

The Mainsheet

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER
2009

Steve Blackburn wins Enterprise NW Top Helm

In a traumatic finally to the North West Enterprise Top Helm series, Steve Blackburn clinched the trophy for the second time in his sailing career.

The last event is the November Plate at West Lancashire Yacht Club. It is usually a exciting and this year was no exception with the racing eventually having to be abandoned after a 66mph gust (recorded in the club house) wiped out the entire fleet!

So without a single race completed the results for the Top Helm series stood from the previous open meeting, with Steve Blackburn at the top of the table.

Steve has had a very suc-

cessful season on the circuit this year, winning no less than 3 opens and second place in 2 more, leaving him 4 points clear ahead.

His winning open meetings included a superb win on the sea at West Lancashire Yacht Club, a win at Bassenthwaite Sailing Club at the start of the regatta week, and also a Wigan Sailing Club at the Enterprise North West Area Championship.

Blackburn has had various crews through the year, but I'm sure he'd be first to thank Nick Hampson and Royston Taggart for their invaluable role in the boat—this year being more challenging than ever

with the advent of the flyaway jib pole .

Other Pilkington Members who competed this year were Richard Critchley and Royston Taggart (who it seems is a fairly good helm as well as a stunning heavy wind crew!)

Richard finished a respectable 7th and Royston 8th—not bad considering he missed a lot of opens due to crewing for Steve Blackburn towards the end of the series. Royston's best result of the year being a win at Pilkington Open with Alan Roberts 2nd and Richard achieved a 2nd place at Winsford Flash in very light and flukey conditions

Special points of interest:

- Steve Blackburn wins Enterprise Top Helm Series
- Diane Roberts wins Guy Fawkes Pursuit Race at Leigh and Lowton SC

Winter Talk Nights

We are now well underway with our winter talk series as organized by Caroline O'Brien.

The theory behind these talks is to try and share the wealth of knowledge within the more experi-

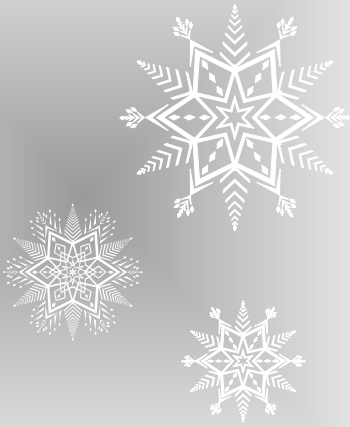
enced members with the less experienced.

The talk series started with ropework given by Roger Lancaster. Everyone enjoyed the evening and even those who thought they knew all

the knots, learnt a couple of things!

The second talk was on boat speed and given by Richard Critchley. It was received very well and we were particularly glad to be joined by two

members of Winsford Flash SC. See the back page for the dates and topics of future talks.



Consideration of Others

The club is short of space for rigging, launching and recovering boats and it is important that we all show some consideration for others while we carry out these tasks.

- Please remember that everyone else has to rig their boat too, and make sure that you leave enough space for others to exit the compound easily.
- If you're not racing, don't launch or recover at the start or finish of a race. You'll get in the way and should only have to wait for five minutes or so.
- Launch in good time so we don't have a mad dash for the slipway after the warning signals are sounded!
- Remember that a swinging boom can be dangerous and take care not to hit anyone.
- Take the time to help others launch and recover launching trolleys so they don't cause an obstruction. Remember that single handers have particular difficulty with launching trolleys.
- Don't push into the slipway if it is busy: take the trouble to hang back and wait for an appropriate gap. Have consideration and patience if you can see others waiting.
- Clear the slipway as quickly as you can and look around to help others to land if help is needed. Again, single handers have a particular problem in recovering their launching trolley.

“Remember that single handers have particular difficulty with launching trolleys.”

As a club we're quite good at most of this. Let's remember all of it a remain a friendly place to sail!

Mayor Visits Mere St Helens Star Thursday November 12

The Mayor and Mayoress of St Helens, Terry Shields and his wife June, were on a even keel for the 20th anniversary of charity events staged by the award winning Pilkington Sailing Club.

The gala day took place at Eccleston Mere and was attended by both the Rainford and Prescott Round Tables and also the Rotary Club of Prescott. The event raised a fantastic total

of £1,500 from a sponsored sailing race in the morning, a tombola, afternoon tea and a barbecue.

Pilkington Sailing Club has been a long standing supporter of local charities and the gala days have raised an awesome £34,000 over 20 years for the Lilac Centre at Whiston Hospital.

It is easy to forget the local involvement our club has in the St Hel-

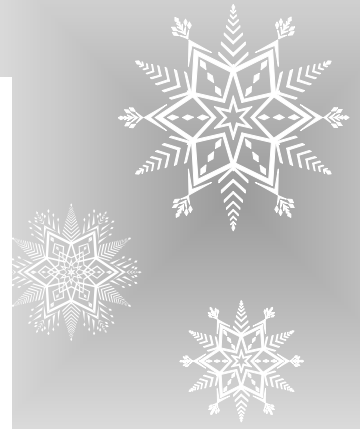
ens Borough. The club runs courses for young and old, with taster days and RYA certificate training. Over the past two years Pilkington Sailing Club have won St Helens Sports Council “Club of the Year” and this year received a further accolade from the RYA Merseyside and Cheshire “Onboard Club of the Year” award.

The Lilac Centre have written a letter of thanks to Freda Lunt for her continuing work in raising money for this worthwhile cause. The letter is posted on the clubhouse noticeboard

Maintenance at the club

Trevor Fillingham and his team have carried out a series of maintenance tasks around the club, including the replacement of light fittings in the clubhouse and outside, repairing the push button to activate the outside lights from the gate (did you know it was there?) and maintaining the security system. They have also carried out remedial work to the OOD box to prevent further water ingress, following the episode earlier in the season that destroyed the OOD box computer.

Various items of boat maintenance are also on the agenda, with particular help from: Robert Dickinson, who is repairing the composite club boat (used by the B team in the 24 hour race); Rob Tyler who is painting one of the club boats; and Alan Boardman, who is carrying out a variety of jobs including sail, rudder and centreboard maintenance.



Winter Series—Clothing

It is very important that all members who plan to sail this winter season comply with the winter clothing rule which states that FULL WETSUIT OR DRY-SUIT MUST BE WORN.

At this time of year, hypothermia can kick in very quickly and can be fatal.

Hypothermia occurs

when the body's core temperature is lowered due to exposure to cold. It can occur even at mild temperatures if exposure is prolonged.

The body's natural defences against the cold consist of restricting the flow of blood to the skin so as to prevent heat loss, along with

shivering and releasing

hormones to generate heat.

These measures are limited and are usually inadequate to maintain body temperature in cold environments.

There is no flexibility in these rules and anyone found not complying will have to be removed from the water.

“At this time of year, hypothermia can kick in very quickly and can be fatal.”

Sailing Committee update—Nick Hampson

Under the leadership of Sailing Secretary Bill Rhodes and Ray Lewis, the sailing committee is now meeting regularly in order to monitor the implementation of the new starting system and to update and modernise the organisation of club racing. Key actions so far include:

- Troubleshooting the new computerised starting system (thanks to Andy Riley for the time and effort he has invested in making the system so effective)
- Publishing race results on the website weekly.
- Cleaning up the OOD box (several members have helped to tidy up the hut and the poles have been re-painted)
- Scrapping the “signing off” system in favour of a single signing on at the beginning of each race session.
- Starting to revise the OOD and safety boat roster to include far more members. Implementing a system for OOD training and arranging further safety boat qualification and training.
- Modernising the content and format of the sailing instructions and programme by Richard Hampson, with the additional aim of making the document available as a pdf on the website.

Compound banter...

PILKINGTON SAILING CLUB

Burrows Lane
Eccleston,
St Helens
Merseyside.

Newsletter Editor,
Richard Critchley
Rich.critchley@btopenworld.com



After our bumper double issue last time, I had a few complaints that the text has been too small for those that receive paper copies to read—so I send my apologies to those who had to dig out magnifying glasses and microscopes! I have increased it slightly for this issue so I will be interested to see if the complaints continue! I am at the forefront of the constant battle to cram in as much as I can to each edition—and keep the photocopying costs down. On this point, if you have an e-mail address and still receive a paper copy, please get in touch with me, and I shall add you to the e-mail list!

More great news this time with Steve Blackburn winning the prestigious Top Helm Trophy—many congratulations Steve. I'll try and give you a run for your money next year! Well done to Chris Parker (WLYC) and our own Diane Roberts who won the Guy Fawkes pursuit race at Leigh and Lowton Sailing Club, with Stevie B and Royston Taggart in 2nd place out of 80 boats, including former Enterprise World Champion Neil Marsden. Liz Wilcox also achieved a fantastic 7th place at the event. Brilliant results all round.

On a different tack, did you know that there were ballroom dancing lessons every Wednesday at 8 o'clock in the clubhouse? Dance teacher Steve Kelly is on hand to instruct and help all follow in the footsteps of Ken Gutteridge, our in house Fred Astaire! Contact Freda Lunt if you're interested, or just turn up next week.

Dates for your diary.

AGM Thursday 26 November at 7.30pm. It's your club: come along and see how the General Committee works and have your say in how the club is run.

Christmas Party Saturday 12 December with entertainment from the Hot Foot Jazzmen. £9 per person reduced to £4 for juniors. Advance booking as soon as possible please to Freda Lunt or Trevor Fillingham.

Children's Christmas Party Sunday 20 December at 3.30pm. Fun for all of the family with Father Christmas arriving by boat. The Mayor will arrive at 4pm and afternoon tea will be available for all. Please let Freda Lunt know if you are bringing your under 11s along.