

Access Class Association UK Committee

A meeting of the ACA (UK) committee was held on 27th November 2007 at Hillingdon Outdoor Education Centre, Harefield, Middlesex.

Present

John Morley	Rutland
Bill Mitchell	Rutland
Keith Harris	New Forest
Joyce Smith	Rutland
Richard Smallwood	Frensham
Andy Sheath	Frensham
Dave Durston	Whitefriars
Ann Lewis	Colne Valley
Janet Lee	Sussex Yacht Club
Johnty Dickinson	Woolverstone
David Cousins	Woolverstone
Steve Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd
Ron Sawford	Steve Sawford Marine Ltd

Also in attendance Chris and Gwen Emmett (Rutland).

Apologies

Brian Thake

1. Chairman's Welcome

John Morley welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. He stressed that we should all bear in mind that racing is only a part of the Access Dinghy sailing experience and we must make every effort to include in the work of this committee wider activities such as encouraging new people to take up sailing the Access boats, and encouraging organisations providing sailing for people with disabilities to be aware of, and to gain access to, the best equipment for that task. It was suggested that each member of the committee takes away the action of getting clubs in their areas involved. It was confirmed in fact that many areas were already doing this and would continue to do so with new vigour.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 15th August 2007 at New Forest Sailability were accepted and approved.

3. Co-option to Committee

Brian Thake of Northampton Sailability was co-opted to the committee.

4. Programme of TT events in 2008

4.1 The committee approved the overall programme as presented by Ron and as published on the web site.

4.2 Decision whether to make all events open: after a full discussion the following was decided.

- That all Traveller events (not including the National Championships) will be open to all sailors.
- That the prize structure will be that main prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd places will be sailed for by sailors with disabilities only and that an extra consumable prize will be available for the first open competitor.

- That the VAT status of a boat is not the responsibility of the ACA and will not appear in any of our racing rules.

4.3 Northern and Southern area championships: after a lengthy and detailed discussion a decision needed to be made between holding a north and south three event series and a north and south one day event championship. The north and south one day championship won the vote 7:4. On a further request another vote was taken between the north and south one day championship and no regional championships at all. The north and south one day championship won 8:4. It was stressed that we needed to make every effort to advertise these championships more effectively in order to attract sailors to them extra to those competing in the TT series.

4.4 Number of events to count for overall TT prizes: it was agreed that the best five results from the ten events will be counted. It was also agreed that there will be no differentiation between north and south events.

4.5 Proposal to apply a time handicap system for servo assist competitors or a separate servo assist prize. After a detailed discussion it was decided not to apply a time handicap system. A strong influence towards this decision was the concern that some TT race management teams would not be able to apply them. It was also decided not to give a separate prize as the numbers in this category are fairly small and giving a separate prize in these circumstances could be seen as patronising.

4.6 Should the 303 class be split into single and double handers: this subject resulted in a very comprehensive discussion. It was decided that the numbers in each category did not make it practical to split them. However there was concern that the 303 wide sailed with a hard seat as a single hander had an advantage over both the 303 wide two up and the 303 sport. Two suggestions were made regarding correcting this difference. 1. That the boat in this mode be sailed with the main sail only. It was decided that trials needed to be carried out to evaluate this mode of sailing before any decision could be taken. Therefore these findings will be taken into consideration for the 2009 series. 2. That the boat in this mode is ballasted with an extra 10 kilos. It was decided that this would be applied throughout the 2008 series.

4.7 Proposals to change the start sequence and order of ACA UK events. After a brief discussion it was decided not to change the start sequence or order of starts of ACA UK events.

4.8 Assistance to race teams at host clubs: an events pack is provided to each club that hosts a racing event. It was agreed that this should be changed to include an invitation to host clubs to request help from the Association in running the races. The highest level this help will take would be for the association to provide an assistant OOD. John asked that Ron put this question to the host club at least four weeks before their event and if they do ask for an assistant OOD to put this request through the Chairman to the committee. It was also suggested that the Association offers to provide a person capable of chairing a protest committee. Richard described the new RYA system of using a qualified arbitrator in an advisory capacity in order to make every effort to resolve the disagreements before a protest committee is established. This was accepted by the committee and Richard will write this into the rules of the Association. Ron to include a section on this in the events pack.

It was also asked that a section of the events pack covered the hoisting of people into and out of their boats and stressed the following points:

1. The strongest possible team of helpers
2. Effective management of the placing of boats on the hoist areas of the pontoon (possible marking of boats that will be needed for the hoist.)
3. Stressing the need for boats to be moved from the hoist area after the sailor is hoisted in, to another area where helpers can assist with the final rigging and fitting of special equipment so that others can use the hoist.
4. The need for the person managing the hoisting to be in contact with the race officer so that they can inform them when all people are hoisted in.

5. The use of power boats to tow the sailors using hoists to the start line if needed.

It was also suggested that the entry forms could be changed with a section, say a tick box, saying that the sailor needs hoisting and a master sheet to list the names of all those who need hoists and the race officer uses the following formula regarding briefing and racing start times. Number of people to hoist multiplied by number of minutes to hoist (10) as a guide for the time between end of briefing and start of first race. (Include this formula in both the hoisting section and the briefing section of the events pack. Ron to carry this out.

4.9 Arrangements for briefings and first starts at ACA UK events. It was agreed that first starts should now be 11 am. Ron to change this on the programme, and include a briefing section in the events pack that will attempt to lay out the requirements of a good briefing (i.e. including all that is needed in as brief a way as possible.) It was also agreed to apply the briefing suggestions made in 4.8 above.

5. AGM

It was agreed that the AGM would be held at the Association's National Championships.

6. PYs of Access Dinghies

After Richard presented the committee with the facts it was agreed that as from the 1st April 2008 the following PYs will be applied:

2.3	= 1850
303 (all models)	= 1730
Liberty	= 1700

Richard asked that any clubs using these PYs include them in their annual returns to RYA.

7. Project involving more severely disabled people.

John reported that the boats and equipment purchased for this project are now available (Steven had brought them to the meeting for people to see). As this project was originally raised by Dave Durston the committee asked him to take the lead and carry out an e-mail discussion in order to take it forward. David stressed that the issues involve more than just getting the boats and people around. He had made further progress regarding the harnesses and was fairly pleased with the way the harness worked. We should include one of these with the rig. He is also working with Bath University to develop a life jacket that keeps the person in an upright position. He also would like to see the development of this project through the web site.

8. George Barker training

Johnty reported that George Barker is attempting to plan a training session for the Access class in the spring of 2008 and believes that it might be more constructive if the 303s and the 2.3 sessions were held on different days. He further suggests that the venue hosts agree to provide boats for those people that are not able to trail boats and that the two venues he would like to use are Rutland and Frensham. Richard described and stressed the value of these one day sessions. The committee agreed the following:

- They would like to go ahead with two sessions but do not want to split the 303s and 2.3s.
- They would like to see a northern event (Rutland) and a southern event (Frensham).
- They would like it to be mid week and not before 1st April 2008. Frensham would prefer a Tuesday or Wednesday and Rutland would prefer a Monday.

Both clubs felt that boats could be made available to those who could not trail their own.

There was an enquiry as to whether the cost of these events would be covered by RYA or the individual sailors. Johnty was asked to feed these points back to George Barker and to let us know the outcome.

9. Treasurer's Report

Johnty presented the income and expenditure of the Association from 1.4.07 to 26.11.07.

Income	
Donations	975.00
Entry Fees	332.00
Grants	2000.00
Interest	<u>345.16</u>
Total Income	3652.16
Expenses	
Administration	515.91
Bank Charges	0.0
Demo boats	10453.07
Sundry expenses	<u>39.67</u>
Total Expenses	11008.65
Overall Total	(7356.49)

Johnty pointed out that much of the sum recorded under donations was from Steve Sawford Marine Ltd plus a generous donation from Frensham. The grant of £2000 was to provide funds for demonstrating the Association's new demonstration boats. Administration was a repayment to Steve Sawford Marine Ltd for printing and postage charges. Ron pointed out to the committee that the majority of this amount was the cost of copying and posting the voluminous rules documents etc. to every member for the AGM and suggested that as the rules are now posted on the internet we may be able to avoid these sorts of costs in the future. He added that Steve Sawford Marine had covered most of the other copying and postal expenses themselves. Johnty stressed that there was a need to make as many savings as possible on the costs of trailing and supporting boat demonstrations. It was pointed out that the donation was provided specifically for this task and that we need to encourage people to give their time and effort to the task of demonstrating the boats but nevertheless the group accepted the need to do this in as economic a way as possible. Johnty also reported the details of the insurance policy that covers the demonstration boats. The executive committee had approved this in order to get the boats insured in time for their first outing (which was before this meeting). The committee ratified this decision.

10. Dinghy Show

John will keep us informed of any Access Dinghy activity at this show.

11. International events

Richard reported that David Starkey had suggested that the next Access Worlds would be held somewhere in Europe in 2010 and asked if the committee would like to put forward a bid to run this event in the UK. He also said there was likely to be a European championships on alternate years thereafter. John will talk to Ian Harrison about holding the Worlds in the UK in 2010. Keith stressed the need for appropriate accommodation. Ron reminded the committee that we in the UK sail under our own

rules that are different from the international Access Dinghy rules and we may wish to consider unifying our rules with the international rules before 2010.

12. Publicity

The committee discussed e-mail newsletter and decided that although it is nice to have such contact with the membership a much more interactive means would be to enable an internet community discussion group. Keith described his new web site (which the committee welcomed with enthusiasm) and felt confident that he could achieve that with this. Richard pointed out that local publicity works well and encouraged other clubs to maximise this resource. John reported that the trifold leaflet that he produced last year will be used for publicity throughout 2008.

Steve told the committee that as part of the development of the www.sailingforall.com web site the Association parts would be published on a new web site called www.accessclass.org.uk and asked the Association's approval for the purchase of this name. The committee agreed. Keith offered his services in developing this site. Ron stressed to Keith the need to keep the rules section of his site fully updated to ensure that we do not have different versions available.

13. Any Other Business

- Richard, in liaison with Johnty, will do the changes to the Access Dinghy General Rules, Special Rules and Sailing Instructions.
- Johnty will send Ron the updated rules by mid January 2008 so that he can include them in the TT briefing packs.
- Joyce asked that postcodes were provided on the racing programme to aid people who have sat nav systems in finding the clubs.

14. Plans for future meetings

John asked the committee to deal with all future work up to the AGM through e-mail discussion and we therefore envisage our next face to face meeting to be at the AGM on either Friday 11th or Saturday 12th July (date and time depending on the National championships programme).