

# The Wagtale

Redditch Sailing Club Magazine

February 2021



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## A message from the Editor:

- Many thanks to all members for bearing with us during this pandemic
- Thanks also to the “**Covid Team**” of Andy, Izzy and Roger for guiding us through these times and enabling sailing to take place safely in a socially distanced manner when possible. I am delighted to tell them that they have been awarded the **Plain Sailing Trophy** – normally awarded to the person who has not just improved their sailing, but contributed significantly to the Club during the year! I think you will agree they deserve the honour.
- The Club has been active in arranging on line training, events, jigsaws and virtual sailing to try to keep members engaged. (We hope you enjoyed the recent Quiz Night).
- We will try to get another edition of the **Wagtail** out to you all before too long, but we need you to contribute your relevant articles – hopefully more fascinating than “Watching Paint Dry...” (See below)! Any contributions welcomed...
- Don’t forget the virtual **AGM on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> March** at 7.30pm on Zoom. Hopefully we can have a lively discussion about the future of the Club.
- We hope to distribute a **Club Development Plan** before the AGM which should stimulate discussion on the evening as well as provide a guide for the future and support for any funding grant applications.





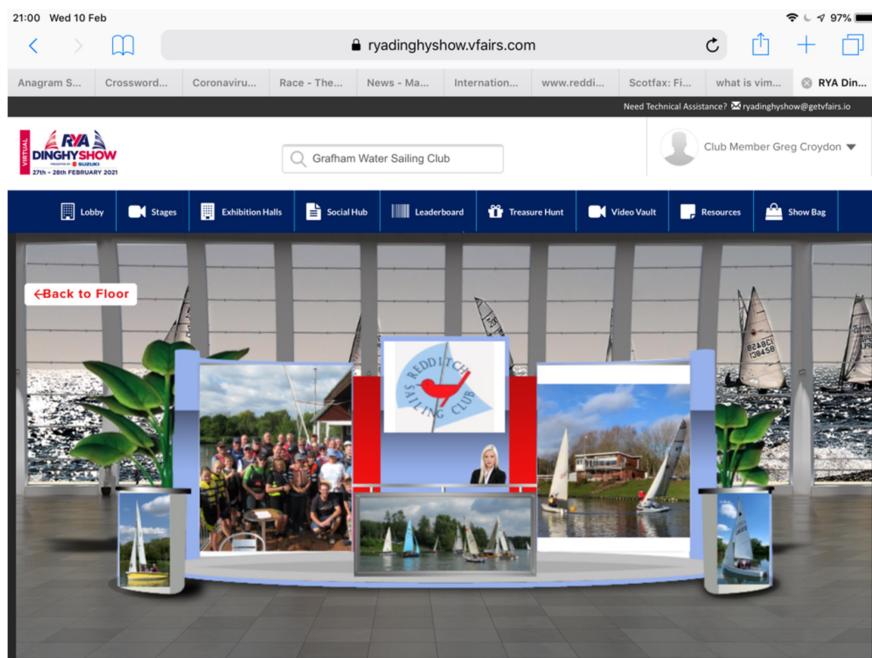
## This year is different!

The RYA Dinghy show is Virtual and Redditch Sailing Club has an 'Exhibitor Stand'.

With the current constraints imposed upon us it seems to be an opportunity to promote the club to anyone local that happens to 'visit' (browse) the show.

### The show is free to Visitors, so you may like to register now.

After looking at the different boat classes, clothing, manufacturers etc. You may like to drop by our stand to say "Hi". We will open the 'clubhouse' (Zoom session) between 2-3pm on Saturday and Sunday for a club chat and 'coffee' (bring your own!). So, you may like to time table that in with other Show talks and demos.



If you are interested and have not already volunteered, you may like to 'stand on the pitch' to receive and chat to Visitors. If so, please write to [Membership@RedditchSC.co.uk](mailto:Membership@RedditchSC.co.uk)

## The Commodore Speaks

Hello, and welcome to the latest Wagtale - it's certainly been a while since the last but hopefully this will entertain you for a little while given there is limited option for other activities.

I thought I'd initially take a quick look back over the last 12 months before looking forwards to 2021.

Obviously the first half of 2020 was very much around the first lockdown and the limited movements that brought. Happily as the weather improved in June, we were again able to start some attempt at normality. Along with every other sailing club, the return to the water was very different but I'd like to thank everyone in the club for helping us all to remain safe, and the summer actually saw some of the highest participations we've seen at the club in recent years. While the racing was different, I hope you enjoyed the freedom of being back on the water as much as I did.

We all felt a great loss with the passing of Len Baker, he was a real character and founding member of the club. My greatest regret is that as a club we have not been able to celebrate Len's contribution to sailing and the club in

the most fitting way - hopefully this is something we can do this and future years.

Unfortunately, we've had another couple of enforced absences from the water of late, but I'm encouraged by the numbers being vaccinated and with luck we'll be back on the lake soon rather than the virtual sailing we have been doing recently. It may even have warmed up a little by then.

I'm sure that there will be restrictions in place on our return for some time yet, but I'd like to thank all club members for the consideration shown to date in adhering to the necessary changes, and the committee for their support and direction in ensuring we retain member safety forefront in our actions.

We would like to run the full racing series starting in the Spring, and also plan the host some training, a number of social events and even an Radio Controlled series (with Dragonforce 65's) when we are able. I'm sure there will be some changes from previous, but the friendly nature of the club is something we all welcome, so we'd welcome you to partake in as many activities as you feel comfortable.

I sincerely hope that you all remain safe and well, and look forward to

seeing you at the club in the coming months as the restrictions are relaxed.

Thanks  
Andy



**Len and Margaret Baker on Len's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday in January**



**In Memory of Len Baker**

Founder member of the Club, active Committee member and Bar Manager who passed away in April 2020. He will be missed by all, but his legacy lives on.

## Annual Prize Winners for 2020

<u>Winter Series</u>			<u>Summer Series</u>		
Pursuit	Gold	I Langman	Pursuit	Gold	A Beardshaw
	Silver	I Sykes		Silver	S Bridgewater
	Bronze	R Irwin		Bronze	I Ranford
Handicap	Gold	P Fuller	Handicap	Gold	M Bish
	Silver	I Sykes		Silver	R Harrison
	Bronze	A Keith Hill		Bronze	I Ranford
Crew	1	H Farmiloe	Crew	1	E Herlihy
	2	I Ranford		2	A Kerridge
	3	E Herlihy		3	M Timmins
<u>Autumn Series</u>			<u>Tuesday Evenings</u>		
Pursuit	Gold	G Croydon		1	A Beardshaw
	Silver	R Crawford		2	A Evans
	Bronze	W Noyce		3	T Keith Hill
Handicap	Gold	G Croydon			J&A Kerridge
	Silver	R Crawford			
	Bronze	A Cooke			
Crew	1	E Herlihy			
	2	E Greaves			
	3	J Kerridge			
<u>Overall Crew 2020</u>			<u>Plain Sailing Trophy</u>		
	1	E Herlihy	The "Covid Crew"		A Beardshaw
	2	A Kerridge			I Langman
	3	J Kerridge			R Harrison
<u>Junior Crew Overall 2020</u>			For all the effort in 2020 keeping us safe		
	1	A Kerridge			
	2	Mer. Timmins			

## Sudoku

				7			
			6	5		7	1
					9		
	7					2	6
8	1				2	3	
		6		9			5
	6		1	8			7
	3				7		5
			4			1	9

# "Start them Young"

Hi Sailors,

Sadly, I didn't climb into a dinghy and have the thrill and action of small craft sailing and racing until I was in my 40s...who knows where I would be now if I had started 30 years earlier ... ha-ha

It all started on a sunny Sunsail holiday with other members of RSC, the Squirrels and Amoses. Although I knew Elaine from Guiding and Andy knew Jane from work, to find ourselves with them on holiday was purely accidental...!

I will always remember Elaine and I being cast off in a Pico by Bruce and Mike, the two of us together in a tiny dinghy catching up on news and just letting the boat decide what to do.

Needless to say we had a wonderful time and some great sailing tuition over the week from Mike, Jane and Bruce. Our daughters were virtually grown up by then, enjoyed the holiday, especially as we paid, but didn't quite catch the sailing bug like I did.



So, when 3 lovely Grandchildren came along many years later, they were my obvious target to inject with enthusiasm for such a fabulous sport.

We had brilliant fun with them messing about in rubber dinghies and on paddle boards. Their

Mum knew that from a young age they would need wet suits and life vests, so we were pretty much set for water action.

Jacob at aged 4 showed great concentration on steering a mirror dinghy across Lake Bala, he wore a big smile and my heart soared.

After working for the NHS for 43 years, I had a little retirement nest egg that I was more than happy to dip into when I saw an Optimist for sale on Apollo duck back in June 2020.



Life had been difficult for several months as it had for everyone, so when between lockdowns we towed it to the children's garden, there was high excitement. We rigged it up on their front lawn and again just messed about, showing them what happened to the sail depending where the wind was coming from.

Our chance eventually came to sail it at Redditch. I had sailed my Laser in what was quite a strong breeze that day. Andy arrived with the Oppy plus children and we set about rigging it. Norma and Alan proved very helpful by suggesting we just

raise half the sail only, it was sound advice as the last thing we wanted was an overpowered boat with what might then become nervous sailors.

The two children were by then 5 and 8 years old, number 3 baby Alfie might need to be weaned and wait a year before he was also launched.

Andy and I manned the rescue boat, the children hopped into the Oppy and off they went happily heading for the park end of the lake.

I briefed Andy that the most important outcome of the day was that the children would love the adventure and would work together as a team. Any over energetic steering was left unremarked upon and when the boat said "Hi" to the bushes several times, then this was deemed all part of the fun. A very friendly fisherman obligingly reeled in his line to accommodate their course, and the boat hook came in handy for hooking the Oppy out of the trees.

All in all, it was a great afternoon. The children had already sailed a couple of times at the Junior Summer Club at RSC. I think this is a great facility and children learn so quickly just by allowing them play in boats with their friends and siblings.

The instructors use the club Optimists to teach the young novice sailors. They are sturdy beginners' dinghies where the children gain confidence with no risk of accidentally capsizing. Although the Optimists are a competitive racing class of dinghy some young sailors progressed further in summer 2019 to the Tera. Meredith particularly enjoyed more speed and competently sailed this single hander.

I think it's known that structured sailing tuition shouldn't start until children are around aged 8. Minimizing the risk of any bad experiences, making sure they are warm and comfortable are all aspects important to ensure the children's



ongoing love of the sport. One day, who knows, if my teaching is as good as Mike and Bruce's then, my Grandchildren might love it as much as I do.

Izzy Langman



## Volunteering in the Pandemic



When the first lockdown was implemented I was mainly working from home and my University had postponed its postgraduate Masters degree and with nowhere to go, I found myself with plenty of spare time. I joined the Studley Isolation Support Group (SISG) helping the vulnerable and elderly residents of the village by doing errands, shopping and collecting prescriptions. The group, who number 65 volunteers, have carried out over four thousand separate tasks since the beginning of the Pandemic. Members of the group also help each other. At first when certain food items were in short supply we even developed a bartering system swapping flour for eggs or just donating what we had to those who needed it. Soon though I was back at work and my University having opened up, albeit online, I found myself back studying so had no time in the day to help out with the daily tasks.

When South Warwickshire General Practice services asked for volunteers to support the vaccination roll out, members of the SISG as well as other residents signed up in droves.

Volunteers help out at vaccination sites across South Warwickshire. Some volunteers have even been trained to vaccinate. One of the main roles though is as a marshal. Marshalls are expected to guide people from the car park, register their attendance, and direct them to vaccination stations. Fellow club member and Studlyite, Justin Kerridge has spent many a shift out in the rain snow and wind, responsible for crowd control.

Able to give some spare time in the evenings, I carried out my first duty at Studley Village Hall. The role involved making sure that the over 80s, who had received the Pfizer vaccine, didn't try to escape before their 15 minutes was up.

I felt like David Seaman, shifting left to right in that doorway with my arms outstretched before herding them back to their seats. But am proud to say not one octogenarian went AWOL on my watch.

I was also responsible for sanitising chairs and chatting to people who were waiting to leave.

Everybody was lovely, they were so grateful and relieved and I really enjoyed hearing everyone's stories, but my favourite, though mortifying moment, was when I turned to an elderly gentleman and exclaimed "I bet you haven't got long left have you?" I'll never forget the look in his eyes! (they were the only part visible of course). A chap sat to the left of him burst into laughter and I quickly realised what I'd just said. After clumsily trying to explain I meant waiting time, and not his mortality he also saw the funny side - luckily.



The centre was getting through 400 vaccinations a day. Little wonder that we are so far ahead with the vaccinations. The process is very well organised with staff working through the clock between 8am and 8pm, some until 10pm. The NHS are doing a fantastic job as are all those supporting them.

Nadhim Zawahi MP recently paid tribute and thanks to the SISG for their contribution to the community and their role in the vaccine rollout. I have now completed a number of shifts at Studley and Leamington Spa, but have so far, even despite offering, managed to dodge standing outside in the freezing cold, maybe come summer time I'll join Justin outside.

I'll bring some sunblock. Hopefully we'll be able to all go for a pint afterwards.

Viki Rose

# Man, in the Mirror

Late 2019 saw me on holiday in Luxembourg (when people were allowed to travel and such like...). I was there for my birthday to visit the Christmas markets and also to visit my brother. Whilst out there, I received an excellent bit of news from none other than Paul Bates... asking me if I would like 'an early Birthday present?'... my very own mirror dinghy... for free! :-)



I'd sailed in 'Polly' several times previously, over warm Tuesday evenings with Paul... It was a good chance to catch up from our RYA course days

and generally having less to think about. Suffice to say the Mirror sat there... for the rest of winter, unused.

Spring eventually came around however and on a warmer but blustery day in March, I was back at Redditch Sailing Club. As was often the case, I'd completely missed the first Sunday race and had come down to see if conditions would allow me to venture out in the Comet for the second. I was fairly sure going out was a non-starter, when I happened to bump into Will Noyce. We both concluded that single handers would be a bit much in the windy conditions... but what about a stable boat... like the Mirror? We had plenty of time to rig the boat and it would be a good chance to catch up. So off came the cover!

Suffice to say I'd gotten away with my 'laissez faire' approach to boat maintenance with the plastic hulled Comet... 'leave the bailer open and collect in the spring!' The wooden Mirror though had no self-bailer and being neglected since Xmas time when my ownership took over, meant the boat looked in the March sunshine, something more like a freezing cold hot tub...



and we once led the race for around 25 mins or so (there was so little wind - bar the breeze that had moved us over the start line – we stayed ahead!). Paul had also kindly allowed me to sail her on other occasions too. Familiar with the boat, I leapt at the chance and before I knew it the deal was done. Paul just wanted to ensure Polly continued to be used and from a cosy hotel on the continent, that sounded all well and good!

Those who know me well, however, know I can at times be a fair-weather sailor... I can cope with the cold or the wet (but not both) and I'm still to get around to buying a dry suit. Furthermore, I have several gold medals for being late... the upshot being that for the next few months, despite taking over ownership of the Mirror, I sailed little. When I did, I grabbed my Comet (my usual boat) knowing it better, rigging it quicker

Not to worry, we still had time.... and armed with hand bailers, we spent 15 mins emptying the hull (and tanks) of a winter's worth of rain. We made it to the start line - and it was good to be sailing a

new boat. Will and I had a great time and the strong gusty conditions meant that the slower turn of speed was not felt by the occupants... we stayed upright, as those around us continued to capsize. The Mirror was well balanced and choppy conditions kept us very entertained.

We'd had fun and were doing pretty well in the race... (another new experience) ... just the final buoy to round and the home straight. Rounding the mark with a gybe, I stepped across the back of the boat and then... crunch...

In my eagerness to get across the boat, my foot had gone straight through. The winter had not been kind to the Mirror... and more specifically the floor. I now had a 30cm square hole where plywood used to be. Will looked round in shock, amazement and poorly concealed amusement... to which I yelled... 'start bailing!!'...

'We can't'... he replied... 'we left the hand bailers on the bank after we emptied the boat earlier'... we both just fell about deck laughing.

At this point and with two of us weighing the hull down, and a question mark over the back air-tank, there was a very real prospect of the boat going under. We frantically beckoned over to a confused safety crew, who could see the boat was perfectly upright. Upon closer inspection however, they began to chuckle and see our predicament. Thankfully the back air-tank held, and we were carefully shepherded to shore. Lots of people then appeared to try and understand why we had stopped a stones-throw from the end of the race.

Suffice to say this was one of the most memorable and entertaining races I have been a part of at Arrow Valley... even if by the end it was ultimately a 'Did Not Finish'. A good laugh was had by all involved, and I'm pleased to say Pete Riley was able to provide his carpentry expertise

and undertake an excellent repair of the Mirror. I can therefore confirm the Mirror is once again in tip-top condition... or at least it was over the summer.... going into winter 2020/21....!



[Mike Balenski](#)

# “Big Boat” Problems!

Here follows a very dull article about rudder bearings. Turn the pages fast if you have any sense!

When I was able to check out my boat at Weymouth after the first lockdown last year, I found that the rudder had gone very stiff. Having disconnected the wheel and auto helm equipment, and even dived under the boat to check for obstructions (mussels found!), it was clear that the problem was with the bearings. I was going to have to get Foyle out of the water



to fix this. At least it would give me a chance to clean her off and re antifoul her.

The famous Weymouth “worm casts” were well affixed to the prop, but this cleaned up nicely!



The rudder shaft ran up inside a tube terminating above the water line, through the steering quadrant and was held in place by a large bolt!

The top bearing was located under the helmsman’s feet, and the bottom bearing located in the hull skin. The bearings were made of “ertalyte” – a form of white cryptonite, I believe (judging by the cost)! They are self-centering bearings so that any flex in the shaft can be absorbed.

Removing the rudder took nearly an hour of very physical work trying to wriggle the shaft down through the bearings. Once out, the top bearing came out easily! It rotates through 90deg and pops out from its “letterbox”. The bottom bearing was where the problem was. It was



locked solid.



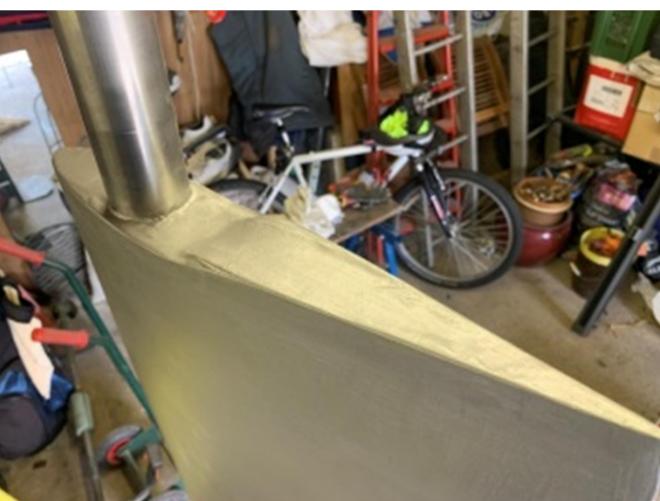
A quick call to a helpful marine engineer for tips, and I got to work with a drill and a hacksaw blade to cut it out.



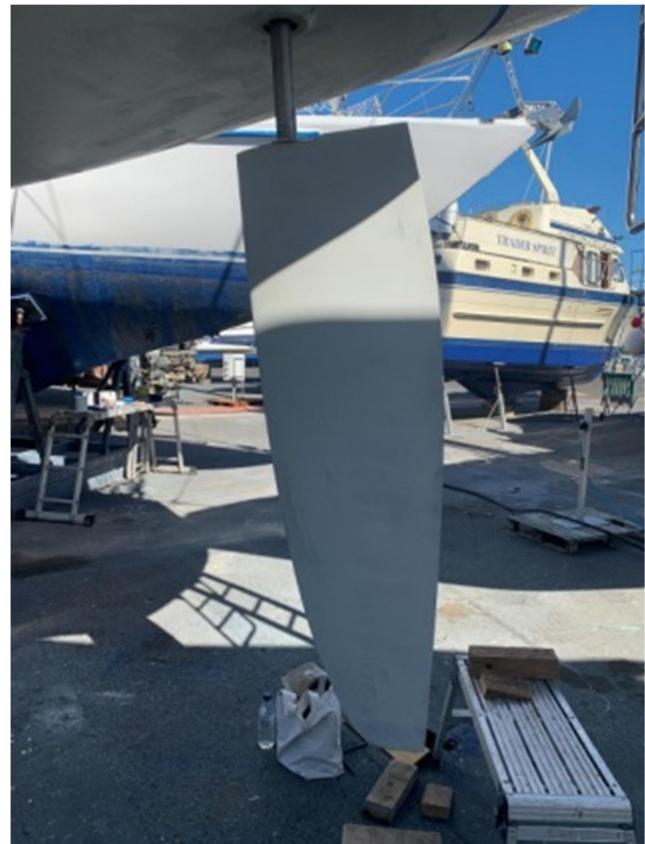
The rudder had some cracks in the GRP along its top edge, so this gave me the opportunity to



grind down and repair this area.



Re-fitting the rudder was awkward single handed as the whole thing must weigh 40kg+ and it involved a lot of climbing up and down the ladder to check it was lined up. Anyway, it worked and the steering is now as smooth as silk.



Painted, polished and rudder replaced – ready for the season that never happened!



**Greg Croydon**

# Foiling in Menorca!

Hi Sailors,

Just a little tale about my adventures in Menorca last year!

Generally, we will all agree I'm sure that it was a stressful, challenging and terrible year for so many reasons last year. Just about every arrangement or celebration anyone had looked forward to was postponed or cancelled.

I presumed the same might well happen to my holiday at Minorca sailing on September 23<sup>rd</sup>. I was lucky enough to attend this resort in Fornells bay Northern Menorca a few times in the past and had built up a wonderful group of friends from all over England and Ireland.



They are a fabulous bunch of fun club sailors. Competition on the water was always tough, but they all loved a gin and to talk sailing tactics all evening as much as I did.

We had all paid our balance for the holiday...[not a cheap affair but definitely better value for money in low season]. One by one for various reasons my buddies dropped out. Flights were cancelled, spouses were unwell, and 2 weeks prior to departure I wondered whether to go alone.

I had been re-employed on an ad hoc basis after retiring from practice nursing. That work

situation left me able to quarantine for 2 weeks on my return. My flight with Ryan Air was still scheduled. ...the centre was still open, and the 2 remaining instructors were mending sails, painting villas and wanting to go out on the water with clients. Hubby Andy reassured me all would be well, so off I went.



The sailing centre there is well equipped, and the staff are friendly and helpful. The large sailing bay boasts good winds but minimal waves being sheltered from the main Mediterranean.

I soon settled in and had been informed a couple of days earlier that I was the only client for that week. I wondered how the training would be without the daily races which were sometimes videoed, or your progress followed with trackers on the boats. In previous years the early evenings were spent in the bar re living the races and having your mistakes monitored and discussed, all part of the banter and learning process.



The instruction as ever was tailor made and helped me prepare for my instructors' course which I was due to complete in 2020 [another postponed arrangement sadly]

Anyway, the highlight of the week was the chance to sail two different foiling boats. It must be said Minorca sailing is like a very special

sweet shop for sailors! The only foiling boat I had previously seen in action there was a Waszp. I had known that there was absolutely no point in me attempting to sail one of those beasts and had stuck to the RS boats.

Anyway, my instructor Beth reassured me that these Australian foiling boats allowed average sailors to experience the thrill of foiling. The boats come in two sizes. The Skeeta is the larger for average sized adults and the Nikki for teenagers and smaller adults.

My question to Beth was “what do I then do if I get up on the foil”. Her reply made me smile when she said... “let’s get you up there first!!”

My first attempt was in the Skeeta in winds of around 10 knots. It was easier than I thought to set up and launch. It was a comfortable boat to sail generally. With some tuition from Beth who was in the rescue boat, I managed to foil for a few seconds. As the boat rose out of the water, so my brain froze...inevitably there were many capsizes, and I soon realised that movements of body and tiller need to be small.

On one occasion I pushed the tiller hard away... [not sure why??]. That was when I found that such action led to the boat nose diving and my body crashing onto stays and mast!! Once up on the foil everything becomes eerily quiet as there is no water lapping at your hull. Your speed accelerates hugely, and immediately... and there is a need to sheet in as the apparent wind increases and moves forwards. This needs to be



done whilst keeping the boat flat and with minimal rudder movement. Of course, there is a whole other issue if a gust of wind also comes!!

I found the boat exhilarating and frightening as the wind picked up.

The following day I tried the Nikki in stronger winds and began to feel more confident... [ very slightly only...ha-ha]. The Nikki has no stays to impale yourself on and I can see how it suits young teenagers. It was easy to right however many times I capsized. That day Beth sailed the Skeeta and I was in awe of her speed as she was reached across the bay.

I would love to try these boats again one day. They are great for swimming and capsize practice!! I found foiling quite addictive with the aim being to stay on the foils for just a few seconds longer.



I felt very lucky to have the opportunity to sail them under the watchful eye of a wonderful

sailing instructor that Beth was. Foiling is I feel the future of sailing, wind surfing, kite surfing and even paddle boarding. These Australian foiling boats make the sport accessible and possible for everyday sailors, they do though come with a high price tag.



This is the best photo of me foiling, I suppose my boat is around 6 inches out of the water.

I expect you have all been watching Americas Cup, I can't imagine how those boats feel for the crew, I think those AC75s are definitely for the big boys!!

Best wishes sailing buddies, hope to see you on the water in March!

Izzy

## Lockdown Funnies!



I don't care how magnificent you are, the law says six.....

1:52 pm



# Repainting Rum n' Reggae

Or: "Watching paint dry in lockdown"!



My Enterprise was built in 1993 by Prior and painted / varnished by Nigel Potter at Paintcraft. Nigel uses epoxy spray automotive technology and is renowned for his fine finishes. Rum n Reggae was finished in metallic British Racing Green – a bit unusual for a boat, particularly as green is meant to be an unlucky colour for sailors.

I bought her in 1997 and, apart from treating scratches and dinks a.s.a.p., the finish remained sound. I had to revarnish the deck and insides about 10 years ago (the final coat went on in the lounge!), but the green paint stayed in remarkably good condition until 2019 when delamination and bubbling became apparent.



After 26 years of year round use and outdoor storage, I think this was pretty good. However, I did "complain" to Paintcraft about it and said I expected that their guarantee was only 25 years! I didn't get a reply!!

So when lockdown was imminent I brought her home and decided to repaint her myself (the cost of a spray repaint professionally would probably have cost more than she is worth!). I was advised to use a "one pot" marine paint like International Toplac or Hempel Gloss and to use a roller where possible.



Using an orbital sander I removed the green gloss to find a yellow undercoat seemingly covering another gloss and undercoat underneath! I remembered then being told that she had been returned to Paintcraft when new as the finish wasn't as good as the buyer wanted. Lucky for me as I am sure that this has prolonged its life.



Two or three coats of grey primer were applied – both sanded and cut back to give as smooth a finish as possible.



The two coats of gloss went on with a mini roller. I had some problems initially with air bubbles in the paint from the roller, but I found the knack of re-rolling carefully to minimise an “orange peel” effect. Plenty of cutting back with a polisher, a go-faster stripe and the name decal and the job was done! I wasn’t allowed to use the lounge this time...

I am reasonably happy with the outcome. There are a few blemishes I am aware of but the overall effect was pleasing! Let’s hope it lasts another 26 years.

Greg

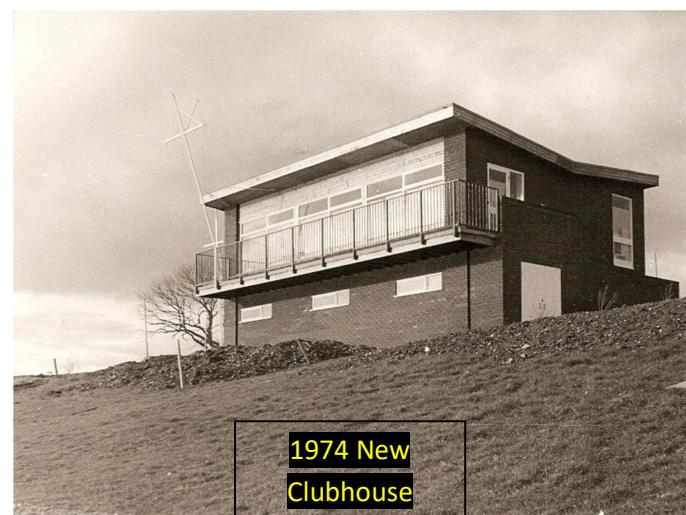


## **Arrow Valley Lake – created in 1973**

**Clubhouse dates from 1974**



Panorama from 1979 – where are the trees?



1974 New  
Clubhouse



Approx 1973



Merlin Open – mid 80s



Approx 1981

## On-Line Training

Don't forget all the on-line training material we created during the first lockdown in 2020. It is all available on the Club website:

[www.redditchsc.co.uk](http://www.redditchsc.co.uk)



### Developing Further Racing Skills

Intermediate - Presentation 1 of 3  
Redditch Sailing Club

## Rules Seminar

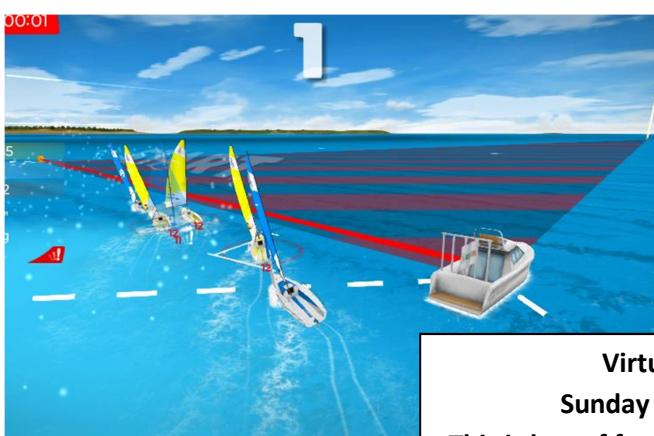
Redditch Sailing Club

The two sessions will cover:

- Understanding the Rules
- Ainslie Olympic Video
- Quiz Questions
- Sailing Trivia



### Rigging and Sail Tuning



**Virtual Regatta Racing!!!**  
Sunday 10am during lockdown.  
This is lots of fun with realistic wind shifts, proper rules, wind shadows and lots to learn without getting wet and cold! Join Us...