

Sailing Committee Minutes – Tuesday 3rd November 2020

Present on Zoom: Bob Joce, Paul Adams, Andrew Craig, Liz Pescod, Tony Woods, Andy Draper and Janet Hawkins.

1. Matters arising

1.1 *Date of Last Meeting:* Noted that there had not been a Sailing Committee meeting since February 2020, although a restart of club racing sub-group had met to re-establish club racing in July.

1.2 *Minutes of Last Meeting:*

Three point plan agreed in February as below:

- Duplicate set of standard resources be placed in 2nd committee boat, so all resources needed for club race and open meetings are in both boats (Janet and Paul)
- Assigning a member of QM Team to take personal responsibility for checking over the committee boats on regular basis (Janet, Paul, Tony Bishop)
- Key group of RO/SC team to form regular working party to review and check resources on the committee boats, to advise on maintenance and resources; ensure that any key points that need addressing are prioritised and actioned (Andrew, Janet, Tony Bishop)

Noted that the above had not yet been implemented, due to Covid-19 situation, but was to become a key focus for the winter along with additional tasks that were now becoming a priority with the continued use of Merry Fisher rather than Foxy Lady for club racing.

- Restoration and refurbishment of Foxy Lady
- Electrical problems/issues with horn (ongoing work to resolve problems)
- Stern flagpole holder – needs a screw inserted so that the flagpole isn't too far down in the holder to be of use/visible
- Halyard system for Merry Fisher to be upgraded – this task to involve standardised flag sizes, to be reviewed/ordered by Janet and new ropes installed with input from RO Team and with QM Team.

2. Race Finishing Time (Sunday Club Racing)

2.1 Noted that there had been a couple of Sundays where club racing had been delayed due to issues with reliability of committee boat, or wind conditions shifting. Paul explained that the club's staff team had been especially busy this summer with teaching starting at 1330, involving members of the safety crews. These staff need a break between safety duties and before starting their 3-hour teaching sessions. The optimum timing of racing was confirmed as allowing 45 minutes for the leader of the first fleet to finish and that if racing starts at 1030 promptly, first races should be finished ready for second race to start approximately 1130, allowing for a short period for recalls, resetting some part of the course, with a finish time of approximately 1230. Noted that safety teams were working to prepare course changes during first race to try and reduce waiting periods between races. However delays to this schedule can and do occur for a variety of reasons. Racing might not start until 11:30 or 12:00 following postponement awaiting the wind to fill in.

2.2 Agreed: ROs to be briefed by Duty Officer when timing is really tight and staff team is really busy; maintaining a dialogue between ROs and the Duty Officer if delays might happen. Agreed also that where wind conditions were light/number of racers small, then reduction of safety cover could be considered (whilst still operating within the Club's agreed protocols). However, it was noted that numbers recently had been high, winds and conditions challenging this autumn, so safety crews had been fully deployed; additionally, staff team were busy helping with launch and recovery and monitoring numbers to avoid overcrowding at the end of racing in particular.

3. Current situation – Club Race Series; Christmas Fun Race; Frostbite Series

- 3.1 Noted that the nation-wide lockdown was about to come into force for the month of November and that this would interrupt club racing (Winter Series) and impact dates for the RS200 and Laser BIG Sunday series. Tentatively, these would both be deferred until Sunday 6th December, but noted that it was uncertain whether club activities would resume fully again when lockdown ended. With that in mind, the results from Winter Series, plus these two fleet series would be reviewed with reduced number of races, once situation was clearer (at the end of November).
- 3.2 Agreed that the Club focus for the winter was to provide Club Members with a service, be that sailing/windsurfing or Club Racing; therefore all visitors on site to be reduced to a minimum and restarting Open Meetings to be encouraged from spring onwards, rather than during colder months of the winter.
- 3.3 The possibility of extra club racing over the Christmas period was explored and suggested that an additional one-off day of racing might be set up (Covid-19 regulations permitting). This might be in the period between Christmas and the New Year. Dates (at the time of meeting) to be considered for Club Race Series as follows, but may well be subject to change):
- Next and last date for Winter Series, RS200 Series and Laser BIG Sunday Series – 6th December 2020
 - Christmas Fun Race 13th December 2020
 - Frostbite Series 20th December (possibly 27th December if club open, TBC)
 - Additional date between Christmas/New Year, possibly 30th December, for a handicap race with fleet prizes, format and number of races to be determined (Andrew Craig, Janet and Paul to explore and Tony Bishop to confirm dates club open over Christmas period)
 - In the light of the cancellation of the Bloody Mary, on 9th January, opinions canvassed about likely popularity of a one-off event on Saturday 9th/Sunday 10th as an alternative – not supported, so Frostbite Series to continue without further interruptions from 3rd January.
 - NORs and Sis to be prepared for the above events.

4. Bloody Mary 2021 Update

Noted that the Bloody Mary had officially be cancelled for January 2021. Noted also that SailRacer were keen to set up a virtual event of some sort, possibly trackable and around the country. Discussion ranged across the merits of this and likelihood of any QM sailors being interested in participating (there would be a cost attached). Agreed that the Club should not allow the brand or name Bloody Mary to be associated in any way with this substitute event. Agreed that there would be likely to be far more support for a Club racing event, as described above, over Christmas period, should racing be reinstated swiftly after the lockdown ends.

5. Popularity of the 'P' Course for Wednesday Racing

Andrew was keen to discover whether there had been any feedback (informally) from Club Racers on the reintroduction of the P course for the Wednesday Evening racing – noted that with such a short series in 2020, there had only been 8 races, 2 of which were P course. Noted that there remained mixed feelings on the merits of the course for different fleets and the tricky nature of setting the course when there were wind shifts from the perspective of RO Teams too. That said, agreed that the accuracy of course setting generally had

improved and the new guides were popular and useful to both safety teams and ROs.
Agreed: to keep 'P' course for 2021 summer season and review.

6. Handicap Update

Noted that with such a short series, there was no statistically significant data and therefore no changes to handicaps for club racing proposed until the March 2021 review from the RYA.

7. Open Meetings 2021

7.1 Agreed that any youth events proposed for winter months should be deferred until warmer months, given the current restrictions in place; Janet to contact the Laser 4.7 open organisers – subsequent to the meeting, Janet had opened discussions for a date in July 2021.

7.2 Noted that many events cancelled from 2020 had been pushed into 2021 and the calendar as it stands at the moment to be approved; noted also that further dates likely to be added, but this would be done in the light of usual protocol regarding size of event and other club commitments. Any positive responses to requests to be subject to current Covid-19 restrictions in place and Janet was in contact with organisers on this basis currently.

8. Automated Lights-Based Race Starting System

8.1 Andrew canvassed opinions about whether it was worth investigating trying to set up and install a bespoke (DIY) lights-based system for race starts, on a committee boat; and whether this might aid the current situation with limited numbers of RO Teams operating. He was aware of a similar system used by Draycote. Concerns were expressed about adding further projects for the QM Team to investigate, given the hostile nature of the environment on a committee boat (electrics and water ...). Noted that most people were used to a system of flags being raised/lowered. Noted also that there would also need to be 2 fully functioning committee boats for the reintroduction of an Open Meeting Racing calendar in the spring and the ongoing maintenance issues for the currently operating committee boat. Decision: not to pursue this as an idea, but to focus on repair of Foxy Lady as a priority and upgrades noted above.

9. On-water Behaviour and Pre-emptive Reminders

9.1 Noted that there were continuing and ongoing concerns relating particularly to young racers experiencing behaviour and language that the Club strongly discourages from any racers. Noted with thanks the work that had gone on with the small group of individuals identified to encourage them to consider impact of their language and behaviour. Key role for Fleet Captains in affected fleets acknowledged and noted that this was not a one-off, but a sustained effort with reminders and encouragements shared regularly.

9.2 Agreed that a reminder of the options and actions that can and should be taken as well as opportunities for reminding all racers of this would be helpful. Noted and agreed that the QM Team would continue to report any examples observed and ensure that the RO Team on the day were informed of sail numbers concerned. Noted that safety teams can witness situations and that there is a straightforward process to be followed, a report was needed for a protest committee and actions and consequences were clearly identified and should be used. These included disqualification from a race, a race series or the ultimate sanction of being banned from the club.

9.3 Noted that the issues of lack of sail numbers earlier in the year had been resolved, by the sanction of not recording results for those with no numbers – swift resolution resulted! This was a clear situation where using sanctions had the desired effect.

9.4 Noted that the current practice of safety teams filming and posting video from the start line was popular, but also a good opportunity to remind all racers that their behaviour and language would be very visible if streamed on FaceBook ...

9.4 Agreed that efforts to be sustained to encourage and remind racers of their responsibilities and the sanctions. Agreed that for next summer's Wednesday Evening series, a communication to be issued for 3rd week of racing, to remind all competitors of the tone and nature of races and all instances to continue to be reported and dealt with.

10. Racing Rules of Sailing 2020 – 2024

10.1 Main changes identified as: hull, crew, equipment crossing the line changes now to just hull crossing the line; for boats not rounding all the marks, Sailing the Course has been adjusted to 'Sail the Course' and race officials can record boats that don't Sail the Course with a new code in the results; both these clarify situations but need to be shared with racers.

10.2 Key dates/processes:

- *Frostbite Series*: Noted that this series would bridge the end of the period covered by current RRS and the start of the new RRS. Agreed that the NOR and SIs to be drawn up using RRS 2017-2020.
- *Subsequent Club Race Series* to use the RRS 2021 – 2024;
- *Templates for all Racing Documents* (Club Racing and Open Meetings) to be updated by early March in time for start of Spring Series and Open Meetings planned for 2021
- *20th January 2021* – noted that Chris Simon would be hosting an evening to explain the new RRS and changes – ROs, Racers to be invited (nature of the event TBC to comply with Covid-19 guidance)
- *Clear communication* of the above needed for all club racers, RO Teams so that all are aware that Frostbite Series is using RRS 2017-2020; all subsequent series using RRS 2021-2024. Key changes, dates of changes and Chris Simon's talk to be included in this communication
- *All 2021 Open Meetings to use RRS 2021 – 2024* (noted that none now planned before March 2021); this to be communicated by Janet as part of planning process

11. ILCA / Laser Situation, Club policy and handicapping

11.1 Tony explained that the Laser and ILCA were legitimate and that ILCA rigs could be equated to Standard, Radial or 4.7s and should be handicapped as such. This is in line with ILCA / Laser Class associations.

11.2 However, the situation is different regarding Laser Performance – these are currently not a 'legal class' recognised by the Class Association; this relates to unmeasured hulls, replica or non-class legal sails and use of these is discouraged by the Class Association and Clubs. This is because there is no standardisation, particularly in sails. There are also concerns over possibility of same numbers for sails as for those in the 'legal class'. LP are canvassing support and attempting to gain the status of a 'legal' class, but so far attempts are unsuccessful.

11.3 Agreed that whilst it is likely that some sailors may purchase the cheaper, alternative to the officially recognised Laser/ILCA boats and sails, it is obvious when these are used for club racing. It was considered that those using these are likely to be less experienced sailors and not having much if any effect on the established 'legal' Laser fleet. Indeed, similar to the situation regarding the use of QM Lasers and 'training' sails. Agreed that if anyone was rising up the ranks using this equipment, then discussions after monitoring whether they have been seen or deemed to have gained an advantage using such equipment and suggestion that they should provide a 'measurement statement' could be invoked. Otherwise, continue with the practice of encouraging less experienced sailors to join in racing.

11.4 Noted that attendance levels from the Laser Fleet for Sunday racing often matches or exceeds numbers attending Open Meetings, so the quality of the field racing is effectively that of an Open Meeting. Discussions with any sailors not using class legal equipment could be based on this and explanation of the fact that Club Racing is effectively a one-design fleet.

12. Any Other Business
No other business was raised.

13. Date of Next Meeting
Focus for the next meeting would be Open Meetings for 2021, new RRS 2021 – 2024 and Race Officers.

Provisional date: 8 pm Tuesday 12th January 2021. Format of the meeting to be confirmed nearer the time.