



Captain's Remarks

It's been quite a while since my last missive. I'd like to say that much has happened but, at least on the sailing front, things have been on the quiet side! The year started with the perverse sequence of weather patterns that we've come used to at Grafham: a couple of weekends with winds (usually from the north-west) strong enough to deter the boldest amongst us were typically followed by Sundays when the mist clung to the lake from daybreak to closing time.

And then the coronavirus arrived. The club was closed until June and, when racing did resume, of necessity, it took a rather compromised form with shore-based starts (remember those from Wednesday evenings in the 1980s?) and restrictions to limit the number of boats sailing in proximity. Two-handed boats were especially hard-hit. Try applying 2-metre social distancing in a boat less than 7 metres long. Bob did attempt to persuade John to crew entirely from a station on the foredeck, but this proposal was politely declined. So 'proper' 2-handed Fifteen racing was restricted to boats crewed by consenting co-habiting adults - and it transpired that many who qualified on those grounds declared themselves unfit for a variety of medical reasons. Thanks largely to Dave Philpott's foresight, Fifteen racing did continue through the summer: Dave persuaded Racing Committee to approve a club handicap rating for boats racing single-handed without spinnakers and a small but enthusiastic band of intrepid helms raced on-and-off through the summer.

A particularly sad casualty of the lockdowns was the annual dinner, which Trish and I decided to cancel a few days before the club shut its doors. It remains to be seen whether we can resume this event in 2021, but it's looking increasingly likely that, if it does take place, it will not be before the early summer. A prize giving and barbecue is a tempting possibility.

But right now, we're back in lock-down with little prospect of racing resuming much before the spring. Keep monitoring the Grafham web site for updates - and/or sign up to the [Grafham Covid WhatsApp group](#).

Longer-term, it's worth remembering that, government grants notwithstanding, the club has taken a real hit that could have existential consequences if the impacts of Covid persist. We are a member's club and our survival depends on the contribution of our members, whether through their individual efforts or through their continued support. So I do urge you to keep up your membership as we all look forward to better times in 2021.

2021 Fleet AGM

This will take place on-line on Wednesday, February 17th at 19:30. If you plan to 'attend', please let me know and I'll mail you copies of the paperwork and joining instructions. You'll be pleased to know I have nominations for all the key officers (some of the present incumbents have agreed to serve for another year) - though none of that precludes further nominations and (gasps of astonishment!) an election. So, if you'd like to nominate someone (including yourself!) for the following fleet officers, please send me details (having first secured the agreement of the person concerned!) Posts up for election are : Fleet Captain, Vice-Captain, Treasurer, Scorer, Keeper of the Plate*.

* Susie currently occupies this post which entails the custodianship of our impressive collection of silverware. Susie has also taken on other duties, including helping organise the prizegiving supper.

Race Results, Summer - Autumn 2020

Summer Sunday Racing

3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett - **Kircubbin Cup**

3849 Graham Wadeley - **Fifteen Rose Bowl**

Grafham Fox (Sailed on 26.7.2020)

3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett

Wednesday Evening Series (7 races with 3 to count)

1. 3974 Dave Philpott - **Sweepstake**
2. 3827/4042 Geoff Floyd - **Cameron Trophy**

Handicap - 3924 Bob Gatton - **John Clifton Cup**

Autumn Series (11 Races to count)

1. 3849 Graham Wadeley **'Early Birds' Trophy**
2. 3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett **'Autumn Leaves' Trophy**

Handicap Trophy - 4042 Geoff Floyd

Duke of Edinburgh (Sailed on 20.09.2020)

4024 Simon and James Kneller

Ron Howard (Sailed on 11.10.2020)

3947 Nick Taylor & Ian Dubock

The above results are all based on published handicaps: single-handers race off 1051 and fully-crewed boats off 1021. We also agreed to suspend for the duration of the Covid emergency the requirement that a valid race needs at least two competing boats. My sincere thanks are due to Trish Knight for keeping track so efficiently of events and results.

Douglas Brown

Older members of the fleet may remember Douglas, who raced Fifteens at Grafham with some distinction back in the 1980s. Douglas won a wind vane for one of his exploits and last year returned it to the club. It appears to be from the Wakefield school and, as might be expected, it is quite substantially constructed. At last year's Fleet AGM, we agreed to find somewhere to display it as a territorial marker in the FF boat park. Covid restrictions have delayed this but I plan to repaint it this winter and, hopefully, to find a permanent home for it in the spring.



UKFFA

Those of you who are members of UKFFA should have received the following directly, but Tim has asked me to promulgate the material more generally across the readership of this Newsletter.

UKFFA has a full programme of events running up towards the Worlds in 2022, there are full details on our website. However, the main association events are shown below:

Date	Event	Venue
Feb 27 th – 28 th	Virtual Dinghy Show	Online
May 8 th – 9 th	Inland Championship WQ	Chew Valley
June 5 th – 6 th	Southern Championship WQ	WPNSA
Jun 12 th – 13 th	Grafham Open & Classic Nationals	Grafham Water
Jun 24 th – 27 th	Nationals WQ	Rhu RN&CYC
Jul 17 th – 18 th	Northern Championship WQ	Bassenthwaite
Sep 25 th – 26 th	Scottish Championship WQ	Loch Earn

Worlds 2022 & 2023

As you may have seen, the worlds have been postponed a year from 2021 to 2022. This promises to be an excellent event, and the organising committee have had additional time to prepare a great welcome. Places are likely to be sought after, get your qualifiers booked in!

The 2023 Worlds will be going ahead as planned and this will be at WPNSA, this will also be our National Championship as the Pre-Worlds. Peter and his team at WPNSA, have a great event planned and with their ability to run multiple racecourses there will be ample opportunity to have a festival of FF sailing alongside the World Championship. More details as we get them.

President's Christmas Message

Thank goodness for some of us the second lockdown has ended, but the third is on the horizon - I do hope all of you have stayed safe and well throughout this year. It's been tough for many and second time round weird we have not been allowed to get fresh air on the water. Interestingly Anglian Water were prepared to keep Grafham Water (& other AWS reservoirs open) yet it was the RYA and Insurers who scuppered sailing. Honestly why does common sense not come to the fore? From 3rd December GWSC will be open and given this time of year we will open the changing rooms using a tally system. I hope other sailing venues follow suit. (GWSC have, however, cancelled this year's Grafham Grand Prix - just being pragmatic and proportionate). We were delighted to hear that many Fifteeners did manage to sail between the lockdowns, all be it single handed in many cases - for many it was simply good to be out on the water.

2020 Flying Fifteen events and Championships have been a non-starter for all of us - however we have a lot to look forward to in 2021. Enclosed with this newsletter is the 2021 diary of events. For the first time in many years there will be a Classic and National Championship held at Grafham alongside the GWSC Open meeting. It will operate on the same track but with a different start time to make the event special.

During the first lock down Justin Waples organised a particularly good wine tasting session; judging by the irreverent banter a good evening was had by all. We plan to kick off the New Year in style and repeat the session in January

Finally, UKFFA would like to wish everyone a very Merry Chrimble & Happy New Year in 2021!

Use of Loadcells

A commercial fittings supplier (Cyclops Marine) is promoting the use of loadcells ['smartlink Nano'] on sheets and rigging on the Flying Fifteen.

Such devices communicate with an output device (either a mobile phone or specific marine electronic equipment) using Bluetooth LE . This involves making radio communications in a range of up to 100 metres. The devices are battery powered.

The Technical Committee has reviewed the compliance of such devices with Class Rule 14 Prohibitions, and concludes that

- There is non compliance with Rule 14.5 (Radio Communications)
- There is non compliance with Rule 14.7 (electric devices not permitted except in Rule 14.4)

Please ensure that these devices are not installed on the Flying Fifteen whilst sailing.



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