



The Water's Edge

Paxton Lakes Sailing Club,

July 2012

RNLI 24 hour race

Well they said we'd get wind and rain for the RNLI 24 hour race and they weren't wrong. The ground was totally saturated before we even started and with more rain forecast I for one decided not to put up my trusty tent. Like me the poor old thing's getting a bit long in the tooth and isn't up to harsh conditions and with only three of



us in our team there wasn't going to be much time for sleep anyway.

Having said all that, the conditions at the start couldn't have been much better, with a nice breeze from the south-west and a dollop of sunshine thrown in for good measure.

The very nature of the race is that you're often in a boat that you're not familiar with. This can be a daunting prospect when the conditions are tricky. Some boats wisely decided to put a reef in until things settled down a bit; others chose to hone their swimming skills. Joe here is demonstrating how you're always well advised to carry a bucket or bailer of some description when there's a chance of filling your boat up with water. As I'm sure Joe will tell you, once your boat is full of water your stability goes all to pot.



As the evening wore on the inevitable happened and it tipped it down. Fortunately the wind stayed through the night which made for some interesting sailing. Spotting

those wind shifts in the dead of night without being able to see the tell-tales can be quite tricky - even trickier for those five boats out of seven that had no wind indicating devices whatsoever!

Eventually the rain did stop and, as predicted, the wind got up again just when everyone was feeling slightly jaded and probably not quite as sharp as they'd like to be. This, of course, is just what the spectators want to see. As is often the case we had two nice gybe marks at numbers 2 and 7 and if they didn't get you there was another down at number 9. Despite the best efforts of the OOD and the weather every boat that started managed to finish, though some had had to make running repairs along the way.

It was refreshing to see a good turnout of juniors this year. Well done to all those juniors that took part – hopefully you enjoyed it, learned something along the way and are fired up to come back next year. Finally, well done to the winning Solo team “The Old Peculiars”, the name says it all. I think it's high time some keen club racers put together a team to stop these pesky Solos from winning – IT CAN BE DONE!

Sail for Gold.

On Sunday 5th August it is the first medal races of the Olympic Sailing Regatta. To mark this occasion and hopefully celebrate a few medals for team GBR we will be running the “Sail for Gold” race day which was first run last year. The idea of the day is racing with a twist. The 1st race will start at 11:00 and will be a pursuit race; the twist is that you have to hold your boat ashore until your start signal. After Lunch there will be 4 Short Course races lasting about 15 minutes each; the twist here is the course will be small enough to complete 5 or 6 laps in the 15 minutes. Then just like at Weymouth and Portland on 5th August the final race will be a double-points medal race. The twist this time is it will be a pursuit race but based on personal handicaps calculated from the results of the previous. Last year when we ran this event for the first time all those that took part had great fun due the variety of racing. Following the racing there will be a BBQ at the club where we will be able to toast Team GBR's success at the Olympics.

Youth Trophy.

The Youth Trophy at Paxton Lakes Sailing Club is a two day event over the weekend 1st / 2nd September. The event is open to any members and friends of members 18 and under on 1st September. You don't need to have raced before but do need to know how to sail. The weekend starts with a race training session to introduce the non-racers to how it all works and hone the skills of those more experienced. After lunch on Saturday there will be 4 races each lasting 20 to 25 minutes. The racing continues on Sunday with 6 races with a similar duration to Saturday. The final race on Sunday is a double-points medal race. During all the racing there will be coaching on the water so it's not only a great weekend of racing but a good opportunity to improve your racing.

NSSA Regatta

Good luck to all our Paxton Sailors heading off to the Olympic sailing venue for the NSSA Regatta to represent Paxton Lakes Sailing Club within the Cambridgeshire Schools and Youth Sailing Association. This is set to be the biggest NSSA Regatta of all time and will see the Olympic Torch sailed by a pair of lucky sailors across the bay. Also all the Olympic Squads will be out training in preparation for the Olympics starting only a few weeks later.

Bradwell Weekend Away 2012

Paxton Lakes sailing club is pleased to invite you to a weekend away to sail on the river Blackwater. Repeating the success of last year, the event will once again be hosted by Bradwell Outdoors, a purpose-built residential outdoor activity centre. Dates 25th to 26th August 2012. Non-sailing members also welcome and there will be plenty for you to do and see.

- Arrival any time from 4pm on Friday the 24th of August
- Two night's accommodation in the centre's main building in shared bunk rooms
- Cooked breakfast on both Saturday and Sunday mornings
- Evening meal on Saturday night
- Packed lunch Saturday and Sunday (available in the mornings to take with us on the water if necessary)
- Two days of sailing with full rescue cover. We will be able to set our own programme of cruising and racing during the two days
- Access to the centre's mountain bikes, high ropes and other activities, subject to supervision availability
- Access to the centre's own dinghies (e.g. Wayfarers) for £50 per boat per day if you prefer not to take your own boat
- Ability to keep your boat safely overnight in the main centre compound
- A very well equipped boatyard and workshop should you be unfortunate enough to break something whilst on the water

A booking form is available on the web site www.paxtonlakes.org.uk

Youth Sailing

The Youth Sailing team have been very busy already this year and have already put in some fantastic results and with a few busy weeks ahead hopefully we will continue to return good results.

The first event of the year was the Cambs Youth League at Cam SC. This unfortunately saw only one member of the youth team attend but Matt still managed to do Paxton proud. Changeable wind conditions and the challenge of river sailing made for an interesting day's racing but one that was very enjoyable. Matt recorded 12th place out of the 35 boats that competed. This has set Paxton off to a

great start in the competition, so hopefully with some higher numbers from the club at the next few events we will move up the standings.

Next on the agenda for the Youth team was the Beds and Cambs Regatta at Grafham Water SC. This saw Matt take his Laser and Helen crew in the Bosun. They were met with awful conditions (we were told that the wind was 25 gusting 30 knots), however both put in a fantastic effort which saw Matt pick up the first Junior Trophy of the season as first junior. Another huge well done to both sailors, you did Paxton proud!

Then came the 24 hour race; a huge thanks to Tori for all her work organising the junior team. Then, even bigger congratulations to the whole team who kept the boat going throughout the night. Well done on a huge team effort.

Then on the 30th June 5 youth sailors made the trip to Ely SC. They were greeted by a moderate breeze that steadily built during the day to give a thrilling final race, with lots of capsizes from everyone. Matt, Bobby, Tara, Helen and Charlotte all did Paxton proud posting some great results that will help move the club up the team standings. Matt, Bobby and Tara posted some exceptional results with them finishing 8th, 7th and 10th respectively. Charlotte won the under 12 category and also picked up the trophy for the youngest competitor. Well done to all 5!

As you can see the youth team have done fantastically well so far. But we want to do better and that's definitely possible with the huge number of events that are coming up.

Youth Trophy - 1st and 2nd September. Once again this weekend will be made up of race training on Saturday morning followed by racing on Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Let's see if someone can beat Andy or if he will retain his title!!

Cambs Youth League - Let's see if we can beat our 3rd from last year and maybe get 2nd or we could even dream of winning it!! To do this we need as many people as possible at each event so please try your best to get there. If you have any problems (like being unable to get there) or just want more info speak to Matt, Tori or Bobby as we may be able to get round your problem and will certainly be able to give you info.

Hunts Sailing Club - 22nd September. **Please note this date has changed.**

Paxton Lakes Sailing Club - 13th October (all juniors should at least attend this!)

NSSA Regatta - 8th to 14th July. This is the highlight event for many juniors. This year it's taking place at Weymouth and Portland on the OLYMPIC courses!

Please keep checking the Paxton website, Facebook page and the Youth noticeboard in the club house for information about the events and reports of how the juniors got on.

So Good Luck to all the juniors at Paxton Lakes SC.

Honda Rib Challenge 2012

The Eastern regional final of the Honda Rib Challenge was held at Island Yacht Club, Canvey Island, and once again youngsters from the club have acquitted themselves admirably. Lewis Redman-Baber finished 3rd in the 8-12 age group and Steven Curtis finished 1st in the 13-16 age group. This year Steven is not competing on behalf of the club but for the charity Northern Exposure Rescue, which is a non-profit making organisation that provides safety cover for water-sports events throughout the country. The final takes place at the Southampton Boat Show in September.

Club boats

I just want to say a few words about the club boats for the benefit of new members to the club.

At Paxton Lakes we are lucky enough to have a number of boats that belong to the club that are freely available for use by members at any time. Allocation is strictly on a first come, first served basis.

In the main these boats have been donated to the club by members who have moved on and no longer have a need for their boat. Some, however, have been purchased by the club for training purposes and subsequently re-allocated as club boats. The intention is that we have a range of boats that new members, who may have only recently completed a course, can use before they decide what boat they would like to buy for themselves. As you can imagine these boats are not in their prime (a bit like me) and you won't be winning any races in them but they can still be fun to sail and are a good starting point for your sailing career.

The boats that we have are constantly changing as newer ones are donated and older ones become un-repairable. When I last looked we had at least: 3 Lasers, 2 Laser Picos, a Kestrel, a Lark, a GP14, a Pacer, a Streaker, 2 Oppys and 2 Toppers. It's almost guaranteed that I've missed something out or something changes by the time you read this. The key thing you need to know is where to find them. Apart from the Oppys and Toppers they are all located along the fence next to the garage. The Oppys and Toppers are near the containers. The rigs and equipment are either in the boats themselves or in the garage. All the boats that are reserved for training purposes have their rigs and equipment in the container so you won't need to go in there. Having said all that, you can bet your bottom dollar that a boat or its equipment will end up where it shouldn't be, making a nonsense of what I've just written.

If you're unsure about how to rig one of the club boats just ask. Time has been set aside before some of the Sunday races for just this sort of thing – check your membership cards for details – but don't be afraid to ask at any other time.

Dates for your diary

August 5th Sail for Gold

This is racing with a twist, set to coincide with the first medal race of the Olympics. Race 1 will be a pursuit race with a Le Mans style start. After lunch there will be a set of 4 short, 15 minute races over a very short course. Finally, staying with the Olympic theme, there will be double-points medal race but with yet another twist: the race officer has to work out personal handicaps for all sailors based on the races that day. So in theory everyone should end the pursuit race at the same point on the lake irrespective of boat type or sailing ability. This should add a nail biting finish to the day. The race day will be followed by a BBQ and entertainment.

November 24 Laying-up Supper

It's never too early to put the date of the Laying-up Supper in your diary. This is when you find out that members really do wear things not made of neoprene. Last year we had a slight change of format which worked well and preparations are underway to make this year's event just as enjoyable. Let's not forget that many of you will be there to collect those hard-earned trophies that you've fought for all season.