

COACHED START RACING SESSIONS ON SATURDAYS

If you've never raced before or just done a bit, these sessions are for you, and they're free of charge.

See pages 2 and 8 for details

Draycote Unshackled

www.draycotewater.co.uk

www.onboardsurfsails.co.uk

May 2011

DRAYCOTE DASH OFF TO A GOOD START

More than 90 boats took part in the inaugural Draycote Dash last November. Nearly half the turnout were visitors to the club, showing there is no shortage of appetite for sailing in cold weather with low wind strengths and the threat of fog.



Despite this, most of the week-end's ambitious programme of racing was completed. Fog forced a reduction on the first day's from six to four races, and the lack of wind forced a delayed start on the Sunday.



Photo: Chris Gandy

Daniel Lewis in his RS Tera held the lead in the Pursuit Race for more than an hour, eventually finishing mid-fleet.

Nevertheless there was competitive racing and pressure on

the leading boat, Simon Childs in a Phantom, to hold his nerve in the Pursuit Race, with a clutch of boats vying for second.

It wasn't just about the leaders, however and, with the generosity of sponsors Hambleside Danelaw Ltd, OnBoard Surf & Sail, and Lanes Restaurant, there was a sprinkling of prizes all the way down the fleet.

More photos on p. 10 (web only). A full race report can be found on the Yachts and Yachting website <http://www.yachtsandyachting.com/news/?article=154864>.

INTER-FLEET CHAMPIONSHIPS: 10th July



Photo: Malcolm Lewin

The Solo Fleet were surprise winners in last summer's Inter-Fleet Championships. Help to knock them off their perch by taking part in this year's event. Details to be announced shortly.

Inside this edition ...

News from the fleets: Updates from the Fireballs, Flying Fifteens, Fast Menagerie, Lasers, Solos, Laser 2000s, Youth training in 29ers, plus Saturday afternoon racing for beginners.

A Note from the Commodore ...

Firstly I will start with some significant good news: in March your Committee voted to accept the terms agreed with Severn Trent Water for a new 15-year lease. New members may be unaware that this and previous Committees have been working for over 10 years trying to agree terms.

My personal comment is that we will have the best result the Club could reasonably hope for. The terms have now been passed to our lawyers to draw up into a lease for signature.

Once that process is secure I'll organise a presentation to Members so you can see the detail. This will probably be in May.

Our demised area will change but importantly we retain the use of the keel boat slipway and can extend our boat parking / windsurf launching into the westerly Open Meeting area. Severn Trent still have no commitment to act on their 2010 planning application for the site so it remains to be seen if site car parking will change. Their Visitors Centre remains shut for the foreseeable future. The fishing franchise may or may not be renewed.

My thanks to my fellow lease Committee members: Phil Hunt, Harry Sayers, Andrew Weeden, Mark Fitton and all their predecessors who have given so much of their time on behalf of the Club. Our training school for both dinghy sailing, windsurfing and powerboat is now under the management of OnBoard Surf and Sail.

A catering contract has been agreed with Dave Mason for the running of the wet bar and lounge kitchen. Please support our suppliers and help them to provide the best service they can to Members.

Finally, a word about money. I won't need to remind you that tax and costs are rising whilst disposable incomes are falling. Our overall financial position is going to remain tight. The best antidote is for you to promote sailing and promote Membership by talking to your work colleagues, your friends, family about the great sport we enjoy and encouraging them to see for themselves what sailing is all about.

Good sailing for the new season.

– **Andrew Blee** Commodore

SATURDAY AFTERNOON RACING FOR STARTERS

And now for something completely different – well, slightly different maybe ...

Learn the skills and joys of racing in a friendly, non-threatening environment.

This series of coached short-course Saturday afternoon sessions is open to all, but particularly aimed at those who haven't yet tried it or had the confidence to have a go.

If you have tried the club racing but found it a bit daunting, here's a way to ease yourself back into it by building your confidence in a more relaxed setting.

Ideal for families, juniors and adults who would like to improve their sailing/racing skills under the guidance of a coach and race officer and it's FREE OF CHARGE thanks to a grant from Rugby Borough Council.

There will be a briefing on the patio at 1.30pm with the coach

and race officer beforehand to explain the format and answer any questions you may have – you should aim to be rigged and ready to sail by this time so that you can launch immediately after the briefing is over.

Then you will spend about two hours on the water taking part in a number of back-to-back races each lasting about 15 minutes.

This is a fun, low stress way of getting into racing and developing your skills.

Training boats (Wayfarers, Xenons, Lasers) may be available for use; call Max to check availability.

Come along and have a go on the 1st and 3rd Saturday afternoons of May, June, July, September and October – see advert for more details or call Max on 01788 814418.



NEW BOSUN

We would like to extend a warm welcome to **Phil Bett** who is joining us as Bosun to replace Peter White.

Phil now lives locally after spending 10 years on Guernsey where he did a lot of yacht sailing and power boating. He was also an RYA dinghy instructor for the Guernsey Sailing Trust, and a member the Guernsey Yacht Club and the Royal Channel Yacht Club, where, he says, "life was usually spent either side of the bar" [does he mean the sill at the marina entrance?-Ed].

Please give him a warm welcome when you see him around the club.



A Flying Fifteen as you have never seen one before! Photo: David Hope

Flying Fifteen Fleet

TIME TO INCREASE RACE TURNOUT

I have always liked the old Army motto "never volunteer", and until now it has always stood me in good stead! Unfortunately I couldn't attend the AGM where Mike Davy, having been three years in the post stood down as Fleet Captain. His final year was dogged by poor health and he is owed a vote of thanks for his determination.

Someone (who remains nameless!) suggested that I had expressed an interest in standing so I was voted in (goes to show it

years due to ice, snow and gales and has resulted in the number of races to qualify being adjusted as a result. Over the series, several stalwarts regularly braved the conditions including the occasion when the two Simons entertained the audience in the clubhouse with a full 360 barrel roll and then sailed upside down to give the rest of us a chance. The pictures are on the FF section of the forum in all their glory (sample above).

As at the time of press Big Blue

handicap boats. Representations have been made to the Vice Commodore Sail on the basis that keel boats and dinghies, with their different sailing characteristics, don't mix well on the start line. He agreed to review the situation in a few weeks time. However, with only two Freds out on 30 March and three on 6 April, a better turnout will be needed to bring about any change.

The Spring Series started on 2 April with seven boats out in the morning and five in the afternoon in fantastic conditions. It's time to get the covers off, chase the spiders out, join in the fun and get the numbers sailing up to the kind of turnouts we have enjoyed in past years. Jeremy Davy is campaigning his boat in Hayling Island for the duration to prepare for the Worlds in July so although we will not see him this season we already have another team on the water, Glynn Williams and Phil Arnold, ex RS200.

Rumour has it that a number of other dinghy sailors are considering moving to the F/Fs in search of fleet racing instead of handicap racing so let's put more boats on the water to encourage this new blood.

On which topic, should anyone want a go in a Fred I am happy to organise trial sails etc. Contact me on 07736 227422 or draycoteff@gmail.com. Enjoy the Summer
-- Rodger Webb



pays to attend the AGM). With the exception of the Fleet Captain's position, the committee remains unchanged and a vote of thanks was passed for their staying power. The meeting agreed the Fleet Championship to be held on the two days, 14 and 15 May. As well as two days of racing there will be "Old Ale and Sandwiches too" (a pint for the first person to name the rhyme and the author) available on the slip.

The Winter Series has been the most disrupted for a number of

hasn't coughed up the results for the Winter series but I suspect that the top three places in the morning race will feature the two Simons, Pete Slater and Geoff and Keith. The same probably applies for the afternoon. Full results will be posted on the notice board.

The Wednesday Evening Series started on March 30th and the F/Fs, due to a low turnout last year and the considerable resurgence of the Laser fleet, have lost their exclusive start. We now share start 2 with the RS300s and other slow

Fireball Fleet

COMPETITIVE BUT NOT TOO SERIOUS



So here we are again, and, after the worst winter for about 20 years, the Fireball fleet has now emerged from enforced hibernation and is once more wagging its bushy tail and doing what it does best, i.e. racing around the pond in a haphazard and none too serious manner like a demented red setter.

And while the harsh winter and economic climate have taken their toll on the number of boats in the boatpark, it's notable that everyone who sailed regularly in 2010 is back again for some more fun this year.

In fact we have picked up two new boats over the winter and a full complement of people to go with them. A big welcome then to Pete and David in 15016, and Paul and Julia in 14876. I'm sure we'll all do our best to help them all to get the best out of their boats, although Pete, aided by Serena, is already going far too fast for my liking and probably needs some help to slow him down a bit.

Although the winter was absolutely and unremittingly rubbish for sailing, we have managed a few small successes. Firstly the fleet Christmas meal and prize-giving evening, which



Fleet racing at its best. Photo: David Hope

turned out to be a very enjoyable evening in spite of being a bit of a trial to organise. Thanks to Helen and Paul for doing the necessary to make that happen. And then, in the first flush of the windless spring season, we tried a day of windless windward-leeward racing. I think we all learned something from this, if only that W/L courses are a bit rubbish when there's no wind.

At the fleet AGM, Richard Botting kindly agreed to serve another year as fleet captain. Richard doesn't own a Fireball but is an enthusiastic 'floating crew' for the Fireball fleet. Indeed, he can frequently be seen enthusiastically floating near an upturned Fireball.

Speaking as one who has been a fleet captain and supported a lot of others, I can tell you that fleet captains do a lot of work and don't get nearly enough thanks for it.

Feel free to change that arrangement wherever and whenever possible.

So back to the future then, and for your delight this year we have:

Every Sunday until October –

Race 1 – The Hancock's Early Bird trophy series

Race 2 – The Winship Cup trophy series

Race 3 – The Summer 72 trophy series

Every Wednesday evening –

The Silver Salver trophy series

8 and 22 May –

The Firebowl personal handicap event, the usual not too serious mini-series with beach starts.

17 and 18 September –

The DWSC Fireball open meeting

24 September –

Fleet social evening

2 and 16 October –

The Marriott Bucket personal handicap event

October-ish (tba) –

The Fleet Championships and the start of the Winter race series.

You can find more details about all of this stuff and the race results at our website

www.draycotewater.co.uk/fleets/fireball

It is, of course, possible that you don't have a Fireball, and are even now asking yourself how you can correct this gaping void in your lifestyle. Just come along and say hello on any Sunday; we'd be very pleased to help you.

– Mike Deane FB 14778

Peter & Mike battle it out with Pete & JR. Photo: David Hope



Miracle Fleet

EVENTS FOR SAILORS OF ALL STANDARDS



Summer is on its way, the weather is looking good and it's time to get yourself out on the water. The fleet is springing into action following its winter slumber and events are coming up that will allow you to kick start your sailing for 2011.

We have had the first open meeting and two Draycote boats attended and managed a win and a fifth place which was pleasing to see. I am sure we will be well represented at other events throughout the season. (see the Association Website for details – www.miracledinghy.org)

The first Draycote event of the year was the Annual Fleet Prize Giving in February and was well attended. We had an excellent meal and an enjoyable evening was had by all. For those that did not make it you missed a good night and I hope you are able to attend some of the other events throughout the season.

Next we have the Fleet Tune Up Day on Saturday 7 May. This gives you the chance to get some advice on setting up your boat, look at how other boats are set up for ideas and take advantage of some of the front of fleet sailors' thoughts on how to tune your and sail your boat in all conditions. (Start 2pm at the Miracle Fleet Slip.)

Other Draycote Miracle events through the season:

18 June – Tom Pearson beginners races.

26 July – Interfleet Championships

25 September – Miracle Pursuit, Single handed and Crews Race

28 Aug, 4 and 11 September – Fleet Championships (9 races, 5 to Count)



Miracles enjoy a slow start in the Draycote Open meeting.
Photo: Malcolm Lewin

Miracle Nationals

Don't forget the Miracle Nationals are to be held at Mayflower Sailing Club in Plymouth this year from 14 to 19 August. This should be a great event and can we again win the best-represented fleet for the fourth year running? Last year there were 10 boats, more this year would be fantastic. Whatever level you sail at, you will have people to race against and I guarantee you will enjoy a family friendly fun week. Call John Tippett or me for details

Get these dates in your diary and do all you can to attend. Please contact me for further information or if you have any questions. I welcome feedback and would really love to see 2011 as the season when we have the best turn out regularly on the water.

– **Ally Jones** Fleet Captain (Miracle 3847)
07976 067401

allyjones@tiscali.co.uk

Laser 2000 Fleet

It is a very brief report for this issue with little sailing over the winter months to report on due to the inclement weather conditions.

The current warm and sunny spring weather will hopefully entice more boats out onto the water to enjoy some good sailing over the coming summer months.

Before the bad weather set in, three visiting Laser 2000s joined us in the Draycote Dash and all thoroughly enjoyed the event. One of the visitors wrote a glowing report for our Class magazine. The

event and format was very well received and he is encouraging others to come to the event in 2011.

Well done and thank you to all the organizers for this new initiative.

The fleet has said goodbye to Tony Chronell who has been a member for several years but the good news is that he has sold his boat to Graham Collet.

We hope Graham will make good use of the boat and join us and others in club racing. The

Class's calendar is once again packed with events with a great variety of venues at which to enjoy close racing and the customary camaraderie amongst the fleet.

As ever, if anyone has any queries about racing at the club, the class in general, or would like help with setting up their boat then please get in touch.

– **Tim & Elizabeth Fillmore**
L2000 21724

Tel 01789 740824 or email
fillmores@btopenworld.com

Fast Handicap Fleet

TURNING UP CREATES A WINNING CHANCE

First came the snow followed by ice then fog. None of which are conducive for sailing. So by the time, we could get out on the lake some regulars were already occupied skiing, mountain biking or just finding that after a few weeks break they were a bit rusty. On the plus side it again goes to show that you don't have to be the club's most experienced sailor to win the series.

Winter Morning Race Series

1st Stuart McBeath
2nd Colin Newman
3rd Jamie Ruddiman

Winter Afternoon Race Series

1st Jamie Ruddiman
2nd Colin Newman
3rd Stuart McBeath

The high point for the Winter Handicap Race was the 50-knot wind that definitely blew the cobwebs away and I was glad to be in a Flying Fifteen (and not the upside down one).

Also deserving a mention is the Laser fleet which boosted our numbers during the winter months and who aren't included in the results for the fast handicap, however without them racing would be duller – Ian Clarke in 1st place in the combined results.

All boats are eligible for results in handicap races, but if they use differing rig configurations with different published PYs they will be scored as separate entries in the Series. Where boats can change rig with no change in PY they will be required to sail in line with their current class rules. The sign-on sheets include a column to write your rig configuration or PY in; please do this as it makes sorting results easier.

Anyone doing OD will still be awarded average points for the day they are on OD

Wednesday Evenings

A revised format that has proved to be controversial in planning, and as I write, this has only had a couple of trials so we shall see how that develops. This year it is average laps - this benefits our fleet most and means that no matter what your PY you will get a sensible length of race and more time to socialise afterwards.

Already we are seeing a bigger than usual turnout and a good variety of boats and skills. Wednesdays are the perfect place to come and ask for help, tips or advice (on sailing!!) as everyone has more time and the approach to racing is a lot more relaxed

22 June: Wednesday Evening Racing BBQ

Instead of trying to arrange an Annual Prize giving in the middle of Winter, this year we are going to go for the middle of Summer.

Please invite friends/family. There is no plan to charge but we will have a raffle – bring your own food/charcoal.

I will remind you all nearer the time, to get an idea of numbers, but it is definitely on a more informal basis and that fits with the fast handicap better. All fleets are welcome to join us.

Fleet Finances

We have a little money in the pot but I would welcome ideas for how to raise a bit of extra cash for the fleet and improve the social side at the same time. Please remember that if you are holding an open meeting, if possible try to raise something for the pot. Even if you just add £1 to the entry fee.

– **Stuart McBeath** Fleet Captain



A collection of boats line up for the start during the winter series. Photo: David Hope

Solo Fleet

GOING SOLO IS THE ONLY WAY TO GO!

The Solo fleet has been active over the winter season, with the peak being 14 boats out one Sunday in January – which must be a fleet record for the depths of winter! There was some great racing throughout the winter, with Nigel Davies, Robin Warren and Jeremy Atkins battling it out for the chocolates.

The summer season has started with some good turnouts and competitive racing. Perhaps the biggest joy was when Mike Furner achieved his first victory in a Solo, beating the fleet captain at the same time, which pleased many in the fleet (including the fleet captain!).

The transfer market has been quite active, and we were sad that fleet stalwarts and great sailors, David Eales, Nigel Pybus and Greg Irish put in transfer requests. But we have invested in new signings and are pleased to welcome Dan Fisher from the Miracle fleet, Chris from the Flying Fifteens and Phil Arnold who has been through most of the fleets but has finally reached the right 'one'. We have also imported my old friend (in every sense!) Tim Davison, sailing author and publisher, who was pushing the front of the fleet in his first outing. Welcome to you all!

DAY SKIPPERS

Congratulations to the following on successfully completing their RYA Day Skipper theory at Draycote Water Sailing Club. The course was run over the winter on Thursday evenings.

Tracey Quine
Alan Sweet
Tim Rushent
Nicholas Funnell
Katherine Jackson
Jim Garner
Sergio Pagliarini
Maria Muntz-Torres



Photo: David Hope

It was good to see long-term fleet members, Simon Wickes and Barry Green, up at the Club recently – sadly without their

specially commissioned from a young local artist (see photo).

Aside from the main Sunday racing, the Solo fleet is still the



sailing kit – but hopefully we will see them on the water soon.

The prize-giving dinner, held jointly with the Miracles, was a great event where we honoured our podium placed sailors. Nigel Davies was presented with both the 2009/10 Winter Series Cup and the capsizer trophy – one recent Sunday he managed to capsizer three times, but still win both races, proving that he is not only the fastest Solo sailor at Draycote, but also the fastest capsizer!

As the front of the fleet gets ever more competitive, we have introduced a plate series for those who have not won a race in the year. For the 2009/10 season, Hamish Brown and Sue McCrea were presented with the plates,

only one that provides mid-week racing (organised by Lance Evans) for those that I describe as the "unemployables" – but I note that they include a number in full time employment (if only their employers knew!) and those running their own businesses (if only their employees knew!).

Sadly my clients do not allow me such pleasures, but I know that Nigel Davies attributes some of his impressive increase in speed to practising on Wednesdays.

If anyone in the Club is looking to sail with (or against) a great bunch, at the weekends or during the week, it is clear that the only way to go is "Solo"!!

– **Jeremy Atkins** Fleet Captain

Laser Fleet

FLEET NUMBERS CONTINUE TO INCREASE

It seems only a short time since I joined the club four years ago. However since that time the laser fleet has been rejuvenated from almost a ghost park to a busy boat park with a regular number of sailors.

The vast majority of the fleet are new members to the club and have either, like me, started sailing after a number of years in the wilderness, or have started sailing for the first time as a result of attending one of the club's excellent training courses, or have moved to the area and quite rightly chosen Draycote as their new sailing club.

Whatever the reason, they have selected the laser as their boat of choice because it's a great way to enjoy sailing that is relatively

maintenance-free and inexpensive.

So what about the sailing? Well, last year's sailing was as close as ever with the fleet continuing to grow throughout the Wednesday season and even the winter. Regulars Ian Clarke and Rob Still (without gloves!!) put us all to shame sailing throughout the cold, with myself and others sailing when the wind was up and the lake clear of ice!!! However, with the increasing numbers Wednesdays have been strong, so much so that we now have our own start once more on Wednesday evenings. This decision was backed up with a turnout of up to 12 lasers sailing in week one of the series, with many boats unable to make the early start. This bodes well for future weeks and a close series.

The social side of the fleet has continued to blossom with the Wednesday evening BBQ at the beginning and end of summer, irrespective of any wind and rain, now becoming a regular fixture. In addition to this, we held the annual social at the fleet captain's house which involved everyone bringing along an allocated course and enjoying a horse-racing night and free-flowing drinks. I am happy to report that the results of horse racing though were far less close than the racing on the water but was nevertheless just as enjoyable, with Chris Dickinson taking first prize. I for one hope the fleet continues to be a friendly and enjoyable one for everyone to join.

– William Whittaker Fleet Captain

BRANFIBRE

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Les Bran of Branfibre has been in the Glass Fibre Repair Industry for over 17 years, 10 of which were spent running the Laser Centre Bodyshop

In 2008 Branfibre were pleased to be joint sponsors of the Inter-Fleet Championships at Draycote Water

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More details from Max at Onboard



Supported by Rugby Borough Council

Youth and Junior Fleet

FOCUSED TRAINING FOR 29ers

Draycote Water has played a central role in the 29er Open Training winter programme, hosting a total of five weekend training events. Here is what two visiting sailors had to say.

26-27 February:

This was an exciting event for 18 boats, with at least five boats on their first Open training weekend. With decent winds throughout, it was perfect to show what a 29er really can do. The boats were divided into groups, where the coaches Phil Walker, Rob Partridge and Will Crocker started with high pressure boat handling, which in 15 knots of wind made everyone concentrate. In the



Debriefing on the patio during the 29er training weekend.

everyone on their toes, and a few in the water!

Saturday evening with a group

Draycote SC was great fun. We had 20 boats and 3 coaches led by Phil Walker. We decided for Saturday we would stay in one big group. We wanted to get on the water as soon as possible as it would be the last weekend before the Youth Nationals.

We focused mainly on starting and we got to practise this in pressured situations and try out different methods. In the evening we had a good debrief followed by a group meal and watching rugby on the big screen in the club house.

Sunday had a good start with a lovely sailing breeze. We got out as soon as we could and did tuning and gybing runs.

In the afternoon we set out and did four races using all the skills we had learnt in all the Open training sessions. This was great fun and gave us healthy competition. We finished the weekend with a debrief going over all the areas covered in the Winter Open training.

Many thanks to Draycote and all the coaches for teaching and supporting us.

All attention is now on the Youth Championships, with a total of six Draycote boats represented in a record-breaking fleet of 42 boats.



afternoon when the wind built to 20 to 25 knots, racing kept

meal at Draycote SC, whilst watching the England rugby team beat France is always good fun!

Sunday started with 18 knots of wind. Phil decided to have more high pressure racing practice, making it difficult for the boats at the front, however good experience. All of the groups came together for a few full-on races to end a brilliant weekend.

19-20 March:

The last training weekend at





A selection of photos of the Draycote Dash 20-21 November 2010

Photos: Malcolm Lewin



YOUR COMMITTEE

- Commodore
Andrew Blee
- Vice Commodore
Dave Bevan
- Rear Commodore Sail
Tom Vian
- Rear Commodore House
Caroline Ramsey
- Treasurer
Will Withers
- President
Harry Sayers

Committee Members:

- Phil Arnold
- Chris Gandy
- Richard Botting
- Phillip Hunt
- Mike Deane
- Gill Pearson
- Mark Fitton
- John Rohde
- Caroline Froggatt
- Andrew Weeden