



## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011**

Royal Torbay Yacht Club  
Thursday, 18th August

### **Present:**

**Elected Committee:** Ben Cooper (Acting Chair), Martin Orton

**Co-opted Committee:** Phil Berry, Jo Hawkins

58 Full Members and 21 Stakeholder Members

### **Agenda**

Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, opened the meeting at 7.15pm by welcoming all attendees.

#### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were given as follows:

**Elected Committee:** Pete Bucktrout

**Co-opted Committee Members:** Rob Allen, Giles Lloyd Williams

**Others:** Arthur Allen (Class Measurer), Mike Davies, Nigel Furness, Roy McCubbin (RYA), Duncan Truswell (RYA), Chris Turner (Builders Representative)

#### **2. Approval of Minutes of 2010 AGM at Pwllheli Sailing Club on 19<sup>th</sup> August**

Copies of the minutes, had been published on the website, and were available for the members present to examine; The Chair asked whether there were any questions regarding the minutes; there were none.

Motion to accept the minutes: Proposer - Phil Berry; Seconder – Phil Walker

Vote to approve the minutes as a true record: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

#### **3. Presentation of the 2010 Annual Financial Statement**

Jo Hawkins, as Acting Treasurer presented the Accounts.

These had been published on the website and copies were available for members present to examine. The role of Treasurer during the year was covered by Barbara Walker through to the end of September, with Jo Hawkins taking over from October.

Jo Hawkins explained that the finances of the Association were very healthy, and then went on to highlight some key developments:

- Event Entry Fees were now being paid direct to the Association, with the Association then paying host clubs on a per boat fee basis.
- Training was starting to show a significant increase in revenue, due to the increased demand from sailors.
- Membership revenue had increased, although it was highlighted that the final payment to the International Class for International Memberships was still outstanding.

There was a discussion relating to the continuing practice of having a "RIB replacement fund".

- Ben Cooper stated that, given the developing strong relationship with the RYA, there was felt to be less need to have a dedicated fund for RIB replacement. This was on the basis that there was no reason to suggest that the continuing provision of a Class ET RIB by the RYA / Eric Twiname fund would not continue into the future.
- It was emphasised that the Association was responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the ET RIB and its road trailer.

It was stated that there were no immediate plans for any specific substantial expenditure, but that the committee would continue to discuss potential ideas for investment in the Association.

Ben Cooper expressed thanks on behalf of the Association to Barbara Walker for all her work for the class during her time both as Treasurer, and as Class Administrator,

Motion to accept the Accounts: Proposer – Adrian Ward; Secunder – Tim Walton

Vote to approve the Accounts: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

#### **4. Chairman's Report (to include Sailing Report)**

Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, presented his report, covering the last 12 months from the last AGM (attached at the end of these Minutes).

There were no questions.

#### **5. Training Officer's Report**

Martin Orton, as Acting Training Officer presented his report, covering the last 12 months from the last AGM (attached at the end of these Minutes).

There were no questions.

#### **6. 2012 Membership Fees Proposal**

Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, presented the proposals for 2012 Membership Fees in line with the new Class Constitution. These proposals which would take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011 for new to the class membership applicants, and 1<sup>st</sup> January for renewing members, are as follows:

- Individual Adult Full member - £32.50
- Individual Youth Full member - £32.50
- Individual Student Full member – 22.50
- Family Full member - £45.00
- Temporary membership – retain at £10 as before.

Ben Cooper asked for any questions relating the proposals; there were none.

Motion to accept the Membership Fee Proposals: Proposer – Phil Walker; Secunder – James Bollingbroke

Vote to approve the Membership Fee Proposals: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

#### **7. Presentation of new Resolutions for adoption by the Class**

Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, presented two Resolutions for adoption by the Association in line with the new Class Constitution.

**Resolution 1** - Honorary Membership for any UK 29er Sailor who subsequently represents Great Britain at an Olympic or Paralympic Games

- Ben Cooper explained the rationale behind this Resolution, and read out the list of current individuals who would qualify for Honorary Membership. He pointed out that Paul Brotherton actually sailed a 29er after competing at the Olympics, but it was agreed that he should be included.
- There were questions or further discussion.

Motion to adopt the Resolution: Proposer – Bill Tucker; Secunder – Martin Orton

Vote to approve the Resolutions: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

**Resolution 2** - 29er Events in the UK; Advisory Guidelines on Minimum and Maximum Wind Speeds

- Ben Cooper explained the rationale behind this Resolution.
- Tom Harris emphasised that at present there was no guideline for Race Officers or Event Organisers.
- Simon Loveridge asked how this Resolution aligned with the International Class; it was confirmed that this aligned the UK 29er Class Association with the 49er's.
- Charles Glover asked whether the proposal referred to a constant wind speed or gusting wind speed; it was clarified that it was an average wind speed.
- There was further general discussion about the general sentiment of this Resolution, especially with regard to the lower wind speed proposal, and it was emphasised that the Resolution set down an 'Advisory' guideline, thereby leaving the ultimate decision to the Race Officer.

Motion to adopt the Resolution: Proposer – Nikki Allen; Secunder – Martin Orton

Vote to approve the Resolutions: Carried, by a show of voting cards, with Three Against and One Abstention.

## 8. **Election of Officers of the Association, Committee Members and Regional Sailor Representatives**

***Election of Officers of the Association, Committee Members:*** In line with the new Class Constitution, Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, outlined the new structure of the Committee, comprising 8 Officers of the Association, plus 4 general committee positions.

A notice had been posted on the website, and on the Event Official Notice Board seeking nominations for each Officer position, and each of the four general committee positions; 12 nominations had been received, all of which had been proposed and seconded in line with the Class Constitution.

- There was one vacant Officer position (Vice Chairman), and 5 nominations for the four general committee positions;
- Ben Cooper suggested that John Mather, who had been proposed for one of the general committee positions be invited to stand as Vice Chairman, thus filling the vacant Officer position;

This was then proposed and seconded by Jeremy Williamson and Jean Furness.

Ben Cooper then presented the twelve committee nominations, and suggested that unless there were any objections, and no positions were being contested by more than one nomination, that all the Election could be taken in one block vote.

This was then proposed by Bill Tucker, and seconded by Adrian Ward.

Vote to elect the proposed Committee: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

The Committee for 2011/12 was thus elected as follows:

<i>Chairman:</i>	Ben Cooper	<i>Training Officer:</i>	Martin Orton
<i>Vice Chairman:</i>	John Mather	<i>Safety Officer:</i>	Phil Berry
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Jo Hawkins	<i>General Secretary:</i>	Angie Alloway
<i>Sailing Secretary:</i>	Tom Harris	<i>Marketing Officer:</i>	Rob Allen
<i>Committee member:</i>	Nigel Furness	<i>Committee member:</i>	Pete Bucktrout
<i>Committee member:</i>	Andy Baucutt	<i>Committee member:</i>	Mike Davies

**Election of Regional Sailor Representatives:** In line with the new Class Constitution, Ben Cooper, as Acting Chairman, explained that there were 8 Regional Sailor Representatives; nominations had been received, proposed and seconded for seven of the eight regions. The only region where there was no nomination was Scotland.

Ben Cooper presented the seven nominations, and suggested that unless there were any objections, and no positions were being contested by more than one nomination, that all the Election could be taken in one block vote.

This was then proposed by John Mather, and seconded by Tim Walton.

Vote to elect the proposed Sailor Representatives: Carried unanimously by a show of voting cards.

The Sailor Representatives for 2011/12 was thus elected as follows:

<i>South-West:</i>	Jack Hawkins	<i>Midlands:</i>	Chris Berry
<i>South:</i>	Jeremy Williamson	<i>North:</i>	Robert Morris
<i>South East:</i>	Hugh Ward	<i>Wales:</i>	Josh Davies
<i>East:</i>	Tom Bucktrout	<i>Scotland:</i>	Vacant

## 9. Open Question and Answer Session

Bill Tucker: Wished it to be recorded that, as a new family to the class, he found the attitude of the sailors and all involved to be very friendly and welcoming. He thanked the Committee for their efforts which are very much appreciated.

Tim Walton: Requested all competing sailors that, as was his last event he asked everyone to make an effort to do "fancy dress" sailing on Friday.

Chris Blackburn (RYA High Performance Manager); Representing the RYA, gave apologies from Roy McCubbin and Duncan Truswell, and stated that the RYA are pleased to be working very closely with the class, especially with event planning and open training; he commented that the RYA were pleased with the strong relationship that now existed, and that they were looking forward to working with the class in the future.

Charles Glover (Chairman, International 29er Class Association): Specifically thanked Ben Cooper and the whole committee, stating that the class had made fantastic progress in the last 12 months, which was a great reflection of their efforts.

There were no further questions.

Ben Cooper then closed the meeting at 8.15pm, and thanked everyone for their time and contribution.

## Chairman's Report – Review of the year ending August 2011

Welcome to the 2011 AGM – it's great to see so many here, and I hope that you are all having a great week so far here in Torquay.

My role here is to give a review of the last 12 months, although obviously I am currently only acting Chairman of the class. I cannot deny that the year did not get off to a good start, last autumn, with, sadly significant divisions in the membership, with major concerns being expressed from a significant proportion of the members, parents and other stakeholders about the direction of the class, its strategy and leadership, and in particular its relationship with the RYA, which was perceived to be at risk of collapsing completely.

Those concerns resulted in a petition for a vote of no confidence in the whole committee, culminating sadly in the resignation of the whole committee, save for three newly elected individuals, plus one sailor rep. I was one of the newly elected committee members, and, with the agreement of those remaining, and given my experience previously as Chairman of the UK Optimist Class, I volunteered to stand as acting Chairman.

The remaining elected committee members subsequently sought to put in place an adequate team of co-opted parents and sailors, as an acting committee, to ensure that the class activities continued, and indeed, specifically, we set about addressing the concerns as mentioned, whilst also attempting to draw together the membership as a whole, drawing a line on the events of the early autumn.

It was a painful time, but one which now is firmly in the past. Indeed, nine months on, I believe we have achieved much of what we committed to do, and indeed, judging from the general enthusiasm both within the class and beyond, we have transformed the class from being possibly treated as the poor relation to the 420, to being an equal, if not even, the Youth Class to be seen in. I hope the membership as a whole can all see the positive way in which the class has developed in this time as being for the benefit of all.

We've got where we have got with considerable time and effort; and therefore before I move on to the year in general, I would therefore like to express considerable thanks to a few key people for their support and commitment, often behind the scenes, but without them, we would not be here today.

First, I must mention our Training Officer, Martin Orton, who was elected last summer as a general committee member, and who took on Training. You will hear from him separately in a few minutes; he has done a fantastic job in developing our class open training programme, to the point where it is oversubscribed, hugely successful, and generating universal praise from the sailors. I am pleased that Martin has agreed, after a bit of persuasion, to continue in this role for a further year (if elected).

Second, although not a committee member, I would also like to specifically thank Phil Walker, who has taken on the role of senior class coach for all our Open Training; much of the success of the programme is down to Phil and his team of coaches helping to develop the skills of all our sailors.

Third, Phil Berry, our co-opted Safety Officer, who has been a continual support to me in developing both this years sailing programme (which hardly existed last Autumn), and who has taken administrative control of our Eric Twiname RIB, and our direction on overall safety at events.

Fourth, Jo Hawkins, who agreed to be co-opted into the role of Treasurer; you will also here from Jo in due course, and I am particularly grateful to Jo for her work in managing the accounts.

Fifth, Martha Berry, whom we formally appointed as our class administrator at the end of last year, and who has supported us all with membership, event and training administration, and all sorts of general administration that has been thrown her way.

Sixth, the RYA ... I will come back to them.

There are others too – Adrian Ward, who stepped in to take control of our website and associated technologies, and who ensured continuity in the flow of communication amongst us and with you, the membership. Giles Lloyd Williams too, who gave support in developing our sailing programme for this year.

So what of the year? There are many really positive things report.

First, membership ... at this point last year, the class had 133 sailors as members split between individual and family member units. Now, one year on, we have 225 sailors as members, made up of 88 in 40 family memberships, and 137 in individual members. This is unbelievable, and as the autumn

starts, we will be seeing many more coming into the class, particularly from Toppers, Cadets and Mirrors, as well as a few coming across from 420's.

Second, sailing in general ... numbers are up across all events, with, as has been said already, the 2<sup>nd</sup> biggest Nationals in the UK class history. The class was the biggest 2 handed fleet at the RYA Volvo Youth Nationals, and I predict well over 60 boats for our Inlands at the end of the year.

Competition overseas is key to the development of our sailors, and I am really pleased with the progress that has been made this year. Three crew's went to Argentina for the 2011 World Championships in January, with Henry Lloyd Williams and Sam Batten finishing 13<sup>th</sup> overall. Several boats have taken part in Eurocup Events so far this year, 5 went to the German National Championships, and 19 went to the Europeans Championships in Switzerland ... an interesting event certainly!

At the Europeans, Phil Walker and Jon Mather and James Bollingbroke and Tim Walton made the Gold Fleet in a frustrating week, for all.

Henry and Sam were also selected as our representatives for the ISAF Youth World Championships in Croatia ... a frustrating event with very light winds with Henry and Sam finishing 11<sup>th</sup> overall out of 23.

One development that we have put in place this year, which we will continue in the future, is the introduction of travel support grants for non Squad Sailors; we gave three such grants to crews to help them go to the European Championships, and we have one grant available now to support a non squad crew to go to Lake Garda at the end of October for the Eurocup event there; this event and the Lymington Grand Prix event being the selection events

Third, the RYA ... we have made significant progress in our relations with the RYA, which has re-established our position as one of the key Youth Classes in the UK ... we have a defined contract with them for the first time which specifies how they will support us, both financially and in kind, and which also details what they expect from us in return.

As a result of the progress we have made, and the structure we have in place, the RYA are now very supportive in terms of recommending the class to transitioning sailors, and indeed in areas where we are less strong, Scotland, the North of England and Wales, there is a particular enthusiasm recommending new sailors into the class. I am hopeful that this will result in increased Squad place numbers for the autumn, although nothing is guaranteed at this stage.

I should emphasize, that we are independent of the RYA – it is a partnership, and we work to our own strategy and plans, but the RYA are totally supportive and indeed enthusiastic of the progress we are making ... obviously, the introduction of a women's skiff at the 2016 Olympics can only be of benefit to the class in general, irrespective as to whether the 29er xx is selected or not. Our relationship with the RYA is very strong, collaborative and mutually supportive for the benefit of both, and competitive sailing in general.

Sadly, there is a slight negative, even with the positives. We had a bit of a disaster with the class RIB earlier in the year; the RIB is provided to us by the Eric Twiname Trust (in conjunction with the RYA), but we are fully responsible for it, to the extent that it should be returnable to them at any time in full working order. Sadly, at the Easter Eurocup event in France we experienced a fatal engine failure, and as a result we have had to fund the purchase of a new engine ... thankfully with the RYA this has not actually meant the full cost of a new engine, but this will have an impact on the 2011 accounts.

Fourth, growth in the class; I have already mentioned the current membership numbers, but this only tells half the story ... we are aware of significant numbers of new entrants coming into the class in the Autumn from various feeder classes ... we are becoming the class of choice for many, if not most; this has had its own problems though, notably in relation to the second hand boat market; One plan for the new committee will be to try to open up the second hand market, finding boats that are disused, and getting them sold on to newcomers ... our estimates are that there are no more than 200 boats in the UK in total, but if we could find 20 and get them into the hands of new entrants that would be a huge step in the right direction.

There are many other things that we have achieved to progress the development of the class ... we have a new Class Constitution, which provides better structure in terms of the management of the class, with defined officers of the association and better structure to the sailor rep positions. Parents of sailors under 19 now have a say in the running of the class, given that they are key stakeholders and financiers, with the stakeholder membership status being introduced; additionally, we now have a Student Membership category, and if approved later in the meeting, this will enable us to introduce a separate membership fee for those members which will recognise the stresses of student finances.

We have made significant progress in the use of the website for better communication; we have taken control of event entry fees, giving new revenue streams to the class for the first time. Our relations with Ovington boats is really strong, and indeed we are working with them to help with bringing new members into the class, and they have a boat upgrade programme in place to help with this. Our Junior Class Liaison, with Angie Alloway, has helped to make the class accessible to new entrants with three very successful 'try a 29er events' earlier this year, and there has been a step-change in our PR, with very few weeks now going by without something being published regarding the class on Y & Y etc ... thanks go to Rob Allen for taking on this responsibility.

I have probably gone on enough ... I hope that in general, the positives outweigh the negatives, and that following on from some early difficulties, the year now gone can actually be regarded as a huge success, and the start of a new growth period for the class in the UK .... For those who don't know, we now have a major target with the 2015 World Championships being awarded to the Pwllheli SC (just awaiting final confirmation) ... something for us all to aim for, and the ultimate recognition of the standing we now have in the International Class as a whole, where we are now the largest single country membership. We also now have a British Chairman of the International Class in Charles Glover, who was elected earlier this summer at the World Council Meeting in Switzerland.

Finally, I'd like to thank my wife Debbie for being so supportive as I embarked on the role of Acting Chairman; we both take a huge amount of pleasure from seeing the progress that has been made by the class this year. It has a great future ahead of it in the UK, and if we can continue to lay on events like this week, then our membership will grow and grow.

I am happy to take questions now, or at the end of the meeting ...

Thank you very much.

Ben Cooper  
Chairman, UK 29er Class Association  
17<sup>th</sup> August 2011

## **Training Officer's Report for Year Ending August 2011**

I believe we have had a full and successful year of training.

There were 11 open training events, including 3 TTS – 5 pre TT selection, and 6 as part of the Opening Training (OT) syllabus post TT selection  
The RYA ran 5 TT events and 8 NYS Events

### **Open training**

We set out with the aim to provide a:

- comprehensive training programme, inclusive for all standards and ages of sailors
- using a variety of venues providing a mix of different sailing conditions, based on the locality of the sailors and
- supporting development of the class across the UK.

We set out a training policy of what we were trying to do in consultation with the coaches, including TT head coach, the RYA and with sailors and parents views via consultation. This included:

- Simplifying the administration through using online entry and payment
- Setting a syllabus based on the TT Squad and aligned with their programme.
- Adding more coaches to meet the demand and were often able to form 3 groups to get a better split of standards, sometimes separating off those new to 29ers and catering better for good sailors missing out on squads and squad sailors joining for extra practice.
- Using survey monkey to get feedback to check what we were doing and ensure sailor and parent views; in particular around the use of the syllabus (how rigid or flexible), group splits (working together or separate more), and to provide feedback to the coaches so they could meet the needs better.

The February survey gave an overall average score of 4.4 on a range of 1 (Very poor) to 5 (Very good), with no scores less than 3, which suggests that we are getting it about right.

With the overall surge in numbers in the class, numbers during the Jan – Mar period in particular were at least doubled on last year even when the TT squad had training on the same weekend, and many TT squad sailors in particular coming when dates allowed.

We survived some very harsh winter events in late Nov/Dec still with keen sailors and coaches (not quite sure on the parents!)

We have considered class squads, but for now have decided that these can seem a bit non-inclusive, but in having the syllabus I think we have created something to be part of and hopefully inclusive for all ages and standards, and achieved regular attendance from sailors giving continuity and benefit to sailors (and coaches).

Financially we used the full RYA subsidy of £3000 during the year (we have to give it back if it is not all used) and otherwise pretty much broke even on the £70 per boat fee. We are well subsidised by the RYA with now a specific written agreement which on training covers aspects of how we run it, the number of events, tie up with Transition Squad selection and more. It certainly feels as though the RYA coaches are becoming more involved with the class which in turn should benefit the class and the standard of the squads.

### **Looking ahead – Regional Training**

I think the future to support continued growth in the class is balancing open training with regional locally run training. Regional training seems likely to do more to encourage development and new comers across the country, and is usually cheaper to run with clubs not charging or charging much less for use of facilities and ribs, and cheaper and more convenient for parents. This regional training and events can then be combined with monthly Open Training (and Open events) to get the numbers to give more sailors of similar standard and challenge and fun to all.

Winter training is now pretty much established at Haying Island, and being arranged to fit and not clash with open training.

The Class association is encouraging regional training through an offer to regions where there are signs of growth, to support it through providing a coach for the weekend (with some conditions to ensure it is open to the region and we get some feedback etc.)

Offers have been made to:

- SW (Torquay)
- N Wales (Pwllheli)
- North (Leigh & Lowton)
- Scotland
- SE ( Bough Beech)

### **Open Training for 2011/12**

Monthly events are planned:

- 4 dates to end of November when TTS selected, including 3 TTS events.
- 5 dates from Dec to March which will run with our OT syllabus, which we need to update with Phil from this year and republish.
- Still using a max of 8:1 ratio. There is quite a bit of guesswork in the numbers, but we hope to be able to gauge it so we can vary between 6:1 and 8:1 and have 3 groups or more where appropriate.
- We have set up initially for 3 coaches for most events and a 4<sup>th</sup> rib for extra safety and to allow coaches to do more coaching and less rescuing, which will need parent volunteers. We are aware that with the growing numbers there will be a number of good sailors and older sailors who won't get into squads who we would need to support with suitable advanced training.

It is likely that this approach will result in spending all the RYA grant, increased to £3500 this year, and some Class Assoc money to support the extra rib, but we are keeping the price the same at £70 per boat per weekend.

We are always open to feedback from sailors and parents; it all helps to improve what we offer.

Planned developments on training include:

- Trying to get some video on the website for newcomers to help them get started.
- Exploring options on sea venues, as we are conscious of a lack of these. It is a balance of sensible environments for the sailors (particularly in Autumn) practicality of the locations and of the venues (distance to sailing area). Consequently we are pleased particularly with the Olympics coming up, to have Weymouth in late March and hope to go out to sea with most to work on waves if suitable and safe to do so.

We are overbooked for the first one (3/4 Sept at Weymouth) and looking at ways to add the spaces required.

There is still lots more we can do, particularly with a new committee and more people prepared to help. *(Very keen to get new parents with a vested interest involved and to take over next year )*

Lastly a huge thank you to:

- The parents who have helped with both providing ribs and crewing them
- Martha for all the administration
- all the coaches and
- in particular our head coach Phil Walker who has done a great job in taking over during the year and providing excellent coaching.

Martin Orton  
Training Officer, UK 29er Class Association  
16<sup>th</sup> August 2011