



Frampton on Severn
Sailing Club

NEWSLETTER

March 19th, 2022



...I'll blow the house down!

Welcome to the March newsletter.

Please send any articles for the April edition to support@fosscc.org.uk by 16th April.

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Commodore's comment

Sitting here in my conservatory with the early morning sun starting to break through and looking at the trees with their new growth, it has made me think Spring is nearly here. It seems a different world to the strong blustery winds of last weekend, but soon we will all be enjoying better weather and some good sailing.

I was really pleased to receive a note from David Lawrence (one of our new members), who wanted to write about his experiences of joining the club. David joined in September 2021, having done levels 1 and 2 at Cotswold Sailing Club, but wanted to buy a boat and found one advertised at FOSSC. He explains that when he came to view the boat, he met Rear Commodore Coates at the club, who made him feel really welcomed. He purchased the boat, joined the club, but felt slightly out of his depth, until he came to watch the racing and met Alan Johnson, who has acted as a mentor, initially going out with David in his newly acquired boat, plus giving advice and support. David wanted to say thank you to Alan and David Coates, but to all the club members who have made him feel so welcomed. This is a true accolade of our very friendly club. David, thanks for telling me of your experiences and welcome aboard.



I was looking at the schedule of events for the year and would advise everybody to have a look on the website and then add dates to your own diaries. Here are just a few dates of note:

- Adult sail training started on 19th March, which received a large level of interest and was oversubscribed
- Junior Week – this is scheduled for 25/29 July. For all of those children who have been before, they know this is a fun filled week and usually oversubscribed! More news on this in next month's newsletter
- Friday night social sailing is due to start on Friday 6th May
- Boat Jumble – Saturday 7th May. A chance for all members to set up stall and sell any of the surplus bits and pieces cluttering up their garages!

Monitoring of the water quality in the lake continues, with samples recently having been taken and analysed. There are always conversations being had around this very complicated topic and I will keep everybody updated as the season unfolds.

Last Sunday (13th) we finally managed to get the people that showed interest at the Frampton Show onto the water. However, due to the rather blustery weather we only had about 1/3 of the people expected. Thanks to all of the members that came down and gave their time to entertain our visitors.

Whilst taking the potential new members on the lake, it was discovered that the hut in the middle of the lake had been blown off its base in the recent storms and was teetering on the edge of the platform, held in place only by the supports. Thanks to the Thursday work party that have removed the unsafe structure and pressure washed the platform.

6 bales of barley straw were delivered on Thursday 17th, ready for the work party on Sunday 20th. Hopefully as many of you as possible can attend, to assist pushing the straw into “straw sausages” and fixing them around the lake. This is generally a fun day, suitable for all ages!

Lastly, the committee still requires a new treasurer to replace Tony Emery. Thank you to Steve Hawkins for stepping into the breach in the short term, but we urgently need to appoint a new treasurer, so if you feel you have the skills and would like to join the committee, please contact either myself (tony@tonyheming.co.uk) or David Coates.

Also, can I please hear from anybody that feels they have the right skills to undertake the role of honorary secretary. Andy Crofts has done a fantastic job over the last 8 years, but wants to step back. Please contact me or David Coates.

I hope to see you at the club.

Tony Heming

Commodore

Sailing Matters!

The weather is getting warmer and brighter 😊. Great to see more people out on the lake. Well done to **Mike Crowley** and **Ian Cook** who won the Sunday and Wednesday Icicle series respectively, and also to **Phil Kirk** who won the first silverware of the year, the West County Breweries Club Championship series. There is now **racing every Sunday until Christmas** (excepting bank holidays) and the **Wednesday evening races start shortly on 6 April**. The **races are open to any club member** who wants to join in – just turn up and the old hands will ensure you know what the course is, when to start, finer adjustment of sail controls, etc. There are also some races throughout the year which are specifically designed for those new to racing so if that applies to you, make sure the following (as well as normal club racing) are in your calendar:

Rookie races on Sunday 15 and Sunday 22 May: Rookie racers (no specific definition of Rookie, just adults and juniors who haven't done much racing before) will start after the other racing boats have set off for their race (and maybe finish before them). You will be able to follow the other boats and maybe receive some hints and encouragement from the more established racers along the course. Single race each day.

ProAm Races on Sunday 29 May and Sunday 26 June: New racers will team up with established racers in the club gulls and have 2 short races with the 'Pro' helming the first race and the 'Am' helming the second race. You will experience the adrenalin of racing, with your own personal coach.

Short Handicap Races on Sundays 29 May, 19 & 26 June, 3 July: There will be 2 or 4 short races each day (only 2 in this series if there is also a ProAm race that day). This will give you good practice of race starts and with the races being short any mistakes will soon be forgotten after the race finishes.

Personal Handicap Races on Sundays 10, 24 & 31 July, 14 & 21 August: The sailors anticipated to be slower set off first and the faster sailors try to catch them up. Your start time depends on your experience and the class of boat you sail. Can you stay ahead of the fleet to the end of the race?

Gold/Silver Handicap on Wednesday evenings 17, 24 & 31 August and 7 & 14 September: The racers will be split into the more proficient (Gold) and less proficient (Silver). The Gold fleet sets off first, then 2 minutes later the Silver fleet starts. There are prizes for each fleet.

Remember you don't need to do every race in every series – just turn up when you can. The more you turn up for the better your series result is likely to be. If you are not so familiar with racing, check out our handy little guides on the FOSSC website [New to Racing – FOSSC](#).

Just in case we have some windy race days, you can find the next in our ‘New to Racing’ series in this newsletter and it is all about racing in stronger winds – fabulous fun and really exhilarating.

Thinking of Buying a Boat?

As I write this, Adult training is about to start. On the last Saturday of Adult Training, 23 April, we will run a session in the afternoon which will be open to all club members, not just those on the training course. We will have current club members showing and telling you about some of the different classes of boat which are sailed at FOSSC – what sort of boat is suitable for what sort of person? What options like different sail sizes are available? What to look out for when buying a boat? You ask the questions, and we’ll do our best to give you some answers.

Sailability

Get ready to rumble!! Sailability starts on 26 March and runs every Saturday (except bank holidays) until 8 October – that’s 25 sessions – woohoo! To all our Sailability members – see you soon 😊. As has been said before, these sessions are ever so much fun and a great way to start the weekend. If you would like to support this part of the club, do come and join in as a sailor, power boat driver, or land based rigger / de-rigger / galley help / general help.

Have fun on the lake!
Rhonwen James
Sailing Secretary

Racing in Strong Winds (and staying upright)

So you’ve **tasted the thrill of reaching on the plane** and now you want to try racing in these strong winds – how do you handle the boat throughout the whole race? These notes are aiming to encourage less experienced sailors contemplating racing who are nervous about joining the fun of the race fleet when winds are strong(er). Also check out the previous article in this series on general sailing in strong winds. Call it “sailing defensively” – the enemy is the wind, not your fellow sailors. The number one piece of advice is to avoid collisions as they could damage your boat, or someone else’s boat and you might capsize or have to do penalty turns. It’s always safer to go a bit further / slower than to risk a collision – and you will get to the finish line more quickly.

These notes will help you to minimise your chances of capsizing, but don’t go on the water if you are not prepared to do so and are adequately dressed for the conditions. Joining a race will mean that a

safety boat is available and you can benefit from watching others. This has been written by two laser sailors, but most points apply no matter the boat you are sailing.

1. Can you **reef your boat**, or is there a smaller sail size? Check out reefing details from the class association or another sailor. For lasers, if you don't have a radial or smaller sail, you can reef. Take out the top batten and wrap the sail around the mast at least twice. Pull the downhaul tight. You may need to add a strop between the clew and the outhaul. Pull the outhaul tight.
2. Tighten the **toe strap** and keep at least one foot under it.
3. Sailing defensively rather than trying to maximise speed all the time can pay off if you stay upright when all around are capsized. Forget about roll tacks, roll gybes, covering someone else's wind, centreboard position (except when gybing when it should be half way up) etc, etc – **focus on staying upright and sailing the correct course!**
4. Don't worry too much about adjusting the sail controls and then you can keep your eyes looking out of the boat, looking for the signs of gusts and shifts on the water, and watching out for others. With experience you'll learn when to set your controls on shore and leave them alone (accepting they will not be optimal on all legs of the course), and when to adjust them (accepting that takes your attention away from the wind and moves your weight in the boat which can be risky in strong winds).
5. **The most fun part is the reach on the plane** 😊! Get your weight towards the back of the boat and play the main sheet to adjust for the gusts. In a low boat like a laser or topper, do not have the kicker too tight or the boom will hit the water as the boat heals away from the wind and capsize the boat ☹.
6. **Be ready for gusts to come in a different direction** to the prevailing wind. These changes of direction are known as **'wind shifts.'** **Your aim is to adjust your sails / hull direction to the optimum position as the wind changes so that you maintain / maximise speed, point your boat in the best direction, and generally get to the next mark as quickly as possible.**
 - a. If you are going upwind, and a 'shift' hits you, you need to be ready to either:
 - i. **'head' away** from the prevailing wind to avoid capsizing backwards or ending up head to wind because if you don't, your boat would be pointing too close to the direction the gust has come from and you won't be going anywhere, or
 - ii. the gust might **'lift' you closer** to the prevailing wind direction which means you can point your boat closer to the mark you want to get to 😊.This is known as being 'headed' or 'lifted'. (Search internet for 'headers and lifts in sailing' to find some useful diagrams of this.)
 - b. If you are going downwind, be ready to let your sheet out or pull it in to catch as much power in your sail(s) as possible, then you can get on a 'plane' (**riding your own bow wave**) and that's fantastic! If you are on, or nearly on, a run you need to be really careful that the boat won't gybe unexpectedly as the wind changes direction. **For this reason, it's best not to be on a run in strong winds.** Consider two broad reaches instead of one run.

Always check your tell-tales / burgee and adjust your sails or boat direction to suit.

7. To help you spot wind shifts, **look at other boats** who are in the area the wind is coming from – you will see them being hit by gusts, or 'falling into a hole in the wind' and then you will be ready for the same thing and you can be ready to adjust where your weight is / where your

sails are / the direction your boat is pointing. This can be really helpful when you are going upwind.

8. Try tightening the downhaul and outhaul but leave the kicker at a halfway setting. Loosening the downhaul off wind and downwind gives more speed and a more stable boat, but is less important than looking out for gusts and other boats and means you have to pull it tight before rounding the mark to beat upwind. With the Laser Radial pull it really tight upwind.
9. Don't worry too much about the **centre board**, except make sure that it is only **halfway when gybing**. Leeway (skidding sideways) is preferable to the boat leaning over as the boom is less likely to hit the water as it comes across. If the boom hits the water, you will probably capsize ☹️.
10. If it is really windy and you need to gybe, one strategy is to sit/kneel in the middle of your boat to keep the hull flat while the sail and boom go across; once the boom has swung across let the sail out more than is required so it flaps around (less power), then move onto the correct side of the hull, make sure you are holding the tiller comfortably, and then pull in the sail to be in the correct position – wastes some time, but greatly reduces the chance of a capsize 😊!
11. If you are going up wind hiked out and the **wind suddenly drops**, or you get headed, before the boat capsizes on top of you, steer away from the wind, lean back and let the water take your weight. If you have kept your feet under the toe straps, wait for the wind to pick up and pull you back up. If it doesn't, get out of the boat and turn it away from the wind before getting back in.
12. Up to a certain wind strength, when going upwind, you should have your sail(s) pulled in tightly as far as they will go. This will allow you to point as high as possible into the wind. **Above this certain wind strength** (which will be particular to you), you may find that the wind is still overpowering you and you can't keep the boat flat. If this happens, **let your sail(s) out just a little** (~30cm of main sheet or 10cm of jib sheet should be enough) while keeping your boat pointing in the same direction. Your sail will 'back' just a little bit (the front of the jib, or the luff of the main sail will have wind on the wrong side), and your speed will decrease just a little bit, but you will still make good progress and in the right direction. Importantly, you will feel the boat become more upright and the risk of capsizing will be significantly reduced. Remember to hike out to balance the boat first, letting your sails out a bit is only to be used if moving your weight is not enough.
13. If you are very much overpowered upwind then sail with the centre board slightly raised.
14. When you do capsize, make sure that you turn the boat, if you can, away from the wind so that it does not get blown right over on top of you as it comes up. Check that the mainsheet is free before getting back into the boat.
15. Sometimes when you capsize, the laser's boom ends up vertical. You will not be able to right the boat if it is like that – you need to swim round to the sail side of the hull and pull the sail flat. For two-sail boats, make sure both the mainsheet and jib-sheet are uncleated before you try to right the boat.
16. Look to see how others launch their boats. With winds on shore or off shore this can be a challenge. You may find it easier to launch from a different place to normal. Help others with their trolley and ask for help with yours.

.....and finally, the banter in the bar after a windy race is all part of the fun 😊!!

Reminder to mark your equipment

Most Members have marked sailing equipment left at the club, but there are some equipment not marked or the markings have rubbed off or faded.

Next time you are at the club PLEASE MARK (OR RE-MARK) ALL SAIL BAGS, MASTS, RUDDERS, CENTREBOARDS that you store at the club with OWNER'S NAME & BOAT TYPE WITH SAIL NUMBER (if known). This will help in identifying abandoned equipment by ex-members that have left the club.

FOSSC Work Parties for 2022

Firstly please note the following dates and designated groups for the 2022 Work Parties at FOSSC:

As usual, if you think you will be unable to make your designated group then please arrange to attend an alternative session.

The first couple of work parties will concentrate on coppicing and pollarding the trees and bushes around the lake.

At present the club only have one identified member who has a chainsaw and license, (as required by the estate) **so if there are any licenced chainsaw operators out there**, please could you email support@foss.org.uk or contact one of the Committee as additional help in this area would be very welcome.

Other equipment that is always useful is any petrol or battery powered garden tools including garden saws, strimmers, hedge trimmers etc. and traditional tree saws. Please remember to bring suitable clothing, gloves and lunch!

The work parties are not just crucial to maintain the clubs infrastructure, but it is also a great opportunity to meet fellow members. We look forward to seeing you at one of the eight work parties, which commence at 0930.

Jim Bennett