



# TELLTALES

The Journal of Priory Sailing Club  
June 2007

www.priorysc.org.uk

## COMMODORE'S COLUMN

Welcome to June's Telltales. The summer season is now in full swing. Well, as I write this column I have just dried out from a soaking during the racing this morning!

In this issue of Telltales we have a number of new features, a review of the events just gone, and up and coming events.

I was very pleased to present Ruth Baker with the inaugural Robin Steffens Shield for being the first Under 17 in the 2007 Icicle Series. Donated by Sue Steffens, the trophy will be awarded to the first under 17 in each of the club series throughout the year. Thank you Sue.

The Volunteers Column will be a regular feature now to keep you updated with events where we need your support. And what better way to start it off than with an offer of money from the RYA to support the training of club members!

I am also very pleased to report that the club has been accepted into the RYA OnBoard scheme – OnBoard is the RYA's flagship programme aiming to further develop the sport of sailing amongst the

### Inside this issue: -

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youth in the UK. What does this mean for us all at PSC? – see the article on page 3.

And lastly, a special new feature for those members who want to sail during the week – we now have a Sailing Buddies section on the web bulletin board. Log on and see if someone else wants to sail at the same time as you do during the week.

David Kirk  
Commodore

## DATES FOR YOUR SUMMER DIARY

Sunday May 20	Olympic Pursuit Series races 1 & 2
Sunday May 27	Start of the Summer Series
Saturday June 9	Open day - taster sessions for the public 10.00 - 16.00 - see page 2
Sunday June 10	Open day - taster sessions for the public 10.00 - 16.00 - see page 2
Sunday June 17	Club lunch 12.45 - see page 3
Sunday June 24	RNLI Regatta for boards and dinghies - first of three races at 11.00 - see page 2
Saturday June 30	Club's fun evening including sailing and BBQ from 16.00
Saturday 7 July	Club lunch - see page 3
Saturday 14 July	Beds/Cambs Regatta at Grafham Water 11.00 start 3 races - see page 2
Monday 13 August to Friday 17 August	PSC Dinghy Junior Course 9.30 to 16.30 Monday to Friday
Saturday 18 August	Topper Open Meeting - first race 11.00 - see page 8
Saturday 1 September	Juniors' Regatta - see page 8
Sunday 2 September	Last D/Buccaneers session - training day for Heron National Championship
Saturday 8 September	Heron National Championship - see page 3
Sunday 23 September	Last races in the Autumn Series
Sunday 30 September	First races in the Frostbite Series - first race starts at 10.30

## VOLUNTEERS COLUMN.

This is now a regular feature to give you an update on where we need help and support across all the activities in the club.

### RYA.

The RYA has contacted us to say that they are going to provide financial support to help the club train the volunteers we need to keep all our events going. At this stage, we do not know how they will provide the funds (i.e. matched funding), but it will be a substantial fund for all clubs to access.

To help us prepare to spend this, the committee has agreed to produce a training needs analysis report to see what skills we have, the gaps and the aspiration of club members to offer support. Through this, you will be able to get trained in a range of courses, for example...

- Powerboat Level 1 and 2
- RYA First Aid
- RYA Assistant Dinghy Sailing Instructor
- Dinghy Sailing Level 1 and 2
- National Sailing Scheme Modules
- Sailing Instructor
- Club Racing Coach

So, what do you need to do? Please email me (davidkirk@beeb.net) with the details of any qualifications you have, and, more importantly, any you would like to get.

### Urgent Volunteer Training – Power Boat

We are going to run a couple of courses for Powerboat Level 1 – this gives you the basic qualification needed to man the powerboat. It is also the first step to being a fully qualified safety boat helm and crew.

The club will pay for the course. In return, you will sign up to a safety boat duty...

The powerboat is critical, without it we cannot run the many events we plan. Places will be limited, so please contact me if you would like to join in.

### Volunteers – Pirates and Buccaneers

Volunteers are needed for Saturday afternoons from May 5<sup>th</sup> to July 28<sup>th</sup> to work with the Pirates. We also need help with the Buccaneers on Sunday afternoons from May to September (1.30 to 4).



You will get wet, so if you have a wet suit, please bring it; if not, we will provide one. But please bring a set of shoes that can get wet (sorry, no Wellington boots.)

### Volunteers – Race Officer

We urgently need to train new members to run the races, both on a Sunday morning and at the open events we run through the year.

Please contact Paul Williams to volunteer, paul@williamsontheweb.plus.com or 01234 325449.

Do not worry if you have not done it before, Paul will pair you up with an experienced member who can show you what to do.

### Officer of the Day

Do not forget your office of the day... you do the duty so that others can enjoy the sailing... when you are sailing, some else is being officer of the day.

### Volunteer thank you 1<sup>st</sup> September 2007

As a thank you to everyone who has volunteered, the RYA has given us some money to pay for a BBQ... this will be on the evening of the 1<sup>st</sup> September, after the Junior and Youth Regatta.. put it in your diary

### Volunteer Action Points – please tick these off...

Email details of RYA qualifications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sign up to a power boat course	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Support Pirates and Buccaneers</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sign up to be a race officer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Officer of the Day	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Book the 1 <sup>st</sup> September for the Volunteer BBQ	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

## MAJOR CLUB PROJECTS

### Project Galley - Kitchen appeal

If you have kitchen fitting skills or have worktops, units, or a good electric cooker that are about to be thrown away that the club could use, then we would be pleased to hear from you. Offers of help to Peter Barton please - 01234 871237.

- Phase 1 of this project is complete. A new fridge and water boiler have been installed. The benches and cupboards around the sink have been made good. Excellent job, thank you.
- Phase 2 now awaits – see the Kitchen Appeal above for our requirements.

### **Project Man Over-Board**

- This project is concerned with planning the purchase of a new safety boat. This will start by agreeing the type of boat to buy and the amount of money to spend. We will then work on how to raise the funds for it.
- This will be discussed in June's Committee meeting
- If you have any thoughts and/or experience, please send them to me for inclusion at the committee meeting

### **Project New Racer**

- Through our membership of the RYA OnBoard Scheme (see the other article), the RYA have awarded us a £2,000 grant to buy a two-hander training boat.
- This is matched funding and the committee has agreed to purchase a RS Feva and some racing sails for the PICOs.
- This new boat will become part of our training and racing fleet.
- Increase our volunteer base
- Improve our chances of securing public funding
- Improve our profile in the local area.

### **RYA OnBoard**

Priory Sailing Club is OnBoard – and our Principal, Brian Stanbridge is the regional OnBoard Development Officer for the RYA – excellent news on both counts.

**So, what is OnBoard?** <http://www.ruob.co.uk/> or <http://www.rya.org.uk/Youth/onboard/infocforclubs.htm>

'OnBoard' is the RYA's flagship programme aiming to further develop the sport of sailing amongst the youth of Great Britain.

OnBoard is a new programme to introduce sailing and windsurfing as a sport for young people. In the next ten years, OB wants to introduce half a million children to sailing and windsurfing.

Sailing and windsurfing have everything, from a relaxing leisure experience to high adrenaline, high-performance sport. OB gets you out on the water, teaches you new skills and lets you have great fun too!

### **Why at Priory Sailing Club...**

- Increase our membership base by attracting new active sailors
- Develop existing junior club activities
- Support youth race training activities
- Increase our volunteer base
- Improve our chances of securing public

funding

- Improve our profile in the local area
- Become a successful and vibrant club.

### **What do we get?**

- Access to grants for volunteer development and training
- An allocation of Henri-Lloyd clothing for volunteers running OB youth activities
- Access to grants for OnBoard equipment
- Local expert advice on junior activities, club facilities and equipment.

### **NEW - Sailing Buddies – web site bulletin board**

If you are looking for a second boat to sail with, log onto the bulletin board and see if someone else is going at the same time. If not, post a message and wait for a reply.

This new service can be used for all sorts of reasons, not just social sailing. If you are looking for some help rigging your boat, or want some guidance or instructions on say sailing techniques or how to start a race, just log on and ask who can come down and help.

### **CLUB OPEN WEEKEND - 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE**

This is the weekend that the club is inviting members of the public to try sailing and windsurfing. The taster sessions will be available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days. Persuade your non-sailing friends to come and have go.

We shall need your help onshore and on the water, so do **please** inform David Kirk, ([davidkirk@beeb.net](mailto:davidkirk@beeb.net) or 01234 307837) when you will be helping.

### **SAILING FOR OUR DISABLED MEMBERS**

Assisted dinghy sailing for our disabled members on Wednesday evenings from 6.30 began on 16<sup>th</sup> May and continues every Wednesday through to 12<sup>th</sup> September.

Would those members who intend to sail on the Wednesday Club Evenings but would also be available to rig, launch, recover and de-rig boats, and crew or helm with a disabled sailor, or operate the safety boat either as a qualified helm or as a crew member, when required, please enter their name and telephone number and tick the appropriate columns on a list on the clubhouse notice board, the one just inside the door at the top of the stairs - you cannot miss it. Or ring or e-mail Roy on 01234 400934 or [beardsbarn@hotmail.com](mailto:beardsbarn@hotmail.com)

The sailing is done in the club Wanderer with a safety boat in close attendance.

## CLUB LUNCHES

June 17<sup>th</sup> Sunday 12.45

July 7<sup>th</sup> Saturday 12.45

All members and their guests are invited to a light lunch in the clubhouse on either or both of these dates and lunch will be free of charge to members and visitors. Invitations are extended to the parents and the children attending the Pirates courses on July 7<sup>th</sup>, and the Buccaneers and parents on June 17<sup>th</sup>, and others who have shown an interest in PSC and wish to learn more.

Committee members will be present to provide information about the club and its activities to guests who are interested in taking a sailing course or in club membership. There will be the opportunity for those interested to sign up for a taster session, a training course or as a member there and then.

Club lunches are planned to be an enjoyable social occasion to meet members and potential members and to promote the club to our guests.

Please come in sailing gear or dress down or up as you wish. It is always helpful if you can tell David Kirk on 01234 307837 if you are coming and how many guests you wish to bring. Children Welcome.

## BEDS/CAMBS REGATTA AT GRAFHAM WATER

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July is the date for this year's event, which is open to members of sailing clubs in Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire. It is an opportunity to sail on a very large area of water, and in a large fleet, as there could be around 50 boats of many classes racing on handicap. There are prizes for individuals and club teams.

You need to arrive early to register, pay the entrance fee, attend the briefing, rig and launch, then sail out to the start line, which could be a mile off shore, for the 11.00 start of the first of three races. The other two are after lunch. Each race lasts for about an hour and the course is usually trapezoidal. Try it; it will be a good experience!

Any number of people can sail from a club, so why not gather a group from Priory and all sail in this Regatta. The results for the best three or four boats from a club will be entered for the winning club prize.

## A VIEW ON CLUB RACES

The Sunday morning races that the club arranges through the year provide a social yet competitive environment for people to participate in dingy sailing. I have been involved myself in competitive sport for the last 25 years, however only with sailing for the last 3-4 years.

In that time I have found racing at Priory a refreshing experience, it is what you want to make it. For me it continues to be a way for me to improve my sailing, to be involved socially with the club and also to compete. For the better sailors it can be the springboard to open

events. For people new to the sport it's an excellent way to meet the other members of the club and to learn how to sail - each of those who participate will have their own specific reasons.

To continue this ethos I would like to do two things: firstly to say everybody is welcome, irrespective of their level of experience. Having started sailing late in life I found those who raced extremely helpful. And speaking to others my experience is echoed by them, which reflects the overall ambience of the club. So if you have an hour or two to spare on a Sunday morning and would like to race please turn up and participate irrespective of experience.

Secondly, in order to improve the racing experience I would like to gather suggestions. They can be anything on starting times, races, and organisation. If you have any thoughts on the subject of how racing can be improved, speak to me or email paul@williamsontheweb.plus.com with your idea.

Paul Williams

## RNLI REGATTA

**Sunday June 24<sup>th</sup>** is the day for this year's RNLI Regatta for boards and dinghies. There are three 50-minute races, two handicap and one pursuit, with the best two results to count for fun prizes for all-comers, novices and young sailors.

The first race starts at 11.00 and the other two will be after lunch, which will be available in the clubhouse. Prize giving will be around 16.00.

You will have to pay a modest entrance fee to enter the Regatta and all money raised will go to the RNLI. There may also be some RNLI "goodies" on sale during the lunch period. Come for the social if not for the racing.

**WANTED: ROAD TRAILER (and preferably launching trolley) FOR INTERNATIONAL 420.  
Contact Jonathan Pitman. 01234 831333 or  
07976 704612 or pitman@dial.pipex.com**

## ALL-FOOLS RACE

On a bright, sunny but windy day, force 5 to 6 from the north east, nineteen helms, all sailing single handed, and many spectators turned out for the All-fools race, which this year coincided with 1<sup>st</sup> April. The very strong gusty wind, some of the gusts must have been well into force 6 or may even have touched force 7, made sailing conditions particularly severe. Notwithstanding this, it was very pleasing to see that about half of the helms were our very young sailors.

The conditions however caused many to capsize, and some of these, both experienced and very young helms, understandably retired. Our young sailors who retired should be very pleased that they managed to sail part of

the race in such severe conditions and will look back upon this as a good experience for the next time they meet severe weather. Of the nineteen helms entered, six completed one or both races, and their positions are shown in the table below: -

Helm		Craft	Points			Position
			Race 1	Race 2	Total	
Sarah Poxton		Topper	1	1	2	1
Ruth Baker	Novice	Topper	2	3	5	2
Paul Williams		Laser	4	2	6	3
Jon Jennings		Laser Radial	5	4	9	4
Tony Ogborn		Heron	3	20	23	5
Bill Lucas		Pico	20	5	25	6

Congratulations to Sarah who sailed brilliantly and, in spite of capsizing about six times, secured first place in both races to win the event. Congratulations to Ruth, who was not only the best novice but also secured second place.

After such an invigorating day, both for those sailing and those watching, it was windy on shore too, all were pleased to retreat to the clubhouse for prize giving and refreshments, the latter very kindly provided by Julie and Amelia Kirk. Many thanks to Julie and Amelia and to the race officers Roy Beard and Jackie Evans. Many thanks also to the safety boat helms and crews of David Kirk, Chris Jennings, Glyn Powell, Jim Thornett and Gordon de Sousa, who had a very busy day.

### HERONS BUT NO STREAKERS!

The club calendar shows that on the 8<sup>th</sup> September PSC is scheduled to host a Heron National Championship and a Streaker Open Meeting. Well, this is not now correct. The club is hosting the Heron National Championship on that day but the Streaker Association have cancelled the Streaker Open Meeting. They are holding their Inland Championship on that day, and also on the 9<sup>th</sup>, at the Pennine SC. We shall therefore have only Herons on the water.

As far as is known, this will be the first year that the club has not hosted a Streaker Open Meeting since the first one held at Priory in 1989. It was not until the fifth Streaker Open meeting in 1993 that the Herons had their first Open Meeting at Priory with the Streakers, which was organised by John Howard, as recorded in the History of Priory Sailing Club.

The following year, 1994, Priory hosted the Heron National Championship alongside the Streaker Open Meeting. It hosted another Championship in 2000 and again in every year since 2003.

### *PSC Committee 2007*

#### *Flag Officers*

Commodore	David Kirk	01234 307837
Vice Commodore	Tim Hewett	01234 319827
Rear Commodore	Glyn Powell	01234 349001

#### *Officers*

Hon Treasurer	Peter Barton	01234 871237
Hon Secretary	Sue Baker	01933 412083
Hon Membership Secretary	Tony Ogborn	01234 708010

#### *Members*

Member	Mark Ingledeu	01234 406386
Member	Chris Jennings	01234 855249
Member	John Morrow	01525 405323
Member	Paul Sharrock	01234 308701
Member	Gordon de Sousa	01462 451031
Member	Sarah Poxton	—
Junior Representative	Ruth Baker	—
RYA Principal	Brian Stanbridge	01234 403933 or 07867 531400
BCA Representative	Brian Stanbridge	01234 403933 or 07867 531400



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Fax: 0171 7231761

16 High Street  
Rushden NN10 0PR  
Tel: 01933 397000  
Fax: 01933 397010

1 Kings Road  
Flitwick MK45 1BH  
Tel: 01525 750100  
Fax: 01525 750106

4 Billing Road  
Northampton NN1 5QB  
Tel: 01604 233200  
Fax: 01604 232593

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## HERON ISLAND

Heron Island lies 50 miles off the east coast of Australia. We travelled the fifty miles over the ocean by helicopter from Gladstone in New South Wales. The island is a true coral cay near the southern end of the Great Barrier Reef. It seemed the right place for a keen Heron dinghy sailor and a keen birdwatcher to go for a very special holiday.

The ocean there is often rough and no place for small sailing boats, so there was no dinghy sailing and the boat taking scuba divers and snorkellers to special places on the reef had two 80 HP Marina outboard engines just in case one failed.

The coral fish were truly of every colour, with brilliant blues and greens prominent. The very small fish of 2 – 3 cms were also bright blue or orange. The sharks were black tip and white tip reef sharks and came to within inches of the beach to eat the newly hatched green turtles. It is said that only one in a thousand young turtles survive to return twenty years later to lay their own eggs.

Every evening in February we tourists walk the beaches at dusk to see the huge 120 cm female green turtles come ashore to dig a large hole, scattering sand in all directions, above the high tide mark in which to lay their 100 or so eggs. Next morning all that remains on the beach are the tracks of their flippers. Four weeks later a hundred or so green turtles hatch simultaneously, each one about the size of a tennis ball, and run down the beach together and swim out to sea, some make it, but others are caught on the beach by Silver Seagulls or in the water by Reef Sharks.

Bird watching was inevitable because 70,000 black noddy terns squawk all day and 50,000 wedge tail shearwaters cry all night (ear plugs essential). For the experts white tailed sea eagles, brown boobies and wandering tattlers could be seen everyday on the beach. The hotel was expensive and 3 star, not 5 star, for £100 a day each, but at least the food was excellent. The island is run by Voyages and can be found in the Thomas Cook or Kuoni Australia brochures. We went on to stay in Sydney and cruise the Murray River before a stopover in Dubai.

It was a wonderful insight into the natural world and we found the Australians brash and delightfully welcoming to a couple of POMS.

Monica & Tony Ogborn

## THE JUNIOR MAINSHEET

So welcome to the second edition of Junior Mainsheet. It contains a lot of information for all of our junior members, but I want first to draw your attention to the article below, announcing a new trophy for junior sailors that has been kindly donated by Sue Steffens in memory of her late husband Robin. Robin was so helpful to all of the junior sailors and to our club in many ways, as the tribute to Robin in the Christmas 2006 Telltales made clear. We are all very grateful to Sue for this wonderful trophy, and will cherish the memory and help that Robin gave so that we might continue to enjoy our sailing.

In addition to the training courses for Pirates, Juniors and Buccaneers, we are having our own regatta on 1<sup>st</sup> September. There is also some good advice on how you can get involved with the Heron National Championship. However, remember, if you are under 14 and you are coming to take part in any of the club's events, Pirates training or club races, which we hope you will do, then there is something very important you need to tell your parents or guardians. They, well - one of them, must accompany you and stay on the shore during the event.

It is not always plain sailing, as you will see from accounts of some of our experienced junior sailors. We are therefore offering a course on rough weather sailing. We should have a good year, so I hope to see you on the water.

Ruth Baker

## THE ROBIN STEFFENS JUNIOR SHIELD

A new PSC trophy has been donated to the club by Mrs. Sue Steffens in memory of Robin and his love of sailing and interest in teaching junior sailors to race in his role as a club coach. The trophy is for the first under 17 in any club series and its first holder is Ruth Baker, who was the best under 17 in the 2007 Icicle Series.

## **PRIORY PIRATES SAILING COURSES 2007**

The Pirates Beginners Course starts on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June for 6 sessions but with no session on July 14<sup>th</sup> because the Beds/Cambs Regatta at Grafham Water is on that date. As usual prior booking is essential, so please telephone Tony Ogborn on 01234 708010 to check if places are still available, or send the Pirates form to Tony by post. This year there is a special emphasis on children attending for all 6 sessions, so that the course syllabus can be completed and so that good progress with sailing ability is more likely to be achieved. Tim Hewett and Sarah Poxton will lead for the Oppie courses and Tony Ogborn and Sue Baker for the Topper courses.

Buccaneers sessions, which are for young people who can sail and now want to learn to race, run on Sunday afternoons at 14.00 through to September 2<sup>nd</sup>. No booking necessary.

## **JUNIORS DINGHY SAILING COURSE**

The Juniors Dinghy Sailing Course run by Priory Sailing Club instructors and coaches is for club members' children between 8 and 18 years and costs £10 (£5 to cover safety boats fuel and breakages and £5 for certificate and log book). Non-members can participate if places are available at a cost of joining as a junior member £30 plus the £10 fee. Please let Tony Ogborn know (01234 708010) if you want to come. The course will include the chance to gain RYA awards Stage 1, 2 and 3 and the Start Racing Module. If you are coming please let Tony know which of these awards you will be aiming to achieve. The course is from 9.30 to 16.30 on Monday to Friday, August 13<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **"ROUGH WEATHER" FOR BUCCANEERS!**

It happens to us all at some time, the wind gets up, we capsize, capsize again - and again, and eventually, we end up, exhausted and retiring from the race. It can be really discouraging, especially when it happens time and time again. But, there are a few things to remember!

You're not just racing for points in the series, or to win, but you're also sailing for your overall experience. This includes racing in light winds, strong winds, winning races, and retiring from them! The way I see it is, I may have lost out by retiring, but overall, I've gained some more experience by racing (or at least, trying to!) in stronger winds than I ever have before!

Another thing is, it's not "giving up" by retiring. I had to retire recently; I'd capsized more times than I could recall, I was freezing and my boat was trying to do the impossible on Priory lake - a total inversion! After coming back in I said to someone that I'd really wanted to finish the race but I felt like I'd given up. To which he replied, it's not giving up, it's knowing when enough is enough, which sometimes, takes more 'nerve' than ploughing on to complete the race

So, remember: don't worry if you feel as though you have to retire - it is normal and happens to all the best sailors in the world! In the end, it is much better coming in early then doing yourself an injury

It's also helpful to remember that as you get older and bigger, being able to stay in the race and cope with rough weather will become more manageable.

Hopefully, this article has helped a bit, but there is also going to be some rough weather training during a Buccaneer session to learn how to handle rough conditions! The date is Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> June at 14.00 hours.

Good luck and see you on the water!

Ruth

## TOPPER OPEN SATURDAY 18<sup>th</sup> AUGUST

This year sees Priory host its fourth Topper Open on Saturday August 18<sup>th</sup>, which comes at the end of the Junior Dinghy weeklong course. This is an ideal event for you youngsters to practise all the skills you will have learnt over the week, and for all the instructors to marvel at your quick learning! Even if you have not attended the Junior Dinghy course, or if you think you are not good enough and therefore shouldn't compete, think again! The Open is still a great experience - as anyone who competed last year will almost certainly tell you! For those slightly more experienced Juniors who hope to go to other Topper Opens later in the year, then our own event is a good chance for you to get a feel for what it is like to compete against some highly serious sailors.

It is an all-day event, so make sure you are available! However, if at the moment you are not sure about being able to come down all day, then I'm sure late entries can be accommodated. There will be an entry fee and a charge for lunch, totaling around £10 or so.

For anybody wishing to compete using a club boat, be warned - there is a limited number of Toppers available, so to be sure of getting a boat, please speak to a Committee member, your Junior Representative (Ruth!!) or myself, and we shall compile a list! It really is first come, first served, so please book your place as soon as you know whether you want to/can come!! Hope to see you all there!

Sarah Poxton

## JUNIORS' REGATTA SATURDAY 1<sup>st</sup> SEPTEMBER

This is a brand new event just for the Juniors!!! Although we have the Topper Open, and Buccaneers and various other events, we thought it was about time we had a day just for you! With races all day just for Priory Juniors (no ultra-serious competitors looking scary or any pesky adults getting in the way) and some FUN FUN FUN prizes, it will be a SUPER day! It is planned for **Saturday September 1st** and will last all day. It should be a good event for people who feel slightly intimidated by the idea of sailing at the Topper Open in August (see other article above) - it doesn't matter AT ALL how good or bad you think you are, just come along and have fun! There will be something for everyone, from serious races for the most competitive, to prizes for fun things such as the most spectacular capsizes, so you could be in with a chance to win almost anything! Also, there is a planned barbecue for the Club's volunteers, so please, feel free to stay and join us for a fun evening, hopefully in the sunshine!!

On a slightly more serious note, to any parents or adults in general out there who feel like lending a hand, it will be greatly appreciated! From being a race officer, to helping launch and recover boats, to even some washing up (unfortunately it has to be done!), if you feel as though you can help, please get in touch! The more the merrier! Thanks in advance!!

Sarah Poxton

## HERON NATIONALS

Priory's yearly hosting of the Heron National Championships is coming again on Saturday September 8th. This is a great opportunity for all our juniors to compete in a serious event with some really good sailors. In the past, juniors who have crewed for both Priory adults and visitors have not only had a great time but also come away with some prizes too! If anyone is interested in being a crew for an adult, my advice would be to get in touch with the Priory adults who usually sail Herons and see if they need any crews - be warned though, practice will be needed and you may need to get your plea in first!

If you don't have any luck with our Priory sailors, then there are usually some visiting helms who are on the look out for some keen young juniors! It is an all day event, so please ask a parent if you can be there all day!

Alternatively, if there are any enterprising juniors who fancy the idea of clubbing together in a pair and competing, then there is only one club Heron available for use to responsible juniors, so I would suggest talking to a Committee member about it as soon as possible! Again, practice is essential! There is also a modest entrance fee - around £10. I really hope the Priory Juniors will keep up the good work in providing excellent crews for adult helms! I hope to see you all on the water!

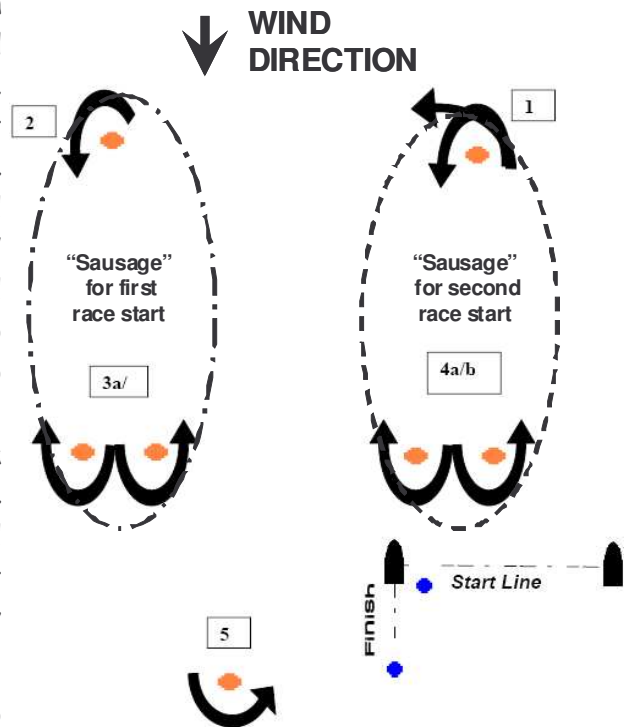
Sarah Poxton

## TOPPER NATIONWIDE AT RUTLAND

Ed, Ellie and I competed in the first of this year's Craftinsure Nationwide Topper Series at Rutland, 31<sup>st</sup> March - 1<sup>st</sup> April, in what turned out to be some very challenging weather conditions. We gather that Priory also had some challenging conditions in the All-fools race on the 1<sup>st</sup> April.

The Nationwide event attracted 187 entrants and these were divided up into 4 flights (red, white, blue and green). The plan was for three pairs of races each day with two flights in each race, and arranged such that each flight raced against each of the other three flights each day. This still gave starts of up to 94 boats in each race and as there was only five minutes between the start of the first and second races in each pair, there were up to 187 boats in the starting area, the largest number of boats in the starting area I have ever experienced.

The course was officially a "trapezoid with an inner and outer loop (sausages), with a leeward gate at the end of the run", as illustrated in the diagram. For each pair of races, the first start sailed to windward then across the wind to the top of a sausage, then down wind to the other end of the sausage where there was a "leeward gate" of two buoys, through which you had to pass and then around one of them before beating up to windward to the top of the sausage. One had to sail around the sausage as many times as indicated by flags on the committee boat and then around a final buoy before crossing the finishing line. The second race of the pair sailed to windward and did the specified number of times around the first sausage around the rectangle to the final buoy and on to the finish line.



Conditions on Saturday started with a stiff 15 knot breeze just east of north running down one of the longer sections of Rutland Water and onto the race area - leading to quite significant waves (more to come on these later). Launching at the club was challenging because the wind was blowing on-shore making it very difficult to launch without an assistant in the water.

Eleanor was recovering from some lurgy or other and wasn't fit to sail on Saturday (or that's her excuse) so Edward and I launched for the first race of the three planned "back-to-back" races and sailed across slightly to windward to the race area, both using 4.2 sails. Edward is pleased to take the credit for my first capsizes during this period...

Edward and I were both in the first start. The combination of a long start line, up to 187 Toppers milling around and the windy conditions made it difficult to see any signal flags or hear any signals making it pretty difficult to have any idea when the race was going to start. As always (or so it seems) the vast majority of the fleet were clustered at the starboard end of the start line around the committee boat, so Edward and I both went towards the port end where it was far less crowded. Beating to windward up the first leg went more-or-less to plan, just the occasional problem avoiding getting caught head to wind when going about. Next it was across the wind (which was gradually increasing) to buoy 2 (without any further capsizes) and there we turned downwind. Downwind was very challenging because of the combination of the high wind and the waves. Running

down a wave (I'm sure they were 2-3ft in height) you had the great danger of sailing the bow of the boat straight into (under) the next wave and "submarining". One escape was to luff up, with the consequence of not going in the direction required. Another problem running was that the dinghy would start rocking from side to side - possibly leading to a "death roll". I made it down to the leeward gate with no further capsizes, chose the buoy to round that didn't require a jibe and battled back to windward. The second downwind leg wasn't so successful. After a number of total inversions I couldn't get the boat back up. I retired to one of the many safety boats. My dinghy was left inverted as the rib continued monitoring the remaining competitors of whom quite a number were battling in the conditions. In fact, from the two starts, 20 competitors failed to finish the races, including both Edward and me.

Once all the remaining "casualties" were being attended to by safety boats, we recovered my Topper and towed it back to the club where Eleanor had taken on a role of helping the retirees and their boats ashore (without having had time to change into appropriate kit). Handing 30211 over to Ellie I went back out in the rib as an extra crew member (it was useful to have someone on board who knew how to de-rig Toppers). That was it for the Saturday as far as our racing was concerned. I spent the second race helping in the rib, recovering a few more retirees, Eleanor continued to help boats and sailors come in and Edward decided that the conditions were beyond him and so didn't re-launch. After the second race activities were wound up for the day.

On Sunday we returned to Rutland wondering if the weather conditions had moderated. The first thing Edward did was to go down one of the slipways to inspect the waves and on seeing they were much as they had been on Saturday decided not to sail. I had somehow tweaked my back (probably on Friday but further developed on Saturday) and wasn't in a state to sail so it was only Eleanor who sailed on Sunday.

Again three "back-to-back" races were planned. At the start of the first race Eleanor got a little tied up. She was on starboard and another boat on port somehow tangled its mainsheet on Eleanor's boat to such an extent that it took two ribs to separate the two dinghies. This is an instance of being "in the right" not helping much because you lose just as much time while "tied up" and the unfortunate consequence for Ellie was she finished 72<sup>nd</sup> out of 79 finishers in that race. The second race went much better - no particular incidents to report and a much better result at 51st. Ellie so far had stayed the right way up but this wasn't to continue in the third race - probably caused by increased tiredness of the long period sailing. Ellie's positive achievement in the third race was to right her boat from a total inversion (something not possible at Priory and something she had never done before) but a short time later she retired ending up in 156<sup>th</sup> place overall (very good compared to Ed, me and thirteen others on equal 173<sup>rd</sup>, not having finished a race).

The weekend was a slight disappointment in the sense of the limited amount of sailing we managed, but perhaps a good thing was to identify some areas where our sailing needs to be improved: sailing in waves and in stronger winds! Ellie and Ed both have sea-training weekends coming up, which should help them prepare for the next Nationwide events in Mumbles and Paignton. Overall, they are still keen to participate in the series and so I guess it was a success!

The conditions can be appreciated from some photographs on the Club's website. Rutland Water, by the way, is Europe's largest man-made reservoir. If you thought of walking its shoreline, prepare yourself for a 25-mile hike. Upon reflection, you might prefer to take your boat and enjoy sailing this large expanse of water - but pick the right weather conditions!

Paul Sharrock

## TOPPER INLANDS AT GRAFHAM

On the 5th and 6th of May, six mad, crazy and slightly worried Priory Sailors braved the difficult and challenging conditions at Grafham Water for the Topper Inland Championships.

It was the culmination of several weeks planning and some last minute panicking! However, on the day all things went smoothly - the boats were unloaded in one piece and launched without too much hassle, and everyone registered relatively easily. The only mishap for Priory sailors on the Saturday was a misplaced lucky hat for one of them!

The first race was divided into 2 fleets, each with 2 flights in them and separate courses. Ruth, Sarah and Ellie were in the first start, while Tom, Ed and Paul were in the second. Although it was a bit daunting for many, the first race was nevertheless a great experience, albeit sailed in a dying wind. With around 150 boats in each fleet, negotiating starts, beats and buoys was somewhat challenging. However, Tom managed to obtain a truly excellent result of 38th place, whilst the Sharrocks each came in the 70s and 90s, with Sarah and Ruth quite happily bringing up the rear.

After an enjoyable lunch, where much chocolate and fruit-flapjack were consumed, we headed out in a dying wind to attempt 2 back-to-back races. However, once we reached the start line, an indefinite postponement flag flying meant an afternoon of milling around in the sunshine - something Ruth and Sarah particularly enjoyed! Again, great quantities of chocolate were consumed!

The second day proved to be about as opposite to the first as was meteorologically possible! Waves around 3 feet high and an increasing wind provided our Priory team with a significant challenge, which all rose to magnificently. With 2 back-to-back races in the morning, the conditions forced almost all of the Priory sailors to retire at some point, with Ruth and Ed coming back to shore looking like drowned rats! Unfortunately, Ellie even managed to get squashed between 2 Toppers as she capsized.

After a welcome lunch break, during which all managed to wind down a bit, Ruth decided that enough was enough and she had already gained invaluable experience. She had an enjoyable afternoon looking at professional photography of the event. For the rest of the sailors, they went out only to find that yet again the race was indefinitely postponed due to shifting wind. But eventually, it went ahead. Sarah was very pleased to have finished all the races on both days, despite being absolutely terrified (as many of us were!) at times.

Overall, despite the blood, sweat, toil and tears (Ok, maybe not blood, but the others.....) an unsurpassable experience was gained by all - and at some points we really really enjoyed it! The whole event made us realize how much we love Priory! The final positions of the Priory sailors out of 271 are set out below.

Sarah Poxton	201
Ellie Sharrock	223
Tom de Sousa	233
Ed Sharrock	247
Paul Sharrock	251
Ruth Baker	264

However, the day was not quite over for Sarah, as she became aware of a protest made against her. She was absolutely terrified of the whole thing, although she had an inkling of which incident was involved (hitting the finish-line committee boat at high speed and out of control!!). However, she had done turns for the offence, so felt reasonably confident of being exonerated, as indeed she was. The protesting person, having not stayed for the protest tribunal, was landed into trouble for swearing at Sarah! The irony was not lost on Sarah, as she remembered her comment that "at least none of the Priory sailors have been protested"!

To conclude, the whole Priory team would like to thank the many people who made this trip possible: the committee for allowing us to take the boats, Gordon de Sousa for helping us launch and load the trailer, and Paul Sharrock for doing likewise and towing the trailer all the way there. In addition, thanks to Grafham sailor Paul Hunter (formerly of Priory) for his advice and encouragement! Thanks again, it is all very much-appreciated people! Same again in the summer perhaps???

Ruth and Sarah