

Dear Member

It is with considerable sadness that we have to tell you that Eddie Blake has passed away. He was, very much, a colourful character at the Club; his humour and frequently unusual way of doing things belied his astute nature both on and off the water. I am unaware of anyone else who took the decision to attach an engine to their Dart. And whilst it was never going to pass muster on the Start Line, it enabled him to get his young family out onto the water for fun in the sunshine (often trips to Whitecliff Bay) regardless of time or tide. The Sprint 15 cartoonist Phil Breeze captured him perfectly two years ago when he was on duty: as we all launched our boats on a perfect summer Sunday morning, the theme-tune to Jaws could be heard blasting out across the Bay from the waterproof speaker he had brought in the patrol boat. (For those who have not seen it, we will put on the website). Many of you will have known Eddie for far longer than we have had, and will have your own special memories to treasure of the sailor and loving family-man. Eddie's wish was to not have a funeral, but instead, if you would like to, please donate to the Hospice in his name.

We hope everyone is safe and well and survived the difficulties presented by the national lockdown over the last 2 months. Can we thank you for your patience during these challenging times. We know that many people would like to have been working on their boats in recent weeks in preparation for the new season. Sadly, government guidelines are very clear that sailing clubs and their boat yards should remain closed until 29<sup>th</sup> March at the earliest. The Covid Committee have continued to meet remotely and monitor the club house and grounds over the winter and apart from a small roof leak everything is in good order. We are all hopeful of a better year ahead.

On March 4<sup>th</sup> the RYA updated guidance on the opening of clubs and sailing following the government's roadmap to see us back to some sense of normality. We are delighted that the RYA has confirmed that from Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup> we should be able to reopen the Club grounds and operate our normal racing schedule (available now to view on the SSC website and a PDF version is in process). In effect we have lost only a fortnight's racing due to the lockdown. Until the middle of June we will be restricted on land by the rule of six, so the usual Covid-19 distancing rules will still apply. The Club House changing rooms will remain closed for the time-being.

Unlike last year, we are coming out of lockdown without any race buoys on the water. We aim to get these out from the first available date being Monday March 29<sup>th</sup> so please make a note in your diary to assist if you are available. Obviously, this will be weather-dependent, and we will confirm a few days ahead of time how we shall best proceed. In the event that we are unable to get the main buoys out immediately, we have taken the precaution of purchasing four large inflatable buoys that can be easily laid on the day of a race.

The Duty Rota will be available to view on the website shortly. Please note these are not set in stone so if you are unable to assist on a particular day please let us know so we can rearrange dates (thanks to those who have already advised preferences).

Many members enjoy trips out in the bay and further afield outside of regular club racing days. This has historically been an important part of the club and it is clearly stated in club rules that members undertake this solely at their own risk. In order to help members in their decision making when sailing without safety boat provision three very experienced members have put together some essential guidance and information. Can we thank, Keith, Sean and Stuart for this valuable document attached to this memo that we recommend everyone reads.

The RYA guidelines on club houses being able to open apply to a multitude of different settings. The committee will ensure we allow access to the club and open as soon as it is safe to do so whilst maintaining national recommendations and guidelines on safety and social distancing. We will communicate any changes but at present the Club house remains closed.

At this time it is not possible to have a fitting out supper but as soon as it is a possible some sort of social event, possibly in the garden will be arranged and trophies from last season presented.

We hope to see members back on the water and down at the club as soon as possible. As changes are made to Government and RYA guidance we will update members accordingly.

Many members have already renewed their **Membership** for the current season, can we remind you that this needs to be completed by **31<sup>st</sup> March** if you wish to take advantage of the early **payment discount**.

With Best wishes

Nick and Yvonne