

31 1/2

Issue 106

SUMMER 2013

RMA

Champion Club

Wilsonian
Sailing Club
Magazine

Calendar

Date	Event	Notes	Tide	
Sun 30 th June	Medway Marathon	Medway Yacht Club	12:22	Low
Sat 6 th July	Cruise to Aylesford		12:30	5.7
Sat 6 th July	Medway River Festival			
Sat 13 th July	Medway Dinghy Regatta	First warning signal 10:55	16:45	5.8
Sun 14 th July	Medway Dinghy Regatta	First warning signal 09:55	17:24	5.7
Sun 28 th July	Start of Late Summer Points		11:23	low
Sun 11 th August	Commodore's 3	First warning signal 13:25	16:23	5.9
Sun 25 th August	Commodore's 4	First warning signal 13:25	16:22	6.2
Wed 28 th August	Last Wednesday Evening Race	First warning signal 18:25	18:09	5.4
Sun 8 th Sept	Wilsonian Grand Prix (Pursuit race am from 10:30am)	First warning signal 13:25	15:27	6.0
Sun 22 nd Sept	Leigh Trophy (Pursuit race am from 10:30am)	First warning signal 13:25	15:15	6.2
Sun 29 th Sept	Start of Autumn Points		14:24	low
Sun 6 th Oct	Commodore's 5	First warning signal 13:25	14:26	6.1
Sun 27 th Oct	Laying up Cup	First warning signal 12:55	11:57	low
Sun 3 rd Nov	Start of Frostbite series		12:18	6.1



Editorial

Welcome to the summer edition of 31 ½

The past month has been a busy month with the big races of the year all kicking off at the club and on the circuit with many members getting in plenty of practice in time for our own Medway Regatta on the 13th and 14th July. Whilst at the time of publication some members have chosen warmer climates to carry out their practice at Minorca!

This edition gives more detail on the Regatta and how to help out, the usual report and a write up on the successful open day we held earlier this year.

As ever I am always grateful for new articles, ideas and comments on the magazine. It would be great to get some news from the skimmers and junior sailors at the club and a bigger representation from the slow fleet and cruising members.

As I finish this watching the MYC Yachts struggle back from a very windless Wednesday evening race, it just remains for me to hope for good winds for the Marathon and Regatta and wish for a good summer sailing season for all.

Amy

If you would like to contribute to the next copy of the club magazine, whether a good story, some club history or you would like to advertise a business, please email editor@wilsoniansc.org.uk

Copy to: Flat 33 South Shore, Ocean Drive, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 1FY
Telephone: 01634 853337
E-mail: editor@wilsoniansc.org.uk

WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB Hoo, Kent 01634 250318

www.wilsoniansc.org.uk

COMMODORE	Christine Godber	01322 337703	christinegodber@aol.com
SECRETARY	Martin Smith	01634 319432	martinj_smithz@yahoo.co.uk
SAILING -SEC.	Matthew Love	01474 874754	mathewguylove@yahoo.co.uk

Front page: Wilsonian Sailing Club is made an RYA Champion Club



Can I remind members if bring they visitors i.e. friends or partners to the club, please could they be signed in the Visitors Book with name and address this is allowed six times.
---Club Rule 25

Can I also remind club members that CARS are only permitted down the track to deliver and remove dinghies, for the disabled, or on official business with the CDO's permission.

Thanks!

Christine

From the Commodore

May was a particularly sad time for me as I had a very sudden bereavement of a close member of my family.

So I was really heartened and cheered to find the Open Day on the 18th May this year was a great success. Thanks to Jason Ramsden and his team who put an enormous amount of effort to keep it running smoothly and keep the children entertained with Pirate Toms Treasure Challenge which depicted the club as a friendly family club.

Saturday Skimmers set the scene early in the morning creating a buzz and the Scouts with the colourful Toppers added interest to the club and dinghy park. Just under 100 visitors came through the club some even arriving before 11am, the official start time, and were encouraged not only to sail, but to learn to rig a boat and help in the ribs. 15 dinghies and many members helped take keen enthusiasts out onto the water.

A barbeque lunch was provided by the house committee and visitors still wanted to go out on the water after that. We have had lots of feedback from visitors and members and interest to join the club so hopefully lots of new members adults and juniors.

To follow on from the Open Day and keep up momentum Peter Horner arranged an Adult Beginners Level 1 and 2 Course on the 31st May and each Saturday in June and two Friday evening for those people very keen this finishes on Saturday 22nd.

The Adult Improvers /Social Sailing sessions start very soon on the 29th June extending to 20th October so if anyone is interested please contact Jo Wicken. If there are any club members that can help with this to take people out in their own boat to helm or crew to get some experience this would be appreciated as we may be short of boats.

We have been trying to encourage local schools to participate in 'Taster Days' which is an RYA 'On Board ' initiative with Sam Rowe our On Board coordinator and RYA Sailing Development Officer talking to the children in school assembly.

Saturday Skimmers goes from strength to strength with 20+ participants every week thanks to all the volunteer instructors who work tirelessly week after week and give up pretty much

From the Commodore continued...

...all their Saturdays

Having submitted the Volvo Champion Club reapplication and am pleased to announce that we have regained the status now known as RYA Champion Club. Volvo Car UK have been the title sponsor for 15yrs and recently been working with the RYA to reposition their considerable support of sailing to add mutual value.

This RYA Champion Club Status is a promotion by the RYA as an ideal venue to take young sailors to get them started and develop their sailing skills which mean we continually introducing sailing to young people and encourage them to progress via race training in a safe and fun environment.

Wilsons School to whom the club was named after originally Old Wilsonians Sailing Club continue to be interested in us again through their Alumni and a representative Sacha Marsac came to the Open Day and felt very at 'home'.

The Medway River Festival is the next on the agenda on the 6th July at Gun Wharf where the Medway Council Office building are an we are promoting WSC on the Medway and Swale Boating Association stand with a WSC boat and plenty of flyers. All offers of help to Man the stand gratefully received and there will be lots of activities for all the family.

Our big event of the year is the Medway Regatta on the 13th and 14th July with visitors arriving on the evening of Friday 12th July. This year we are having a steak and salmon barbeque and all the excellent food that the house committee provides for us in the way of homemade cakes and great lunches and salads

Applications are through Sail Racer and details of Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions are on the website.

Risk Assessments are proving to be a challenge again for Martin again now that we have lost Jonathan Mills Deputy Harbour Master Peel Ports to Singapore when we thought we had it sorted we have now Captain John Gurton and his assistant James Goodfellow. Martin is rising to the challenge and we are hopefully going to simplify the process.

The Admirals Cruise with the new Mayor Councillor Josie Iles came down the Medway this Sunday at 11.10am.

Well done to Amy Adams (our ed) and Peter Heyes for winning the 3000 Nationals at Grafham Water two weeks ago congratulations.

On a lighter note Jeremy Drummond Martin Smith and myself we invited to the now past Mayor's Farewell Dinner. Vaughan Hewett ever adventurous in his last days as Mayor was going to abseil down some large building and go up another. True to the end he has managed to get us some funding from the Peninsular Ward where the club is situated for 5 Optimist Trolleys at about £165 each, good old Vaughan !

Well that is it from me as I am about to go sailing Minorca for week with a gang for WSC farewell and see you in week

Christine

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Medium Handicap Fleet Report

We are now well into the sailing season but summer weather has made only a brief appearance with a number of Sundays proving too windy for this aging Laser sailor. However there has still been some good sailing and the South Kent race day was very good leading to one of the most enjoyable SK races I have done.

Despite the weather we have had **slightly** more boats sailing in the Spring Series. Last year we had a maximum of only 9 during the Spring Series and this year we had 10 in two of the races. Congratulations to the winners of the Series:

- 1st Gordon Belcher Laser
- 2nd Stewart Robertson Blaze
- 3rd Graham Jenkinson Laser

When (if) the weather improves it would be good if more people were able to sail on a regular basis this year and improve the competition between us.

Members of the medium fleet have also had success in other events. Chris Saunders came 1st in the South Kent in his Blaze. Brian Lamb with Sam Pygall is leading in the Commodores 2. And we had several people high up the results board in the 3 Race Regatta.

Many will know that Gordon Belcher is unwell. He is now back home and recovering, although he has more treatment to come – and he is taking a close interest in the sailing results and who is winning in his absence. I wish him well and hope to see him back at the club before the end of the season.

See you on the water soon – we have some new members in the fleet so make them welcome when you meet them.

Graham Jenkinson

Laser 191856



Above: Sitting comfortably? Then we shall begin...

Martin Jessop about to settle down on his centre board for comfortable seat to watch the Admirals cruise pass by - others chose the club veranda but I suppose an eye level view was better?

Martin Smith

Pictures from the Fast Fleet



Saturday 6th July – Medway River Festival

We will be manning our club stand at Gun Wharf Chatham on 6th July with a club boat and we would be grateful if any members could assist for all or part of the day. We are promoting WSC on the stand of Medway and Swale Boating Association and anyone could assist.

If you can help, please reply to info@wilsonianssc.org.uk

Far Left: The joys of camping at Coniston

Tim's tent being buffeted by 50mph gusts... This was about 7am and Tim was in the tent asleep! I looked out from my van and thought the whole thing was going to collapse on him! He slept on oblivious apparently.

Jo Wicken

Despite 50 mph gusts Tim and Jo still came 2nd at Coniston Regatta!

Left: Champions!

Peter and Amy pick up the trophy as 3000 National Champions for the second year running. With tougher competition than the previous year it all came down to the last lap of the last race! Nail biting stuff...

Amy Adams

Laser 2000s Fleet Report

So far

Here we are, fast approaching the summer solstice at the time of writing this, and still no sign of anything like summer warmth/sun.

The Spring Points Series saw an entry of 11 2Ks, despite the cool air temperatures and very cold waters of the Medway. Congratulations to Lesley O'Rourke in winning the Series, with her crews Peter Baker, Lucy Hockey and Natalie O'Rourke. I always find it so pleasing to see different names in the list of trophy winners. Great result.

The dreadful spring weather had a detrimental affect on our Training weekend, held over the weekend of 11/12 May. It appeared to put off a number of our own club boats, and certainly put off visitors from attending. Despite this, 6 home boats did benefit from the excellent coaching offered by Dave Adams from Broadstairs Sailing Club, on behalf of the 2000 Class Association, and sponsored by Noble Marine Insurance. Still, at least we got to get in some training in the sterner stuff, for a change, rather than the comfort of gentle breezes that we've experienced in previous training sessions.

After the initial "meet and greet" over coffee in the clubhouse over coffee, during which we agreed the plans and targets for the weekend ahead, we focused on the five essentials (trim, balance, sails, centerboard and course), with particular reference to the 2000. No-one could have come away from that session without a clear appreciation of the need to get weight well forward in the boat and keeping the boat dead flat at all times.

We then got out onto the water, under grey skies in a force 3-4, gusting 5-6 breeze, to practice the five essentials on a short upwind/downwind course, with Dave constantly recording the action on his video camera at the same time as giving advice and tips.

Special mention should be made at this point of Nina Wallis and her crew Terri Avron-Cotton. Not only was this the first time the two ladies had been in a boat together, it was Terri's first real outing in a dinghy at all. Considering the prevailing weather conditions, Terri's inexperience and the lack of all-up crew weight in the boat, they should be praised for endeavouring to go afloat in the first place, let alone demonstrating their desire to learn, practice, compete and improve.

After a welcome break for lunch, we covered various starting techniques, including line bias, holding station, acceleration off the start line and some key rules applying to race starts, and quickly got back out on the water to practice these start-line disciplines. It soon became apparent just how difficult it was holding station on the line in strong tidal waters, thought it was encouraging to see the improvements at each attempt.

We finished Saturday's session on the water with three short races, putting into practice everything covered throughout the day. Some of the racing became very lively at times, as nasty squalls and rain came through ahead of the heavy cloud formations fast approaching from the South West. Once again, it was interesting to observe how closer the racing became as the afternoon progressed, with constant place changing and different race winners.

Saturday concluded with a superb two-course roast supper at the ridiculous price of £5 per head, thanks to the efforts of our usual Fleet galley angels, followed down by several pints of local brew until late into the evening.

We awoke on Sunday morning to a complete contrast in the weather, with bright sunshine, blue sky and a far more welcoming force 2-3 breeze. Participants walked down the track first thing looking rather tired and, for some unknown reason, complaining of aching all over, but this didn't deter them from wanting to soak up yet more information and continue putting Dave's tips into practice.

The morning kicked off with a session in the dinghy park, covering rig settings, tuning and general tips. One of our Fleet members, who shall remain nameless (?!) became rather disappointed at this stage, having seen all her excuses for poor performance on the water taken away in one fell swoop. It was her boat that was used to demonstrate the set-up and the tuning session!!

On returning to the clubhouse, we learnt all about spinnaker hoisting, setting, dropping, power zones, mark rounding and relevant downwind racing rules, with Dave drumming into us the need for the crew to be on their feet during each of these procedures. This was clearly demonstrated when we came to review the video footage later in the day.

Once back out on the water, we practiced these downwind techniques again on a very short windward/leeward course. Unfortunately for some, the kinder weather that greeted us first thing was by now deteriorating, with the wind building to a force 4-5 once again and strong squally gusts. Having watched Nina and Terri practice their capsizing drills, which itself impressed the RIB crews, Paul Clark clearly decided that he should he should try it out too!!

Friday 12th - Sunday 14th July



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Medway Regatta 2013

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[Click here for more information, notice of race and entry forms](#)

2k Fleet Report Continued...

Further lessons were learnt when reviewing the video footage over lunch in the clubhouse. Nina was observing just how John Hewat, a seasoned 2K sailor, wasn't as flat as he thought he was.

After lunch, we ventured back out onto the river for one last time, with the aim of getting in three short back-to-back races to practice all aspects covered over the weekend. Nina and Terri had agreed to do a bit of helm/crew swapping, and began a game of musical boats with others out on the water during the afternoon races. Terri was encouraged by her new helm to hike harder, only to learn afterwards that the main reason for doing so was to help keep her helm protected from the waves breaking over the bow!

Dave became a little devious at this stage, adjusting the start-line bias and checking to see who had noticed what he'd done and how it was dealt with before the next start. He was encouraged to see people picking up on what he'd done, and to see a marked overall improvement in ability as racing progressed. Andy Hockey and Louise were particularly diligent at checking out the line bias and practicing holding station.

Nina had now become disappointed for the second time during the weekend, when her new crew (who shall remain nameless) disappeared over the side of the boat without saying goodbye.

Regrettably, because of the seriously deteriorating weather conditions, we had to curtail the last race of the afternoon, with safety boat resources now becoming very stretched between our training events and general club racing.

In his final review of the weekend, Dave observed how he had noticed a massive improvement in abilities between Saturday morning and Sunday afternoon. Dave was an excellent coach, and we were all very grateful for his time and enthusiasm in helping us all to improve. I would like to express my sincerest thanks to all those kind WSC members, beyond the 2K Fleet, who gave up their weekend to help out, and without whose support the training would simply not have taken place.

Still to come

1) **Medway Regatta** - 13th and 14th July

I hope to see a great turnout again in this year's Regatta. We will benefit once again from having our own start and prizes, so all we now need is to see a great turnout of 2Ks entering and enjoying the event. Oh, and some decent weather (it's got to arrive at some point soon, surely?).

2) **National Championships** - at Pwllheli, from 4th to 9th August.

- 3) **Open Meetings** -
- | | |
|------------|------------------|
| 6/7 July | Lee-on-Solent |
| 14/15 Sept | Felixstowe-Ferry |
| 5/6 Oct | Bala |
| 19/20 Oct | Rutland |

4) **Broxbourne Regatta** - 7th and 8th September

This has always been a really fun weekend on safe, sheltered waters, and an opportunity to experience racing in a completely different type of environment. I should add that the event is as much about enjoying ourselves socially as well as the racing itself, so do come along if you can. I feel sure you will have a great time. Just ask anyone who's been before!!

We usually take along a good contingent of boats, and non-sailing companions, and always come away having enjoyed the weekend. I'm certainly hoping that we are well represented again this year. Please do let me know if are thinking of joining us this year, so that I can give an idea of likely numbers to Broxbourne for catering (etc) purposes.

Look forward to seeing you all at the Regatta.

Colin Treadwell

Laser 2K 22258



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Open Day 2013

Another successful Open Day.

Although we officially opened the doors at 11am, visitors started arriving from before 10am and were keen to get on the water. With the Saturday Skimmers creating a buzz around the dinghy park before getting on the water, and the Scouts being colourful in their Toppers on the foreshore, the club really did portray its long standing strap line of "The friendly family club".

We had just under 100 visitors through the gates which consisted of groups of friends, families and single sailors all with a mix of sailing ability but many who wanted to get in to the sport. We had about 40 children all wanting to go sailing and most of the younger ones could be seen running around the dinghy park looking for the hidden posters for Pirate Toms Treasure Challenge all sporting toy eye patches and whistles. It was a joy to see so much fun and laughs.

Visitors were encouraged to not only go sailing but to be involved in rigging the boats and helping with the ribs. This opened many dialogs where members could introduce the ethos of the club and how it operates. This in turn was met with enthusiastic responses and general questions about memberships and courses, which is of course the main reason for the open day. We had 3 ribs all taking visitors out for rides and 15 dinghies all giving an insight in to sailing on the Medway. Some of which already sail and are interested in moving from their club to ours, all from flyers we distributed at the Alexander Palace Dingy Show. A great BBQ lunch was provided by the house and no sooner that it had finished, visitors wanted to get back on the water and at 4pm we still had a queue of people wanting to go back out.

An email received the following day, stated...

Hi

Can I firstly say that from a prospective new members point of view, the open day and the way it was arranged was perfect!

I am interested in the upcoming beginners course, specifically for my wife, who has sailed a couple of times on holiday, but wants to learn more formally and secondly, for my daughter 15, who did the 1 & 2 a couple of years ago at Chipstead, but lost her confidence due to some blustery winds, several capsizes and clonks on the head and hasn't sailed for a couple of years.

We had just about enough members to help with the Open Day and if by going by the previous year's visitors, we may probably need more support next year.

We have had over 3 memberships confirmed with still more in the pipeline.

Jason Ramsden

Right: The club open day



Medway Regatta Weekend

The house has requested help for cakes, quiches and desserts for the Medway Regatta Weekend.

If you can help, please reply to info@wilsonianssc.org.uk

Right: Drew the peacock

So, I'm painting my laser under the BBQ shelter, noticed I had companychecking out my handiwork.

I've nicknamed him "drew...drew peacock" (!)

Anonymous



ALTO REVIEW

This is from a person Jo and I met at the Dinghy Show last March. He comes from Oxford Sailing Club and was very interested in the Alto. He told us he has been following the development of the class with a great deal of interest, and asked if we would allow them to have one on demonstration to see if it was as good as it looked.

So we took a boat down to his club and put it together in rain and snow, wasn't the most inspiring of sailing conditions, but we were greeted with a great deal of enthusiasm and interest.

What you see below is his review of the Alto as he saw. It was posted on the Yachts and Yachting forum for everyone to see.

Please read the report and when you see Jo or me at the club we'd like to hear your thoughts on it.

Tim Kift

Alto review (reproduced courtesy of Jon Tweedle)

Ok, so where to start with this unbiased review of the Alto? I suppose by declaring a slight bias, in that I have always liked the look of it – not just the physical, but the concept of the boat. Since it appeared a few years ago, I've wanted to have a go, to see if it lived up to its stated aim of providing a modern, up-to-date design that provided fast, affordable performance without the need for a full-on racing snake physique.

Much has been made of the Alto's 505-derived heritage but other than dimensionally, there aren't any obvious reminders of this. In my opinion the 50h is the most beautiful dinghy hull shape ever penned, so from that viewpoint the lack of the long curved foredeck and sexy wide, flared gunwales is a disappointment, but this is made up for somewhat by lines and chines that look bang up to date. It is a large boat and appears larger in the flesh (especially when parked next to my OK) than it did when I saw it at the Dinghy Show, but for all its size, a hull weight of 82 Kg makes it easily manoeuvrable around the dinghy park.

Rigging the boat is a simple affair with no surprises. The current jib has forestay clips up its luff which are simple and easy to use. A zipped luff version is being looked into, I believe, but while this may have a positive performance impact I do feel that for sailors in the real world of Club/Open racing the ability to merely drop/ flake the jib and tie securely with a line whilst having lunch is of more practical use. The mainsail goes easily up the carbon mast via a 2:1 halyard and all the tails stash neatly away in a pocket of the fabric foredeck. That foredeck is a fantastic feature which allows simple access to all the bits that have the ability to go wrong on an asymmetric-kite boat both on and off the water, and makes the initial halyard routing on stepping the mast a doddle.

The Alto launches without drama off its purpose built gunwale-hung trolley and sits quite stably on the water, even in stronger winds, and climbing aboard requires no feats of acrobatics. Both the foils are hauled down smoothly and certainly have a feeling of quality, inspiring confidence. Those last two words are massively important, as it's a theme that seems to run through the whole boat. Once you sheet in, the boat accelerates very quickly – not in a nervous, jittery way, but with a smooth feeling of controllable power. The only thing I can liken it to is the speed and handling of a big Jaguar or Aston Martin Coupe, as opposed to a Lotus Elise, for example. Similar speeds, but a very different feeling.... Whoosh!

Upwind it's fast – deceptively so! That static stability I mentioned earlier gets even greater when you're under way so that when a gust hits there isn't a panic to maintain control, there's a slow roll that gives the crew time to adjust positioning and sails to make the most of the opportunity. I've not taken the crew position on the boat yet (I'm useless up the pointed end!) but Cameron had no problem getting out and back in from the wire. The side-decks and gunwale are covered in ProGrip (or similar) and provide a secure area to plant your feet. In sub-planing conditions it's easy to get forward to avoid dragging the stern, but as the wind increases you can feel the boat just wanting to get on the plane and fly. In a breeze we've tended to knock off a few degrees of pointing to raise the speed and this seems to be pretty effective in a fast handicap fleet. With the particular boat we've borrowed there have been a couple of issues with the self-tacking jib – the sheet is led forward through a "guide" block attached by shock-cord, then through a double-block at the bow that is also used by the kite system, before being led aft under the foredeck. This set up was experimental, and we had an issue with the double-block being pulled in different directions, eventually jamming the sheet. As I said, this was an experimental setup that hadn't been tested, but we made adjustments to the shock-corded guide block and this has alleviated the problem. The other solution is two single blocks

at the bow.

Separate rig and jib-luff tension is controlled by the by the helm, by way of cleats on the starboard/aft of the centreboard case. This works well and is easily adjusted, even on the move. Cunningham and Kicker (Gnav) controls are led to the port/aft of the case. Maybe it's just me, but these controls didn't have a lot of feel to them, and as you'll see on the video, I don't think I've been using enough kicker. I'm going to ProLube the boom gnav slider and track for the next sail, and this may well fix that feeling. Again, it may be just me, but I felt a little unsure about having these controls effectively on the centreline as the time when I want to use them is when we're overpowered, ie hiking hard from the sidedeck. Tim from the Class has sent me pictures of one of the boats they've sold that was spec'ed with dual kicker controls – a tidy job it was too, and one that I'd definitely want.

The kite system works well, with a single line hoisting and deploying the pole. The chute mouth is a good size, allowing hoists and drops from both tacks without jamming. Downwind with the kite up the speed is amazing in a good breeze. The bow loves to lift, and in flat water the spray hitting you is not excessive. The overriding feelings are of speed, control and confidence (there's that word again). Our second sail in the boat was in honking wind, 4s gusting 5s maybe, and I never once felt that we were going to go for a swim, not even when gybing! She just sits there, firing along, under control and ready to respond to sail and steering inputs. In lighter wind (and when we've got our angles wrong) we used the wing wang to great advantage. As you'd expect, the loads on the pole-lines are pretty big so it takes good timing and teamwork to ease the kite and cant the stick to windward at the same time, but once done dead-running is perfectly achievable. Whilst not a big player for us at Farmoor, I could see this would be of huge benefit when cheating the tide or flow close to shore on the sea or river. It works, and really well, but you mustn't forget to straighten the pole before dropping the kite of course.

There are some other minor niggles, most of which you'd sort out for yourself as an owner. The moulding on the top of the centreboard case has a lip extending laterally alongside where the helm sits, and it could be useful as a toehold for a bit of hiking – not a bad thing in itself, but the toestrap sits very close to this and is one of the reasons (along with age, fitness and laziness) why I can be seen on the video not hiking quite as far out as I should. My biggest problem with the design is the amount of water that you ship in if you "over-roll" in a tack. Perhaps I'm just used to boats with more freeboard, and I'm sure you'd adapt your technique in time, but it's a huge amount of water for a mistake, that wasn't actually that close to a capsize! Despite being fitted with a pair of good sized self-bailers (and transom flaps) it takes the length of a hefty beat to clear as well. Again, maybe I've just got used to self-draining cockpits...

So how would I summarise the Alto experience? After the first couple of sails I was concerned that it was all too easy. The stability, control and confidence you get in the boat made it feel that there was little challenge in sailing the thing, but on reflection I realised that this was a positive. I've owned a string of hard-to-sail boats and enjoyed them, but never reached my potential as training, practice and fitness time was lacking in my life. This boat allows you to go fast and have fun, but also gives you the chance to concentrate on actually racing as opposed to merely surviving. We've been racing in the Fast Handicap fleet so far, that sails round-the-cans courses, and starts 3 minutes after the Asymmetrics that sail windward/leeward (but using the same windward mark). In certain conditions we've made massive inroads in to that "head start" against some lower PY'd classes – I'm looking forward to starting with them on their course in the next couple of weeks!

Value wise, it seems tremendous.... a boat that can not only be used, but properly raced and competitive in all conditions up to F6 (or more, dependant on ability of course) for £9800ish including trolley and cover I think, is hard to beat. My son knows little about 505s so can't use it to compare, so likens it to a "properly grown up Laser 3000 on steroids" and I don't think he's far off the money with that. There aren't that many current, single trapeze, spinnaker boats out there on the market and this is a great boat that could and should fill that gap. Its only marketplace problem is that it's not up against like-for-like boats for sales, but others such as the RS800 which also have plenty of second handers up for grabs. Which would I have? The one that'll allow me to sail, race and be competitive all year round, and won't threaten to tip me out/break my body/be frustrating on a Wednesday evening light wind race. I'll be honest – I'm beginning to love the Alto. There, I've said it. Would I buy one? If I had that amount of money to spend then the answer then the answer is an emphatic yes.

Thanks for reading (if you got this far!)

First Cruise of the Year

The first club cruise of the year took place on Saturday 1st June and left for Queenborough at 10.00hrs. While overcast the day was comfortable with the addition of a windproof top and wonders of wonders the wind in the right direction and right strength made for a perfect cruise sailing there and back.

With a mix of club members and Scouts from the 38th&40th Strood Sea Scouts we had 21 people on the water with a mix of Wayfarer, Pacer Gull and GP14 dinghies.

The next date is the cruise to Aylesford on the 6th July - hope you can join us for that one. Contact David Wraight at DWWraight@aol.com for more details.

Any cruise to Queenborough involves passing Fort Darnet and to anyone on the river it's a familiar site but who knows about the pub built to service the garrisons at Darnet and Hoo? The Isle of Beauty opened on Bishops Marsh, close to the fort, sometime in the 1860s and was named after a popular poem/song of the time. It was apparently a shanty construction although in 1871 eleven people are recorded as living there. Patronised by bargees and watermen, and visited by Dutch fishermen trafficking in gin the house was well-known for its smuggling connections.

When the licensee ran short of beer, he had to row over to Gillingham Pier for fresh supplies and at least one licensee was drowned on the marshes. The license was withdrawn in 1888 due to a lack of business but the foundations could still be seen at the end of the century.

See right:

Set to music by T. A. Rawlings. Published as sheet music by Joseph Williams, London,(Printed between 1823-1834) The poem and music also appear in "The Odeon," a Collection of Secular Melodies (printed in U. S. A., Boston, 1837). The song often is cited as the origin of the phrase, "Absence makes the heart grow fonder." The song was popular during the American Civil War.

More literate members may have noticed that the title and last verse of the song come from the epic poem of 1667, *Paradise Lost* by John Milton.

"When the waves are round me breaking,
As I pace the deck alone,
And my eye in vain is seeking
Some green leaf to rest upon;
What would I give to wander
Where my old companions dwell?
Absence makes the heart grow fonder,
Isle of Beauty, fare thee well!"

More history and cruising in July.

ISLE OF BEAUTY, FARE THEE WELL

By Thomas H. Bayly

Shades of Evening, close not o'er us,
Leave our lonely bark awhile!
Morn, alas! will not restore us,
Yonder dim and distant isle.
Still my fancy can discover
Sunny spots where friends may dwell;
Darker shadows round us hover,
Isle of beauty, Fare-thee-well!

'Tis the hour when happy faces
Smile around the taper's light;
Who will fill our vacant places?
Who will sing our songs tonight!
Thro' the mist that floats above us,
Faintly sounds the Vesper bell,...
Like a voice from those who love us,
Breathing fondly "Fare-thee-well!"

When the waves are round me breaking,
As I pace the deck alone,
And my eye in vain is seeking
Some green leaf to rest upon;
What would I not give to wander,
Where my old companions dwell...
Absence makes the heart grow fonder;
Isle of Beauty "Fare-thee-well!"

David Wraight

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Do you have a notice for the rest of the club?

Need a crew for an upcoming race?

Need to swap a duty?

Or have recently competed at an open event?

Include it in the next 31 ½ by emailing editor@wilsoniansc.org.uk

Or post it up on the members section of the website.

Members Notice Board

Duty swaps required

28th July (AHO & Safety Boat) - Contact Jane & Jeremy Drummond
16th June (Safety Boat) - Contact Colin Freed

Crew/Helm required

Due to drop out I need an additional crew member on a Tradewind 35 sailing from Hamble to Falmouth July 3rd - 6th. Crew of 3 already in place, fourth person needed. Likely stop off Dartmouth or Salcombe. Lift back to Kent available on Sat 6th.

For more details please email richmet1@tiscali.co.uk or mobile 07767 641200.

Crew required for the 2013 season in an Osprey (1155)
If you would like to know more, please email richmet1@tiscali.co.uk

Results from the Circuit

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Lying in 10th out of 46

10th 2000 21914 Wilsonian Sailing Club
Andy Hockey and Lucy Sweet/L Somers

Wayfarer Nationals

8th place (gold fleet) Wayfarer 10934 Wilsonian Sailing Club
Brian Lamb and Tony Hunt (Beating MYC's Richard Stone!)

3000 Nationals

1st place V3000 3602 Wilsonian Sailing Club
Peter Heyes and Amy Adams

Vortex Open at Grafham

1st place Vortex 1013 Wilsonian Sailing Club
Mike Gower

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