

Access Class Association UK Committee
Minutes 18th November 2009

A meeting of the ACA(UK) committee was held on 18th November 2009 at Hillingdon Outdoor Education Centre, Harefield, Middlesex.

Present

John Morley	Rutland (Vice-Chairman – World Championships)
Gordon Harle	Rutland (Vice-Chairman – SKUD Representative)
John Figgures	Rutland
Chris Emmett	Rutland
Keith Harris	New Forest
Richard Smallwood	Frensham (Chairman)
Andy Sheath	Frensham (Vice-Chairman)
Paul Holzherr	Frensham (Treasurer)
Brian Thake	Northampton
Dave Durston	Whitefriars
Ken Butterfield	Swarkestone
John Hainsworth	Swarkestone
Pat Jackson	Sussex Yacht Club
Steve Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd
Ron Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd (Secretary)

Also in attendance

Gwyndra Emmett	Rutland
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Apologies

David Cousins	Woolverstone
Bill Mitchell	Rutland
Melvin Kinnear	Tideway

ACA(UK) Honour John Morley.

The Committee presented John Morley with an award in recognition of the leadership, encouragement and development of Access sailing he has given in his role of Chairman of the Association from 1998 to 2001 and 2006 to 2008.

The award is a framed, composite photo of Access sailing. Richard Smallwood, on behalf of the whole membership thanked John for all his work and said "the photo shows many people enjoying Access sailing who are benefiting from the tremendous effort John has put into introducing Access sailing to the UK, establishing it as a UK class and guiding its development. We look forward to John's involvement in Access sailing for many years to come."

John thanked the membership and said "I have seen the Access class grow from the first boats we imported at Rutland Sailability and have been so impressed by the dedication of the clubs and in particular the enthusiasm of the many sailors who now sail these boats. I will treasure this memento."

1. Chairman's Welcome

Richard welcomed Ken, John H and John F to the committee.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meetings held on 24th November 2008 and 11th July 2009 were accepted and approved.

3. Programme of ACA(UK) Events in 2010

3.1 Approval of overall programme. Ron presented the overall racing programme for 2010. He pointed out that the French Championship dates are not confirmed. There was a discussion concerning format of the RYA Sailability Regatta at Rutland. It was decided to keep our TT as one day, four races. It was also decided to try to include a 10th TT into the programme. Suggested venue is Oxford – Ron and Andy to take this forward.

3.2 National Championships arrangements. The National Championships 2010 will be hosted by Swarkestone Sailability. The Friday will be a Training Day run by Matt Grier, Saturday and Sunday will be the racing.

John H told us they have in place an experienced race officer, two hoists, plenty of volunteers and, after modifications, jetty space for up to 60 boats. There are limitations of space in the clubhouse so plans are being made for the patio area to be covered. Toilets will be augmented by portable toilets. Andy will e-mail John regarding companies that provide these. Camping will be available on site with toilet facilities available at night. There are plans for a buffet supper evening with quiet musical entertainment on the Saturday evening.

Richard asked that the AGM be planned for the Saturday evening at about 6.30 pm. Ron asked John and Ken to work on the following documents: an invitation, a notice of race (Northampton's last NOR is available on the web and in addition Brian will e-mail a copy to John/Ken), accommodation information sheet (this is in addition to the information already given on the website), a flier covering the training event and the main event. Ron asked for these to be completed by 1st January 2010. John F asked whether an official equipment inspector would be needed for the event; it was decided this was not needed.

The committee voted regarding the number of races that should be programmed for the event. It was decided by 7 votes to 3 to plan 4 races on Saturday and 3 races on Sunday. There will be one discard allowed as long as four races are completed.

3.3 Possibility of Northern and Southern Area Championships. It was decided to include a northern and southern championships in a format previously suggested by Richard and reinforced by members of the current committee, i.e. to designate each TT host club as "north" or "south" and to decide the area champions by their best three results in each area. Trophies only would be given for first place in each class in each area. This will be trialled for one year, Andy and Ron to organise.

3.4 Quality of race management at TT events. It was generally felt that the quality of race management had been rather mixed throughout the 2009 series. Taking into account comments made by host club race officers, it was agreed that the requirement to time each lap be removed in order to give race officers and their teams less to carry out and, in doing so, hope for more accurate ranking of the races and consequently the overall event.

It was agreed that for UK race events we enforce the requirement in the rules for full size sail numbers. The committee asked that SS Marine have available at TT events sufficient sail numbers of the correct size to allow replacement on the day of any undersized numbers. Steven agreed this would be done. Ron was asked to draw attention to this requirement on the website and in the introduction to the rules.

3.5 Arbitration hearings at TT events. These arrangements were found to be satisfactory and their use will be continued. Host clubs should identify suitable arbitrators before racing starts.

3.6 Any other racing event business.

3.6.1 It was agreed that Libertys would routinely have a separate start with race officers making a decision for a combined start if Liberty numbers are low. Richard will make the appropriate changes to the sailing instructions.

3.6.2 David questioned the five to count rule in the TT series, suggesting we have four to count. It was decided that we would five to count if nine or more TTs actually take place, and drop to four to count if there are only eight TTs or less completed.

4. Possibility of training sessions run by RYAS Racing Development Coach Matt Grier. There was a long discussion concerning this training. The main points to come out of this are:

1. Adding a training day to the TTs is generally not well supported as it has such implications on overnight stays, helper availability and resources needed by the host club. If this is to be done it should be restricted to one or two events in the annual programme. Andy will withdraw the request for training at the Notts County event but continue to investigate the possibility of training at the Burghfield event.
2. Specific Training Days separate from TTs and put on by a club that can offer the loan of boats to some of the travelling sailors was seen to elicit more attendance. Chris will take this idea forward with Rutland and report back to Richard.
3. If the event is a multi day event such as the Nationals then a training day can often be added with little disruption to the sailors arrangements.
4. George Barker's practice of attending the TT events and videoing elements of the racing and discussing these with sailors at the end of the day was valued and sailors would like to see this carried on if possible.
Post Meeting Note: Matt Grier has regrettably rejected this proposal.
5. Ron was asked to put on the website that if a club wants an RYA coach for the day at any time they should contact Matt Grier.
6. Richard will take these ideas forward with Matt Grier.

5. Progress on changes to the International Access Class Rules. Richard, who is a member of the International Technical Committee, told us that all of the things that we wanted included in the International Rules were now in. This includes weight limits giving minimum hull weights and maximum and minimum keel weights and allowing other modifications currently in the 2009 UK special rules. Richard stressed the need for all Access sailors to study the international class rules to keep abreast of all changes. A revised version will be published dated 1 December 2009.

It was agreed that ACA(UK) will retain a "no reefing changes" rule at ACA(UK) events.

Andy proposed that the UK should change back to the rule that requires all 303 wifes that are sailing single handed to have a fixed central hard seat. There was a full discussion on this and it was decided to keep to the international class rules which do not require such seating and to raise the subject with the international sailors at the Worlds event at the planned forum for the discussion of Access sailing.

6. Consideration of PY numbers of the Access 2.3, 303 one person, 303 two person, Liberty. After a full discussion, in which Pat pointed out that a much lower number had been found appropriate for 303Ws at Sussex YC and David D and John H reported findings at their clubs, it was decided to change the PY numbers for racing in UK in 2010 as follows:

Liberty	1650 (unchanged)
303 one person	1690 (down by 10)
303 two person	1720 (down by 10)
2.3	1875 (up by 25)

Richard said that clubs where Access classes participate in integrated handicap racing must be strongly encouraged to include Access class results in their annual PY return to the RYA.

7. Progress on the project 'Involving More Severely Disabled People'. Steven reported that the Association's Bruce Wake boats have been in constant use on loan to interested clubs and at shows.

Dave D suggested that it may be of interest to the Calvert Trust who have centres at Exmoor, Keswick and Keilder, to build a relationship between them and us. They have outreach services where they help people to set up sailing for people with disabilities at the person's local club. It was agreed that Dave will make approaches to them to see where they and ACA(UK) can work together. Steven suggested it would be good for them to have and distribute our race programme and other promotional material.

8. Reefing of Access Dinghies. It was agreed to add the reefing techniques suggested by John Hainsworth to the other method already posted on our website.

9. Treasurer's Report. The committee agreed that the Association's financial year should run from 1st January to 31st December. Paul will circulate a statement of accounts for 2009 to all committee members. This set of accounts will then be considered at the 2010 AGM in September.

Steven said SS Marine would transfer the boat levies to the Association before the end of this financial year. The levies for the SKUD boats will be recorded separately on the Association's accounts.

10. Report of International Events.

10.1 French Nationals June 2009. There were six UK entrants and we had winners in three of the four classes with the other three competitors all on the podium.

10.2 European Championships Port Camargue. This was a super venue. There were three UK entrants who achieved second in the 2.3 class and third in the servo Liberty class. A full report can be found on the Association's website.

11. RYA Dinghy Show 6/7 March 2010.

11.1 Access Class boats on display: SKUD18, 2.3 and 303 boats would be there, and possibly a Liberty. Steven reported that he had also been asked to provide a pontoon and hoist for the RYAS stand.

The Association will receive 20 free tickets for the show. Anyone who would like to attend the show to help on the stand can apply to Andy Sheath for a free ticket. Gordon told us that the SKUD group will also have 10 free tickets.

David D asked if the ACA(UK) could provide the SKUD sub group with finances for a SKUD flier for the show. Steven said that SS Marine would cover the costs of these. David will arrange the production of the flier and liaise with Steven for repayments. Ron asked that enough are printed for SS Marine to have a supply for inclusion in their information packs and that a PDF file of the flier be made available for inclusion on the website.

Ron was asked to design and publish an ACA(UK) general flier covering the other Access classes.

11.2 Class Shirts. The committee was asked to decide regarding two designs of class shirts. The design chosen depicted the ACA(UK) logo and the legend 'Sailing for All' in script below it on the front of the shirt. Richard will order a stock of 50 in a spread of sizes. We estimate that these will be sold at £8 per shirt for those going to the show (all people who receive a free ticket will be expected to buy one shirt) and £10 for all others. The shirts will be offered to ACA(UK) members at the Dinghy Show and at TT events. More can be ordered later if there is a demand.

12. 2010 Access World Championships

12.1 Progress report of organising committee. Richard reported that all the appropriate documentation is now available on the web, and that it is important to read all the documents before making your entry. We are encouraging people to get their entry in as soon as possible. It is not necessary to pay the fees when you make your entry. Payment will be required by 24th April 2010.

The committee has appointed a regatta secretary, Pauline Hilleard, who will receive entries, fees and be available to answer, or seek answers to, queries. E-mail contact details are on the website.

Richard pointed out that in order to provide boats for charter we would need to borrow boats from Sailability groups. He asked each member of the committee to talk to their club about the possibilities of this.

Richard said that a lot of hard work had been done by the committee and we could help them best by prompting entry, plus helping with the availability of boats for charter. There will be a payment made to the clubs for this and insurance will be provided for the boats throughout the event. There were questions regarding the format of the entry form and fees payable. Richard explained these to the committee.

12.2 World Championship funding. John Morley told the meeting that Anglian Water Services will not reduce their fees but may make a lump sum donation to the event. John is working on this and other potential donors in order to secure extra funding for the event.

John said that Mike Gallon who is Sailability Rotary UK Co-ordinator has made the following offer. If a UK competitor would like to explore the possibility of their local Rotary sponsoring them to compete in the event, providing they contact him and let him know their name, address and contact details, he will identify the person's local

Rotary group and contact them regarding Rotary and the competitor getting together to discuss possible sponsorship. The committee felt this was a valuable asset to our sailors. Gordon pointed out that, when he and Simon had been involved, the Rotary club requested that they go along and give a short talk to one of their groups.

John pointed out that this Worlds event is an Access Class Association UK event. Therefore it is the responsibility of all to provide funds. All clubs and organisations sailing Accesses should be asked to contribute a minimum of £100, possibly up to £400 to the event, either as a donation or even to sponsor entertainment elements of the event and have their name put to it. John asked that all are contacted about this. It was decided that the request should come from Richard. Richard, with John M's help, will compile a letter and Ron will distribute it.

Gordon pointed out there was a need to get accommodation booked early as there will be quite a run on it as we get up to the event.

Keith told us of an RYA Sailability event sponsored by Coutts Bank that he will be attending. He suggested this would possibly be a good event to get sponsorship. It was suggested that Richard contact Debbie of RYAS to take this idea forward.

Andy suggested some promotion of the event could take place at the Dinghy Show.

Keith said regarding sponsorship logos that he has contacts in the signage business if anyone needs these services.

13. Where to hold the ACA(UK) AGM in 2010. It was agreed that this will be held at Swarkestone Sailing Club on Saturday 4th September at 6.30 pm approximately as part of the National Championships.

14. ACA(UK) website. It was thought that the website was good and well used. There were no suggestions for alterations other than those points made throughout these minutes.

15. Publicity. There were no new suggestions regarding publicity.

16. Any Other Business

Andy informed us that New Forest Sailability will be happy to run a National Championships for us in 2011 or 2012. The committee welcomed this and left the details to be worked out by Andy and Ron.

Dave D pointed out that we must not lose sight of the grass roots of Access sailing. He told us that the fact that our TT racing had required a much more rules oriented event had resulted in Whitefriars ceasing to host a traveller event. Richard agreed that we must not lose touch with the grass roots. We probably have more Sailability groups in the UK than most other countries, certainly many more than the European countries, most of whom do not take part in racing. Ron suggested that over the next year we consider what we as an Association can do for non racers and that we increase our publicity to clubs letting them know we are here to help with any problems they may have.

Gordon gave us a brief report concerning the SKUD Class. He said UK sailors won the 2009 World Championships and, at the 2009 Sail for Gold Regatta, UK sailors came second, fourth, fifth and sixth.

The SKUD Class in the UK is going from strength to strength. In addition to the boats that campaigned for the 2008 Olympics we have two new boats, one for Alex Hovden and one for Belfast Loch Sailability, and a further one boat ordered. This brings the UK fleet up to around eight.

The SKUD committee is hoping to set up a traveller series that will include Weymouth, Oxford, and Queen Mary. They had held an AGM a few days previously and Dave Durston is now the new Secretary. Dave will provide Ron with details of the new committee plus minutes of the AGM plus lists of events. These will be published on the website as they are received.

17. Plans for future meetings. It is intended that we have a committee meeting at the Worlds (details to be confirmed) and the AGM at the Nationals.

The meeting was closed.

Post Meeting Note

Melvyn Kinnear of Tideway Sailability is co-opted onto the committee.

Melvyn was available for the meeting but was missed off the circulation list and therefore did not have the details sent to him. His query on this was received too late for us to respond in time for him to attend. The agreement to co-opt Melvyn was subsequently made by the executive committee.