

UK **CHERUB**

**Newsletter
Spring
2006**

www.sailingsource.com/cherub

Steve Irish
Screaming around
Auntie Gavro
Events 2006

Buying and Upgrading
Building
Invasion Française
Skiff Rules

www.fotoboat.com



Presidents Message

EDITORS MESSAGE

Our Esteemed president has been extremely busy with the important business of building his boat for the past month so has not been able to write any mutterings. So instead of Presidential mutterings for this issue you will have to put up with some Editorial Mutterings and a picture of our President.



As I write the evenings are starting to get lighter, even if it is not getting any warmer, and all the winter building projects should be either nearing completion or a state of panic ready for the new season. I have already had the first sail of the year which had everything; sunshine, calm, wind, rain. The only thing missing was warmth; still the cobwebs were well and truly



blown away. With the all the Cherub events and others that I am planning to attend it does not look like I will be spending many weekends at home again this year.

I am hoping to make it south for a few events and look forward welcoming you all to Scotland for the Nationals in Largo Bay 31st August to 3rd September. I have sailed there quite a few times in the past and it is a great place. Lower Largo is a small village in Fife looking out over a sandy beach across the Firth of Forth to the Bass Rock and Edinburgh visible in the distance.

If there is wind, *and in September in Scotland it is likely*, there will be waves and a lot of fun to be had for all. If things do go wrong there is a Chandlers and Sail maker about 30 miles away for those emergency repairs. In the Evening there are a few pubs which serve beer and food and the club is likely to be putting on some evening entertainment. If you are desperate for some serious late night partying then Dundee or Edinburgh are not that far away.

I am sure that it is going to be a great season of sailing for everyone So if you have had a great day's sail or have spent the winter up to your elbows in Carbon and have a urge to write about what you have done then please do it can be technical or funny, sensible or silly just pick up a pen or start tapping the keyboard and see what happens☺.

The Newsletter is reliant on member contributions, many thanks again to those who have sent things to me for this and previous issues. If you have something to say then please do not resist and just say it, otherwise you will just have more drivel from me to read.

Lets all get sailing make this a year to remember with stories of designing, building, sailing, racing and hopefully not too much breaking.

Newsletter Editor

Phil Alderson





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EVENT DATES	
14-17 th April	Weston SC Weston Grand Slam
6 th 7 th May	Queen Mary SC Inland Champs
13-14 th May	Weston SC, Hampshire Open Meeting
24-25 th June	Stone SC Blast + Open Meeting
1 st July	Bala SC, Wales Bala Long distance Race
12-13 th August	Castle Cove SC Open Meeting
31 st August 3 rd September	Largo Bay SC Fife Scotland National Championships
9-10 th September	YC Carnac Breizhskiff

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The Cherub is a Development class with a varied history so when looking to buy it can seem daunting at first. In general buying a second hand Cherub is no different from any other boat and the same sort of things should be checked and the normal rules will apply. There are a few things that are more important in Cherubs and there are options for upgrading that should not be ignored.

If you are looking to buy a boat capable of winning the Nationals then just like any other class it is going to cost money. Most people, however take a several years to master the boat and if you are prepared to put the effort in there are plenty of lower cost boats that will not lose much in value and could even increase if you do a good job of updating. One of the advantages of a Development class is that even if you are sailing an older boat you can still get good racing against other older boats and quite a thrill when you do beat newer boats that should be faster than yours.

♥ Early Boats

The Early boats up were made from plywood and boats from that era were originally sailed with symmetric spinnakers. Many of these boats were later converted to asymmetric. As with any wooden Boat rot is important. Cherubs are very lightly built so are quite susceptible to damage and particularly splitting along the joints between



sheets of Ply. These boats are cheap and will provide a good learning platform to start with. The Cherub Builders have always been at the forefront in technology and some of the first

fibreglass and foam sandwich boats in the UK were Cherubs. These early High tech boats can be good for their age most notably some of the early Kevlar Epoxy boats. Although slower than the more modern cherubs, on a windy day the older boats can still show quite a turn of speed. It is worth being aware that a 30 year old lightly built boat is going to be delicate and needs to be treated with care to avoid damage. This type of boat is not really suitable for upgrade beyond 1991 spec but is still a lot of fun for not much cash. You can expect to pay from “please take this off my hands” to about £500 for one of these.

♥ Early Nineties Boats



In 1991 the class adopted the Asymmetric spinnaker and this combined with new construction techniques lead to a bit of a building boom. The majority of boats built during this time were constructed in Foam Sandwich largely in glass but with

Carbon and Kevlar becoming more popular in later boats. The Most popular design in this era was the “Italian Bistro” which combined speed with easy handling. Later in the nineties a number of designs appeared to get around the rise of floor rule. These “rule dodgers” had a distinctive double chine to reduce the waterline width of the boats. Any boat from “Bistro” and later has the potential to be a low cost pocket





rocket whether still with the 1991 sails or like many upgraded to 1997 rules. With a boat like this an important thing to look at is the weight; it is key to performance and difficult to get rid of. Pretty much all of them are capable of being upgraded to the full 2005 spec. Those that were previously upgraded to 97 will already have had a lot of work done and the later narrow double chine boats like the Pasta Frenzy and the Dog have an advantage over the earlier wider boats and so are likely to go for more. You can expect to pay between £800 and £3,500 for a boat like this depending on; equipment, condition and weight

♥ 97 Rules Boats

In 1997 there was a significant rule change which allowed construction of very different hull shapes. The restrictive rise of floor rule was removed and



replaced with a requirement for a chine 2m long which must reach at least 0.45m from the centreline at some point. At the same time the sail area was increased to 12.5 sqm upwind and 15.5 sqm spinnaker. To combat the increase in sail area



the max width was increased to 1.8m and to help fit the new area in a 0.3m snout was introduced to allow for larger jibs. Thanks to the narrow waterline these post 97 designs are much quicker than the earlier boats but can be trickier to sail. If

you are serious about winning the nationals then these are the best boats to get, none of the post 97 hull shapes have been outdated and it is possible to upgrade to full 2005 without too much surgery. Again weight is an important factor in choosing a boat as is if it has been upgraded to 2005 rules. You can expect to pay £2,000 -£3,000 more for a converted boat than one that is still 97 rules.

These post 97 boats do not come up for sale very often and prices vary from £4,000 to £7,500



♥ Latest and Greatest

In 2004 twin wiring was allowed and then in 2005 an increase in sail area to 15.5sqm upwind and 21sqm spinnaker.

It is unlikely that any boats built after 2005 will be available second hand for a



while and if you want one then it is probably going to be quicker just to build it yourself.

Thanks to the recent rule change you could well get yourself a bargain that is ripe for upgrade. You can sail it around as is while you decide on the upgrade path and still get good racing against other boats that have yet to upgrade. Or you can just dive straight in to boat surgery and upgrade.

♥ Upgrading

A full upgrade from 97 rules would involve replacing the sails with larger ones, to support this depending on your boat you may need to do a few other upgrades. A longer Boom is usually



needed and some boats may need a small extension to the mast. An extension to the spinnaker pole is probably required and you may need to do some modifications to allow the pole



to come further back into the boat when retracted. A longer spinnaker sock and potentially a change to the chute mouth are other likely modifications. As the rule change was only recent there are not many 2005 sails on the second hand market and you are going to be between £1,800 and £2,500 for



a suit of sails plus whatever modifications are needed to your boat. The materials required to extend a mast would be about £100 and if needed a new one would be about £1,500.

♥ Cheaper Options

Upgrading does not have to be done all in one go there are quite a few boats that have just put a larger spinnaker on while leaving the rest of the boat till cash flow will allow the rest of the upgrade. One cost cutting measure that is



available is to use a second hand RS800 spinnaker, unfortunately you will need to visit a sail maker to cut a small amount of area off this but they do work well. You can get close to the full upgrade by adding a larger mainsail to the large spinnaker. The 2005 nationals were won by a boat that had done this. It may be possible to modify a mainsail from a different class to get close to the new area, although this would need careful measurement and is unlikely to be as good as a custom sail.

♥ Help

There are as many options for buying and upgrading boats as there are crazy paint jobs but as it is a small class it is easy to find someone who knows a bit of the history of the boat and will be able to help out with your decisions. There is a network of class technical experts who can be contacted through the website and who are more than happy to talk to and help a newcomer to the class.



The first French apparitions of the cherubs in France was at the Carnac eurocup a few years ago. Old people are still discussing in the pub about small bathtub who were pacing everybody downhill. Then from time to time through Breizhskiff.com, someone was asking questions about this particular class with eclectic boats with weird names and even more doubtful artjobs on their hulls. When 2 years ago Francois G. began his building project allot of people looking forward some news from the boatyard. Even if we are not sure yet it is a cherub the spirit is there. The real impulsion was given by Laurent and I visiting LDS to spy a famous chilly party. We then stole Pistrix who is "maquillée" now as Pastatoïde. The yellow gun is now well known around after some good results in the Breizhskiff trophy. UK Cherub attendance at Carnac was bless for us giving its "lettre de noblesse" to the class. Winter 2005 is the impulse we will perpetuate to grow the class. The 3 new Cherub since September has led us to an amazing 500% jump. Here is the news from everyone - Ghislain

♥ 2666 Pastatoïde : Laurent/Olivia/Ghislain/Clarisse

After being the first French national champion (alone in its category) Pastatoïde is having a strong refit at the moment. First of all, the numerous paint layers have been removed before repairing all bit and leaks of the hull who was not really dry anymore. A new rig from RS600 mast is planned with new home made sails who are the prototype for the next boat. The boat who was 56 kg before refit is aimed in its new colors (very cherubish as you can imagine.) However the most important innovation will be a baby due for July by Olivia.

♥ Halo Jones : Thomas / Nathalie

The boat is it a total refit with new paint and varnish but one of the most important modification will be the widened wings. The new mainsail which is being cut will probably worth it. A new spinnaker is planned for spring. It seems cherub give ideas of ... cherubs. Nathalie is



also waiting a baby for this summer.

♥ 2539 Whaam : Arthur/

After trying to cross the channel without any ID then missing its train, Arthur finally manage to visit Bristol. The famous Whaam as just arrived in France and the small leaks will be repaired during winter. Arthur as planned a new set of sails for next year before a complete building the year after. When is planned the baby ?



♥ Spot on : Francois

It's a "vieille dame" who probably need to keep its old alloy rig. The boat is a real furniture. A new trolley will probably be the best enhancement of the year ! Babies are already behind



♥ Noname : Francois G.

"The cheapest Cherub ever" I think nothing has been bought on the boat apart from the sails coming from AquaMarina. Hope we will now if it is a cherub at least.



It isn't sufficient to buy 4 boats from our British fellowship to say that the class have a clear sky future. The most important is in the project which are running and the interest people have for it.

♥ Projects

At the moment 3 big projects are running :

♥ The Halo Jones Project

Thomas was one of the the first moth builder in France in 2002. More than that a hull has been moulded over Halo Jones ! A carbon mast and the same sails as Halo Jones will be added to have 2 similar Cherubs around Piriac.

♥ Oléo Banjo's project

Yann Kergerle from Roscoff has been asking me a lot of precise questions about building for a few months when I received pictures from a mould jig in January !!! The male mould built over a very

ambitious design with low rockers and fine entry is amazing. At the moment the project is to build at least 2 Cherubs and probably 3 really soon. Yann is not at its first try. As an ex Mini-transat yachty (he achieved 29th) he likes fast yacht and build himself a Bongo 9,60 he has already driven at 20knts !



♥ Slug Project/ Projeter la limace

Laurent and I will begin soon the building of a new slug with the traveller mould. We are waiting until I move in a more appropriate place in april to begin the hull although all scantling have been choosen. The boat will be a classical wing cherub without deck and an equilibrate rig. A T-foiled rudder is plan at the beginning and why not some innovative concepts.

We want to run a laboratory project with transparency. We want to give a clear idea of what can be done in France with time frames and real costs. We will try to write a kind of building guide of a building in order to help people to know exactly what imply a building process.

We have good hope that soon after these innovators project others will follow. Many people have shown their interest especially in the fireball class. There is a lack of class for builder who still want to be competitive. Fireballs have never been so close SMOds

♥ Racing

The French fleet is organising to have a national this year either at Carnac or Granville. Granville could be an awesome place for an European championship.



One of the great things about the Cherub class apart from the sailing is that it's one of the few classes in the UK where it is still possible for an amateur to build a boat capable of winning a championship themselves. That is not to say that it is easy it is equally possible to build a boat that is barely capable of sailing let alone winning.

As with most things there are a range of options that you can take when building a boat depending on how much of the build you want to do yourself. This ranges from boats where the owner has designed and built pretty much everything except the blocks and string to those that have been bought nearly complete and have just required fitting out prior to sailing.

As far as cost is concerned the main components to a finished boat are Hull, Rig, Fittings and Extras.

EXTRAS

There are a surprising number of extra bits that you need to get for a new boat that can be forgotten when budgeting.

♥ Cover

You will probably want some sort of cover to protect your shiny new boat from the elements. The cover will have to be custom built to fit your boat and you can expect to pay between £180 and £250 to get one made. Some people also like an undercover to protect the bottom of the boat while travelling and you can expect to pay another £150 for one of those.

♥ Road Trailer

If you intend doing any kind of travelling with your new boat you will need some sort of road trailer, these range in price from about £300 to £800 for an all singing all dancing combi. Of course you can always go second hand but it may need refurbishing.

♥ Painting

To make your boat really stand out then a good paint job is a must. To get the best finish many people opt for spraying. This could come in at

about £250 if done professionally and could take a bit of pre planning to arrange. Of course it is possible to spray it yourself and if you have a



compressor then you are half way there, having something to practice on before you go for it on your boat will make a big difference. If you prefer the traditional way then you can get brilliant results with just a paint brush.

♥ Foils

The foils may not be an issue as they are often built as you are building the hull and the material content is low compared to a full boat. If you are going for professionally built foils then remember that you need to plan this ahead so that they



arrive in time for you to build the centreboard case and fit it to the boat at the appropriate time.

♥ Spinnaker Pole

Included here as it does not really fit in any of the other categories a spinnaker pole can be made quite easily from scavenged bits of carbon tube. A beefed up windsurfer mast is one option, top sections of broken carbon masts are also common donors. Of course you can always go the whole hog and just buy one somewhere between £250 to £500 depending on the length and complexity of taper required.



♥ Fittings

Even on a simple boat like a Cherub when you are starting from scratch there are a surprising number of fittings involved. For example looking at blocks on Primal Scream there are:

- ♥ Mainsheet (4)
- ♥ Jib sheet (4 Plus track)
- ♥ Kicker (6)
- ♥ Cunningham (10)
- ♥ Kite Sheet (4)
- ♥ Kite Halyard (7)
- ♥ Pole launch system (2)
- ♥ T-Foil control (7)

That makes a grand total of 44 Blocks and 8 cleats to fit the boat out. On top of the blocks you also have to consider the attaching hardware such as eyelets and Bolts. Of course some of the systems can be simplified a bit but not by a huge amount. The amount of string required is also quite significant.

- ♥ Spinnaker Halyard 20m
- ♥ Spinnaker Sheets 10m
- ♥ Main Sheet 8m
- ♥ Jib Sheet 3m
- ♥ Control Lines 20m
- ♥ Trapeze Wires 20m

To this you could probably add about 20 m of elastic for various components.

RIG

For a rig you basically need a Mast, Boom and sails. Making your own sails can be done but you probably need to be quite friendly with a local sail maker. If this is beyond you then going to a sail maker known to the class or at least skiff type rigs



is your best bet. You will need to have some idea of the layout of your intended rig but you can

discuss it with your sail maker and they can often give you good advice on what will and will not work. They will need to know quite a few measurements from your boat in advance as well as how the mast bends so that they can match the luff curve to the mast. It is worth remembering that good sail makers often have long waiting lists and so you do need to plan in advance, the last thing you want is a finished boat with no sails. Recent sails in the class have



come from Redeye, RMW Marine, Caws, a few people have imported sails from sails from Fyfe sails in New Zealand and Batt sails have made a lot of sails in the past.

Booms are straight forward to make and do not take up so much carbon that if they do break you have not wasted too much. Masts are a different story although there are probably more home made carbon masts in the Cherub fleet than in any other. So if you



want to take the DIY option there is plenty of experience and even a mandrel available. If you do not feel up to this then there are some good masts available commercially Recent masts have come from Superspars in the UK, CST in Australia and C-Tech in New Zealand so there are quite a few options.



HULL

Now we get on to the fun bit of building the hull. Cost wise the hull can be a relatively small part of the whole boat, however time wise it is the major contributor. This is where it is possible to make

considerable savings if you are prepared to put the time in, as your



time is cheaper than a boat builder's so the more you do yourself the cheaper it is.

♥ Facilities

To build a boat you need access to a workshop of some description it could be a garage or a shed but if you are going to do much of your building in the winter then you will need some method of heating the work area. Epoxy resin will not cure well below 10°C and if the temperature drops below freezing the unused stock of resin can be damaged due to the formation of small crystals. You do need space around the boat to work in and some sort of table for cutting cloth on. Raising the boat up to a comfortable working height and supporting it securely will make life much easier.

♥ The Mold

In order to build a hull you need a design and then a jig or mold built to that design. There are two main types of molds the male mold and the female mold. With the female mold the boat is built inside the mold and with the inside skin of the mold conforming exactly to the outside skin of the boat. This is the method normally used with production boats and can produce good results with very little fairing needed on the outside prior to painting, however this type of mold takes much longer to build and needs careful preparation before use. The most commonly used type of mold used in the Cherub

fleet is the male mold. Here the hull is built on the outside of the mold with the outside skin of the mold being the same size as the inside skin of the hull. This means that the size of the mold needs to be adjusted to the thickness of the foam used. Also the outside skin will need more fairing to finish the hull off, however many people consider that it is possible to build a lighter hull this way. If you are going to vacuum consolidate your hull as you lay up then the mold must be built in such a way that it is airtight and you have a platform around the edge of the mold that you can stick the vacuum bag to. The mold is normally built by placing thin strips of wood over a series of frames, the wood strips are cut to be as close to each other as possible with filler in any gaps that are left. It is quite common to cover the mold in a layer of glass cloth for extra strength. This is then faired and covered in a release wax so that it is possible to get the hull off! There are a number of molds floating around in the class at the moment and a simple option is to borrow one of those and build a boat on it. This saves the



time and cost of building a mold yourself although you do have to arrange to pick up and return or store the mold when you have finished with it.

If you do not feel that you have the expertise for building the mold and hull shell then there is always the option of getting this part of the hull built by a professional and then completing the bare shell yourself. This can be quite a good option as you know that the hull a major part of the boat has been properly built and is light weight this may enable you to complete the rest of the hull without having to invest in a vacuum pump.



♥ Materials

All of the Cherubs that have been built in recent years have been built in foam sandwich construction. It is possible to build out of plywood; however it will be more difficult to build a stiff light structure out of ply than foam sandwich. You can either build fully in Carbon or in Glass with carbon reinforcements in strategic positions. In theory an all glass construction would be cheaper, however some consider that as you need more glass which soaks up more resin the difference is not as great as you would expect. This along with the extra weight of a glass structure is why most recent Cherubs have been mostly Carbon. As a rough estimate you would probably use

- ♥ 40m² of 200g/m² Carbon woven cloth
- ♥ 50mX50mm of 300g/m² Unidirectional Carbon Cloth
- ♥ 15m² of 150g/m² Woven Glass
- ♥ 3 sheets of 80gm³ 8mm foam
- ♥ 25l of Epoxy

When using epoxy the best results can be had from using a low viscosity resin such as SP's Ampreg with an extra slow hardener. It also helps to warm the resin before use so that it is even thinner and will soak into the cloth faster. Of course if you can get hold of it and have the facilities you can always use prepreg.

♥ Vacuum

In order to build your boat as light as possible you need to ensure that the cloth is wetted out with the minimum amount of resin possible and that it is stuck firmly to the foam. One way to achieve this is to use vacuum pressure to



consolidate the laminate while it is curing and to soak up excess resin. To do this on top of the materials you need for the hull you will also need a vacuum pump and vacuum consumables which include the bag, peel ply, bleeder cloth and release film. You can expect to get a pump for about £50 second hand and £250 new and the vacuum consumables are likely to set you back about £

♥ Construction

To build a boat you basically need to prep the mold, laminate the inside skin, bond on the foam, laminate the outside skin. The hull can now be removed from the mold. Now laminate some flat sheets of foam for the spine and bulkheads. Fit the centreboard case, bulkheads and transom. Laminate and fit the false floor ready to start work on the above deck components. Build the bow structure for the rig loads and the spinnaker pole. The Foredeck and spinnaker sock mouth together with the mast step and above deck structure for the shroud points the centre console and finally the rudder gantry. All taking into account the positions for fittings and routing for string around the boat. With the basic boat complete you can fair of the rough edges and make it look good. Does not sound much but you can expect this to take about 2-3 hundred hours to complete the boat. If you do not have the time or expertise to do this yourself you can always get a boat builder to do it for you giving you the option to specify how much or how little work you get them to leave for you to complete. Of course in doing this you are going to have to pay someone else to do the work so you can expect and increase in cost, however as long as you go to a boat builder with a good track record in constructing very lightweight boats you can expect a high quality end product.

CONCLUSION

Once you have added all the bits together you can expect your new boat to come in at between £5,000 and £8,000. There are ways of cutting the cost and scavenging second hand components from old boats is one of them. Another is to get together with someone else to buy materials if you buy in bulk you stand a chance of negotiating a discount.



The last weekend in August is always the weekend that Phil and I trail the "Cherub" to Largs and compete in Cumbraes regatta. The Saturday is pretty normal with two or three races "round the cans" in Largs channel, however on the Sunday there is what is arguably the best race of the season round Cumbrae. Where anything from 50 foot yachts to toppers compete and sail round the island which is 3 miles wide and 4 miles long and plus a few bouys which probably make the course about 20 miles.

Most of last season was spent sailing in reasonably light winds, which was good in some ways and gave me the opportunity to get used to sailing the new cherub (and Phil used to helming from the wire). The Saturday of Cumbraes was similar to the rest of the year but we did have some good racing against a Vortex with an asymmetric.

The Sunday dawned with light winds and we thought it was simply going to be a repeat of last year's race where we sat on the bottom of the boat and struggled round. We started with a beat going south about and we were keeping up quite nicely with an RS200 (oh dear) with occasional marginal trapezing. However just before the mark the wind got up, got gusty and kept getting up we accelerated rather rapidly leaving the RS200 on the horizon and catching the vortex and a laser 4000.

As we bore away onto a white sail reach we picked up more speed, the spray got worse we could hardly see where we were heading. I have to say at this point I was getting a little scared, especially

after all my mishaps sailing a cherub, ask Phil. By the time we reached the mark my heart was racing (see photos for evidence of fear). We rounded the mark and Phil suggested we put the kite up. I hesitated for a while then got into the middle of the boat to pull it up (sometimes I hate my job as crew, especially when you are tired and having to pull up the bigger kite becomes even harder work but up it went) and off we flew over to the Bute shore.

I'm sure everyone wondered where we were going, to be honest I think we were just putting off the gybe. Eventually we decided we should probably head for the mark at the top end of cumbraes. So it was time to execute the gybe that for a change went quite smoothly, we stayed upright, must be a first, back out on the wire.



I started to relax and enjoy myself, for what turned out to be the best sail in Primal (possibly even a cherub) yet. We flew down the back end of Cumbrae (hitting a maximum speed close to 18 knots) and on the way had to avoid a dive boat who all stared open mouthed as we went past them. The next thing was to attempt to get the kite down at the mark, usually not my favourite thing, I am frequently found crouched on the bottom of the boat, trying to catch my breath having winded myself. While complaining to Phil, "I feel sick now" oh well at least in this race I only had to do it once.



Then it was back to some white sail reaching going past some keelboats like they were standing still while the crews sat on the side wellyhanging and looking puzzled. I'm sure they were thinking that we were mad, and wondering "what the hell was that?" Then it was a torturous long beat to the finish in the large waves that had now formed in the channel, which was slightly difficult with the bigger sails but again we stayed upright. Still at a bit of a loss as to how, but we finished and got the boat ashore after one brief swim.



Another problem we have been having with the new boat seems to be our ability to return to the slip after sailing. Taking the Centerboard out seems to result in a quick swim. When we got on shore and packed the boat away we went to look at the results and to our amazement not only had I had a great race but we had also won.

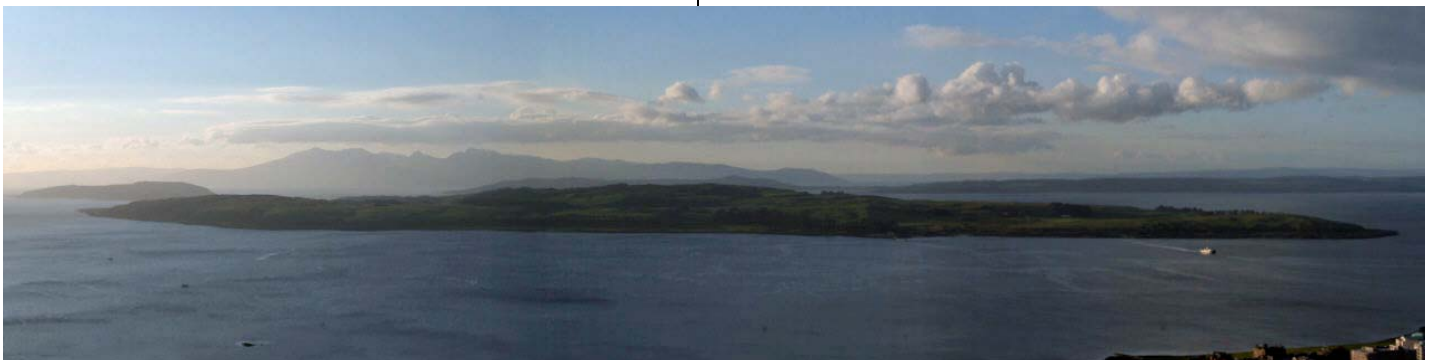
I have to say that to my surprise I have enjoyed sailing the 2005 rules cherub despite not being to keen on the rule changes to start with, going upwind with the bigger sails is fine it is the helm and crew that are the problem here. The big jib is

easy enough to handle with a 4:1 jib sheet even though it is 5.3m². My only issue with the boat now is the asymmetric, it is hard work pulling the rather large kite in and out of the bag. As I'm not that strong, and it frequently gets stuck especially on the way down and I feel sick after tugging away at the kite halyard to no avail. Phil is planning a

new spinnaker chute, which I hope will help. I have to say I am enjoying sailing the boat but it does tire me out a lot especially in a race with lots of laps as I have to pull and lower the kite so many times and sometimes I have a bit of a sense of humour failure.

Hopefully this year we will have as much fun with the boat, if any of you are interested in doing cumbraes this year. It is the weekend before the nationals, so if you were planning on spending the week at Largo Bay, it may be worth a detour to the west coast on the way up to join us on the Sunday for a sail around the Isle of Cumbrae, definitely highly recommended.

See you all at the Nationals, if not before,
Carol Low.





Following a question by Daryl on the 12ft skiff forum about how to sail short boats twin wire this was written by "Washable Moth" Text and pictures taken from www.skiff.org.au

Skiff Rule 1

In a contest between the rudder and the sails, when the sails are big they ALWAYS win!

So sail it like a windsurfer (Its the only way you can go wavejumping 2 up!)

Roll the rig to windward to bear away and use fore and aft trim to change the helm, you will see twelves down under that are leaping to windward with both crew on the wire aft of the transom the rig raked over the tuck and to windward this is to ballance the boat.(like a windsurfer)

Skiffs Rule 2

There is no difference between doing the right thing too slow (or fast) and doing the wrong thing. Both ways you end up "on the fin" so work on timing and train your reflexes (thats why not thinking about it works for people when they sail by "feel")

Skiffs Rule 3

If it is hard to pull on ease it, its faster and skiffing is an apparent wind game, just like windsurfi

ng.

If it feels good DO IT



Skiffs Rule 4

The rudder is a handbrake and can only slow you down more or less, the boat will not jump untill there is no helm (when this occurs determines what range of breeze more than rig size, though minimising drag helps)

If you use it to round a mark , tack or gybe you will slow down, and if your trim and ballance is not perfect you will stall and the sails will win returning the boat to its natural state (perfect for a sudden a fin inspection).

Skiff Rule 5

"Flat is FAST" this applies to ALL sails as well as the boat trim, to allow acceleration and pump up your apparent.

Skiff Rule 6

The headsail will put you "in the piss" more than any other sail.

Unless your trim is perfect you cannot bear away without stalling, or round up at will, without the headsail eased.

When the breeze is fresh and you are two sail reaching, sail with the jib eased to just luffing so that you can go up or down a bit without touching it, or you will assume the position "on the fin again" (not arthur finnigan)

The headsail tacks the boat, by easing the headsail suddenly to spin the boat into the wind and then backing the headsail out of the tack.

Ensure you are through the tack and the boat is flat before sheeting on normaly.



Skiff Rule 7

Fast is safe, the sooner and faster you can

get the boat moving the easier the boats are to sail,.

To do this get on the wire, no wire no pace, no pace no good, no good no sail.

It is faster and safer to be crouched on the wire than sitting on the gunwale.

Skiff Rule 8.

The lightest crewmember goes through first....

...and grabs the spinnaker sheet as far towards the clew as they can reach, the heavier behemoth lumbers through the boat as fast as he can heaving the boom through as he goes to speed himself up and assist the gybe, when the boat is dead square and goose winging the kite.



This is a stabilising point and if the breeze is really wild or the waves require a pause you can over sheet the kite in this mode and backed or not you will hove too when he is sure the rig is not rolling too far or fast (there may be no pause at all with practice) the skipper yells "now" if he is the runner or simply pulls down to the water line with the spinnaker sheet, making the leach tight, and all that is required to blow the chute through onto the other tack is the smallest twitch on the tiller which is required because the heaviest has by now hooked up and is jumping on the wire allowing the boat to be pushed up filling the spinnaker on the new gybe, the lightweight has tailed new sheet in his spare time and the as the he hits the wire he drops th old sheet, the spinnaker fills with a crack and the boat jumps away assuming he has tailed enough sheet for it to fill.

Jumping on the wire after a gybe allows the boat to be pointed up and accelerate the sooner you do this the less likely you will be to roll the rig the wrong way cause the rudder to be necessary, and as you are going slow the rudder will fail to beat the sails in the eternal contest.

As you gybe you must be accutly aware of where the masthead is as that is what is steering the boat with the headsail blanketed (like a windsurfer). All other gybing systems are a variation of this method but with more freedom as the skipper and crew are closer in weight, but also harder as it is harder to keep enough weight on the wire and the sails full.

Skiff Rule 9.

Skiffs do have brakes, as in the example above you can hove to or you can be just trying to get settled after a set, a good method is for the crew to jump out first and as the boat speeds up the skipper follows, problem is that as the skipper jumps out his extra weight sends the boat ballistik, before he has his feet under a fruit loop(foot strap made of cord and plastic tube)you are airbourne with the bitch of all weather helm problems the rig comes to windward and you do an exiting maoeuver called the "windward skate" (or an all standing

bearaway to by the lee with two on the wire) part of this move is performed with the crew underwater, and the skipper needs a new trapeze elastic.

OR the crew could just over sheet the kite, the boat heaves to and slows the lee helm jacks the skipper onto the gunwale and assuming he is hooked up the fwd hand tucks his skippers toes (both feet) under the straps where they belong. and eases out the chute, this is the fun bit. Works good to avoid collisions too.

Skiff Rule 10.

You know you have too much sail up, when you nose dive and round up at the same time (or you are in a 12' skiff)

When you have it all ballanced too perfection and you have the boat accelerating like a shower of shit off a shiny shovel you get a gust and bear away with it to keep the boat under the rig and next thing you



know you are running square and the rig is still accelerating faster than the boat, then the nose starts to sniff, all Yahooing ceases and with a hush you hold the boat under full power straight nose dive (or "going down the mine") ballanced and true untill it is standing on its nose with the mast head on the water, the better the trim the longer it will stay (unless your pole is stuck in a mud bank) There is no shame in mining, and it is often said the the famous trophy known as the "Miners Helmet" awarded to the "underall champion" has been won many times by the crew who jagged the overall the next season!

The Miners helmet is awarded heat by heat, and eventually for the series for the best straightest and most skillfull nosedives.

For going for more pace is the way to get out of trouble, win and also to do the best nosedives.



Interview with Steve Irish by Iain Christie

Many of you will have followed the transformation of the 1989 vintage Italian Bistro Suicide Blonde into a 2005 rules "big rig" boat by Iain Christie and Simon Roberts over the winter. Unfortunately, Simon was in India and Iain was recovering from an operation when the Cherub fleet descended on Draycote Water for the Open Meeting last autumn. So rather than missing out on the fun, Suicide Blonde found herself in the hands of RS800 National Champion Steve Irish for the weekend. Crewed by 2005 New Quay Nationals veteran Paula Symons on the Saturday and local RS200 helm Paul Goodwin on the Sunday, Steve had the event sewn up with a race to spare, despite never havin' g set foot in a Cherub before!

Iain catches up with Steve on the beach...

IC-Steve, congratulations on yet another open meeting victory, and this one in a new class! So as not to dishearten the rest of the fleet too much, just give us a quick run down on the highlights of your sailing career to date. We know you are the current RS800 National Champion, what have you done prior to that?

SI- I started sailing in an Oppy, progressing to the 420 where I won the Worlds in 1991 and the nationals 7 times. I then did years in the 470, winning the nationals and finishing 5th at the Europeans. Since then I have been mainly sailing RS800's, winning the nationals for the last 2 years.

IC-A distinguished career then and you've probably seen a lot of changes in our sport over the years! As you know we as a class have gone through some major changes ourselves recently, allowing larger upwind and also downwind sails. I know you have not sailed one of the smaller rig boats, but what are your first impressions of the 2005 rig?

SI- Well, the rig's a bit of a beast for such a short boat. I'm amazed you can get so much sail area into the mainsail given the length of the boom and the mast.

IC-Yes, it is a bit of a squeeze to fit 15.5 sqm of white sail onto the boat, and to try and encourage a bit of common sense in new builds, we do actually now have a mast height cap in our rules. The class now has two distinct styles of mainsail cut evolving, Redeye Sails using a shorter boom and a fat head main, and RMW using a longer boom with a smaller head. What are your thoughts on this, and do you think the fat head main might present problems in big wind and waves?

SI- We used the Redeye fat head setup at the open. I was surprised how well the massive head held up in the full power conditions. You could really pull the mainsheet and tighten the leach, producing loads of power and pointing. We were twin wiring very early. It will be interesting to see how controllable it is in a breeze. My guess is the mast on Suicide Blonde is a bit stiff - great for the full power conditions we had, but I think gust response may not be its strong point in a

breeze. The longer boom and smaller head should be easier to sail, control and bear away, so could be a better compromise on a difficult short boat.

IC-I think you could be right, I've yet to sail the boat in really exciting conditions at sea! Now looking at downwind performance, as you know the boat you sailed uses an old RS800 spinnaker and a few other older boats are converting to bigger rigs with this in mind. How did the kite feel to you compared to when it's powering an 800? Would you say this is a sensible direction for the class to go, or should we be looking at a different cut ideally?

SI- The RS800 kite performed well on the Cherub, especially when twin wiring. It felt a little strange when we were trying to soak. It works really well on an 800 when soaking. You can get real deep and keep it flying. On the Cherub it seemed difficult to achieve this. This

could be because the set up is mast head and the mainsail so fat that it blankets the kite a lot earlier, or that the sheeting angles are closer in board.

The best argument for going the 800 kite route is that there are loads of cheap second hand ones around. The rate you trash kites Iain it must be a good plus!

IC-Tell me about it! At least it keeps my local sail maker busy! Whilst we're on the subject of kites, there





is some debate over whether to twin wire or not downwind. Obviously many of the helms are super keen to get out on the wire at every opportunity, what are your thoughts on this?

SI- Once you can get the boat fully planing, then it's a case of both on the wire, build the apparent and get down to the knots and send it. However, we made some big gains in the open by being a little more conservative, and as the lulls came in reducing to single wiring and taking a better angle, just keeping it on the plane. Once we were falling off the plane we went for some extreme soaking and sat on the side to get better angles. Not quite as exciting but the winning makes up for it!!

IC- Hmmm, interesting. It's a shame you did not have enough breeze for full-on twin wiring all weekend, but based on what you have seen how does the Cherub compare to the RS800 and 49er you usually sail? We've been "upgraded" to a five star difficulty rating in Yachts and Yachting, do you think this is right?

SI- Well Iain I think Suicide Blonde should have a rating all of its own of at least 6. None of the cleats work! The main difference I found was the boat responds like a seesaw. You are always either too far back or even worse too far forwards. The rig actually feels quite small after the 800 or 49er mainly due to the mast length. However, with such a short hull it is plenty of sail area to handle.

IC- Don't say I didn't warn you about the cleats! It's interesting you say that though, as a class we work hard at promoting ourselves, and despite the "Scrapheap Challenge" jokes I hear at Draycote, for a fringe development class we are enjoying a real upsurge in interest, having just had our best attended open meeting as well as our best attended Nationals for many years in 2005. In your opinion, how are we perceived at the moment? What are we doing right and wrong as a class?

SI- I believe you are seen as a great friendly enthusiastic class but a little mad. The development of the bigger rig is great and keeps the class moving forwards with the rest of the boats like the Int14, 49er and 800. The best thing is that anyone can have a go at putting the boats together and it's not expensive (I

spotted a great new mast section for you down the scrap heap the other day Iain).

I think some of the boats and the sailing could be improved massively by making sure all the control lines work efficiently and more time is spent practising boat handling.

IC- Good point, I'm sure I'm not the only Cherub owner with a big "to-do" list! However, despite slipping cleats and the fact that you've never sailed a Cherub before you've still won the event with a race to spare. I'm sure we could all learn a thing or two, what would be your top three tips for getting to the front of the fleet and staying there?

SI- Concentrate on the basics. Once you have your boat on the water and it all works concentrate on the racing and the boat handling. There are bigger gains in these areas than worrying about the sail designs or hull shapes.

Win the start. Sail fast and conservative. Take the bullet. Easy!

If you want to learn any more you will have to come to one of my training weekends!

IC- We may well just do that! So then, that's the 800 Nationals, the Tide Ride and most importantly the Draycote Cherub Open in the bag for this year then! I know you've been doing a lot of coaching recently, what's on the cards for 2006 then?

SI- You're right, the coaching has taken off so I'm now doing that full time. I have a busy season lined up mainly working with the 29ers, who have their Worlds in Weymouth this

year, and one of the women's 470 teams who are gearing up for China. There's also the Cadet West Zone squad who are improving quickly.

I'm trying to fit in at least the RS800 nationals and Fat Face circuit and the Tide Ride but I'm not sure how much time I will get to practise. And what date is this year's Draycote Cherub Open?

IC- We'll be back to you on that date, and I'm sure that I can modify your 800 so it measures in time for the event! Steve, thanks ever so much for your time, and congratulations on your convincing win!

**Steve Irish
Coaching**



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Dear Aunty Gavro,

I love my beautiful Cherub, but I have just been over to a big shiny stand where they are not just selling boats but a whole lifestyle! The glossy brochures and attractive salesperson have made me think about my future. If I buy a boat from them not only will I get new boat but the lifestyle that goes with it. A tan and white teeth a beautiful partner and lovely kids, the sun will always shine, my rust bucket will turn into a 4x4, and I will have a garage to fix my new boat in. Although they told me that I won't need it as their boats never break.

I am so tempted because, and this is the clever bit, all the boats are all the same so I have the same chance of winning a race as anyone! not like in a Cherub where you actually need to sail faster than the fleet to win.

Yours Defecting of Dorchester

Dear Defecting,

You must resist, their pretty smiles hide forked tongues. It is difficult sorting your life out when you are addicted to bright colours and high-tec composites, but it can be done, just look at me!

Gavro

Dear Aunty Gavro,

I have come up with an IDEA about how I can make my Cherub go faster so I can win all the races. I need more sail area, but if I have that I do not think I could fit the sails on the boat, so I need a longer snout to help with that, or I could just make the hull longer cos that would stop me pitchpolling. Then I think that I should make it lighter because weight only slows me down. But what happens to my small crew when it is windy with my big sails? I will get blown over, so I would like to change the sails around a bit make the boat wider with big racks to sort that out. But if I make it wide enough then I could just sail on my own and that would make the boat even

lighter and faster. I thought I was getting somewhere but then I realised I could put a big outboard motor on the back I could go really fast and win all the races, so I think I will do that. Is this legal for Cherubs

Yours,

Indecisive of the Internet

Dear Indecisive,

I do not think so but why not convene a focus group to discuss this further?

Gavro

Dear Aunty Gavro,

I think I must have done something wrong, for years it has been hot and sunny all the time, we sometimes get amazing winds I could have gone rocketing around really fast if only I was allowed out. Now it has all gone wrong. I was locked in a dark box for ages now after they let me out, everything is cold and grey and sometimes really cold and white then it goes back to grey. The water is not blue any more it is grey and so cold. What has happened where am I?

Displaced of the Cayman Islands

Dear Displaced,

Welcome to the UK the weather may be terrible but at least you get to play with some other Cherubs!

Gavro