

# The Club Line



Waldringfield Sailing Club



SPRING 2026

# Those Duties . . . . your Club needs you

“How much does it cost to be a member of your club?”, my brother-in-law asked. “Wow”, he said, that’s amazing value.”

The secret, I explained, to maintaining a full sailing programme going and offering a well-stocked and reasonably priced bar and galley is of course



## VOLUNTEERS.

Everyone is called on to do something towards the smooth running of WSC with some members giving freely a great deal of their time, energy and skills.

And it would be wrong to think that a single member’s contribution doesn’t matter much ... it does. The roster - now encapsulated in the online DutyMan Ap - is specifically designed to spread the load equably.

Any new members worrying about not knowing what will be expected of them need have no concerns. All activities - Galley, Rescue, Bar, or Race

## From the Editor

What is the purpose of a club magazine? Perhaps to share and to showcase the activities and achievements of the members, and in this issue to focus in particular on individuals in the context of cruising logs and class racing. From the Norfolk Broads to the Ionian Sea; to Ardeleigh with the Cadets and to Aldeburgh with memories from our nonagenarian, Mike Nunn. The youth of the club prove to be tough team racers in a new Christmas event and young Noah Hughes is putting his Topper turnovers behind him in his journey to singlehanded success. We learn of the Larkmans’ association with the Dragonfly class and we fondly remember former club captain Mike Pert who contributed in many ways to the life and soul of the club. Someone has even had the temerity to write about the exploits of this editor in his yellow laser!

Thanks to all who have contributed, to my brother, Steve, for editorial assistance and to Giles de Margary for his sterling work and patience in production.

**Patrick Cooney**

Management - are overseen by someone who will say what needs to happen. However, anyone wishing to develop some specialist skills should have a word with the Club Captain (Steve Cooney) or Vice Commodore (John Ogden).



WSC is blessed with a core of dedicated and well-trained safety boat crew and many volunteers enjoy their time with safety enough to go on and seek powerboat training. All you need to do is turn up on time and appropriately dressed. - it’s usually colder on the



water - especially at either end of the season.

Most members do their duties reliably and with cheerfulness. You add so much to the club - Thank you.

**Anne Spalding**

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Photographs by Alexis Smith, Robert Deaves and cameras from the various fleets.





# Presidential Ponderings



**R**ecent news has shown us how certain presidents are always grasping for something more, and are mentioned in files on the internet. Well what one can do, so can another. I have gone from the quiet ageing white haired person in the corner, whose wisdom is questionable, to acting Commodore – no election required. Files on the internet can be found in Dropbox, and I've been let loose with MemberMojo.

I started my sailing career in a car-rycot in a Dragonfly and learned to sail off the beach at Waldringfield in a small clinker-built dinghy. About 65 years ago I progressed to sailing a Cadet with my sister Jo, and subsequently at University I spent quite a lot of time team racing in Fireflies. Jo and

I have now evolved into Squibbers – I think we may well have been quicker in the Cadet than we are sometimes in the Squib. As some of you may know I was International Cadet Class Chairman for several years which was a most interesting time – we even managed to effect a World Sailing rule change after a nearby fatal shark attack just before the start of the Cadet Worlds in Adelaide (Rule 41(a), Outside Help, for those interested).

I think it is a case of *plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose*. The Club has come a long way since I started sailing, but Cadets remain one of our cornerstones, Dragonflies still grace the river, and team racing is in the ascent. There is of course a lot else happening on and off the water to enjoy; I look forward to seeing you at the Club.

Having been Commodore previously about 10 years ago I am back! I'm hoping not see any sharks or experience too many changes of direction, but am looking forward to being at the helm again steering the Club until James Skellorn is ready; I wish him a speedy and full recovery.

Happy Sailing

**William Sudell**





# Jahan Jolly



On Wednesday 16th July 36 senior members of the club enjoyed a trip on the Jahan, motoring down to Ramsholt and then back up river to the Tidemill. These were members with lasting memories of the friendships made during the fund raising to build the new clubhouse, some we don't see in the Clubhouse these days and some of whom are no longer with us.

Getting these senior members together for a trip on our beloved river onboard Jahan was the idea of Nicky Harris and Rosemary Nunn, in order to give them a trip down memory lane (river). It was a beautifully warm sunny afternoon and a really noisy experience onboard, the commentary was drowned out by the loud chatter and laughter as many hadn't seen each other, or been able to be on our beautiful river for quite a while. Tea and scones with jam were served during the two hour trip, and the staff at the boatyard, together with our Treasurer, Roger Challis, helped make the trip come to fruition. A fun afternoon was had by all with some members eating in the club later that evening.

**Rosemary Nunn**





# Topper Journey

**B**ack in 2023 there was a Topper open at Waldringfield. It was very windy and very gusty. It was my first big event and I only capsized 20 times! In my defence the conditions were very tricky - a mast broke (unusual in a Topper), there were many other capsizes, and a lot didn't finish.

There was an opportunity the following year to join the Topper Regional Training Squad (James Pipe was there as well). We had 6 weekend "camps" run by an excellent coach. It was the turning point for me and, apart from great fun, it improved my boat handling and racing enormously. Our best camp was at Brightlingsea when we had a 20 mph steady wind and were learning to surf.

Since then I've been busy sailing in WSC events, regional open meetings, and some national events.

very strong and durable which is low maintenance. You can start with a smaller sail and progress to a larger one so, even if you are growing you can stay with the Topper (usually up to 16).

It's a good route to take with your sailing especially if you



First time sailing single-handed



The Topper is a fun boat to start in. It's very responsive, and these days can be quite technical with lots of power in the sail controls. The original hull material is

want to focus on a single handed boat. There is an amazing amount of training available (most of it through the RYA and ITCA (the International Topper Class Association)). There is an East Regional racing circuit (20 boats), a

National Series of races (100 boats), the Topper Nationals, and the Worlds (in Quiberon in Brittany this year). So, lots of opportunity to race against good and developing young sailors. I've sailed in all but the Worlds and have made some good friends over my 4-5 year journey.

I'm planning to continue racing in the Topper over the next two years but also transitioning over to a Laser.

I'm enjoying my Topper journey and love my boat.

**Noah Hughes**  
**Topper Junior Class Captain**



# Extracts from Neil Cawthorn Log

## Blue Skye Log — Italy to Greece

**5–21 June 2025**

**A**fter a late night involving too much Guinness and too little judgement, David and I made the bleary-eyed dawn pilgrimage to Gatwick for the 07:00 flight to Catania. My travelling companion took the aisle; I drew the short straw and sat next to a Hatty Jacques look-alike who treated the poor man across the row to her entire autobiography. Earphones would have been a mercy.

Etna, grumbling like a discontented god, had been erupting in recent days, but the ash stayed away long enough for us to land. Angela from Lipari had advised bus-then-ferry rather than the train, so we followed orders. A leisurely lunch in the air-conditioned terminal helped pass the time before boarding the hydrofoil. At Lipari, David acquired clip-on shades and I settled our bill with Angela for looking after Blue Skye. Supper was “Steak Davide” — surprisingly excellent.

### **6 June — Lipari to Reggio Calabria**

Barometer 1023; engine 1693 hours; everything checking out nicely. We slipped at 10:10 into a flat calm, Henry the Autohelm earning his keep while we aimed for the Strait of Messina, threading our way toward the fabled waters of Scylla & Charybdis.

Approaching the Strait, we encountered an extraor-



Leaving Lipari

dinary vessel: a low, workmanlike hull supporting a mast of disproportionate height, and — even more astonishing — a man poised at the end of a bowsprit projecting two boat-lengths beyond the bow. Sword-



fish hunters. A dying art, but still practised here by men with strong constitutions and even stronger stomachs.

Reggio Calabria eventually appeared through the haze. The Harbourmaster, full of formality, asked our “intentions”, which I always think a philosophical question in the middle of a passage. No marina replied to radio calls, but a man on the pontoon waved vaguely, which seemed invitation enough. The marina sat between a dual carriageway and a railway line — noisy, concrete, and full of young men sitting in chairs waiting to take money. We ate on board. David cooked again.

### **7 June — Reggio to Roccella Ionica**

Barometer 1021; engine 1701 hours. A north wind promised 6–18 knots, so we slipped at 07:00. Within an hour we were treated to the sight of the Italian aircraft carrier Cavour, cutting north through the Strait in stately fashion — the sort of ship that makes even a Grand Soleil look like a bath toy.

The wind died mid-morning, and we motored on



toward Roccella Ionica, whose pilot notes describe “continuous silting” and require “extreme care”. They were right. The recommended yellow buoy marking the safest entrance channel was nowhere to be seen,





and I edged in too soon, touching momentarily on the bar — only my pride was injured. Fuel and showers were available, though the latter were not functioning despite a 98-euro fee. The less said, the better.

### **8 June — Roccella Ionica to Crotona**

Barometer 1019; engine 1711 hours. A worrying emptiness in the engine's water filter, but the motor produced a steady stream, so we set off at 06:40 with David stationed at the bow, guiding us through water so shallow we had 20 centimetres under the keel. By mid-morning we were motor-sailing in a light north-easterly. The wind strengthened briefly around noon, giving us 7.5 knots, but by 13:15 it died again.

We reached Crotona at 16:30 and tied up beside a catamaran owned by Filipina, an Italian-Australian sailing solo up and down the Italian coast. A remarkable woman, living entirely on her own terms. We invited her to dinner and heard how she'd braved a week storm-bound outside the Tiber before venturing in — a seasoned hand.

### **9 June — Crotona to Leuca**

A long leg across the instep of Italy: 70 nautical miles. Barometer 1016; engine 1720 hours. At 06:45 we slipped, joined by a French ketch, Maupiti. We both motored until a breeze came up, then hoisted sail. With Maupiti ahead, a friendly chase began. For a glorious hour we closed on her at 7.6 knots until her skipper, sensing competition, fired up his engine. The wind then collapsed entirely.

Our intended destination, Leuca, had earned unflattering reviews, and when they declined our Navily request for a berth, I wasn't shocked. Still, ever optimistic, I called on VHF, and — after assurances it was "only one night" — they found us a spot. The receptionist, Elena, was memorable mostly for her sulkiness. Nothing notable about the town, but from the hilltop the sunset was sublime. David cooked an excellent supper.

### **10 June — Leuca to Erikousa (Greece)**

Barometer 1018; engine 1731 hours. The marina



Santa Maria di Luce



Erikousa Harbour

office, despite promises, opened late; so did the fuelling station. We left unfuelled at 09:30 and set course for Greece. A cracking breeze carried us at over 7 knots, prompting teasing messages to David's brother Paul, who'd claimed to have achieved over 8 knots on Blue Skye. We hit 8.7 — "just saying".

At 13:30 we crossed into Greek waters. By late afternoon, passing the first island, the wind funnelled and caused a small catastrophe below decks. By 18:00 we were off Erikousa; by 18:30 we were moored and raising a glass to arriving safely in Greece. Supper ashore: lamb and wine — everything you'd hope for in a Greek taverna.

### **11 June — Erikousa to Corfu**

In the morning we met George, the harbourmaster,



The island of Corfu

a man of profound enthusiasm. He admired the empty bottle of Laphroaig in our recycling, announcing it "the best whisky in the world". I wasn't going to argue. We left him and his deputy Theo (whose plans for the day clearly involved two young ladies and a small



Agios Stefanos



Evening – the Ionian Sea

sailboat) with a bottle of overly sweet sparkling wine.

At noon we slipped. Under genoa alone we drifted south in warm air while David produced a magnificent frittata. Around 17:00 we anchored at Agios Stefanos on Corfu — familiar territory, where the year before Charlie and Milly had married. News came through that their son Oscar had arrived that day. A fine omen.

We dined at the Eucalyptus restaurant, run by Christos the local police chief and his wife. Cold beer, warm hospitality, and the Ionian glowing gold at sunset. Bliss.



12–21 June — Down the Ionian to Preveza

A hazy procession of island anchorages followed — Meganisi, Kalamos, Kastos, Ithaca — each with

its taverna, its cats, its lazy water. The winds gentle, the engine steady, the boat behaving beautifully. Odysseus would have approved, had he not been distracted by gods and temptresses.

Finally we slipped back through the Lefkas canal and made for Preveza, where the voyage ended. Blue Skye had carried us from the Aeolian Isles to the Ionian Sea with grace and good humour.

Another chapter written; many more to come.



The complete version of this log was awarded the 2025 Globe Trophy for the best log.





# WSC Cadets on Tour

## Frostbite Series at the Ardleigh Sailing Club

The Waldringfield Cadets have been proudly on tour this winter, taking on the renowned Frostbite Race Series at Ardleigh Sailing Club. Whilst braving chilly temperatures, shifting breezes and competitive fleets, our cadets have shown determination, resilience and fantastic team spirit throughout the series.

Alongside this series the WSC cadets have been training most Saturdays at Ardleigh with a training plan designed



and led by Sam Brearey, with invaluable support from Ethan Davey and Alex Enkel. Their combined experience and enthusiasm have created a focused yet encouraging environment, pushing sailors to step outside their comfort zones while building confidence week by week.

This winter programme has marked the beginning of our structured 10-week training plan, designed to cover all the essentials needed for competitive and confident sailing. The programme has focused on fundamental skills such as hoisting, tacking, and reaching alongside developing core boat handling, starting techniques, upwind and downwind performance, race tactics, and clear onboard communication. A key element of this training has been the inclusion of a race series within our sessions, where at the end of every training day sailors have been able to put into practice what they have learnt in a final race.

A particularly exciting development during the training has been the introduction of new helms and crews into the WSC fleet. Stepping into racing roles during the winter season is no small challenge, but our new pairings have embraced the opportunity brilliantly.

Conditions across the series have tested the fleet in a variety of ways — from light, tactical races demanding patience and precision, to breezier days requiring sharp boat handling and quick decision-making. Each race has reinforced the importance of preparation, teamwork and adaptability, all central themes of our 10-week programme.

Thanks to Ardleigh Sailing Club, Waldringfield Cadets on Tour has been a fantastic start to the coming season and we look forward to building on this momentum as the year progresses.

**Laura Walker**



# Mike Nunn at 90

At the end of February Mike Nunn reached the impressive milestone of 90 years old! Here, we look back at his long association with Waldringfield Sailing Club, with the boats he sailed and the people he has sailed with.



With Firefly 664 on the beach at Waldringfield

Mike grew up as one of six children living on Cliff Road in Waldringfield, as his father Harry and uncle Ernie both ran the Nunn Bros. Boatyard on the Quay. He says he was taught to sail on the Deben in the late 1940s in a 10ft sailing pram dinghy, by Heather Parker (now Cutting) who ignited his passion for sailing. He was recruited at age 16 by one Jack Knights to crew in a Firefly, on account of his small stature and light weight! He then started crewing for Jack Hoyland in Dragonfly No. 9 (“Leo”) – Mike recalled he

would have to get the boat rigged for racing on the edge of the beach, with the sails up ready, Jack would generally arrive late, bounding down the steps from the cliff-top and jump aboard Leo, shouting “Tally Ho!” as they pushed off the beach – and off they would go.



After winning the Chadwick Trophy in Aldeburgh Week

After two years in the RAF doing national service from 1954-56 Mike returned to Waldringfield and started working for Nunn Bros. boatyard. He bought an old and rather dilapidated Firefly (No. 664) which he renovated to race at the Club, this time as a helm. He took the boat down to Felixstowe Ferry during Deben Week 1957 and there met Rosemary Stagg, who soon became his regular Firefly crew. They competed in various local events, including winning the Bradley Cup open meeting at Brightlingsea.

Mike & Rosemary married in 1961 and in the same year set up Seamark Nunn in Trimley St. Martin, as builders of small dinghies and sailboats. The



Mike & Rosemary in Firefly 664 at FFSC





company's first commission was to build four identical 14ft RNSA clinker sailing dinghies for the Royal Hospital School in Holbrook. Throughout the 1960s and 70s Seamark Nunn built large numbers of highly competitive OK's, Solos and Optimists, firstly in wood and later in fibreglass. The business expanded into chandlery, outboard engines and yacht sales in the 1970s – in particular becoming synonymous with the Pandora 22ft sailing yacht, built by Gordon Harris' company Rydgey Marine in Lowestoft – many of these pretty little yachts were sailed on the East Coast, and some are still afloat today!

At that time yacht racing was very much part of the racing scene at WSC and Mike became a regular participant with his Pandora "Blue Nun" K337 – with regular crew Roger Blunt, David Clarke and his son Andrew. Mike could be seen on many Saturday afternoons sparring with his sailing nemesis - Gordon Harris - also racing his Pandora with a very keen crew aboard. Deben Week was always one of the highlights of the sailing season. 1973 saw the pinnacle of Mike's yacht racing, winning (amongst others) the Cork Plate, Deben Week, Aldeburgh Week and later that year the Pandora Nationals, sailed on Lake Windermere.

More racing yachts followed, including a Sadler 25 and a Popcorn mini-tonner, both raced offshore in the Haven Series; but by the late 1980s onwards, Mike concentrated more on cruising than racing. A succession of Westerly yachts followed, all covering plenty of sea miles either cruising alone or in company with other WSC yachts. Mike was yacht class captain at WSC on three occasions and still helps to organise Yacht Class social events. His latest yacht, a Dehler 36 "Rikasa" is his pride and joy and he still sails her regularly with wife Rosemary and other friends and family.

Mike celebrated his 90th birthday with a fantastic party for some 70 invited guests at Waldringfield



Sailing in Sweden, Summer 2025

Village Hall. This included impromptu speeches from family members, a response on behalf of the guests by Gordon Harris, and as you would expect – some funny story telling by the birthday boy himself!

We now look forward to his 100th birthday celebration!

**Andrew Nunn**



Heading off for a Firefly Open Meeting



# Eight Misconceptions about the OK

- **The OK is outdated.** Yes the boat was first built in 1957 but the design has stood the test of time. The advent of the carbon mast has improved its popularity and the OK is now sailed in over 20 countries. The 2025 World championships attracted 212 competitors!

- **The OK is not competitive.** There is a very competitive, but inclusive national and international scene. However there are also local open meetings within easy reach as well as a small but dedicated group of OK sailors at WSC. During handicap races the OK can hold its own, when the conditions are right; a glance at the results and you can find an OK at or near the top of the fleet.

- **The OK is difficult to sail.** As with all many



dinghies the OK is easy to sail but difficult to sail well! That is the challenge!

- **The OK boom is so low it is a nightmare.** With the carbon mast the boom lifts when the mainsheet is released, you use no kicker upwind (the mainsheet and mast do the work) so it is easy to tack. (Even if you are 6' and not as agile as you used to be!) To gybe you simply have to remember to ease the kicker first and you can gybe standing up if need be.

- **The OK is slow downwind.** The OK goes in a straight line and is perfectly balanced downwind, especially if sailed by the lee. The experienced sailors tuck themselves into the

back corner of the cockpit and have an armchair ride!

- **The OK has a lot of control lines.** Essentially there are 4; they are doubled up so they can be adjusted on either tack, but it looks like a lot: kicker, inhaul, outhaul, and downhaul!

- **The OK is difficult to gybe.** The OK is balanced in the gybe, as long as the kicker is eased, but not let off fully! There is plenty of room to duck under the boom and a mid to strong wind gybe is done standing up and bent forward. It is as easy as any other boat despite the low looking boom.

- **The OK is expensive.** There is a whole range of boats on the market. As with any racing boat the top of the range is expensive, However you can pick up a good quality, second-hand boat for a reasonable price. The beauty is the OK has longevity and it holds its value.

Luke Farthing





# Cadet Helms joining forces in the Lark fleet



Larks will soon be appearing from their winter locations in garages, gardens or Ardleigh Reservoir where some have enjoyed a little winter sailing.

One of the most encouraging developments in the Lark fleet is the number of younger sailors becoming interested and involved in the class, both locally and nationally. Two great examples of this are Alex Enkel and Hettie Thorogood, both of whom have strong backgrounds in the highly competitive Cadet class and are now bringing their experience to the Lark fleet, challenging the seasoned Lark club members.



Championships at Barnt Green, she is continuing to build experience in the class. From a junior sailor's perspective, Larks are great boats to sail. They are fast and quite technical, which means there is always something new to learn. Crewing in a Lark is also a brilliant way for younger sailors to build confidence and develop racing skills while sailing with more experienced helms in the fleet.

As Hettie comments on the winter series: "Having sailed with both Glen and Alex Enkel, I can safely say crewing for Glenn is a lot more laid back. Sailing

Alex Enkel is the current Cadet National Champion and finished 2nd overall at the Cadet World Championships in Lipno, Czech Republic. These achievements earned him an invitation to compete in the prestigious Endeavour Trophy, sailing with uncle Howie, where they competed against the best of the best in the UK sailing world.

Another junior sailor, Hettie Thorogood, also from Waldringfield Cadet Squadron, Hettie has now developed a reputation as a confident and capable Lark crew, with solid racing skills and a good tactical awareness on the water. In fact Hettie came second, as a helm, in last year's Cadet National Championships at Brixham, being only six points behind Alex in the final standings.

Having sailed with different helms over the winter at events including Ardleigh and the Lark Winter



with Alex is slightly more intense and he is not afraid to let you know if something needs doing, but it is also very rewarding and good fun."

During their time in Cadets, Alex and Hettie were friendly rivals, each helping their own another to sail harder and faster. Now, as they move into the Lark class, the dynamic shifts, rather



than competing bow-to-bow, they'll be joining forces in the same boat. With their combined talent, determination, and proven drive, Alex and Hettie are set to become a formidable team and a force to be reckoned with in the fleet.

The pair are a great example of how the Lark class continues to attract and develop young sailors without the expectation of following the RYA pathways and they will be a force to be reckoned with at the Lark Nationals in July. Look out for their progress as they work towards and take part in the champs.



# Memories of Cruising with Mike Pert

In mid June of last year I was fortunate to be invited to crew by long-time friend, Mike Pert for a short cruise on his Halberg Rassy 37.

Heading for Ostend we cast off in the early hours to catch the tide out of Levington Marina - ever vigilant of the Goliath container ship movements through the Felixstowe shipping lanes.

Our outward passage would involve dodging the windfarms and finger-shaped sandbanks radiating out from the Medway approaches, and undertaking a 5 knot crossing of commercial lanes with container colossi generally bearing down at nearer 20 knots.

A fast crossing under sail saw us safely into Ostend Harbour flying the Belgian Courtesy flag and a Yellow Q -acknowledging entry into EU territory -in time for a civilised meal in the North Sea Yacht Club.

Strong winds and immigration administration kept us in port the next day and with unfavourable long-term forecasts of headwinds Mike's masterplan to head North to Holland was scrapped in favour of Plan B -South to France.

Under motor - wind all gone - we headed for the impressive sand dune evacuation beaches of Dunkirk which go on for miles. The Yanmar

diesel purred on faithfully all day.

Berthed at the old Dunkirk marina port we were some 5 miles from the Immigration Building at the the industrial port - where we had to go to get passports stamped for entry and exit. This involved a bendy bus ride,



hazardous motorway crossing and an expensive but ultimately invaluable and resourceful taxi driver.

Mike and I spent the rest of the day in the superb 1940 Museum of Evacuation. The seaward end of the famous harbour mole can still be seen.

A light sailing breeze the next day carried us back across the Channel to Ramsgate spotting in the distance an overcrowded rubber dinghy powered by a tiny outboard making slow progress on the flat sea. Radio traffic indicated that it would be picked up by UK Border Force when the

boat(s) 'crossed the line'.

We were safely moored up in Ramsgate marina when squall winds hit the port that night so strong that we were rocking heavily with bare poles - making us very grateful for the 5 tons of lead keel under us.

The final run up to Suffolk the next day was Champagne sailing on a sparkling sea, keeping well inshore of the notoriously shifty Goodwin Sands and passing through the Lindon Array wind turbine area - a forest of immense towering turbines. We nicked a bit of their wind but I doubt we'll be getting a bill!

**Roger Challis**





# The Tale of the Yellow Peril

Every tidal river has its folklore.... and then it has Patrick, the veteran Laser sailor who refuses to age out gracefully. While others invest in carbon upgrades and fitness plans, Patrick relies on stubbornness, muscle memory and a boat so violently yellow it has its own nickname : “The Yellow Peril”. It is not so much a dinghy as a floating midlife crisis with a sail number.

Time may have weathered Patrick but it hasn't dulled his belief that he alone understands the tide. He studies the river with the narrowed eyes of a man who claims to “know her moods”, as though the prevailing current personally briefs him before racing. The rest of the fleet check their tidetables and forecasts, Patrick checks his instincts and vibes.



He parks himself in some suspicious sliver of favourable current and lets the river do the heavy lifting.

This overly visible veteran will invariably try his luck on the start line with a port tack flyer, sometimes with disastrous consequences, but when he pulls it off it is a vision to behold and fires up his dwindling supply of adrenaline.

His tacks creak, his hiking strap protests. His pre-race warm up consists of muttering about how sails were better in the old days. But when the fleet compresses at the windward mark there he is again: fluorescent, smug, and somehow leading. It's not elegant, it's not athleticism; it is pure tidal opportunism



And yet, infuriatingly, The Yellow Peril often finds its way to the front of the fleet, Not with the sleek acceleration of youth, but with the slow grinding inevitability of a tax bill. While younger sailors fumble with kinetics and overthink laylines, Patrick simply



wrapped in a hull the colour of a warning label.

Mock him if you must, everyone does, but when The Yellow Peril slides ahead yet again, you'll hear Patrick's familiar refrain: “ Experience, boys, Experience”.

**Mark Hodge aka Chat GBT**



# Cruising on the Norfolk Broads

## Three Men in a Boat

On the last Friday in April, I packed Millie up and headed up to the Broads arriving at Loddon at about 17:00 on Friday. The journey was pretty uneventful but did require a couple of stops to re-tie the trailer board. Bungees on a Drascombe Lugger trailer-board don't really work. A hastily chopped up piece of 4mm line and some round turns with half hitches and bowlines thrown in did the trick.

Millie was launched and rigged quickly with the help of Dan and Rory who had just arrived as I pulled up at the marina.



Setting up on Friday evening

was quickly rectified, and we were on our way again. There are two types of outboard users - those who



Breakfast -12 eggs, 2 packs of bacon and strong tea

Once rigged, we made our way to check out where we would be spending the night. Slipping the engine gracefully into reverse we pulled smoothly away from the dock and promptly ground to a halt. I had forgotten to turn the fuel on! This

was quickly rectified, and we were on our way again. There are two types of outboard users - those who have forgotten to switch the fuel on, on an occasion and those who haven't done it ..... yet.

After satisfying ourselves that the



bank, just up from the marina would be suitable for the night we took a short walk to the White Horse for supper. This was delicious and, fed and watered we returned to Millie at about 21:00.

Luckily, we had catered for the rise and fall of the Broads tide, because at about 02:00 we were at least 3ft below where we were when we had gone to bed.

It wasn't a very warm night to say the least but the Snuggpac sleeping bags did their jobs.

The lines were slipped at 07:00 and made our way towards the main section of the river where we joined a couple of other boats who had the same idea and moored up alongside a quay where breakfast was served. Scrambled eggs, bacon and strong tea.



Dan and Rory - Chilly 0700 start

The weather didn't get much warmer for some time, and the crew were well wrapped up late into the morning.

Once breakfast had been devoured, we cast off and headed towards Norwich.

The wind filled in and we managed about an hour under the power of the canvas. The photographs prove that we actually managed to get some sailing in! The sun came out and things started to get a little warmer. I was hoping that the sun coming out might bring with it a breeze as the land heated up, but this wasn't the case and we ended up calling on the Mercury







outboard again to send us on our way, chugging up through Cantley and Brundall.

There are a number of rather suspect looking pubs along this stretch of water that we were on and none of them looked particularly inviting. Possibly, the victims of falling numbers and rising prices.

Our perseverance was rewarded by the Ferry House Pub nestled on the south side of the river and little way east of Postwick, who provided lunch. The meal was most agreeable although the crew would recommend that you give the mushroom soup a bit of a wide berth; it looked a little like the water we had recently arrived on.



With time ticking by and Norwich calling out to us in the distance we once again headed off after helping the skipper of a hire boat avoid a costly disaster. They came in way too fast and nearly took a chunk out of the starboard quarter with the corner of the quay.



When we suggested a round turn and two half hitches as an appropriate knot, he gave us a suitable and courteous nod. We made the suggestion and left, sensing it might not be followed. At least we tried.

The rest of the day went without any particular dramas and we motored our way along up towards Norwich. Between our final berth and the outside of Norwich there are four bridges in total. This meant that we had to take down

the mast. After a quick stop, we were back on our way with the mast and mizzen comfortably stowed on deck.

To treat ourselves after the arduous and taxing sailing we opted for a pint in one of the many watering holes available to us in Norwich. Luckily this one was on the river and so allowed us to keep an eye on Millie while we quenched our thirst.

Rory had packed his equipment and camping gear, by chance, in a



Outside Norwich - still a happy crew

waterproof bag which proved to be a sensible move, as the transfer from the boat to the quayside resulted in one of the bags taking a swim. In Dan's defence the step up from the boat to the wharf was about 6 ft with a sizeable set of railings to contend with as well.



Leaving Baltic Wharf





Mille and the crew spent the night at Baltic Wharf with supper and a shower being much appreciated.

The comfy bed was very welcome and all refreshed, we were awake and up by 07:00 ready for the day ahead. The morning started at a welcome relaxing pace with a long chat with Rory's neighbour about how her and her husband had spent their youth on the water. She was most impressed that Miille stayed the night alongside.

Unfortunately, Dan had to leave us and so with two up we were ready for another day on the river.

We left Norwich at about 09:15 and opted to leave



Peanut on Lookout duties

about 100 meters from the end of the voyage and this was because the skipper forgot to refuel.

Around two hours into the return journey Rory and I opted for a brew and spent about an hour just enjoying the tranquillity. The tea was accompanied by the chocolate bar of the gods, a Snickers. There is little more enjoyable than sitting in a Drascombe Lugger with the sound of the water lapping against the hull, while sipping on a hot beverage. I had to drive home that evening so a cold beer wasn't an option.

Just in case we thought we could relax the broads threw us a cheeky curve ball on the very last section of the trip. As we were heading down towards Loddon, along the backwater, we passed the outflow of Hardley Flood, Rory and I were rather caught off-guard. The tide had been heading out for some time and the outflow was quite fast. Mille lurched to port and the crew were taken by surprise and narrowly avoided falling in a heap in the bottom of the boat.

Whilst away, we were treated to a whole myriad of wildlife from a seal through to a marsh harrier. I suspect that there may be some ornithologist somewhere fretting over the algorithms. Rory had downloaded an app on to his mobile that allowed us to identify birds by their call. I had managed to imitate the Eurasian Curlew and proceed to add the call each time the app

was fired up, much to the dismay of the crew.

We had opted not to stop for lunch and made it back to Loddon for about 15:00. Millie was out of the water in no time at all and I was back at Waldringfield for 17:10 the same evening.

**Jim Jenner**



the mast in the stowed position. We decided not to raise the mast as there was little or no chance of the wind filling in. A sensible decision, as the river was mirrorlike for the rest of the day.

The wind didn't deliver on the Sunday and the trusty Mercury and the amber nectar of outboard fuel, Aspen, once again performed outstandingly. For the whole weekend we only got through about 5 litres of fuel despite motoring for the best part of two days.

The only time the engine cut out was



Afternoon brew with a chocolate bar





# RS200 Fleet Photos



# Team Racing - The Maybush Mince Pie

## On Christmas Eve

After weeks of unseasonably mild temperatures and gentle breezes it was perhaps predictable that we would wake up on Christmas Eve morning to windows rattling in their casements as it blew old boots straight out of the East. Other than the North Sea and bits of Denmark, there's not a lot separating Waldringfield from the Siberian wastelands. If a couple of us hadn't already spent a day collecting and launching ribs in preparation (thankyou McKellar / Wooton and Bushes for bringing your ribs out of hibernation), we might have been tempted to get back under the duvet and call it all off. But the youth of today has to be listened to; and so it was that Angus pronounced it was "more or less sailable".

Earlier in 2025 Waldringfield acquired a flight of 6 fireflies from Glasgow University with the aim of establishing team racing activity on the Deben. It's pay-to-play sailing and designed for everyone to have a go. In 2026 we will have an inter-class competition (what price some wily Wayfarers versus the seadog Squibs?), but it's proving particularly popular with younger members many of whom will head off to university having now acquired some vital team racing skills. After nine sessions through 2025 we identified the opportunity to run a low-key event on Christmas Eve when so many young and/or ex-members would be driving home for Christmas. It was like herding cats in the days leading up to the event but, in spite of the freezing cold, we had a fantastic 26 sailors turn up; enough for 4 teams of 6 with a couple of spare crews.

The cold easterly allowed us to run a team racing inverted-S course right in front of the Waldringfield Boatyard – a big thankyou to them as it meant we could do rib changeovers from the pontoon without getting wet. The wind had moderated just a notch or two but it was still pretty full-on despite reefed mainsails on the Club Fireflies. A double round-robin where each team sailed every other team twice was quite enough to find some worthy winners. Amongst the sailors there were 2 world champions, 7 or 8 national champions and a couple of British Sailing Team sailors so, whilst

not all of them were experienced team racers, the standard of sailing was not too shabby and was certainly very competitive. One family – mine - likened it to a waterborne, festive game of Monopoly with the inevitable



family arguments to come; another, Jamie and Bee Harris, got back in a boat together for the first time in ages (cadet worlds in Garda 2015?) and so avoided just such an issue. I think I counted 5 families with more than one representative sailing. After around 3 hours of racing, it was getting dark, the tide was on the turn and we had to get the ribs recovered.... and anyway someone had said earlier that the whole point was an excuse to get to the Maybush. Great fun, thrills and spills, traps, mark 3 sweeps, spins, a few black flags, and even the odd capsizes. To the victors the spoils – Team 2 prevailed (Angus/ Flora, Hattie/ Immy/Max, Alex/ James) with one more race win than the other teams. And so into the Maybush Pub where it was great to see so many Club members turning up to have a watch and join in the craic.





Looking forwards, there are more team racing sessions through the season, a repeat trip to the Eric Twiname Championships, an inter-class team racing event on 6th June and maybe come September, a little jaunt up north with a full double stacker for the Southport 24 hour race. We think this team racing on Christmas Eve might even become a thing and, in the spirit of team racing events with silly names, we'll call it the Maybush Mince Pie next year. All we need is to continue the enthusiasm, and for more people to give



team racing a try and join in the fun.

**John Ogden**

## Dragonflies and the Larkmans

Many members of the sailing club will know of Larkman's Boat Yard. They look after and store many of the yachts moored along the Deben. The Larkman family have had a long relationship with the Waldringfield Dragonfly, and without their skill and knowledge there would be less Dragonflies around to be sailed today.

The first Dragonfly was built in 1949 and the last one in 1963. For over sixty of those years the Larkman family have been involved with the Dragonfly class. In the early years many of the boats found their way to Larkman's yard for maintenance and winter storage.

I never had the privilege to meet Dick Larkman, but by all accounts he was a chap who enjoyed a chat and a chance to put the world to rights. In their yard at Melton they had a racking system for storing the Dragonflies three high in their main boat shed. The area they were stored in is now where tea and cake is taken in the boat shed, a fitting tribute to the past winter home of the Dragonfly!

Dawn Larkman remembers the many hours spent sanding, plugging and varnishing the Dragonflies that they housed in these racks. Also Steve Larkman recently said that he remembered as a child, sanding boats when the boatyard was located in Waldringfield, before they moved to Melton, and that was sixty years ago!

These days the Larkmans still have a very close relationship with the Dragonfly class and their current

boat owners, as they still help to maintain the remaining boats in the fleet when needed. Over the winter months on the mezzanine floor, you will often find a couple of Dragonflies in for some attention.



No17 fully restored August 2024







Tea and cake with Dawn, Auden, James and Steve

In 2024, to help celebrate the seventy fifth year since the first Dragonfly was launched, everyone at Larkman's yard contributed to the full restoration of Dragonfly No 17. This was the first ever boat launched in 1949. Most people would have burnt number seventeen as she was in quite a state, but with the skill of James Palmer and Fred and Steve Larkman, they beautifully restored this historic boat.

The work started in January 2024 with all of the inside and outside scraped back to bare wood. All the ribs have been replaced, the transom repaired, with a new centre case and keel and then finally a new deck was fitted. As ever this is not the end of the story! No 17 then had ten coats of varnish applied to turn the boat from a ragamuffin into a princess! Many of you will have seen number seventeen on display in the car park at Waldringfield over the Cartoon weekend 2024 and will have had a chance to appreciate the beauty of Larkman's workmanship and the time spent to bring this historic boat back to her sailing life.

When number seventeen took to the water in spring 2025, the boat was a tribute to the Larkmans and their continued support over many years to the Waldringfield Dragonfly.

In October 2025, the Larkmans agreed yet again to host another restoration. No22 (Midsummer) which is currently undergoing a full refit. The history of Midsummer was that she was taken away from Waldringfield in early 1990 and lived down at Wrabness and was owned and sailed by Billy Ridges. In the past No22 underwent an extensive restoration, but unfortunately she had been left in the hot summer sun for some time and had some split planks and rivet lines. These are currently being repaired. Midsummer should be on the water this year and we hope that Billy could enjoy a sail in her once again.

If anyone would like to own a Dragonfly, or sail one for a season please get in touch.

**Richard Smithson**



No 22 Midsummer under restoration





# A Rigging Endorsement

**B**oat owners quickly learn the difference between equipment that works and equipment that works reliably. Thoughtful rigging and deck setup play a significant role in how enjoyable and dependable a sailing season turns out to be, whether for relaxed cruising or competitive sailing.

## **Why winter and early season checks matter**

The period leading into the sailing season is an ideal time to take a closer look at rigging and deck systems. Early spring inspections often reveal issues that are not immediately obvious once boats are back in regular use. Standing rigging that appears sound can show early fatigue under closer examination, deck fittings may be approaching their service limits, and control systems can develop wear patterns that affect performance and reliability.

Small decisions made early in the season frequently prevent far larger problems later on. We regularly see minor components, inexpensive and easy to replace, becoming the cause of significant failures simply because they were overlooked. Insurance data supports this, with many mast failures traced back to components that routine inspection would have identified in advance.

## **Rigging inspections prevent expensive failures.**

Standing rigging typically reaches the end of its service life at around 10 years or 40,000 miles. This is not a guideline but a safety threshold. Incorrectly tensioned rigging places unnecessary strain on masts, hull structures, and fittings, while tired running rigging increases friction, reduces control, and makes sail handling harder than it needs to be.

## **Tired ropes cause more problems than most people realise**

Replacing worn ropes brings immediate benefits. Fresh running rigging reduces friction through blocks, holds more reliably in cleats, is easier to handle under



load, and offers more consistent stretch characteristics, making sail settings easier to repeat.



These improvements are felt straight away on the water.

## **Quiet, practical support**

Regular rigging inspections and early maintenance help owners avoid the disruption of mid-season failures. Whether replacing dinghy halyards and sheets, checking standing rigging, or reviewing deck hardware alignment, proactive attention keeps boats safer, more reliable, and more enjoyable to sail.

Good rigging support is ultimately about prevention rather than repair. Early season checks allow work to be planned sensibly, costs to be managed, and the sailing season to be enjoyed with confidence rather than interrupted by avoidable problems.

Compass Rigging & Deck Systems is based in Aldeburgh and supports boats across the local area and beyond. Our approach is practical, considered, and focused on keeping owners sailing rather than firefighting problems.

If you'd like advice on rigging, inspections, or winter maintenance planning, we're always happy to have a conversation.

**Aaron Woolf**  
**01473 233445**



# ILCA LASER OPEN

Sunday 3rd May 2026

Waldringfield  
Sailing Club 

4 races for ILCA 4, 6 & 7

Serving as the opening event of the Eastern GP circuit, this regatta features four races separated by a lunch break, combined committee boat starts with prizes awarded for each rig, and permits the use of replica equipment.

<b>Briefing</b>	<b>First race</b>
10:15	11:15