

NSW 16FT SKIFF ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF CLUB COMMODORES MEETING HELD 19/6/10
AT MANLY 16FT SKIFF SAILING CLUB

Meeting opened at 1.10pm (preceded by lunch, commencing at 12.30pm).

PRESENT: Lloyd Mulholland (Chair), Michael McMahon, Sandor Tornai, Chris Mulholland, Alexandra Deakin, Troy Dobinson, John Andrew, Gavin Cooke, Jackie Damiani, Chris Andrew, Paul Linnett, Reg Baker and Mark Graham.

APOLOGIES: Joe Walsh (St George) and Doug Bennett (Port Hunter).

CLUBS REPRESENTED: Belmont, Manly, Drummoyne, Georges River, Illawarra and Middle Harbour.

Lloyd Mulholland thanked the Commodores for attending. This is the eighth year that this forum has been held and the consensus continues to be that it is still worthwhile on an annual basis as it provided a means for clubs to share information and ideas.

Reg Baker (**Illawarra**)

- The Club hopes to increase their 16ft fleet slightly next season to 10 boats (up from 9);
- They do have a junior training program with a fleet of Skyriders and Sabots;
- Together with their very successful fleet of Flying Ants, they now have about 35 junior kids;
- There is also an Open Class, which includes 29ers and 420's; next season there should also be a 13ft skiff;
- Trading wise, the Club had a good year and are in the black.

John Andrew (**Georges River**)

- There were 7 registered skiffs this season, however, their weekly fleet was again boosted at various times during the season by 2 or 3 Middle Harbour boats;
- Expect about the same number next season;
- The Club still has Lasers, Herons and 420's; whilst this season there were only about 3 to 4 420's, next season there could be up to 15 boats;
- Junior sailing still takes place on Sunday morning;
- They have Skyriders and Sabots (6 x 1-up and 6 x 2-up) for training, plus 6 Flying Ants;
- Financially, the Club is now trading better, but has a long way still to go;
- One problem is that the current club infrastructure is too big for the current level of trading;
- John advised that, as a result of some factions within the Club, he had recently resigned as Commodore; the Clubs AGM is at the end of September;
- A number of sailing regattas are again scheduled for next season – State Youth Championships on long weekend in October (about 200 boats); State Laser Championships on 2nd weekend of November; Australian Laser Championships over Xmas / New Year (300 boats), followed by the National Youth Championships (300 boats);
- There has been a good response to a request for volunteers for these regattas.

Gavin Cooke (**Manly**)

- The Club's fleet reduced slightly this season with 28 registered skiffs and 22/24 regular starters; there may be one or two additional boats next season (30), with possibly 2 new hulls; a few boats have changed hands, whilst there are a couple of new crews;

- There was a fleet of 10 13ft skiffs regularly sailing this season; expects a fleet of around 13 next season;
- Flying 11 fleet was expected to increase to about 28 next season (up from 26), whilst the MJs are expected to reduce to around 15 (from 20); lack of boat storage is still one of the primary limitations on fleet size, with demand still exceeding what can be provided;
- For the last two seasons, the Club has held a day where kids of the junior fleets can go out on a 16ft skiff; short sprint type races have been run;
- The Learn to Sail programme continued this season, resulting in crew matching with some more experienced crews; there were 2 x 10 week courses – Sat. morning and 2 x 1 week school holiday courses;
- The Club is currently re-evaluating the Learn to Sail Program – they will probably drop the School holiday lessons as they have tended to become more of a child minding exercise; the Saturday morning program will continue and approaches made to local schools with a view to running programs in conjunction with their sports programs.
- Renegotiation of the Club lease with NSW Maritime Authority has finally been signed; it is a 35 year lease; several small amendments are being negotiated; the Club currently has a good relationship with the NSW Maritime Authority and the lease is to be used as a model for other club leases.
- The Club is still trading profitably and expect that the figures for this financial year will exceed previous results;
- A DA is currently with Manly Council for building work to close in the covered deck area and to further open up the inside of the Club; there are also plans to restructure the kitchen area and function room; in addition some extension is also planned for the front of the Club.
- The Club did investigate the possibility of helping to bail out St George Sailing Club, however, the potential cost was a bit more than Manly could afford;
- The Club is concerned about the cost of 16ft skiffs and to that end is:
 - Looking to invest in another hull mould;
 - To commit money towards the Class for the benefit of the Class;
 - Trying to get cost of a boat to around \$30,000;
 - Concerned about the introduction of carbon spars;
 - Have a view that we should get hulls to a cheaper price, then move to carbon spars.
- The Club has a strong commitment to advances on prizemoney to help people break into the Class and also to help existing crews to buy new boats.

Sandor Tornai (**Drummoyne**)

- Indicated that their fleet had stayed the same this season with about 5/6 boats starting each week; expect to stay the same next season;
- Junior numbers are down to around 8 or 9 Flying 11's and 9 Sabots (there were 27 of these a few years ago); some kids are staying in Sabots until they are 16 years old; the Club does have some training sabots;
- Have an Open Class fleet with mainly 29ers and Cherubs;
- TS Hartley and Trailer Sailor fleets are still going well;
- The Club does run a Learn to Sail Program, however, they found that many did not stay on; future applications for the Program will be culled to try and only accept those who indicate a commitment to continue sailing with the Club;
- Approval was given by the NSW Maritime Authority for a 22 berth marina in front of the Club in 2008, however, the Board has decided not to proceed as they feel it will not be profitable enough;
- Club is still trading very well;
- The Board is still supportive of 16's and sailing in general;
- Extensions are being carried out to ladies change room amenities;

- the Club is still closely monitoring what will happen to property that they sold adjacent to the western side of the club building.

Troy Dobinson (**Belmont**)

- Indicated that their fleet was a similar number to last season, with around 22 starting each week (24 boats registered); should be similar next season; one concern is the increasing average age of crews;
- Expect a number of juniors to start coming through in the next few seasons; acknowledged that the Club had taken their eye off the ball several years ago, but started to rectify this situation in recent seasons;
- Their Pelican fleet has continued to increase again in popularity this season with 30 boats expected next season; problem is, there is actually a shortage of boats; crews are coming from the Learn to Sail program; also parents who were skiff sailors have kids coming through and they are also helping with coaching and training;
- Cherub (about 10 in all); mostly in the 20-25 year age group without a skiff background, however, some are now seriously looking at making the transition through to skiffs;
- There are now about 20 F11's; their Nationals are scheduled to be held at Belmont next January;
- Laser fleet almost defunct;
- The 29er fleet have dropped off again; could be about 8 next season, coming from F11's; the Class is a year to year proposition as to whether they will continue;
- The Board recently decided, albeit narrowly, not to take on 13ft skiffs, at this stage;
- The Club is working on a Program with local Primary school kids to teach them sailing;
- The Club is trading well with another strong year;
- Funding for sailing has been increased;
- The Club is currently awaiting judgement in respect of the case with Leightons (re.concrete cancer problem with the section under the Club facing the Lake).
- The property at 38A and adjacent boatyard have been demolished; subject to funding, the Club is hopeful of building a new boatshed in that area.
- There is a proposal to sail the State heats allocated to Belmont (heats 1 and 2) at Salamander Bay / Soldiers Point. Key officials are to visit the area on 3 July and will advise if this will be feasible.

Alexandra Deakin (**Middle Harbour**)

- Their fleet for this season was 9 registered boats, similar to last season; she expected that the numbers would increase to maybe 14 for next season;
- The 13ft skiff fleet is still relatively small with 6 boats this season and should be the same next season; there has been some flow through to the 16's;
- They still have good numbers in their juniors - Skyriders, MJs (about 20) and Flying 11s (20);
- This structure of juniors, intermediate and senior fleets is gradually starting to pay dividends for the 16's and the Club in general;
- The Club made a profit this season, despite the fact that there has been no trading since 31 May 2009 (funds have come from bar sales after the Club's races and the Telco towers on the building);
- They have now reached an agreement with ZEST Waterfront Venues; the contract for the major renovations work to Club has been signed this week; they expect a 20 week construction period and, hopefully, work should be finished by the end of November 2010; the deal with Zest also sees the creation of a capital fund to be used for sailing activities.

Mark Graham (13ft Skiffs)

- Mark noted that the successful clubs had a solid junior program; the 13ft skiff was an ideal Class to fit into such a program;
- There are currently 20 boats in NSW and about 6 in Brisbane;
- The Class had attracted a good proportion of girls;
- The Class offers about a two to three year transition period for young sailors;
- The 13ft skiff mould has been moved to Queensland as they have a number of boats to be built and an ex-skiff sailor, John Anderson has volunteered to build them;
- The Class seems to be taking off in Queensland with kids coming from 125's and 420's;
- For the 2010/11 Nationals in Brisbane next season, Mark expects about 20 boats (10 from NSW and 10 from Qld).

There was no delegate or report from the **St George** or **Port Hunter** clubs.

GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Belmont Sprints and Regatta - Troy advised that the Belmont Sprints would be on Saturday 13th February 2011 and the Belmont Regatta would be on Sunday 14th February. He also advised that the Club would be supporting the Port Hunter Club's Great Lakes weekend on the 27th February 2011.
2. Darling Point Sailing Squadron - the Queensland Association is still keen to see skiffs sail from DPSS at Manly.
3. 2011/12 Australian Championships - yet to be decided by clubs, but the Qld Association are now keen to host them at Hervey Bay.
4. Yachting Australia - there was some discussion what YA does for our clubs.
 - In particular, the question was asked as to what they did to help promote our Class;
 - Gavin Cooke is currently a Board member of YNSW and said that 80% of YA's funds come from the Federal Government with a focus on encouraging the winning of medals at major events; the remainder comes from member fees;
 - He suggested that they did not have a focus on clubs at the grass roots level because this primary funding source is targeted at winning medals;
 - He suggested that clubs should write to YA and YNSW and encourage them to direct more of this support to the grass roots (club) level; Gavin suggested that countries such as Canada do this and do not have the same focus on the elite section of the sport;
 - Gavin also gave another example that the UK has a "Learn to Sail" caravan that travels around the country.

Lloyd Mulholland once again thanked all those who attended, especially those who had travelled a long distance (from Belmont and Illawarra), and agreed that it had again been a worthwhile exercise. He particularly wished to thank the Manly Club for hosting the meeting and supplying lunch and drinks for the attendees.

Meeting closed 3.20pm

NEXT MEETING – Manly Club (18th June 2011), although this may depend on the planned building work. Otherwise, another club venue will need to be found.