

HALO

Spring 2024

The magazine for the
Miracle Dinghy Association



Picture courtesy of Malcom Lewin



Chairman's Report



Hello fellow sailors,

Looking forward to getting back on the water, as the season changes, the days are starting to get longer, and spring bulbs are beginning to pop their heads out of the ground. We now have Snowdrops and Daffodils in Wiltshire.

This year we celebrate 50 years of the Miracle dinghy. There have been generations of many families that have enjoyed sailing the much-loved Miracle.

Picture courtesy of Brian Jones, August 2023 Nationals @ Brixham YC

This edition of the Halo includes some archive articles that our Editor, Hannah Metcalfe-Smith has sourced on the history of the Miracle dinghy. I hope you enjoy reading them and in particular how fashions and cars have changed over the years!

In response to request from members, the committee have worked hard in the closed season to plan events comprising a variety of one-, two-, three- and five-day durations. There will also be a special 50th Anniversary Regatta at [Carsington SC, Derbyshire \[DE6 1SU\]](#) with a discounted entry fee for Miracle sailors. This will be a 3-day event over the bank holiday weekend: 25th to 27th May, held jointly with the Graduate and Heron fleets.

The nationals will be at [Rutland SC \[LE15 8HJ\]](#) 12th to 16th August with our friends in the SigneT fleet. This has been chosen as a central England, inland venue to be as accessible for as many people as possible. Rutland have stipulated that they require a minimum 30 boat entries to commit the appropriate volunteer resources to run our event this year.

[The open meeting calendar for 2024 available on website](#). Please come and support these events. Note, there are new open meetings at Wilsonian SC (Medway Regatta) in July and Broadwater in October this year.

Well done to Graham Watts, Helen Jacks, Jon and Jess Willars who have been participating in winter regattas and promoting the Miracle dinghy. See how they got on in the Y & Y reports and also on the Facebook Miracle Dinghy User Group. [\(1\) MIRACLE SAILING DINGHY OWNERS GROUP! | Facebook](#)

At the AGM in Brixham last year, I gave the Association notice of my intention to step down as Chairman after the Nationals this year. I have enjoyed my time as Chairman but feel now is the right time to let somebody else lead the Association. Your committee is looking for a volunteer to take over this role. Please consider if the time is right for you to give some time to the Miracle Association and speak with our Secretary, Helen Jacks.

Hope to see you all at Miracle events this year.

Regards,

Paul

Paul Robinson

Miracle Dinghy Class Association - Chairman

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

16th February 2024



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Draycote Dash by Graham Watts



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Two Miracles arrived at Draycote ready for a big weather weekend: 4114, Graham and Helen, and 3805, Tom and Hannah, in a total entry of 109 boats. Saturday saw a full day of sailing, with four handicap races, starting the slow fleet start. Graham and Helen completed all four in the blustery and cold conditions, and Hannah and Tom opted to compete in the first three races. By the end of the day, both boats were in the top half of the fleet.

Sunday, things got wild. For the two-hour, non-discardable pursuit race we both set off at 15 minutes in pursuit of the early starters. After a bit of confusion over the first two marks, things settled down and both the spinnakers were raised for the first wild ride down wind. The second beat, we were catching the early starters and again, both raised the kites for the next downwind leg. Hannah and Tom gybed the spinnaker at the next mark and set off down the screaming reach. Graham and Helen tried the same but somehow got the kite wrapped around the jib and could not free or drop it, so had to retire. Hannah and Tom carried on, and with only one capsize and flying the kite whenever they could, they finished a gallant 37th. Overall, Hannah and Tom were 55th, and Graham and Helen were 63rd.

Pictures courtesy of Malcom Lewin

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Tiger Trophy by Jess Willars

My name is Jessica Willars, I am 9 years old and I sail the Miracle with my dad (Jon).

We went to the Tiger Trophy at Rutland sailing club on the 3/4th of February 2024 as part of the Sailjuice winter series.

106 boats entered and split into 2 fleets of fast and slow.

Race 1 set a Trapezoid course at the dam end of the lake giving us plenty of water to sail around.

Wind speed was around 12 knots gusting 18 at times.



The fast fleet started first giving us a chance to have a look at which side was favoured up the first beat. We started right off the committee boat and tacked off early to go to the right side of the course to try to avoid some of the faster boats which seemed to work well. Rounding the windward mark we found that the first reach was a bit too tight for us to properly fly the kite so we dropped and headed high to re-hoist and have a good sail downwind whilst the faster 420s and others started to fly past. It wasn't long before the fast fleet also started to lap us. We finished 55th.

Race 2 was almost a repeat of the first for us although the wind started to drop and we managed to improve our result to 42nd

Race 3

The wind was now around 8-10knots and the start was looking pin end favoured as most of the fleet realised. After getting into a huddle of eager starters with bigger sails and faster boats we took a last second decision to gybe out and onto port to get clear air. This seemed to work well for us as we made it to the windward mark in a better position than expected. We had some good competition with Streakers, Solos and ILCA Radials all the way round to gain our best result of the day in 32nd.

It was great to speak to so many people on the water before the starts and in club later who recognised the Miracle as a boat they had previously sailed with family and friends.

Day 2

The forecast was looking a lot stronger although looking from the shore at 9am it looked very pleasant. Today would be one big 2 hour long pursuit race.

By the time we launched at 11am with the slowest boats we were seeing around 25 knots. A very brisk reach to the start got me soaked and I felt like a human shield to my Dad! By the time we started it was very choppy up the lake to the left of the club and the wind felt like 35+. We got off the line alone since a few boats capsized or were late and had a battle with ourselves to the first mark. A massive gust laid us over as I struggled to undo my jib. We then became a bathtub sinking more with every wave which was not fast!

Tiger Trophy continued...

A very long downwind took us back past the club, down past the church on the right side and out towards the tower in the middle of the lake. It took almost that long to empty fully of water since our bailers didn't seem to work properly.

The next beat was the longest of my life all the way back to the start and then windward mark. This time we were empty so took off when the kite was launched and I think it is the fastest I've ever been in the Miracle! At the gybe we were waiting for a lull but the wind just seemed to keep getting stronger and the shore was getting closer and closer. Surprisingly we made it and headed back up the dreaded beat for the last time to finish 50th with half the lake down the neck of my drysuit!

I think everyone did well and it was very good experience for me. Well done to Sam Pascoe sailing a Musto Skiff for winning the event overall and also to Arwen Flur and Matthew Rayner (who I got my 1st Tera off) coming second in a 420.

I'd also like to say well done to my Tera friends Laia and Isla sailing an RS Feva, they did very well especially downwind.

Picture by Tim Olin.

Datchet Flyer by Graham Watts

Only Graham and Helen with 4114 made the trip to the outskirts of London for the 2nd round of the Sailjuice, lucky for us, it was not in the ULEZ area.

Saturday was gusting well and with 3 handicap races planned we took to the water with most of the other 80 boats that had entered. We were in the first start and played it safe at the less crowded pin end. After making it up the first beat we decided to keep the spinnaker hidden firmly in the boat for the reach and for the entire race and passed quite a few boats that were upside down including Professional sailors, multi-National champions and Sailmakers. We finished 44th in Race 1

Race 2 the wind had gone up a notch or 2 and after starting we decided it was getting to fruity for us and came ashore as did many others. Only 26 boats finished and racing was abandoned for the rest of the day. Sunday morning race 3 was run in slightly lighter conditions but knowing it was going to blow up again we kept the spinny in the boat again and finished 41st.

The non discardable Pursuit race was next and as they run the Fast and Slow fleets together it was quite wierd to have boats like the RS 300 and Scorpions starting before us and had done half a lap before we had started so it was hard to see who was in front of you and who was catching you. We finally took our first swim of the weekend as we kited down the run dropped the spinny and gybed and splosh, in we went, we were gutted after lasting so long in horrendous conditions. We righted the boat from it being turtled and sailed on finishing 46th which gave us an overall placing of 40th for the event.

We were commented on in the dinghy park by 2 other classes for taking our flag and promoting the association in return for the association paying the entry fee.

Graham and Helen. M4114

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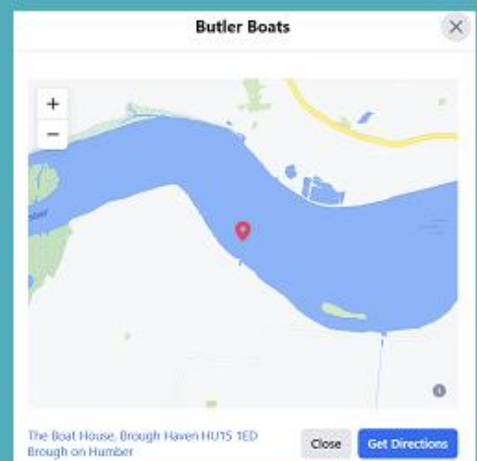
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Peter Burfield – Obituary by John Tippet

It is with great sadness that we have to tell you all that our Pete has sailed the course and crossed the finish line just a few weeks short of his 87th birthday. He hadn't sailed competitively for a few years, but had enjoyed coming up to the Sailing Club at Draycote Water for a snack and a chat with all his mates.

A Manchester lad, Pete had sailed at Delph S.C before his work moved him to the Rugby area in Warwickshire in the 1980's. He brought with him his wife June, and his beloved Miracle No 2132 called OOZAT. He was a very lucky chap, joining Draycote S.C he found his long-term crew Barbara Green who was completely new to sailing. Both Pete and Barbara did not carry a lot of weight and they quickly established themselves as formidable light wind sailors in a fleet of 30 plus Draycote Miracles.

At that time, all Miracles were made in wood and not epoxyed, and only the very brave sailed through the winter. Most took their boats home for some winter TLC. Pete was no exception and OOZAT went into the garage for an annual coat of varnish. Rumour has it that Pete came into work one day later on before the season started, having done some repair work on the boat and said he had found his varnish was now some 2.5mm thick in places. All this varnish has stood the boat in good stead, eventually he sold it and we know that it is still in good hands down at Whitefriars S.C, having changed owners a couple of times. Not bad for a boat built in 1978.

Barbara recalls their first Nationals at Rock in Cornwall in 1990. There were sixty odd Miracles entered and the first points race was sailed in very strong and gusty winds. They capsized three times on the water, but Pete's determination to carry on paid off. They finished in 32rd place, their best result of the week, because so many other boats had retired. The worst bit was they capsized four times on the way back to the shore. Subsequent races were held throughout the week in light winds on what is a tricky tidal estuary. Only 6 races were held back then, and as the tide set the start times back, we did get to play in the sun and surf at Polzeath on one morning.

Pete decided that he needed a new spinnaker for the 1992 Nationals at Llandudno. In conversation with Miracle Association's then Measurements' Secretary, he found out that a new optimized reaching spinnaker was being developed by a regular Miracle sail maker. So he decided to wait a while. Pete duly acquired one of these new kites and set off for Llandudno full of hope and expectation. This was the magic bullet that was going to jump him up the fleet (we've all been there). Disillusionment soon set in (we've all been there, as well) when, flying this new wonder down a reach, he was overtaken by another Miracle sporting a spinnaker with a two foot (600mm) gash in it. His thoughts and words are not recorded, but were probably unprintable anyway.

He did have some good luck too, and there is another tale from another National Championships, probably Brixham in 2005. Pete found his boat parked next to Sam Mettam and Geoff Phillip's boat. They had been National Champions the previous year, so he was chuffed to be next to them. The first race didn't go well and they finished badly. The next days racing went well and they continued to get good results throughout the rest of the week. When asked to explain this improved performance, Pete said that probably some of Sam and Geoff's kudos must have rubbed off on them. The rest of us mere mortals from his club thought Pete has more likely had some one on one boat tuning and advice on spotting the wind shifts and the impact of the tides from Sam. Meow! Results of 4th, 3rd, 5th, 13th, 5th, 3rd, 2nd and 9th to count really are a good set by anyone's standard. Pete and Barbara's final position was 4th – their best ever Nationals result. In front of them were Sam and Geoff, David and Michelle Raines, and Ian and Sam Kelly. It just goes to show, it pays to listen and learn.

I'm very grateful to ex Miracle sailings from Draycote – Bob Morris, Paul Butler, and Robbin Warran and of course, Barbara for helping me cobble all this together.

Well Pete, my friend, wherever you are, we all hope you have a warm, steady breeze in your face with the tiller in one hand, and in the other a tight mainsheet.

John Tippet

P.S. Sooner or later, Pete's Miracle No 4034, a Butler built wooden boat will come up for sale, anyone interested, please contact John to be added to the list.

Miracle Events Calender

Date	Location	Event
13 th April	Staunton Harold Sailing Club	Midland Area Championships
4 – 5 th May	Delph Sailing Club	Northern Area Championships
25 – 27 th May	Carsington Sailing Club	50 th Anniversary Regatta
15 – 16 th June	Whitefriars Sailing Club	Southern Area Championships
29 th June	Girton Sailing Club	Puddleduck Championships
6 – 7 th July	Wilsonian Sailing Club	Medway Dinghy Regatta
27 – 28 th July	Thornbury Sailing Club	Regatta
12 th – 16 th August	Rutland Sailing Club	National Championships
21 st - 22 nd September	Shotwick Sailing Club	Welsh Area Championships
5 – 6 th October	Shustoke Sailing Club	End of Season Championships
19 – 20 th October	Broadwater Sailing Club	Open Meeting

There are lots of events to take part in for the Association's 50th Anniversary year!

Our Secretary Helen Jacks has collated some accommodation options at Carsington and Rutland to help the members get organised to attend.

Carsington:

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hoptonhall.co.uk

Emma Tallis

etallis@henfox.com

01629 540458

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<https://www.knockerdowncottages.co.uk/>

Fiona Buxton

fiona@knockerdowncottages.co.uk

Netherton Hall

<https://www.nethertonhall.co.uk/>

Tim & Vikki Foxlow

info@nethertonhall.co.uk

Rutland

Rutland Water Campsite

<https://www.rutlandwatercampsite.co.uk/>

No electricity hook up but chemical toilet emptying point and mains water. Adjoining to Rutland sailing club..

The Paddock

<https://thepaddockrutlandwater.co.uk/>

2.2 miles away from Rutland SC, suitable for campervans (electric hookup, but no toilet facilities).

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Editor's Corner



Picture courtesy of Malcom Lewis at the Draycote Dash 2023.

As the days are getting noticeably longer, and I put this edition of the Halo together, there is a lot of sailing to look forward to in 2024.

Tom (my husband and crew) and I thoroughly enjoyed our last outing of last year at the Draycote Dash which was incredibly breezy and chilly. It was a really amazing experience to sail in such a big mixed fleet and catch up with faces old and new. The Race Officer for the event was Richard Pye who had previously sailed the Miracle with his son – I'm sure some of the members reading this will remember him.

Due to the breezy conditions (35mph+ on Sunday) we sustained a small amount of damage to the boat, with a block ripping off, so that really did put an end to our season and Pamela has been tucked up in the garage ever since.

We've been able to sand the interior of the boat right back and are now in the process of putting the epoxy, varnish and fittings back on.

Don't worry – I've carefully labelled all of the fittings, so putting her back together should be a piece of cake! It's definitely been a labour of love, and I do sincerely hope our recent cold snap warms up soon so we can continue to work on her sensibly. Hopefully, after all this TLC, she'll look a bit better, and will be suitably water-tight once more to get us back out onto the water as the season begins.

As you can see, there is a whole host of events in the pipeline this year, including an exciting opportunity to join the Heron and Graduates at Carsington Sailing Club on the late May Bank Holiday weekend, as well as another excellent Nationals event at Rutland Sailing Club. Tom and I thoroughly enjoyed our last nationals at Rutland (although I think Tom's highlight may have been the afternoon trip we made to Melton Mowbray for one of their famous pork pies).

A big thank you to all those who contributed race reports to this edition of the Halo – we all love to hear about your adventures! Looking forward to seeing you all on the water soon!

Hannah Metcalfe-Smith
Halo Editor
Pamela - 3805

Some Miracle history...

This year is the 50th Anniversary of the Miracle Association and I've been hunting through the archives. Nick Smith (my Dad) has provided me with one of the collections that we received as part of one of our Miracle purchases down the years. I've pulled out a few bits and pieces for this edition of the Halo and will add more with each edition this year to celebrate the long and varied history of the class and give an insight into its heritage. Please see below the front page of Issue No. 7 of the Halo from October 1977.

MIRACLE HALO

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIRACLE ASSOCIATION

Issue No. 7 October 1977

A LETTER FROM YOUR NEW CHAIRMAN

Those members from I.C.I. Sailing Club and I.P.C. Yacht Club who knew Bernard Gray had no hesitation in nominating him the Chairman for our first Miracle Association Meeting at Ranelagh Sailing Club, Putney. I remember him saying that we should accept the rules and measurements of the Association and we would sort out the anomalies later. Well, he has done it. There are a few items to tidy up, but he did what he set out to do - get the Association off the ground. Not only has he given up a lot of his spare time to the Association, his family have also been very much involved. I know they have enjoyed this experience because the Miracle is a family boat. Thank you Bernard for all your hard work and we shall rely on you for your guidance in the future!

Well, what of the future? To start with we 'goofed' over the date of the Annual General Meeting this year. Next year it will be held during the Nationals as in 1976. The venue for the 1978 Nationals will, subject to confirmation, be at Ullswater and last from Monday to Friday. The Northerns will be at North Lincs. Sailing Club, the West Midlands at Shropshire Sailing Club and the Southerns at Sovereign Sailing Club. All dates have yet to be confirmed.

He would like to run a Miracle rally or rallies. Are there any offers? Anywhere in the United Kingdom?

I would like to remind you that the Miracle is a one design boat. Paul Barrett ensured we kept to this idea and we shall miss his valuable advice on the Committee this year. I know at times he made himself a little unpopular by 'sticking to the book'! He was right and we have appreciated his efforts to make us keep to the rules.

Lastly, this is your Association and to make it a success we need your support. Comments and suggestions for next year's programme would be much appreciated.

Bob Ferguson
EDITOR

NEWSLETTER

I am pleased to announce that Elaine Ireland has offered to become the Newsletter Editor for HALO. Elaine has sailed a number of different boats and I understand that her family will shortly be purchasing a Miracle. To help make her job easier and make the Newsletter more interesting with facts and information it is important for all Miracle owners to send to Elaine, race reports, hints and tips, articles, and anything which may be of interest to other Miracle owners.

PLEASE SEND ANY ARTICLES THAT YOU MAY HAVE TO:-

MISS ELAINE IRELAND
15 PADDOCK GARDEN
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As part of Issue No. 7 of the Halo, there was an interesting article on the addition of rowlocks to the Miracle – not something you see a lot of these days, but something I've seen mentioned on the Miracle Owners Facebook page in recent months.

"CLIP ON" ROWLOCKS FOR THE MIRACLE - by Bob Hopwood

I'm one of the old brigade who prefers oars to paddles anyway, especially when it means a long haul against the tide in a light wind. If you would like to equip your Miracle with rowlocks which can be clipped on in seconds without damage or alteration to the boat, here is a way of doing the job. Tried and tested in all sorts of weather, I have found these attachments very satisfactory.

For each of the two attachments in addition to the rowlocks you will need the following:-

- $\frac{3}{8}$ " marine plywood 16" x 5"
- Hardwood strip 5" x $1\frac{1}{8}$ " x 1"
- Hardwood strip 5" x $\frac{3}{8}$ "
- Brass plate 14 or 16 gauge 5" x $2\frac{3}{8}$ "
- A length of strong elastic cord about 6" long - the type with wire hooks at each end
- 18" of $\frac{1}{4}$ " diam. dowel rod
- A brass screw $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8
- 2 brass bolts 2" x $\frac{1}{4}$ " with washers and nuts

The rowlock attachment will fit over the gunwale. I suggest about one foot aft of the after edge of the thwart. Drill and insert a brass screw under the gunwale at the appropriate point, leaving about $\frac{1}{2}$ " projecting, then file off the screw head. This will act as a locating pin and is the only permanent fitting to the boat.

Figure 1 shows how an attachment is assembled. You will notice in Figure 2 that the brass plate has a "V" notch which will engage with the locating pin under the gunwale. The brass plate is, of course, bolted onto the underside of the attachment. You may have to bend the plate slightly to ensure a good fit round the gunwale and rubbing strip. It is important that a smaller strip of hardwood should be positioned to fit exactly over the inner edge of the side deck. Both wood strips should be secured the plywood by glue and brass nails or screws. The surplus plywood should be trimmed flush.

You will see from Figure 3 how the elastic cord holds the attachment firmly in position over the side deck of the boat.

I have found nylon gunwale type rowlocks quite satisfactory but this is a matter of personal choice. To avoid loss through sinking, it is a good idea to attach a piece of cork to the stem of the rowlock with a piece of light cord.

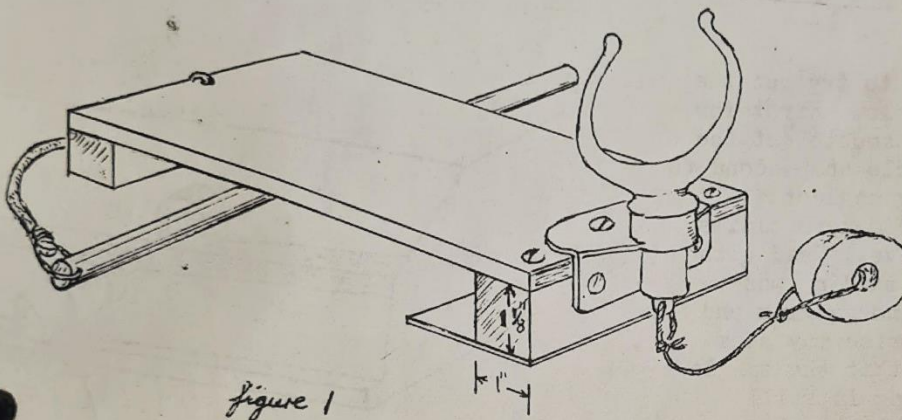


figure 1

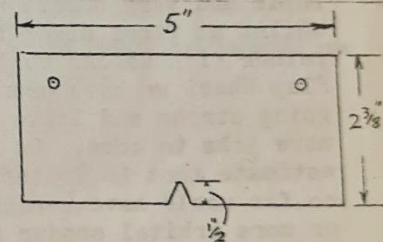


figure 2 Brass Plate.

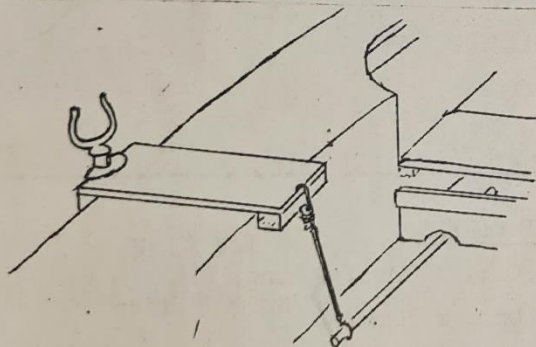


figure 3

EDITORS NOTE

The above idea is very useful and well thought out but I must point out that the stud which is fitted under the gunwale is, in fact, out of class. Perhaps somebody can modify this idea so that some other form of locating is possible. If any other member has any useful tips like this one then please let us know so we can include them in our newsletter.

Thank's Bob for a very useful tip!

As part of Issue No. 7 of the Halo, there was an events calendar, much like the one I put together for each edition of the Halo for our modern version. The event names look familiar, as do some of the club names, but there are certainly some places I've never visited with the Miracle. It would definitely be interesting to know if there are any Miracles still sailing at the clubs that still exist.

EVENTS CALENDAR

7th May	Thames Sailing Club	Mr. J. Mellers, 4 Beard Road, Ham Common, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey.
21st May	Wilsonian Sailing Club	Mr. S. Brookes, 9 Cross Lane, Bexley, Kent.
3rd & 4th June	Northern Area Championships North Lincs. Sailing Club	Mr. P. J. Twining, The Manse, Ulceby, South Humberside.
3rd & 4th June	Southern Area Championships Sovereign Sailing Club	Sailing Secretary, 15 Paddock Gardens, Polegate, East Sussex.
17th & 18th June	South Western Area Championships Sutton Bingham Sailing Club	Mr. A. Brown, 73 St. Marys Crescent, Yeovil, Somerset.
18th June	Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club	Mr. P. Shearman, 6 Friston Close, Seaford, Sussex.
8th & 9th July	Leigh-on-Sea Sailing Club	Mr. C. Walker, The Old Town, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.
8th & 9th July	Midland Area Championships Shropshire Sailing Club	Mr. G. Miller, Stonehouse, Picklescott, Church Stretton, Salop.
23rd July	Redoubt Sailing Club	Mr. W. Hills, 7 Castle Bay, Folkestone, Kent.
31st July - 4th August	NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS Ullswater Sailing Club	Mr. P. Skilton, Melton Road, Wrawby, Nr. Brigg, Humberside.
7th October	Redditch Sailing Club	Mr. J. G. Wilson, 151 Finstall Road, Bromsgrove, Worcs.
7th October	I.C.I. (Slough) Sailing Club	Mr. B. Gray, 58 Seeleys Road, Beaconsfield, Bucks.

For a more recent piece of nostalgia, with some names that current Miracle sailors might recognise from the circuit, see below a picture of the Race Report from the Northern Area Championships held at Delph Sailing Club in 2005. I found this in the Halo from that summer.

RACE REPORTS

NORTHERN AREA CHAMPIONSHIPS DELPH SAILING CLUB 14TH & 15TH MAY 2005

A total of 21 boats competed in the Miracle Northern Area Championships at Delph Sailing Club over the weekend of the 14-15 May. The weather, whilst fine, did its best to test both competitors and the Race Officer.

The first race on Saturday was sailed in very fresh conditions with a lee shore. Several crews decided that the best way to make good use of the conditions was to sit it out and see if the weather improved. Of the 12 who ventured out Raines & Raines, Atherton & Wroe and Reddy & Reddy made the most of the conditions to finish in that order.

Having seen that the conditions might not be as extreme as they had feared the second race, in similar conditions, saw three additional boats take to the water. Atherton & Wroe proved to be the most consistent adding a first to their second in the previous race. Watts & Harden and Moulden & Charnock completed the line up at the front of the fleet.

The Saturday night barbecue was once again a great success with over 100 people enjoying good food, drink and company.

The Sunday morning was definitely the morning after the night before and the competitors saw the opposite extreme of the wind conditions with non-existent to very light shifting winds. The wind filled in for the first race only for it to die immediately after the start. Mettam & Phillips, who had been absent on the Saturday, showed their class by winning comfortably in a race that was shortened as the boats had completed just one lap after an hours racing. The conditions made it a bit of a lottery with the Reeds being a winner and claiming a second followed by Baileys. Of the leaders Reddy & Reddy were the big losers finishing twelfth and now looking for good results in the remaining races.

The wind became a light zephyr for the second race and somewhat shifty. Mettam & Phillips again

showed mastery of the conditions to win. Atherton & Wroe made up for a disappointing fifth in the first race of the day to take second in front of Reddy & Reddy. Savelli & Sweeney did their chances no harm with a seventh having been first to the windward mark.

The wind again played its part in the final race, changing direction leading to a short postponement and a change of course before the fleet got away. Again Mettam & Phillips showed their class after a poor start sailing through the fleet to win comfortably and take the title. The Reddies maintained their improvement to card a second, their best result of the weekend with Watts & Harden claiming third.

All that was left was to award the prizes with Mettam & Phillips, Atherton & Wroe and Reddy & Reddy claiming the first three places in the Gold Fleet. The Silver Fleet was won by Moulden & Charnock with Bailey & Bailey and Williams & Sands taking second and third. In the Bronze Fleet it was an all Delph affair with Savelli & Sweeney finishing ahead of Nash & Baycroft and Smith & Smith.

Thanks must go to the race team for setting good courses in trying conditions, being ex Miracle sailors ensured that they knew what the fleet wanted. The galley provided excellent food all weekend, which was much appreciated. The Saturday Night Barbecue was its usual success and attracts many non-Miracle sailors who appreciate the camaraderie that is to be had in the Fleet, thanks to Tim and Jane and everyone who helped them.

Finally a mention for Annie Stephenson who won the Endeavour Award for being the youngest helm, sailing her fathers boat with scratch crews, and having had the boat set up, probably for the first time in its life, sailed it to eleventh in the last race beating several vastly more experienced competitors.

1st	S Mettam & G Phillips	RNSA	3
2nd	W Atherton & S Wroe	LLSC	5
3rd	J & S Reddy	Delph	8
4th	D & M Raines	RYA	9
5th	G Watts & M Harden	SHSC	10
6th	L Mouldon & C Charnock	Delph	11

What makes the Miracle different from all the others?

Most sailing dinghies seem to fall into one of two types, the have-fun pottering type and the out-and-out racing type. This is fine for the lone wolf buying a boat. He can choose which sort he fancies and be happy ever after. What is more because he always uses it in the way he prefers, he naturally gets the maximum use for the money he spent. But what about a family of four – mum, dad and two children, say? They could have a wide variety of preferences. Father and son might like some exciting racing, cutting through the water at speed, flashing past other dinghies and finishing the day tired but victorious. On the other hand, mother and daughter might prefer to glide along tranquil waters enjoying the sunshine and soft breezes as they acquire a golden tan. Then again, the whole family might, on occasions, want to go on a picnic and sail together to an uninhabited island or down an interesting creek where tea, cakes and cucumber sandwiches can be downed before setting off home at dusk. If Dad likes fishing he might want to dispense with sails and use a small motor to get to the ideal spot for the big catch. The son of the

family might want to show his skills to his friends. Daughter might like to bring along her boyfriend . . . The big problem is that sailing boats because of their very nature have not lent themselves to true versatility.

A big breakthrough came in 1963 when the Mirror Dinghy was launched. Using a revolutionary and simple form of construction it opened up sailing to thousands of people – at a price they could afford. But, although it is still the most popular class boat in the world and is raced by great numbers of enthusiasts it could never be described as a genuine racing design. Also, because of its size it can accommodate three people but four becomes a crowd.

Is the ideal boat, then, just a dream? Or could all the dreams be assembled to make a beautiful boat and not a mis-shapen misfit? If this could be realised it would be an enormous achievement. Many said it would be a miracle.

Well, we've done it! Here it is! And, of course, we called it the MIRACLE!

