

Minutes of a Meeting of the Access Class Association (UK) Committee
10th November 2010

A meeting of the ACA(UK) committee was held at 11.00am on 10th November 2010 at Hillingdon Outdoor Education Centre, Harefield, Middlesex, UB9 6JN.

Present

John Aldridge	Woolverstone
Melvin Kinnear	Tideway
Gordon Harle	Rutland (Vice-Chairman – SKUD Representative)
John Figgures	Rutland
Richard Smallwood	Frensham (Chairman)
Paul Holzherr	Frensham (outgoing Treasurer)
Brian Thake	Northampton
Dave Durston	Whitefriars
Harvey Harrison	Swarkestone
Pat Jackson	Sussex Yacht Club
Steve Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd
Ron Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd (Secretary)

Apologies

Andy Sheath	Frensham (Vice-Chairman)
Clare Andrew	Rutland
Tom Harper	New Forest (incoming Treasurer)

1. Chairman's Welcome

Richard welcomed our two new committee members Harvey Harrison and John Aldridge to the meeting. The committee duly co-opted John Aldridge onto the committee.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th September 2010 at Swarkestone Sailing Club were approved.

3. Racing Programme for 2011

3.1 Progress with and approval of the overall ACA (UK) Programme. At short notice Andy Sheath had to miss the meeting so Ron read out his report. Many venues had been confirmed but the programme was not yet completed. When completed it will be circulated to members. Ron informed the meeting that Bristol Sailability wish to stage a traveller meeting in 2011. The meeting approved their inclusion which will give 11 traveller events in 2011.

Action: Andy and Ron

3.2 UK National Championships arrangements. Richard confirmed that these will be at Frensham Pond on 11/12 June 2011. Unfortunately the cheap wheelchair - friendly accommodation used for the 2006 Nationals will not be available so it is a case of the usual commercial arrangements. A list will be issued with the Notice of Race. There has been a serious issue with weed at the end of the 2010 summer season so it may be necessary to have a fall-back position if the weed returns early in 2011, possibly re-arranging the event at another venue later in the season. A decision should be possible by the end of April. It is hoped that there will be a training day on the Friday before. Paul informed us that there was a very good wheel chair accessible B&B in Farnham. He will pass their details on to Peter Etherton.

Action: Paul

3.3 International Events. The most significant event in 2011 is the European Championships, hopefully from 23 to 28 May on Lake Garda, Italy. There are unlikely to be boats for charter so it will be a case of taking own boats. Some Frensham Pond sailors are already planning to attend and Richard expects to go. Gordon told us there was a super hotel half an hour's drive from the lake that is fully wheelchair accessible and will find the details and give to Ron for inclusion on the website.

Action: Gordon

3.4 Quality of Race Management at TT Events. There was a general air of disappointment at the quality of race and event management at various clubs throughout the series. Things mentioned were poor start sequences, inaccurate results, wrong size sail numbers, late briefings and late commencement of racing. The committee members had a full discussion around this including consideration of the comprehensive events information pack that is given to each club. The main points to come out from this were as follows:

- It would be good to produce a single A4 document listing what went right and what went wrong throughout the year and circulating this as information to all host clubs.
- Have one person allocated to each club that had problems in the previous year to:
 - a. contact the club at least a month before the event to make sure advanced planning is in place and that the planning checklists provided in the events pack are being used and kept to;
 - b. visit the club one to two weeks before the event to meet as many of the team that will be running the event as possible and to go through the checklists and rules with them;
 - c. attend the event being on site as the gates open and mentor the team through their various duties throughout the day (the person taking on this duty would not be available to their own race team for that event). Volunteers were asked for to carry out this duty. Richard, John Figgures, and Steven volunteered to take some turns with this. Ron told the committee we would need more volunteers as we could not expect anyone to take on more than two events a year.

Ron was asked to co-ordinate the necessary actions.

Action: Ron

3.5 Class Sailing Instructions. The following changes were discussed:

- A preamble note will be added pointing out that the overall safety and management of the event is the host club's responsibility.
- 6.1 – Course Instructions: wording will be added strongly advising that a separate finish line be provided on the opposite side of the Committee Boat to the start line. This must then be passed through on each lap to keep the start line clear.
- 7.2 – Words will be added to the Liberty flag to include manual and full servo Liberty.
- Following a discussion regarding 2.3Ws racing on equal terms with 2.3Ss, and the recent IACA decision on this matter, it was agreed unanimously that both types could be used in UK events in 2011. It was suggested that those 2.3 sailors with international ambitions, and who are capable of sailing one, should consider seeking a 2.3W to try out and race if appropriate.
- A discussion considering the use of the 'I' flag instead of the 'P' flag resulted in the decision not to change the sailing instructions.

A revised version will be circulated in due course for the approval of the committee.

Action: Richard and Ron

3.6 Any Other Racing Business. Regarding the 'distribution of Access Dinghies worldwide' table that was circulated, Steven pointed out that the 2.3S and 2.3W figures shown for GBR are incorrect. This is because some kits purchased from Australia as wide kits were actually used to make single seat boats. Steven will pass the actual figures to Richard who will see that they are corrected in the International statistics.

Action: Steven and Richard

4. Report of 2010 World Championships. Richard said that many members were there and a comprehensive report has already been circulated. It was considered a great success by the international visitors and IACA committee, not least because we attracted 82 entries from 10 countries. The sponsorship of the Bruce Wake Trust had proved essential to enable the event to be run at reasonable cost to the competitors. Paul advised that the accounts had now been closed and that £14,000 of the Bruce Wake Trust sponsorship money had been used with the balance returned to them. The efforts of Ron and Steve Sawford to provide 27 charter boats in excellent condition, of John F and Gordon measuring, and Richard's excellent leadership and attention to detail and hands on approach were particularly noteworthy. The committee gave these in particular and everyone involved a vote of thanks and endorsed this with a round of applause. Congratulations were given to all sailors who took part in the event and particularly to our UK Liberty full servo World Champion, Melvin Kinnear.

5. Any matters arising from AGM of the International Access Class Association (IACA)

Richard and John F had participated in this meeting in October and reported as follows:

Election of Committee. Richard was re-elected onto the IACA committee as 303 representative and John Figgures was also re-elected. They both serve as well on the IACA Technical Committee. There was a vote to choose the Liberty representative on the Committee between Herb Meyer of the USA and Brendan Tourelle of New Zealand. Brendan was elected.

Changes to Class Rules. There will be a change to the Liberty and 2.3 class rules regarding boats in a Full-Servo-Assist division as follows: Sailors in a servo assist division are not permitted to manually adjust the sheets or other control lines or move the boom. To be eligible for the servo assist division, the boat must be sailed fully servo controlled, ie, only steering and sheets operated electro-mechanically. Sailors manually controlling either sheets or steering or making any adjustment to control lines, shall be deemed to be sailing the boat partial servo/manually.

Minimum Numbers for Championships. The IACA Championship Guidelines will be amended to specify the minimum number of entries required for a division to be valid at Access Regional Championships at four (4) boats, and the minimum number of entries required for a division to be valid at World Championships at six (6) boats.

For servo classes, the minimum number of entries required for a division to be valid at Access Regional Championships will be three (3) boats, and the minimum number of entries required for a division to be valid at World Championships will be four (4) boats. This requirement is to be clearly indicated in the Notice of Race (NOR) and other pertinent documents relating to Regional or World Championships.

Where the number of entries for any one division does not meet the minimum number by the entry closing date, that division will not be sailed in the Championship UNLESS the division can be combined with another compatible division. For example, Liberty Servo-Assist can be sailed with Liberty Open Division, or 2.3 Servo-Assist can be sailed with 2.3 Single Person Division.

Access 2.3 Divisions. Richard had moved that separate divisions be offered for the Access 2.3S and 2.3W classes at World and Regional Championships with the proviso that should either division not meet the required minimum number of entries by the entry closing date, the classes would be combined in one 2.3 division. The motion was defeated by 4 votes to 3.

6. Consideration of PY Numbers of the Access 2.3, 303-Solo, 303-Double and Liberty

Richard took some timings at the 2010 Nationals which those who were there will agree provided reasonable medium wind conditions. Having computed the results of the first boat in each class in a number of races Richard proposed some changes to the PY numbers. The meeting also received a report from Pat Jackson of figures computed from timings taken at Sussex Yacht Club in handicap races with conventional dinghies.

The meeting had a full discussion concerning the data provided and decided to alter the recommended PY figures for 2011 to the following:

2.3 – reduce from 1875 to 1810

303-2 person – reduce from 1720 to 1610

303-1 person – reduce from 1690 to 1580

Liberty – reduce from 1650 to 1550.

These figures will be used throughout 2011 and will be reviewed at the end of the season.

Pat (Sussex Yacht Club) and Harvey (Swarkestone) agreed to consult on their findings throughout the next season. Richard stressed the need for clubs that have Access dinghies racing with conventional dinghies to get their Sailing Secretaries to send in their Access class club racing data to the RYA for consideration of publishing PY numbers nationally.

Action: Pat and Harvey

7. Reports of training sessions run by RYAS Racing Development Coach, Matt Grier

Four Access class sessions run by Matt at Frensham Pond in March were open to other groups, and sailors came from Tideway and New Forest. They were counted a great success in preparing for the World Championships.

Ron informed the meeting that a series of race training events is being run at New Forest Sailability Spinnaker Sailing Club coached by David Bedford or Matt Grier on Tuesdays 16th November to 14th December inclusive. Bring own boat and boats can be left between events. Bring own lunch, hot drinks will be available. If interested contact rorymorrison@uwclub.net.

8. Possibility of appointing Access Class regional race training co-ordinators

Richard reported that Debbie Blachford is keen to get more Sailability groups carrying out novice race training. This is different from Matt Grier's sessions which are aimed at expert sailors. She has offered travel expenses and a daily payment for qualified race coaches or Senior Instructors to visit groups which do little or no racing. There are three qualified Access class race coaches at Frensham Pond and at least one at New Forest.

What is proposed is that two race training co-ordinators be nominated, one for the North and one for the South. They would receive requests from other clubs and then ask the ACA(UK) coaches for a volunteer to take on each assignment. They would also liaise with RYAS to authorise the payment of expenses.

This initiative was supported by the committee.

Members were asked to enquire within their clubs as to whether any of their members would be willing to take up the position of regional co-ordinator and let Richard know.

Action: ALL

9. Progress on the project “Involving more Severely Disabled People”

Dave said he was pleased to see that quite a few more people with severe disabilities were joining the fleet. Steven reported that the Bruce Wake boats were being extensively used.

10. Treasurer’s Report – State of Accounts on Handover

Tom Harper was not able to attend because of an emergency that occurred en route to the meeting. Paul therefore gave his report on the accounts and this was accepted. Richard took over the books and agreed to hand them over to Tom as soon as convenient.

Action: Richard and Tom

Richard propose a very sincere vote of thanks to Paul who has kept the books for the past 4 years and also took on the far more complex task of managing the finances for the World Championships. The committee fully endorsed this with a round of applause.

11. RYA Dinghy Show 5/6 March 2011

11.1 Access Class boats to be Displayed. In March 2010 ACA(UK) had a 303 and a 2.3 at the show thanks to Steve who provided transport and set them up with a pontoon and hoist. Many committee members and other supporters got free show tickets in return for helping to man the stand over the two days. There is no cost to ACA(UK) as RYA Sailability and SSM Ltd subsidise the RYA show fees.

It is planned to have two boats again in 2011. Steve reported that all was in hand for the stand at the show and that the costs will again be covered by SS Marine and RYAS. Ron reported that progress was being made on the production of two mounted banners that had been negotiated between Richard and Debbie at about £100 each. The cost of one will be covered by RYA and the other by ACA(UK).

11.2 Involvement by Committee Members. Andy Sheath is managing our participation at the show and will be asking for volunteers to spend an hour or two on the Saturday or Sunday on the stand. That leaves plenty of time to explore the show yourselves. Andy will have 20 tickets and should be able to provide two tickets to any volunteers who wish to bring a carer or partner. Please try to help if you can.

Action: Andy and ALL

12. Access Class Sails – Do we want a UK Sailmaker to be licensed?

Richard gave the following report.

“There have been many emails about this matter with IACA representatives since the World Championships. As a result, he now had an email message inviting this committee to recommend a sailmaker to the boats’ designer and rights holder, Access Sailing Systems in Australia. Do we wish to do this in order to improve the reliability of supply and, hopefully, get a better price for Steve to sell the sails to us?

If so, that sailmaker will be invited to make one of each sail they intend to supply, using the pattern used by Horizon Sails, to show that they can make an identical sail to the Horizon one-design. The sails would still have to be sold through SSM Ltd.

The Committee members agreed that they wished to take up this offer.

Richard went on to report that he had been in touch with Hyde Sails in Southampton who make one-design sails for the Laser family of boats, Topper, Comet and many other classes. Note that the Topper and Comet classes use mast-sleeved battenless sails like the Access classes. Hyde were keen to take this on if the committee agreed.

Richard pointed out that Hyde make their sails in the Philippines. The up-side is that their main market is in UK and they have a weekly air-freight service to UK. If sails are ordered in good time by Steve they would be sent by sea freight, potentially at a lower price.

The committee members were asked whether they were content to go with Hyde Sails, who seem to have most of the right credentials, or is there any enthusiasm for asking other sail makers whether they are interested?"

The committee decided that Hyde Sails should be nominated to Access Sailing Systems as the choice as UK sailmaker for the Access classes. Steve and Richard were asked to take this forward.

Action: Richard and Steve

13. ACA(UK) Website – Any comments or proposals?

The committee was pleased with the information on the website. It was pointed out that some of the events pages were out of date, and Ron explained that as soon as the 2011 programme is finalised these will be updated.

14. Publicity – Any suggestions to improve publicity generally?

Harvey pointed out the value of personal contacts and recommendations to potential members local to your clubs, possibly giving out leaflets. Gordon suggested Access Class Sailing windscreen stickers. Steven will look into this.

Action: Steve

15. Any Other Business

Gordon asked if the new bulb keels and foils are going to be allowed on the UK racing circuit in 2011. Richard said they would not be for the time being but will raise the issue with David Staley concerning international intentions.

Action: Richard

Due to the fact that much committee work is carried out by email so that we only have a need for one main committee meeting a year, Richard pointed out how important it is for people to answer their emails even if only to say 'no comment'.

Action: ALL

16. Plans for future meetings

It was agreed that there was no need for another meeting before the AGM 2011 which will be planned during the weekend of the National Championships. A further meeting will only be called if the need arises.