

Thorpe Bay Yacht Club

Sandhopper Newsletter

Summer 2009



Sandhopper lift-in - owners and crew, 2009

Welcome to our second edition of 2009!

Lift-in went to plan and was executed to perfection. Many thanks to those "unknown" culprits who tied a lovely thong to the captain's mast, just out of his reach! They will be pleased to learn that they have remained on the mast as "lucky pants", and the results have been great so far this year, as *Windrush* is giving *Squiffy* her annual beating.

Two boats have joined the fleet so far this year. **True Blue** (10), the original prototype, has joined our fleet with new owner **Mark Askew** who has already been on 99% of the races as well as fitting in an overnight trip to Rochester. Welcome, Mark.

We have also seen the return of **Sandhopper** (11) which was driven from Scotland, some 650 miles in 12 hours by **Kevin Kitson-Jones** and has been bought by new owner **Nick Binnendijk**. Nick, pictured right, is just 18 years old, and has been

enthused to join the fleet after racing with his dad in **Squiffy** (41) as well as borrowing any other boat he could just to race in the most competitive fleet at TBYC. Welcome, Nick - I believe this makes you the youngest owner of a Sandhopper ever - even your boat is 21 years older than you are! I am sure that, with Nick's enthusiasm, he will introduce other younger members to our class which will help increase our numbers further.



Young Nick, stripping his Sandhopper

I think that it is a true testament to the Sandhopper that it can be enjoyed and raced competitively by all age groups equally. I've been very lucky to race frequently with my own dad, who is seventy years young, alongside my son who is just twelve. When the three of us race together, it is an absolute joy and one I will always treasure.

It has been great to see an average of fifteen boats starting most races. Even on very blustery days, we are getting eight out, and it certainly is an advantage to sail three-up in those conditions and there seems to be an abundance of crew waiting to be asked to come and play, as it has been too windy for their dinghies!

Glad to see the Sunday trophy being passed around the fleet. I also love to watch the envious looks from our fellow sailors who wish they could join in. It was also nice to see the "golden anchor" awarded for the first time this year. **Phil Crawford** was the lucky recipient, and it was



*Hmmm... I wonder how much I could get for these if I sold them for scrap?
The Red Sand towers as seen on a Sandhopper cruise in September 2005*

awarded for his perfect mooring alongside **Polly**, followed by a leisurely swim, and still managing to come sixth, luckily for *Squiffy* and *Zeus* who sneaked in whilst Phil was being wrestled back in his boat by the very able **Margaret Kennedy**.

The Sandhopper picture screen is also receiving praise from the other sections. If you have any pictures to add, please email them to me (in JPG format only, please) and I will put them on.

Not long now until the Open, and the Nationals are closing in, so get out on the water and practice. I see **Peter Blomfield** has already measured another eight sets of sails this year, that's on top of the seventeen from last season.

There is still a high demand for Sandhoppers, so if you know of one for sale or are considering selling, please let me know.

I hope you enjoy this latest newsletter, and I'll see you on the water !

Barry (39)

...DIARY DATES...DIARY DATES...DIARY

SAT-SUN JULY 11/12	Sandhopper Open at TBYC
SATURDAY JULY 18	Nore Race
SAT/SUN SEPTEMBER 5/6	Sandhopper Nationals at TBYC
SUNDAY OCTOBER 18	Sandhopper Final Fling
SATURDAY OCTOBER 24	Sandhopper Lift Out



Hyde Sails sponsor the prizes for the 2009 Sandhopper Nationals.

I bought *Talitrus* (S46) in 1979, so later this year I shall have owned and sailed the same Sandhopper for 30 years; a lifetime. Is this a record, I wonder?

For those of our forebears whose lives straddled the two World Wars, thirty years was an age many never reached. Those that did faced major challenges, like finding enough to eat and staying alive. Our generation has been very lucky; we just worry about inflation, credit, the cost of new sails and antifouling etc...

On the subject of inflation, when first built Sandhoppers cost under £700. *Talitrus*, second hand, cost me £1,800 in 1979 (that's over 300% inflation!) This year I spent nearly the same again getting the bottom treated - three times the cost of a new boat in the early seventies!

Hoppers have actually held their value pretty well, certainly better than cars or shares, so you can assure your partners that you bought your Hopper as an investment, not just for fun.

When I joined TBYC I was the proud owner of a Zenith. The club committee were iffy about having such a boat in the club, as they were trying to push certain classes and do away with handicap racing; somehow I don't think they succeeded. Thus I bought Jack Sprat and



Talitrus saltator: smarter than your average shrimp

renamed her *Talitrus* - the generic Latin name of the little creature which lives on the foreshore and which most people call a sand-hopper.



The Joy of Sandhoppers

by Peter Blomfield



In the early years, my daughters crewed for me, and we could rig and get off the mooring in 8 minutes. We would then find ourselves sailing with those stalwarts of the club and highly competitive helms such as David Mayne, Dennis Bundy and Daniel Blunden, all desperate to prove they were the best. I just wonder how they would get on against our current best sailors; I think the standard has improved.

The joy of a Sandhopper is that it can be all things to all men. I enjoyed exploring the Medway, and remember sailing up the creek behind Queenborough to the point where it was almost too narrow to turn round, mainly sailing single-handed.

Later, with a healthy young companion, John Evans, the sights were set further afield. We cruised up to Brightlingsea, where the harbourmaster decided we were too small to worry about mooring fees. We cruised further up the East Coast; in at Harwich, so that we could explore the Orwell and the Stour. On arrival at Woolverstone Marina, the manager took pity on us, made us tea and agreed a very favourable rate. The boat ended up staying there for about ten days.

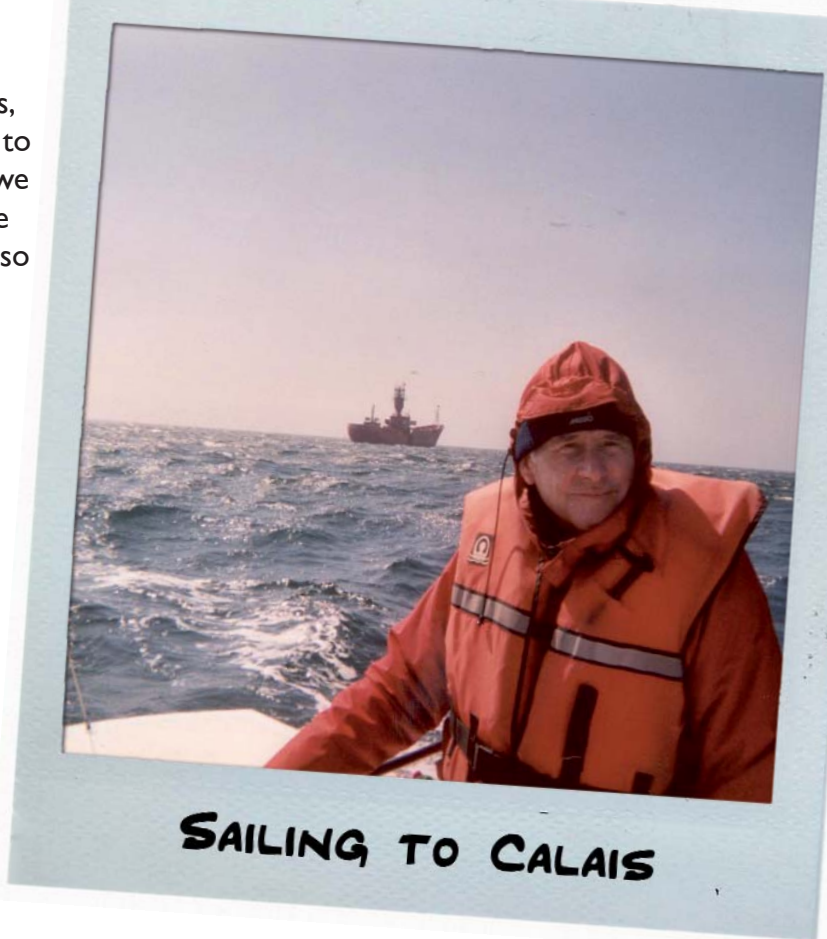
We also had an interesting trip to Calais. David Dane and Bill Brech (and later, Stan Starkey) had made the trip many years earlier, but they went for and with the Calais Rally; John and I decided to do it on our own.

From casting off at the club to arriving at Calais, we didn't see another single pleasure boat, neither sail nor motor. Our first encounter with a pleasure boat was at the entrance to Calais, where we found two chunky yachts under motor waiting for permission to enter.

We have told the story of our crossing elsewhere; suffice to say it was not without incident. John nearly fell out of the boat. I nearly dropped the outboard over the transom. We had a close encounter with a cargo ship. I lost the skin off my bum, and the passage took fifteen hours. (The skin took at least ten times as long to grow back!)

So there you are, lads. Sandhoppers are not just for racing. Could someone else please win the Cruising Trophy this year?

Peter Blomfield

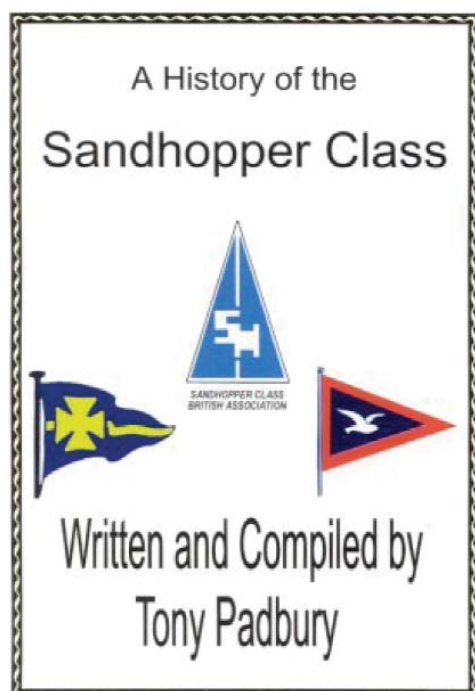


This little book covers the initial conception of the Sandhopper and its development. It is a collection of articles from the archives covering race event reports, long distance passage trips and technical articles.



First published in 2006, this 82-page book is available in paperback and yours for just £6.50 inc. p&p.

Email history@sandhopper.org.uk for details.



Your Pictures



Tom, flying his kite at the TBYC Open



Ray shows off his balloon-modelling skills



Zeus, keeping guard at the rear of the fleet - as usual



"What rule did he scream?"



Jolly, teaching his son premature starts!

We'd love to print your photos in a future edition! All pictures sent in will be returned.

Speak to Barry Duce for details.

absolutely floorless

The Sandhopper Floor Installation Project, 2008/9

Last winter I decided to completely replace the floor in my Sandhopper, Zeus. I was helped along the way by many of you, including Paul Spratt, David Johnson, Chas Gibson, Paul Farrall, Martin Binnindijk, Peter Thompson and Barry Duce. We decided to photograph our work, in order to produce a document which might, in the future, be useful to club members and other Sandhopper owners.

Well, that document actually became a nineteen-page booklet, so rather than reproduce it here we thought we'd present some selected highlights.

You can now download the full guide, in PDF format, from our website.



◆ A quick visit to B&Q revealed this fantastic tool, which vibrates through GRP, epoxy and wood like a hot knife through butter, and is a convenient size to get into tight places. Its main advantage over a grinder is the level of control one has and when you are that close to your precious hull, that makes for some great peace of mind! It also makes a fantastic sander and has other cutting attachments that make it wonderfully adaptable to a

◆ If you look carefully you can see how closely you can cut the floor away from the hull with that Bosch tool. You can also see how saturated and rotten the ribs were at their ends. The construction of these early boats was to paint the ribs, and then stick them in with sheets of chopped mat, on each side, leaving the ends and centre of each rib exposed to whatever was sloshing around in the bilges. It is these parts that were in a bad way and some simply fell apart in my hands, particularly when scrubbed to clean the grease off.



◆ Firstly, feel underneath the floor where it meets the hull for soft wood and/or delamination of the ply. A useful tool in determining the state of the floor is a small digital camera!



Visit the website at www.sandhopper.org.uk for full details



I cut away 3" squares of the glass covering the ribs to expose the damp wood and then dried out the boat using a greenhouse heater. The ribs dried far faster than expected and once dried, a couple of coats of epoxy sealed and strengthened them sufficiently. With this done, you can sand off all the bits that didn't come off with the Bosch cutter and ensure the hull is smooth and ready for glassing and the knees and clean and sanded.



Your options to waterproof the floor at this stage are threefold; you could choose to go for a clear epoxy finish or a coloured epoxy, which can then be painted over; or primer/paint option. Since epoxy adds significant stiffness, I would recommend that option as a great waterproof barrier to all sides of the floor.

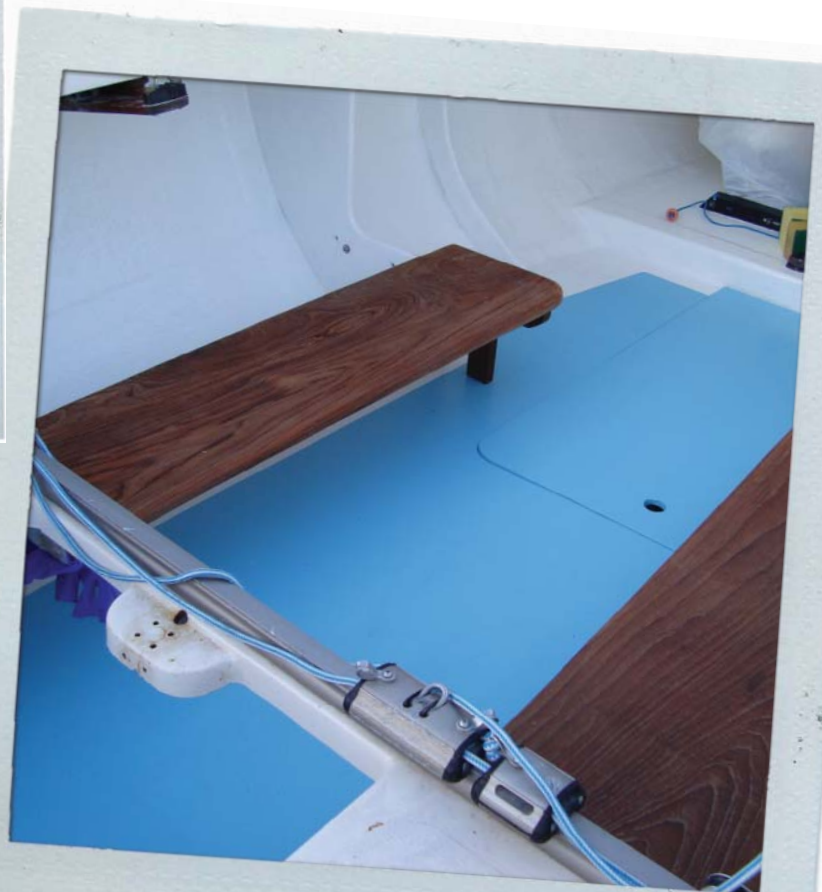


Brush on a layer of mix to the areas above and below the join - not onto the filler as this already has epoxy in it and you will distort the lovely finish you have just achieved. Pour on the mix and work in gently with the brush, brushing the cloth into the corners and ensuring an equal coverage of both the hull and floor.

It is very tempting to continue if you make up too much and add more glass, then realise you need more filler, so mix some up, then realise you haven't cut enough glass and so on - until you get into a right old mess - at which point David will appear out of nowhere and laugh at you, or worse, Barry will discover you a day later because you have stuck yourself to the inside of your precious boat! It was the fear of either of these situations that kept me following the sage advice of David J...and I think it went well as a direct result.

▼The final step is to apply International Interdeck non-slip paint to be applied. The best way to apply the Interdeck, I found, was to roll it on, using a fluffy roller as this leaves an excellent surface which looks, dare I say it, quite smart (if, in this colour blue, a little swimming-pool-ish!)

Next project: the seat supports?





SETTING STANDARDS

Hyde make race winning sails for the most popular one design classes.

The Sandhopper sails were developed in conjunction with the Squib programme and proved to be race-winning straight out of the bag - that's how they do it at Hyde's. When Hydes work with a class they win with the class. Check out the new range of accessories at the Hyde web shop.

MAKING SAILS THE WAY YOU WANT
HYDESAILS.COM - 0845 543 8957

This year's Nationals, which are being held at Thorpe Bay Yacht Club on the 5th and 6th of September, are being sponsored for prizes by **Hyde Sails**.

Hyde's have kindly donated a new **spinnaker** and new

Genoa as the main prizes. One of these will go to the winner of the event whilst the other will go into a draw in which all those entrants that enter all the races will be placed in to. **Hyde's** have also donated lots of other prizes of kit bags and T-shirts.

*I am sure the event will be a fantastic success and I would like to thank **Hydes** for helping with the prizes. As with last year, if you are unable to make the event but would consider loaning your boat, then please contact me; also if you require crew then let me know.*

We are hoping to see a few boats from MBSC and if they would like any help getting their boats to TBYC then again let me know, we have a few trailers and a full FI crew ready to help launch etc.

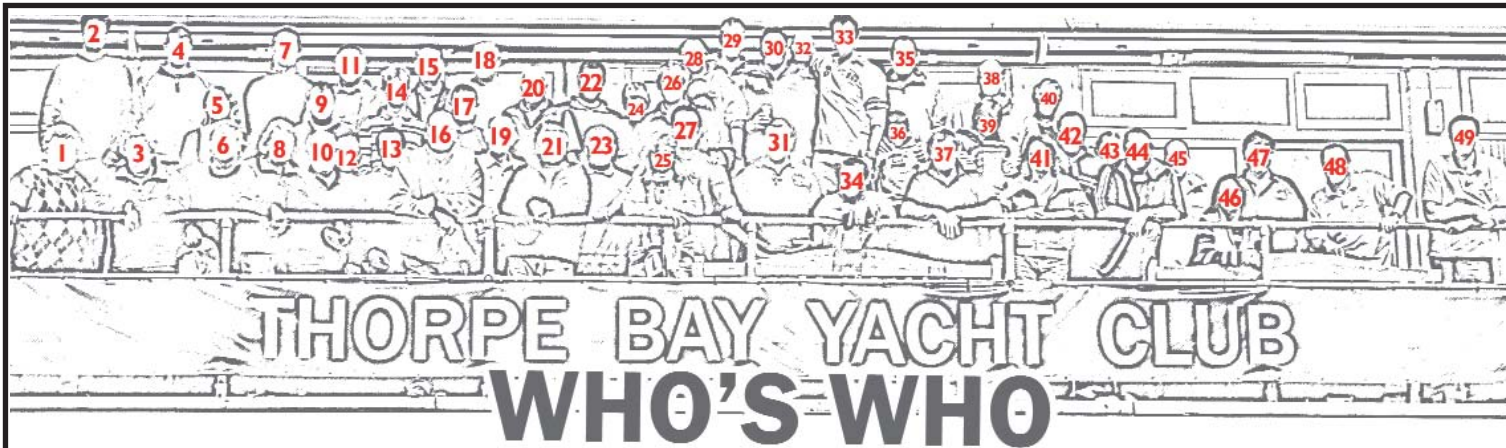
BD

NORE RACE 2009

The committee boat will once again be outside the Mulberry harbour holding your beers in readiness for the big finish on **Saturday July 18th!**



Picture, left: the boys relaxing after a good sail last year



- 1. Graham Harp
- 2. Chris Maloney
- 3. John Boshior
- 4. Shaun Christian
- 5. Liz Austin
- 6. ?
- 7. Mike Thomason
- 8. Pat Eastaugh
- 9. Dick White
- 10. Brian Whistler
- 11. Roger Burrows
- 12. Iain Abbott
- 13. Gordon Saunders
- 14. Paul White
- 15. Phil Crawford
- 16. Nigel Payne
- 17. Tony Padbury

- 18. Mark Robinson
- 19. John Evans
- 20. John Richards
- 21. Len Eastaugh
- 22. Toby Speller
- 23. Mike Duce
- 24. Janet Wilmsner
- 25. Lisa Farrall
- 26. Martin Eyre
- 27. Paul Farrall
- 28. Konrad Wolfe
- 29. Chas Gibson
- 30. Barry Duce
- 31. Jason Burrows
- 32. Paul Spratt
- 33. Martin Binnendijk
- 34. Ray Evans

- 35. R. Paxman (Standing in for Peter Thompson)
- 36. Mini-Paxman
- 37. Richard Barnes
- 38. Rupert Snow
- 39. Peter Snow
- 40. Peter Blomfield
- 41. Sally Willis
- 42. Alan Willis
- 43. Tom Jenkins
- 44. Ray Pettit
- 45. Chris Clarke
- 46. Margaret Kennedy
- 47. Tony Byrne
- 48. Steve Hopper
- 49. Mark Dell

"I wish I'd bought a Sandhopper instead..."

Sandhopper Open

The Sandhopper Open at TBYC is being held on the 11th/12th of July. This is the weekend of the Thorpe Bay Regatta and will be a busy event. Please see full details and race instructions on the TBYC web site and the Sandhopper notice board nearer the time. I hope to see all of the boats enter this and the nationals. Again, if you need any help with your boat please let me know.

BD



photo finish

Beginning of the End: Demolishing the old slipway, 7th April 2009

The next edition of the **Sandhopper Newsletter** will be out in September. If you have any photos, articles or news you'd like to print, please speak to Barry Duce or email: barryduce@yahoo.co.uk.

