one used it very much and therefore there seemed no focal point for the week. Still the sailing might make up for that. If only.

Launching from The Green was down a slipway on to a very soft, sandy beach. Generally the holidaymakers were fully installed before we arrived and were hell bent on staying there, as 68 Ospreys tried to outmanoeuvre them. By the end of the week tempers were definitely getting frayed in both camps.

The week was dogged with light winds and courses that were generally set too close inshore. One day we waited until late afternoon before starting, only for the wind to die completely at the leeward mark leaving most of the fleet becalmed. A leading bunch of about 6/8 boats had managed to round successfully and stayed in wind all the way up the second beat. In no time at all they were running back under spinnaker towards us. But did they get becalmed? No, of course not. They carried wind all the way round the mark, and off they went on their second triangle, leaving the rest of the fleet still becalmed, and a whole round behind. And guess what, the result stood!

The animosity between the sailors and those on shore finally came to a head on Thursday afternoon, with an incident involving a local shopkeeper. I can't go into too much detail here, other than to say it involved a rather unusual method of re-arranging one of the car parking areas.

I guess there will be those who enjoyed the week, especially whoever won. I can't even remember who that was, or where we finished, such was my own disappointment in the event.

The Osprey committee were continuing to look for new Championship venues and John spoke with great enthusiasm about a place he had sailed at previously, Pwllheli. He was asked to establish the possibility of them hosting our 1989 Championships. They were keen and in no time at all a rather disappointing entry of 56 Ospreys assembled in North Wales. I say disappointing, because this was confirmation of a trend which unfortunately continues today. The trend being, that whenever the event moves away from the south coast, entries will fall.

Pwllheli is a small town built around a harbour and also has several decent beaches. In 1989 they had a small clubhouse. One side overlooked the harbour, the other the beach and the open sea. Launching was down a slipway into the harbour with a short sail to the racing area. To overcome the lack of clubhouse accommodation a large boat shed was commandeered for the week. This was decked out in flags and bunting and accommodated a bar, galley and a large seating/dancing area and quickly became the social centre for the week. With an adjoining caravan site providing on-the-spot accommodation, very quickly this was looking like an excellent venue.

An excellent week's sailing, with a full racing programme completed in a real variety of conditions. John and I had a fantastic time. My ambitions when I joined John were simply to elevate him from a position in the lower half of the fleet, to, well, who knows? This was the first year we felt we'd really progressed in that direction, with an overall result somewhere in the 20s. The question was, would we be able to keep the improvement going again next year, when the Championships returned to South Wales, and back to Tenby?
To be continued.

PS. We've been back to Pwllheli for our Championships several times since 1989. When we were there last, in 1998, there was a new marina, complete with magnificent clubhouse, changing facilities, car parking and a secure dinghy park. Interested? Well don't forget we're back there again for our 2005 Championships!

National Championships, Pwllheli, 23 - 29 July 2005

PLANNING IS NOW well advanced for this event, with a wide series of options available to us. The Committee will finalise in mid-January. Notice of Race and entry forms, will be issued with the Newssheet in mid-February prior to the dinghy show in early March.

Main Points:-

~ Accommodation details will be with you in the next few weeks.

~ Pwllheli Sailing Club will allow boats to arrive through the previous week and be fenced in.

~ The same applies for the week following our event, but the boats must be away before Friday 5th August at 5 pm, because of imminent plague of Optimists and associated tribe.

~ Lay Day Wednesday.

~ 2 Points races Monday.

~ Dinner / Prizegiving at the George Hotel, Cricieth, on Friday with buses from Club/Campsite.

~ Tractor will be provided for pulling boats off the beach. Camping 3 miles along the beach, but none at the Club by order of the Council.

~ No parking costs or problems around the Club.

~ There is a large range of visitor attractions in the area, all worth seeing.

Food For Thought

In its 'Awards 2004' Britain's top cycling magazine, *Cycling Plus*, gave its bronze award in the food category to '**Squeezy Energy Gel**' (79p per sachet Tel 02392 594696) a 100% carbohydrate fix. The silver went to SIS's '**Go Electrolyte**' drink. But the gold award went to what their sports scientists considered the best single food for any extended sporting activity - the humble **banana.**

And if you find that your on-board yellow-jacketed snack tends to look like mushy baby food by the time you get round to eating it, buy a ***Banana Guard*** from Banana2go. A tough, simple and slightly phallic looking banana-shaped case to put your banana in, it is hinged along its length and is made from ABS plastic. It has airholes and a larger hole at one end to thread a string through so you can hang it under your foredeck. It is available in a range of colours and costs just £3.97 + £1.20 post. What a bargain.

Contact: www.banana2go.co.uk

WHAT'S ON & WHERE

Here they are, all the Opens, Championships and Special Events sorted out for you. There are events in all areas of the country so there's no excuse for anybody not to go to at least one.

■ Championships ▒ Special Events □ Open Meetings

Dinghy Show, Alexander Palace **5th & 6th March**	*The boat show purely for the dinghy sailor - that means you. It's easy to get to and the rail networks usually do some good deals on prices. Check out different boat layouts, buy a new wetsuit, meet some old friends and you're just about ready for the new season.*
Blithfield, **Welsh and Midlands Championships,** **23rd & 24th April**	*Blithfield is the only remaining club in the Midlands with an Osprey fleet. They put on a fantastic event - their bar and their ladies' food are legendary. If you've never been before give them a try this year.* **Contact: Ian McDonald 01889 505774**
Hornsea Open **7th & 8th May**	*A small seaside town, but they sail on a natural glacial lake just half a mile from the sea. Everyone goes off for an Italian meal on Saturday evening. A nice, friendly atmosphere.* **Contact: Dave Metcalfe 01964 535829**
Coniston Open, Cumbria **28th - 30th May**	*A three-day holiday event much loved by the sailors who attend regularly. The lake is very big and the scenery is stunning. Good camping facilities and great local pubs.* **Contact: Willy Crichton 01772 499750**
Poole, Southern Championships **11th & 12th June**	*Poole has the largest Osprey fleet in the country, and many of the class's top sailors too. If you want to try your boatspeed out against the best, this is the meeting to go to.* **Contact: Peter Frith 01202 694845**
Panmorra Cup, Penzance **18th & 19th June**	*Re-live your Nationals exploits on the English Riviera. A fantastic sailing experience among some superb sailors and lovely people.* **Contact: Des Menear 01736 756154**
Lord Birkett Trophy, Ullswater, Cumbria **2nd & 3rd July**	*The Northern sailors love this one - they must do, 200 boats turn up every year. A poor Osprey showing this year, let's make it better for next year.* **Contact: Ullswater Yacht Club www.uyc.org.uk**
National Championships, Pwllheli, N. Wales **23rd - 29th July**	*This is the big one, the one everybody wants to win, but so few manage it. Most of us aren't there to win it, just to be in it. Join all the really keen sailors in the class and jockey for position.* **Contact: Maureen Carroll 01394 388540**
Kielder Water, Northumberland. **Scottish and Northern Championships** **10th & 11th September**	*You're always sure of a warm welcome at this most northerly of our events. It's good humoured all weekend, the scenery's stunning, the sailing water huge. Good meals in the clubhouse and at the Black-cock Inn. Camping onsite.* **Contact: Mike Scott 01835 870238**
Morecambe & Heysham Visitor Trophy **Morecambe YC** **17th & 18th September**	*This is an event the Northern Osprey sailors are trying to get going. Known as 'Britain's Bonniest Bay', the views across to the Lakes are wonderful. Very tidal, very interesting. Plenty of local Accommodation.* **Contact: Maureen Carroll 01394 388540**
Netley Open **24th & 25th September**	*This has become one of the Class's most popular venues over the last few years. Always well attended, and always great sailing for everyone.* **Contact: Bob Thomas 02380 454187**
Symmetric Grand Prix, Rutland Water **8th & 9th October**	*If you haven't tried this very successful event it's about time you did. Now into its third year. A dip in numbers this year, mainly down to poor Osprey attendance.* **Contact: Ian Madely 0114 236 6873**
Inland Championships, Rutland Water **23rd & 24th October**	*This is rightly a very popular event on the calendar. Good Olympic courses shared with three other classes. Camping onsite.* **Contact: Maureen carroll 01394 388540**

To qualify for the Wilkinson Sword a boat must count results from four Osprey Open Meetings (at least one of which must be outside its own geographical area) plus one Special Event.

A Special Event is defined as 'any handicap regatta with four or more Ospreys competing'. This can be a multi-race event such as Poole Week or the Symmetric Grand Prix OR a one-race event such as the Hoo Freezer.

Geographical areas are defined as:-

North – north of a line between the Wash and Birkenhead

Midlands – south of line between the Wash and Birkenhead but north of a line from the Thames to the Severn Estuary

South – south of a line between the Thames and the Severn Estuary.

The crew of a competing boat shall comprise EITHER the same helm OR the same crew in all of the races to count. In effect this means that the helm can have more than one crew or vice-versa.

There will be a special prize for the leading Mk 2 or 2A in the overall results.


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