

Minutes of Sailing Committee Meeting

On Wednesday 1st November 2017

Present: Bob Joce, Andrew Craig, Paul Schroeder, Tony Woods, Josie Adams, Janet Hawkins

Apologies: Vicki Thurston

1. Matters Arising

Any matters arising from previous meeting were to be discussed on the agenda.

2. Club Racing Attendance Decline; Initiatives to Reverse the Trend

The analysis of attendance data previously circulated by Andrew Craig was discussed. Noted there was a general decline in numbers, not just on Wednesday evenings, but particularly noticeable over the summer, when members may sail elsewhere, or be on holiday. There was discussion about the number of races that counted as well as the 33% qualification rule in NOR. This was felt to be discouraging and Andrew indicated how few racers had actually qualified. The following was discussed/agreed:

- a) Remove the DNQ/qualification status from published Sailwave results, as this was the first thing racers see. **Janet** to do for next Wednesday Evening series.
- b) Noted increased accuracy of weather forecast and weather conditions information from Windguru – may have an effect on decision making, rather than sailors coming up and then deciding whether to race.
- c) Quality of catering – noted that this had been raised in the past; noted that the numbers staying for dinner had on occasions been very low, making the caterers' job tricky; noted that the social aspect of Wednesday evenings needed to be boosted, perhaps by encouraging fleet attendance. **Janet / fleet captains**
- d) Fleets participating – noted that attendance by the largest fleets – both Lasers and RS400s had declined markedly in 2017; agreed that more needed to be done to encourage other classes to become competitive and that this worked when there was an active fleet publicity – model of the Laser fleet used as an example. **Janet / fleet captains**
- e) Start time for Weds Evening series – noted that it was a rush for some sailors to leave work and be at start line at 7pm. Agreed that it would be reviewed with the Safety team (Vicki) and Catering team (Debbie) whether a later start time would work for them. If this works for them, agreed to incorporate into the NOR, as well as being highlighted on the racing events calendar on website. **Janet / Paul**
- f) Encouraging younger sailors – agreed that suitable dates would be selected for a Youth Series within the Wednesday evening series, with a specific Youth Prize. This would be similar to the Youth Series for Sunday races. **Janet / Vicki** to liaise with youth group.
- g) Noted concerns about the demographic of sailors generally – consensus of opinion that there was a 'gap' with few sailors in their 20s and 30s being active members of clubs, as they had grown up with RYA squad system and been used to travelling to events, rather than being based at clubs. Noted that this would be a difficult situation to remedy, but that how to promote sailing at Queen Mary to this age group should be a focus.
- h) Widening diversity of classes sailing and becoming involved in racing. Agreed that Demo Days, Class Association contacts, eg. possibility of Aero event to be explored. **Janet** to liaise with RS Class Association; **Janet** to research possible Demo Days

- i) Recommendation from Sailing Committee to Council – to set up a small sub-group to discuss the decline in standard membership. **Andrew** to refer to Council for action.

3. Open Meetings 2018

- a) Feedback from Cherub Open. Noted comments about combining the Cherubs with the Club racing, which made valid points about incompatibility of craft. Agreed that mixing more appropriate classes with club racing would be better, going forward. Noted that for 2018, Cherubs were combining with RS700s. Noted that the size of meeting might not meet the minimum break-even, for an Open Event. Agreed that **Janet** would explore whether Moths/Waszps, considered compatible with these 2 classes, might be interested in a second meeting, combined with Cherubs and RS700s. To feedback to Sailing Committee on interest in such an event. Noted that D-Zero event was for one-day Race meeting, on Saturday 21 April, with the offer to any interested participants, of joining Sunday Club Race. After considering this, Sailing Committee agreed that this would be a good way of encouraging possible new members and welcoming them to the Club; this class does have sailors who participate in Club Racing and it was felt they were more compatible with this format than Cherubs.
- b) Open meetings on calendar so far for 2018. The following meetings were ratified by Sailing Committee:
- 17/18 February SWA Open
 - 24/25 February RS End of Season (postponed from Nov 2017)
 - 10/11 March Moth/Waszp Open
 - Possibly 17 March LWA (dates to be confirmed)
 - 21 April D-Zero; 22 April any D-Zeros offered the chance to join Sunday Club Racing
 - 28/29 April RS Feva Inland Open
 - 19 May T15 Interclub Event
 - 22/23 September Combined Cherub/RS700 Open; to encourage Moths, Waszps and Rooster 4000s to join this to make up numbers
 - 29/30 September Zone Squad Championships
 - 20 October QM Youth Open
 - 21 October Club Championships
 - Possibly 17 November LWA (dates to be confirmed)
 - Club Racing Calendar (draft, appended) **Janet** to contact **fleet captains** for them to identify dates for RS200 Series, RS400 Gold Fleet and Laser BIG Sundays; **Janet / Vicki** to identify suitable Youth Race Series dates; before final list is published, along with Wednesday evening Youth Series dates
- c) Agreed: **Janet** to talk to **Clare at RS Class Association** about possible Aero Open Meeting to encourage Aero sailors to QM
- d) Open Event Pricing for 2018 – noted that organisers of the 2018 events so far scheduled were aware that prices were being reviewed. Discussion covered comparable club entry fees and discounts. Agreed that Club Open Pursuits would remain free to Club members; agreed that the youth discounted fees would be removed, as their current level could not reasonably be expected to influence parental decisions on entering youth events at QM. Agreed no change in pricing for 2018, but situation to be reviewed for 2019.

4. Race Officer Supply and Demand

Noted that for the remainder of the 2017 racing calendar, there were very few 'gaps'. Agreed: **Janet / Andrew** to contact Peter Caselton to recruit an ARO for the LWA event 18/11 (Janet has emailed 2/11/17; Andrew to talk with Peter at Saturday Club).

For Open Meetings in 2018,– **Janet** to hold back the dates for Open Meetings from the general duties published on DutyMan, so that **Bob** can recruit experienced RO teams for these events; noted that the original RO team for the RS End of Season event have agreed to run the racing for the February re-scheduled event.

Race Officer Training – noted that only Richard Steele, Stephan van Posern, Graham Evans (parent of a Youth Group sailor) and possibly Francisco and Teresa Lobato had indicated they were interested in training as Race Officers, but that it had been difficult to pull together a group of 4, which would be minimum viable course size. Agreed: **Janet / Paul** to consider running again in February; other **SC** members to actively try and recruit other interested parties who might be ready to move from ARO to RO. Names to be passed on to Janet if interested.

5. Handicap Update

Agreed that no changes be made to Club handicaps for November 2017 to March 2018, but that this would be reviewed again in March, as there might be more data from RYA. Noted that Saturday Club had been trialling a variable handicap for CATs, depending on low, medium or higher wind strength. Agreed: to incorporate this as an experiment for Open Pursuit Races. Agreed that the NOR / SIs will need to include 3 different start numbers based on winds, for CATs. On the day of racing, the relevant one will be notified to racers. **Andrew / Janet / Paul** to liaise and incorporate into NOR and SIs, as well as publicising to club members.

6. NOR and SIs

Noted that NOR and SIs would be needed for: Christmas Fun Races, Stewards Cup and Frostbite Series. Also noted that the Winter Series NOR/SIs should have had 3 minute rather than 5 minute start sequences. Agreed: **Janet / Paul** to prepare and publish these. Noted that Janet will ensure that for 2018 Winter Series, the start sequence is 3 minutes not 5. Noted that the template for 2018 does not need to be changed.

7. RS End of Seasons – special measures; Laser Performance Masters

Noted that the RS event had been re-scheduled to 24/25 February and that Aeros would not be represented, as they have another event. Discussions focused on the impact that low water levels might have on the Laser Masters event. Agreed that it would be practical at current water levels with the expected turnout. Agreed: **Janet to liaise with Vicki** about whether leaving Lasers on the bank was feasible. **Tony** to confirm to Gareth that the event will proceed to allow him to ensure this information is clear to all interested Laser sailors.

Agreed: positive message about the event needs to be sent out swiftly, especially in the light of the re-scheduling of the RS event. **Janet / Tony Bishop**, Gareth and the Laser team to co-ordinate this.

8. Rules Advisers Refresher/Talks

Noted that Chris Simon had already agreed to do a general Rules Talk as part of Winter Evening programme. Noted that despite Andrew's best efforts, no input from RYA had been forthcoming, but that Bob would attend an RYA planning event for Race Officer training on 4th November. Agreed: **Bob** would discuss with Chris about possibly presenting a further session on Rules Advisers and liaise with **Janet / Tony Bishop** about dates. Noted that at the end of the Rules Talk, it would be helpful for this second session to be publicised.

9. Boat Park Policy

- a) Keelboat Sailing. Sailing Committee considered the feedback from keelboat sailors to the current low water levels in an email shared with SC. Agreed to seek further investigation and to suggest Council discuss before responding.
- b) Noted updated boat park policy list of approved boats (October 2017). Bob asked for a written definition what QMSC would and would not accept in the light of enquiries regarding CATs, spinnakers, foiling boats and larger keelboats. Agreed it would be better to have the definitions formalised, rather than responding on a case-by-case basis. Agreed that this policy statement did not necessarily need to be publicised widely, but that this would be a very useful statement. Parameters to include: length, breath, weight, size of spinnaker and PY. Noted that the issue of Thames A-Raters and the BM were a separate case and that any such statement should reflect this. Agreed: **Andrew / Paul** would work on this and circulate.

10. AOB

Club Racing: Pink Flag on Leeward Mark – Tony asked that the size of the pink flag for the leeward mark be cut, to reduce its size because the practice of wrapping is not happening. Agreed. **Janet** to liaise with **Vicki** for action.

Tony raised the waiting time between races and indicated that where there was a 4 lap Laser first race, this resulted in Lasers having less of a wait between races. However, noted that this can cause others to wait for 3rd start. Noted that a longer first race, shorter 2nd race was popular with Laser fleet.

Open Pursuit Race August 28th 2018. Josie sought advice on what should constitute a minimum number of racers. This was in the light of one person entering the race, which was subsequently cancelled due to lack of wind. After discussion it was agreed that this had been a very unusual situation and that should a similar circumstance arise in future, this would be reviewed.

Courses for Club Sprints – noted that a complicated 'M' shaped course was tricky and it worked better to keep courses simple, where possible incorporating a long first beat. The ideal length of race was approximately 15 minutes. Race Officer teams to consider the design of the courses for 2018.

Appendix 1: Draft Club Racing Dates 2018

Steward's Cup Open Pursuit Race	1/1/18
Easter Open Pursuit Race	2/4/18
Hadfield Open Pursuit Race	7/5/18
Honey Pot Pursuit Race	28/5/18
RNLI Pursuit Race	27/8/18

Frostbite Series	31/12/17 – 18/3/18	12 weeks; 24 races, 12 to count
Spring Series	25/3/18 – 27/5/18	10 weeks; 20 races, 10 to count
Summer Series	10/6/18 – 12/8/18	10 weeks; 20 races, 10 to count
Autumn Series	26/8/18 – 14/10/18	8 weeks; 16 races, 8 to count
Winter Series	28/10/18 – 9/12/18	7 weeks; 14 races, 7 to count

Wednesday Evening Series: 4/4/18 – 5/9/18 23 races, 12 to count

Spring Sprints	3/6/18
Summer Sprints	19/8/18
QM Youth Open	20/10/18
Club Championships	21/10/18
Christmas Fun Race	16/12/18