



THE CLYDE YACHT CLUBS' ASSOCIATION

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NEWSLETTER

December 2009

to: All Club and One Design Fleet Secretaries
cc: Executive Committee, Handicap Committee

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As another autumn grinds (or squelches) its way into winter, it is time once again to bring you up-to-date with items of relevance to the season ahead. As always, we invite you to share this newsletter with your members who may have particular interest in specific items.

1. Seasonally-Laid Racing Marks and other Race Management issues

We require to reconfirm our intentions to QHM and Clydeport regarding seasonally-laid marks. I attach the details provided by us (based on clubs' inputs last year) and ask that you inform us of any intended changes by the end of January. This will allow any dialogue with the harbour authorities to be concluded before Sailing Instructions are finalised.

The Race Management section of the website - www.cyca-online.org.uk - now includes updated details for contacting Estuary Control and QHM (Faslane) for notice of naval and commercial shipping movements.

It is hard to over-emphasise the need for good practice at all times in running our events. Disappointingly, another "incident" in 2009 has led to further strains in our relationships with the harbour authorities.

2. Marine Safety

The Association continues to participate in the Clyde District Marine Safety Sub-Committee. This is a valuable forum for exchanges on the interactions between different users of the waters under QHM/Clydeport jurisdiction. We are currently pursuing an incident between a ferry and a regatta in which the traditional presumption "that the amateurs are in the wrong" will hopefully be demonstrably not the case.

One major and recurring theme is the problem of creels. Whilst we must all acknowledge the rights of fishermen to earn a living, the proliferation of creel buoys - often badly marked, almost always unlit, and increasingly often in channels or fairways - has become a real hot potato. A Clydeport Notice to Mariners

has emphasised the need for a new sense of discipline, and in the final analysis problem creels will be lifted. It would, however, be far preferable to have a constructive solution without the need for confrontation, and MCA and the harbour authorities are working with the fishermen's organisations to seek agreement on a voluntary Code of Practice.

Clydeport will welcome feedback from all river users - the sailing community included - on problems encountered. Please recommend to your members that they notify the CYCA office of any incidents involving creels and we will provide consolidated input to MCA and Clydeport.

3. St Kilda

With WHISCA having gone dormant recently, and with a number of WHISCA clubs now part of the CYCA, we have been approached by the National Trust for Scotland to take on the role of seeking input for the current St Kilda Stakeholder Consultation. Their questionnaire and reply form are on our website, and replies should be sent to StKildaConsultation@nts.org.uk by 8th January.

4. Racing Calendar and Club Data

The calendar continues to progress towards completion. The latest draft is attached, and an updated version is maintained on the website. We will also provide input to RYA Scotland. Please contact the office with any updates.

We would also appreciate notification of all changes in club office-bearers and anything else affecting your club's entry on the Association database and website.

5. Handicaps

The Handicap Committee has recently completed work to augment the allowances available for furling headsails. This is to reflect the evolution in equipment, with modern systems being so much more efficient.

All furling headsail systems will continue to be awarded the standard 0.25 min/hr allowance. However additional allowances will be awarded, on a sliding scale, based on the Furling Drum Height to Forestay Length ratio. Updates to existing handicaps can be requested at no charge, based on provision of the appropriate additional details, as long as the new certificate is accepted via email.

Details are contained in the revised Handicap Application Form and associated narrative details, available on the website.

6. Crinan Canal / Boat Safety

Alec Howie of British Waterways at Ardrishaig has provided details of the results of safety inspections conducted by canal staff. These make sobering reading

- ÿ Lockers which are not suited to store gas – i.e. not gas tight and not venting outboard, vents too small, in wrong places, blocked with ropes and clutter, cylinder loose.
- ÿ Pipe work past sell-by date or not the correct type. Rusty clips.
- ÿ New boats with non compliant gas lockers – one had hole drilled to vent in board!

Y Outboard fuel in locker with Heater unit and spare gas bottle

7. Minimum Equipment Regulations

Following our cautious entry into this minefield for the 2009 season, discussion at the Fixtures Meeting suggested that progress had been made, and that further efforts should be directed towards Notice of Race and Sailing Instruction consistency.

It is worth noting that on the Clyde and Loch Fyne alone there were over 100 boats inspected of which less than half were defect-free. Guardrails and flares were the items most frequently at fault. And, worryingly, almost 200 of the 848 lifejackets inspected had one or more faults - primarily corroded or out-of-date gas cylinders and triggers.

8. Association Membership

We are pleased to have been able to welcome Glencoe Boat Club and Tarbert Loch Fyne Yacht Club, and we have another club planning to join in the New Year. We have also managed to contain the consequences of the financial downturn by a bit of internal belt-tightening, and so would hope to be able to confirm no change in subscription rates at the Spring Delegates Meeting in March.

Best wishes for Christmas and for 2010.