



“ensuring disability is not a barrier to experiencing the joy of sailing”

[www.poolesailability.co.uk](http://www.poolesailability.co.uk)

## *Mid Season Newsletter 2010*

What a wonderful season we have had so far, with nearly all sessions being fully booked. The sailing programme has been packed with extra activities including a visit to Poole Afloat, sessions for the Dorset Blind Association and the Victoria School, Big Boat sailing to welcome the Sail For Heroes Fleet, a trip to South Bank Sailing Club on the Thames, the Hawk Nationals, and the race training sessions for the forthcoming Poole Week racing series.

All of these activities could not have taken place without the dedication of our helpers who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make the sessions so enjoyable. Many thanks to all of you!

**Hawk Nationals** . You all know how well our Poole Sailability boat did at the Hawk Nationals and I have persuaded those who were involved to write an account of their weekend adventures.

### **Day 1**

Training had culminated the previous weekend with both crews venturing out of the Harbour, only to be greeted with a Force 5. The boats and crews coped exceedingly well. We were ready!

Friday saw Phil Berry, Mike Izzo, Matthew and myself accompanied by Anna in Lyn J rendezvous with 22 Hawks in Studland Bay. A brief stop. All boats to the start. We were off racing to Christchurch. Fresh wind from the South, spinnakers up, what a sight, but not for long!

Black SBS boats everywhere. A Hercules above. We were in the middle of a drop zone!! The fleet were ordered to head back towards the Harbour entrance, which we did. Relinquishing our possible 5<sup>th</sup> place we headed inshore. At least 50% of the fleet ignored the warning (they possibly had their VHF switched off). The world's most elite fighting force with RIBs etc were soon falling from the sky. Excitement over, our attention soon went back to why we were there. The battle was on to regain our position.

We entered Christchurch Bay and over the line to finish 11<sup>th</sup>. Not bad for a scratch crew that was only delivering the boat to Christchurch.

## Day 2

The forecast was for F3 building to possibly F6. Ouch! Not a whisper of complaint from our Saturday crew- Martin "Hurricane" Hadley, Mel Fisher, Matthew and myself, could not have been more up for it.

Martin helm, Mel jib, Matthew spinnaker, and myself trying to keep us out of trouble.

First race had a good start close to the committee boat. We honestly thought we would be last racing against the Christchurch Hawk fleet and hardened racers that had travelled from all over the UK. But no we were in the thick of it. No quarter given on the marks, we finished 8<sup>th</sup>. We could only think that Anna and Sara Richardson in Lyn J were so vocal it must have put the other crews off.

Race Two with the wind building, the best start ever. Two bangs - a general recall. Gutted. Second start Martin did well. In the thick of it again and away over the line. The wind freshened, possibly Force 5.

The downwind legs were exhilarating. With Matthew on the spinnaker we were flying. Another good result.

By the third race it was the promised F6.

Martin still insistent that he wanted to helm, but 4 hours hard graft was beginning to tell. He never complained, nor did Mel, who in the pitching sea took more than one knock to his legs. We sailed safe, having witnessed a boat in front of us have his spinnaker blown out. We made it to the finish feeling tired and elated.

## **Bill**

### ***The Evening Bit***

After being pounded about and drenched with spray on rescue boat duty all day with Sarah Richardson, and a delayed return to base to rescue a fellow Hawk competitor, we were glad to reach the harbour. The welcoming comfort of Christchurch Sailing Club was an ideal place to revive. Several other Sailability members drove over to join us for the evening meal and entertainment which was superb. We were made very welcome, and managed to spread the word about our club to many interested people. Due to exhaustion, excitement, and a glass of wine, the rest of the evening quickly passed, but I am told our dancing moves also made a big impression on our Christchurch hosts.

## **Anna**





### Day 3

Day 3 of the Hawk Nationals..... and the weather forecast was for lighter winds than the previous day (thank goodness!) and sun. We returned to Christchurch Sailing Club nice and early for a quick check-over of the boat, final visit to the “facilities” and we were off, with the Safety boat close behind. I was the only member of the crew who had never raced before so was glad of the excellent support and expertise of our skipper, Dave Ward, and advice from his number two, Lyn Cherret.

Motoring in convoy with 19 other Hawks down the beautiful River Stour was a fantastic experience. Tim Worner helmed us out of the Run and the excitement really started to mount as we saw the whole fleet spreading out into Christchurch Bay, some with spinnakers up for a last minute practice - an amazing sight! Soon all the boats were milling around the start line and the 5 minute gun went and it was “stop watches on” - Dave explained to Tim how to arrive at the start line at the perfect time and we had a very respectable start. The sailing was exciting (and mostly dry!) but always well within our comfort zone as we tacked across to the upwind marker and Lyn got ready to hoist the spinnaker; round the marker to a huge cheer from the safety boat (with boats BEHIND us!) then the long downwind leg surrounded by brightly coloured spinnakers. We were aware of how well the Sailability crew had done on the previous two days and just didn't want to let them down, so it was great not to be the last boat over the finish line for race one.

Then it was my turn to helm, so we hove-to to swap over and I took a deep breath. Again our skipper gave excellent directions and I felt totally confident on the tiller; many familiar faces waved and smiled as we all milled around waiting for the starting gun; twice round the course, two boats dropped out, at one point I looked quickly round as we passed the up-wind mark to see FIVE boats behind us!! Then disaster - the spinnaker halyard had become wrapped in the jib reefing and was refusing to become untangled, despite Lyn's Amazonian efforts...so no spinnaker for the final lap but STILL we were not last! The satisfaction of the final horn signifying our crossing the line was immense and we had big grins on our faces all the way back to the club.

After lunch was the prize-giving during which the results were read out in reverse order - 19<sup>th</sup> ....., 18<sup>th</sup> ....., 17<sup>th</sup> ....., 16<sup>th</sup> (still not us!)....., 15<sup>th</sup> ....., 14<sup>th</sup> - Poole Sailabilty, to a huge round of applause from all assembled in the club bar. What a result! I had genuinely expected to come last with so many established racing crew in the fleet, and had merely hoped we would finish, with no collisions or casualties. I am very grateful to all the other team members who enabled me to have such a fantastic experience - bring on Poole Week!

And a final thank you to Dave for teaching me some words I had never heard before (!! ) as he cursed himself for a minor error of judgement!

***Sara Holloway***

## **OCTOBER SERIES**

Sailing will be held on Sunday mornings from 10.30 am on

Sun 10 Oct

Sun 24 Oct

Sun 31 Oct

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

**Beach BBQ** Our annual BBQ on the beach will be held after sailing on Sunday 26 September. All friends and family are urged to attend this popular event at which there is always great food and a few surprises.

**Jive Night.** Get your dancing shoes and 50s clothes ready for an evening of fun at the Jive Night to be held in aid of disabled sailing at the Memorial Hall, Colehill on Saturday 23 October. Tickets only £7 each from Mike Bartlett on 01202 885160. There will be a licensed bar and demonstrations throughout the evening. A wonderful chance to learn mojive.

## **Curry Night**

Don't miss Poole Sailability's ever popular laying up supper and prize giving night which will be held on Saturday 30 October at Lake Yard Club. A curry buffet and live music to follow from the Fundamentals. Fun for all members, friends and family. Just £15 per head.