

## **Commodores Report**

Yet another year has rolled on by at Dee Sailing Club with lots going on again throughout the year. For me it is my final month in office but I have to say it has been an absolute pleasure to be Commodore over the past two years and I feel extremely proud of our excellent Sailing Club and members that make it what it is.

As ever there is lots of work that goes on in the background to help keep the Sailing Club in good working order, I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved for all the hard effort. For Captain, Andy, Mark and Don, there seems there is a never-ending amount of jobs to be done, but as ever they tirelessly work on to keep things running. There is also lots of hard work put in during the year by our Tuesday gang, keeping the land and premises maintained and in good working order.

We often forget about the Committees that put so much of their own time and effort into facilitating the smooth running of the Sailing Club, so a huge thank you to everyone on General Committee, Sailing Committee and House Committee for giving up their time for the betterment of the club.

There have been some notable improvements throughout the year with the erection of fences in the car park, more astro-turf laid, a 20-foot container in the back field for storing maintenance bits and the boat lift parts. We also now have an electronic notice board within the clubhouse to advertise what is going on, thank you to Richard Stacey for getting this set up, as well as WebCollect.

The new Membership system is now fully up and running, WebCollect is already proving to be a huge help in reducing the amount of time processing the membership and going forward will make both joining and renewing membership so much easier to stay on top of.

During the past year we have spent time and money looking to progress with the proposal for the new extension, we have had drawings commissioned and site meetings to determine what we would need to do in order to move this on further. We have met with the local planning officer and we have been told that there would not be any objections to progressing with the build. Our next stage is to evaluate all of the costs and to peruse grant money to be able to achieve the building of the extension, we will keep the membership informed as to how this is progressing.

For the beginning of the sailing season for some of us lucky ones, we go back to my report of 2019, as it was at this time last year that eight boats from Dee Sailing Club had already been shipped in a container to Thailand and soon, we would all be heading off to join them to compete in the Dart 18 World Championships.

The event was a huge success with Dee Sailing Club providing the largest single entry of boats from any individual Sailing Club, with Club burgees proudly flying from the tops of our masts whenever we were ashore it looked more like a home event.



The conditions for the competition turned out to be perfect with glorious sunshine, a daytime temperature of 32 degrees, strong Southerly 15-25 knot breezes and a sea temperature of around 25 degrees, it really was ideal sailing. The main event hosted by Royal Varuna Yacht Club was spread out over a week with two races every day bar one, with some tremendous racing throughout the fleet.



Dee Sailing club proved to be a force to be reckoned with on the World stage with some great individual performances from Dee Sailors, one of our own Club Members, Gareth Owen, his performance being the most notable, narrowly missing out on claiming another World Championship title, finishing in an extremely respectable second overall.

Winter training was on the agenda following the return of the competitors from Thailand and thoughts turned to the season ahead. Regular on the water sessions have been and will be held throughout the year to come, with existing and new sailors all reaping the benefit we plan to continue this for the foreseeable future, building the strength in our sailors' abilities so please come along if you are interested.

From 20th to 22nd of April saw Dee Sailing Club host the Dart 18 open meeting, with boats from all over the country attending yet again. It turned out to be ideal sailing conditions and unseasonably warm weather, again all 8 races were completed successfully.



As ever the visitors were treated to Dee Sailing Clubs legendary hospitality and the beer flowed freely into the evenings as the competitors and followers enjoyed the live music.

As the weather continued to warm and the nights drew out there was to be a stirring coming from the back field, as one by one the Cruiser fleet began to launch down for the season ahead, it wasn't too long before the moorings off the Clubhouse were full once again and it looked like there were more this year than the previous year. It is fantastic to see the fleet growing, going from strength to strength, long may this continue. A big thank you to Roy Sheriff for the excellent Cruiser report below.

The Dunkin assembled in May/June 2018 completed and ready to lift our boats off the water at the end of the season, the Dunkin revolutionized the way the club could now handle and move boats at almost 3 times the speed of previous methods. It also led to members thinking about, looking at and upgrading to larger vessels knowing the days of struggling to launch and recover were now over.

The year started with members working hard to get their new boats and existing boats ready for the season. Those with new boats were actively selling their old boats which resulted in new members joining the cruising fleet. Mike and Lynne finally found a boat they were happy with and proceeded to get the newly named Galileo Sadler 19 cleaned up. Andy Rainford with limited sailing experience bought Clearwater from Malcolm who now had his £10 boat in a condition that resembled a new boat. Andy took to sailing as the proverbial duck to water with minimal tuition he was sailing solo and going out in a range of conditions.



Part way through the season Rich purchase Orca from David Goddard who now owned Puffin a 19ft Tardis that had standing room as well as spacious heads and lots of cabin room.

Towards the end of the Year Rick purchased Ashlar and proceeded to work on her through the winter.

David bought Wild Magic which was badly damaged by a rogue boat breaking her moorings and wrapping itself around White Magic and cutting short David's sailing season. White Magic was Written of and quickly purchased from the insurers by Andy.

While musical boats and the new trend of boat swapping took place the rest of us resorted to the mundane task of sailing. 5 intrepid sailors started their season off by hiring a boat in Scotland sailing from Largs around the Scottish isles (a YouTube of this can be seen on the "Sailing with Roy Sheriff" channel)



The season as a whole was very mixed with either the tides not being good or the weather being wet, windy or still airs. This still didn't stop 14 boats taking to the water and making use of the best weather when it arrived, we had a good turnout for the Commodores cruise with Adam abandoning ship and using his tender and Dawpool to add to the number of craft used by one crew.

Solstice week this year saw 2 boats, Kingfisher with Duncan Noel and Sienna with Lee and myself staying in Red Wharf bay then making our way back to Conwy then home where we were joined by a pod of Dolphins who entertained us for more than ten minutes, jumping, twisting and swimming under the boat. All can be seen on the YouTube channel.

Our next long trip included 4 boats heading to Conwy again. Dorne Mist Malcolm and Mark, Wild Magic DPL and David, Salina with Lee going solo and Saltern Spirit myself and a John. Weather was good with just enough wind to sail. Unfortunately, I developed an engine cooling problem resulting in Lee coming back for us and towing us into Conwy at night. A big thanks to Lee who also towed us back to the moorings at the end of the trip. Once again film on YouTube.

Lee and I took one more trip to Conwy towards the end of the season to be fog bound for a couple of hours. Our trip back included 25 minutes of Dolphin entertainment which made the trip exciting.



Our final sail was a very pleasant and enjoyable trip to the Fun ship across the Estuary from the club. Duncan organized a great overnight sail mooring off the Funship and making use of the facilities on the site. We had a great Barbecue with new member Jo and her mother joining us for the Barbecue and providing an amazing range of food. The boats that did the trip were Kingfisher Duncan and family including Oliver's first night on board. Sandpiper Mike, Salina Lee, and myself on Saltern Spirit.

Duncan has been working hard to develop the Funship site for DSC members. This will enable people who wish to build their confidence and experience sleeping on the boat overnight. Well worth pursuing in the coming year.

Finally, a big thanks to all who have helped make this year a good one be it through supporting others, sailing, or carrying out repairs on the site for others to enjoy.

2020 we have a new Cruiser Captain Duncan Swinson and Mooring Officer Mike Noonan. Let's make it a good one by getting as many people afloat as we can. Videos of all long trips can be found on YouTube "Sailing with Roy Sheriff"

Once again, our Juniors have been busy too, with Young Athena Rose Nash and Emma Millensted heading up our Optimist sailing on the marine lake at West Kirby, I believe that both of them are becoming very proficient young sailors. Athena has also been crewing on an Albacore both at Dee and West Kirby and I'm sure it won't be long before she is jumping into a Catamaran, it is great to see the progression of the juniors.

Thank you to Jonathan Waddington for writing the following article on the Mirror sailing.

It was great to see the club Mirrors making another appearance at Abersoch this year. The junior fleet is going through a period of transition as some of our boys become men (that might be stretching it a little, but suffice to say they look down on their dads nowadays) and the next batch of juniors haven't yet moved up from Optimists.

As a result, the Dee SC contingent prayed for heavy winds to help them keep up with the super light crews in the other boats. Having been in the winning junior boat for the last three years we have to feel a little sorry for Harriet Waddington who this year said goodbye to her pairing with brother Matthew, only to be lumped (which is exactly the right word) with dad Jonathan, who is definitely designed more for comfort than speed!



The other Dee boat was helmed again by Matthew Waddington. The rules of the competition state that the combined age of a junior boat must be less than 30 and so in an effort to squeeze one more year and potentially a fourth successive victory, Matthew dropped Harriet, trading her in for younger brother Josh. Whilst Josh is 11 and Harriet 14, Harriet goes to dance after school and Josh practices his scrummaging as a hooker: Suffice to say that the gain from the age differential came at the price of a heavier crew!

So, off the two boats set, willing the wind Gods to come out in their support. The first day saw the 59 boats unfortunately for Dee SC, line up in very light winds. This meant a tough day and whilst Matthew and Josh kept themselves in the top half of the fleet, they were well back from their usual top 10 positions.

The wind promised to build after that day and the forecasters were right.



Over the rest of the week we lost two days to too much wind and then sailed or more accurately drifted for the other 3.

Sadly, no silverware for Dee this year but as ever a tremendous event that we hope the next batch of juniors could be ready for on 17-21 August 2020.



Another noteworthy success for Dee Sailing Club Members, we have Jonny and Alex Harris who achieved the high status of becoming National Champions in the Cherub Class, very well done to them in this high-performance development class of dinghy.

One of Dee Sailing Clubs highlights of the year is always our Regatta, this year was no exception. The day started off slightly over cast but there was plenty of wind this time round to get two good races in. A record number of boats turned out this year and it was fantastic to see our own cruiser fleet also part take in the racing.



Lady luck was definitely with us that day, as we all came ashore the sun finally decided to come out from behind the clouds, the bar filled up, the lawn was awash with people enjoying a drink or two, a very tasty hog roast and some good live background music to help the party atmosphere along.



I mustn't forget our Snooker team, as it seems to be going from strength to strength too, having beaten Hoylake Sailing Club last year I am hopeful that we will retain the Trophy again this year. We have had some very close-run matches with most of the clubs on the snooker circuit and hopefully this year we can warrant a Trophy cabinet to keep them all in.

As numbers continue to grow both in the Clubhouse and on the water, there is a steady increase in the numbers of Cruisers, Catamarans and Dinghies coming to the Club, a testament to what a great place Dee Sailing Club is, I expect 2020 to be a fantastic year for us all.

I would like to thank everyone for all their support over the past two years and I would especially like to wish all the very best to Lee Matthews as incoming Commodore and his team of Flag Officers supporting him, I am sure 2020 will be an amazing year.

Kind Regards

Will Thompson

Commodore