

Notes to the 2012 Programme

Given your enthusiasm for new events at the AGM I am pleased to say that, with a mixture of some re-branding, and some additions, we have fitted them all in.

Effectively BSC race one, on 27th May becomes a multi-start event with short races from a close-in committee boat. Phil Rust has kindly volunteered as O.O.D. If there are written instructions you will receive them; otherwise approach the committee boat before the start in the usual way. Your best single result counts as race one of the Cormorant Cup.

This is the 85th year of the class and will be suitably marked with a Dinner at the Colne Yacht Club on Saturday 16th June, and a race for the very prestigious Carstairs Cup (The Queen of Rum Cay) on Sunday 17th. After thirty or forty years we have reached the point where it is again possible to muster twenty boats on the start line, so please come and join in the fun. Your Chairman is very keen to invite and involve friends both past and present to both events and more details will follow.

The revival of Brightlingsea Town Regatta is another new event with the Sailing Club officiating two short races. With this, as with Wivenhoe and Rowhedge regattas, where I receive pre-published details you will receive them promptly.

So with all that, plus an evening race and refreshments on Saturday 28th July, a Champagne Race, Ladies Race, the very popular Final Fling and lunch, - not to mention Pyefleet Week and all the rest of it we really do have a "packed programme". - I do hope you enjoy it.

(Course cards remain blue dated 5/10 for CYC, and buff dated 5/09 for BSC and I will be laminating some more.)

Technical

The increased overcrowding throughout the fleet is a lot of fun. Enthusiasm fuels it of course, - lots of people giving it socks. Luck helps, but simple basics are essential, so to avoid starting with a penalty (for me and for you)- maybe a list would help?

1. Check out the finish on the centreplate and rudder, and that they have smooth round leading edges. Sail with the rudderblade angled 5" forward.
2. Bottom smooth?!
3. Mast rake measurement at 14" with the forestay tight. Then set the backstay lengths so that they both haul tight with 6" of track still to go.
4. Outer ends of spreaders upswept about 2" - upper shrouds bang tight, and lowers slack.
5. Racing - don't give distance away. Start on the line, in clear wind, as near to the fleet as your skill and nerve allow. Then keep clear wind but don't tack too far from the fleet without good reason. (Sail for speed, minimise boat on boat "tactics" - make, and let, the boat do some work.)
6. Don't let up. Copy boats that sail faster. - Really look at their sail trim and crew trim and copy it.

State of the Class

Yes I know! - Even so, at a time of consistent development and, in particular, further potential it may be worth a look at where we are just at the moment.

Forty-one boats, including three in GRP have been built since 1927 of which eight are confirmed lost. Of the current stock of thirty-three, nineteen cruise or race out of Brightlingsea. A number which has roughly doubled since 2005 and threatens upward again later this year when John Mullins' new GRP C50 and at least one of Nick Readings restorations are due to launch.

Some considerable effort, involving everything from the GRP mould to the racing and social programme, class rules, publicity and communication etc. etc. is at the root of this momentum. - But none of it would have worked without the boat the way it is.

Maybe its no good asking me! - I see a unique and coveted element of our heritage, a work of art singly and collectively, and a source of enjoyment irrespective of direct involvement. All in the form of a genuinely able cruiser and racer. What the magazines call a classic.

What is certainly true is that the boat today is the result of considerable evolution since its design in 1927. The hull shell and foils remain, but the construction, weight, rig, sails and fittings have all been appropriately modernised by the designer and owners.

The 1927 rig is charming but it would never have sustained the breadth of appeal of the boat today. Robbie Stone drew the proportions we now see as early as the nineteen fifties and effectively kick-started a progressive mind-set which has never been lost. Democracy has produced clear modern Class Rules which at present appear to have reached a point of some stability.

The most telling fundamental of Robbie Stone's original concept clearly emerged from his thinking about sailing in our estuary, and I suspect, his experience of previous boats. The core design feature of the boat is the almost instantaneous deep-to-shoal draught capability facilitated by the centreplate winch. He managed to turn a good beat against a falling tide from a distinct hazard into an enjoyable challenge. And all now with the benefits of modern kit, low maintenance, berthing ashore etc. etc. - and if I am any judge a wonderfully enjoyable racing and social scene.

Well and good, - so what of further growth? Could we get to thirty boats? I could (and will) trot out all the ways of addressing the "supply of boats" (a phrase which I innocently imagine to be bandied about in the plush boardrooms of the average plastic fantastic manufacturer!).

We have our GRP mould, with templates for all the wooden bits, - we have a building jig and full templates for as many all wood "Avocet" clones as you care to order. We have a plentiful supply of historic hulls for restoration (advert - I have four myself). - We have centreplates, new bronze castings and patterns of every description. Plans for boats, masts and trolleys, rules, tuning guides and an up and running boat or two for sale. - OK while theres no "choice of colours and prices" on the internet, in our own terms we've got "supply of boats" covered.

So what about the supply of people? - Well, looking back at the 2007 crew list we've not been too bad at that either since three from that list are now owners! But is there the possibility of a plateau

effect sometime? With few top boats coming to the market it needs to be obvious that buying into the fleet with a new boat or full rebuild represents real excitement and great value. I've done it twice so I know that it does (strangely enough deciding on the colours was one of the best bits). The fun of sailing and socialising in a well organised fleet is part of the deal, currently a very good one.

We have the jigs and moulds, - Brightlingsea has the craftsmen and the skills. "Where we are" if we wish to grow yet again is to carry on showing how exciting and rewarding it can be to bring the two together.

So more of the same, bring your friends, make a point of it, bring anyone and everyone who wants to join in. And if you are looking in as it were, you are very welcome. Give me a ring if I can help. - Good sailing.

Malcolm Goodwin 01206 823223

Boats for sale (both around £4K).

C26 "Krystine" Rob Rendell 07799697451
C75 "The Mike" Gary Powell 01206 382543

New Boats

20K plus (possibility of B.O.D. Association deal)

Full Rebuilds

12K plus (Hulls £100 to £600 for full rebuild only)
Contact Malcolm Goodwin in first instance.

100 plus copies to owners, members, and friends.

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Many thanks if you have paid.

Owners £20
Associates £10

to Richard Stephens
10 Chestnut Way
Brightlingsea
Essex CO7 0UA