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Nationals: Pwllheli 7th-12th Aug 2016

The Halo

Miracle Association Magazine Spring 2016



RYA Suzuki Dinghy Show 2016

The Friendly, Family, Dinghy Class”

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Contacts

Louis Moulden

Chairman
louis@lmolden.orangehome.co.uk
Delph SC

John Tippett Secretary
tippet.john@tiscali.co.uk
Draycote Water SC

Mike Smith Webmaster
mikesmith@stuk.freeserve.co.uk
Thornton Steward SC

Gillan Gibson Halo Editor
kengillian2@yahoo.co.uk
Thornton Steward SC

Miracle Association website:
<http://www.miracledinghy.org>

Disclaimer: Much of the information within this publication is gathered from individuals, clubs, etc. The Miracle Class Association and its Officers and Committee accept no responsibility for the correctness of such information and opinion. Members are always advised to check with clubs before travelling to events.

Photo credits: Cover Gillan Gibson; p2 Sue Atherton; p3 Jean Reed; p15-17 Brian Mumford; p18, Nick Smith.

Items for the next issue to the Editor by 1st June 2016

Editor's Corner

A new season dawns with all sorts of opportunities, though there is a bit of an element of "use it or lose it" as numbers of boats attending events are dropping.

A positive initiative if you are interested in days gone by is a number of the early Halos are on the website. They run from the first issue in October 1975 to issue 27 of May 1988. Steve Fischer was kind enough to loan his copies to me after the Rutland Nationals and they have been scanned. They are in the members section with the recent copies. If you do not have your login contact the webmaster, address on the left. It is very much a "work in progress" with the plan is to gradually add the other issues. You will note that there are gaps as we did not have issue 3 or 12. Do you have copies we could either borrow, or which you could scan for us please?

It is quite intriguing to see how much has changed and also how much is still relevant today. Seeing where all the Nationals have been held and the size of the fleets was interesting, as was viewing photos of a number of members in their younger years. Debate about the way forward was just as keen then, with for example the discussion on the adoption of



the spinnaker. But then, I have always thought there is nothing the fleet likes better than a good discussion.
Gillan Gibson,
Miracle 3670

Chairman's Desk



Hi Folks, I hope you are all ready for sailing, the sun is going to shine and the wind blow gently all summer!
Alexandra
Palace Dinghy

show went well ,thanks to the work of Ken and Gillan Gibson, Martin and Mavis Bathe, Hannah Smith, 2015 National Champion, and Dad Nick Smith, plus Dave Butler and his right hand man Andy, also the Mumford family Yvonne, Brian, Hannah and Abbey.

Dorri and I left Bolton at 4.00 am on Friday, in a snowstorm, towing the Miracle. Neighbours have since told us that if we had left it any later the road was closed and we wouldn't have made it out of the village. It was great to meet old friends from other fleets as well as our own, ogle the flash equipment that costs too many pennies(if only it were pennies!). It was good to see Marcel and Julia Neutboom over from Holland and to see Tracy Amos and Gemma Gibson our silver fleet winners. We enjoyed an interesting and informative lecture on the

Olympic sailing team's training and plans, and met the team manager Sparky over coffee.

We had a questionnaire at the Miracle stand asking members to comment on their preferences for the development of the Miracle fleet the results of which are reported elsewhere, but are interesting.

We arrived home at 1.00 am on the Monday morning.

Dorri and I called in at Pwllheli Sailing centre on Saturday last, all seems to be set for our National Championships on the 7th of August 2016. Please get your entry in asap to have a chance of earning tickets in the raffle for a refund of your entry fee. Enter before the end of April and you earn 2 tickets, enter in May or June and you earn one ticket. The other way to earn tickets is to enter 3 or more open meetings between August 2015 and August 2016 to gain one ticket.

Finally, please make it your plan to teach new members and beginners in you Miracle as most people buy the type of boat they learn to sail and feel confident in. This is good for them, and for us as a fleet.

Good sailing! Louis.
Louis Molden, Miracle 4036

Hints and tips

Do you have any ideas to help others? Let the editor know so they can be shared.

Vibrating towing straps: To stop flat tie down straps vibrating/drumming during towing put a twist in rather than leave them lying flat. Gillan Gibson

Towing: Ensure everything is tied down securely, including the mast, and there are no loose ends. Stop after a couple of miles to check nothing has loosened.

Are you going???

Miracle website feature

Do you want to know who is going to a particular event or is coming to yours? Well, sailors can register their interest using the "Count Me In" feature on the website:

- Go to: www.miracledinghy.org
- Click on the "Events 2016" button
- Click on the bottom green button on the right to see who intends to go to which events
- Click on the top green button on the right to add your details

OK, so an intention to go does not necessarily mean you will get there, all sorts of things can happen in the

meantime, but it does give some indication to you and others and helps with a club's planning.

Facebook

The Facebook Page was set up so sailors could keep in touch and find out what was going on and who was going where. It was great at the Rutland Nationals for reporting the results and goings on, so why not make use of it this year for open meetings? It can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Miracle-Dinghy-Class-Association/965046153558785>

Race meeting Calendar 2016

Broadwater (UB9 6PD) Southern Area Championship	23rd & 24th April	www.broadwatersc.org.uk
Delph (BL7 9TS) Northern Championship	14th & 15th May	www.delphsailingclub.co.uk
Welton (HU15 1PT) Inland Championship	4th & 5th June	www.weltonsc.org
Girton (NG23 7HX) Puddleduck	25th & 26th June	www.girtonsc.org.uk
Leigh & Lowton (WA3 1BQ) Midland Championship	9th & 10th July	www.llsc.org.uk
Pwllheli (LL53 5YT) National Championships	7th to 12th Aug	www.plasheli.org
Shotwick Welsh Area Championships End of Season Championship	10th & 11th Sept	www.shotwicksailing.org/home/

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Going to an open meeting: Give it a go

If you've wondered about going to an open meeting but were not sure what was involved there was an article in the Spring 2010 issue of *Halo*. Along with other articles from the

magazine it can be found on the website. Clicking on "members" will bring up a page with a list of articles at the bottom right, one of which is on going to open meetings.

2017 Nationals: Weymouth no longer the venue

Despite our best efforts the 2017 Nationals cannot now be held at Weymouth. There have been complications and the Weymouth National Sailing Academy are unable to offer suitable dates. Various other venues are being explored at present and

it is possible that the published dates may also have to change. Your Association apologises for the situation and for any inconvenience caused, but matters are beyond our control. We will publish the new arrangements as soon as possible.

Take a letter Mr Secretary

John Tippett

Dear All,

Not very often you hear from me, but I have a few important things to say. The Miracle Association, individual Miracle owners, our boat builders and our sail makers are I feel at a bit of a cross roads and we need a good road map to show us the right way forward.

At issue is our lower membership numbers, lower boat sales, lower numbers of open meeting venues and open meeting attendances and what we, the collective we, can do about it.

You will see in this issue of Halo that at the Association's committee meeting in March we did a lot of soul searching prompted by correspondence from Dave Butler which triggered a whole bunch of other basic comments and suggestions on the overall issue of promoting the Miracle.

You will also see that in this issue the Committee agreed to allow two variations of laminate sails to be trialled by individuals this season **at Club level only** and for proposals to be put forward at the AGM at WNSA, Plas Heli in August 2016. At the same time some of the other suggestions need to be addressed and that's the purpose of this open letter. As Class Secretary I have promised to try to get these things moving so in no particular order of priority here are the other main points

Additional Sponsorship- we already have sponsors, they pay to have their adverts in our Halo Magazine and we are very

grateful to them too for their continuing support. They do however keep a fairly low profile. It has been suggested that other fleets have sponsors who help promote open meetings and national championship events and would in return demand greater publicity for themselves and by association, our Miracle dinghy. Our Rules now allow advertising on mainsail and jib so there should be nothing holding them back.

We are now quite a small fleet but I intend to make contact with some of the more well established potential sponsors in the sailing fraternity. You may have some thoughts on this or contacts there – so just let me know. Great oaks from little acorns grow!

Area Representatives - It has been suggested that we could re-establish Area Reps. Many years ago, "when Noah was a lad" I was the Miracle Midlands Area Representative on the Committee and then I progressed to Treasurer, then Chairman and now Secretary (twice) so you see I rose from humble beginnings. Seriously though, I do not think that potential Area Reps would necessarily need to attend our Committee Meetings but they could be very useful. They would know the area and its sailing clubs better than most, know which sailors have moved to where, and should be better able to make contacts at all their local sailing clubs. I suggest we consider five areas - South West and South Wales, North Wales and North West England, North and East of

England, The Midlands, and South East England.

So what say you – I'll be one if you will, just get in touch.

Training Events, another suggestion. We are now spread quite widely over the whole country, it is difficult to envisage just having one event. Do we split it between north and south? Do we combine training with 2 day open meetings, maybe sacrificing one race? Do we want boat set up advice on shore, or race training on the water? Do we employ one high profile trainer or several individual trainers who are more likely to know our Miracle Dinghy?

I will try to get this sorted but I do need your input too so come on get in touch

Joint Events – I had started this last year trying to combine with another fleet for the Draycote open, so have established quite a few good contacts. As a result of this the SigneTs are joining us at WNSA, Plas Heli. The Kestrels too had seriously thought about it but ended up at Harwich. So there is an interest there, not just for Nationals but I'm sure at open meeting level too. I had contacted individual classes directly, is this the best approach, should we chase up designated clubs too? What do you think?

Attend Grand Prix Events - another way to enhance the Miracles profile. The Committee have agreed to support any Gold fleet crews who sail in The Bloody Mary (down south) or The Brass Monkey (up north) by covering their entry fee

costs. So let's put the pressure on our Superheroes to attend these events and support the Miracle too.

Better Coverage in the Sailing Press - advertising in *Yachts and Yachting* is expensive we get better value if they write a report for us – it's free, but they do like photographs too. So if your club has a Miracle Open someone **must** be delegated to do the write up and submit it to *Yachts and Yachting* and of course to *Halo*. If we don't pull ourselves up by our own boot straps, I'm sure no one else will.

Better Photos – well we are having a professional photographer come for a day at WNSA Plas Heli –so another good reason to go along this year with your smart sailing kit and in best posing .

Just one last thing, I do intend to resign from the Committee in August,. I can recommend the Secretary's job, it is quite time consuming sometimes but you really do get to understand the problems your Association faces and the effort that all its Committee members put in.

We do need some fresh blood on our Committee so come on give it a try

Enough from me, see you somewhere on the water this new season.

Yours sincerely

John Tippett
Secretary, Miracle Association

My email address is
tippett.john@tiscali.co.uk



7th to 12th August

Entry fee £160. Includes:

- Racing
- Boat space parking
- Car parking
- Commodore's Reception for all
- 2 tickets for Prizegiving, for helm and crew (Additional tickets Adults £15, children £9)

Note - Electronic Payment available - See Entry Form

Midweek meal

Everyone: £8.50 adults, £6.50 children, from Reception

Entering

Forms are available from the Secretary and can be downloaded from the website.

Websites:

Welsh National Sailing Academy

- <http://plasheli.org>

Tourist Information

- <http://www.pwllheli.org.uk/>
- <http://www.visitwales.com/accommodation-search>

2016 Nationals Welsh National Sailing Academy

Pwllheli

North Wales

Social Events Diary

Sat 6th Aug	Informal evening
Sun 7th Aug	Reception, 7.00 pm
Mon 8th Aug	Free evening
Tues 9th Aug	Free evening
Wed 10th Aug	Meal and Quiz, 7.00 pm
Thurs 11th Aug	Association AGM, 7.30 pm
Fri 12th Aug	Prizegiving & Meal, 7.00 pm

Bar open in evenings

National's Raffle

Win a refund of your entry fee

Tickets are not for sale, it is about being organised and earning them!

Enter the Pwllheli Nationals early

- 2 tickets if enter by end of April.
- 1 ticket if enter in May and June.

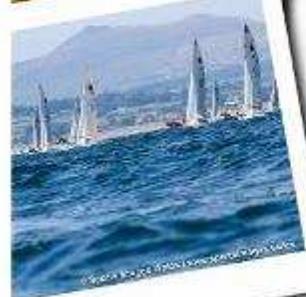
Go to open meetings

- 1 ticket if enter 3 or more open meetings August 2015-August 2016

To be drawn at the
WNSA Welcome
Sunday 7th August 2016
Welsh National Sailing Academy



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Croeso i Bencampwriaethau Cenedlaethol y Miracle

Welcome to the Miracle National Championships 6 – 12 August 2016

At Plas Heli you'll find:

- A café and restaurant with spectacular views of the race area and Snowdonia mountains
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- Suitable rooms for briefings, registration, results and judges
- A big hall for opening and closing ceremonies
- A large secure boat park
- Changing facilities with warm water
- Motorhome facilities

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- Restaurants, cafes, grocery stores, banks, gift shops
- Adrenaline and adventure sports



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Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Miracle Association will
be held at
Welsh National Sailing Academy
Plas Heli Cyf
Hafan, Pwllheli
Gwynedd, Wales
LL53 5YT

On Thursday 11th August 2016 at 7.30 pm
(room location to be advised)

Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Approval of Minutes of AGM held on 13th August 2015 at Rutland
3. Matters Arising
4. Chairman and Officers Reports
5. Treasurers Report
6. Proposals for changes to the Miracle Association Rules of the Association
7. Proposals for changes to the Miracle Association Rules of Measurement and Construction
8. Election of the Committee
9. Any Other Business

According to our Rules of Association any proposal for consideration at the AGM shall be proposed and seconded by full members and submitted to the Association Secretary no later than **21st May 2016**

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Sail Plan Survey

With ideas about possibly having a Miracle mainsail with a roach flying around your committee wanted to know what members thought. An opportunity arose with the Dinghy Show and Brian Jones put a questionnaire together and Mavis Bathe made it her mission to have as many as possible filled in. Since we were asking Brian took the chance to find out about other possible sail changes which have been suggested at various times. There were 18 returns, though the figures below do not always add up to that as many people did not answer all the questions.

And yes, in a perfect world we would have at least as many more responses again, so it is a bit of a straw poll, but the results are still very interesting.

And before you ask, your committee did consider whether to extend the poll to an email and/or postal survey, using a Halo mailing, but past experience is there is relatively little response so we would still end up with low figures.

However, if you do have strong views on any of the options why not tell your committee?

Question on Miracle sail plan	Yes	No
Leave it as is , ie no change	13	4
Asymmetric option	2	14
Laminate sails (no restrictions)	0	13
Laminate sails (with restrictions)	11	5
Increased mainsail area, ie roach at top	3	12
Increased jib size	2	13
Full genoa option	4	13
I am an Association member	14	3
I own a Miracle dinghy	16	2
I regularly race a Miracle dinghy	13	4

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4099 - The Story of the Build

Brian Mumford

Where did the idea come from?

Well having sailed and raced many different classes of boat from singlehanders, asymmetric, symmetrical, trapeze, hiking, when ever I have come across a boat that someone says "I built it" I've had nothing but admiration and subsequent thoughts of "no way could I do it", well I don't have them thoughts anymore.

So how did it happen? Well the best kept secret is that most of the really interesting conversations happen standing at the urinals in the gents loos, in this instance it was at Hunstanton Sailing Club and a chance conversation between myself and Brian Jones. Basically by the time I'd exited the gents changing room we'd shaken hands on the purchase of digital plans. I mentioned it to the girls and they said yeah right when you gonna get time for that? It will never happen. Next time the subject came up again was at the Redoubt open when Mr Jones delivered the plans and I chose the sail number.

Two weeks later the plans came up in conversation with my brother Richard, I showed him the paper plans then said I also have digital versions. Now my brother is a person of few words but when he said "I can cut them out for you" I thought well it would be impolite not to take him up on the offer. See, he's a joiner by trade and has a CNC (computer navigated cutter) at his works, he seemed to make it sound all so easy. Once I'd worked out what ply I needed a phone call to Robbins timber and the marine ply was delivered to his works

two weeks later. Rich also said give me a list of what hard and soft wood I needed and he wood source it from offcuts! The spec lists from Brian Jones saved a huge amount time and were very accurate, the building book was also an invaluable companion.

Four weeks later I turned up at his works with my father in law's campervan and loaded a complete Miracle kit/jigsaw puzzle into the back, then relocated back to his house to unload into his double garage which proved to be the perfect location to build.

Now the build started in earnest the 2nd week in January 2015, although I did have a head start with me brother having glued the spine and one side of the centre board case together on his work bench. This is probably the most critical part of the



4099 - The Story of the Build (cont.)

Brian Mumford

build so was keen when he offered to do this for me. A run through and check that all panels and pieces were complete and plenty of West epoxy in place for the build to commence. The main hull skin came together quite quickly, I would tend to spend probably 24 hours a week spread across the 7 days. Screw, glue, clamp, check and leave seemed to be the best method. Rich would finish work early on a Friday so would join me after lunch for 4hrs. I would save the bulky/fiddly jobs for his expertise and these 4 hours a week were very productive.

I didn't have many specialist wood working tools just the basics like plane, router, coping saw, hammer etc. I borrowed a mitre saw off me brother, trestles off me father in law and clamps off



whoever offered them. Two tips, work out how many clamps you think you need then double it, and buy a Dremmel a really great tool for those tricky bits.

Once the basic shell of the boat was complete I really enjoyed designing and building the interior, shute or bags, thwart,

seats and case - of course always keeping an eye on the Rules though. As the interior was sorted the boat started to take on its own personality, and with

every new addition the sense of achievement grew. The taking of templates for the decks and side tanks from the boat, then cutting them out over size ready to be glued on the hull was a time off real pleasure. It does make it easier at this stage to have an extra pair of hands and Rich was keen to be there, at one point we had every clamp in use, with also some old grain store weights and bricks in strategic places. Trimming the panels would off would have been a really time consuming and difficult part but for me brother turning up with a professional trimmer with a floating angled head! What a tool, the majority of the work done in an afternoon.

Once all trimming was complete the boat looked nearly finished but for the fitting of rubbing beads and nose. In reality though it took nearly as long in time to complete the build from this point with the epoxy coating, varnishing and painting all to be done. I'll be honest, this was the most laborious part and I didn't enjoy it. What made this part worse was I knew I had a



deadline looming and was determined to be on the water before Rutland, so had to keep pushing on. It all looked achievable, then Hannah got picked for the NSSA Schools Nationals, also at Rutland two weeks before the Miracles, that meant one week lost out of my schedule that I couldn't really afford to lose.

All fixtures, fittings, sails and rig were supplied by Neal Gibson of Gibson Sails. Now, with three weeks to go before the Miracle Nationals, I was at a point of starting to fit out, although not totally happy with the finish I had to start. A week later and I'm off to the Schools Nationals with Hannah and very relieved as Neal said he would work on the boat whilst I was away. If he hadn't stepped in we would of not have been on the water before the Miracle Nationals and would probably have been doing a Brian Jones and fitting out actually at the nationals!

Having had a great time at the Schools Nationals and Hannah having been part of the Kent winning team, I returned home to find the boat sitting on my father in law's, lawn mast up, under cover; wow! Took the cover off and the fit out was complete. Neal had done a fab job.

The Wednesday before the Miracle Nationals I packed up the boat and towed it down the lake. After an hour the mast was up and sails were on and we rolled 4099 into the water, Yvonne climbed in first (she must trust me), I then pushed off and we drifted away for our first sail. Now time was limited as I had to work in the evening but there were no major issues and after 20 minutes we recovered the boat and packed away. A success and I can't really believe that I've actually done it and it floats.

Well we turned up at the Nationals with only 20 mins on the water and no notion of how the boat would fair against



other Miracles. I didn't really expect to compete and thought it would be a week of learning. As it turned out we were a bit inconsistent as we tried to race and learn, but to win two races one in strong winds and the other in light conditions was beyond what me and Yvonne thought was possible. To say I was pleased is an understatement, the boat clearly has potential!

I would like to thank Roger my father in law for the loan of his double garage for six months, Richard my brother for all his help and expertise, Neal for coming to the rescue at the end and the odd nugget of wisdom. Oh, and a big thank you to Yvonne for putting up with me throughout, she also had to put up with a house move straight after the nationals so we had a bit on!

One last word, if I can build a boat anyone can. Speak to Brian Jones and get some plans!

Brian Mumford

Endeavour Trophy (Part 2)



Last time we heard how Nic and Hannah Smith prepared and arrived at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club at Burnham-on-Crouch in Essex for the Endeavour Trophy, the completion for the national dinghy

champions of that season. Now the day of the competition has arrived...

Saturday

Breakfast – full English - at the club was at 8.30 in the 1st floor lounge. At the 9.30 briefing we learnt we were not allowed to touch the racing marks in this event. Something that is allowed in normal RS200 racing and there would be drinks and snacks provided on the water. We had already got our own food and drink as we knew we would be out on the water for hours, a lesson learnt from the open meeting. We were encouraged to launch early, because the race area is a mile or so down river from the club in an area where the river Roach joins the Crouch and it was to windward against the incoming tide. The highlight of this sail to the start area was a seal popping up in front of us – a real surprise.

When I have written race reports before I have been able to give blow by blow accounts, but with this event – 8 races in 2 days, the details are a bit fuzzy. Generally our races were characterized by second row starts and capsizes. In the previous week the forecast for the weekend looked wet and windy. As it turned out the event was blessed with perfect sailing conditions. Sunshine and also enough wind. The Crouch is a tidal river much like the Severn, but not as wide so sometimes you had to choose

which side to go down.

The course was windward/leeward with the start/finish line just up from the leeward marks. A NNE wind was coming diagonally across the river so that the start for the first race, was in the mouth of the Roach to give windward leg the right length. Edwin Buckley who was the race officer knew the length of leg would give a 2 lap race of 45 minutes in the 8 – 10 knots of wind at the start.

The strong incoming tide meant a dash for the south shore after the start and the start line was biased to account for this and to stop a pile-up at the committee boat end. We held on down the shore longer than most and were rewarded by gaining places over those who went early and found themselves tacking against the tide to round the windward mark.

The course for Race 2 was the same but now the tide, which changes very quickly on the Crouch was starting to go out. The wind had been increasing during the 1st race and picked up again. A lot of boats appeared over the line at the start being pushed by the outgoing tide, but only an individual recall was signaled.

The increase in wind strength showed up a weakness in our boat preparation. The RS200 is normally sailed with the helm holding the mainsheet continuously, for Hannah and me this is not what we are used to. I had tried to set up the jammer correctly on our boat, but it was still awkward to use. Frustratingly we had 2 capsizes where the sheet popped out of the cleat. This race saw one of our more spectacular capsizes. We were approaching the leeward mark and being swept the wrong side of it by the tide. We did a big bear away to get around the mark but the boat kept rolling to windward

and we capsized, much to the consternation of the couple of boats following close behind. This was a long race – 4 laps and with the capsizes, we finished more than 15 minutes behind the leader and so were disqualified from this race. If you see the results this is why we were given 24th place.

The 3rd race was delayed to move the course into the middle of the Crouch as the wind had changed direction. The tide was ebbing strongly and the wind over tide effect was producing some big waves. We had a big capsize just after the windward mark when I didn't move my weight back in the boat and we lost all rudder control.

The 4th race started promptly as marks stayed in the same positions as race 3. Hannah was now holding the mainsheet upwind. We completed the gybe successfully and Hannah was moving back in the boat to keep the rudder in the water. I then heard a squeal from the back and then we fell over. Hannah had just slipped out the back. I got onto the plate and looked back to see Hannah swimming frantically after the boat. We weren't completely on our own at the back of the fleet and on the next windward let the Wayfarer sailors dropped the mainsheet, rolled to windward and then tacked in front of us and flopped over in what seemed like slow motion. We tacked to clear them and beat them to the finish. At the front Ben Saxton and Toby Lewis (Merlin Rocket) won all 4 races.

Wow what a day! By the time we got back we had been on the water for nearly 7 hours. The food was a highlight of this event and the club knew after a hard day on the water we would need refueling immediately on coming ashore. We packed the boat away, got changed and went upstairs for Bolognese. Hannah is a vegetarian and the chef always provided a good veggie option. We retired to the downstairs lounge to catch up and mull over the days racing while

waiting for the Endeavour Dinner which was set for 8pm.

The dinner was a 3 course affair. Soup for starter, with a main course of chicken, bacon and leek pie with vegetables and treacle sponge with ice cream or custard for dessert. Edwin gave a speech after dinner which was all about thanking the members who were helping to run the event and thanking all the sponsors who help make it possible. On our table were the Firefly, National 12 and Supernova sailors. The Supernova is a single hander and the helm and crew normally sail against each other and were finding it a challenge to work together. It was 10 o'clock by the time the dinner and speeches had finished so we called it a night and went back to Julie's house. She had been racing herself that day, crewing on a Dragon.

Sunday

We got up aching all over from the previous day, but keen to get to the club for breakfast. It is a fantastic setting for a sailor to have breakfast, looking out over the moorings with the sun glistening on the river. Breakfast was 15 minutes earlier to help get the days racing completed and allow the competitors to get home. Many had the prospect of a 4 hour plus drive after the event.

The forecast was spot on. Sunny, colder and more wind. We sailed out to windward, hugging the North shore to keep out of the incoming tide. The Race Officer had set the course by the time we arrived and the race (5) started on time. Tacking down the south shore was the only way, but some boats still underestimated the tide and tacked too early and had to tack in the strongest tide to the mark. When we are sailing RS200 events we are allowed to touch the course marks, but in this event the normal rules applied and there was a Jury Boat on the windward and spreader mark

Endeavour Trophy (cont.)

policing this rule. It was surprising how many boats were getting caught out by the tide forcing them onto the marks.

After yesterday's capsizes we played it safe downwind and whilst the other boats were gybing back and forth across the river we sailed low (almost on a dead run) down the north shore and did one gybe to the leeward gate. This conservative route didn't take advantage of the incoming tide but we did beat the Topper girls. The rest of the fleet were also managing the boat and the conditions much better on Sunday with hardly any capsizes.

The tide was still coming in at the start of race 6, but changed during the course of the race. For the start of race 7 the tide had fully turned and it was hard to stay behind the line. At this start we saw an experienced race officer signal the start a few seconds early to get the boats away. The middle of the river with the outgoing tide was the best route to windward. When we tacked onto the long tack down the middle we found ourselves just behind Ben Saxton and Toby Lewis who had won all the races so far. Watching them, we were treated to a master-class in how to sail the RS200 to windward in a good breeze. They were hiking hard and kept the boat very flat through the gusts. This race saw our 1st capsize of the day at the gybe, but we still managed to beat the Topper girls.

Race 8 was a demonstration of how serious Edwin takes the quality of racing at this event. He could easily have run the race on the existing course, but a slight change of wind direction around to the north would have produced a very one-sided windward leg. The committee boat was moored and they had a boat as the other end of the line.

The whole course was moved to account for the change in wind direction. We were getting better at the starts and found ourselves in front of a few boats at the windward mark. A capsize on the gybe and me missing the toe-straps after a tack dropped us back to our customary position.

We got back ashore, reluctantly handed our new sails back, packed up the boat and got changed. The prize giving was in the 1st floor lounge where we had our much needed, after sailing, meal of Irish stew. Ben and Toby won all the races on Sunday as well – a totally dominant performance against the best small boat sailors in the country.

Well what an event! It was all I expected and more. The sailing was a true test of the sailors' skill and determination. The weather was perfect if a little too much wind for our skill level and the shore-side organization and hospitality were superb.

A few of the champions were taking part thinking this was a once in a lifetime opportunity (it had taken me 50 years to get there), but having tasted this event I would love to go back. However, there is just the small matter of winning the National Championship. Hannah started out crewing for her mum at Brixham in 2005 and helmed at the Nationals on and off since a windy Beaumaris 2010 where she won the Bronze fleet. She was 1st in the Silver fleet at Plymouth and was first Lady at Hunstanton. This progress stood her in good stead for this year's Nationals and probably helped with those final day race nerves. We are very grateful to the Miracle Association for the help and encouragement to take part in this prestigious event.

Mike Smith

The Bloody Mary Pursuit Race

The Bloody Mary Pursuit Race is the largest inland dinghy race held in the UK. Open to all dinghy classes with a PY number equal to, or lower than, the International Topper, it takes the form of a two and half hour Pursuit Race with the slowest boat starting at 12:00 noon and the faster boats starting progressively later depending on a handicap rating which is set by the Race Committee. This iconic event, which is in the Yachts and Yachting hall of fame as one of the Top 5 events in the world, draws competitors from all over the UK and the Continent.

The forecast was for a wet day with a rising wind. In the event the wind behaved as predicted, but the rain mostly stayed either side of us.

The secret is to arrive early, rig your boat in pole position and make sure you can launch to reach the start in time. The boat park is an exposed and draughty place, slipways drop steeply off either side of the concrete peninsular and we often try and depart from the lee side. With this years southerly wind there was no lee side: recovery was interesting!!

We were at the start in time to practice our kite flying as Paul my young crew had never flown one before. Our start was easy with just two other Laser radials with us and a bunch of Fevas ahead which gave good markers on progress and

were an overtaking aim. The course is complex and wanders around the whole reservoir. After a couple of laps the faster trapeze boats start appearing on our transom calling for steady nerves approaching the marks. Stating 'no water' on one occasion elicited the response of "then you'll be speared by my bowsprit"! We weren't!! Trying to stay in clear wind seems to be key.

In the final hour foiling Moths whizzed past in all directions, you don't avoid them, they avoid you.

At the finish we reckoned we were somewhere mid fleet which wasn't a bad guess as 128th out of 260 was the final tally

Finally its the mad scramble to pack the boat away and get to the head of the queue to drive up, hitch up and then drive down the one way system. An army of volunteers ensures a pretty smooth exit: having a friend around from our local sailing club helps somewhat.

It's always a great day out, just one long race and the best dinghy spectacle around, come and swell the numbers next year, especially since the Miracle Association has offered to pay the entry fees of the first 5 gold crews who contact them.

Brian Jones, 4064

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/56799327734/>

Website

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

Miracle Association Committee

Committee Members

Louis Moulden, Chairman
louis@lmolden.orangehome.co.uk
07977 514776
Delph SC

**John Tippett, Secretary
Trophy Officer**
tippett.john@tiscali.co.uk
01788 572129
Draycote Water SC

**Kenneth Gibson, Treasurer
Dinghy Show Co-ordinator**
kengillian2@yahoo.co.uk
0191 537 1712
Thornton Steward SC

Martin Bathe, Membership
mjbmlbuk@aol.com
01254 689308
Delph SC

Brian Jones, Measurement Sec.
brianandjoanie@gmail.com
01628 416511
Maidenhead SC

Richard Brameld, Race Organiser
subbyltd@aol.com
Welton SC

Gillian Gibson, Halo Editor
gillan_gibson@yahoo.co.uk
0191 537 1712
Thornton Steward SC

Dennis Southwell
dennis.southwell@hotmail.co.uk
01617 484940
Leigh & Lowton

Michelle Raines
michelle.raines@talktalk.net
Leigh & Lowton

Miracle Association meeting

Summary of minutes

Upton – 12th March 2016

- **Dinghy Show:** This was not as well attended as previous years, with Sunday in particular quiet, perhaps because it was Mothers' Day. All those who helped were thanked. Next year the standard association sized stand is to be taken.
- **Dinghy Show survey:** A survey was taken on possible changes to the sail plan. Results reported elsewhere.
- **Measurement:** Front buoyancy tank issues under discussion.
- **Treasurer:** The Association is in a

financially sound position.

- **Halo:** The next edition is being prepared. Results of Dinghy Show survey to be included and to be put on website and Facebook.
- **Membership:** Renewal forms were to be issued shortly.
- **Open meetings 2016:** The programme was confirmed
- **Miracle's future**
 - ◇ **Increase in mainsail roach area— Dave Butler/Sail Register correspondence:** A photograph of a sail with an enlarged roach was

circulated. The Meeting agreed that this sail could be trialled by individuals at Club level but it *must not* be used during any Miracle Association events during the 2016 season. A proposal can be put to the AGM.

- ◇ **To include a genoa/modified foresail as an alternative to roach increase:** No support for option in the Dinghy Show survey, so no further action to be taken.
- ◇ **Increase in spinnaker size:** Not included in the Survey, but no known demand and no further action at this stage.
- ◇ **Laminate sail to the existing sail plan:** A proposal is expected at the AGM. Meanwhile, it is understood that a suitable laminate sail exists and this sail could be trialled by individuals at Club level but it *must not* be used during any Miracle Association events during 2016.
- ◇ **Modify deck layouts, etc:** The Meeting agreed this would involve changes to existing mouldings monies for which was not available.
- **Other suggestions:**
 - ◇ **Effect of previous Rule changes:** It was not thought this had been the reason for reduction in racing members as it had made the Miracle more competitive. It was noted an average of 10 new boats per year over recent past was as good a growth as many other fleets. Active promotion of the Miracle by everyone must be encouraged.
 - ◇ **Incentives to attend open meetings:** Host clubs and their Miracle fleets need to actively promote their own events. Nationals—there is a free ticket for the draw to win an entry

fee refund for those who enter 3 open meetings or more. Put more information on website and Facebook.

- ◇ **Sponsorship:** Sponsors already advertise in the Halo. Other potential sponsors to be contacted. Noted that sponsors can advertise on sails.
- ◇ **Area representatives:** These will know their local clubs and be more in touch with local membership, they do not need to be on Committee. Possibilities to be explored.
- ◇ **Combine with other classes:** Already under consideration and work will continue on this.
- ◇ **Grand Prix events:** Association to cover entry fees for Gold Fleet sailors who enter 2012/2017 Bloody Mary (south) and Brass Monkey (north).
- ◇ **Training events:** Possibilities of an event in the north and another in the south to be investigated.
- ◇ **Sailing press:** Yachts and Yachting advert expensive, better coverage by having open meeting reports.
- ◇ **Posters/flyers to clubs:** These were not considered cost effective (time and money)
- ◇ **Photos:** A photographer has been booked for Pwllheli.
- **Nationals**
 - ◇ **2016 Plas Heli:** Final arrangements were discussed.
 - ◇ **2017 Weymouth:** This venue was not now available and alternatives are being explored.. Various venues were discussed and are to be explored.

Copies of the full minutes of meetings are available from the Secretary on request.