



NEWSLETTER

Chairman's Comments

All being well you should receive this newsletter in March, just as panic starts to set in about getting your boat ready for the new season. It should be well worth the effort. The main events promise to be very competitive with four new boats built last year and other boats being taken over by enthusiastic newcomers. Remember there are only a few weeks to "fine tune" from the start of the season until the Nationals at Thorpe Bay at the end of May.

The Committee has met twice since the AGM and was confronted with two immediate problems. Firstly, the perennial one of availability of reasonable quality blue sailcloth and secondly, whether to take part in the Sailboat Show. There is positive news regarding blue sailcloth. Lonton & Gray have ordered a special run of blue sailcloth of a grade recommended by Dimension Polyant as suitable for the class. This cloth should be delivered in early April. Other grades of blue cloth, which were used over the last couple of years, are still generally available as well.

It is felt that with the impetus provided by the new boats, the web site set up by Peter Freshwater and the steady build up of funds we can promote the Class a little more actively without depleting our funds too much.

The deadline for committing to the Sailboat Show was early January. In the event, with a possible blue cloth problem, it was decided that it was a "step

too far" to commit significant funds to this two day show, particularly as our boat builder was not prepared to contribute any funds. We still had representation on the MBSC stand. In the long run our aim must surely be to encourage new fleets to start up. With this in mind we have embarked on a campaign to make the sailing fraternity more aware of the boat's potential through limited advertising and by publishing our web site address. As we all know the Sandhopper is particularly attractive to clubs on estuaries and inlets with drying moorings and maybe we should target suitable clubs. Is there anybody up north who can give Beadnell a new lease of life ?

As well as promoting the Class generally we do very much want to serve our members needs. Since the Association was reformed in 1997 successive committees have consolidated and improved the Class. Now is the time to see if there are other ways of bringing added value to the membership - so if you have any ideas please let somebody on the committee know. For instance an innovation this year is the new Cruising Trophy which was suggested by Peter Blomfield at the AGM (see later article).

Good Sailing !

Brian Whistler S38



Bluejacket S154 First Parker Boat.

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Sandhopper Events 2003

Nationals Thorpe Bay May 31st June 1st.

Burnham Week August 23rd.-30th

MBSC Open

Sept 27th-28th

AGM TBYC

November 30th. 11am.

Hello Sailor

Brian Wells and I have sailed against each other, or with each other, on and off for 47 years, starting in dinghies way back before Brian took to sailing and racing across seas and oceans.

Since 1989 we have shared a Wayfarer, racing hard with the Essex YC at Leigh-on-Sea. We take turns at helming, and this works well for us. We laugh a lot, fall over occasionally, and at times wonder whether we are sailing *with* or *against* each other. But the real buzz for us has always been serious competitive racing. And so, looking around, we came to be attracted to the fleet of Sandhoppers at Thorpe Bay YC. (Today I cannot believe we took so long to be seduced.)

Then, having failed by a few hours to buy the only second-hand boat for sale at the Club, in a rush of blood we decided to throw our pension books at the problem. We ordered a new boat from Parker Boats – the first new-build for six years.

TBYC gave us a fantastic and warm welcome from Commodore Peter Thompson downwards. We met up again with several old'uns who we had sailed with/against, mainly in National Twelves, back in the 50s and 60s – Ian Abbot, Colin Bates, Phil Crawford, Pauline Davidson, Ian Kennedy, Ian and Sue Stobart. Even the Club's walls joined in the reunion, with several old (sailing) enemies gleaming down in gold leaf from the Honours Board – Keith Musto, Kit Hobday, Mike Patten, Peter Bateman. It was a really comfortable feeling.

Parker Boats were swiftly on with the task of building Sandhopper No 154, while Lonton & Gray were our chosen sailmakers. We were like two little boys with the promise of a new toy – ask our wives! We named her Bluejacket, and her topsides would be navy blue (the dictionary meaning of bluejacket is “a sailor in Navy”). And we fell in love with her the moment we first saw her at Parker Boats in January 2002. (We were not the only ones to fall under her spell. Others could not resist her beauty, leading to three more orders for new boats.) The builders had done a wonderful job, and they spent

hours going over every little fitting with us. We cannot speak too highly of the workmanship, the attention to detail, and the sheer enthusiasm of Bill and Bruce Parker and their team.

On 28 February, with a borrowed van and a borrowed trailer, we brought Bluejacket home to Thorpe Bay. She was launched, or to be precise she was lifted onto her mooring, on 24 March. What a superb system TBYC have developed with two modified fork lifts putting 25 Sandhoppers on their moorings at low tide in just 2 hours.

We raced her. We re-raked the mast. We raced her. We softened the rig. We raced her. We adjusted the spreaders. We raced her. We moved the foot of the mast. We raced her. Brian tweaked something (or was it everything?). We raced her. We etc. etc. There is no record of how many times we altered her rig (let alone *what* we adjusted or *by how much*). But we did get to know her very well, and we were really enjoying our new toy. She is slippery and she is rewarding of efforts to coax the best out of her. She is a delight to sail, which we did mid-week on not a few occasions; and she offers a super racing experience, in which we indulged on 51 (repeat, 51) occasions during 2002. Highlights for me were a gloriously brisk day in the Nore Race (a race which I had won in a Firefly in 1957), and a Burnham Week which gave our 8-strong fleet (5 TBYC and 3 Maylandsea) an unbroken eight days of racing and comradeship.

Brian and I rate 2002 as one of the best sailing years of our lives. It is thanks to all our good friends, both long-standing and new, both at TBYC and at MBSC, both Sandhopper sailors and others, not forgetting the late Oliver Lee, that our pensions and our time have been so rewardingly spent.

Must go. I nearly forgot. We are going down to the boat park to rethink the mainsheet traveller controls.

Peter Smith S154



Don't forget to
book your diary for
the AGM.
November 30th.
TBYC
11.00am.

News from the Bay.

A recent interview with the Class Captain Len Wright on his comments for the 2003 season went some thing like this. "Well I would like to say It would be nice to see more boats on the water this year so lets get cracking, have the boats on the water soon, have a really good season and of course you had better watch out for me as I have ordered a new genoa".

We then thought it would be a good idea to hear from our newest Sandhopper owner Nigel on his thoughts for the season. Nigel who with Richard Bremner purchased S28 last year got off to bad start when Richard suffered a bad blow to the head, after an unexpected gybe, preventing him from sailing for many weeks. They seem undaunted as their boat was one of the first launched this year. So below are Nigel's words of wisdom!

Ed.

Sandhopper sailing – a new season

As seems to be usual in my life, I have probably chosen the hard way to learn something new. Most of those new to sailing take a considered and measured approach. They go on a course such as competent crew and day skipper. Once qualified in these areas they presumably progress to master of the QE2, stealth fighter pilot, astronaut – that sort of thing. They typically start their sailing career in more modest craft, say a boat the size of a dustbin lid and sail it on a garden pond. Typically I had to do it the hard way, skipping over (probably unwisely) several types of smaller boat more suitable for novices, going straight to a Sandhopper. I did try to get on a course but apparently one's parents have to register you for a day skipper course upon conception, such is the waiting list in our area.

It seems to me that Sandhopper sailors are a certain breed, bound together by their enthusiasm for the class and their passion for the sport. They are a tight-knit band of enthusiasts whose main driving force is the preservation and furtherance of the Sandhopper class, pursuing this end with evangelistic zeal. From what I've learned so far it would appear fortunate indeed that there are such enthusiasts around as without them the class might well have died out. Is it just a coincidence I wonder that all these people, some of whom (I hope they won't mind me saying), are no longer in their 30's and seem to have the energy of a hyperactive teenager (I wonder if Len is going to Ibiza again this year for the club/garage scene?).

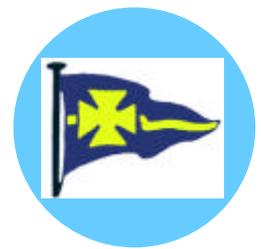
Recently I made a visit to the club to

carry out some maintenance on the boat and I started chatting to these oracles of the sea. At the suggestion that I might not bother to anti-foul this year sharp intakes of breath were drawn (a bit like Private Fraser in "Dad's Army" - "Doomed - we're all doomed"). It was as if I'd suggested paragliding off Sydney Harbour Bridge. (Of course I was going to anti-foul anyway – just testing). I got back into my car and made my way to Burnham intending to get what I thought was the standard colour of anti-foul – white. When I returned I was asked what colour I had got – I sneaked a glance at the tin and confidently answered "red", while thinking "bu**er". Still, I won't always be this incompetent (probably).

Talking of incompetence, Frank Levy kindly helped with the erection of my mast. What he must have thought of me as I lamely dropped it for the second time he was far too kind to say out loud. It's a good job the boat can't speak...

Still, as I write this article it is the Saturday morning of the launch. It is a beautiful clear morning, the sun is out, the birds are singing and the boat is ready (not sure about the crew, but the boat's fine). A new cover is on order as the old one has the appearance of the Turin Shroud and is about as durable. Another season of Sandhopper sailing beckons and, despite the events in Iraq this week, one's heart lifts at the prospect of a season of sailing Sandhoppers and the rivalry and camaraderie that accompanies it.

Nigel Whiting S28.



Join us.
Every second
Wednesday for a
natter, drink and
a bit of grub"

TBYC Sandhopperings

Sandhopperings commenced a little early this year with a great Sandhopper Dinner at TBYC ,organised with great imagination by Janet Wilsmer and hearty winter fare by Phil's Bistro .A Casino Night with Roulette and Blackjack tables provided a great atmosphere after dinner and a clue as to some peoples other pastimes .It's always a pleasure to see our welcome guests from Maylandsea and also this year special guests Nick and Helen Oliver from Rice and Cole boatyard who provide us all with such good hospitality and service during Burnham Week ,plus the odd respray. Details of the winning gamblers are a little sketchy ,as by then the 2nd bottle of red was dry ,but I do believe young David Hopper and Pat Eastaugh figured somewhere in the front runners .

The lingering fragrance of antifoul and gelcoat ,and the faintest of seabreezes has been prevalent in the TBYC dinghy-park of late ,with this rewarding spell of clear weather inspiring our Sandhopper fleet to fettle and burnish their finely

tuned racing craft.

Resident racemeister ,Paul Clarke's new acquisition 152 looks slick and ready for some good results if he can tear himself away from the racebox ,committee boat or the million other things he manages to squeeze in at the club , and Trevor Hitch explained to me ,in great detail how he repaired a leaky bilge keel on 'Sandwitch' in his private race HQ out in a remote test facility ,sorry ,barn near Rochford .Brian and Peter have been waxing the beautiful hull of 'BlueJacket' to a deep gloss you could swim in and Phil Crawford is contemplating 'Pray' from the bar ,as he is ready for launching as I write .I myself have done nothing save for pumping the bilges only occasionally ,and concluding that old copies of 'Yachts and Yachting' are nothing like the real thing.....looking forward to seeing you on the water.

David Johnson S150



Join us
TBYC Sandhopper
night 2nd Wed of
Month

TBYC Sandhopper
Supper night Last
Fri of Month .
All Sandhopper
owners welcome
Book to dine

Blue Sails.

As a follow up to the Chairman's comments on blue sailcloth we can advise that Lonton and Gray expect delivery by about the second week of April they have a number of orders in hand which will be processed on first come first serve basis.

Below are the current prices for Lonton and Gray Sandhopper sails.
Ed.

Sandhopper Sail Prices 2003	Ex. VAT	Inc.VAT
Mainsail made in 240gm AP HMT0 Enterprise blue polyester including insignia ,sail nos, battens & sailbag.	£401.00	£471.17
Extra for one row of reef points if required	£ 35.00	£ 41.12
Foresail made in 245 gm AP HMT0 Enterprise blue polyester including wire luff, hanks if required, window and sailbag.	£ 300.00	£352.50
Tri-radial spinnaker in Airx 700 ripstop nylon in any 1/3 colours including sail numbers and sail bag	£368.00	£432.40

Secretary's Note Book

A.G.M: The following were elected to stand as committee members at the 2002 A.G.M.

Nominated:

Roger Lamboum MBSC; Keith Williams TBYC.

Peter Freshwater MBSC; David Johnson TBYC.

Elected:

Tom Dayes MBSC; Brian Whistler TBYC

Co-opted as Class Secretary: Iain Abbot TBYC

COMMITTEE MEETINGS. At the first committee meeting the following were appointed to positions on the committee:

Chairperson Brian Whistler

Membership Secretary Peter Freshwater

Treasurer Keith Williams

Technical Rep Tom Dayes

All the proposed rule changes as itemised in the calling notice for the 2002 A.G.M. were carried unanimously. The rulebook will be updated during the

course of 2003 and distributed to members.

CRUISING TROPHY: Peter Blomfield (S46) proposed that a trophy be presented to the Sandhopper submitting the most interesting log of a cruise or a season cruising. This trophy to be presented at the Association A.G.M. The proposed rules etc. for this trophy are shown below.

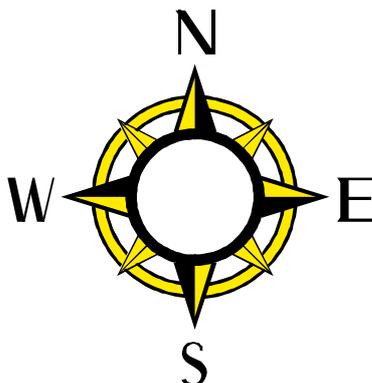
SUBSCRIPTIONS: This reminder will no doubt appear elsewhere in this newsletter, but subscriptions are now due and should be forwarded to Peter Freshwater a.s.a.p.

CERTIFICATES: The new season is almost upon us, therefore is your certificate up to date, have all new sails been measured and your certificate endorsed. Contact either Peter Blomfield (S46) or Tom Dayes (S15) for sail measurement. Your certificate will be inspected at the Championships without fail.

Iain Abbot. S24

Cruising/Passage Log Trophy

Objectives	Rules
<p><i>To encourage those members not so keen on racing to partake in Sandhopper activities.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage cruising / passage making in Sandhoppers.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage sailing in company. To promote the Sandhopper as a Day Sailor.</i></p> <p><i>To promote the Sandhopper as a family boat</i></p>	<p><i>The Trophy is to be perpetual and competed for annually-</i></p> <p><i>The competition to be open to any Full / Associate member.</i></p> <p><i>The log need not necessarily be prepared by a boat owner.</i></p> <p><i>The cruise / passage to have been carried out during the current sailing season.</i></p> <p><i>The log need not necessarily be for one cruise / passage-</i></p> <p><i>The completed log to be submitted to the Sandhopper Class British</i></p> <p><i>Association committee by the 30th of September of the current sailing season.</i></p> <p><i>The Trophy will be awarded to the Member submitting the most interesting / informative log.</i></p> <p><i>The Trophy will be presented to the winner at the Sandhopper Class British Association A.G.M.</i></p> <p><i>The committees decision will be final and no correspondence nor discussions will be entered into.</i></p>



Web Site Update

A number of updates have been made to the website and the 2003 events are all listed.

The front page is being revised and with form part of a common story line for the advertising proposed.

However we do need some good photos that we can freely use for the boats promotion. This is not only for the website but also for Parker to produce a colour brochure. If you have any good pictures please let me have copies, Format can be either prints / negatives (negatives best for print publications as these can be scanned at high resolution or jpeg files (300dpi for a 6 x 4 print..)

Peter Freshwater.S155



Membership Secretary's Report

Thank you to all who have paid their subs for 2003 those of you who have not yet received their membership cards will find them enclosed with this Newsletter.

If you have not yet paid then please forward your fees to me asap. Please keep me advised of any changes to address, ownership etc to enable us to keep the records up to date.

Current Full Members stand at 55 and Associate at 16.

We have updated the Small rule book but do not expect to distribute to all members at present. However I will be happy to send a copy on request. Please supply A5 SAE.

Hon Membership Secretary.

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Sandhopper Class British
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Editors Comment

Thanks to the contributors to this edition. It is nice to be able to include articles about Sandhopper sailing from other than the Committee. So thanks Peter and Nigel.

We aim to have another edition in October before the next AGM in November and would like to see more content so please if you have any interesting views, articles or pictures please send to either direct to me or via Iain. Any format will be welcome.

Peter Freshwater.S155