

***Message from the Commodore***

I would like to thank our sponsor, Firmus Energy, for their support of this year's Winter Series, which finished in March with *Atlantic Challenger* emerging as the overall winner on points. Sometimes the intensity of competition can lead to disputes over technicalities that sap enthusiasm and good will, and I hope we have now put this behind us.

The summer season got under way with the start of our Summer Series on 10 May, and the hosting of the GP14 nationals, which, because of very stormy weather, were restricted to one day, on Sunday 20 May. Unfortunately the Club was only represented by one entry, but it was a most instructive day for us all seeing how these little craft could really perform. The organisers have offered to come back to give training sessions for our members in developing their skills in these boats. Please contact the Sailing Secretary, Peter Frazer, if you are interested.



However, undoubtedly the highlight of the year and a proud moment for the Club in its 40th birthday year, has been the launch of *Blue Thunder*, our new Committee Boat, by Lady O'Neill on Saturday 2 June, followed by the 100<sup>th</sup> Cat's Cradle race started by Lord O'Neill. It was his great-grandfather, we believe, who inaugurated the race between all the sailing clubs on the Lough in 1907. Sadly, after a very stormy race down to Kinnego, the trophy this year was won by our main rivals there in the Lough Neagh Sailing Club! This was matched the following week, however, in their Regatta when the Bradys, father and son, won overall in the cruiser class races in *Silver Girl*. Very unpredictable weather meant a somewhat disappointing turnout for our own Regatta at the end of June, where the honours once again went to the Kinnego teams in their J24s. Our Summer Series finished at the beginning of this month, and was won by my old friends in *Eroica*. The season concluded with the annual River Bann and Lough Neagh Association Boat Rally at the last week-end in July, when *Charade* (Liam Donnelly) upheld the honour of the Club by easily winning first place.

You will have received our letter regarding some of the "Loughfest" events with which we have agreed to help the Borough Council. I hope you will support both of these if you can.

Our next big project is, of course, the refurbishment of the Club House. I am frequently being asked by a number of you when this is likely to start. I can only say that all the details have been agreed and we are now in the hands of our builder, who assures me that he will be able to start work shortly.

Our new season will start again in October with another Winter Series. Until then I hope we will all have some proper long summer days that we can enjoy on the water.

**Alan Reilly*****OVERHEARD IN THE BAR*****"Sailing's just like sex: you don't have to be any good at it to enjoy it!"**

## EVENTS DIARY

- Try Sailing Night: 22 August (19.00-21.00 hrs).
- Swan Song & Firework Display: 25 August (21.15 hrs).

### Messages from the Jetty Master

• I'd like to thank all those who have given me so much of their time helping with the new jetties, particularly Dave Collier, Aubrey Kincaid Jnr., and William McCormick. It has made life a lot easier for me and is very much appreciated.

• Unfortunately, there has been another spate of thefts from boats on the jetties and in both the dinghy and trailer parks. It really is important that all members remember to close the security gate after entering or leaving the Club, **at all times**. It is a bit of a pain but it does no service whatsoever to your friends or family to leave it open. In spite of the inconvenience, I really must stress the importance of this for **all** Club members.

• If you are using the upper slipway, please, please remember to lower the curtain after you leave and when you return. The amount of debris that accumulates there is atrocious and affects all of us. It is merely a courtesy to everyone else to close the "door" after you've used it. It should be an automatic action just like turning off the light when you leave a room at home! Thank you.

Joe Allen

### New Marina News

You will all have been pleased to see some concrete signs of the Council's new marina being developed, in the form of a barge being used to collect core samples from the bed of the Lough for analysis in preparation for sinking the jetty pillars.

### RYA News

On 13 June 2007 the Department for Transport announced that they would be pressing ahead with the introduction of an alcohol limit for non-professional mariners. The proposed regulations will even be applied to the navigation of vessels less than 7 metres (about 23ft) in length and not capable of a maximum speed of more than 7 knots. The limit of 80 mg per 100 ml of blood will be equivalent to that already in existence for professional mariners.

Rod Carr, RYA CEO, said: "The RYA's view remains unchanged from that of 2004. We believe that new legislation is unnecessary because there is still no evidence of the existence of an extensive problem relating to alcohol and boating. However, given that the Government is intent on pressing ahead with the introduction of an alcohol limit for leisure mariners then we will work hard with the Department for Transport to ensure that sensible measures are put in place. There are a number of serious issues relating to the proposal, which were brought up during the consultation process, these include: •The precise clarification of which boats will be affected and in what circumstances. •Clarification of which persons on board boats will be affected. •How the legislation is going to be enforced and by whom. The fact that the DfT has stated that the proposed regulations will not apply to jetskis shows how complex this issue is and the difficulties inherent in policing it".

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