



It's the new season!

Spring is on its way! I know because the crocuses, primroses and daffodils are appearing in my garden. If Spring is on its way then so too is the start of the new season at NSC. Time to attempt to fit that post-Christmas body into a wetsuit, make your way to Pitsford, dust off the boat cover, attack the long grass and weeds around the wheels of your boat, check the mice haven't eaten the spinnaker, main sheet, toe straps or some other vital piece of rope and get on to the water!

If all that sounds too much like hard work to start with then come to the Start of Season Social at the Clubhouse on Saturday March 5th 7.30 and let us remind you why you love sailing and windsurfing so much. The bar will be open, a jazz quintet will be playing subtly in the background and a buffet will be available. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Hope you like the new style of newsletter.

Carol Travers, Commodore.

The Lark Fleet at NSC has been quite active this winter due mainly to the interest and support of the Lark Class Association and the NSC Sailing Committee. Due to their efforts we have seen a great Lark Winter Championship including a full black tie laying up supper, lots of Lark support at the Steve Nicholson trophy and a winter / Icicle Lark mini series yet to finish and with all to play for between 4 boats in the last race. Together these events have created good competitive Lark racing on most weekends and excellent positive feedback for NSC from visiting sailors.

The efforts for this activity started in the summer when the idea was proposed by the Sailing Committee and the Lark Association (Steve Cumley) for a Lark winter mini race series to be held at NSC. For many years Frensham Pond SC in Surrey have held the Frensham 5 winter series with support coming from southern clubs who stop sailing in the winter. The plan was to start a similar series of races for Midland sailors at NSC but with visitors joining the club as winter sailing members thus allowing them to join in with club racing at any time over the winter.

The outcome of talks resulted in 5 Larks joining NSC as winter members to compete in the winter series and club sailing as they wanted. With 2 of the visitors sailing most weekends (the Marlow family from Nottingham 2462 and 2490) the turn-

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Photo: Claire Butterfield

Dates for the Diary

Sat 5th March 7.30 pm - Start of season social

Sat 5th & Sun 6th March - Dinghy Show at Alexandra Palace

Sun 6th March 12.00 noon - start of Spring Series

Mon 28th March - 100 mins pursuit race

Thurs 14th April 19.30 - The New Racing Rules. Bar Open!

Thurs 21st April 19.00 - start of Thursday racing

Mon 2nd May - Club Open Day

Tues 3rd May - start of Tuesday racing

25th to 29th July - Summer Camp

Wanted urgently!

The Sailing Committee are urgently in need of a volunteer to join them as **Sailing Secretary**. The Sailing Secretary attends the monthly Sailing Committee meetings held on the first Wednesday of each month and takes the minutes. If they want to take part in the discussion they can. Having taken the minutes the Sailing Secretary writes them up and sends them to the Rear Commodore Sailing. And that's it! Over and above this, the Sailing Secretary can be as involved in sailing Committee stuff as they like! If you think you might be interested please contact Ian Castle (RC Sailing) ian.castle@sportaviation.co.uk or Carol Travers carol@shr50.demon.co.uk for more information.

The Laser Fleet continues under the guidance of a new Fleet Captain, Jim Lowbridge. Jim has been out on the water during the Icicle Series, as have a number of other fleet members including Alex Styne, Andy Baker, Tom Travers, Nick Taylor, Rod Hudson, Tom Castle, Kerry Tucker and Emma and George Hand - not a bad fleet for the Winter period.

Jim has been publicising the club's Laser Open which takes place on Saturday, 2nd July together with the Solo Open. Every reason for active Section members to take part – this is our invitation regatta providing a broad range of outside competition in familiar surroundings. Look out on the fleet's noticeboard for any additional information.

For those of you who travel, the first event is the Stokes Bay Qualifier on 12th-13th March and the first local traveller is at Stewartby (date to be published but usually a Saturday in April). At the back end of the coming season, the club hosts a Laser Masters Open which takes place on 29th/30th October. More on this nearer the date.

Kerry fancies getting a Laser team to the National Club Championships this year. The event is at Rutland on the 4/5 June. She's not 100% sure how many boats we can send from each fleet at present, but it would certainly be fantastic to send a team. Anyone interested should let her know. If there are a good number interested we can use the Spring Series to decide? We think clubs can send more than one team.

In previous years we have set up a Race Training programme for those interested. Last year was a joint occasion with the Solos and this worked well. Jim Lowbridge is prepared to set something up for those interested. Laser numbers have been small but I can vouch for the value of taking part. There's always something to learn, even if it's just as a 'refresher'. Let Jim know if you are interested and he can set up a date.

For all club members, don't forget that the Laser Fleet has a 'Full Rig' Laser Demo boat for you to try Laser sailing. The boat had a fair amount of use during 2004 and hopefully will continue to do so.

For many it's time to get the sailing gear out and check that it still fits. As the next crop of younger members come through it looks as if there will be an increase in the number of Radial sails on the water, also 4.7's. Some have braved the Winter weather already. All bodes well for the Spring Series.

Ye gods! Who turned the snow on?

Richard Sivers

Sunday racing from 6th March

12.00 Fleet Race

14.00 Pursuit

16.00 Handicap

Northampton Sailability

Eleven members travelled to the Boat Show to see Geoff Portas, our Webmaster, collect the RYA Communications prize for the best club website in the East Midlands Region. We didn't win the National prize, but there is always next year.

On 6th January, the Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire, Lady Juliet Townsend, honoured us with a visit. She came to assess us as we have been nominated for 'The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service'. She spent a couple of hours with us, and enjoyed a trip on our Drascombe Longboat in perfect sailing conditions. We shall know whether or not we were successful early in June. Wish us luck!

Harry Cockburn, Chairman

Down By The Waterside—a musical contribution from Bruce Merry (to the tune of "Down by the Riverside")

I'm gonna pull on my old wetsuit

Down by the waterside, Down by the waterside, Down by the waterside,

I'm gonna pull on my old wetsuit, Down by the waterside,

Ain't gonna do no work no more

Chorus:

Now I ain't gonna do no work no more, I ain't gonna do no work no more,

Lord I ain't gonna do no work no more, no more.

I'm gonna pull on my old wetsuit

Down by the waterside

Ain't gonna do no work no more

More verses:

I'm gonna find me some good wind shifts, etc.

I'm gonna make all them planing gybes, etc.

I'm gonna find me a screaming reach, etc.

I'm gonna get to the starts on time, etc.

I'm gonna have me a pint of beer, etc.

I'm gonna get me a bacon butty, etc.

One for the smokers (on the terrace of course):

I'm gonna have my fags alfresco

Down by the waterside, Down by the waterside, Down by the waterside,

I'm gonna have my fags alfresco

Down by the waterside,

I'm gonna smoke indoors no more

Now I ain't gonna smoke indoors no more, no I ain't gonna smoke indoors no more,

Lord I ain't gonna smoke indoors no more, no more.

I'm gonna have my fags alfresco

Down by the waterside,

I'm gonna smoke indoors no more

Cruising Fleet

2004 was the first year that a Buddy or rescue boat was not needed when a member wished to go for a sail; for me, this change in the Rules made it the best year ever because to be able to go sailing any time during the hours of daylight was wonderful! Hopefully, more of you will experience this first hand in 2005 but please abide by the Rules that apply to you which will be the Sailing Instructions 1-9 in the back of your Handbook.

If you want to join us when we sail to Holcot and back, just let me know, as we try to do this every week normally on a Wednesday at 1p.m. but any day is possible depending on the weather.

If you have any queries or matters you would like raised at the monthly committee meetings, please let me know. In the meantime, I hope to see you on the water during the forthcoming months.

Norman Wilson, Fleet Captain

The Larks ctd out of Larks has been very good. On mini series race weekends the turn out has been great. A further spin off from Lark Association support resulted in the Lark Winter Championships and the Steve Nicholson at NSC having lots of publicity on the Lark web site. The positive support for the Larks at NSC also prompted the Lark Association social committee to bring their laying up supper (high spot of the Lark social calendar) to the Club.

The Club hosted the Lark Winter Championship on 27th and 28th November 2004. 45 boats signed on for the event with 2 races on the Saturday and 3 on the Sunday. Great racing was had by everybody in superb racing weather with fierce competition throughout the fleet. The overall championship victory went to J Lewis and Milly Parsons in Lark 2356 from Burghfield, but only by one point, and then only after their third win of the series -- in the last race.

Best NSC members were David and Georgina Hand, while Mitch and Marie did very well to finish second NSC boat in their first open / championship event.

Colin Haberfield, Fleet Captain

Further to discussion at the AGM in December 2004, the General Committee would like to invite members to give us their thoughts or ideas on the membership structure of the Club. Please send any comments to Carol Travers (Commodore) carol@shr50.demon.co.uk or write to her via the Club.

Solo Fleet

The 2004 winter series was not as well supported as in the previous year when we had a total of twelve entrants. However, Rob Jackson was the overall winner of this series with Bruce Merry second and Tony Welch in third position.

During the 2005 season we will be running a Tuesday evening series comprising of 17 races with six to count. Hopefully this will attract those in the Solo fleet who, like myself, have other commitments on Thursday evenings, and also encourage those who now sail the Thursday series to enter the Tuesday series as well.

Some important dates: Solo Inlands at Rutland Water, 18th & 19th June; Solo Open at NSC - Saturday 2nd July.

Many thanks to those who volunteered to help hand with the winter work at the sailing club during January. I hope all soloists have enjoyable and successful racing during the 2005 season. See you all on the water. *David Mabbutt, Fleet Captain.*

VC's Comments

Well it has been a very busy time at the club. Decorators have been in, new picnic tables, bar stools and even a TV bought with the raffle money are all making the Clubhouse a great place to be.

The Icicle series is going well and the additional Larks are making racing very interesting. Topper training is keeping the club busy for several weekends prior to the start of the new season.

The Steve Nicholson Trophy was a huge success and raised over £1800 for the Asthma charity. We also held the RS400 Winter Championships in February which were well attended.

All this traffic has had a detrimental effect on the grass, so if you can avoid driving on it until we see some recovery that would be good. We also need some help to maintain the Site and Equipment, so if you have some spare time contact

John Warner, Ian Castle or myself and we can fill your days with hours of DIY fun!?!

Don't forget the Easter Monday 100 minute Pursuit race on March 28th, the first of a great series of Bank Holiday events planned for this year.

We are also looking for more ideas on improving your sailing club, be it on the water events, off the water socialising or even how the club structures its membership. Please pass your thoughts and ideas onto Carol Travers, Ian Castle or any Committee member.

Anyway here's looking forward to a fantastic 2005 season, I expect to see you on the water or at least in the bar....

John Wayling, Vice Commodore

Lark 2084 or Phantom 1100

For Sale

Silva Compass—detachable, with mounting bracket £35.00

Silva Compass—no bracket £25.00

GP14 kicker system 8:1 £10.00

John Warner ☎01604 406688

The Steve Nicholson Memorial Race

The 5th Steve Nicholson Race was held at NSC on 29th January, with a record attendance of 135 boats. The format was similar to previous years with two handicap races each for conventional single- and double-handers and for asymmetric boats.

The north to north-westerly breeze was considerably lighter than recent days, with rarely more than 10 knots and dropping further by the last race. Race Officer, Chris Wright, set a zig-zag course for the conventional boats with four gybe marks, including one mark very close to the club-house.

Race 1 for double-handers was lead from start to finish by C Howarth and V Townsend in a Fireball, with similar boats in 2nd and 3rd places. The second race was won on handicap by Allan Cave in his Flying Fifteen (crewed by C Thomas), with Tom Stewart and Elizabeth Ross coming second in a National 12.

Overall winners were Tim Rush and Kev Hope in their Fireball.

The first single-handed race was won by Will Gulliver, with Nick Beloe in second place, both in Phantoms. First youth finisher, in his Laser 4.7, was George Hand of NSC. Phantoms also dominated the second single-handed race, with Nick Beloe leading John Wayling to the finish. Nick finished first overall, followed by Will.

The first race for the asymmetrics was won by Richard Stenhouse in a Musto Skiff with Keith Escritt second in a Vortex. The second race was taken by Mark and Sam Littlejohn, who were overall winners in their RS400.

Prizes were kindly donated by Pinnell & Bax.

Detailed results can be found on NSC's website - www.northamptonsailingclub.org



John Warner and Phil Kenny gybing at C
Photo—Claire Butterfield

Children's Sailing Camp

Monday 25th to Friday 29th July inclusive.

For further information, please contact

Phil Kenny via NSC.

Northampton Watersports Centre

We start the new season with Sarah Procter who joined us as a full-time Senior Instructor last Autumn. She has been a great help with looking after our 40+ strong fleet, instructing and marketing the Centre.

We were instructing right up to Christmas and have already started delivering tuition this year.

We expect to be busy as ever this year. We have been taking bookings for this year since December, so if you are thinking of booking on a course, don't leave it too late!

We provide one-to-one tuition and courses for beginners and more experienced sailors, so if you want to improve your sailing skills, get into racing or want to start sailing with spinnakers, give us a call.

We offer discount to club members for courses and boat hire. Please contact us for more details.

Our clubs will be running on Saturdays again this year. Jays will start on 9 April and T15 windsurfing on 7 May. Jays will now be run for young people who are at Stage 3 standard, so if there are any of you needing to attain this level, why not come and attend one of our youth sailing weeks at Easter, we still have spaces!

The Centre will have a new pontoon this year, thanks to Anglian Water providing a substantial part of the funding.

We will be selling a number of boats this year, including a Topaz Tres and a Wayfarer, so if you are interested, call us on 01604 880248.

I would like to say a big thank you to all of you who have supported the Centre last year.

I look forward to seeing you all out on the water this year. *Isolda Marroquin, Centre Manager*

Contact details: Tel: 01604 880248 e-mail: info@northamptonwatersports.com

Articles and ideas for the Newsletter are welcome. Deadline for next issue - 20th April.

Please send to Rob Jackson at NSC or e-mail to nscnews@dsl.pipex.com