

# Redwing Newsletter

July 2007

NATIONAL REDWING DINGHY ASSOCIATION

Your Hon. Sec. writes :-

The 2007 season is well underway now and the Looe fleet turning out have been numbering between 5 and 7 boats. This is a bit disappointing since there are many more boats still in store that could double this fleet size.

However this is not as small as the Tenby fleet that has now been placed in 'mothballs' as the regulars try out the delights of Osprey dinghies for a while. (Excellent dinghies for sea sailing too!) R228 and R244 are in commission (although only R228 has been out sailing at Tenby this season) and are booked to take part in the National Championships in the Scillies this August. R244 will be helmed by Rolly Squibbs and crewed by Tommy D'Ortez and R228 will be sailed by Bill and Nan as usual.

Brian Carvey and Francis Marshall have made a big effort and actually got our rules re-written to the new RYA template requirement and have sent a draft off for approval. At the moment we are waiting to hear back from the RYA. The Redwing's 'National' status appears to have been revoked and the yardstick de-listed. This is apparently because there are insufficient Redwings sailing too few races to qualify for a calculated yardstick in the modern RYA-administered UK sailing world. Help! We need some ideas to keep the fleet alive.

Here's one to get you started: How about a brand-new ready to sail Redwing in low maintenance FRP, with a modern rig, built-in buoyancy in a choice of hull colours? Does this sound interesting? Do you think it would appeal to modern

dinghy buyers and sailors? A few rule changes, the purchase of our copyright and a benefactor to fund the development / mould costs etc. and it could be a reality. Your thoughts and comments please.

Happy sailing, Bill.

And the Chairman would add:- His particular thanks to Brian Carvey and Francis Marshall for the enormous amount of work they undertook in re-writing the Redwing class rule to comply with the RYA requirements. ( I'm sure we all echo that Colin.(ed.)).

'07 Nationals Anticipated entries for Scilly stand at 14, a little disappointing considering the initial enthusiasm, but I am sure that those attending will thoroughly enjoy the event . However some boats have not yet paid, thus to avoid the late entry fee, can you please enter without further delay.

Most details for Scilly are now resolved but special thanks to Barry Darlington for providing the Committee boats for this years event, I am sure that Cary and his team will be appreciative.

No sails talk! Following the last AGM, several people were going to advise on issues they were having with Macnamara Sails. To date there has been no response so do we assume all is well?

'08 Nationals A championship venue for 2008 will need to be agreed at this years A.G.M, so let's get our proposals together to ensure the venue attracts a large entry. (NB comments elsewhere in this and previous issue, ed.)



National Championships, Fishguard, August 2003

**I'm indebted to Roger Hocking for his noble response to Nick Smith's piece in our last issue and also to my plea for Redwing yarns; others from those corners of Wales and the West-country where Redwing memories remain cherished will, I hope be encouraged to follow suit. MH.**

Thanks to Nick Smith (alias Nasty Nick) for an interesting and at times controversial article in the December 2006 Newsletter. It's always nice to get different views from a newcomer to the Redwing Class and I know Mike Hick appreciates anyone who can sit down and write a long article. Keep it going Nick you seem destined for a position in the National Redwing hierarchy!

Hello, hello! Mike, you did jog my memory in mentioning the Cornishmen apprehended in the mid-60's by the Pembrokeshire Constabulary. This was possibly on the first of my 14 visits to the Championships in Tenby in 1966 with 8 of us sharing one bedroom at the Sun Inn and crewing brother Derek in R.201 (Condor). In those days we often used to drive back overnight (after the prize giving and after coffees in TSC members houses to sober us up), to compete in a 3-day Open Meeting in

Looe, starting on the Saturday. The joys of being young! We did make a lot of noise when leaving Tenby in convoy, thus causing this apprehension, but fortunately were able to explain the reason for all the silverware to a couple of very suspicious local Bobbies!

I also recall on the drive over, Redwing legend, the late Eddie Walke (R146, Flare), who won his only ever National Championship that year – with major celebrations – crewed by Ian Llewellyn, now a London Solicitor, almost caused an accident or two on the journey. Eddie, had a left-hand drive car and with Ian sitting in the normal “driving seat” reading a newspaper, caused overtaking drivers more than a second look with the driver apparently *reading*. (Incidentally, Ian crewed with Derek in R.201 (Condor) the following year and they won this Championship in N.Devon – what a record!).

I was also reminded of another year in Tenby, in the early 70's, when a now ex-Redwing sailor, staying in the top floor bedroom of a small guest house and faced with an “emergency”, stuck a certain part of his anatomy out of the window. Holidaymakers were heard to comment that “...there must be some very big seagulls in Tenby”.

Noblesse oblige One sailing incident sticks out in my mind. In 1966, sailing with brother Derek in R.201 and Restronguet farmer Roy Howells in R.186 (Bosun Bird), and having finished first and second in an early championship race with no protests or comments on the water, Roy, a true gentleman and an excellent and very fair sailor, spoke to Derek and myself after the race (which we had won). He thought that after we had tacked under his lee bow on the last beat his sails had just touched our shrouds and he was in the wrong and that when we had rounded the last windward mark our sails had just touched the mark. We were completely unaware of either incident. He suggested we both retire, which we did. How many sailors would do that nowadays?

Devonian's delights The other memory is of R.206 (Dick Hamlin & Ted Cox) of Dartmouth SC, who won the Championship in 1970, passing myself and Paddy Southern in R.182 (Whip or Will) on a down-wind leg while pouring and drinking coffee out of a big flask! (In plated form on the Taw and Torridge and only down-wind, cream-teas were the order- of- the-day for R174! Ed.)

On Nationals venues Back to Nick: your comments on Championship venues are interesting, and I can see where you are coming from, but we have tried other venues and sharing Championships, and anyone who went to Brightlingsea will recall that sharing in "Pye Week" didn't work very well. Most will remember the muddy creek with some boats stuck on the starting line in the mud, some unaware why they weren't moving!

We may be a small class, but it is a National Championship, and we can make it viable for the host club, sometimes with our drinking alone. And, it is much more enjoyable to be where you are wanted. We need to stick to Looe, Tenby, Fishguard the Scillies and we should also try North Devon. Outside of these ports it has just not worked and the proof of the pudding etc.

Roger's riposte Finally Nick, I have to challenge you about your comments on tacking to leeward of you as we approached the windward mark in Race 5. Invalid protests are best left, as in the Protest Room

I could go into detail but I won't – this is a Newsletter not a protest form. Four rules are involved not one and I was disappointed it was not heard as we had a rock solid case which was independently supported.

Happy Sailing Nick, I would really have looked forward to seeing you in the Scillies in August and indeed to seeing as many Redwingers as possible at this fantastic venue.

From the 68 year old "Flying Pensioner" – once again, sailing very close to the wind, **Roger Hocking**.



**R183 flat-out ( well nearly ) Instow June 2006**

## Boat movements: a historic Redwing surfaces in Cornwall !

R2! Much excitement was generated last winter, by an inquiry to Bill Dowell from Robin Louvel in Donderry about a boat purporting to be a Redwing, named 'Kittiwake'. This, it transpired was actually Redwing no. 2; the first Redwing built by Roy Dann in 1939.

Robin had intended to rebuild the boat for fishing trips off the beach at Donderry but quickly realised that the amount of repair required and the delicate nature of the hull made this impractical. Thereupon he offered her for sale and after inspection she was brought to North Devon by David Price.

She is in quite a distressed condition, having been left without proper support; she was quite badly hogged and the keel was cracked aft of the centre board casing. She was GRP sheathed up to the water-line and it seemed that the deck had been removed at some time to facilitate re-ribbing by a very crude separating of the top strake – a considerable restoration project.

However, we set her up in traction in David's garage and after a month or so she showed signs of returning to her proper form. No further advance had been made when we re-met a fellow English (National 14) sailor at the Semaine du Golfe this year. Richard Spiller has an amazing track record in the restoration business as he totally rebuilt his boat from the beached wreck he rescued 19 years ago.

Richard had been so impressed by the sea-keeping performance of the Redwing compared to his damp N.14 that he

expressed an interest in obtaining a Redwing and collected No. 2 as his latest project soon after our return from France.



**R2's new owner looking perhaps a little apprehensive, about to depart for Wareham.**

R 154 progresses slowly and is really waiting for the winter when sailing no longer hampers progress. She now has 18 new ribs (or more correctly timbers), with another 15 to go. The insertion process had it's moments of light relief. Whilst nailing the first long timber at the transom end I was pressing the rib down with my left hand clear of the point at which I expected David (Price) to drill to exit, with my right hand resting lightly over the point of one of the new nails. Predictably the drill exited into the ball of the thumb; at this naturally I jumped, simultaneously pressing down on my right hand. On inspection I found that I had a neat and bleeding puncture in

either hand. No associated enhanced water-borne performance, it must be said, has been evident to date!



**R 154 responding to restoration with the after timbers removed and oxalic acid applied.**

R86 I have recently had a long conversation with Richard Bush, who purchased R 86 last year and although from what he tells me she seems a remarkably complete Pearn boat he is quite honest in admitting that the amount of work required for her restoration is beyond his available time and has therefore sadly decided to sell. Richard will provide a detailed run down of the work he has discovered. The boat comes with a brand-new combi-trailer at £750. Richard may be contacted on mobile on 07774784168.

R23 in the family Robin Downing one of the editors oldest friends and a cousin by marriage, has acquired 23 from Neyland. She like 86 is, I understand, also very complete, although missing her deck skin; a daunting restoration element will be the removal of the black paint from the hull, one only hopes' it was applied over layers of varnish.

GRP? On Bill's suggestion for a plastic Redwing; it certainly works for Albacores. A composite hull with timber deck, thwarts and cappings would look fine. Can we reopen the glued-ply debate for a pre-cut diy kit? ( where's Walter ?).

## Whipping the Loose Ends

NDYC-2008 Championships ?

There is a risk that that the Association may render itself persona non grata with the club after a series raised and dashed hopes of seeing Redwings en masse in the Estuary. I would suggest (taking-up one of Nick Smiths points from the last issue) that the class needs a good public airing in order to encourage regeneration. Sailors of other classes should experience racing with Redwings at close quarters to best appreciate the quality of close competition they provide.

Although Brightlingsea may not have been a good estuary experience, those that have sailed recently in North Devon must know it to be quite different. I therefore throw down the sporting gauntlet and challenge the Association to race in North Devon Yacht Club's 2008 Open Week from Sunday 10th to Friday 15<sup>th</sup> August. Giving six days of combined handicap with inter-class racing; as a class we can of course incorporate our own Championship Trophies for the appropriate races.

This is, it should be emphasised, the challenge of the different: fixed-line starts and courses determined by wind direction related to the geographic constrictions of the estuary. We have had courses this week, for example, approaching Nick Smith's trapezoids which, with a good ground-sea running, has given some superb surfing runs and reaches.

Instow Invitation For '08 this is probably best viewed as an alternative, should the above prove a non-event. Bill Dowell will have a choice of possible dates for AGM selection.



**There are other ways of enjoying your Redwing - La Semaine du Golfe de Morbihan 2007; R174 (all behind as usual) in the Auray, about to demonstrate, that even with a metal-plate, Redwings have an extraordinary light-air performance. R211 and 174 once again joined this Breton Classic Rally, of which, more anon.**

Vintage pics Under sub-section BOATS on the very comprehensive Looe town web-site, are to be found a fascinating series of photographs of early Redwings and sailors which are, sadly, rather poorly captioned. If by chance anyone of you can access the originals and copy them to me with informed captioning, I will insert them herein as may be appropriate; similarly any other early historical photos will be gratefully received. A proper archive is the answer, has it ever been attempted?

Vintage bits? This is probably addressed principally at those of you where Redwings were most concentrated: restoration purists prefer to use original bronze fittings where practicable – stem - heads, rudder and transom pintles and gudgeons, horses, winches, etc, etc. Dig deep into the darkest recesses of your tool chests and please let me know what you find. R2 for example, requires a horse and transom/rudder fittings (North Devon has supplied winch and plate) and R154 a chromed winch to match her other fittings.

Championship Sailors! The very best to you and all the supporting cast for some superb weather (local Gurus' say it's a possibility!) and the closest of racing. Weather permitting; I have hopes of joining you, though sans boat. **Mike H.**

**“The Redwing is an outstandingly brave little boat, from which one can learn that the sea is to sail upon, in a boat in which we can enjoy the sea in all its moods and not fear it if there is a hatful of wind.”**

**(Uffa Fox, Sailing Boats 1959, on the Redwing as originally designed).**

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