

BROADREACH



JANUARY 2026



BROADWATER SAILING CLUB

AFFILIATED TO THE RYA



Steve Langford in his Miracle with son number two, James, and they were going really well.

Editorial

Another issue of Broadreach aimed at cheering you up in the somewhat unpredictable winter weather.

Thanks as always to the contributors who have kindly supplied some nice articles.

The quality of sailors at the club is well illustrated by reports from two of our top sailors (Dave Phillips and David Cherrill) who took on international competitors by attending the OK and Aero world championships in Italy and France.

Phantom captain and regular traveller, Dave Patrick, has supplied a nice report covering both the BSC Phantom open meeting and the Phantom National championships held in Plymouth... almost another country!

It's also nice to read about the background of some of our members. The latest person I have cajoled into doing a profile is the charming Graham Thomas who has written about how his sailing career came about, how it then progressed significantly and, of course, what he's gained from BSC membership.

The ever-present club racer Helen MacVean has provided a great report on the "Sheppey Round the Island Race" which was a real test of endurance last September. Five boats with eight BSC members ventured to Essex for this event and have the scars to prove it!

Club officials Peter Joseph and Tim Alden both submitted articles. Tim is quite rightly proud of the new self-launching anchor which he explains to us, while Peter hopes we all learnt something from the Christmas quiz that he set us all!

And of course our commodore Andy Chaplain takes the opportunity to thank many BSC members for their volunteering efforts and also updates us on the latest regarding the proposed Activity centre.

As usual I've tried to find pictures from Facebook or other sources—generally supplied by some of our great photographers from around the club.

Enjoy the rest of the winter sailing...I suspect that we're all looking forward to the Spring.

Happy sailing. *Andy Cooney*

(Aero 1747 & Merlin 3577)



Commodore's Gybes

Reflecting on 2025, we are very fortunate to have so many members who contribute their time to the upkeep and improvement of club facilities. We have active Main and Race Committees, well attended Work Parties and members whose time and individual skills are offered and utilised.



Among the many equipment and facility improvements, the Committee Boat was hauled out, cleaned, antifouled, and a new rudder and canopy fitted. Electrics have been replaced and the self-launching anchor windlass now fully commissioned. Outboard engines have been fully serviced and a new Duty Officer Jaffa 'safety boat' is in the final stages of commissioning. Pontoons are maintained, race, shallow and out of bound marks repositioned and replaced as required and boat and car park grass and hedges cut. Then there is always a list of things to do in the clubhouse, porta-cabin and containers from light replacement, leaking roof re-sealing to fixing toilets!

My thanks to you all, on behalf of you all, for the help provided by members which all contributes to Broadwater SC being the successful club it is.

Following meetings with the HS2/Align Community Support Team the recent work on the access track from the yellow barrier to the car-park including the supply of aggregate was completed free of any charge to BSC. Discussions are currently taking place for the delivery and installation of a 20' container to replace the 'Bosun's Locker' and later this year there could be further free of charge work with the supply and delivery of infill to stabilise the shoreline between the main and committee boat pontoons. Further updates on these activities will be posted on the web-site and Facebook/WhatsApp groups.

Club Commodore, Andy Chaplin

Another busy working party....



Hillingdon Water Sports Facility and Activity Centre (HWSF&AC)

The revised HWSF&AC Planning Application was posted on the London Borough of Hillingdon (LBH) Planning Application website on 25/11/2025 (ref: 2382/APP/2023/2906). This started a 40-day consultation period that ended on 9/1/2026. Unfortunately, the revised plans no longer provide the vision as communicated by the LBH Leader Councillor Edwards of a 'world-class water sports facility and activity centre' with some significant concerns for Broadwater SC (BSC), HOAC and other statutory bodies. Pros & Cons for the revised planning application proposal were sent to BSC members and many of you will have submitted comments on the revised plans; thank you for doing this. BSC Trustees and Main Committee sent a detailed response that included a request to re-consider alternative plans to leave BSC in its current location. A petition raised and signed by members, who are also residents of the LBH, to 'Leave BSC where it is on Broadwater Lake' has also been completed with 141 signatures and this should allow a voice at the LBH Planning Committee Meeting.

There have been over 6000 responses to the Planning Application that are now being evaluated by the LBH planning team. A request has been made to allow a review of the submitted comments, along with a summary of the responses and for a copy of the recommendation to be made by the LBH Case Officer Mr Micheal Briginshaw along with the basis for the recommendation. The Planning Application Committee is made up of seven elected Councillors and the committee meeting on Wednesday 11 March 2026 starting at 7pm is expected to review the Planning Application. These meetings are open to the public and are also broadcast live on the LBH You Tube channel.

Thank you for your ongoing support for Broadwater SC and for comments submitted on the revised plans and for LBH residents' signatures on the petition. You will be kept updated on further developments.

Lots of jobs to do...pictured below.... more working party heroes!



OK 2025 World Championship (Lake Garda) by Dave Phillips

It all started innocently enough. One perfectly normal evening at Helen and James's place, James casually mentioned the OK Worlds were taking place on Lake Garda in September. Most people would say "that sounds nice," and move on.

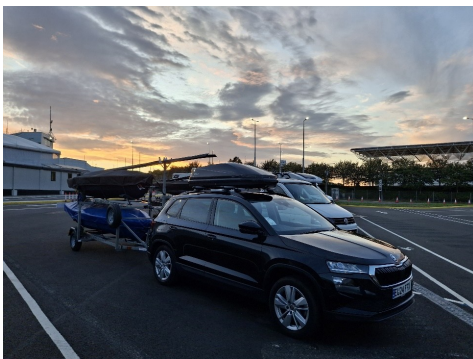
Not us.

Approximately 30 seconds later the Airbnb was booked, the route was planned, and we were basically halfway to Italy in our minds. Efficiency at its finest.

The Epic 1000-Mile drive

We set off full of optimism and snacks heading to the channel tunnel, cruising smoothly down through France until reaching Dijon for the night, but more importantly, a very welcome bed and a nice French restaurant.

The next morning, however brought a twist to the plot. The Mont Blanc tunnel was closed! What followed was a "scenic detour" looping around Switzerland and climbing up enough mountains to make a goat dizzy.



Beautiful? Yes. Planned? Absolutely not. But eventually, we headed back down, and we rolled into Lake Garda only mildly traumatised. Thankfully, we were immediately revived by alcoholic beverages supplied by my daughter and her partner. A truly heroic welcome committee.

Measuring Day Mayhem

The next morning was the dreaded boat measuring. On paper, simple. In reality utter chaos.

Both James and I had measurement issues with our masts and rudders. These needed to be corrected to get the sign off from the measurement team. Let's just say there were multiple issues within the fleet of 212 boats. We got there eventually, mostly stress free.



Practice Race & Picture Perfect Scenery

Sunday brought the practice race. All 212 boats out on the water at once, it was like a floating traffic jam but significantly prettier. The views across Lake Garda were jaw-dropping. You could almost forget the mild panic of trying not to hit another boat while launching.



Holiday Mode

Despite the battles with equipment, the detours, the wind, and occasionally our own decision-making, the week was brilliant. Sun, sailing, family, friends, and the small matter of being at one of the most iconic sailing venues in Europe. Would we recommend Lake Garda? Absolutely.

If you ever get the chance to sail there, take it. Just maybe check the Mont Blanc tunnel status first.



The Main Event: 5 Days, 10 Races

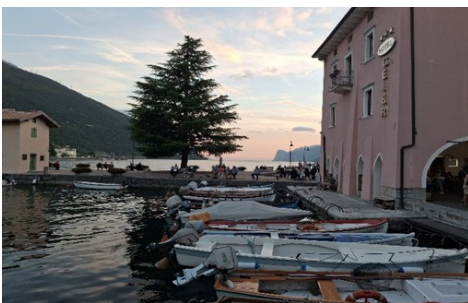
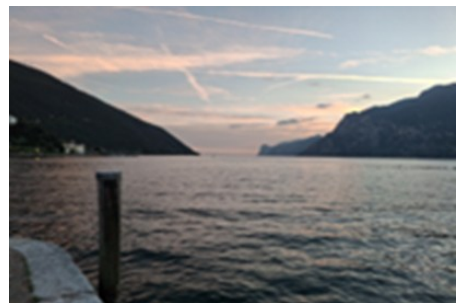
Once the championships began, things got real. Two races a day, five days in a row. Classic Garda conditions, lightish in the morning while we were waiting to be released from the beach, then the Ora starts ramping up so that by 1 pm the wind was blowing 15–20 knots under cloudless blue skies. Perfect for sailors who enjoy working harder than they intended on holiday. As for results, let's just say neither James nor I troubled the podium. But the scenery more than made up for it, and the racing was very well organised.



Beautiful scenery makes this well known dinghy racing venue a perfect holiday and racing destination.



Some great shots from the OK World Championships at Lake Garda where two Broadwater members took part and thoroughly enjoyed a challenging event.



Aero – Worlds: Ecole Nationale de Voile et des Sports Nautiques ENVSN— Quiberon Peninsula, France (by David Cherrill)

All three aspects to attending a major sailing event are slightly trickier with a world championship abroad... Getting there (with a boat), accommodation and the event itself.

Travelling with an Aero is much less complex than many other boats. Most people just put the boat on the roof for long journeys – no trailer expense and worries, though some take the opposite approach and put as many Aéros as possible on a single trailer to share costs... I chose to rooftop mine and the only complexity was trying to work out how tall it was for the ferry booking! It also has the advantage that you make friends straight away as you help each other unloading.



Accommodation for the Aero worlds was a choice of using the ENVSN own rooms (very cheap, good value meals, very convenient), camping (in the field on-site or off-site at commercial holiday centres), or local holiday accommodation. Being a French government institution, the ENVSN option I chose needed copious use of French to work out the right options – but the reward was a ready community of international sailors for the week to share meals with. As a friendly class there is usually something going on most evenings from the Opening Parade with flags, bar Karaoke, boules competition, Commodores welcome drinks, and an official event dinner.

We also did quite a bit of racing! This was a strange mixture of rigid measurement checks – to an Italian youth squad who thought the rules didn't apply to them being 'anonymously' reprimanded at the daily briefing in fluent Italian by one of Race Officers! Most World Championship venues are chosen for the location, and the Quiberon peninsula didn't disappoint with close, competitive but friendly, racing with a variety of wind strengths on a beautiful stretch of water. A week to remember.



Above - Prizegiving fun at the Aero World championships.

Right - Impressive trailer stacking



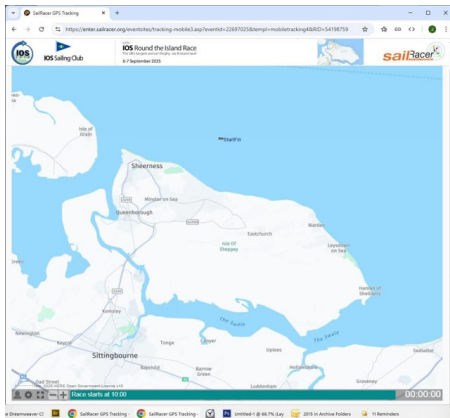
Below - Worlds photo with the help of a little photo-shopping...



Motorsport.com photo by
© David Williams / Contrasto 2012

Round the Isle of Sheppey Race 2025

by Helen McVean



On Sunday 7th September seven Broadwater sailors set off merrily and blissfully unaware of what lay ahead. T'was the eve of the 2025 Round The Isle of Sheppey Race! A day that will be etched in our memories forever! We'd had a wonderful summer and it looked to be stretching into September. We had checked the forecast which was predicting a fair amount of wind, but nothing we couldn't handle. Or so we thought! On Saturday we travelled to the Isle of Sheppey where we got the boats ready. Andy Cooney and Peter Joseph

tested the water in the Merlin in a "Round the Cans" race. Lively, but no problem. That evening we all went for a hearty meal at the pub, The Flying Dutchman. Graham Thomas reported that the forecast looked like it "was improving from mid-day." Andy Cooney agreed, confirming that his forecast said it was going to be a "medium wind."

The following morning, we made the most of the hearty breakfast on offer at the B&B. Graham Reece and Graham Thomas had no time for such frivolities. They sped off to get their Lasers ready in order to get a good start. They would be starting in the first group of boats. The 40-mile race begins off Sheerness, where the seven BSC sailors in five dinghies within a fleet of over 40 boats, set off in a staggered start system based on their Portsmouth Yardstick (PY) handicaps.

The race starts at the Isle of Sheppey Sailing Club, one of the oldest sailing clubs in the UK. Sailors head clockwise around the island, starting in the Thames Estuary. The race continues into the swale section, the area between the island and mainland. The Kingsferry Bridge passage is a unique and mandatory part of the race. Passing under the Kingsferry Bridge, requires boats to be deliberately capsized and then walked under the bridge.



The lasers were first to head off to the start.

After the bridge, the race continues through the Medway estuary, past Garrison Point and into the sea before heading back to the finish line at the club. Sailors must be prepared for a long and difficult race, as it is known as a true endurance test.

As we prepared the boats for the race, the wind was already whistling a demanding tune through the rigging. From the moment the sails were hoisted, the dinghies felt alive, straining at their lines, eager to run but requiring a firm hand.

Leaving the relative shelter of the club, we hit the open water in the Thames Estuary. The sea state was instantly “lumpy,” sending sheets of spray flying over the bow. The sound was a constant crash-thump, the wind a deep, sustained roar that forced us to yell over to one another in our double handers. The wind just seemed to build and build. The 'medium wind' Andy had predicted soon turned into a relentless force.



Sailing upwind in heavy weather was an intense, exhilarating battle against the elements, demanding total focus and physical exertion from both the helm and crew. It was less about comfort cruising and more about survival and control, a constant dance of balance and power. The water wasn't flat: it was a chaotic mess of waves and chop, and every wave was a tactical decision. The boat slammed against the short chop, threatening to trip or nose-dive if not handled exactly right.

The goal was to drive through or over the waves without losing momentum or stability, a task that required excellent teamwork and communication. The helm had to be constantly adjusting the course, bearing off slightly down a wave face and then pinching back up to windward, always looking for the most efficient path.

The experience was a sensory overload: the roar of the wind, the stinging spray, the tension in every line, and the constant motion of the hull beneath us. The boat felt alive, a “wicked fighting machine” on the edge of control. Making a mistake could mean an instant, dramatic, capsized. Ultimately, the hard upwind sailing was a test of skill, fitness and nerve.

It was lucky that none of us capsized. For the first 2 hours we were beating upwind. The tide and waves were not helping us. The two Albacores with Brian/Dave and Steve/Helen could see the entrance to the swale but we just never seemed to get any closer. The wind was building and we were not making any headway through the waves.

Unfortunately, the waves coming over the bow were filling up the hull and we were no longer travelling fast enough for it to empty out. We were lolling about and having to constantly spill wind because of the big gusts. Brian's boat started to nose dive because his buoyancy tank had sprung a leak. It was then that we saw a beach that looked like we could land on. It was with a heavy heart we decided it would be safer to go ashore.

After getting the water out of our boats we dropped the main sails and turned back, sailing just by jib which was much more comfortable and still pretty quick. Brian and Dave began to fall behind so they put up their main and started to catch us up. We decided it was time for us to follow suit and soon we were absolutely motoring along, sending sheets of white spray flying back over the foredeck, soaking the crew and helm. It was an epic plane of about 10 miles all the way back to the clubhouse! Even though we had retired from the main race, this was now a race between 2 Albacores!



The two Albacores forced onto the beach to bail out before returning to the Clubhouse.

Meanwhile, the 2 Lasers were being helmed by Graham Thomas and Graham Reece. For the sake of distinguishing the two Grahams in this article we are going to use some old nicknames that they thought they'd shaken off - "Grum" and "Reecy".



Grum and Reecy

Like the Albacore sailors, Reecy and Grum were being tested to their limits by the elements. They managed to get into the Swale, but things were no easier there. Reecy, although flying along by this stage, was struggling to navigate effectively and eventually the tide and wind forced him onto a beach. He thought that his luck had changed as a beautiful lady approached him.

Sadly it was only to tell him that it was a private beach and he shouldn't be there! He told her that he was actually trying to sail around the Island but was struggling. The lady asked Graham if he would like to come in and have a cup of tea but Graham didn't want to impose and he was worried about his muddy boots!

He set off to try and make it to the bridge but ran aground on a mud flat. So he got out to push his boat off, but then couldn't get his feet out of the mud!. He was completely stuck! He might have been there for hours, but luckily for him Grum spotted him and came over to see if he could help. Reecy warned him not to come too close otherwise he would get stuck as well. He told Grum to get to the bridge and send a rescue boat. Grum was exhausted from being battered by the wind and waves, but digging deep and using the last of his energy, he managed to make it to the bridge. There he was able to tell a rescue boat about Reecy.



Negotiating the bridge with lots of helpers.

There he was able to tell a rescue boat about Reecy.

They set off to find Reecy. Grum meanwhile managed to find a lift and was able to get back to the club and get his car and trailer. The rescue boat got to Reecy. They managed to throw him a line and towed him off of the mud. Reecy said he was so glad to get into the rescue boat, he wouldn't have cared if they'd left his beloved Laser! The accumulated fatigue was immense. The two Grahams were emotionally and physically drained.

The Merlin Rocket with Andy and Peter made it all the way to the finish line! They had survived the swale where the risk of an involuntary gybe downwind or a broach was ever-present and demanded constant vigilance. It was an incredible feat that they made it! 40 boats started the race and only half finished. They did Broadwater and themselves proud! They were in the elite 20 finishers. A very respectable 14th place! Their elapsed time was 5hrs 10mins! They had survived the intense, exhilarating battle against the elements which had demanded total focus and physical exertion from both the helm and crew. Incredibly, Andy Cooney hadn't even got wet! He only got a small splash on his left ear! Peter Joseph had shielded him so well!



The Merlin setting off

Back at the club house, cold, tired, but galvanised by the sheer scale of our achievement, we shared a well-deserved pint. The "Round the Isle of Sheppey 2025" had been a brutal test of seamanship. It will be etched in our memories forever not for the victory, but for the day we truly wrestled with the sea and survived. We had learned a valuable lesson: even a "medium wind" forecast in the Thames Estuary can turn a pleasant Sunday sail into an epic tale of endurance.



The brave BSC "team" discussing tactics and thensharing war stories.

Phantom Open 2025

A great turnout of nine club boats welcomed 13 visitors on an overcast October Saturday, making this the best-attended Phantom Open at the club to date. The light breeze at the start of the day gradually built to around 10 knots, though it never quite reached true planing conditions. Four back-to-back races were scheduled, with race control in the capable hands of Andy Wheeler who, together with Helen, kept the fleet moving efficiently with quick turnarounds between races.

Racing was close throughout, with all four race wins shared between Richard Nurse of Northampton SC, who took the event overall, and Mark Addison from Upper Thames SC, who finished second overall. Jeremy Deacon sailed consistently to secure three third places, earning him third overall.

The day concluded with a cracking spread ashore and a well-earned beer or two. Well done to Jeremy and Andy Taverner as the top-placed Broadwater boats, and special mention to Phantom guest Andy Cooney as the third-placed local boat. This was the last event of the South East Open series - in which Jeremy gained 2nd place overall, with myself in 4th place.

For a full report and results: <https://www.yachtsandyachting.com/news/291061/Phantom-Southeast-Travellers-at-Broadwater>



BSC sailors working hard at the Phantom open held at the lake in October. Andy and Helen ran the event smoothly with a little help from Austin.

Phantom Nationals September 2025

by Dave Patrick

Four Broadwater Phantoms made the journey to Hooe Point, Plymouth, for an event that attracted a strong fleet of 57 boats. Day One began with a 50-minute warm-up sail out beyond the breakwater, where two races were held in pleasant 5–10 knot breezes. Jeremy sailed his best race of the series to secure an excellent 14th place, followed home by myself, Andy Tavs, and Hilgard.

Hooe Point SC rightly enjoys a great reputation as a venue, but unfortunately a major clubhouse refurbishment meant the site was closed. As a result, competitors had to make do with a marquee and very basic facilities. Fortunately, I had managed to book a comfortable Airbnb for the four of us, conveniently located within walking distance of a decent hostelry.

Day Two was a very different story. With winds exceeding 25 knots, around a quarter of the fleet chose not to launch. Of those that did, another quarter failed to reach the start line—again set outside the breakwater—or else they turned back shortly after. To add to the challenge, the rain was absolutely torrential, and with the strong wind whipping it up, the swell had built to around two metres. The Phantom's generous sail made the downwind legs a particularly terrifying experience for those still battling on. The bitterest pill was that a mark broke free during the race, and with safety crews stretched to the limit, the race had to be abandoned. Credit to Jeremy and Andy for persevering and staying out in those conditions.

The race team then made a sound decision to bring the dwindling fleet inside the breakwater for Race 3, where the waves were smaller and the wind had eased slightly. With that race completed and the wind building once more, sailing was sensibly abandoned for the day.

Day Three began with a cloudy and windless launch, but the much-refreshed fleet was soon rewarded with blue skies. By the time racing got underway—after yet another 50-minute sail to the course—the wind had filled in to around 7 knots and steadily built to 18 knots over the day. Three races were completed. Jeremy recorded a 19th place, while I finished 20th. Unfortunately for Andy, a tiller failure in the second race of the day resulted in a capsize and a slow tow back ashore, leaving him unable to contest Race 7.

Congratulations to Jeremy for finishing as the best-placed Broadwater boat, securing 27th overall.



Tenby here we come!

Dave enjoying his Phantom

How I Learnt to Sail By Graham Thomas

The start: October 2005

When my wife Gill bought me an **RYA Adult Level 1** sailing course at Stanborough Park Water Sports Centre, I had no idea it would lead to years of adventure. I also didn't expect it would end with me racing every Wednesday morning at Broadwater Sailing Club.



Above - Graham enjoying his laser on a lovely day at BSC.

The Adult Level 1 course didn't go as smoothly as I had imagined. I spent most of the first day head to wind, capsized, or tangled in the lakeside trees. The instructor cheerfully announced that the final exercise on day two would be a capsize drill. I felt this was unnecessary since I had been doing capsize drills all weekend, just without supervision or applause.

The most frustrating part was that I couldn't figure out the wind direction or how to make the boat move as I wanted. My dinghy seemed to have a mind of its own. I persevered, and by the end of the weekend, I had at least learned one useful skill: the ability to right a dinghy.

Unfazed, in May 2006, I returned for **RYA Adult Level 2**. I made progress and learned to tack and gybe without causing panic. However, it still felt raw, and I concluded that sailing was something I could only learn through practice, persistence and patience. I remained frustrated but hooked.



Luckily, my three children, Emily, James, and Sam, caught the sailing bug too, though they showed much more natural talent than I ever did.

Their enthusiasm became one of my main motivators and before long we had signed up at Bury Lake Young Mariners (BLYM), where they jumped into junior courses every half term and summer holiday.

Graham with his son Sam in Reading as new "Senior Dinghy Instructors"

A change of tack: September 2008

In 2008 I worked in IT at a bank in the city and in September of that year, with the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers, it became clear that the global financial situation was serious, and that layoffs were likely. Fortunately for me, it didn't come to that. I looked for something to take my mind off the situation and signed up for a night school class in Fleet Street for the **RYA Day Skipper Theory**. The course introduced me to navigation, tides, weather, and COLREGS. While the theory was still fresh in my mind, in July 2010, I took the five-day practical course and earned my **RYA Day Skipper** qualification. The dinghy sailing had helped a lot since many practical exercises were already covered.

Learning to teach: November 2012

Returning to dinghies, by November 2012, I had earned my **RYA Dinghy Assistant Instructor** qualification at BLYM, taking the course with Emily. We continued visiting BLYM whenever we could, volunteering as assistants on courses. I helped with adult and junior courses on weekends and sometimes took vacations from work to help during school holidays. I timed it so that one or more of my children could be there as well - sort of a working holiday.

In June 2014, we bought our first dinghy - a bright blue Laser Pico, an indestructible sailing-school workhorse, which we kept at BLYM. One very windy day, I rigged her with full sail and jib, expecting to zoom around the lake. Instead, I spent an hour capsizing repeatedly until I lost count. When I finally staggered ashore, drenched and disheartened, someone helpfully remarked, "You had too much sail up." I had learned a tough lesson about the value of reefing.

The same year, we took our first family sailing holiday in Malta and chartered a 39-foot Bavaria yacht named "Magi". Despite having my Day Skipper qualification, I thought it was safer to hire a skipper - Gareth Thomas from Canary Sailing School. That was a smart decision as it was a fantastic week and Gareth took a liking to my family. We did many sailing exercises, anchored every night, caught and cooked fish, and swam a lot.



Above - Graham and family aboard Magi in Malta

Back at BLYM I also became a fully qualified **RYA Dinghy Instructor**. After years of trying to understand sailing, I was now qualified to teach it to others!

Needing a break: April 2016

In April 2016, I decided to leave my job at the bank and take a year off. It was fortunate that Gareth was looking for extra crew to help move sailing school boats between Malta and the Canary Islands. I joined him and paying guests for an amazing adventure. Throughout 2016, I sailed about 2,000 miles in the Mediterranean. My main focus and enjoyment was navigation, and Gareth was an excellent teacher.

In 2017, I returned to work as a contractor and took on the **RYA Yachtmaster Theory** course. I traded evenings at home for long nights of tidal calculations and caffeine. In the following years I took the **RYA Coastal Skipper** practical and then finally the **RYA Yachtmaster** exams in 2019. The RYA Yachtmaster practical exam is known for being extremely difficult due to the high skills required and the stress of being tested in various tough situations, including night-time sailing and simulated equipment failures.

Success demands a high level of competence in all aspects of seamanship, including navigation, boat handling, and safety, which must be consistently demonstrated under pressure. When the examiner finally said during the debrief, “I don’t think you’re dangerous -- congratulations, you’ve passed,” I was nearly in tears. Fourteen years of courses, and I had finally reached a pinnacle.



Graham hard at work on the charts - all part of the Skipper and Yachtmaster exams.

Sam and I joined Broadwater and jumped into racing. I had bought two second-hand Lasers and tuned them identically, thinking this would level the playing field. It didn't. Sam beat me every time. By then, he was also a Dinghy Instructor and an excellent one. He would grin and say, “Dad, you sail by the book—that’s your problem.” He wasn’t wrong. By “the book,” he meant pulling the mainsail tight when sailing upwind and letting it out when sailing downwind—there is much more to it!

We both continued to volunteer at BLYM, and by April 2021, we had each earned our **RYA Senior Dinghy Instructor** qualification - surely proof that something must have been going right despite my racing record.

Joining Broadwater was a humbling experience. Even with my shiny Yachtmaster certificate and Senior Dinghy Instructor badge, my racing skills were not great. There's nothing quite like watching someone win race after race when you know they can't even tie a bowline. I could teach knots all day but couldn't reach the front of the fleet or, on bad days, even the finish line.

One memorable pursuit race had me finish dead last. I trudged home soaked and feeling very downbeat. Emily, James, and Sam cheerfully pointed out that at least I couldn't do any worse. It was hard to argue with them. A reset was clearly needed.

Wednesday morning racing has been a revelation - a cheerful mix of good company, lots of coffee, great food, and plenty of advice. The regulars are friendly and always ready to help with hints or handy tips.

After one particularly gusty race where I spent more time in the lake than in my Laser, someone asked if I had pushed my daggerboard all the way down. Of course, I said "yes, that's what the book says for upwind sailing!". Apparently, the book is wrong. When it's gusty, raising the daggerboard a little helps avoid getting knocked down. A great tip, though I mentioned it would have been more helpful to know that before the race.



Oops — fabulous picture of Graham missing his toe-straps on a day when he took his 360 degree camera on board. So he was guaranteed to catch the moment!

My racing reset has definitely helped. I'm now spending more time upright than upside down, which I consider progress. For the newer members or someone starting where I was six years ago, here's my slightly tongue-in-cheek guide to surviving and occasionally succeeding in Broadwater racing:

1. Check your boat before you start. It's amazing how far you won't get if something falls off. Make sure your ropes are where they should be and your knots haven't mysteriously untied themselves overnight. A quick five-minute check after rigging can save a race and earn you bonus places over those who didn't make it off the slipway.

2. Stay in your boat. Sounds obvious, doesn't it? I learned the hard way that speed doesn't matter if you're swimming. If it's too windy for your gybes to be graceful, just tack. It's not heroic, but it's faster than bailing.

3. Sail the course. Learn your laylines and don't undershoot. If you keep hitting buoys, treat them as a hint that you've gone too close - and remember, a 360-degree penalty turn for hitting a buoy is almost always slower than doing a wide rounding.

4. Understand headers and lifts. Once you can stay upright and mostly on course, start watching the wind shifts. Get your head out of the boat and watch for the gusts. Tack on the headers, stay on the lifts, you will be amazed at how much faster you'll be. I even set up a camera on the front of my Laser which has helped me identify where I was making mistakes.

5. Sail efficiently. Don't just haul the ropes and hope for the best. Keep an eagle eye on your telltales and the luff of the sail - if they're flapping or streaming the wrong way, you're not going to be speedy.

6. Start on time, in the right place. Getting to the line on time, pointing the right way, and not being tangled with other boats is half the battle. If this is where you are now, then congratulations, you're officially starting to be competitive.

Looking back: 2025

From those first frustrating moments at Stanborough to the friendly chaos of Broadwater race mornings, my sailing journey has been full of good humour, learning, and the occasional swim. Along the way, I've gained a few qualifications, a lot of soggy gear, and a wonderful community of sailing friends. Broadwater Sailing Club has been the perfect place for me to keep improving my skills. It shows that the real joy of sailing isn't just about winning but sharing the water, the wind, and the stories that come with it.



Graham....looking good at BSC.

Graham Thomas, Laser 208125

Self-Launching Anchor Windlass

by Tim Alden

The committee boat is now equipped with a self-launch and recovery anchor windlass. This improvement means there is no longer any need to deploy the anchor manually, nor access the foredeck to carry out anchoring operations.

For guidance on how to power the boat and start the engine, please refer to the Committee Boat Operating Instructions.

Initial Checks The Windlass is an electric motor powered by the boat's 12v battery. There is a LEWMAR breaker switch after the battery master switch. The breaker is located beneath the battery master switch

Operate the windlass with the engine running. The anchor is dropped and weighed using the up/down switch located on the side of the console: The anchor will tip off the bow roller and drop into the lake.

There is a RED PAINT MARK at about 15M of chain deployed. This will be plenty.



Dropping the Anchor - To correctly deploy the anchor, begin by positioning the boat some distance upwind of the intended starting point. Once you have reached this position, bring the boat to a stop and lower the anchor. Allow the boat to drift back naturally to the desired station. After this, use perpendicular transits to check your position and ensure the boat remains on station.

Weighing the Anchor - When it is time to recover the anchor, first start the engine. Begin to move the boat slowly forward towards the anchor chain at a dead slow pace as you start to wind in the chain. When the chain becomes nearly vertical, put the engine in neutral and complete the stowage process.

Stowing the Anchor - The anchor should be raised so that it comes onto the deck in the bow roller, restowing horizontally. Be aware that the windlass clutch is designed to slip if an attempt is made to wind the anchor in too far, preventing damage to the equipment.

NEVER USE THE WINDLASS TO MOVE THE BOAT ON A SET ANCHOR – ALWAYS USE THE ENGINE.

The Broadwater Christmas Race Quiz – What we learned...

Congratulations to Andy Wheeler, who won the quiz, claimed the 007 Bollinger and impressively got all of the technical questions right. The quiz was designed to educate as well as entertain, with questions split between race management and racing rules & tactics. As intended, it also highlighted a few useful areas where a refresher was helpful for many of us. Below are some of the key points that emerged.

- The Results Officer needs the sign-on sheets and the Race Officer's working sheets for each race, along with the fully resolved finishing order for the pursuit race (four sheets in total). This ensures they have the best possible chance of untangling the inevitable queries and corrections. Completing and photographing the paperwork on the day, before leaving the club, and emailing it to the Results Officer (using the address on the form) really helps. If technology isn't cooperating, please do ask for help.
- Just over half of respondents recalled that the course should be posted on the course board 20 minutes before the race. This timing is a balance between setting the course too early (when a major wind shift may still occur) and too late, which can make it difficult for slower boats to reach the start line in time—especially when the start is not near the launching area. Arriving early makes this much easier to achieve.
- Around half of us correctly identified that the start line should be 50% longer than the combined length of all boats. While wind direction and the position of the islands can make this challenging, line length has a real impact on fairness and competitiveness. At Broadwater, boats average around 4m, so allowing about 6m per boat works well for handicap races. For pursuit races, the line can be shorter, based on the largest group sharing the same start time.
- Most respondents remembered that the Committee Boat should be at the starboard end of the line. A useful additional point is that the line should be set with a slight bias, with the port end a little further upwind. This helps spread the fleet and avoids congestion at the Committee Boat. One way to achieve this is to anchor slightly upwind of the port end mark, then pay out chain to create the desired bias.
- Many also recalled that a slow boat can only be finished a lap (or more) early if it crosses the finish line after the overall leader and after the leader of its own class. In short, a boat cannot be finished before the race has ended overall, or before its class race has ended.
- In summary, the race management knowledge on display was encouraging—particularly given that answers came from both Race Officers and Assistants. Hopefully, the quiz has helped sharpen everyone's understanding a little further, and will make race management even smoother next season.

Peter Joseph on behalf of the Broadwater SC Race Committee



The Wednesday lunch club doing what they do best!

Monty's Tiramisu

This dessert has gone down well after the Wednesday morning races a couple of times. I found it in a magazine in my dentist's waiting room. It was titled 'Ten Minute Tiramisu'. The recipe is for 12 helpings, so scale up or down as required!

Mix together:

5 tbsp instant coffee

6 tbsp brandy

6 tbsp sugar

500 ml boiling water

Pour over 400g of 'sponge for trifles' (the fingers will do but the rectangle pieces are better). Set aside.

Mix together:

400g (1 tin) custard

500g mascarpone

200ml creme fraiche

In a roughly 8inch square deep dish, lay up 2 layers of the soggy sponge between 3 layers of cream mixture. Top it off with PLENTY of cocoa powder. Then chill.. (the dessert that is!)



Buon Appetito!

Monty Johnson