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Newsletter of the Grafham Flying Fifteen Fleet

November 2021

Captain's Comments

Well, it has been a very busy and active summer after coming out of lockdown. We've had good turn outs for both Wednesday and Sunday racing, with close racing and a tie between Geoff/Colin and Dave/John for the Wednesday series.



We've had to deal with variable wind - either too much or not enough. However, it is worth remembering that the forecast is rarely right, so do come and don't

assume the worst! Our first attempt at the Ron Howard trophy did suffer from not enough wind, but was competitively raced for later in the summer, and while the Grafham Fox was on the top end of being raceable, it was again competitively raced.

After the Grafham Fox, we held the 2020 Fleet Prize Giving and it was good to see so many of you there. Let's hope that we can do the 2021 prize giving nearer to 2021 than '22.

Earlier in the Summer, we hosted the Flying Fifteen Open meeting, alongside the Classic and Silver Championships which included spectacular K28 from 1949 pictured with it's original sails! Despite the lack of wind causing cancellation of the Sunday racing, the event was well attended with visitors from around the country, and I'm pleased to say that the Silver and Classic boats will return in 2022. The full account is [here](#).



A number of our sailors went travelling during the summer and Tim has contributed a note about his exploits in this regard.

In case you've not seen - the club Christmas lunch will be on the 19th December this year – sign up [here](#) and pay at the canteen by the 12th, but note that numbers are limited. Look forward to seeing you there.

Race Results

With a full summer of racing here are the recent results:

Early Summer Series (May, June)
(23 races with 11 to count, 4 qualifiers)

1st 3794 Dave Philpott & Graham Wadeley 14 points ***'Grafham Ducks'***

2nd 4084 Tim O'Brien & various crews 22 points

3rd 3727 Barry & Katy Wyatt 39 points

Handicap: 4039 Sue & Andy Rhodes ***'Aker's Anchor'***

Flying Fifteen Open *'Brigg's Trophy'*

4024 Simon Kneller & Ashley Painter

Late Summer Series (July, August, early Sept)

(26 races with 8 to count, 6 qualifiers)

1st 3794 Dave Philpott & Graham Wadeley 8 points ***'Kircubbin Cup'***

2nd 4039 Sue & Andy Rhodes 8 points

3rd Bob Gatton & John Forsdike 11.5 points

Handicap: 3727 Barry & Katy Wyatt ***'Grafham Rose Bowl'***

Wednesday Evening Series

(19 races with 7 to count, 5 qualifiers)

Joint 1st

4042 Geoff Floyd & Colin Gilbert 7 points

3794 Dave Philpott & John Forsdike 7 points

'Sweepstake'

3rd 4012 Trish & Jonathan Knight 14 points

Handicap: Brian Appleyard & Matt Hood ***'John Clifton Cup'***

Ron Howard

(Sailed on 5 September 2021)

4012 Jonathan & Trish Knight

Duke of Edinburgh

(Sailed on 19 September 2021, 3 Fifteens sailed)

3794 Dave Philpott & Pip Chapman

Grafham Fox

(Sailed on 24 October 2021)

3550 Les Rant & Susie Sontag

2020 Results

For completeness, here are a copy of the 2020 results as announced at the prize giving.

Summer & Autumn

***'Specials'* on Sundays**

Kircubbin Cup - 3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett

Fifteen Rose Bowl - 3849 Graham Wadeley

Grafham Fox

(Sailed on 26 July 2020)

3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett

Wednesday Evening Series

(7 races with 3 to count)

1st 3974 Dave Philpott - ***Sweepstake***

2nd 3827/4042 Geoff Floyd – ***Cameron Trophy***

Handicap: 3924 Bob Gatton – ***John Clifton Cup***

Autumn Series

(11 Races to count)

1st 3849 Graham Wadeley '***Early Birds***'

2nd 3853 Peter Wolstenholme & Cameron Torbett '***Autumn Leaves***'

Handicap - 4042 Geoff Floyd '***Autumn Series Handicap***'

Duke of Edinburgh

(Sailed on 20 September 2020)

4024 Simon and James Kneller

Ron Howard

(Sailed on 11 October 2020)

3947 Nick Taylor & Ian Dubock

SSI changes

For those of you who've been racing on a Sunday, you'll know there have been some changes regarding when the start/finish line is an obstruction. Do keep an eye on the SSIs and check for changes / remind yourself of the content at the start of each series.

There is an expectation that the Winter Series, starting at the beginning of December, will be four starts with the Flying Fifteens on start 2.

Club Duties

There have been challenges to get the required number of race officers and safety crews out for the Wednesday and Sunday racing this year. There was one Wednesday cancelled and a number of Sundays that were very close and only went ahead when volunteers were found on the morning.

To try to address the situation, the Club is going to start allocating duties after a period where people can volunteer for their preferred dates. The 'Fifteen fleet has been good at fulfilling its duties, including last minute stand ins so please

keep this up.

If anybody needs help with DutyMan, please contact the Office, or if you're not sure what is involved with either committee boat or safety boat duties, please contact me and I can fill you in.

Upcoming Events

19th December **Christmas Pursuit and Club Christmas Lunch**

2nd January 2022 **Grafham Grand Prix**

If you've started looking at your 2022 Calendar, there is a Flying Fifteen fixtures list at <https://flying15.org.uk/fixtures-and-results/fixture-list> with quite a few events coming up, including a couple hosted at Grafham, and the European Championships at Cowes:

19th and 20th March **Ovington Inlands**

28th and 29th May **Grafham Open and Inland Championships**

7th to 10th July **National Championships at Hayling Island**

20th to 26th August **European Championships at Cowes**

Rule Changes

In case you've missed the results from the ballot on the various rule changes, here is the link to the FFI article - <https://flying15.org/News/2021-ffi-ballot-result>

Tim's Travels

by Tim O'Brien

Sailing at Grafham is always fun.... made more so by the sailing malarkey on the water with the usual antics of 'selective' deafness, short sightedness, lack of judgement with respect to closing boat speeds (when squeezing in at marks), or just pure bloody mindedness - sorry...assertiveness is the right expression here; but above all the bonhomie on and off the water.....Fifteeners are a great bunch of people from all walks of life who share a common passion.

So when you have it all at Grafham why travel ... well I will try and explain... partly it is sailing at different venues and waters whether on the sea or on a

different pond or lake – different skills are acquired (and lost) – but there is always plenty of competition and of course different competition... This year I chose to race at WPNSA (Weymouth – Southern Championships); Rhu (Helensburgh – National Championships) – both in June and with Sam Neal; Poole Week in August where I crewed for Bob Gatton; Aldeburgh Open with Graham Wadeley and Royal Windermere Open with Julian Clarke in September; and finally Chew Valley – Inlands, and again with Graham in early October.

Given that 2020 was a write off event wise, and with Covid loitering in society affecting overseas holidays and other pastimes, meant that when an event was finally given the go ahead the lure of an 'out of county' weekend and to sail was too high, as was my responsibility to support the FF circuit in my then role as President of UKFFA. The Worlds in Perth (Feb '21) had been postponed until '23. UKFFA Inlands were covid delayed from May until October, but on 5/6th June we could start in earnest with the 1st event of the Fifteen calendar being the Southern Championships at Weymouth Portland Sailing National Academy – Simon and Ashley were there in FF4024 and Sam and I in FF4084 – we had plenty of space to park up and get ready – the NSA has an apron ramp making access easy and with an inner/outer harbour water allows for sailing in all conditions – it was really the first chance to socialise and Justin Waples kicked off with numerous bottles of Rose on the return on the first day – good supper too and a great chance to catch up with others – lucky as Weymouth was pretty shut up with very few places open. As to the sailing, well done to Simon and Ashley leading the GWSC contingent in.

By the time you have derigged; rigged, derigged and rigged again the hassle of preparing to travel is minimised (75 mins although Simon seems to do it in 40 mins!) – Fifteens are easy to tow with such a low centre of gravity and good for up to xxx mph (insert your own speed here). All I recommend is that you check your wheel bearings as a combination of sea water and lack of grease make for interesting times – both of Simon & I had close shaves on this front over the summer.

Simon & Ben (Longstaff), and Sam & I travelled to the Nationals at Helensburgh which is situated on the north shore of the Clyde where we sailed out of Rhu Marina (at the entrance to Gare Loch ie Faslane - see pics below) – RNCYC members and organisers were very welcoming and helpful getting the boats in and out of the water at the marina. A strongish contingent of Classics and Silvers, primarily Scottish boats joined in too – the sailing conditions were good and occasionally the sea lumpy on the first two days – sadly we were sandwiched by a slam tacker whilst avoiding the lead boats on their run... but these things happen. The knowledge one picks up from fellow sailors is invaluable as was Phil Evans checking out our measurements after day 2 as I was complaining that we were not pointing as we should. Simply fixed by setting up the gib luff correctly – too tight. Regretfully we were not able to show our improvement as the wind died to zero on day 3 – Simon and Ben bailed out and headed south – right decision for brownie points, whilst others hung around

doing the odd bit of site seeing – Oban was a lovely drive – and serious socialising too.



Poole week is just fun – Parkstone Yacht Club is a great place to sail out of with excellent facilities and good food too – and great to catch up with Richard Ledger and Carol Duke. All the racing was within the harbour where local knowledge helps with tides and shallow waters – on several occasions we all grounded coming in at the end of the day. Bob and I were scheduled only to sail

three days, Simon was sailing with Graham too and there were some interesting tactics approaching the windward 'Can' marker (they are 'solid') with wind against tide – we were doing well one moment thinking we were level flanking with Simon and Graham only for them to sail through carnage without batting an eye lid – must be the calmness of a Pilot!

For those of you who have not sailed at Aldeburgh – just go – it is less than 2 hours from GWSC – and they do things in style – one race, come in for a leisurely lunch just as the tide turned from high to low and then back out for 2 races in the afternoon. Graham and I thought we were doing well in the first race lying 4th at the leeward buoy only to plonk ourselves on the mud going back up to the windward mark - watching 10 boats sail through was (not) amusing. Mooring up for lunch (wind against tide) saw me over the side of the boat again (fell out trying to sort out the mooring rope) much to the amusement of all and me alike. Going up towards Snape Maltings in the afternoon on an ebbing tide saw more antics trying to dodge shallow water – again we go from heroes to zeros when we watch the fleet sail through us. It took Graham and I until the last race on Sunday where we salvaged pride and showed others what we are capable of. A very good evening meal where other club members joined in made everyone feel very welcome.

Back to RWYC to sail with Julian (ex 4043 at GWSC) – Julian has relocated to Sedbergh and it was great to catch up with him at my former club – RWYC sits in the heart of Bowness bay and the scenery around is just fab. We sailed for 7 hours on Saturday (too long) in winds gusting 30 on occasions – wet too. The beats were 2 miles long! For those who have not sailed on Windermere beware of vertical winds, wind shifts and holes – good competitive racing and fun to be amongst many old friends from 30+yrs ago. Julian helmed my boat and we came in halfway – not bad but it could have been a lot better.....

As to the final outing of the year Graham and I went to Chew Valley for the inlands – a reservoir in super surrounds just south of Bristol – Saturday was a glorious day – too glorious as there was no wind – sailing was abandoned for the day by 2 pm to allow people to explore before returning for an early supper at the club. Sailing on Sunday was limited to 4 races – with the water low, yet again Graham and I grounded in the middle of the lake on the lay line for the windward marker – winds were fickle, one minute we were up and next back down again – the last race proved our greatness by sailing backwards to last place – how does one do that...

So what are my takeaways – Fifteneers are a great crowd to race with and against – camaraderie and having fun comes to the fore every time, but above all else it is taking away the many shared fun and amusing experiences both on and off the water – my thanks go to Sam, Bob, Graham and Julian for keeping me on the straight and narrow and for being fun to sail with. Sailing is a great antidote to work (no mobile / laptop on the water!) and for not taking life too seriously.....we just need an excuse to chill more.

Goacher Sails

Breaking News - Tim has just received this email from Steve Goacher:

We are excited to announce that Chris Robinson, who has been working with us for almost 11 years at Goacher Sails, and his wife Hannah have taken overall control of the business. I have taken a step back from the front line to focus on leading the design of our products. Hannah will be taking over the admin role from Shelagh.

Chris is well known in one design sailing, a popular member of the Hollingworth Alumni and together with Hannah, they are committed to do their best for you and all our customers going forward, with the full support of all our existing staff.

Our capabilities and our ethos have not changed, and we enthusiastically look forward to the future.

Although I am taking a step back from overall responsibility, I remain committed to the team I have led for over three decades, but with a lighter workload expect spend some more time on the water.

Shelagh and I thank you for the support you have given us in the past. It has been an enormous pleasure to make things which are enjoyed in such an absorbing hobby, backed by a team who never give less than their best.

*With Best Wishes
Steve and Shelagh*

UKFFA News Highlights

Those of you who are members of the UKFFA should have received UKFFA newsletters directly, but for the benefit of the whole fleet, here are a couple of highlights that I thought could be of interest.

[The Flying Fifteen Jib Revisited](#) - a review of the new jib and control systems following five years of experience

[What goes wrong when racing?](#) - an article by Malcolm Hall on how he avoids three 'freak' events that happen too often

[Abseiling with your 'Fifteen](#) - an instructional document produced by Blackpool and Fleetwood YC on their approach to hand launching 'Fifteens with a steep slipway

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