

HALO

Spring 2023

The magazine for the
Miracle Dinghy Association





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Chairman's Report

Happy New Year to all our members! Only a few hardy people continue to sail through the current season of frost and snow.

I am excited to announce that your committee has been working on some training opportunities for the coming season to encourage members who would not normally participate in open meetings to come and join us. These are planned for Saturday 22nd April at Staunton Harold Sailing Club and later in the season on Sunday 13th August at Brixham YC.

Preparations for the nationals are at an advanced stage with the team at Brixham, with sponsorship secured from SailingChandlery.com. It is envisaged that online entry forms should be available to competitors by the end Feb-23. Further details of the training sessions and nationals are also provided in this edition of the Halo and on the web site.

As I write this report, arrangements are in hand for the RYA Dinghy show at Farnborough on 25th & 26th February 2023. There will be a new Butler built boat on the stand, a blue hull of GRP construction. We are looking for volunteers to be on the stand.

If you can assist either on Saturday or Sunday, please contact Graham Watts, email: graham3794@sky.com

Thank you to Wayne for his work on the racing calendar. We have a programme of ten open meeting events from April through to October. Details can be found on the Miracle website.

It is great to have Ian Fryett in post as our new Treasurer. He has been battling hard with HSBC bank to revise the account contact details!

Looking forward to the new sailing season ahead. I am planning to attend a number of events and look forward to seeing people on the events circuit.

Regards,

Paul

Paul Robinson

Miracle Dinghy Class Association - Chairman

<http://www.miracledinghy.org/>

Miracle 4110



Picture from Dabchicks SC nationals Aug-22 taken by Belinda Marfleet

Events Calender

Date	Location	Meeting
22 nd - 23 rd April	Staunton Harold	Midland Area Championships
29 th – 30 th April	Port Dinorwic	Regatta
6 th – 7 th May	Delph Sailing Club	Northern Area Championships
20 th – 21 st May	Filey Sailing Club	North East Area Championships
10 th – 11 th June	Girton Sailing Club	Regatta
1 st – 2 nd July	Whitefriars Sailing Club	Regatta
8 th – 9 th July	Thornbury Sailing Club	Regatta
13 th - 18 th August	Brixham Yacht Club	National Championships
23 rd – 24 th September	Shotwick Sailing Club	Welsh Area Championships
7 th – 8 th October	Shustoke Sailing Club	End of Seasons event

More details on all these events can be found online on the [Miracle Dinghy website](#) or the respective club websites.

Editors Corner

Since last writing for the Halo, I have completed my RYA Day Skipper Theory course. It was a fascinating insight into bigger boat sailing, with some interesting parts of the safety briefing still relevant and useful for dinghies. It certainly reminded me that I can do a lot to be more prepared when going sailing and how that can help us if we get into a tricky situation. This definitely includes having the right kit, with plenty of layers, fresh water, snacks as well as some basic tools, like a knife which can be carried without too much additional weight. With Christmas out of the way and the New Year in full swing, I've turned my attention to some work on the rudder. I've sanded it right back to enable me to remove the cracked epoxy, ready for a fresh coat or two, as well as some varnish, of course. Sailing remains a remote possibility due to the horrid weather and the lack of dinghy sailing at Thornbury, as over the winter period the cruiser fleet get out on the water for a series from January through to March – the brave souls! All said, though, I'm very much looking forward to getting out onto the water and onto the circuit this year – which is already looking very busy. I hope to see you all at the Dinghy Show – it makes for a lovely day out with lots of interesting stands to visit and talks to listen to.

Happy Sailing,
Hannah Metcalfe-Smith
Halo Editor, Miracle 3805



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GP-14 THROUGH DECK CONVERSIONS

Could you make your boat go quicker with some re-tuning of the rig?

By Ian Fryett, National Champion 2019, 2022

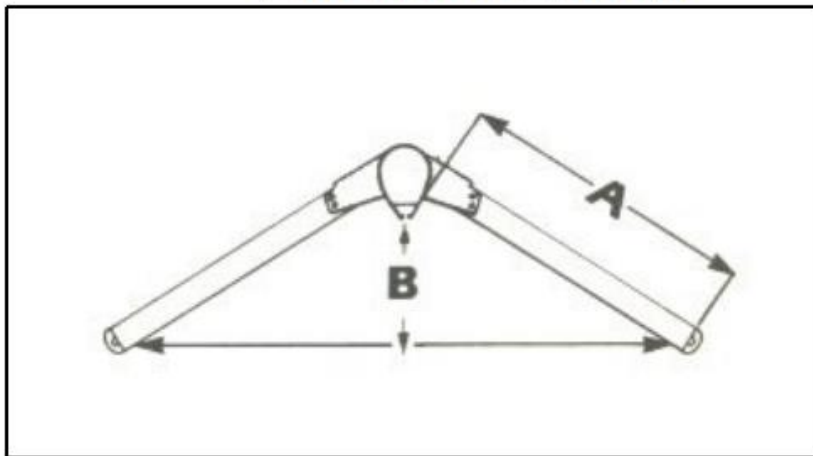
I bought my first and current Miracle dinghy (4011) in 2018 from a non-racer who had simplified the boat in order to enjoy cruising around a lake single-handed without a spinnaker. The boat itself had been built to a high standard by the professional boat builder Robert Spolton in 2008, however the boat had in effect been completely altered from a racing setup. Having achieved some success in racing other classes of boat such as fireballs, 505s, ospreys and international moths etc, I realised that the boat needed to be set-up from scratch in order to be competitive on the racing circuit.

This is what I did to improve the rig set-up for racing:

The mast

Mast bend: I am reliably informed I have an Aldebaran mast and the first thing I noticed was that the mast was bending slightly forwards when the rig tension (Jib halyard tension) was applied. This usually happens if the spreaders are not correctly setup. I therefore consulted a few tuning guides for the miracle dinghy that I found online and decide to try the settings recommended by Speed Sails:

Alderbarren mast



Measurement **A** is from the side wall of the mast to the shroud.

Measurement **B** is made by putting a straight edge from shroud to shroud and then measuring from this edge to the nearest point on the luff groove.

A=350mm

B=140mm

The mast now had a slight bend aft (towards the stern of the boat) when normal rig tension was applied (approx. 180lbs measured at eye level on the shrouds with a rig tension gauge). However, if I applied more rig tension (200-220 lbs measure on the shrouds) as for windier days, this pulled the mast slightly forwards and removed the aft bend. A straight mast effectively increases the fullness of the mainsail and powers up the sail, which was not what I wanted, as was looking to de-power the mainsail on windy days by slightly increasing the mast bend aft. I solved the problem by moving the foot of the mast as far forwards as it could go and by raking the mast a bit more by moving the shroud pins down a hole or two on the shroud plates.

Mast rake:

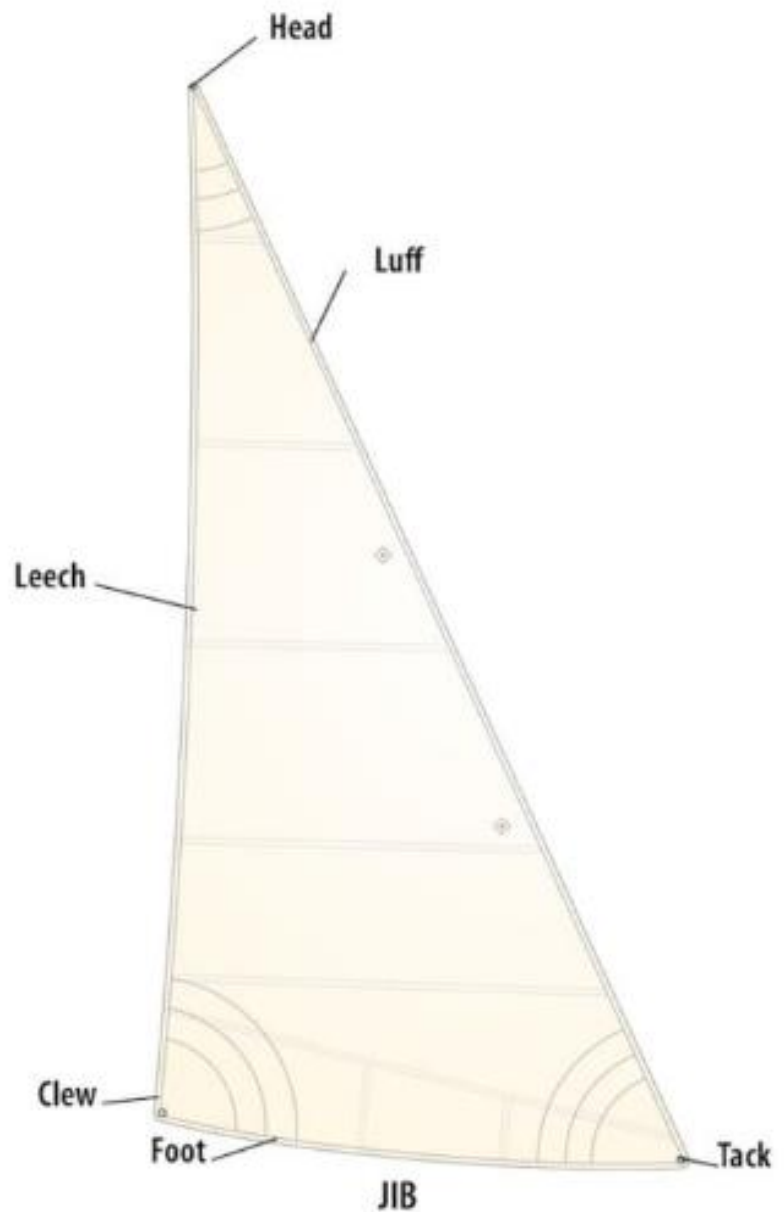
The mast rake setting that I use and rarely change is: **5800mm**. The mast rake is measured from the tip of the mast to the top of the transom above the rudder fittings. With the jib raised and with 180lbs tension on the shrouds, I use a tape measure attached to the main halyard and pull to its normal position. Please be aware that not all miracle dinghies have the same height of transom, as some are more curve shaped than others.



The Jib

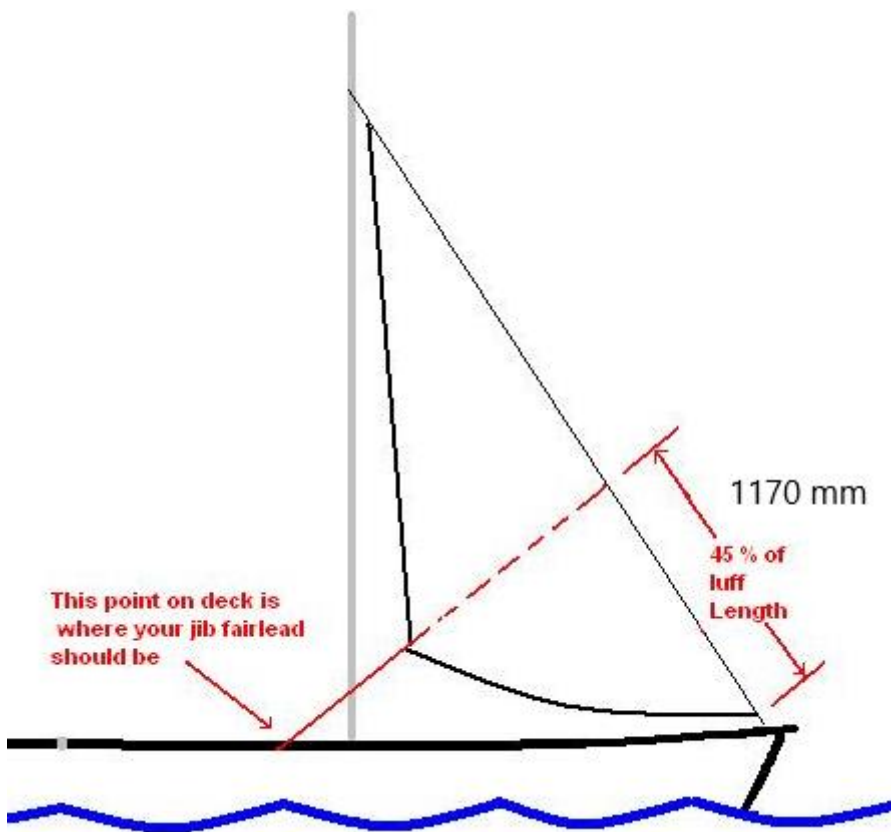
Jib luff tension

I also discovered that the tack of our jib was tied very tightly to the jib wire which had the effect of making the luff of the jib too tight for any conditions other than when it was very windy. The jib luff should be treated in the same way as the mainsail luff, i.e. loose enough to allow small horizontal creases to form in light to moderate wind conditions, but tighter to remove the creases in the windier conditions. Tightening the jib luff brings the fullness of the sail forwards and allows the jib leech to open more which is good for windy conditions. I solved the problem by untying the tack of the jib from the jib wire and then re-tying it to the tension required depending on the wind conditions. This is something that my crew and I do every time we prepare to sail and occasionally adjust between races on the water if required, however this can be a fiddly job if the conditions are choppy.



Jib sheeting angle

My boat has inboard sheeting for the jib and utilises a track attached to the inboard edge of the side tanks. After a few sails, my crew Katie and I realised that it was very easy to choke the jib by over-sheeting, which closes the leech of the jib and disturbs the airflow between the jib and the mainsail (the slot). This can be disastrous for boat speed. The sheeting angle of the jib also needs to be correct for optimum boat speed. The goal is to sheet the jib fairly tight whilst allowing the jib leech to twist off (outwards) at the top third of the sail to prevent the slot from closing too much.



We have marked a good sheeting angle on our jib by marking a straight line on the sail itself (permanent pen marker) from the position where the jib sheets are attached to the sail (clew of the jib), to a point on the jib luff that is **1170mm** up from the base of the jib luff wire.

By sheeting the jib to its normal upwind position and looking along the line of the jib sheet, we can see if this coincides with the line drawn on the sail. This enables us to see if the angle that the jib sheet bisects the jib clew is correct, or whether we need to move the jib cars on the jib tracks backwards or forwards along the track. Moving the jib cars aft has the effect of flattening the bottom half of the jib and opening up the jib leech which is good for both windy and very light wind days. Moving the jib cars forwards will create more depth in the bottom half of the jib and start to close the jib leech which creates a more powerful sail. This can be good for medium wind days when you are looking to achieve maximum power from the rig. However, be very careful as it is easy to close the jib leech too much which results in a loss in boat speed. It is usually easy to spot when the jib leech is too tight as you will get backwinding of the mainsail near the mast (mainsails starts filling from the leeward side rather than windward side). It is usually better to err on the side of caution and have the jib leech too open than too tight.

Summary.

Having checked all of the above, I now have a good racing setup for the rig and sails. My new crew Ella and I, keep a record of our rig settings every time we race by recording the following in a notebook: wind speed, sea conditions (flat, choppy, rough etc), rig tension on shrouds, mast rake, jib track position, spreader length and spreader angle. This enables us to gradually work out the fastest settings for different wind and sea conditions. This is a very iterative process, and we are still learning, but that's the fun of sailing. Don't be afraid to try different settings of your rig, you will learn a lot by trial and error. Whilst all of the above is helpful to make your boat go quicker, it is equally important to get your head out of the boat and concentrate on getting a good start, sailing the boat well and making good tactical decisions during the race.

Training Events

Your committee are very excited to announce the following Miracle training and boat tuning sessions for the coming season:-

1. Sat 22nd April Staunton Harold Sailing Club, DE73 8DL <https://shsc.org.uk>

This will be taking place prior to the open meeting 22nd & 23rd April. Jon Willars has kindly agreed to lead a training session for us. **Boats to be rigged and ready for 11:00 on Sat 22nd April.**

Costs:-

- | | | |
|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| A. Sat am Training session only | £10:00. | |
| B. Sat am Training session + Open meeting race No. 1
pm} | £15:00 | {1 st race Sat mid |
| C. Sat am Training + Open meeting both days | £30:00 | {Sun racing all day} |

Free camping from Fri 21st 17:00 onwards.

Please let Graham Watts know if you are attending **before Fri 31st March 2023, including your sail No. and level of experience.**

Email: graham3794@sky.com (Note: Graham is away on a course first 3 weeks of April).

Jon Willars will arrange the training to suit the participants who sign up by the deadline of 31.03.23. A minimum of 5 boats will be required to make the training event viable.

2. Sun 13th August, Brixham Yacht Club, TQ5 8AR <https://www.brixhamyachtclub.com>

Sunday 13th August at our Nationals week at Brixham YC has been allocated as a training/ practice race day with a training session Sunday morning with Practice Race Sunday afternoon.

Further details of on-line entry form nationals & training session to follow.

RYA Dinghy & Watersports Show – 25th – 26th

The [RYA Dinghy & Watersports Show](#) is taking place at the Farnborough International Exhibition Centre on 25th – 26th of February. The Miracle Association will have a stand and we are looking for volunteers to help out – if you'd like to, please get in contact with Graham Watts: graham3794@sky.com

The Dinghy & Watersports show has a lot to offer, with stands for Clothing, Class Associations, Boat Retailers, Sailing Holidays, Equipment, Rigging, Sails and Covers. In addition, throughout each day, there are live demonstrations of equipment, talks on sailing and the opportunity to interact with model-yacht racing, VR headsets and give trapezing a go!

It's well worth a visit and a great way to kick off the sailing season.



Pictures from Dabchicks SC nationals Aug-22 taken by Belinda Marfleet



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Brixham National Championships: Sunday 13th – Friday 18th August 2023

With preparations well under way for the Miracle and Signet National Championships sponsored by SailingChandlery.com, to be hosted at Brixham Yacht Club, please see some information below on the venue, with regards to accommodation, beaches, walks and activities alongside the sailing.

[Brixham Yacht Club](#) Restaurant and Bar area is disabled accessible and has fantastic views over the harbour and Torbay, including the sailing area.

The format of the Nationals will be a training session on Sunday morning, with the practice race to be hosted Sunday afternoon. Monday to Friday will see two Championship races each day, with the additional races run directly after.

The Boat Entry fee, costs for food at the Commodore's reception, a 2 course prize giving dinner and additional costs will total £215 per boat. Tickets for the Wednesday evening BBQ will be priced at £14.50 each and will be available to be purchased separately at registration. Additional guest tickets can be purchased for Commodore's reception and Prize giving. A food menu will follow, with **online entry forms available at the end of February 2023**.

Due to Brixham being a popular holiday destination, please do not delay in booking your accommodation. To help you with your search, please have a look at the links below for a variety of accommodation types.

Holiday Chalets and Static Caravans

- [South Devon Holiday Park](#)
- [Landscope Holiday Park](#)
- [South Bay Holiday Park](#)
- [Riviera Bay Holiday Park](#)

Camping and Touring Caravans

- [Wall Park, Century Road](#)

Cottages:

- [Brixham Cottages](#)
- [Holiday Cottages](#)

Whilst there is plenty of action out on the water for the sailors in the bay, there are also lots of activities for accompanying family and friends.

Beaches (distances from Brixham's Harbour Office)

- St. Mary's Bay, 1.4 miles
- Broadsands Beach, 4.3 miles
- Paignton Beach, 6.5 miles

Activities

- [Splashdown Waterpark, Paignton](#)
- [Golden Hind, Brixham Harbour](#)
- [Shoalstone Pool, Brixham's sea water pool](#)
- [Dartmouth Castle, Dartmouth](#)
- [Paignton Zoo and Environmental Park, Paignton](#)
- [Pirates Bay Adventure Golf, Paignton](#)

Walks

Brixham is based on the South West Coast Path which starts in Minehead on the Somerset coast and finishes in Bournemouth in Dorset, with notable landmarks such as Berry Head and Sharkham Point. Berry Head National Nature reserve has many trails and a café. [This website](#) provides circular walks of varying distances to select from depending on your energy levels.



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