



Streaker Class Owners Association

Autumn 2011

A thrice-yearly newsletter circulated to all members of the **Streaker Class Owners Association**



Another successful Nationals. *Photo: Bett Simmons*

Chairman's message

Welcome all, to another Streaker newsletter. Where to start? After all, it has been quite a year!

The major event of the year, as always, was the National Championships, yet again ably hosted by Pennine SC. I suppose the disappointment was the weather, certainly on Saturday when the wind was blowing force 5 and gusting 6, with horizontal rain. I must congratulate all those who took part in the racing – it was 'full on' at times, but the long legs and simple triangular course reduced the risk of capsizing. This I think went some way to maximising the number of finishers in each race. John Whitfield and his race team did a splendid job. Our congratulations to the new National Champion – Steve Cockerill, who revelled in the conditions.

The ladies of Pennine SC (Josie Gentry and her team) should also be commended for the evening meal on Saturday and the hot food and drinks throughout the weekend. One of the highlights of the weekend for me was the Saturday evening entertainment. Mike Rimmer on maracas kept the rhythm going, and perhaps the red wine helped, but the Yorkshire Teabags had a spirit which was really enjoyed by all the sailors and supporters there. Dave Metcalfe joining the band on guitar added to the quality of the entertainment – or was that an improvement?

We extended the number of prizes given out at the Nationals, including prizes for extra positional places in both ladies and silver fleets. Matt Whitfield was the first winner of the new Fifteen Transom Trophy, for boats at

least 15 years old, the trophy being presented to the class courtesy of Butler Boats. Our thanks also to Pinnell & Bax and Sail Register for providing the spot prizes, which were won by Dave Taylor (sailing bag) and Geoff Town (cover). And courtesy of Rooster Sailing all went home with a well-earned drink as well.

The Inland Championship held as part of Bass Week was another great weekend. Bassenthwaite SC really did make a super effort, even rescheduling an extra race on Sunday to make up for one we lost on Saturday. My thanks to those members who made the effort to travel up to the Lake District for the weekend to join the Bass Week regulars. I think the Streakers gave a good account of themselves in a part of the country where they are not normally raced in any other event. And I suppose I should be congratulating myself for winning the Inlands! All who took part received a commemorative glass, and again prizes were awarded well down the order, not forgetting place prizes for the Silver Fleet (Silver Spars Trophy) won by Matt Whitfield. Matt has had quite a good year in his well looked-after Streaker 1446 – who needs a new boat to get in the prizes?

As mentioned in my last Chairman's message, the class cannot operate without a class secretary. So I am delighted that following the AGM we have obtained the services of Veronica Falat, who sails Streaker 1654 – and very well too, winning the Southern Paddle series in her first season in the class.

(continued on page 2)

It is certainly not expensive to be a member of the Streaker Class Owners Association. We are already planning for next year, and with your renewal (not due, by the way, until 1 March 2012) we have decided that members should be identified with stickers on transoms. I appreciate that in general the only reason for not rejoining is because somebody forgot. But if there is anyone who for one reason or another does not want to part with £12, don't worry – we will be very polite in our encouragement to join. Next year should see a new design of car sticker as well.

The Streaker calendar of events for 2012 is starting to come together. The National Championship is to be held at Grafham Water SC on 16/17 June. We are still looking for a venue for an Inland Championship, with some new venues being considered. It is not easy, however, even though we can muster a reasonably sized fleet, as shown by this year's Inlands. The larger well-established clubs don't seem to get the idea that Streakers are worth taking seriously. We are on the case – we just need to make a better presentation of the strength, enthusiasm and numbers that the Streaker class has to offer. Of course we need your support to ensure that when we do organise events at one of these clubs (such as at Grafham for the Nationals) the numbers entering are maximised.

I suppose the success of the Streaker class is reflected not only in the number of new boats that are being purchased but also in the demand for second-hand boats. We have discussed the problem of demand outstripping supply at a recent committee meeting. I have noticed that a number of Rooster and Butler boats are being traded up for new ones, but these get purchased rather quickly. I am aware that at the same time there are Streakers languishing in the dinghy park of sailing clubs. Please can we ask members of any of these clubs to be vigilant, find out who these Streakers belong to and make contact with the owners. It may be they intend to come and sail, and enjoy their Streaker. Then again, they might just have forgotten all about it and would be prepared to sell. We need Streakers in all states of repair, as well as Streakers ready to win.

The Streaker Dinghy Sailing group now exists on Facebook, and this is another way for Streaker sailors to communicate with each other.

Many thanks to all Streaker sailors for your support this season. Please keep spreading the word. It seems to be getting easier, but let's not be complacent.

ALAN GILLARD

How to get two Streakers to an open meeting

Ian Parish and Bill Strange visited Tamworth SC for the Streaker Paddle meeting in April, and this is how they managed to get their Streakers there. Nicely done!



SOUTHERN PADDLE

sponsored by Rooster Sailing

Veronica Falat offers a personal review of the 2011 Southern Paddle series

When the dates and venues for this year's Southern Paddle Series were published I dutifully marked them all on my calendar and had high intentions of doing all nine of them. Needless to say, things didn't quite work out like that but even so I did six, missing out on Bosham and Deben, and Weston was cancelled due to strong wind.

Obviously 'doing the circuit' isn't everyone's idea of fun. If you've got good competition at your home club, why bother going anywhere else? And if you haven't got a trailer or a tow bar, there might be too many problems to overcome. But if you can travel, at least occasionally, it can be a lot of fun, and the more you do it, the slicker you become at getting the whole show on the road.

The following are my observations about the places I visited on the Southern Paddle this year.

Firstly, **Bough Beech** at the end of March. What a nice stretch of water. Plenty big enough for some good courses. We shared the event with Lasers, who started five minutes ahead of us, which was handy as they could show us which marks we were aiming for! In rather light and shifty conditions the Streakers were soon overhauling the Laser tail-enders. I think one of the things I remember most clearly of that day was the loud splat noise as Ian Bradley capsized in a not-very-windy gybe, much to the surprise of all around him. However, he was up and sailing again so fast that he won the race. In fact he notched up three straight wins and it looked like he was right on course to retain his title of Southern Paddle champ.

Two weeks later it was the **Tamworth** open. This counts for both the Southern and Northern Paddle Series but I think the only 'Northerner' who turned up was Alan Gillard. Again it was a joint event with Lasers and, whereas there had been plenty of space at Bough Beech, the lake at Tamworth seemed to be full of boats as the course made us crisscross backwards and forwards. There was quite a bit of confusion at times as people lost track of where they'd got to in the course and seemed to be heading for marks at random! The racing was good fun – the weather was nice and the breeze warm and shifty. The conditions clearly suited local sailor Paul Burgoine, who won the first two races and came second to Alan G in the third.

With the Weston open cancelled, the next event was in June at **Ouse Amateur** SC near Kings Lynn. I'd Googled it and seen that the racing would be on a very straight, rather narrow stretch of water and I had wondered what would happen if the wind was blowing across it rather than up or

down it. Would we spend a lot of time reaching backwards and forwards? Yes we would! The breeze was indeed from the direction that the race officer had hoped it wouldn't be.

Short windward legs were possible – but good reaching technique was what was needed. Having not been at Tamworth, Ian B needed some good results and he started strongly with two wins. But after lunch black clouds were building most ominously and brought a big squall. Ian, along with many others, capsized. Briefly I was in the lead but Nick Lovell (who I think had also capsized) overtook me and gained the win. That race was pretty tough – but we were treated to the sight of the Supernovas (who we were sharing the event with) struggling even more than we were. When they were hurtling out of control it looked most spectacular, and some embedded themselves deep in the reeds!



Ouse Amateur SC, June 2011

We seemed to go from one extreme to another – because after the excitement of Ouse the conditions at **Stewartby** were very gentle. Much of the time there was no wind at all, and when it did fill in it came from random directions. The race officer decided to just get on with it and set a course. This time we were with the Solo fleet, who started ahead of us. Again, this was most helpful because we could see what was happening wind-wise ahead of us – although the Streakers were soon working their way through the Solos, which must have been most annoying for them. Despite the conditions, the racing was close and competitive. Barney Proud got two wins but I beat him in the last race to give me my first win of the series. It had been a baking hot, sunny day. A good day out!

The event that I had been really looking forward to was the **Deben** open, because that's the nearest Streaker club to where I live. However, the weather forecast was awful and I decided to wimp out and stayed at home. Later I was amazed to hear that they got all three races in and had a fleet of eight or nine boats. The local boats did very well – especially Michael Hanes, who won every race.

A week later it was **Bosham**, down in Chichester Harbour. I missed that one too, because of other commitments, but it sounds like it was a good event. Paul Burgoine and his father John made the trip down from Tamworth and took a race win each, with the third win going to Dave (brother of Steve) Cockerill. Evidently there was some excitement at the start of a race when a fleet of much bigger boats came through the Streaker start line just as the race got going. Fortunately there were no collisions, but it was a pretty near thing! The photos of the event on Alan Simmons' blog show it was another nice summer's day – so I imagine everyone was glad to have taken part. If there's an open meeting there next year, I would like to go.



Horrid weather at Broxbourne, September 2011

Next up it was **Broxbourne**. By now we were into September. Perhaps, dear reader, you will have realised by now that our hero from last year, Mr Bradley, is not featuring much in this report. Since the open at Ouse Amateur he had been missing from the Southern Paddle scene. I imagined he was bound to be at Broxbourne, but no he wasn't. Evidently a mishap with his boat was keeping him away. Anyway, his absence helped me gain two race wins, with the third race going to local sailor Peter Selway. This was another event where we shared the water with Lasers, and again no problems with that, except when some Streakers on a first beat got rather entangled with Lasers on their second beat and the aforementioned Streakers headed to the wrong mark. Just a momentary glitch. Broxbourne was a very welcoming club. The weather had been horrid at times (heavy rain) but the free coffee at the start of the day and the free tea and cakes at the end more than made up for that.

Now there was just the **Alton Water** event to come. I was leading the series because, along with Alan Simmons and Gary Hogan, I had got my nine race results to qualify.

Another sailor who had been to three opens was David New; he's new to the class and had brought his boat, 1080, to Tamworth, Ouse and Stewartby to learn about Streakers and how to set up his boat, but he was having to count some DNFs in his results. Having sailed in five events, I was happily discarding my worst results and could boast a score of three firsts and six seconds to count. However, with one event to go, I could still be beaten by Ian Bradley or Paul Burgoine if they turned up and picked up more first places – but in the event, neither was there. So I could relax and just enjoy the racing. Nick Lovell added to his tally of 4,4,6 (Tamworth) 3,3,1 (Ouse Amateur) with 4,2,3 and so took second place, ahead of Alan Simmons. Alton Water is a good size for Streaker sailing – big enough for some good courses but there are always wind shifts to keep you thinking hard! We shared the reservoir with a fleet of Toppers under training but there was plenty of room for all. Alan G won two races and Michael Hanes took the third win, but that still didn't give either of them enough results to qualify for the overall series.

There were a total of seven qualifiers for the series, which doesn't seem an awful lot when you consider you only need nine race results, meaning you only have to go to three events. But evidently that's better than it was last year! If you live in the southern half of England, how about giving the series a go next year? Don't be put off by the thought that the racing is all deadly serious – because it really isn't, and the more events you get to, the more friends you'll have in the fleet. The fleets are not big. In fact they're pretty small, varying this year from 8 to 12 boats. So, if you turn up you'll be warmly welcomed because everyone will be glad you made the effort. There's a huge range of abilities in the fleet, so however good or bad you think your sailing is, you'll fit in! See you next year!

Veronica Falat

Southern Paddle results, 2011

1st 1654 Veronica Falat Waveney & Oulton Broad YC

2nd 1541 Nick Lovell Ouse Amateur SC

3rd 1700 Alan Simmons Lancing SC

4th 1446 Matt Whitfield Tamworth SC

5th 1548 Ian Whitfield Tamworth SC

6th 1757 Gary Hogan Haversham SC

7th 1080 David New Paxton Lakes SC

The lucky winner of the Rooster Wave sail was Chris Seear from Royal Harwich YC

The two photos accompanying this article have been shamelessly stolen from Alan Simmons' blog at streakerramblings.blogspot.com. I hope he doesn't mind! If he does, he should sue the editor, not Veronica, who is entirely blameless.

NORTHERN PADDLE

sponsored by Sail Register



An account of events north of Watford Gap
by **Matt Whitfield**

The Streaker Northern Paddle Series in association with Sail Register concluded on 15 October with the final 2011 open meeting at Welton Sailing Club. The series started the year with 15 events, but the opens at Blackpool and Fleetwood SC and Girton SC were both cancelled. A variety of conditions greeted some 80 travellers in total – from sunshine and a sea breeze at Hornsea to light wind and tricky shifts at Tamworth.

Competitors were required to count their best 15 race results from a possible total of 45, although this was dropped to best 12 results after the loss of two meetings. Early on, the top spots were the property of three former national champions, Ian Jones, Alan Gillard and Tom Gillard, who all made it to the Northern Championship at Hornsea. As the season progressed, series regular Alan Gillard established his

dominance, only failing to win a handful of the races he entered. Nick Lovell, another regular, came closest to testing Alan, always there to catch him napping on those rare occasions on his way to second overall. Third went to Ian Bradley, attending fewer meetings than he has in previous years but still coming home at the sharp end of the fleet.

Overall, 12 sailors had enough results to qualify for a prize, all receiving a Streaker burgee. Roger Wallis won the prize for first boat over fifteen years old and the prize draw for a free Sail Register sail went to Peter Cogill.

2011 has been another bumper year for the Streaker class, and we hope we can continue to build on this in 2012 and deliver another great season of racing. See you all at the Dinghy Show in 2012!

Matt Whitfield



*The final Northern Paddle meeting of 2011, Welton, October
Photo courtesy of Welton SC*

Northern Paddle results, 2011

Name	Total points
A Gillard	12
N Lovell	22
I Bradley	30
D Butler	37
D Smith	43
P Tyerman	48
P Cogill	54
J Hollis	78
R Wallis	88
M Clack	108
M Whitfield	113
S Chilton	125

Wave sail update

In case you missed it, the Streaker 'Wave' sail was passed and fully accepted as the preferred smaller sail for Streakers at the AGM in 2010. The Wave sail has been a 'slow burner', to coin a phrase, but Streaker sailors are starting to find that it is a delight to sail with.

I am particularly pleased with the balance of the Streaker when using the Wave sail. This was always one of the major issues with the simple cut-down sail. A number of Streaker sailors have sent me testimonials of their experiences with the Wave sail. Here is one example.

I have a Wave sail and I absolutely love it. I raced with it a couple of weeks ago when it was gusting between 20 and 24 knots and it was fantastic – I capsized on my first gybe but got through the next two without a problem.

I find I am actually quicker sailing at the top of a force 4 upwind than with my big sail, but I suffer a bit on a reach or downwind – though having said that I am very vulnerable with my normal sail downwind when it is windy. I find that if it is gusting about 17 knots I should use my Wave sail and should probably use it before then but I really like reaching fast so use my large sail at the expense of my upwind performance.

I love the look of the sail and the performance. I am sure the people who are sceptical have not sailed with one in high winds.

Another lady sailor at our club has one. She is smaller than me and could not manage her larger sail at all but loves her Wave sail so I think they are a great success. I would recommend anyone who finds the big sail a bit too much to get one.

I am a great fan.

Jan Goodridge (Streaker 1652)



The Streaker Class Owners Association has purchased a Wave sail so that members can have a trial sail with it before buying one. So if you want to have a go please contact me and we will see what we can arrange.

Alan Gillard

Where have all the young sailors gone?

For those not in the know, the Streaker Class appears to be regarded as a boat sailed by older sailors. To be honest, who cares! What I know is that we are sailing one of the best single-handers on the market, and the friendships made within the Streaker Class are not related to a particular age group. But I do feel that we could do with a few more younger sailors to come and join us.

Whichever sailing club you may be a member of, you cannot help but notice the large numbers of junior and youth sailors who receive training in one of the RYA pathway classes. The resources and money being spent on the training and coaching of these sailors is considerable, both in support from the RYA and from the parents of the sailors involved. The standard achieved by them is without doubt this country's way forward in winning of more medals at the Olympic Games.

But what is happening to these young sailors when they are too old to continue in the youth scene? Or simply have been cast aside by the system as 'didn't make it'? A few (though not enough) continue to sail. Are these young sailors moving on into other classes rather than Streakers? Not that I have seen. All dinghy classes in this country would love an influx of younger sailors to bring new life into the class. It is a problem that I feel the RYA has never addressed and appears to be doing little to change – the whole focus is on winning medals at the Olympics, but for the good of the sport of dinghy racing at all levels, the RYA needs to address the perception that the only dinghy racing worth doing is at Olympic level. This is not to say that beginners are not catered for, with the RYA 'On Board' scheme, but how much of this is again focused at the younger sailor?

I am not sure what the answer is, but if you see any of these youngsters probably looking lost, let down and disillusioned by 'the system' why not suggest they have a go in your Streaker? They just might like it.

Alan Gillard

TECHNICAL CORNER (1): Righting lines

I have been using righting lines since I bought my first single-hander, an OK, in my early twenties, and I've installed and used them on my Solos and Streakers ever since. Some of my contemporaries in the Streaker fleet refer to them as granny lines, but this year several have commented on how quickly and easily I can right my Streaker from a capsize, when others are floundering in the water and sometimes needing outside assistance.

On a wooden boat, the lines are attached via a deck clip fastened below the rubbing strake near the centre thwart, i.e. at the widest point. In plastic boat, some drill a hole through the rubbing strake, while others attach a line under the rubbing strake from the shroud to the mainsheet eye at the aft end, and tie the righting line to that.



*Front fastening, under shroud
(all photos on this page by Peter Cogill)*

There are many methods for fastening the loose end. Over the years, I have used Velcro, hooks and other ties. The important thing is that you can easily release the line when in the boat or in the water. Currently I fasten mine below the stern mainsheet traveller eye with some elastic; I used to fasten them on the transom, which helps when swimming round the transom, though the lines need to be longer. Attach some thin shock-cord at the deck end to keep the lines tight. I use 8 mm line (an old control line is suitable): I can wrap it round my hand or tie knots in it to help with the grip. To reach across the hull the minimum length is 1.6 m, and the overall length depends on the method of fastening.



Righting lines secured at the transom with Velcro (on a Solo)

When I'm in the water, I can often right my boat by pulling on the upper righting line (which is behind rather than in front of the dagger board). The boat usually comes up; otherwise I pull myself onto the dagger board with the line, which I find much easier than trying to pull myself onto it any other way.

If the boat turns turtle, to get the boat horizontal, grab a line – it's much quicker than trying to get hold of the mainsheet – stand on the opposite gunwale and pull on

the line. After righting, if you have difficulty getting back into the boat, make a loop in the line to put your foot or knee into, so you can lever yourself up – tie a bowline or form a loop by holding the loose end against the thwart. I have spliced a loop in mine to stand in, but rarely use it.



Aft fastening with quick-release mechanism, under mainsheet traveller deck eye

When I capsize, I try to grab the line as I clamber over the side or swim round the transom. An added bonus is that after falling in to windward, if the lines are released, I can often catch the lower line to keep in contact with the boat.



Righting line correctly positioned, behind dagger board

To avoid spoiling my new Rooster, I tried fastening the lines below the shrouds. However, as I found at the Lancing Nationals, it didn't work, I was unable to right the boat or get onto the board, as I was pulling at completely the wrong angle.

If you want to try out righting lines for yourself, tie an old control line to the centre thwart. The only drawback is that a line fastened this way doesn't always hang over the side and can get washed back into the boat.

Peter Cogill (Streaker 1683)

TECHNICAL CORNER (2):

Rule 60 – height of upper edge of lower band above sheer line

If you have ever been faced with replacing a Streaker mast in your boat for whatever reason, you can find yourself with a small problem of fitting the new mast to the boat so that the mast conforms to Rule 60.

(Measurement Rule 60): Mast – Height upper edge lower band above sheer line. Minimum 570 mm to Maximum 595 mm

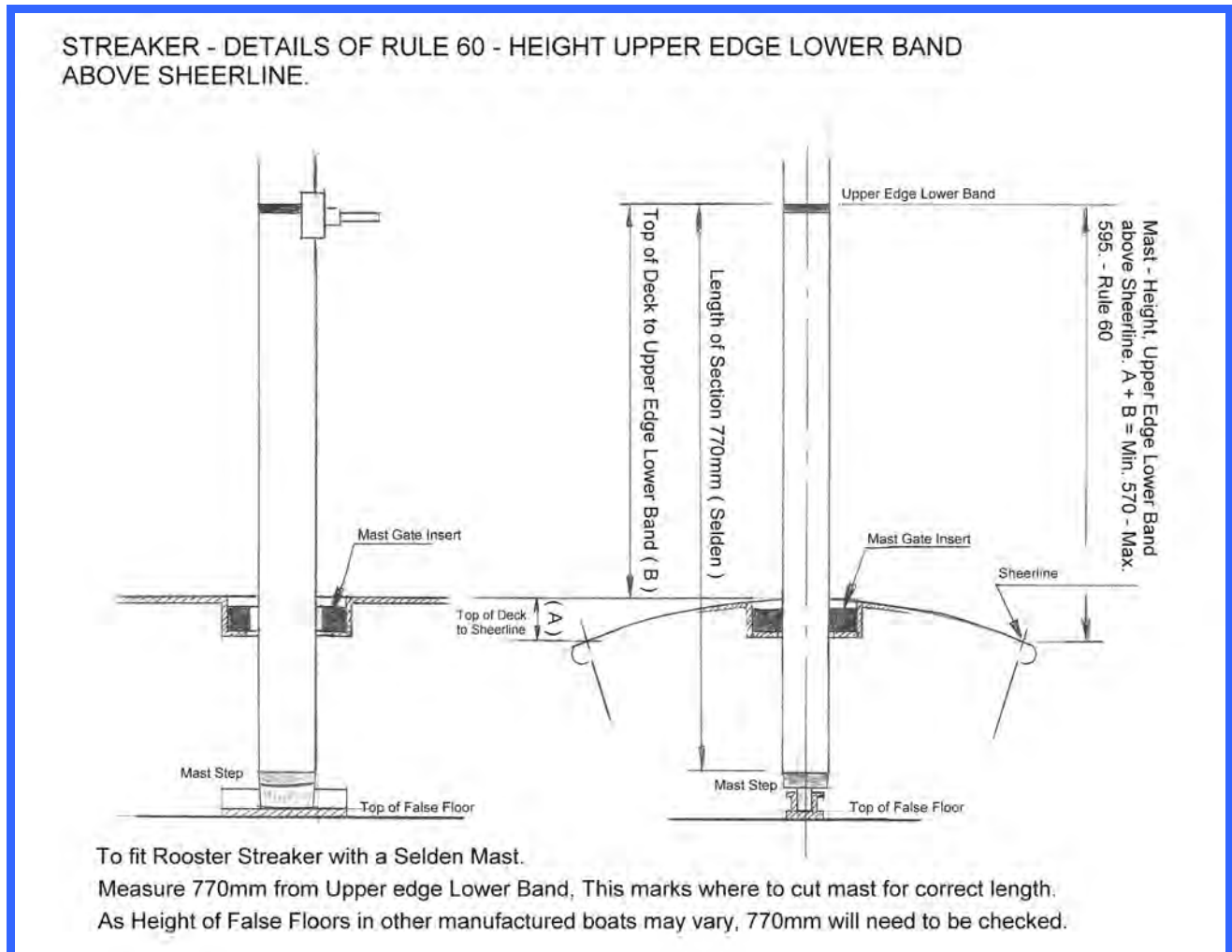
Streaker masts are generally supplied over-length, and it is necessary to shorten the mast at the bottom end to fit to your boat yourself. You might ask, 'Why it is not supplied the correct length?' Well, since the class adopted the false floor that the mast sits upon, the height of this false floor is unmeasured and so can vary in height from one boat to another. Hence a mast which was made to fit a Rooster boat might not be the right length for a Butler boat.

The height of the mast is measured not from its foot but from the 'sheer line', so that the rig is effectively the same height in all boats.

In my case I changed from a Rigel section mast to a Selden Lambda section. The sketch below shows how rule 60 is measured, and how I found the dimension of 770 mm for my Rooster Streaker.

I put the over-length mast in the boat and measured as per rule 60. Dimension A was 80 mm. So I then made a pencil mark on the mast a distance of 510 mm (Dimension B) up from the top of the deck. As shown, $A + B = 590$ mm, which conforms with Rule 60. The distance between the top of the lower band and my pencil mark was how much I needed to cut off the end. I would always recommend checking your dimensions two or three times before getting the hacksaw out, however!

Alan Gillard



TECHNICAL CORNER (3): Carbon masts

Some of you will be aware that Alan Simmons has been trialling a Streaker mast manufactured from carbon fibre. The mast in question was made by Streaker sailor Ian Jones, and is based around the original 'Cheetah' mast section. Basically it is a 51 mm round tube with an alloy track attached for the sail to go up.



Alan received the mast at the 2010 National Championships at Stewartby. Of course, it is out of class for any Streaker class open meeting or championship, so Alan has been using it during club races at Lancing. Another southern-based Streaker sailor, Laurence Venus, has had a go with the mast as well.

From the SCOA point of view there is no move to allow any different mast other than the alloy sections currently available. I understand that masts manufactured from carbon fibre are significantly more expensive than their alloy counterparts. But because the Streaker mast is not tapered, just a straight section, and the fittings are all externally fitted, the production of such a mast for a Streaker might turn out to be comparable in cost.

The carbon fibre mast has now been passed on to me, so I can evaluate it on behalf of SCOA. The table below shows some characteristics of the current alloy sections and the carbon section.

Mast section	Weight fully rigged (kg)	Deflection through 20 kg loading (mm)	
		Fore & aft	Sideways
Rigel	7.0	80	120
Selden Lambda	6.5	70	100
Carbon	6.0	125	140

The weight of the spars is where you would expect to see the Carbon mast with an advantage, and certainly this is the case – but not significantly so, as it is only 0.5 kg lighter than the Selden mast and 1 kg lighter than the Rigel.

The expected bend characteristics of the carbon and alloy masts can be seen through the deflection when the spars are loaded with a 20 kg weight. I think we can clearly see that there is little to choose between the current alloy sections, but the carbon mast bends significantly more. In view of this I think that the carbon mast would need to be made stiffer. This might well increase the weight of a carbon mast.

I have not had chance to sail with the carbon mast but I know that Alan Simmons commented on the bend characteristics, which did not match the luff curve of his sail.

In a future Newsletter I will report how I get on and what the carbon mast is like. Meanwhile, members should understand that this is not a development that SCOA is actively pursuing. It is just out of personal interest, and a little bit of fun!

Alan Gillard

DATES FOR THE DIARY

16/17 June 2012: Streaker Nationals

Grafham Water SC

(AGM on the Friday night, 7:30 pm start)

Inlands – to be arranged

Further details of all next year's events in the next newsletter, and on the website

Wanted – Streaker videos

Matt Whitfield is organising the Streaker stand at next year's Dinghy Show, and he is looking for some video footage to display on the stand. Do you have anything that might be suitable? If so, please contact Matt through the *contact* page on the website.

The Streaker class is spreading – pass it on!

Isn't it funny how some dinghy classes are popular in some parts of the country and virtually unheard of in others? A year ago I bought my Streaker, brought it back to my club (Waveney & Oulton Broad YC) in the Norfolk Broads and spent a lot of time explaining to people what it was! Like me, many of the members of my club have been sailing dinghies for a long, long time – but the Streaker was one of those classes that we'd never really been aware of. If it hadn't been for Steve Cockerill telling me a year earlier that I really should try one, I probably would have carried on oblivious to the Streaker – but fortunately he did tell me and I took the plunge and bought one.

The boat is great. It didn't take me long to realise that. And I soon wondered how it could be that I'd never considered one before.



Open meetings 2011

- Northern Paddle venues
- Southern Paddle venues

I learnt a lot about the class from the class website, and it was clear that the strongest fleets are in the north of England. This is reflected in the number and distribution of open meetings in the two Paddle series; this year the Northern had 15 opens, mostly clustered in Yorkshire and surrounding counties, while the Southern only had 9, mostly in the southeast, but covering a fairly wide area.

What is clear, from the map showing where these open meetings are, is that large parts of Britain have no Streaker opens at all. I expect all this is common knowledge to you long-term Streaker sailors and you'll say 'Duh, of course there are no opens where there are no fleets!' But I'm curious as to whether the class is actually spreading into new territories. Perhaps there are other people who, like me, are recent converts to the class even though they sail at clubs where Streakers have not appeared before.

In June I became class secretary (an honour indeed!) and in due course I was sent the list of members of SCOA. This gave me a chance to find out which clubs have the most members – and the top two are both 'up north' at Ripon and Hornsea. Interestingly, tying for third place are Pennine and a southern club, Deben in Suffolk, and there are several other southern clubs (e.g. Blakeney in Norfolk and Bosham in West Sussex) that are matching northern clubs for SCOA members.

However, looking at class membership only gives us half the picture. I know from experience with other classes that many boat owners do not join the class association when all they're interested in is sailing at their own club. Sad but true! Perhaps we can make association membership appealing to everyone – but that's another story! Anyway, I've been in contact with various fleets and it does indeed seem that the Streaker is even more popular than the class membership data suggests.

The Ripon fleet is doing incredibly well with 28 Streakers in the club; 7 or 8 is a normal fleet size for Sunday racing and during this summer season 17 boats sailed at least once. In the Ripon open meeting a few weeks ago, 12 of the 25 competitors were locals. According to Chris Wright, there are several reasons why the Streaker has become so successful at Ripon: *'The class seems to suit our water, which often provides rather fickle winds. Because of the size of the lake we don't get waves (except in the most extreme conditions), and a light boat like the Streaker can make the most of light puffs of wind. It accelerates quickly and provides some exciting sailing on a not particularly*



The Ripon fleet is doing incredibly well. Photo: Ian Smith

large lake. Some members have joined the class from Lasers because they wanted a boat that is lighter off the water and less strenuous to sail on it. Others have joined because they can see that as the Streaker is the biggest fleet racing at Ripon SC it provides close racing for all levels of competency (or incompetency in some cases)! The fleet includes boats of various ages, including two that were brand new this year.

Clearly, once a club fleet has established itself so that it offers good competition, it is likely to continue to attract new members from other classes. This seems to be happening at places like Beaver SC in East Yorkshire and Girton near Lincoln. Eddie Thorpe at Beaver says: 'In the last year the number of Streakers at Beaver Sailing Club has risen from a few to around a dozen or so. I bought mine this year from Alan Gillard, and am one of four regular racers at our club. A couple more race occasionally. We race in the Handicap events, but may have a fleet next season. The class has become more popular at Beaver, with people moving from Laser, Solo, Enterprise etc. The main reasons being the light weight, as we have steep launching ramps, and the boat being less of a handful on the water for more mature or less experienced helms.'

Similarly, Brian Rennie at Girton reports: 'We have 10 Streakers at Girton currently. Eight of the fleet are raced fairly regularly and four or five very regularly. The boat

attracts older sailors because of its easier handling than Lasers, for example, but also attracts younger light people. The next strongest single hander fleet here is the Solo. Solos seem to better suit slightly heavier/bigger people. In any case we get good racing against Solos, which seem to have lost popularity to Streakers for the moment, so the boats fit well together for handicap racing. Both boats seem to be well suited to the lake sailing we have here.

You might be interested in the age of boats here. Half the fleet are in the 1500s and the rest are quite a variety of ages. One has been converted to full centre main by its 70+ year old owner.

Quite a lot of people are very taken by the appearance of the boat and its handling if they are allowed a sail. I am quite sure we would have even more boats here if there were more good-condition, older boats around at middling prices, but I guess we will have to wait for all the new ones to age a bit for that.

Finally, I have been sailing Streakers for well over 20 years and only in the last year or two have I had the pleasure of seeing the fleet break the half-dozen mark. My impression is that once there are enough of them in a club, more people get attracted, but it is a real effort to get to the lift-off point, and the shortage of reasonably priced second-hand boats does not help.'



A crowded start line at Ripon. Photo: Ian Smith

For more photos of the 2011 Ripon Streaker Open, see www.ripon-sc.org.uk/Streaker_Mirror_Open_2011

This brings us on to the subject of available boats. For a fleet to grow, there has to be a source of boats. In a well-established fleet, some boats are likely to change hands within the club but in a small, growing fleet there is less chance of that unless someone is selling so that they can afford to buy new. It does seem a rare event that a boat with a sail-number over 1600 (i.e. less than five years old) appears on the 'boats for sale' page of the class website, and so anyone considering getting a newish boat also has to consider buying new, which of course ain't cheap! What seems interesting to me is that a high proportion of new boats are going to people who sail at clubs that have no Streaker fleets. Looking at the Boat List on the website I can see that 2011 boats have gone to south coast clubs such as Lymington, Emsworth and Warsash, well outside the normal Streaker sphere of influence.

I wonder how long it will be before the Southern Paddle will be including opens at clubs west of Southampton. It certainly seems that the class is becoming more and more established in the Southampton/Chichester Harbour area, but the southwest of the country looks like untouched territory. If anyone knows different, please tell us what's happening!

Then there's Wales and Scotland. From the membership list I can see there are a few members dotted about in Wales but I'm not aware of any actual fleets. It's the same sort of picture in Scotland. However, this might not do justice to the degree of enthusiasm these members have for the class. For example, at East Lothian Yacht Club at North Berwick on Scotland's east coast, there are only three Streakers – but all have sail numbers above 1700! Over on

the west coast the Clyde Cruising Club has two Streakers and one of those has a 1700+ number.

Blakeney SC in north Norfolk provides an example of what can be achieved in just a couple of years if a group of Streaker enthusiasts acts together. Alan Robinson explains: *'I started the fleet with my Streaker in 2009, chosen because Blakeney is very windy – I didn't want to miss out on days when it was blowing 25–30 mph. A Laser is too much like hard work in these conditions and a Phantom unmanageable!. Also I wanted a boat to establish as a new club class, mainly for older club members and several lady sailors. I wanted an epoxy boat which wouldn't fall apart. I was encouraged by Ian Bradley's results in North West Norfolk Week and the boat looked right! I like the fact that there are some local opens.'* There are now six Streakers at Blakeney, all just two years old or less. Alan says: *'There is further interest from other members but a lack of second-hand boats is holding people back.'*

If people are prepared to pay for new boats even though they are a considerable distance from the centre of the Streaker world, they are demonstrating how convinced they are of the boat's merits. Perhaps there are things that the Class Association can do to help them convince others in their clubs and surrounding regions that the Streaker has lots to offer – its lightness, responsiveness, ease of handling etc. If anyone has suggestions to make about promoting the class in Scotland, Wales, the southwest of England, etc, please contact me. Spreading the word about Streakers is my chosen mission!

Veronica Falat

Enjoying life in a Streaker

After having a go in a Hobby whilst on holiday, I decided to try and get back into sailing. After searching through sites like *Go Sail* and *Apollo Duck*, I found myself looking for a wooden Streaker. I found one in Oxford, so when I was visiting my mother in Milton Keynes in October 2010 I travelled down to Oxford to have a look. It was love at first sight – we agreed a price and arranged to meet at Milton Keynes a couple of weeks later. We loaded her onto a large tipper truck, as we had no road trailer, and set off on our journey to Ipswich. We stored her in our garden for the winter, where we rubbed down the hull and gave her a fresh coat of paint (Dolphin Blue). We have named her *Flipper*, due to her colour and my poor sailing skills.

As my main time for sailing was going to be on Wednesday nights, and because I did not want to get tied to the tides, I chose to join Alton Water – which turned out to be a very good decision, as I find the members and staff their very friendly and helpful. We launched *Flipper* at the end of March and I have not looked back since.

I have met at couple of other Streaker sailors and they have been very helpful in getting me going in the right direction and up the right way.

I thought I would just keep to pleasure sailing and leave the racing to others for this year. But within a couple of months I entered the Lemons Hill Race. This is a race down the river to the first bridge, which is normally a no-go area due to the fact that it is out of sight of the club house and part of it is a nature reserve. Somehow I managed to get all the way round and did not come last.

Since then I have entered the pursuit racing on Wednesday evenings, with mixed results, normally finishing in the last few places. I even managed to capsiz before the start line on one occasion.

I have a busy winter ahead of me, as I have to rub down the decks and re-varnish her and replace most of the controls as they look like the originals from when she was built in the 1970s. Any helpful hints gratefully received.

Steve Long (*Streaker 764*)

What's in a number?



The early days of Streaker dinghy sales were confined to kit-built boats sold by Jack Holt Ltd. From conception Jack Holt Ltd saw average sales (issue of sail numbers) of 128 boats per year for 10 years, but the actual yearly issue of sail numbers seem a little erratic through this period. Issues of sail numbers show that in 1977 a total of 416 Streakers were sold. But this tailed off to a lowly 6 boats in 1984, with not much better sales of 18 in 1985.

The kits were dispatched all over the world to countries as far away as Australia and Indonesia. Most of the exported kits went to Holland (185), Costa Rica (167) and Japan (141). In total 761 Streaker sail numbers have been issued away from these shores, encompassing 31 different countries. We know little of the whereabouts of these Streakers, other than from the occasional owner who makes contact with us through the class boat register on the website.

In 1982/83 the issue of sail numbers was further confused when Jack Holt Ltd apparently decided that they should issue numbers from 2000 onwards for boats which were going abroad. So sail numbers 2000 to 2082 were issued out of sequence. Was this was to give some sort of identity to these Streakers? Who knows – but some of the 2000 sail numbers found their way onto UK registered Streakers, including numbers 2010, 2023, 2028, 2030 and 2031. Was this a mistake? The 83 sail numbers issued out of sequence are not included in the list of numbers issued for 1982/83, and perhaps that goes some way towards explaining why the sales of Streakers in the early 1980s appeared to tail off so dramatically.

The Streaker class to some extent benefitted in its early years from the 'build your own sailing dinghy' concept. But the class needed to develop if it was to continue to attract new owners. The Streaker Class Owners Association

agreed with Jack Holt Ltd to allow boats to be built using patterns in 1980. But, as I have said before, I am not sure that such patterns were made available officially by Jack Holt Ltd, instead being copied from the supplied kits. A GRP version of the Streaker was developed in 1986, but this had little effect on sales of Streakers, which averaged 15 boats per year between 1985 and 2005.

The big change came in 2002, when the Streaker class saw transfer of copyright, technical control and ownership of moulds from Jack Holt (Designs) Ltd to SCOA. Prior to this, if at an AGM we had voted in favour of, for example, 'alloy rudder stocks', Jack Holt could always veto the class members' wishes – which is exactly what happened in the case of alloy rudder stocks.

Such self-determination has allowed the class to develop such that we now have licence agreements with two boat builders in Butler Boats and Rooster Sailing, in addition to plywood kits available from Ron Beasley, and of course the recently developed comprehensive plans/patterns. All this has had an effect not only on the supply of boats but also on their quality, including a number of design changes that have improved the original design without compromising performance. The overall equipment for Streakers has also improved, no longer being limited to the cheapest Holt Allen fittings of the original concept.

The outcome of this in terms of sail numbers? Since 2006 the class is seeing sales in excess of 30 boats per year. Hopefully, in the next five years we will reach the magic 2000 sail number and make the jump of 83 sail numbers issued out of sequence.

Alan Gillard

Further information on sail numbers is now on the website – see the history page at www.streaker-class.org.uk/info.php.

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