

Paignton Sailing Club

Newsletter May 2010

Hello Everyone,

At last we have some warm weather, more appropriate to this time of year. We had a terrific turnout of 26 boats last Wednesday and a similar number on Sunday which included several junior sailors. We are also seeing good signs that class fleets are developing, particularly with the laser 2000s, lasers and RS 600s. It can only help boost turnouts and enthusiasm for racing.

I have decided to write this newsletter because a lot is going on and you should be aware of how your committee is approaching a number of issues. Some changes, for the better we hope, are in the air. Read on.

Club finances

So far this year the club's finances are not looking good. The club is heading for a significant loss this year and we are digging into our reserves. We rely on championships to keep our financial head above water but there will be no championship this year and we do not have one booked for next year so far. It's not for lack of trying. 2012 is looking a lot better (scorpions and laser masters confirmed) but the outlook for 2013 onwards although hopeful is uncertain. If the opportunity arises we will run two full championships a year to make up lost ground. However, it is clear that clubs are chasing a diminishing number of classes with fleets big enough to hold week-long championships and some clubs such as RTYC, Hayling, Phwelli, Weymouth, and Abersoch are becoming increasingly commercial in their quest to run several championships a year putting the squeeze on smaller clubs like us.

Another problem has been the inexorable rise of the club's overheads in excess of inflation and our ability to increase income from membership and the like. There is not a lot we can do to reduce our overheads apart from selling club boats and this we are reluctant to do. The situation has jolted the Committee into looking at ways in which the club can develop over the next 5 yrs so that it is not quite so reliant on the running of championships. In April we held a brainstorming session with members of the various committees and they came up with a mass of ideas to take the club forward. To sift through the ideas and develop some sort of action plan a **Club Development Group** was formed which reports to the General Committee.

Club vision

A club vision has been agreed upon for the next five years. To summarise it says that we will continue to maintain the club as a friendly, family orientated club and aim for a varied and active social life with good catering throughout the year. We will strive to increase membership by at least 10% each year (faster for social membership),

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to increase race turnouts by the same percentage each year and find ways of increasing income so that we are not so reliant on championships to survive. The group decided to focus on four key areas namely:- **finding and developing volunteers; increasing membership; improving social life and; generating income.** Some of the action plans agreed are given below.

Finding and developing volunteers

A club like ours is only as good as its volunteers. We cannot even start down the road to achieving our vision without enough volunteers with the right amount of experience and enthusiasm. We will be looking at our volunteer needs for the next few years and deciding what recruitment and training is required to meet our needs. We will also identify key posts to ensure there is a succession plan to ensure we have natural replacements when people go.

Increasing Membership

In an effort to boost membership this year the club has hired a stand at the Great Outdoors Exhibition (Go Expo) in the Riviera Centre over the Bank Holiday 30/31st May, followed by the club Open Day on 5th June. Discounted membership and training is on offer to new members for this event. Membership is a complex issue. People join and leave for all sorts of reasons, but just to keep membership steady let alone grow needs hard work. We have to offer something to bring people in whether it is to sail or just socialise. This is one reason why we are putting more effort into training this year. If enough new members come along we will be running three beginners' courses (two will be week-end courses) compared to only one last year.

Generating income

Our main source of income is from members subscriptions boosted by championships most years and training. Training particularly could generate more income for the club given enough qualified volunteers. The demand in the community for beginner training seems inexhaustible. Of course there are other areas particularly with the hiring out of club premises and club dinghies where we hope to bring in some extra cash.

With reference to club use I hear that some clubs have boosted income and membership by encouraging other groups such as bridge clubs to use the premises on non-sailing nights as long as they become social members. **If you know of any such group looking for a home please contact me on 01803 863864.** The club is also available for hire for private parties for £50 per night (free for club members) plus charges for the barman and cleaner.

Improving social life

It has been agreed that Fridays will be the main club night. **Friday night sailing will not stop at the end of August but will continue to the end of September (with earlier starts in this month).** Thereafter Friday nights will continue as the club night with a programme of talks and social events right throughout the winter.

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Friday night draws for a cash prize have been reinstated with the cash accumulating until someone is successful. You have to be at the club to win when the draw from the membership list is made.

Other matters

Help needed

You may be aware we have had no rear commodore since March when Jan resigned. This is having a negative effect on our social programme for this year although we hope to run the key social events. It would boost the moral of the social committee and me if a member came forward and volunteered to act as social secretary or co-ordinator for the rest of the season. We are also looking for someone to organise the Games Evening on Saturday 19th June.

Similarly we are looking for someone to co-ordinate the shore side of Torbay Week. This year will be much easier than previous ones because there will only be the handicap classes to look after.

There is still room for more volunteers, especially juniors, to man the PSC stand at the Go Expo 30/31st May in the Riviera Centre. Each stint only last three hours and this is a fantastic opportunity to have a look over the rest of the Exhibition.

The Long Distance Swimming Association is organising a swim from Meadfoot to Brixham and back on Saturday 3rd July. PSC has promised to provide a manned RIB to help with safety cover. We will be looking for two members to man the RIB for several hours on this day.

If you are able to help with any of the above situations please contact me on 01803 863864

Coming up

Saturday 5th June - Club Open day 10am to 5pm

Sunday 13th June – Round the Bay race

Wednesday 16th June – 1st Harena race

Saturday 19th June - Games Evening starting at 7.30pm

Friday 9th July after sailing – BBQ and presentation evening for adults and juniors

Friday 16th July start 6pm – fun sail to Goodrington and BBQ

Supervised sailing

Friday night's supervised sailing starts in earnest on 9th July but before this adults who have completed the April/May course can join the supervised sailing on Saturday mornings (report 9am) on the following dates, 12th June, 26th June and 3rd July.

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Torbay Week 21st – 23rd August

There will be no championship dinghies at this year's Torbay Week so the organisers are hoping for an increased turn-out of the handicap fleet. The TW committee has taken note of local sailors' comments from previous years.

The result is a dinghy programme geared to the needs of the local sailor. The entry fee is less and the championship element takes place over Saturday and Sunday. There is a pursuit race on the Monday evening.

The main dinghy social event is on Saturday evening. There will be a meal and live music from the ever popular group "Sharp Practice". This event is also open to club members in general who we hope will turn up in good numbers.

Racing at other clubs

The Royal Torbay YC now races its dinghies on Saturday mornings. For a fee of £30 a year it allows members from other clubs to enter and take part in the races. Full details can be found on the RTYC website. The General Committee has agreed that a reciprocal arrangement will apply to members of other clubs who want to take part in PSC racing.

Broadsands

There has been very little movement on the Broadsands project except that tenders have been requested for architectural services. Funding is the key issue and it seems that funds for the Broadsands development must come as a spin off, not only from the Harbourside development, but from the other developments planned for Paignton town centre. The General Committee is expecting another brief and update from Iain Masters shortly.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Ollie Wright and Jack Hawkes-Smith, two of our top juniors, who came third overall in their feva dinghy in the RYA Eric Twiname Memorial event held recently on Rutland Water in testing strong-wind conditions.

Well that's more than enough from me. Best wishes for the rest of the season and let us fill the bay with sails.

John Maynard
Commodore