



No 29

1969/4

OLD GAFFERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER No. 1969/4

With this issue we welcome two new Honorary Members, from the Clubs which have entertained us so magnificently for our races. They are:

R.T. Burke, The Coppice, 91 High View Road, South Woodford,
London, E.18.

Commodore, Stone Sailing Club.

W.H. McMillan, Yew Tree Manor, Beaulieu Road, Lyndhurst,
Hampshire.

Rear Commodore, Royal Corinthian Yacht Club.

Also, we welcome the following new members:-

G.K.J. Booker, 71 Park Road, Southbourne, Emsworth, Hants.

C. Ellis, Emsworth Yacht Harbour Ltd., Thorney Road, Emsworth,
Hants. Bries

A.D. Freeman, Duncliffe, Woodmancote, Emsworth, Hants.

Capt. R. Gatehouse, D.S.C., R.N., Wick Lodge, Hoe Benham,
Newbury, Berks. Pleione

Dr. M. Hoagland, Thetford, Vermont, U.S.A.

Old Baldy

J.G. Holmes, C.7 Archers, Archers Road, Southampton. SO1 2ND.
Wind

N. Irens, Crete Hill House, Cote House Lane, Bristol 9.
Piskie

D. Lamb, 50 Plaistow Lane, Bromley, Kent.

Elsinore II

D.R. McGilvray, 20 Belsize Grove, London N.W.3.

Senechal

T. Watson, Jnr., Old Orchard Road, Armonk, New York, U.S.A.
Spray

N.A. Weller, 33 Hillside Road, Benfleet, Essex.

Dormouse

G. Winfield, 17 Upper Mall, Hammersmith, London W.6.

Sea Gull II

WINTER MEETINGS

SATURDAY 8th NOVEMBER Party at Maldon Little Ship Club.

7.0 p.m. Buffet supper. Tickets 5s. on the night. No advance booking.

As many of you know, the catering for this party is "do it yourself". Some members' wives have helped wonderfully for the past five years. Would somebody else like to share the work of preparing sandwiches, bridge rolls, etc. at home during the afternoon? Please let me know as soon as possible. J.A.S.

SATURDAY 14th NOVEMBER Social and Solent Area A.G.M. at the Emsworth Slipper Club, 7.30 p.m. Buffet Supper, 5s. per head. The Club is ours for the evening as the Slipper Club are holding their annual Dinner and Dance that evening. Will any member wishing to raise any item of business at the meeting or to make any nominations for the election of Officers or Committee notify Michael Millar in writing at least one week before the meeting.

If any members have films or slides of this year's events, please bring them along.

Will those who wish to attend please complete the tear-off slip on Page 12.

A.G.M. See note on Page 11.

2. WANTED - HELPERS. The continued steady growth of the Association increases the load on its workers. Some of the jobs can not be sub-divided, but we hope others can, and would welcome volunteers. Possibilities appear to be:-

Association Handicapper Instead of trying to deal with handicaps for races as part of the pre-race work, we would try to compile as complete a list as possible of permanent handicaps. This job would require somebody familiar with fairly simple arithmetic. Some of the work could be done any time, but there would be peaks just prior to the races. Late entries would still be dealt with by the local race committee (unless the Handicapper felt he would like to travel to see the race). Liaison (postal) with Race Secretaries. Ability to visit Michael Millar in London or me in Maldon might help, but this is NOT essential.

Membership Secretary Duties would be to maintain as accurate as possible a list of members AND to address the envelopes for the Newsletters. Postal liaison with all secretaries (i.e. at the moment Michael and myself and treasurer) could be frequent (up to fortnightly). At least one visit to Maldon per year would be necessary to compare my card index with the official list of members and the Newsletter circulation list.

Addressing the Newsletters would involve storing the Addressograph (approximately 2' x 1' x 1'); storing the envelopes purchased in bulk (say 2' x 2' x 1' space) and running off sets of envelopes such that I always have one set in hand. This involves about one hour's work per set - five sets per year. Also, new stencils would have to be ordered from the good lady who prepares them for us.

This job really requires lots of "odd moments" rather than any major efforts, but with over 400 members, of whom quite a number seem to move every year, it needs somebody who can keep on top of the work all the time. Ownership of or ready access to a typewriter would help - if not available, then fairly clear handwriting would be necessary!

A membership secretary could prove a very real help to Michael, Tom Cook and myself. From the liaison point of view a member living in Essex, or who sails on the Blackwater, would be best.

Help with folding newsletters would be welcomed. This requires somebody accessible by telephone during working hours, available at a few hours notice five times a year who could travel to Maldon for an evening. The need is greatest when we have a big Newsletter and I'm a bit late getting the stencils cut. Then the help is needed as soon as the duplicating is done, and so very little advance warning can be given. Newsletters go out about Easter, just after Whitsun, early August, mid-September and December.

1969 SOLENT RACE

This event turned out to be yet another outstanding success. The entry of 56 was two down on last year, but the number of actual starters, 53, was a clear record. As now appears to be the rule at our races, the wind was too light for the bigger boats, but there was enough wind to get nearly all the boats round the course, and it was a lovely warm sunny day.

The Royal Corinthian Yacht Club race officers chose a course twice round:- Line, Truck, South Ryde Middle and over the line, crossing the line in a westerly direction, which gave a total of 15 miles sailing. Unfortunately, a catamaran race was started before our race, and several owners thought their course signals applied to our race, and since the catamarans were starting easterly over the line they moved off down wind and tide to what they subsequently found was the wrong side of the line. By the time the starting gun went there were six

boats still the wrong side. Four got back within ten minutes, but the two big ketches Terminist and Regard had a very hard fight to get back again, Regard taking 54 minutes and Terminist 72. It was a wonderful sight to see these two really large boats, Terminist 80 feet long with all white sails and Regard 53 feet with all red sails, beating backwards and forwards against the tide.

Thanks to the improvement in the displaying of boats' names it was possible to list the order of most of the starters. In several cases where two or more boats crossed the line together, the further boats could not be identified, so the following list can not be regarded as complete. Patsy made a perfect start, followed very closely by what looked like Foam, then came Melmore, Peggy, Romilda (possibly hiding at least one other boat from our view) Dawdler, Gaivotta, Dusky Maid, - ? - , Piskie, - ? - , Tearaway, Bries, - ? - , Ingar, Quiver, Sea Breeze, Golden Plover, Gairloch, - ? - , Sybil of Wivenhoe, - ? - , Tessa, Peggy H, Paguerra, Sarah Two, Fanny of Cowes, Pleione, Katrine, Olive Mary, Mina, Amelia Jane, Mayfly, Sombria, Firefly, Thetis (who had come back from the wrong side of the line), Seagull II, and Senechal.

Some boats had got themselves involved with some motor cruisers on their way down to the line, and one well known owner is reported to have nearly lost his cap when his head came into contact with the bowsprit of a following boat. One boat (Senechal?) appeared to be contemplating an argument with a Red Funnel steamer, but otherwise the running start appeared to be remarkably free of incidents despite the close packing of so many boats.

Ignorance of the racing rules led some owners who had started their engines to get back to the right side of the line to continue motoring back after the five minute gun. So far, our races have been delightfully free of any "rule troubles", but this just could not be ignored; our hosts from the R.C.Y.C. being utterly astounded to see these boats proceeding at four to five knots against the tide with all sails shaking. A most regrettable incident, especially as we pride ourselves on providing racing for those who do not normally race. In future, we intend to mention any points like this in the race literature so that owners who do not know the rules will not inadvertently render themselves liable to disqualification.

J. B. Pot's new boat Dreva soon established a lead, which she held for much of the race, but it was always a very close race. From the shore, gaffers could be seen right across the Solent - a wonderful sight. Unfortunately, it could also be seen that some had not noticed the instruction in the sailing instructions to pass to the South Eastward of West Bramble Buoy - a safety measure introduced to keep all boats clear of the main shipping channel. This led to the Race Committee having to ask some owners to retire after the race - again most regrettable. (Next year's sailing instructions will be amended to clarify this point and make it much more obvious).

Dreva completed her first round in two hours thirty-one minutes (odd seconds rounded down), followed two and a half minutes later by Gaivotta, then Paguerra and Melmore. Four minutes later came Trammel, then Piskie, Guiding Star, Saari; Fanny of Cowes and Saga racing almost neck and neck; Firefly, Gairloch and Sea Breeze. After Sea Breeze we saw the most unusual sight ever seen in any Old Gaffers Race. Moving across the water towards us came what looked like a film producer's impression of a Bedouin tent! An enormous mound of canvas which looked as if it touched the water all along its base approached until a low, dark blue bow could be seen near the middle of the pile. As she drew rapidly closer the mystery was solved. G. B. Ling had brought Golden Plover round from the East Coast with more headsails than halliards, and on the run these headsails ought to be made to work. Those who have seen several races are now somewhat blasé about water sails below

main booms, but as Golden Plover is the only boat in the Association with a main boom longer than her hull her water sail was a de-luxe version. Out to port was boomed a very large genoa, and by some wonderful means Mr. Ling had managed to fill most of the space between the foot of this genoa and the water with another spare sail, which appeared to be contributing some quite useful forward drive. Their gybe right off the Clubhouse was an interesting performance to watch!

At some time during the proceedings, a certain amount of confusion occurred because the limit mark for the line became detached from its anchor and went off for a sail, until collected by the R.C.Y.C. launch, which then motored up and down displaying the buoy until a replacement could be laid. Examination showed the rope on the buoy had been cut, presumably by some boat who had fouled the rope.

A full list of the order of boats, with accurate timings, at the end of the first round can be made available to anybody who wishes to know in detail how well he was going - generally most boats took roughly the same time for the second leg of the course as for the first, and positions did not change much. Regard caught up well with the tail-enders, and Terminist completed her first round almost exactly an hour after Katrine, thus taking about ten minutes less to actually round the course.

Dreva stood on a bit too close to the shore off Norris Castle, letting Paguerra slip into the lead. As Mr. Pot obviously felt that the boat which had the honour to carry our President jolly well ought to be first over the line, this called for special efforts, and the finish was the most exciting ever seen in an Old Gaffers Race, as Dreva drew ahead of Paguerra just before the line. Gaivotta, Melmore and Piskie came in nicely spaced, then came another close duel as Fanny led Saga towards the line - the reigning East Coast champion and a boat which has won the Solent Race three times in five years fighting for supremacy. The issue was in doubt right to the end as Saga drew ahead, then Fanny pulled up again, gaining steadily, but just not enough, and Saga finished a bare second ahead.

Three quarters of an hour (and several boats) later Peggy-H and Marishka came in together, and this time there was a true dead heat, the tips of both bowsprits coming onto the line together.

Shortly after Fanny and Saga finished, Inga's distinctively coloured hull was spotted pointing in a peculiar direction, and it soon became clear she was aground, and unable to get off in time to get a reasonable place.

By six o'clock, forty boats had been timed in, but of these eight had to be weeded out, leaving the record total of 32 boats placed within the time limit. It ought to have been 33, but Mina had somehow mistaken the transits and turned back to anchor before crossing the finishing line.

Mowi, Regard, Katrine, Bries and Mayfly were all in sight, and completed the course soon after the time limit. Pleione and Merope II were left unaccounted for, and assumed to have retired. Terminist, determined to show that even in the light wind she can go, battled doggedly on to complete her second round - a very good performance, and one which gave a lot of pleasure to the spectators on the Esplanade, for many of whom the sight of such a large gaffer under sail was a very rare treat indeed.

I gather the O.G.A. members afloat thoroughly enjoyed their day - I know I enjoyed my day ashore, basking in the sunlight and the splendid hospitality of the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. Another pleasant feature of the day was the offers of help, in particular from one member whose boat was not ready to race, and who took notes at the start, helped with the general work at the finish, and generally assisted with keeping the paper work in good order. And then there was Stuart Garnham, imperturbably coping with the calculations of corrected times and T(H)CFs for

Continued on page 6.

RESULTS OF THE 1969 SOLENT OLD GAFFERS RACE

(start 11.00.00)

FINAL POSN.			CORR. TIME	POSN. OVER LINE	FIN. TIME	CLASS
1	Piskie	N.Irens	4 03 18	5	15 50 40	20
2	Paguera	D.Ettling	4 09 13	2	15 30 36	2
3	Fanny of Cowes	D.T.Cook	4 14 00	7	15 33 38	20
4	Saga	D.Lord	4 15 53	6	15 53 37	2
5	Firefly	H.R.Poulton	4 32 44	9	16 04 23	20
6	Sea Breeze	S.Wood	4 35 06	10	16 04 38	20
7	Dreva	J.B.Pot	4 35 57	1	15 30 32	1
8	Gaivotta	R.Francis	4 44 59	3	15 34 15	1
9	Saari	C.M.Waddington	4 45 26	8	15 57 01	1
10	Gairloch	P.W.Clements	4 47 37	11	16 05 38	2
11	Melmore	A.A.Muirhead	4 50 47	4	15 40 56	1
12	Quiver	M.D.Millar	4 54 40	13	16 41 52	20
13	Thetis	R.G.King	5 04 44	16	17 07 10	2
14	Guiding Star	J.B.Glennie	5 12 34	12	16 11 03	1
15	Marishka	T.N.Mackean	5 16 18	14=	16 49 29	20
16	Daisy Bell	M.Phillips	5 17 12	24	17 26 50	2
17	Patsy	C.M.Jefferson	5 29 43	17	17 07 35	20
18	Tearaway	W.D.Richardson	5 36 49	32	17 49 15	2
19	Fancy	D.J.Wright	5 40 02	18	17 16 35	20
20	Peggy H	R.V.Crick	5 40 46	14=	16 49 29	1
21	Wind	J.G.Holmes	5 46 39	25	17 27 19	1
22	Storm	D.J.Cade	5 50 48	20	17 25 29	20
23	Senechal	D.R.McGilvray	5 53 10	27	17 31 58	20
24	Iona	R.E.Griffiths	5 55 11	28	17 33 21	20
25	Olive Mary	J.M.Cross	5 59 05	26	17 29 52	2
26	Tessa	P.E.Colley	6 04 46	29	17 38 38	20
27	Dusky Maid	P.A.Clark	6 06 38	31	17 47 50	20
28	Skipjack	G.G.Jackson	6 07 29	30	17 43 24	20
29	Peggy	R.L.Pidduck	6 20 03	21	17 25 51	1
30	Romilda	F.W.Hillier	6 20 58	23	17 26 23	1
31	Sybil of Wivenhoe	G.B.Judd	6 42 00	19	17 24 40	1
32	Richard Davey	J.H.Robinson	6 44 03	22	17 26 00	1

Retired (including non-starters, boats not finishing within time limit etc.)

Amelia Jane, Appleberry, Bries, Chough, Dawdler, Elsinore II, Foam, Golden Plover, Huckleberry Finn, Inga, Katrine, Maid Marion, Mayfly, Merope II, Mina, Mowi, Pleione, Regard, Sarah Two, Seagull II, Sombria, Spray, Terminist, Trammel.

PRIZEWINNERS

The Channel Cup	..	..	..	..	..	..	Piskie
The Dead-Eye Trophy	..	..	..	..	..	..	Dreva
The Le Havre Plate	..	..	..	..	..	..	Dreva
Second Class I	..	..	..	..	..	..	Gaivotta
Third Class I	..	..	..	..	..	..	Saari
Fourth Class I	..	..	..	..	..	..	Melmore
The Emsworth Cleat	..	..	..	..	..	..	Fanny of Cowes
Second Class II over 50 years	..	..	..	..	..	..	Firefly
Third Class II	"	"	"	..	..	..	Sea Breeze
Fourth Class II	"	"	"	..	..	..	Quiver
The Channel Plate	..	..	..	..	..	..	Paguera
Second Class II under 50 years	..	..	..	..	..	..	Saga
Third Class II	"	"	"	..	..	..	Gairloch
Fourth Class II	"	"	"	..	..	..	Thetis
The C. H. Paxton Memorial Trophy	..	..	..	..	..	..	Marishka
Laggards Ladle	..	..	..	..	..	..	Tearaway

the late entrants - he must have worked at something beyond flat out, but always appeared completely unflappable. Not surprisingly, Col. Elliott and the R.C.Y.C. team who ran the race for us were a wonderful boost to morale. I gather the Yeoman of Signals was "borrowed" for the day from the next door establishment.

The traditional party in the evening set a completely new standard in O.G.A. events. Over 200 owners and crew partook of an excellent supper in two sittings in the spacious dining room. One member, upholding our Elder Gaffer's description of us as piratical individualists, obeyed the request to dress for dinner with a tie and appeared in a magnificent white tie - which on closer inspection was revealed as a sail tie!

Mr. W. H. McMillan, Rear Commodore, welcomed us to the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, saying he hoped we would come again, and Mrs. McMillan presented the prizes. John Clarke replied on behalf of the Association, and presented Mrs. McMillan with a small memento. (Do we have any teetotal members who could take comprehensible notes of these witty speeches for me?) Altogether, the whole day was a wonderful occasion.

The next day was not devoid of interest, as gaffer after gaffer slipped out of Cowes, setting sail as they went. The event appears to have been a popular one with residents of Cowes and the visitors, and various comments such as "Now that's what real yachts used to be like", were reported.

Piskie has changed hands since she last raced, and her new owner, Nigel Irens, was in hospital for Race Day. Her win should be a wonderful tonic for him! (I'll bet he hangs on to his crew now!) Piskie and Paguerra have demonstrated at long last that Fanny of Cowes can be beaten, but David Cook need feel no shame - it took a couple of really good boats to do it, and Fanny managed to beat several other well known fliers in their own home waters. It is to be hoped that the presence of three boats from the East Coast (Fanny, Golden Plover and Katrine) in a Solent Race is a record which will be broken with each race we hold, and more and more owners will make the passage to the other area.

And now for a competitor's view:-

THE SOLENT AREA OLD GAFFERS' RACE, AS SEEN BY AN EAST ANGLIAN

In 1968, Fanny of Cowes entered this race, largely as the result of Michael Millar's sporting challenge, Michael having sailed Quiver in the East Coast race. But it seemed last year that the fates did not mean Fanny to reach the Solent - after months of northerly winds the wind set in from the South West, and at gale force at that. Fanny got as far as the Naze.

1969 was different - winds of force three and four from the North West conveniently veered North East as Fanny nosed into the Channel. An early start on Saturday ensured reaching Folkestone before dark, and the trip was completed in two more easy stages - the next night being spent in Newhaven. Total time on passage from Ipswich to Folly Inn, on the Medina, was 33 hours, - with a little help from the engine past Beachy Head, where the wind died away for a time. Fanny was safely in Cowes on Monday night, awaiting Saturday with great interest. Her time for the trip compares with Quiver's 36 hours from Heybridge Basin to Birdham Lock, but Quiver's trip was done in one hop, taking foul tides as they came. On the Sunday and Monday, Fanny stayed in harbour until the tides were fair. Fanny's only unpleasant moments were off the North Foreland, where wind against tide put up a very unpleasant sea - it had been blowing much harder for several days previously and the seas had not yet abated.

The intervening days were pleasantly spent - chatting to Fred Hillier, who was looking out for Fanny, and in studying the sailing instructions and surveying the possible course. The sailing instructions named 27 buoys, of which some would be

named at 10.30 a.m. "on the day". It would need a computer to calculate the possibilities - but at least positions could be marked on the chart, and with Fred's invaluable help they were. Since some of the buoys are racing marks put down by the clubs and not named on Admiralty or other published charts, we decided we had defused the Southern enemy's secret weapon - how little did we know: there were more to come!

On Friday evening we were in despair. There had been no wind all day, and the local forecast did not promise much better for the morrow. It certainly seemed probable that Fanny had made the trip, only for the race to be abandoned. However, next morning provided a steady North East breeze of about force one, freshening at times, and a glorious cloudless sky. We waited off the Royal Corinthian line for the posting of the Code Letters of the selected buoys, and the direction of the start. These instructions had been promised for 10.30 a.m., giving skippers half an hour to eliminate 24 of those multitudinous marks.

At 9.30 a.m. letters and a red flag appeared, and we thought "Fine, they are really on the ball and getting our instructions across good and early". The red flag indicated a start against the tide - surprising because it was so strong - but anyway a start was made on putting names to the code letters. However, Fanny was lucky enough to have a crew member ashore in the Royal Corinthian, and when he came aboard at 9.45, he was in a position to say "As you were. That lot of instructions is nothing to do with the Old Gaffers - a catamaran race is starting an hour before us." And so it proved. When the Royal Corinthian say 10.30 a.m. they mean exactly 10.30 a.m., and not a minute sooner. Several skippers seeing the course hoisted at 9.30 rather naturally began to "jill around" on the wrong side of the line. They were not necessarily bound to notice that at 10.30 a completely different set of instructions was displayed - anyone down tide of the line had a very difficult task to re-cross before 10.55 without motoring. Two boats were in fact disqualified for motoring after the five minute gun - whilst others (caught by this "secret weapon") gallantly set off in pursuit, having given the fleet an hour's start. Anyway, secret weapon number two had gone off without hitting us!

I should perhaps emphasise at this stage that all arrangements for the race were in the hands of the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, and that the instructions issued to the Old Gaffers were identical with those in use during Cowes Week and throughout the whole season. My references to "secret weapons" (there are more to come) are not meant to be taken seriously, and cannot in any case be a reflection on Southern Area officials. The Royal Corinthian, apart from making their beautiful clubhouse available, had undertaken to run the race - a truly noble gesture.

At 10.30 arrived the "moment of truth" - our course. This proved to be quite a small triangle, with a down tide start, and two laps to be sailed. We knew that all times were to be taken after round one, in case the second lap was not completed. All seemed very usual and sensible, except the position of the first mark. This proved to be a Club buoy (not shown on charts, which did not worry Fanny) but positioned not in front of us at roughly ninety degrees to the line, but away on the opposite bank in such a position that the direction of the first leg was almost an extension of the line itself. I have never in my life seen such a course. In effect, with the wind free, it reduced the length of the line to the width of one boat at the limit mark. However, fair for one, fair for all. (Query - Secret weapon No. Three?)

By starting late, Fanny ensured quite a good position for the first leg - to windward of the entire fleet, but Piskie made a better. The majority of the huge heap that arrived there a few seconds later were destined to get in each other's wind for the whole of the first leg, which was a short one. Fanny,

up to windward with a clear wind, overtook about thirty boats within about fifteen minutes of the start. We arrived at the first mark, the "Truck", with about five boats ahead of us and 48 behind us - though several of the more powerful boats were destined to catch us on the next leg, a beat against the tide.

From now on "our" race developed into a private duel with Saga, whose performance seemed identical; with Piskie about three minutes ahead, and Dreva and Paguerra showing us the way round - all superbly handled.

The next secret weapon was a beauty. Beating against a foul tide, the entire fleet was heading for slacker water on the North Shore, when a few of the boats ahead put about on a short board into the swifter tide. "Heavens, they must be mad!" was our first reaction, especially as better tacticians were holding their course. "But what about Regulation 17", said Peter Catton - one of the wisest remarks he will ever make, even if he does have a long life. The writer, being the crewman who first boarded Fanny shortly before the start, having gone down by road, hadn't even read the instructions. Nor, it seemed, had many other people. Regulation No. 17 dealt with Safety (lifejackets, flares and all that stuff, I suppose, skip it!) But this regulation, with the object of protecting racing fleets from the bows of the Queen Elizabeth and similar monsters, names a group of buoys as compulsory marks in all courses, and we found that we were required to pass West Bramble Buoy to the South East. As if 27 were not enough to cope with, now this lot! But fair enough - the precaution is sensible - even if we did not expect to find marks in the course under the heading of Safety Regulations. Sadly we put about into the swiftest of the tide, and even more sadly hoisted a protest flag whilst noting the names of seven nearby craft now rapidly pulling away from us to the slack water of the North Shore, including Golden Plover, one of the other East Coast entries. She would undoubtedly have been in the prize list but for this mishap. As I watched astern I reckoned that for every boat that put about to sail the correct course there were two that did not. These were so far astern I could neither identify the boats nor be certain of my facts. I had an eagle eye for Quiver - we could not allow her any liberties at this stage - but our Sister ship duly behaved herself.

Soon after this disappointing development came the fifth secret weapon - the Brambles Bank. Nothing secret about that, the reader may comment, a famous hazard marked on the charts as drying out four feet. My knowledge was limited to cricket matches played thereon. It was now low water - but nothing showing. Boats ahead seemed to be sailing clean over the top with impunity - but at this stage we thought we had the race won - Piskie was a late entry and we did not know her rating. Everything else ahead was too big to win a Gaffers race in light winds (or so we thought). Cautiously we came about to clear the Bank, and thereby possibly lost first place - secret weapon number five had scored a hit, and a very fair one. After the race the locals commented "but it was neaps". This we knew - but can one sail $3\frac{1}{2}$ ft. of draught over a bank that dries out four feet, even at neaps? $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. difference between Springs and neaps - in the Solent it might be true - I can believe anything of tidal behaviour in the Solent!

After the Brambles, a superb tussle with Saga for $1\frac{1}{2}$ laps. Three quarters of the five hour race, both of us hotly in pursuit of Piskie. This was finally resolved when Saga crossed the finishing line a few seconds ahead of us, with Piskie her usual couple of minutes ahead. We had hoped to beat Saga to it, by virtue of Fanny's 12 ft. bowsprit which we had managed to push ahead of her at about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the finish. But Saga stole a few seconds somehow, although Fanny only lost honour (a tiny handicap difference in her favour ensured our place). And so we finished, fairly confident that we had achieved our aim of putting the Channel Cup beside the East Coast Trophy.

But we hadn't! Piskie, a boat no bigger than Fanny was entitled to time from us, and had insulted us by finishing in front anyway. Paguerra, a "big boat" had saved her time in light airs - we did not think it possible. We had to be content with the Emsworth Cleat - a magnificent trophy - after one of the most interesting races in which I have ever sailed.

As far as anyone is aware, this is the first time in the 97 years of Fanny's life that she has been fairly beaten by a gaff-rigged boat in any race. A horrid shock for us, due I felt that for once we were up against skippers who knew as much about racing as they did about sailing. An unusual experience for us - we thought most Old Gaffers were cruising folk, not much worried about racing tactics. But the boats I have mentioned did not miss a trick - and nor, I suspect, did Dreva and Paguerra - though we were too far behind to be able to see and fully appreciate their boat handling. There must be several more keen racing types in the Solent Fleet.

Fanny has changed her plans for next season - we had thought of this as a "Once for all time" entry. The Solent is a long way from Ipswich, but Fanny will be back for another try at that elusive Channel Cup.

I hope that elsewhere in the newsletter someone has done justice to the party after the race - it was terrific.

Fanny's return journey - off we go again for another saga! No. She went by road. Circumstances reduced her crew from five to two, and North Easterly winds persisted. On Monday we de-rigged her in the Emsworth Marina and left her in the care of Admiral Vick's wonderful organisation. The Emsworth Marina at least is owned by a real sailor, not a property developer. In his time the Admiral has crewed for Charles Curry of Olympic fame. But that is nothing! On Saturday Admiral Vick had sailed in the Old Gaffers Race; for really intelligent help in matters maritime the Emsworth Marina seems to have everything.

I must conclude this badly written account of a narrow viewpoint of a grand event with one paragraph of really sincere thanks and appreciation to all the Officers of the South Coast, and their many helpers, who did so much to help Fanny and her crew with all the little details of visiting an away port. Fred Hillier and Michael Millar were true guides, philosophers and friends, and did everything possible to make the visit pleasant. But everyone was as helpful as they could be. For East Coast boats to compete in the Solent event does indeed involve a lot of effort; but if it can be done the effort is worth it. We were reluctant to return home, especially by train!

Tom Cook.

After receiving the draft of Tom Cook's account of the race, I had a letter from Tom, from which I feel the following extracts make clear the feelings of many people who were present on race day, and a comment for East Coast entrants to note:

"I felt absolutely rotten when a large number of boats sailed the wrong course - one dreads the subsequent inquest. This was of course entirely the skippers' fault. But in my opinion it is useless to tell people 'you must read the instructions'. They know this. But if one makes the point humorously or dramatically there is a better chance that people remember the snag next year - this I've tried to do . . .

". . . Another skipper who saw things from further back was lobbying for 'no race' - he reckoned he saw 25 go wrong. I told him he had no grounds for his 'no race' theory - he should simply have named as many boats as he could - he said there were too many! But he was very upset - up to the first mark he was doing well in a small boat - he felt he could have been robbed. But, once again, if any people have prizes who shouldn't it is the fault of the skippers who failed to protest - as in cricket

you cannot have a man 'out' without appealing to the umpire. No one can criticise the committee, if no one protested. Fanny protested - and her protest was fairly and correctly disposed of.

"I agree with you that Fanny's days of easy wins on the East Coast must be nearing their end - and a good thing too. But I don't think it is a matter of new staysails. As I've tried to suggest it is more a matter of knowing something of racing as distinct from cruising. We have hitherto found that on the reaches - even the broad reaches, everyone is happy to give us the windward berth - where we get a clear wind. Very few of our East Coast skippers seem to realise that it is hopeless just to point at the next mark and hope, you get involved in a huge heap of boats in disturbed air and progress is slow. In the Solent Area Saga never willingly gave us a clear wind - if we got it we had to fight for it - thereby losing a little time - and this is how it should be, when racing. I got the impression that we were racing against five boats - none of whom were going to give us a present of anything - this is one reason why I enjoyed the race so much - for me it makes it far more interesting if the opposition is knowledgeable. But I agree that the primary concern of O.G.A. is good fellowship between owners of Gaffers - the races are only incidental to this; unlike a sailing club whose 'raison-d'etre' is to organize racing. . . . "

AN OPEN LETTER TO CLASS 3

Gentlemen,

Without doubt, we all had a fine sail on the day of the Old Gaffers East Coast Race, but I do not think that any of us felt that we were taking part in a race for Class 3.

Over the last 3 years, the Class 3 results have been as follows:

1967	Annie Laurie	1st over line	2nd lowest THCF
1968	Annie Laurie	1st over line	Lowest THCF
1969	Boy Martin	1st over line	2nd lowest THCF

From these results, it seems to me, and I hope to you, that the handicapping system employed just does not work for our type of boat. If we are to keep the spirit of competition, and the Class, alive, I feel that it is time that we devised a different system of handicap. (The mind boggles at the thought of a Fireball, THCF say .75 or lower, setting a fully battened sail with vertical gaff, planing home in 4 hours, with a corrected time of 3 hours!)

A way has occurred to me, that might be worth your consideration.

The 1969 weather was, I think, perfect for Class 3, and so very fast times were returned by all entrants. If these times are taken as a yardstick for each boat, and each boat's actual time is divided into that of the fastest boat, then a handicap figure can be obtained for each boat. Thus the result of future races will be determined by the amount of improvement each boat can make, relative to its 1969 performance.

There are snags, such as other boats entering the race, but I am sure that as long as we keep the nucleus of boats we have at the moment, these difficulties can be overcome.

To illustrate my idea, I have worked out the table on page 11, using 4-figure logs, and taking finishing times to the nearest tenth of a minute.

By multiplying future actual times by the handicap factor, a more realistic result will be obtained.

If you have any ideas on this subject, perhaps you would be good enough to get in touch with me at the address below.

One more comment. I can assure you that this letter is not the result of sour grapes on my part, but a genuine desire to see really competitive racing in Class 3.

<u>Boat</u>	<u>1969 Actual Time (mins.)</u>	<u>Handicap</u>
Boy Martin	341.1	1.00
Surf	342.7	0.99
Annie Laurie	390.9	0.89
Appleberry	406.2	0.84
Mary of Maldon	410.1	0.83
Red Red Rose	475.7	0.73

C. R. Williamson,
26 Downs Road,
Maldon,
Essex.

FOR SALE

EMERALD 29' x 8.5' x 4.75'. Albert Strange design. Built 1938. Pitch Pine on oak - full length planks, laid teak deck, teak interior. Topsail yawl cutter rig. Nine sails in inventory. Excellent condition throughout, cruised extensively. Reason for selling - wants larger boat. Accommodation for four. 5' 11" headroom. Calor gas cooker, W.C., chart table, Stuart 8 auxiliary.
L. Roobottom, The Breakers, Marine Drive, Rhos on Sea, Colwyn Bay.

SARA 18' 6" x 6' 3". Centreboard Cutter. Stuart Turner 4 h.p. engine. Two jibs and topsail (new this year) in terylene. Canvas mainsail. Running rigging all terylene. New mast and boom; deck beams and deck (Trakmark covered). Pine hull, copper fastened. Pram dinghy. £325 o.n.o.
J. W. Wright, 9 Marriot Road, Barnet, Herts. Tel: Barnet 7090.

WHERE BE TU (ex Biddy) 9 ton cutter. Built Howard of Maldon 1908. 32' x 28' x 9.5' x 5.1'. Hull pine on oak with oak garboards and shear strake. Teak coachroof and trim. Iron keel plus iron pigs. Mainsail, roller reefing; 6 headsails and topsail. 28 h.p. 4 cyl. Leyland diesel, 10 gals. fuel tank, electric starting. 3 bunks and 1 cot, calor gas stove, Baby Blake. 35 lb. CQR on 30 fthms $\frac{3}{8}$ chain; kedge and 50 fthm Nelson warp. Echo sounder; lifebuoy; compass; flares etc., nearly new clinker stem dinghy. Lying Woolverston Marina. £1,500.
P. Austin, 12 Hull Road, Cottingham, E. Yorkshire.

6 COLLARS for 8" dia. mast and 6" dia. mast in twin sets of 3. Each set consists of a flanged ring (approx. 4" high) where mast passes through deck and 2 clamp on collars for gooseneck and throat halvard blocks respectively, all well galvanized,

TACKING AN EAST COAST SMACK

We had managed to get Polly out of Brightlingsea Creek without hitting the large and luxurious motor yacht moored right ~~across~~ the entrance, though we did give the men aboard an anxious moment or two, and were beating our way down the Colne. Dave, the athletic type, had climbed the mast to examine the rigging, Janet was dozing on the deck, and the new owner, John, was below shaving, leaving me at the helm. I was feeling quite pleased with my progress when for no apparent reason Polly luffed head to wind and stopped. I knew that I often tended to pinch boats when beating, but I was sure I had not been that close. However, I knew the cure, and it worked. Polly gathered sternway and I let her pay well off, then when the wind was almost abeam Janet and I hauled in the sheets and off we went again. But only for a very short while. We were hardly moving before Polly completely ignored her helm, luffed, and stopped. This time I tried the other tack, with exactly the same results. My third try brought the proud owner on deck to see what the --- I thought I was doing. After telling him what I thought of a boat that did such peculiar things, I let him take the helm and show me the correct way to handle a smack. Dave had by now joined us on deck, and three of us stood and watched John as he allowed Polly to gather sternway, turning her until the wind was abeam, then ordering us to pull in the sheets, and as we gathered way, turning to me to point out that that was the way to get a smack sailing, and any other time I wanted lessons to go to him. Before he had finished talking though, Polly had luffed and was lying nearly head to wind again. John tried twice more with no better luck, then asked me if I could think of any reason for such behaviour. I was hardly in a thinking mood - it was a glorious day to be stuck out in the middle of the Colne, and when we got fed up our dinghy was lying astern, and it was not too far for Dave to row me back to our boat in the Creek. Dave was new to sailing so did not worry about the problem, but wandered round the boat examining all the rigging. However, in his explorations he found the answer to the question when he asked John where the anchor stowed. I still wish I had had a camera with me to record the expression on John's face when he looked over the bulwarks and saw the anchor was down. One look at the pawl made me wonder how ever the thing had stayed up long enough for us to get so far out, but I have never understood how all the chain slid over without any of us being aware of its going.