

NSW 16FT SKIFF ASSOCIATION  
MINUTES OF CLUB COMMODORES MEETING HELD 16/6/12  
AT MANLY 16FT SKIFF SAILING CLUB

Meeting opened at 1.40pm at Manly Yacht Club premises (preceded by lunch at 12.30pm).

PRESENT: Lloyd Mulholland (Chair), Michael McMahon, Alexandra Deakin, John Andrew, Gavin Cooke, Paul Linnett, Grahame Dingle, Riv Robson, Dan Watterson, Grant Windsham, Peter Kershaw and Mark Graham.

APOLOGIES: Paul Donovan, John Whitelock (Drum.), Sean Harrison (Bel.), Rob Wasson (Qld), Craig Corke (Bel) and Richard Nadone (IYC).

CLUBS REPRESENTED: Belmont, Manly/St George, Drummoyne, Georges River, Illawarra, Port Hunter and Middle Harbour.

Lloyd thanked the Commodores for attending. This is the tenth 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 valuable means for clubs to share information and ideas.

**Grahame Dingle (Port Hunter)**

- There were 4 skiffs sailing regularly during last season;
- They also have 5-6 Manly Graduates, 5 catamarans and 8-9 Flying Ants;
- Some older Flying Ant sailors might move on next season, reducing the numbers;
- The Club generally seemed to lose juniors (16-19) due to them finding part-time weekend work;
- They still have a good on-going relationship with Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club who are helping out with their juniors;
- The Club hosted the VS Nationals during the season – very successful carnival;
- 16ft skiff State Championship heats were a good for the Club and were financially very successful;
- Another proposed coal loader proposed for the Port has been put on hold;
- The Club received a grant from one of the coal companies to build a new kitchen area;
- Financially, the Club is still quite sound, for its size.

**John Andrew (Georges River)**

- There were 4 registered skiffs this season, however, their weekly fleet was again boosted at various times during the season by 2 or 3 Middle Harbour boats;
- The number for next season is in doubt and the Club's future is in doubt;
- The Club still has Lasers (about 15 sailing on Saturdays), Sabots (about 7 boats) and about 4 other different boats that make up the Open Class; there are several 420's stored in the shed, not racing;
- The Club is struggling financially;
- Unfortunately, the Club's last Manager embezzled some funds from the Club late last year; no replacement, at this stage.

**Gavin Cooke (Manly/St George)**

- The **Manly** Club's fleet remained about the same this season with 29 registered skiffs and 24 regular starters; next season should remain about the same;
- There was a fleet of 10 13ft skiffs regularly sailing this season; expects maybe one or two more next season as juniors move up from F11's;
- Flying 11 fleet was around 25 boats, with about the same expected next season;
- MJ's fleet was also around 25 boats, with about the same expected next season;

- The Learn to Sail programme continued this season with some flow through benefits to the MJ fleet (about 50% of trainees have moved through, with an even mix of boys and girls); there were 2 x 10 week Programs and one during each School holiday;
- A Junior sailing day with 16's taking out junior sailors was a huge success (it was followed by a social bar-b-que);
- With relatively poor weather conditions over the season, the Club has had a mixed year trading wise, basically breaking even;
- Work has been undertaken on the beams under the Club to once again combat the concrete cancer (a problem since the early 1970's); the original proposal to replace some of the concrete beams has been abandoned, as the beams were not as bad as first thought; they will instead be stripped and a cast used to effect repairs, at a much lower cost than was first expected (to replace the beams).
- At **St George**, there was a fleet of 5-6 regular 16ft skiffs, with the same number expected next season;
- There were also 16 Moths, 12 MG's and a small fleet of Flying Ants and Skates;
- The Learn to Sail Programme with Craig Ferris, has been fully subscribed (same as at Manly 2 x 10 week and during School holidays);
- The Club managed to obtain a \$50,000 grant from the NSW Department of Sports and Recreation for their Junior Sail Training Program;
- Their current training boats are the training version of the Optimist and also Pacers;
- There is an intention to introduce MJ's on Saturday morning next season; it looks like Flying Ants will not be sailing next season;
- The Club's focus is still on rebuilding their Junior fleets, with the idea that this will encourage some parent involvement, as the Club's volunteer base at StG is currently very small compared to Manly;
- The Club will host both the MJ and F11 Nationals next season in the December/January period; they will also host the Moth Nationals next Easter;
- Trading wise, the Club is breaking even;
- Negotiations are in the final stages with their business partner to rebuild the Club, however, with DA's, etc... this will still be 2-3 years away, before completion;
- In the mean time, some improvements have been made to the existing structure.

#### Dan Watterson (**Middle Harbour**)

- Their fleet for this season was about 9 registered 16's; he expects that next season they may increase to about 10-11;
- The 13ft skiff fleet is still relatively small with only 4-5 boats this season and, hopefully about the same next season;
- They still have good numbers in their juniors - Skyriders, MJs (about 10-15) and Flying 11s (about 10-15);
- They also have a fleet of about 10-15 29ers racing on Sundays; they have an age restriction of 23 years of age; some will also race with the 13's on Saturday afternoon next season with the view to also encourage them to mix with the 16's sailors;
- There has been a good flow through of 13ft sailors into the 16's, but this has decimated their 13ft fleet somewhat;
- Next season, the Club will have two or three Junior Sailing Days on Sundays with the 16ft fleet; the 16's will be obliged to attend as their prizemoney payment for the season will be contingent on their attendance at these events;
- In addition, if a 16ft skiff crew race with a Junior sailor, they get a handicap benefit;
- The Club also has a combined Presentation Night (Seniors and juniors);
- Next season, the Club will host a Regatta for 16's in December prior to the Nationals;
- Since the main Club building reopened last August with the ZEST function group as their main tenant, the Club has continued to improve its financial position;

- The Club reopened later than hoped and ZEST are still building their function business, plus still adapting to providing a Bistro service for the Club;
- Similar to Manly, the Club has also found the poor weather as a hurdle; costs of parking at The Spit is also an issue (\$24 for 3-4 hours).

Paul Linnett (**Illawarra**)

- The Club's 16ft fleet decreased slightly this season to 7 boats;
- They do still have a junior training program with a fleet of Skyriders and Sabots, however, again they have not translated to any real numbers for their junior and intermediate fleets;
- Skyrider fleet was sponsored by TRUenergy and this sponsorship will continue next season, however, it may be through Energy Australia;
- Flying Ants numbers are still low, although the Club did win the Nationals again in 2011/12;
- There are about 10 boats in an Open (mixed) fleet;
- Yachting New South Wales are insisting on an annual fee of \$350,000; this takes into account their social members which number about 8,000; the Club is fighting this exorbitant fee; Lloyd Mulholland advised that Belmont had the same problem, but successfully won their case to return to only counting sailing members (Paul to advise IYC of this information);
- The Club is to host the Yachting NSW Youth Championships again next season, plus the Taser States next Easter;
- Trading wise, the Club has not travelled well again this season;
- The Club has employed a consultant to try and trade through their financial difficulties; they are also investigating to find an amalgamation partner.

Riv Robson (**Drummoyne**)

- Their fleet had improved slightly this season with about 6/7 regular boats starting each week; expects to stay the same next season; they have gained a couple of ex-Cherub sailors in the 16's this season;
- Similar to last season with the Junior numbers – around 3 Flying 11's and 20 Sabots;
- Have an Open Class fleet with about 8 Cherubs and 10 OK Dinghies;
- There are about 16/17 regular TS Hartley and Trailer Sailors;
- Learn to Sail Program is still running;
- The Club has about 15/16 yachts racing each Saturday, and about 50-60 racing on Tuesday evenings during DST;
- Club is still trading very well, up about 10% on last year;
- The Club could end up with about 5 commercial moorings in the waters off the Club;
- Improvement works are being carried out around the Club, including a new Board Room.

Lloyd Mulholland (**Belmont**)

- Indicated that their fleet had remained about the same as last season, with around 21 boats registered and sailing; should be similar next season;
- Club is still offering grants to Juniors moving up to 16's, if they have sailed for a certain time with the Club;
- Their Pelican fleet has continued in popularity this season with 35 boats; race on Saturday mornings; problem is, there is still a shortage of boats and the Club is offering an incentive of \$2,000 to anyone who builds a new boat;
- Cherubs (about 20 in all), however, they have been given notice that the fleet will be disbanded at the end of another four seasons;
- There are still about 20 F11's who race on Saturday afternoons;

- Only about 3 Lasers sailing regularly (will probably be disbanded next season);
- The 29er fleet has increased with about 8/10 boats (Club has 23 years age limit);
- The new boatshed was finished early in the season;
- 16ft skiffs take juniors out on Sunday mornings in novelty races, usually about 4 to 5 times a season;
- 16ft skiffs who race with a Junior crew member get an automatic 2 minute handicap adjustment;
- The Club is still trading well with another very strong year (net profit of \$1.5 million);
- The Club is planning some major capital expenditure and is also looking at a new starters boats.

#### Mark Graham (13ft Skiffs)

- There are currently still about 18 boats in NSW, which has remained static in the last season or two;
- One new boat being built by McConaghy for a crew at Manly;
- State Championship format changed this season, with the 13's not sailing at the same time as the 16's, mainly because the timing was around School and Uni exams;
- States next season will be 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> December and then 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2013;
- The 13ft skiff mould has been returned from Queensland.

#### GENERAL BUSINESS

1. “Recruiting the Next Generation” - Alex Deakin tabled a summarised report of the Survey results for this initiative which was undertaken just prior to last season. The survey was conducted to discover how older and current skiffies felt about the Class and how it has evolved and also to canvass suggestions for improvement to take it forward.

Subsequent to the results being released earlier this year, clubs were asked to identify three initiatives that their own club would like to introduce to help themselves and three initiative that they felt the Association should undertake or support to grow the Class.

Feedback has been received from four clubs who took the time to consider the issue (Manly/St George, Belmont, Middle Harbour and Port Hunter) and Alex outlined the results. There was discussion on the points raised.

Gavin Cooke also updated the meeting on the progress, to date, of Manly's investigations to produce a cheaper (completed) hull. They are hoping that one can be produced for around \$15,000, but further work needs to be done to finalise the plan.

It was agreed that the results of the club's ideas and submissions be circulated to all clubs and that they provide feedback on the ones they would like the NSW Association to focus on. It was agreed that each club should also roll-out their own initiatives.

2. Yachting New South Wales - Gavin Cooke indicated that a comprehensive survey had been conducted by YNSW last season on Sailing. It was a wide circulated and focused mainly on non-sailors to gain their perceptions of the sport. He will circulate the results.

Lloyd again thanked all those who attended 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 for the attendees.

Meeting closed 4.15pm

**NEXT MEETING** – Manly Club (15<sup>th</sup> June 2013).