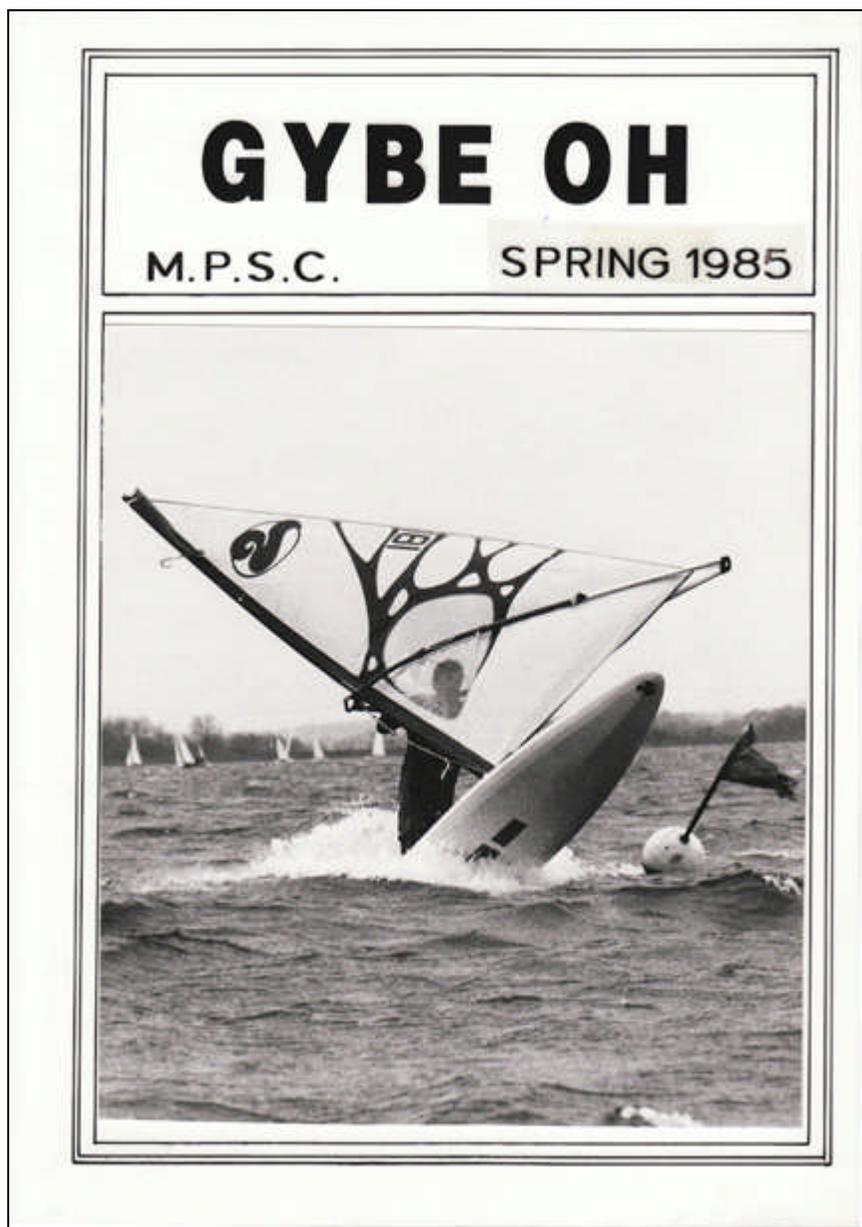


**'GYBE OH'** - This Newsletter of the Metropolitan Police Sailing Club was originally circulated in Spring 1985



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THE MAGAZINE OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE SAILING CLUB.

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Secretary " Inspector David Thomson(XS)

Crewing Secretary " Det Inspector Stuart Douglas (D.9)

Committee " PC 439 B Tim Bewicke (BH)

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DS Andrew Hewett (CD)

Here we are at the start of yet another sailing season. With Easter as the first weekend of the month, there will be a lot of our members on the water in all sorts of craft. Yours truly will be flexing his sailing muscles on Bala Lake, at their three-day Easter Regatta. Then there will be the dinghy open meeting at Chase Sailing Club, organized by the West Midlands Police, on Thursday 18th of this month. That should bring out all the potential police sailing champions. It is usually well attended by all the local forces as well as the Met. If you wish to attend and you are not sure where Chase Sailing Club is, just contact me by telephone.

Our own sailing regatta will be held this year on Thursday 9th May, at Queen Mary Sailing Club, Ashford, Middlesex. We have abandoned the usual month of June because it comes too close to the date of the Police National Sailing Championships (8th and 9th June at Bala Sailing Club). If you have not yet received an entry form for the Metropolitan Police Regatta, and you wish to take part, then contact either DS Andy Hewett or DC Roger Glass at the CID Office at West End Central Police Station (CD). Andy is the organizing genius for this year's meeting. If anyone who is not actually sailing on that day is willing to lend a hand on a rescue boat, on the shore party, or at any one of the many tasks that need to be done in such a meeting, then your offer of help will be gratefully received.

It looks as if Andy Hewett could be spending quite a lot of his time on the water this year. Not only has he become a very keen Laser sailor, but he has been offered a place on one of the boats competing in the Whitbread's Round The World Race this year. That is a trip that could last about eight or nine months. I am sure that you join with me in wishing him every success in this venture, and we look forward to hearing all about it in future pages of this magazine. We shall follow the progress of the race with all the more interest knowing that at least one of the competitors belongs to the M.P.S.C.

Plans are well afoot for this year's Three Peaks Race. Alex Ross, John Burbeck and the rest of the team are taking the preparations very seriously. Physical fitness is going to be one of the key factors, and the 'sailors' as well as the 'runners' are going into strict training. They realise that the risk of injury could entail one of the sailing members of the crew having to 'run' at least one of the mountains. The selection of the actual boat has not been finalised, but the team are hoping to use another fast trimaran, as they did in 1983 when the Met team came third overall. There is talk of there being four police teams taking part in the 85 Three Peaks Race. That should make it a more interesting competition, and should bring police sailing as a whole a bit more publicity. Let us hope that they all do well and give our image a boost.

The Offshore Section of the club will be starting off their season with a Fitting Out Supper to be held on Thursday 2nd May. The venue will be Mandy's Restaurant, in Seething Lane, in the City (near the Corn Exchange). Inspector David Thomson at Southall Police Station (XS) is organizing this event, and will be notifying every member of the time and place. Contact him if you want any further information.

The Club's Laser is still to be berthed at Queen Mary Sailing Club where it can be used by members of the MPSC. It is still in good condition and (according to the Maestro, Stan Batten) is still a competitive boat, and we would like to keep it that way. So, it is important that it is looked after and any defects or damage is reported immediately after use so that repairs can be made. There is nothing worse than spending a lot of time and trouble in getting to Queen Mary's only to find the boat is not sailable. The boat is kept locked up (because of theft of parts in the past), and a list of key-holders can be found on a later page of this magazine. Please make sure that the Laser is secure before leaving it. If there are any amendments to the list of key-holders perhaps you could inform me of them, so that I can keep the list up to date.

Last year we sadly had to say goodbye to our Vice Commodore, Dan Glen, on his retirement from the force. Dan served the club faithfully for many years, and his skill as a helmsman as well as chairman of the committee will long be remembered. At the club's A.G.M. last December, John Burbeck, was elected to take his place as Vice Commodore of the Metropolitan Police Sailing Club. Congratulations are due to John for assuming that important role, and also on his promotion to Detective Chief Inspector. He is now one of the Commissioner's F.R.I.T. squad, and can be contacted at D.5 Branch at New Scotland Yard. We wish him well in the future.

Another stalwart of the club that we have lost to Civvy Street is Peter Moore, our secretary of the Dinghy Section. Peter was a former honorary secretary of the club, and has been a committee member for many years. He is a great organizer, and has many social events to his name. His crowning glory was taking on the organization of the 1984 P.A.A. National Sailing Championships. He did a first class job which was evident by the smooth way that that event progressed. We shall miss his talents. Perhaps now he will find time to sail the boat he has been building in his garden over the last few years. Our loss is the government's gain. Peter has got a job in 'Positive Vetting' (I think it has something to do with animals!).

I would like to thank Alistair Kerr for his article "Anchors Aweigh" which will be of special interest to all the members of the Offshore Section. Thanks too to Prout Catamarans for allowing me to print an article from their own magazine "Prout World". It was an interesting insight on what goes on in a police-escorted trip round London. And, last but not least, my thanks to Stan Laurenson-Batten for the photographs displayed in this issue of Gybe Oh. Stan is now well ensconced in his house on the front at Christchurch, in Dorset. If you are down there at any time, and are near the (            ), then look him up - he lives right opposite. He will be very glad to see you. We hope to see him at the Met Police Regatta in May, if not before.

If any other members or friends of the club have any interesting tales to tell, either about sailing, or connected with the water, then please put it down on paper and send it to me. I am always on the lookout for copy. Also if you have the dates of any events that you are taking part in, or you think will interest our members then give me a call or send them 'through the bag'. That applies to our county friends as well. The sooner we get a list of fixtures published the less likely there will be of a clash of dates. I am always interested in the results of police competitions, and cannot always attend them myself. So if you do well - whether it be in police meetings or not - then let us all know. It must benefit the club as a whole.

Last July the London Dockland Development Corporation held a Water Fun Day in the West India Docks. The idea was to publicise the docks as not just a place to do business, but also as a place for recreation. It was held on one of the hottest days of the year, and therefore the water was very welcome to keep cool. The idea was obviously a great success, because this year they are going to do it again, but over two days instead of one. The dates will be the 6th and 7th of July (a Saturday and Sunday). H District have taken on the task of organizing the event, and have asked the Met Police Sailing Club to lend a hand. They would like some dinghy racing going on in the South Dock, and so I shall be trying to organize something along that line. We tried to do just that last year, but did not get a lot of support from club members. Please make a note of those dates and try and come along. After all, it is not every day that you get to sail in inner London. Come along and be part of the scene, and enjoy yourselves.

Len Gooch

WEST MIDLANDS POLICE REGATTA - 85

1st	Gareth Owen	Merseyside	Laser	¾	¾	¾	=	1½
2nd	J & E Burbeck	Metro	Merlin	2	3	3	=	5
3rd	Geoff Norman	Nottingham	Laser		5	2	=	7
4th	Simon Hawkes	A & Somerset	"		2	6	=	8
5th	Roger Glass	Metro	"	5	6	9	=	11
6th	Dick Sivers	Northants	"			4	=	
7th	Colin Cooper	W Midlands	"		4			
8th	Derek Westall	S Wales	"			5		
9th	Charles Jordan	Kent	Phantom	3		7		
10th	David Thursfield	W Midlands	GP 14	4				
11th	Rod Bramhall	Gt Manchester	Enterprise					
12th	Ross Elliston	Metro	Int Canoe	16	13			20

There was an entry of 25 boats in this year's West Midlands Police Regatta, which was held on Thursday 18th April, at Chase Sailing Club, near Brownhills in Warwickshire. This first meeting in the police calendar always attracts a good crowd.

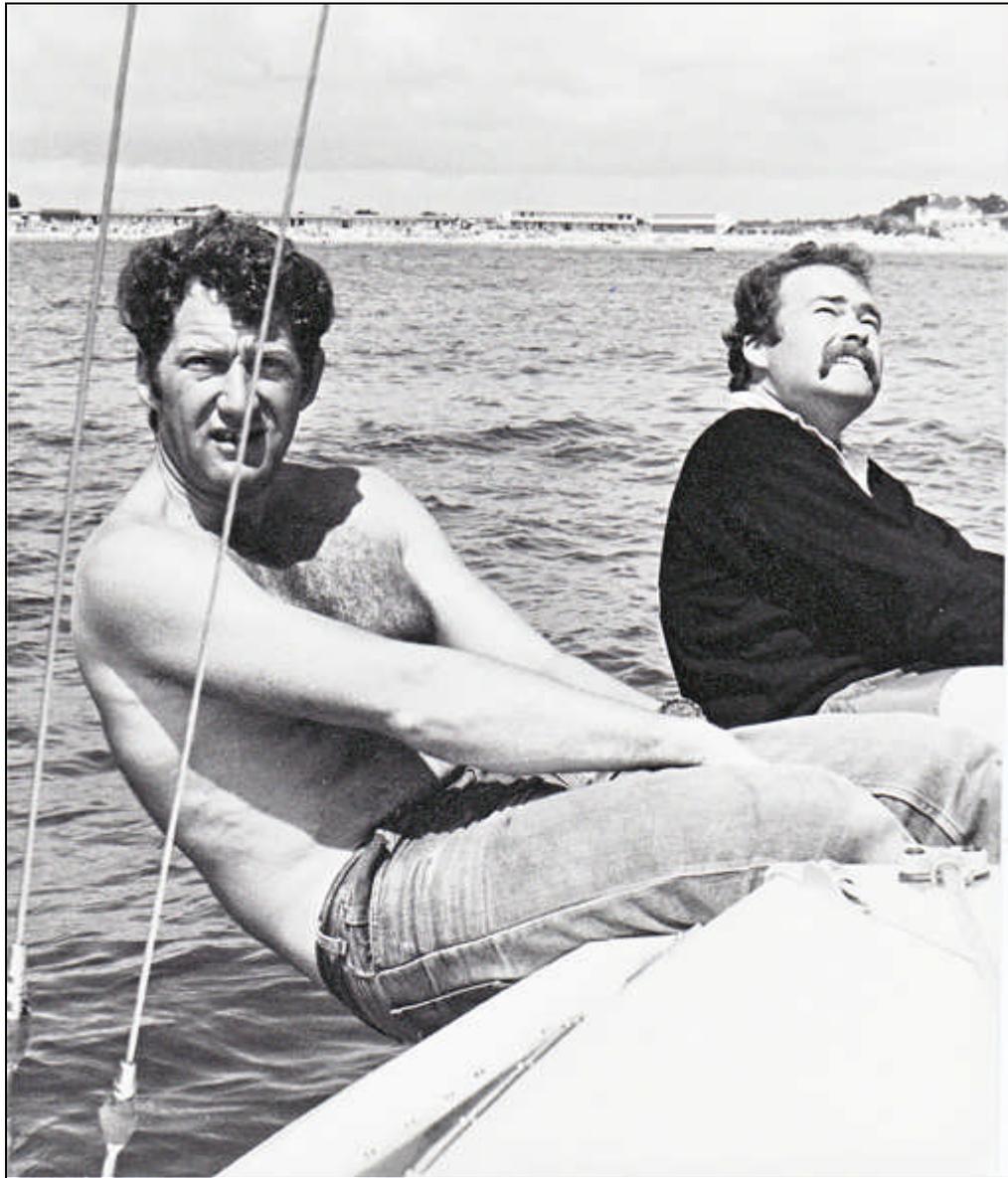
Three races were held in the variable winds (force 1 to 3). In the first race it was the Burbecks that lead for most of the way in their Merlin Rocket, but were eventually passed by Gareth Owen in his Laser, and Charlie Jordan in his Phantom. Charlie was sailing particularly well. Andy Hewett appeared in the force Laser.

Ross Elliston is trying his hand at sailing an International Canoe this season. It is quite a mean machine, but quite tricky to keep upright. He was able to show off its boat speed in the second race, where he took the line honours in the slightly stronger winds after overtaking the Merlin Rocket. The Laser fleet battled it out in a close fought contest, with Gareth Owen and Simon Hawkes finishing just ahead of Colin Cooper of the local Force. Roger Glass had to be content with 6th place. On handicap, Ross was placed 13th.

It was Gareth Owen and Dick Sivers that reached the first mark in the third race ahead of the rest of the fleet. The wind was getting stronger, but was still variable. Eventually John and Elizabeth Burbeck passed Sivers, and then Ross Elliston steamed past everyone except Owen. Then Geoff Norman, in spite of having a dose of flu, slipped past Sivers, finishing 2nd to Gareth. Charlie Jordan put paid to his chances when he hit one of the marks, putting him out of the running for a prize. Ross Elliston's performance gave him the 7th place in this race, but was not good enough to bring him on the 'leader board'.

As can be seen from the list of results, it was a field day for the Lasers, with Gareth Owen showing his mastery of the art by winning all three races. Geoff Norman did extremely well considering the age of his boat compared to many of the other leading Lasers.

Roger Glass and  
Len Gooch



Our Rear Commodore (Dinghies) sailing his 'Micro' E.P.B., like a Laser to good effect in the Micro National Championships at Poole Bay, crewed by PC Laurie Wright

Photo - Stan Laurenson-Batten

## ANCHORS AWEIGH

The art of compromise must be well practised in our family, for whilst Dad enjoys the tranquillity of quiet, peaceful anchorages, Mum and daughters prefer the convenience of Marinas with ready pontoons, no dinghy work, and for teen-age daughters - large mirrors.

It was during a noisy and almost sleepless night in St Helier Marina that I promised myself a few days of peace and solitude at Isles Chausey on our way to St Malo, where we were to meet French friends. My reading about this group of rocks and sandy islets only a few miles to the south of Jersey spoke of their quiet seclusion, nesting stormy petrels and absence of sophistication. I made the mistake of telling all this to my wife and daughters.

Having escaped the Marina at high water early next morning, we anchored in St Aubin Bay and before sailing off in light breezes with the tide.

Entry to the anchorage at Grand Isle was easy even for strangers such ourselves, but my surprise at as number of yachts rafted alongside as they the moored to the visitors' buoys was only matched by the mirth of the feminine crew. So this was the solitude and bird watching I had promised ! And we rocked in the wash of passing vedettes carrying day-visitors back to Granville for supper. "But wait", I said, "Until we are peacefully at anchor".

The north-going tide was running strongly through the channel just before high water. Presuming that the ebb would flow just as strongly southwards, I decided upon using my large Bruce as a bower and rather larger C.Q.R. as a kedge anchor. This was eventually accomplished after dinghy inflation and much securing, of anchor buoys in a proper depth of water, and after strenuous exercises in arithmetic on my part whilst calculating the tremendous tidal range.

The eventual position with correct scope left us lying close, but not too close I believed, to an attractive French 35 foot sloop, whose appearance was marred by a large white repair on the fibreglass of her port quarter. The Skipper of this vessel soon began to call to me in French. This I should explain was doubly foolish of him because (a) I was hungry and mouth-watering odours were emitting from the galley, and (b)) I cannot speak or understand French.

The peace and tranquillity of our family evening meal continued to be disturbed by the fellow, and my daughters, who were able to converse with him, explained that he was complaining that we would swing differently since he was lying to only one anchor. He further advised that I should do the same. I felt that the narrowness of the channel and doubtful grip of a lone anchor being turned in such a strong tidal flow made two anchors advisable. But to appease my voluble neighbour, who was by now joined by his equally loquacious wife, I varied the scope of my anchor warps to increase my distance from him. In the gathering darkness I was then able to feel at peace as I puffed a reflective pipe and watched the moon's image mirrored in the now tranquil anchorage.

With the turn of the tide, our respective yachts were closer, but separated by at least two of his boat lengths. Rather maliciously I took some pleasure from noting that my French friend's boat was bumping against fishermen's rafts at the side of the channel. So this was the reason for the glass fibre repair!

It was at this stage that the curious tidal flow in this channel became apparent to me, and I began to realise why so much faith was placed in only one anchor. The main strength of the ebb flows northwards - the same direction of the flood. Only latterly on the ebb does any tidal flow in the opposite direction occur, and then only weakly.

My peace of mind at the security of our position was such that on the next day I felt no qualms at leaving our boat at anchor and exploring on foot, some of the miles of rock and sand which are exposed to this delightful area at low water. It was upon returning to our boat that we found that the hedge anchor had been moved, the warp re-tied and the fender which I had used as a buoy had disappeared, together with the line connecting anchor to buoy. This was a fine long length of nylon which had served me faithfully, in which I placed great trust. So also had the attractive blue boat disappeared, together with its voluble occupants.

This time my astonishment, fury and sense of loss was matched by the rather quieter and restrained mirth of my foolishly feminine crew. So much, they said, for peace and solitude of a quiet anchorage.

It is only proper to add that, after this inauspicious start, having re-laid my kedge anchor, we spent a glorious few days, bird watching, sun-bathing and mackerel-fishing in these entrancing surroundings. At high water the Grand Isle remains visible with other very small islands and a collection of rocks, but as the tide recedes an area of some  $6\frac{1}{2}$  x  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles of rock and sand are exposed. The continually changing view is fascinating and beautiful. What was a jagged rock becomes the peak of an island, which in turn becomes part of another; navigable channels become sandy beaches; delightful sunny coves are exposed; Bird life (feathered variety) is rich.

I was amazed at the absence of British yachts. During our stay we found only two or three. The French, notably from nearby Granville, however are present in numbers, but there is still space for many more yachts without spoiling the Islands' peace.

It was with regret that, having run out of water, bread and most importantly, wine (for the small shop on Grande Isle is not well stocked, and water is not easily come by), we set sail under cruising chute on a tranquil and peaceful evening, on our way to Granville Marina.

Our only other attempt at anchoring on this year's holiday was on our way home in Braye Harbour, Alderney. In the morning we had motored in a flat calm through rather poor visibility from Guernsey through the Swinge, where we experienced the expected few minutes of turbulence, and into Braye where I again inflated, calculated and 'played with my bit of string'. (How scathing families can be!). Supper/forecast time saw our return to 'Andata' and we listened to forecasts of wind strengths of variable 3 and less, and reports of south and south-westerly 1s and 2s. It was with some surprise therefore, that we found our culinary preparations being hampered by an increasing swell. Beautiful pressure-cooked lamb was left untouched, and daughters discreetly withdrew shoreward. The Mate's talk of abandoning our peaceful mooring for the calmness of Cherbourg Marina gained conviction as the evening progressed, as did her anger at my ability to have a snooze in preparation for a possible night sail.

Our Maxi 84 did not roll alone. We watched other larger vessels also pitching and heaving as the gentle winds blew us around and the scend continued. One beautiful beamy Gaffer showed her flat undersides in a most ungainly fashion, and we watched as a warrior and a Rival lunged, gesticulated and swayed in a grotesque war-dance. Yet the wind was in the southerly quarter and certainly very moderate at that.

Braye should only behave in this way with the wind north of east. She had not treated us so unkindly before. One must learn to accept the inevitable in life, I reflected, as 00.30 hours saw us motoring out with the leading lights of Braye falling astern. My reward was a magnificent and gentle night sail in warm balmy breezes. Oddly, the stars were clearly visible, whilst man's imitative efforts from Cap de la Hague and Quenard light-houses quickly fell from view in poor visibility.



Sigma National Championships 1983

Photo - Stan Laurenson-Batten

AN UNUSUAL TRIP WITH A SAILING BOAT, or  
AREN'T OUR POLICE WONDERFUL?

One reads that Prout Catamarans are one of the big five of British yacht builders and that 65% of production is exported - mostly to the U.S.A. Therefore most customers do not see their boat until it arrives in a foreign land, where probably they only have to step masts, rig and sort out minor problems such as equipment tests before starting to sail. Whilst I know that a lot of Prout business in England is in stage-built boats, most home customers who buy a Prout Catamaran completed at Prouts presumably have the boat launched at Canvey Island and sail away, hopefully into the proverbial sunset. Thus the only land-based journeys are those from the moulding factory to the other side of Canvey Island, through production in the factory and launching.

I am an export customer of Prouts. Not, I hasten to add, in the U.S.A., but in Qatar in the Middle East, and my boat, named CATAR, is a Quest 33CS, number 101. I am fortunate that my work often takes me to the U.K. and I was able to see my boat many times through building. I was in England almost at the completion stage, but a dock strike was imminent and in fact happened 2 days before completion, so I had to come back to Qatar and kick my heels awaiting word from Paul Redman that the strike was over and they were ready to deliver to Southampton; because I was determined to be on CATAR on her journey from Canvey Island to Southampton. I had all sorts of worries about the journey, mostly based on the belief that boats are designed for the water and therefore don't go as well on land. I also knew, that with 9'6" between the keels, she was about a foot wider than the truck, and at 14'3" overall width, considerably wider than one road lane. Such journeys are undertaken on the roads of Britain every day with the most extraordinary loads, but they aren't carrying my goods, and in spite of Paul Redman's assurances I was still keen to be in on the job of moving my boat.

I arrived at Canvey Island and Prouts bright and early on, what was to me, a cold and windy day, and there was CATAR standing proud on blocks right at the front of the factory. It was a great thrill to me to see her there with CATAR painted on the bows and stern, the mast securely tied along her length (I still haven't seen her with the mast up) and all ready to go. I was told the police escort was due at 4 pm and in the meantime I walked around and around the boat admiring her. I climbed aboard and looked her over - what a beauty! Around mid-day Malcolm Elvy arrived with his truck and I was introduced to him and his partner, Ray. The first job was to load CATAR onto the trailer. Strangely enough, despite the beam, this is easy to accomplish with two fork-lift trucks alongside, one at each keel, rather than a crane. The forklifts raise the boat, the truck backs underneath. Manœuvring the truck into exactly the right position took a little while, but Malcolm was expert in moving in the restricted space available, and when he was happy the fork-lifts lowered the boat onto two steel beams fixed across the bed of the truck. Surprisingly easy, and though the boat was rather too large in every direction for the trailer, CATAR looked happy in this strange position. Then came the tying down which Malcolm and Ray do on their own. Ray said each strop has a certain 'twang' when the tension is correct, which is important to ensure no movement of the boat in transit.

At 14'3" overall width we are required by law to have a police escort throughout the journey and movement is restricted to certain hours also. We were all ready and waiting at 4 pm when the Essex Police arrived in a Ford Granada, so we set off straight away, the police escort ahead with blue lights flashing, shoing opposing traffic onto the pavement, DAF truck with CATAR aboard, followed by myself in a Mini. The first problem was not many minutes away. At a difficult right turn there was a car parked in the way. A policeman from the second car, ahead of us - and moving traffic out of the way, was trying to locate the driver. With traffic building up, the police unceremoniously opened the car and pushed it out of the way, and we were off again. At the first roundabout where we joined the A.13 Southend to London road yet another police car was blocking the road against other traffic and we were onto

dual carriageway. It was my first experience of the police actually holding traffic for me to go through and it set the pattern of later events.

Police saw our little convoy safely into a lay-by near Dagenham just before 5 pm, wished us well and departed. We had to wait until 8 pm we were told - because of the evening rush hour - for the London Metropolitan Police escort. Promptly at 8 pm three BMW police motorcycles arrived. They had come up from their Hampton Court Depot to take us to the Staines by-pass. Malcolm and the policeman greeted each other as friends and discussed the route. Although I found the first leg exciting following my dream perched on Malcolm Elvy's truck with police cars and flashing blue lights everywhere giving me in a little Mini priority, Ray told me, "If you thought the first leg was exciting, you haven't seen anything yet". How right he was.

It had been agreed our route lay around the North Circular Road, which for those not aware, is the Ring Road around the north of London. A road which is crossed by all the main - and minor - roads going north, east and west out of London. A mass of traffic lights, roundabouts, one-way streets and various other road hazards now including us. The local radio stations were broadcasting traffic news at regular intervals and there we were, "Motorists are advised to avoid the North Circular Road for the next hour or so as a wide load is making its way from East to West". Fame at last! I hadn't had my radio on at first, so I did not hear the Essex radio warning, nor did I hear the Surrey one later, though I did pick up the Hampshire M3/Southampton one.

Imagining that at some point I might be left behind the convoy at a red light or a roundabout, I asked one of the policemen what I should do if the lorry went through a traffic light at green and they changed to red before I got through. He said to keep as close as possible to the truck and provided one of the bikes was behind me to go straight through. Fame and notoriety in one day - well night, because by now it was dark. Off we went into the fray. It was not many minutes before, for the first time in my life, I went through a red light. It is somewhat unnerving, though in this case quite safe, to go through a red light with a BMW police motorcycle at your right shoulder flashing blue lights all over the place. You know you have done wrong and feel that the blue lights are beckoning that you should stop immediately and take your punishment. But no! as I almost involuntarily slowed down the policeman alongside was shouting, "Keep up. Close the gap". So I did. Ahead, the two leading BMW's are racing on to the next set of lights to stop all traffic whatever the conditions or colour of the lights to allow us free passage through. As we go through the lights the bike at my shoulder gives a roar as it accelerates to take the lead position, the bike stopping traffic to my right is beginning to move as we come through, on to follow the first for the next hazard, and the bike on my left moves up to my right shoulder preventing anyone making an attempt to overtake. This is incredible, it is exciting, it is frightening and it is also very fast. We are probably averaging over 40 mph, and yet the radio now tells us there is a tail-back of over a mile behind us. I imagine a million confused motorists banging into each other as they try to copycat a little red Mini they have just seen jumping lights! He did it, why shouldn't I? At one point because of the difficulty in negotiating bends on a short stretch of one-way street we are led up it the wrong way! No matter what the situation we are moving all the time and the cool way in which the police handle the situation gives me not only a new light on the British Police but also a great admiration for the job they do.

Because I am - most of -the -time - so close to CATAR sat on the back of the truck I am also able to see that she hasn't moved at all, but sitting up there and seems to be enjoying all the attention and interest. For even at this hour there are plenty of people about who stop, or are we stopped, and stare as we go by. A Prout catamaran, like any boat, is designed to sit in the water and not on the back of a lorry. Nevertheless, the beauty and grace of CATAR is apparent for all to see, sat up as she is, high on the lorry. The twin hulls with graceful curves, the rudders slightly

turned, the outdrive set down almost seems to be wishing to help push us along even faster to the sea and her home.

We arrive at our lay-by on the Staines By-pass at 9.45 pm. Between one and a half and one and three quarters of an hour to cross London - by the pretty route - a car could not ordinarily do that at any time of the day except for the wee small hours. My nerves are shattered! Ray's words come back to me. How right he was! After a short chat with these three policemen they depart for base at Hampton, and we are left to await Surrey Police at 6.30 am the next morning. Malcolm and Ray are sleeping aboard the truck. Malcolm does not leave his load at all from the time of picking it up until delivered. It is a comforting thought to me as the owner that he cares enough about his load to be with it all the time. I went off to stay with my sister who lives near Staines. Earlier in the day I had no idea where I would be that evening so I was not expected. My brother-in-law was interested to see CATAR, so after something to eat we went to look at her resting on the lay-by, being very quiet so as not to disturb Malcolm.

The next day I returned at 6.30 am to find Malcolm and Ray just getting out of their beds behind the seats and preparing a welcome cup of tea. Malcolm immediately asked who I had brought down at 11.30 pm the night before. I was sorry to have disturbed his sleep but reassured that he knew someone was prowling about.

The morning brought our first hitch so far. Surrey Police had sent their escort on time but had to divert him to another job and one Range Rover finally arrived at 8.00 am. This was rush hour time and we set off anyway. The first mile or so was the worst because we were with the main flow of traffic and negotiating the Crooked Billet roundabout caused some problems for everyone with only one escort. But once on the M25 and away from London we were on an almost empty motorway. Then onto the M3, and as the day grew brighter and the sun came out, CATAR looked magnificent sailing down the motorway. At Fleet Services we were to meet the Hampshire Police escort, but because we were 1½ hours late they had gone off and we had to call on Malcolm's radio telephone for a replacement, which turned out to be a Jaguar XJ6. To this, once off the motorway, was added a BMW motorcycle and later still, on departure of the XJ6, another BMW motorcycle driven by a lady member of the Hampshire Police Force. I had never before met a lady police motorcyclist. The black leather gear was very nice too! It was this lady who led us through Southampton, past Dock Gate No. 4, up alongside Berth No.35, waved goodbye, and was off on her way to other duties.

We did not have long to wait before CATAR was craned off Malcolm's truck onto the empty dockside where 'Nosac Barbro' should have been loading. But 'Nosac Barbro' was not there and, we were told, not coming for another three days, so we left CATAR there waiting and I just made it back to Heathrow in time for the night flight to Qatar.

My thanks go to Paul Redman and Robert Underwood of Prouts. It is very nice to know that one is not just a customer to them, but a person realising a dream in purchasing a boat. They are always grateful and pleased you chose a Prout and will always help their customers in whatever way they can. To the Police Forces of Essex, London, Surrey and Hampshire my thanks; you gave me the journey of a lifetime. Whatever journey or voyage CATAR undertakes in the future, I'm sure she will never do it as fast, maybe not as smoothly either.

Finally, to Malcolm Elvy and his mate, Ray, my, thanks. From what you have read you will know that Malcolm is a real trucker. He tells me that he has moved Prout cats for years. He knows what he is doing at all times from the moment of arrival to load. His routes are carefully planned and he always checks the load at stops. He tells me his truck is almost his home. What the reader will not know is that Malcolm, who drives a perfectly standard truck without modifications, has two artificial legs and malformed hands. To him this is not a problem and his skill and knowledge is borne out by the respect the police we met on our journey have for his skill and ability.

As I write this, my boat is now on the high seas aboard the 'roll-on, roll-off ferry, 'Nosac Barbro', calling at Jeddah, Mina Qaboos and Umm Said, where I take delivery. You shall hear more.

Adrian Lowe  
October 1984

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FIXTURES for 1985

APRIL	18th	West Midlands Police Regatta	Chase SC
MAY	9th	Metropolitan Police Regatta	Queen Mary SC
	23rd	Greater Manchester Police Regatta	Elton SC
JUNE	8th/9th	P.A.A. NATIONAL SAILING CHAMPS	Bala SC
	15th	Three Peaks Yacht Race	Barmouth
JULY	6th/7th	Water Sports and Family Fun Day	West India Docks
	17th/18th	Dorset Police Regatta	Poole YC
AUGUST	21st	Nottinghamshire Police Regatta	Retford Argonauts SC
	28th	Sussex Police Regatta	Bexhill SC
SEPTEMBER	17th	Kent Police Regatta	Hampton Pier SC
	19th	British Police Laser Sailing Association Championships	Chase SC (W Midlands)



Elizabeth and John Burbeck with  
Mr David Owen, QPM., Chief Constable of North Wales  
at the P.A.A. National Championships -85



'DRY ICE' prepares to hoist the spinnaker on rounding the windward mark,  
At the Sigma National Championships at Poole, in July 1983.

Photo - Stan Laurenson-Batten

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1st	Gareth Owen	Merseyside	Laser 117166	¾	¾	3	=	1½
2nd	Roger Glass	Metro	" 118165	3	4	4	=	3¾
3rd	Geoff Norman	Notts	" 43330	2	2	R	=	4
4th	Gooch/Bishop	Metro	Albacore 1852	6	7	2	=	8
5th	Rod Bramhall	GMP	Enterprise 10932	4	5	5	=	9
6th	Jeff Nelson	GMP	Laser 56240	5	12	4	=	9
7th	R Gibson	Merseyside	Merlin 3078	7	6	6	=	12
8th	Nigel Jackson	Notts	Laser 102559	10	3	11		13
9th	M Wood	GMP	Enterprise 7451	9	8	7	=	15
10th	H Anelay	W Yorks	Laser 88776	8	11	8	=	16
11th	R Jenkinson	GMP	Enterprise 15408	12	10	9	=	19
12th	G Squires	W Yorks	Laser 32649	11	9	12	=	20
13th	Barbara Selby	N Yorks	Enterprise 20038	DNS	14	10	=	24
14th	M Hudson	GMP	Laser 46242	13	13	R	=	26
15th	J Carr	W Yorks	Signet 585	14	R	16	=	30

The regatta organized by the sailing club of the Greater Manchester Police was held on Thursday 23rd May, at Elton Sailing Club, near Bury, Lancashire. The weather was fine for most of the day, but there were rain showers in the afternoon. The winds were light and died away as the day wore on.

The total entry of 15 boats are listed above. Six different police forces were represented, from as far afield as London and North Yorkshire.

This event was won by Gareth Owen, from Merseyside, sailing a Laser. He made sure of the first prize by coming first in the first two races. He was able to discard his 3rd position in the last race.

The runners-up prize went to Roger Glass, from the Metropolitan Police, also sailing a Laser. He won the last race, and came 3rd in the first race.

The third prize went to another Laser sailor, Geoff Norman, from Nottinghamshire Police. Geoff came 2nd in the first two races.

The fourth prize went to a real boat, an Albacore, sailed by a pair of ancient mariners from the Metropolitan Police. They did not look to be in amongst the prizes until the last race, when they managed to fend off all the Lasers except one, and come 2nd. They were only 6th in the first race.

The last, but not least, of the prize winners was Rod Bramhall, from the local force, sailing his very fast Enterprise. He was 4th in the first race, and 5th in the second race.

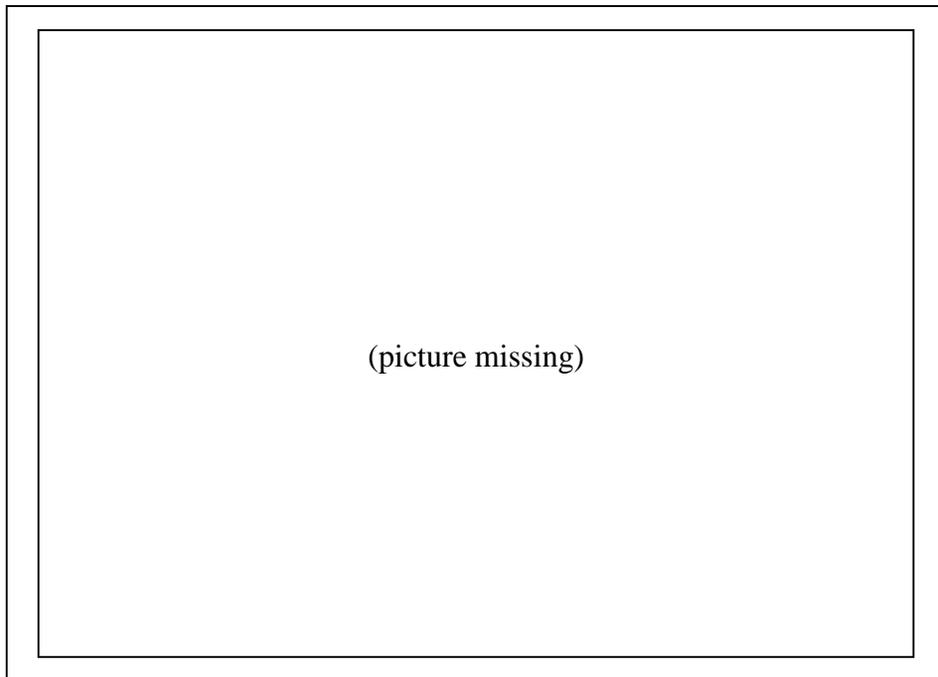
In the first race there was a committee boat start, quite near the clubhouse, but there was so little wind that quite a few boats went beyond the pin and had difficulty getting back to the line when the 'gun' went for the start, including Albacore 1852. When they did get going, they were well behind the leaders. There was a battle going on at the front of the fleet by the Lasers of Owen, Glass and Norman. They kept swapping places. At the end of the first lap Roger was in the lead, with Geoff second. At the end of the second lap Roger was still in front, but Gareth was second. At the finish, that order had been reversed, with Gareth first, Geoff second and Roger fourth. The Merlin Rocket of Merseyside's Gibson had managed to creep past Roger, finishing 10 seconds in front of him, but that was only good enough on handicap to make him 7th. Gooch finished 10 seconds behind Glass, but was beaten on handicap by Jeff Nelson (GMP) in yet another Laser, who finished 34 seconds behind him.

Rod Bramhall sailed well in his Enterprise and was 7th over the line, but his handicap boosted him up to lath place. Gareth had won the race, finishing 37 seconds ahead of Geoff Norman, who was 22 seconds in front of Gibson.

The second race had a similar start to the first one. Gooch, in the Albacore was determined to make a better start than his previous attempt, and made straight for the line, from the windward side of it. Progress was slow and the line was crowded, and his way was blocked by an Enterprise, which promptly luffed up, keeping the Albacore over the line. The Enterprise was so busy luffing that he luffed himself over the line as well as the Alb as the starting-gun went. So those two boats spent a few minutes more returning to the line and starting properly. That put Gooch right at the back of the fleet, with very little wind to make up the lost distance. However, by the end of the first lap he was the 6th boat past the committee boat, but there he stayed for the rest of the race.

It was Gareth Owen that lead the pack, with Geoff Norman in close attendance. They were shadowed by Gibson in the Rocket, and Jackson in his Laser. Roger Glass had made a poor start, and never passed 5th place, and finished over 5 minutes behind the leader. The Merlin Rocket was third to finish, but was dropped to 6th on handicap. Glass moved up to 4th. Bramhall was yet again 7th over the line, and moved up to 5th on handicap. Gooch was listed as 7th in the results.

Len Gooch



Dave Abbott in action at Datchet Water Sailing Club.

METROPOLITAN POLICE REGATTA - 85

1st	Simon Hawkes	A & Somerset	Laser 120476	2	2	¾	=	2¾
2nd	Roger Glass	Metro	" 118165	¾	7	2	=	2¾
3rd	Goodman/Loake	Sussex	Albacore 6678	5	¾	14	=	5¾
4th	Derek Westall	S Wales	Laser 1134211	8	3	5	=	8
5th	J & E Burbeck	Metro	Merlin 3326	7	11	3	=	10
6th	Nigel Jackson	Notts	Laser 102559	9	14	4	=	13
7th	Geoff Norman	"	" 43330	15	4	9	=	13
8th	Gooch/Bishop	Metro	Albacore 1852	6	9	8	=	14
9th	Charles Jordan	Kent	Phantom 799	18	8	6	=	14
10th	Robert Bruce	"	Laser 4	4	18	11	=	15
11th	John Allen	Notts	Merlin 3304	11	5	17	=	16
12th	John Neaverson	"	" 2905	27	6	10	=	16
13th	Nigel Tinkler	Metro	Laser 42865	10	10	7	=	17
14th	Lambert/Thomson	"	Ent 17830	3	20	21	=	23
15th	Steven Proffitt	"	Laser 75370	14	13	12	=	25
16th	Brian Tucker	Dorset	O.K. 1356	12	21	15	=	27
17th	John Kelley	Metro	Laser 102717	17	15	13	=	28
18th	Peter Cammaerts	"	" 118466	13	22	16	=	29
19th	Ross Elliston	"	Canoe K75	21	12	24	=	33
20th	Paul Skerman	Sussex	Laser 72570	20	19	17	=	36
21st	Tom Hunt	Metro	" 42754	22	17	19	=	36
22nd	Brian Hudson	Herts	Solo 2198	16	24	22	=	38
23rd	Abbott/Donnelly	Metro	Fireball 12809	25	16	28	=	41
24th	Ross/Jones	"	Merlin 3236	13	32	20	=	43
25th	Derek Coleman	"	Mirror 43150	28	23	23	=	46
26th	Steve Gathercole	Notts	Int 14 1081	19	31	28	=	47
27th	Keith Bateman & son	Metro	Ent 1967	24	26	26	=	50
28th	Peter Nordquist	D & Cornwall	Laser 39340	31	25	25	=	50
29th	Anne Atchley	Dorset	Fireball 12077	26	27	28	=	53
30th	Jordan/Ogilvie	Metro	GP 14 11359	Did not sail				

The 1985 Metpol Regatta was held on Thursday 9th May, at Queen Mary Sailing Club. The meeting was organised by the West End Central team of Hewett and Glass, and a very good job they made of it. Their efforts were rewarded by an entry of 30 boats representing 9 different forces, from as far away as Devon & Cornwall and Nottingham.

Three races were held, but they tended to be rather short this year. However, the competition was strong for the 'leader board', and it was a close run thing for the first prize. The two leading competitors finished up with the same number of points, and the 'match' had to be decided on their discarded results. So it was that Simon Hawkes, from Avon & Somerset was the winner.

Len Gooch

This year's P.A.A. Championships were held on Saturday and Sunday the 8th and 9th of June, at Bala Sailing Club in North Wales. They were organized by the Merseyside Police. The Race Officer was Owen Shaw, the Secretary of Bala Sailing Club.

The championships consisted of four races, two being held on each day, with the best three results to count towards the prizes. The weather over that weekend was ideal for sailors, with fresh breezes blowing on both days, between forces 3 and 5. It was a bit too windy for a few of the competitors, but most of them thrived on the windy conditions. All the races had committee boat starts.

61 boats were entered from 23 different police forces, including 3 boats from the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The Metropolitan, South Wales and Greater Manchester Police Forces shared the greatest number of entries, with 6 boats each. The most popular class of boat was the Laser, with 27 entries. There were 6 Enterprises and 5 GP14s. The fastest dinghy on the water was the Spearhead from Kent, with a Portsmouth Yardstick of 98. The 'slowest' boat was the Mirror 10 from South Wales, with a yardstick figure of 146. Catering for the wide range of performances must have given the Race Officer nightmares. But the races were well run, and the whole meeting went very smoothly, thanks to the skill of the organizing committee.

For the first race, on the Saturday morning, the wind was blowing about force 3 to 4, from the north-east. This gave Chaz Jordan and Bob Bruce, from Kent, the chance to show what their Spearhead, now named 'Space Invader', could do. Chaz has had the boat for a few years now, and he can make it go quite fast, but he has yet to make it go fast enough to overcome the low handicap figure. He showed off the boat's potential by streaking to the front of the fleet and taking line honours in this race, but by the time the time-keeper had worked out her handicap figures, he was right back to 26th place, and that was despite him finishing 23 minutes in front of the Signet that was placed 25th.

It was the family team of John and Liz Burbeck that crossed the finishing line second, in their Merlin Rocket. However, their 25 seconds lead over Roger Glass, and further 15 seconds lead over Simon Hawkes (Avon and Somerset), both in Lasers, was not enough to keep them in that position on corrected time. In fact they were dropped down to 5th position, with Glass and Hawkes taking the first two places. The 3rd and 4th places went to Gareth Owen (Merseyside) in a Laser and Peter Goodman and John Loake (Sussex) in an Albacore respectively. The latter boats stormed over the line just behind the Merlin Rocket of Allen and Pilsworth (Nottinghamshire), in close formation. The time-keeper recorded the three of them as being only 1 second apart. Allen was pushed down to 9th on corrected time.

David Abbott and Mark Donnelly arrived at Bala with their brand new Flying 15. It was to be its maiden voyage. Even so, they were quite quick, and managed to be the 8th boat over the line, and 10th on handicap. The team-mate, Ross Elliston, had left his International Canoe at home and had brought along the M.P.S.C. Laser instead. He had lost none of his cunning, and was the 5th Laser to finish, and took 6th place in the race. Kevin Johnson (West Yorkshire), in yet another Laser, took 7th place. Dick Sivers (Northamptonshire) was 8th.

The weather conditions for the second race, on Saturday afternoon, were similar to that of the first. It had taken its toll in the morning race, and the start-line was a little less crowded in the afternoon. Once again it was the Spearhead of Jordan and the Merlin Rocket of Burbeck that showed the greatest boat speed and fought their own battle at the front of the fleet. The line honours went to Kent by about 12 seconds, but the pair of them finished 22 minutes in front of the next boat. The 3rd boat home was the International 14 of Gathercole and Wilkinson (Nottinghamshire), with their compatriot, John Allen, only 5 seconds behind

behind/

them. 5 seconds behind the black Merlin Rocket of Allen came the Flying 15 of Dave Abbott. However, all these five boats were beaten on corrected time by the 6th boat to finish, the Laser of Gareth Owen. Only the Burbecks did well enough to retain their finishing position (2nd) - of the rest, the Spearhead was placed 30th, the International 14 was placed 19th, the Nottinghamshire Merlin was 8th, and Dave Abbott was 9th.

The 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th and 7th places went to Roger Glass, Simon Hawkes, Dick Sivers, Ross Elliston and Nick Haggitt (West Mercia) respectively. Sivers and Elliston crossed the line only 1 second apart. So the Lasers showed once again their superiority over the two-man boats when it comes to handicap racing.

On the Sunday morning, when the time came for the third race to begin, the wind had freshened to force 4 to 5, and was coming from the west. This caused some capsizes amongst the front-runners as well as others. One example of this was the Merlin Rocket of John Burbeck. The Met duo came to grief three times and finished up in 34th place. John Allen was another Merlin sailor to capsize, and he finished 25th.

So Jordan and Bruce had very little competition out in front in this race, and finished 2 minutes 17 seconds ahead of the second boat, the Flying 15. 50 seconds later Simon Hawkes, in the leading Laser, crossed the finishing line. Simon had been trailing Roger Glass for most of the last beat, with Roger doing everything he could to cover him. But a wind shift right near the line caught him out, and allowed Hawkes to nip in and finish 8 seconds in front. Gareth Owen was the next boat to finish, some 55 seconds behind Glass. The 6th boat over the line was the red Albacore of Len Gooch and Clive Bishop, with the Merlin Rocket of Neaverson and Walters (Nottinghamshire) about half a minute behind them.

On corrected time, Lasers took the first three places, with Hawkes 1st, Glass 2nd, and Owen 3rd. The 4th position went to Dave Abbott, and the 5th spot to Len Gooch. The unfortunate Spearhead was demoted down to 15th place, but his best position yet. 6th spot went to Phillip Chester (Hampshire), sailing a Laser. 7th place went to John Neaverson, in the Merlin Rocket. Ross Elliston crept in the 8th spot.

For the fourth, and last race the wind dropped slightly, but not a lot. But it was still windy enough to cause the Spearhead to capsize. That allowed someone else to take the line honours.

This race was to be the decider for the championship. Three of the Lasers were in a position to win the tournament, but they would have to win the last race to make it certain. Roger Glass was leading on points with  $5\frac{3}{4}$ , with Simon Hawkes and Gareth Owen close behind, both with  $6\frac{3}{4}$  points.

Right from the start, it was Hawkes that showed all the drive and determination that it takes to win such a race. He took an early lead and held it right to the finish. He even beat the Flying 15 to the line by 5 seconds, and was 75 seconds ahead of the third boat, the Burbecks' Merlin Rocket, and 90 seconds in front of the next Laser, Roger Glass. Gareth Owen could only cross the line in 7th position, only 5 seconds ahead of Ross Elliston.

The 5th boat to finish was John Allen's Merlin. Dick Sivers' Laser was 6th. By the time the time-keeper had done her sums the first two places went to the Lasers of Hawkes and Glass, the 3rd place went to Abbott, Sivers and Owen were 4th and 5th, Elliston was 6th, and the Burbecks were 7th. John Allen finished up in 8th spot.

So it was Simon Hawkes that was the 1985 police champion. He was awarded the Sunderland Trophy for being placed first overall, the Midlands Trophy for winning the last race, and the Laser Trophy for being the first Laser. Roger Glass was the runner-up, for which he won the Police Review Trophy, and also won the Bala Trophy for winning the 2nd race. The Merseyside Trophy, for the third boat, appropriately went to Gareth Owen.

P.A.A. NATIONAL SAILING CHAMPIONSHIPS - 1985

1.	S Hawkes	Avon & Somerset	Laser 120476	2	4	¾	¾	=	3½
2.	R Glass	Metro	" 118165	4	3	2	2	=	4¾
3.	G Owen	Merseyside	" 117166	3	¾	3	5	=	6¾
4.	J & E Burbeck	Metro	Merlin 3326	5	2	34	7	=	14
5.	R Sivers	Northants	Laser 5	8	5	7	4	=	16
6.	Abbott/Donnelly	Metro	Flying 15 2999	10	9	4	3	=	16
7.	R Elliston	"	Laser 112417	6	6	8	6	=	18
8.	Allen/Pillsworth	Notts	Merlin 3304	9	8	25	8	=	25
9.	Gooch/Bishop	Metro	Albacore 1852	12	11	5	10	=	26
11.	P Chester	Hampshire	Laser 115775	D	13	6	9	=	28
10.	K Johnson	W Yorkshire	" 85256	7	12	9	13	=	28
12.	N Haggitt	W Mercia	" 64165	11	7	13	15	=	31
13.	D Westall	S Wales	" 113421	13	14	20	11	=	38
14.	Goodman/Locke	Sussex	Albacore 6678	4	10	R	27	=	41
15.	P Pope	S Wales	Laser 54401	20	17	12	16	=	45
16.	Neaverson/Walters	Notts	Merlin 2905	19	24	17	12	=	48
17.	G Norman	"	Laser 43330	16	15	18	22	=	49
18.	Thursfield/Larson	W Midlands	GP 14 12639	18	23	14	18	=	50
19.	J Nelson	Grt Manchester	Laser 56240	15	22	16	20	=	51
20.	Hawkey/	Cheshire	GP 14 11883	32	25	10	17	=	52
21.	R L Brown	Thames Valley	Finn 423	R	20	11	21	=	52
22.	C Cooper	W Midlands	Laser 65022	17	18	19	dns	=	54
23.	Critchley/Cross	Lancashire	GP 14 6043	22	26	21	14	=	57
24.	C Wilcock	Sussex	Laser 61738	14	21	dns	23	=	58
25.	N Jackson	Notts	" 102559	d	16	24	19	=	59
26.	K M Wilson	Lothian & Bds	" 54587	21	27	22	30	=	60
27.	Jordan/Bruce	Kent	Spearhead 16	26	30	15	46	=	71
28.	L N Baalam	R.U.C.	Laser 74308	24	32	23	25	=	72
29.	Bramhall/	Grt Manchester	Ent 10932	28	39	29	24	=	81
30.	P A Mahood	R.U.C.	Laser 919;1	D	28	27	26	=	83
31.	Smith/Carter	W Yorkshire	Ent 17762	30	46	26	29	=	85
32.	J Leybourne	Warwickshire	Laser 121766	39	29	30	31	=	90
33.	Benson/Humber	Lancashire	Albacore 1294	23	35	40	33	=	91
34.	Stafford/Sykes	Humberside	Wayfarer 3286	29	37	31	32	=	92
35.	S Roberts	S Wales	Laser 91240	27	31	39	34	=	92
36.	Wood/Cooke	Grt Manchester	Ent 7451	36	44	33	26	=	95
37.	P Davies	S Wales	Laser 56152	35	D	28	37	=	100
38.	Dickinson/Allen	W Mercia	GP 14 5173	33	51	32	40	=	105
39.	D Langton	Thames Valley	Solo 3054	34	36	38	39	=	108
40.	P Skerman	Sussex	Laser 121766	39	42	35	36	=	110
41.	B Selby	N Yorks	Laser 88687	40	40	36	41	=	116
42.	Gathercole/Wilkinson	Notts	Int 14 1081	50	19	d	47	=	116
43.	J Sturdy	W Midlands	Laser 68807	43	43	42	35	=	120
44.	J Lake	"	" 67110	37	33	50	d	=	120
45.	R Anelay	W Yorkshire	" 88776	31	34	d	d	=	124
46.	Carr/Walsh	"	Signet 585	25	53	48	d	=	126
47.	M Cannon	Lancashire	Miracle 2403	48	54	37	45	=	130
48.	Jenkinson/Kannenberg	Grt Manchester	Ent 15408	d	45	41	44	=	130
49.	Singer/Hancock	R.U.C.	Seafly 482	47	D	45	38	=	130
50.	Tinkler/Davies	Metro	Fireball 12118	42	47	43	d	=	132
51.	D Davies	Wiltshire	Lightning 94	50	38	44	d	=	132
52.	R & M Clarke	Merseyside	Ent 17841	44	d	46	43	=	133
53.	S Grayland	Kent	Topper 24969	50	52	d	42	=	144
54.	J Parker	S Wales	Mirror 62541	45	50	d	d	=	145
55.	Atchley/Tuckley	Avon & Somerset	Fireball 12077	41	49	d	d	=	149
56.	Bowen/Cottle	S Wales	GP 14 4114	46	D	47	d	=	152
57.	M Hudson	Grt Manchester	Laser 46242	d	41	d	d	=	159
58.	Corless/Keegan	"	Ent 19342	d	48	d	d	=	166
59.	N & S Ellis	N Wales	Scorpion 1405	50	D	d	d	=	168
59.	Gibson/Williams	Merseyside	Merlin 3078	50	D	d	d	=	168
59.	Dahill/Slater	"	GP 14 11067	50	d	d	d	=	168

D = disqualified d = did not start (or did not finish)

THE THREE PEAKS YACHT RACE - 1985  
AS SEEN BY ALEX ROSS AND LEN GOOCH

This is the story of the Metropolitan Police team's adventures in this year's Three Peaks Yacht Race. It is jointly written by the skipper and one of the support group, and so gives an all round view of the event. The Three Peaks Race may have started off 9 years ago as a leisurely trip up the west coast of Britain, from Barmouth to Fort William, with a walk up Snowdon, Scarfell Pike and Ben Nevis just to add a little spice to the journey, but today that word 'leisurely' is no longer used. It has become one of the premier endurance events in the country, attracting some of the world's best sailors and fell-runners and the swiftest boats. It is an out and out race from start to finish. Like the London Marathon, its popularity is such that there are far more applicants to race than can be catered for, and the numbers are normally restricted. This year the limit was 35 boats.

The race has always been popular with the Armed Services, with its emphasis on physical fitness. The Navy, Royal Marines and various Army units have all done well over the years. In the past few years police teams have joined the Services and have shown that they can compete with the best of them. It was the Merseyside Police that paved the way about 5 years ago, and in 1982 they came second in the event, sailing a boat called 'Mersey Beat'. It was that year that the Metropolitan Police took part in the race for the first time. Unfortunately they had problems with their boat off the Cumbrian coast and were forced to retire. In 1983 the same two Forces took part, and this time it was the Metropolitan Police that beat their rivals from Merseyside, coming third to the Mersey team's fifth. In 1984 they did battle again, and resulted in the Merseyside team finishing fourth in very rough weather conditions, and the team from the Met retiring half way through the race.

This year Merseyside and the Met were joined in the race by teams from North Yorkshire Police and the Royal Ulster Constabulary. The R.U.C. were accompanied by a rival team from the Ulster Defence Regiment. The latter two teams were not shown on the race programme as such, possibly in the interest of security. The R.U.C. were shown as 'a team from Belfast', and the U.D.R. were listed as the 'Army Sailing Association'. This may have satisfied the organisers of the race, but it did not please the two teams concerned or their supporters. They were more than proud to bear the names of those two famous bodies, and wanted to advertise the fact that they were taking part in this prestigious sporting event.

The Metropolitan Police Sailing Club had done a lot of heart searching after the 1984 race. Alex Ross and John Burbeck were quite prepared to take up the challenge for 1985 providing they could find a team that would commit themselves to that task 12 months in advance. That was the only way they would have a chance of winning, and that is what they aimed to do. In those 12 months they were faced with difficulty after difficulty, not the least of which was the cost which escalated month by month. But that is just what this race is all about - facing difficulties and overcoming them!

Having sailed 'Triple Fantasy', a 35 foot trimaran, in the 1983 race, Alex Ross knew that boat was capable of being a winner, and went all out to charter it. However, 'Triple Fantasy' had been so badly damaged as the result of the 1984 race that the owner, Terry Cooke, was reluctant to let it be used in the Three Peaks Race ever again, especially as he was committed to racing it himself in the Round Britain Race in July 1985. When he was finally persuaded to let the Met team use it, it was the insurance company that came up with the next problem. They would only insure the trimaran for the Three Peaks Race if the owner was on board. So that meant that even though the Met were chartering the boat, they would have to charter the owner as well, and Terry would have to become one of the racing team. By that time the race was getting nearer and nearer, and so they agreed. Both sides were not sure

sure/

what they were letting themselves in for.

The Met team consisted of Detective Chief Inspector Alex Ross as the skipper, Detective Chief Inspector John Burbeck as the navigator (both of whom are experienced and skilful helmsmen in sailing dinghies and offshore craft), Inspector Peter Hodgkinson (an experienced race walker and an instructor in the adventure training section of the Cadet Centre), Sergeant Graham Jones (an experienced fell-runner and mountaineer), and the owner, Terry Cooke (a multi-hull sailor of some repute). They were backed up by a support team consisting of Sergeant 'Trog' Royle, and Constables Graham Courtney, John Robertson and Len Gooch. The intrepid crew of five boarded their craft at Dartmouth for a shake-down cruise to Barmouth, where the race was due to start. On the voyage they met strong winds and rough sea conditions, and so were able to see just what the boat would do.

The boat itself was designed by Derek Helsell and was built of g.r.p. It was about 35 feet long and 18 feet wide. To keep the weight to a minimum every vestige of comfort had been abandoned in its design. To say that the living accommodation was spartan was to be very kind. It was an out and out racing machine, and therefore anything that did not lend itself to making the boat go faster was left off. It had a very shallow draught, and was therefore the ideal craft for sneaking into places like Ravenglass on the last of the ebb tide. This factor was to play a big part in this year's race. The name of the trimaran had been changed from 'Triple Fantasy' to 'Yacht Paint Centre' in readiness for the Round Britain Race (Terry Cooke works for the centre), and was not an indication of sponsorship, as was the case for most of the other boats taking part in the race, for the Metropolitan Police.

Saturday 15th June 1985, the day of the start of the race, dawned bright and sunny. The harbour at Barmouth was full of racing craft of all shapes and sizes. The roads bordering the waterfront were lined with an assortment of support vehicles. The local boatmen were kept busy ferrying crew members to and from their boats. Some were loading up with essential supplies. Others were transferring 'not wanted on the voyage' items ashore. Last minute checks were being made on sails and engines (the Met team had a last minute panic with their outboard motor, and had to change the gearbox and propeller). The lucky ones, having had their scrutineering completed and their stores loaded and packed away, were able to relax in the sunshine and drink in the race atmosphere. This year they were not due to leave the harbour until 1800 hours, for the actual start at 1930 hours. All the hustle and bustle was a great, free show for the holiday makers in Barmouth.

The start-line was set about a mile offshore, and at the appointed time the local Mayor and his entourage, on board the Lifeboat, led the procession of competing boats out of the harbour. The teams were given a rousing send-off by the crowds of friends and supporters lining the quay and on the mole at the mouth of the harbour. They were joined by hundreds of holiday-makers, who were totally bemused by all the activity. The local boatmen were not slow to take advantage of all the extra customers, and were laying on special trips to go out and watch the start of the race. The weather is not always compatible for that sort of thing as it was on this occasion, for it was a glorious, sunny evening.

As the time drew near for the race to commence, the watchers on the beach could only strain their eyes seawards to try and catch a glimpse of their particular favourite. With the sun low in the sky, it was difficult to pick out the individual craft. But then, on the stroke of half past seven, a puff of smoke was seen to rise from the committee boat, followed shortly by the sound of the canon. The 1985 Three Peaks Yacht Race was on. The 32 boats that had been milling about on the east side of the starting line, now purposefully began heading westwards into the setting sun. The initial goal was Bardsey Sound, on the western tip of the Lley Peninsula.

Yacht Paint Centre had come in to the start-line on the starboard tack and were able to clear right away to the north. The wind was on the nose for Bardsey Sound, which was about 30 miles away. 'Royal Insurance', the trimaran manned by

by/

the Merseyside Police were following in their wake. There was only one boat that the Met crew could not see behind them that they feared, and that was the winner of last year's Single Handed Trans-Atlantic Race, the 53 foot trimaran formerly called 'Exmouth Challenge', now called 'The Challenge'. The big tri' had tacked out to sea to seek more wind. The rest of the opposition was behind the Met boat, and falling back.

The wind died as the night fell, and Yacht Paint Centre came to a stop in Bardsey Sound. Rigging the oars (the boats are allowed to be propelled by oars or paddles) in the dark resulted in a knot slipping, and John Burbeck taking an unintentional swim. A dripping wet Burbeck was soon hauled back on board, but promptly dived back in again to rescue the oar, and had to be hauled out again. This delay allowed 'Royal Insurance' and 'Dobbin' (a 30 foot catamaran from Cardiff) to row past them. 'The Challenge' had passed them earlier on and was then about half a mile ahead.

The Met boat fought its way up the coast, even flying its largest spinnaker at times, but the wind did not fill in until dawn. The crew saw the wind coming across the water about 5 miles away, and headed for it, and were able to tack back to the rhumb line as it arrived. This wind helped them to recover most of the distance they had lost on 'Dobbin'. They re-passed 'Royal Insurance', but 'The Challenge' was still half a mile ahead.

So it was that 'The Challenge' was the first boat to cross the Caernarfon Bar. It's huge mainsail could be seen above the sand-dunes by the support groups gathered at the oil-jetty, just east of Caernarfon Castle. The sun shone on that Sunday morning, but there was very little wind. It was not until 0908 hours that the big trimaran sailed clear of the dunes and came through the gap at Abermenai Point. She had had problems with her engine at Barmouth, and had to be towed to the start. On reaching the mussel bank buoy, it became obvious to the onlookers that she was still without an effective motor, as she continued sailing towards the south bank, instead of coming straight towards the jetty.

At 0923 'Dobbin' sailed past Abermenai Point, followed 4 minutes later by 'Yacht Paint Centre'. These two boats switched on their engines at the appointed mark and motored past the unfortunate 'Challenge', tacking upwind. The Met team found that they were closing on 'Dobbin' when there was an ominous cracking noise from their outboard motor support bracket. It had begun to break up. That meant that they had to ease off the engine power or risk losing the motor overboard. So the Welsh catamaran was the first to berth at Caernarfon, and drop its two runners off, but only 5 minutes in front of the Met. The 62 mile trip from Barmouth had taken them 14 hours and 24 minutes and 14 hours and 29 minutes respectively (the record time is only 8 hours and 59 minutes).

The tide was high, and the landing stage at the jetty was awash, but the Met runners, Peter and Graham, soon leapt ashore barefoot, with towels in hand, ready to chase hard after the pair ahead of them. They knew that they could not afford to overdo things, and should be conserving any energy that they could. But knowing that their rivals were so close was a great incentive to give chase and catch them, and that is just what they did. The Hodgkinson-Jones combination returned from the 24 mile run and the 3,560 feet climb up Snowdon 3 hours and 49 minutes later, 6 minutes ahead of 'Dobbin's' runners. Whilst they had been away the sailors had been fed and watered, the boat had been replenished, and the damaged engine-bracket had been rebuilt. 'Yacht Paint Centre' was ready and waiting to start the next leg of the race. In the excitement of ferrying the weary runners back onboard the trimaran, one of the oars from the dinghy was dropped overboard and was promptly carried away by the tide. The departure was then delayed whilst John Burbeck carried out a rapid rescue mission on the floating oar, this time in the rubber dinghy. This was almost too much for the supporters on the quay, who could see the runners from 'Dobbin' rapidly approaching, and were leaping up and down with frustration. In the end the two boats left Caernarfon only a few minutes apart.

The Merseyside Police were the fourth team to enter the straights at Caernarfon. They approached the oil-jetty under engine power just behind 'The Challenge' who was still under sail power. But the skipper of the big trimaran had misjudged his speed of approach and was going far too fast to stop, and was forced to sail beyond the jetty and turn round. This allowed 'Royal Insurance' to nip in third place and drop its runners at 1034. The ill-fated 'Challenge' landed its runners 6 minutes later.

On leaving Caernarfon for Ravenglass, the skippers have a choice of going back over the bar and sailing right around Anglesey, or taking the short cut through the Menai Straights. Alex Ross chose the latter and sailed north-eastwards into what little wind there was, dodging the sandbanks, buoys and other boats along the way. Just about 100 yards before the Menai Bridge the wind died and the crew had to revert to oar and paddle power to make any progress. They were urged on by shouts from their supporters positioned at the base of the bridge. They could see that 'Dobbin' was very close behind and making good progress in the light airs. This part of the Menai Straights, between the 'new' bridge and the old Telford suspension bridge, is known as The Swellies. It is a gorge full of rocky islands, and is notorious for its dangerous currents and whirlpools. It can only be negotiated safely at certain states of the tide. Fortunately this was one of those times, but it was necessary to row hard to keep the boat moving. Both leading boats could be seen by the watchers on the suspension bridge making every effort to go a little bit faster. Both teams were being cheered on by their respective support crews. This would be almost the last place the groups would be in visual contact with each other until they reached Ravenglass.

Once clear of the suspension bridge 'Yacht Paint Centre' and 'Dobbin' picked up the wind again, and began a tacking match towards Beaumaris and the eastern end of the Straights. The Met boat managed to hold its few minutes lead, but only just. On reaching Puffin Island, just off the east tip of Anglesey, the police team sailed through the gap between the two, whilst the catamaran took the more southerly route right around the island. They both found themselves in a choppy, sloppy sea. 'Dobbin' appeared to suffer badly in the rough water and soon began to drop back, and was soon out of sight of the trimaran.

The wind eased to the west as darkness fell, then increased in strength. This suited the trimaran, and it simply flew along. At 0130 the next morning they found themselves off the Selken Rock Buoy, the mark for Ravenglass, but the crew could not see anything except the lights of the Sellafield Power Station, and eventually anchored off in about 2 metres of water. Alex climbed the mast to try and spot the glimmer of the water channel behind the beach, showing the way into Ravenglass's tiny harbour, but without success. It was not until about 3 o'clock that they got sight as the sky started to become light with the false dawn in the north-east. By then 'Dobbin' had arrived to the south, about half a mile away, and found their way straight into the harbour. 'Yacht Paint Centre' raced down to that point and they gingerly made their way up the channel against the ebb tide. The channel became narrower and narrower the further they went in, and they were in danger of running aground. In the end Alex, wearing a dry suit, leapt off the bow into the water with a line over his shoulder and managed to pull the boat off the bank twice. On the second occasion he glanced around and saw that they had passed the disembarkation mark, which was now high and dry behind a sandbank. So they anchored the boat, and the skipper carried the runners ashore on his shoulders in order to keep their feet and clothing dry (and carrying Peter Hodgkinson was no joke). After the compulsory 5 minute scrutineering check Peter and Graham were off and running for Scarfell Pike. The prospect of running a minimum distance of 32 miles and climbing a peak 3,210 feet high at just after 4 o'clock in the morning must have been a daunting one. This time 'Dobbin's' runners were not so close. They had started off 41 minutes ahead of them.

Dr Gareth Buffett and Norman Carter, the runners from 'Dobbin', completed their run at 1021 hours, making the time for the run 6 hours and 51 minutes. On their return to Ravenglass they were immediately ferried out to their catamaran, which then started off on the third and final leg of the race. No sooner had they reached the entrance to Ravenglass harbour than the Met runners trotted in

in/ at the end of their run. Peter and Graham had done well and had made up 17 minutes on their Welsh rivals. Unfortunately their trimaran was not ready to pick them up at that stage. By the time they were rowed to the boat and they were ready to sail they were about 35 minutes behind the leader. The tide was flooding in fast now, and at least 13 other boats had arrived in the harbour. The first of those to come in was the orange and yellow trimaran of the Merseyside Police. Their runners, Swanborough and McBride, were now locked in battle with several other teams eager to return in time to set sail on the same tide. They did in fact get back in time for the last of the tide, but before they could scramble aboard their boat, the strong current swept 'Royal Insurance' away from them and up onto the south bank. They were so firmly aground that nothing the crew could do, would free the boat and they just had to sit there and wait for the incoming tide to float them off. Other than the leading pair, only three other boats escaped from Ravensglass on that tide.

As the first five boats now headed for Scotland they were blessed with a south-westerly wind of about force 4 to 5. As soon as they reached the Ravensglass Bar, 'Yacht Paint Centre' had its mainsail and number 3 genoa up and pulling well. They sheeted in hard and headed for the Isle of Man gap. The boat was flying through the waves, with Alex Ross and Terry Cooke taking turns at the helm. It was not long before they had to take in two reefs on the main and use the working jib. They could see very little because of the spray constantly washing over the boat. They had passed the Isle of Man before it became visible, (and the same thing happened as they passed the Mull of Galloway). Even though they were sailing 1½ miles offshore they still hit tremendous overfalls. The waves were very steep, and the boat was caught by the first irregular one, and as they were clearing the top of it a hole appeared behind it. The trimaran dropped (or flew) like a stone into that hole. Peter woke up with the cabin roof only inches from his face, but landed safely back in his bunk. The rudder bar was later found to be bent by about 20°. Very shortly after that rough passage they found themselves in quieter waters heading for the Mull of Galloway.

Alex Ross awoke from a short sleep to find the boat off the coast of Ireland, at Lough Larne. The weather forecast stated that the south-west wind would veer to the north-west and then back to the west later. So they tacked towards the new wind. It did not arrive on cue, and so they went easterly up the Clyde into the tide and the very bad sea from the north-west, with the old south-westerly swell helping them. These conditions were not too bad for the trimaran, but the police team knew that it would not suit the catamaran, 'Dobbin' if they were still ahead of them. They could not persuade themselves that they had overtaken it, and were constantly peering around for the sight of sails. They found out later that they must have passed the cat' before reaching the Isle of Man, because that is where 'Dobbin's' crew had to lower the mainsail whilst one of them attempted to tighten up the rigging screws on the masthead diamonds. This entailed climbing the mast in a choppy sea, and the job took them about 4 hours to complete.

As darkness approached on the Monday night, 'Yacht Paint Centre' was slowly being lifted up to the Mull. They passed it at 0130 on Tuesday morning, with the tide turning with them. In the Sound of Islay the sea was flat and the wind was dying steadily. What wind there was came from the south-west and they were able to fly their big spinnaker. After Gigha Island the tide was about to turn, so they turned to the Argyle side after the Crinan Canal and started rock-hopping. The shore is fairly steep and there were back eddies and puffs of wind the whole morning. The sun came out and they were soon flying all sorts of sails, some looking like sleeping bags and others like oilskin jackets, and even yellow wellies. You could almost say that they 'steamed' up the Sound. The spinnaker was gybed constantly to keep the apparent wind on the beam, and this required absolute concentration.

The 'Yacht Paint Centre' crew thought that they had got to Corryvreckan Gap too early, but decided to make across to it, sailing up the shallower bank in the middle. As they got there they found more wind and the boat started to hum again. They were not troubled by the last hour of the tide and they carried up through Fladda Narrows and across to Mull. The wind then deserted them as they tried to get into Loch Linnhe, the loch that leads up to Fort William. They made what use

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they could of the tide and any puff of wind that came along, but they had to row most of the way for about 15 miles. It was not until they reached the Appin Narrows that the wind came back, this time a little more from the west. That wind carried the Met boat through the Corran Narrows with about half an hour to spare before the tide turned against them. It was there that they spotted the disconsolate support crew of 'Dobbin' on the bank, asking them for any news of their boat. The Welsh supporters were not alone, for there, emerging from the local hostelry, were  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the Metropolitan Police support team. They could not believe their eyes when they saw 'Yacht Paint Centre' slipping through the narrows. They all rushed down the ferry ramp to get a closer view, waving and shouting greetings. The sailors were too busy at the time to wave back, as they were changing one head-sail for another, but they all felt elated now that they knew they were in the lead.

But the race was not over yet, and the sailors had three headsails on the deck ready to go up, and managed to use all three within 200 yards as the wind conditions changed. The runners were manning the oars and were keeping the boat moving when the wind fell away. The number one genoa came down, and the masthead drifter went up and the trimaran slowly cleared the eddies. The tide turn was very close there, and they were fortunate to get through without too much trouble.

As they cleared Corran Narrows the big spinnaker went up, and stayed up for the last 8 miles. They still had to gybe it constantly, but the wind remained from astern. The evening cruiser handicap racers welcomed them off Fort William, and not long after that they reached the mark where it was permissible to use their motor. Although they started the engine it was not necessary to use it as the wind was moving them faster than the motor could. It was not until they lowered the mainsail, about 200 yards from the jetty, that the sailing finished and 'Yacht Paint Centre' had to motor in. The Met team received a rapturous welcome, not only from their own jubilant supporters, but from the marshalls and all the onlookers present. The runners were landed at 1948 hours that Tuesday evening. That meant that the trimaran had covered the 235 miles from Ravensglass in 32 hours and 58 minutes, smashing the previous record by no less than 9 hours and 26 minutes.

All that remained now was for the Peter and Graham, the Met runners, to complete the Ben Nevis run free from injury. Part of this run was going to have to be made in the dark, so 'care' was to be the watchword. Peter had suffered badly on the Snowdon run, but had really got going on Scarfell. That had boosted his confidence, and now he had no fears about Ben Nevis. He had spent the last 8 miles of the trip up Loch Linnhe sitting completely relaxed at the base of the mast just drinking in the fantastic scenery. Graham, on the other hand, seems to be able to run for ever and was busy with his preparations as they sailed up the loch. They were both very fit, and were determined to do well. They now knew they were in front, and were keen to keep it that way. They started off for the Ben at 1953 hours with their skipper's request for 'just a nice, safe finish' ringing in their ears. As if it was a good omen, the clouds that had been covering the top of Ben Nevis for most of the day, began to lift and turn pink. Patches of snow could clearly be seen near the summit, and the air was crystal clear.

After an interminable wait by the sailors and supporters, the two Met runners returned to Corpach Lock and crossed the finishing-line at 2352 hours, completing the 171 mile run and the 4,406 feet climb in a minute under 4 hours. Graham had sustained a bad fall and they were both suffering from stiffening muscles, but none the less they finished with smiles on their faces. They were very tired, but happy to know they had fulfilled their part in this team effort. When they got their breath back they were able to slake their thirst on champagne, supplied by the exultant support group. The whole Metropolitan Police party could not stop grinning. They had won the Three Peaks Yacht Race after 4 years of trying, and had won it well. The whole race had taken them 3 days 3 hours and 57 minutes. That was 7 hours and 52 minutes better than the previous record.

The speed of the boat had put a tremendous strain on the runners in the team

team/

by reducing their recovery times between the runs. It meant that they had had to run the equivalent of 3 marathons in 3 days, with the minimum of food and comfort in between, living in an environment that never stopped moving. They had run over 70 miles and climbed a total height of over 11,000 feet. That is tough running, and a truly remarkable feat.

It was not until 0125 on the Wednesday morning that the second boat, 'Dobbin', landed its runners at Corpach Jetty. The wind had deserted them just south of Corran Narrows and they had to row for the last 12 miles or so. Their run for the Ben started at 0130, and took them 4 hours and 20 minutes in difficult conditions. But that meant that 'Dobbin's' team had also beaten the previous race record by 1 hour and 54 minutes, but nearly 6 hours behind the Met Police.

The third boat, 'Memec and Chips', a trimaran that had won this race on three previous occasions, did not arrive at the finish until 2244 on Wednesday evening, with their runners completing the race at 0253 hours on Thursday. 'BDP Acropolis', last year's winner of the Three Peaks Race, finished just over an hour behind 'Memec'. The 5th boat home was the 26 foot monohull 'Ensign Dyas', manned by a team from the 2nd Battalion Light Infantry, finishing at 1018 hours on Thursday, after they had run the Ben in a fantastic time of 3 hours and 11 minutes. These three boats were the last to escape from Ravenglass on that early tide.

The cost of running aground and missing that tide became all too obvious when 'Royal Insurance', the Merseyside Police boat, did not arrive at Corpach until 1632 hours on Thursday, being the 8th boat to finish. They then dropped a further two places when their runners were overtaken by faster men arriving after them.

The North Yorkshire Police, manning a 32 foot cruiser, arrived in 18th place at 2255 on Thursday night. Their runners found it difficult trying to run the Ben in the dark, and were overtaken by 4 other teams. But this was their first attempt, and no doubt they will be back to do better in the future.

Two other new teams to the race, the Royal Ulster Constabulary and the Ulster Defence Regiment, did not find the light sailing conditions to their liking, but nevertheless had their own little battle with each other. 'Dalriada', manned by the U.D.R., was in front of their police colleagues for some time, but then ran aground at the Corran Narrows, and was stuck there for most of Thursday night. That allowed the R.U.C's. 28 foot Kelt monohull to reach the finish about 1½ hours ahead. The luck of the Irish certainly deserted the R.U.C. team when one of their runners twisted an ankle on Scarfell Pike. In spite of that, the man insisted on doing the final run, and in so doing twisted his other ankle badly. However, he still managed to limp home in 4 hours and 15 minutes. The U.D.R. completed their run up Ben Nevis in a creditable 3 hours and 38 minutes.

The Three Peaks Yacht Race is almost unique in the world of sailing. It was described by Peter Stokes, one of the runners on 'Throbber', a 24 foot Robber, the smallest boat in the race, as "Totally bizarre, but absolutely fantastic!" Another quote come from Ron Isles, who has covered most of the races as the publicity officer, who said, "The Three Peaks Yacht Race should carry a government health warning, for it is definitely addictive!"

Next year will be the 10th anniversary of the race. Each of the previous winning teams have been invited to take part. So it should be a 'race of champions' and should be well worth watching, that is if you cannot take part yourself! But for the Metropolitan Police Sailing Club, this year's effort will be hard to beat.

Our thanks go to the Royal Marines for supplying the oars; Mercury and Perrys of Paignton for supplying the engine, and to the M.P.A.A. and the 'land team' for support. The charter fee for the boat was paid by the 4 members of the crew.

Alex Ross and Len Gooch

THREE PEEKS YACHT RACE - 1985  
FINISHING TIMES AND POSITIONS AT CORPACH  
 (Subject to Confirmation)

BOAT	CREW	TYPE	DATE	TIME IN	RUN ENDS	TIME	FINAL PLACE
1. Yacht Paint Centre	Met Police	Tri	18/06/85	1948	2352	3.59	1st
2. Dobbin		Cat	19/6/85	0125	0550	4.20	2nd.
3. Memec and Chips		Tri	"	2244	0253	4.04	3rd
4. BDP Acropolis		Tri	"	2359	0406	4.02	4th
5. Ensign Dyas	Light Infantry	Mono	20/6/85	0702	1018	3.11	5th
6. Phantom Wake		Cat	"	1148	1556	4.03	6th
7. Marlow Ropes		Tri	"	1328	1818	4.45	7th
8. Royal Insurance	Mersey Police	Tri	"	1632	2046	4.10	10th
9. Red Goblin		Mono	"	1709	1957	2.43	8th
10. Arabesque	St Thomas Hospital	Mono	"	1730	2134	4.00	12th
11. 7th Int. Xpress	R Horse Artillery	Mono	"	1743	2116	3.41	11th
12. Midnight Cowboy		Mono	"	1743	2039	2.50	9th
13. Flicka		Mono	"	2206	0307	4.56	15th
14. Skandia Life	Ladies Team	Cat	"	2208	0330	5.17	18th
15. Alik		Mono	"	2240	0319	4.34	16th
16. Throbber		Mono	"	2244	0332	4.43	19th
17. Odile	R.A.F.	Mono	"	2245	0259	4.09	14th
18. Silent Night	N Yorks Police	Mono	"	2257	0409	5.09	22nd
19. Bucks Fizz		Mono	"	2300	0233	3.28	13th
20. Gremr		Cat	"	2303	0323	4.15	17th
21. Insoluble		Mono	"	2327	0343	4.11	20th
22. Assent		Mono	"	2346	0404	4.13	21st
23. Red Conqueror		Mono	21/6/85	0050	0518	4.23	23rd
24. Merchantile Flyer		Tri	"	0500	1214	7.09	25th
25. Moody Kintyre		Mono	"	0553	0920	3.31	24th
26. Airstrip Underlay	R.U.C.	Mono	"	1015	1435	4.15	26th
27. Dalradia	U.D.R.	Mono	"	1148	1521	3.38	27th
28. Go Kart		Mono	"	1254	1658	3.59	28th

DORSET POLICE REGATTA - 1985  
17th/18th July at Poole Yacht Club

1st Roger Glass	Metro	Laser	2	2	7	¾	= 4¾
2nd Eddie & Hillary Hinds	Dorset	Dayboat	4	¾	¾	4	= 51
3rd Stan Laurenson-Batten	Ex Metro	Laser	¾	3	6	3	= 61
4th Gooch/Bishop	Metro	Albacore	5	7	2	5	= 12
= 5th John & Liz Burbeck	"	Merlin	19	11	3	2	= 16
= 5th Allen/Pilsworth	Notts	"	6	13	4	6	= 16
7th Peter Pope	S Wales	Laser	3	6	14	8	= 17
8th Derek Westall	"	"	8	4	8	7	= 19
9th Roger Brown	T Valley	Finn	7	9	5	10	= 21
10th Nigel Jackson	Notts	Laser	9	5	9	11	= 23
11th John Leybourne	Warwick	"	12	10	10	9	= 29
12th Brian Tucker	Dorset	O.K.	11	8	13	14	= 32
13th Ken Brearly	"	Laser	10	19	11	12	= 33
14th Paul Skerman	Sussex	"	13	12	12	13	= 37
15th Ray Hollis	W Kids	Topper	23	14	15	15	= 44
= 16th Jeff Hines	A & Somerset	Enterprise	19	23	23		= 65
= 16th Barbara Selby	N Yorks	"	19	23	23		= 65
= 16th Mike Kinnard	Metro	GP 14	19	23	23		= 65
= 16th Dennis Langton	T Valley	Solo	19	23	23		= 65

This year's Dorset Police Regatta lived up to its reputation of being one of the best meetings on the police sailing circuit. Thanks to the organization of Brian Tucker, the meeting went as smoothly as ever. All credit too to the Race Officer, Jim McGregor, for setting some good courses and to the Time Keeper, Frances Killminster, for working out the results so quickly.

This was the first opportunity that many of us had to see the brand new clubhouse and marina of Poole Yacht Club. The prime site on which the old clubhouse stood for many years was bought by the shipping firm, Truck Line, and part of the deal was for them to build the club a new building for the members and a marina for their boats. This they have done, and the premises are superb. It would be an ideal place to hold the P.A.A. Championships some time in the near future. The picture windows in the clubhouse still give the occupants a panoramic view of Poole Harbour and the Purbeck Hills. There must be few better backdrops to any sailing meeting. This part of Dorset has a good sunshine record, and Wednesday 17th July proved just that. It was an ideal day for sailing. The sun shone and there was a force 4 southerly breeze to go with it. This produced some sizzling reaches, and not a few capsizes. The Thursday was not quite so bright, but there was wind, and all the competitors that survived the first day thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

A triangular course was used for three of the races, which were set Olympic style (triangle, sausage, triangle). The extra beat and the dead run in the 'sausage' leg made sure that the Lasers did not have it all their own way by reaching ¾ of the race. The courses were quite demanding, requiring both physical fitness and concentration to do well. The second race in the series of four was

was/

a 'Round the Islands' race around Brownsea and some of the islands in the harbour. This turned out to be quite tricky in more ways than one. Most of the competitors did not know where the racing marks were, and so a rescue boat led the way. So it was a case of follow the leader. The channels to the south of Brownsea Island are quite narrow and are marked by wooden posts. If you strayed beyond the posts you ran aground on the mud. Sometimes the centreboard hit the bottom on the correct side of the posts. It was an interesting concept for a race, and certainly made a change from chasing each other around three buoys. The lead changed places several times, but ultimately went to the Dayboat of Eddie Hinds on handicap, which saved it from being a Laser benefit.

It was good to see Stan Laurenson-Batten, now a police pensioner, back on the circuit. He may be a little older, but he is still extremely fit and sailing as well as ever. His up-wind speed in a blow is incredible, as was shown in the first race. Roger Glass and Peter Pope could not get near him. John and Liz Burbeck were in front for some time in their very fast Merlin Rocket, but the rudder blade fractured at the top and would not lock down. This caused them to capsize twice, and finally to retire. The two Enterprises taking part both capsized and sustained broken centreboards in trying to right them. The unfortunate Dennis Langton capsized his Solo and damaged his shoulder in getting back in. He was unable to sail in the other three races.

The new Dayboat of Dorset's Eddie and Hillary Hinds was obviously the boat to reckon with. It may have the shape of a 'Swallows and Amazons' type of boat, but it had the speed and performance of a good GP 14. When that is combined with a handicap allowance of a Mirror Dinghy you are onto a winner. They looked favourite to win the event right up until the last race. It would need either Roger Glass or Stan Batten to win to stop them. It was Roger that just pulled it off by a mere  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a point.

By the second day the Burbecks had cured their wayward rudder and were up at the front of the fleet again. However, in the third race, there was not enough wind to allow them to get far enough in front of the Albacore of Gooch and Bishop to beat the handicap. The two old fogies gleefully hung onto their wake, being beaten only by the Dayboat in the end, after the handicap figures had been worked out. This was the only race in the meeting in which the Lasers did not feature in the first five places. The leading single-hander was Roger Brown in his Finn, and he was 5th.

The last race was the exciting decider for the trophy. Three boats were in a position to win the event, but they would have to win this race to clinch it. It was Roger Glass that took the bit between his teeth and went off like a train. Stan Batten just could not get near him. Further back the Dayboat was trying hard, but the leading Lasers were going further and further ahead. At the finish it was the Burbecks' Merlin Rocket that took the line honours, but it was Roger Glass that won the race and the trophy for the event. The Dayboat finished in 4th place, but that was good enough to win them the runners-up prize. The third prize went to Stan Laurenson-Batten.

The sailing was so good that many of the crews were reluctant to leave the water. Many of them did stay on in the area after the meeting to sail and explore the harbour further. It is a beautiful spot, and well worth a visit. So if you were not there this year, make sure you are there next year. You can then share in some of the best sailing in the country.

Len Gooch

NOTTINGHAMSHIRE POLICE REGATTA - 85

1.	R Sivers	Northants	Laser	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	3	=	$2\frac{3}{4}$
2.	K Johnson	W Yorkshire	"	$\frac{3}{4}$	4	2	=	$2\frac{3}{4}$
3.	N Jackson	Nottingham	"	3	3	$\frac{3}{4}$	=	$3\frac{3}{4}$
4.	G Norman		"	6	2	4	=	6
5.	C Cooper	W Midlands	"	4	5	5	=	9
6.	Gooch/Povey	Metropolitan	Albacore	5	7	6	=	11
7.	I Smith	W Yorkshire	Enterprise	10	6	7	=	13
8.	R Bramhall	G Manchester	"	8	8	15	=	16
8.	Stafford		Wayfarer	7	9	11	=	16
10.	J Allen	Nottingham	M Rocket	9	10	10	=	19
10.	J Leybourne		Laser	13	11	8	=	19
12.	R Anelay	W Yorkshire	"	11	13	9	=	20
13.			Signet	dns	12	12	=	24
14.	R Jenkinson	G Manchester	Enterprise	12	17	13	=	25
15.	P Newton		Laser	R	14	15	=	29
15.	P Pilsworth	Nottingham	Fireball	14	15	19	=	29
17.	G Squires	W Yorkshire	Laser	16	17	19	=	33
18.	I Ogden		Enterprise	20	21	19	=	39

In a month of uncertain weather (It rained every day in London up to the Bank Holiday Monday) the day chosen for this year's Nottinghamshire Police Regatta was ideal for sailing. There was both wind and sunshine to be had on Wednesday 21st August 1985, when 18 boat-crews met to do battle at Retford Argonauts Sailing Club, near Newark. There was the usual predominance of Lasers amongst the menagerie fleet (9 Lasers - half the fleet), with Enterprises coming second, with 4 boats. There were 6 different forces being represented, from as far apart as the Met and West Yorkshire.

Three races were held, with the best two results to count towards the final results. The race officer, Bob Haynes (from the local club - a dentist by profession) set three different courses, just to keep the competitors on their toes. Some were quite complicated, and caught one or two helmsmen out. All the courses included quite a lot of reaching legs, much to the delight of the Laser fleet. They were in their element, planing about all over the place. There were a few capsizes but, on the whole, the conditions were quite manageable by most of the crews.

Dick Sivers, Kevin Johnson, Nigel Jackson, Geoff Norman and Colin Cooper were having a fine time at the head of the fleet, constantly exchanging places in the force 3 to 4 winds. There was a different winner for each race, with Kevin Johnson winning the first race, Dick Sivers the second, and Nigel Jackson the third. Kevin and Dick finished up with same number of points, and the tie-breaker had to be used - the discard result (Dick's was a 3rd, and Kevin's a 4th). So Dick Sivers was the eventual winner of the event, but only just. Nigel Jackson was placed third, only 1 point behind the leading pair.

Len Gooch and Dick Povey represented the M.P.S.C. in their Albacore, The Caliph. The best they could do was to come 6th overall - the first of the 2-man boats (the real boats). They were pushed strongly by Ian Smith in his Enterprise, and also Rod Bramhall, in a similar boat.

The whole day was enjoyed by all that attended the meeting.

Len Gooch

The Sussex Police Regatta was held on Wednesday 28th August, at Bexhill-on-Sea, on what was probably the best sailing day of the season - Force 3 to 4 and very warm. Unfortunately, only nine police crews took advantage of the conditions, perhaps because of the previous bad weather which had left a fairly lumpy sea, or perhaps they were all on holiday. Luckily the meeting was held at the same time as the local club regatta, and about twenty local boats swelled the fleet considerably and gave the police crews some competitive racing. The only visiting teams were ourselves in the Merlin, and two crews from Kent one of whom was Alan Gimes, in an Albacore.

Because of the small police entry, it was decided not to give them a separate start. However, the slow and fast handicap boats were split, and the slower boats had to sail fewer laps. This had the result that all the boats spent similar times on the water.

There were two races. In the morning the local Albacores, with Peter Goodman and Alan Gimes among them, showed why that design of boat is so suitable for the sea conditions on the south coast. The first group to the windward mark was of four Albacores, followed by a local Javelin, the Burbecks in their Merlin, Chris Wilcox in his Laser, and a local Scorpion.

The second leg was a long reach, which allowed the spinnaker boats through, together with Wilcox, who had a tremendous show of speed on the waves. As the race continued the Burbecks progressively pulled ahead of Wilcox. Behind them, Goodman and Gimes were having a superb race with the local Albacores. They finished in that order for the police results, although a local Albacore won overall.

Only eight police crews had entered the afternoon race, as retired Sussex member, David Jones, decided not to start. He had been able to get away from his new vocation as Rector of Uckfield - a daunting new venture in which we wish him the best of luck. The wind freshened slightly for this race, and together with a turn on the tide. This caused a slight increase in the size of the waves, just enough it seemed, to slow the Lasers upwind. The marks had been moved, which meant that there was only a short spinnaker reach and a long two-sail fetch. These conditions were perfect for the Albacores. Upwind they built up a tremendous lead, which the long reach compounded. The winner on the water (and overall) was a local Albacore. The Burbecks were second, closely followed by Goodman & Loake, who were over the line at the start. Chris Wilcox finished second police boat, followed by Gimes.

Overall, it was a superb day's sailing, at a well organized and very friendly club.

RESULTS:

1st	John & Liz Burbeck	Met	Merlin	¾	¾	=	1½
2nd	Chris Wilcox	Sussex	Laser	2	2	=	4
3rd	Alan Gimes & Tony Broughton	Kent	Albacore	4	3	=	7
4th	Paul Skerman	Sussex	Laser	5	4	=	9
5th	Peter Goodman & John Loake	"	Albacore	3	dis	=	11
6th	Mike East	"	Topper	7	5	=	12
7th	David Jones & Tracy Jones	"	Graduate	6	dns	=	
8th	Ian Skerman	"	Laser	dis	5	=	
9th	P Bardup & R Goddard	Kent	Wineglass	rtd	rtd	=	

John Burbeck

The build up for the world championships began some nine months prior to the first race in Italy, with the building of a new hull. Not having the funds to buy an off-the-shelf 'go fast' Fireball, I negotiated a 'fair price' and opted for a somewhat unknown boat-builder. Once built, it was down to me to paint and varnish, fit out and rig in double quick time, to enable sufficient 'tuning up', prior to the first qualifying event at Paignton in early May.

The U.K. Fireball Association is permitted nine boats at the championship, and hence the competition is fierce early in the season to secure one of the places; all of the qualifiers attracted between sixty and seventy boats. When the points were tallied, we had qualified comfortably in fourth place. All that was required now was to keep practicing. The big event just prior to Italy was the National Championships at Plymouth. This was sailed during the same week as the Fastnet Race, so needless to say, it blew - gusting 35 knots in one race. The week ended with a victory for the visiting Australian pair of Abbott and Smyth, with the National Champion being Tony Wetherall, and us third - one week later we were off to Italy.

Diano Marina is on the Italian Riviera, about 40 miles east of Monaco, and renowned for light and fickle breezes. This prediction proved accurate for the practice week (actually 4 days) with winds shifting as much as 180 degrees, and all but one day blowing less than force 3. The next two days were enough to try the patience of a saint - "Measuring". A small team of Italians were expected to completely measure 60 Fireballs, with all the additional language and temperament problems, in 80 degrees of heat - all good fun!

The following day (Saturday) was the first of seven races, and the pattern emerged very quickly. The tide always flowing in the same direction around the bay, and with a substantial wind bend under the cliffs at one end, there was only one way to go. If the wind was from the west, it paid to go hard left; from the east, hard right: Boat speed was thus at a premium, especially on the mile and a half reaches. Wetherall dominated the championships, winning with a race to spare, although places could change between third and eleventh depending on results of the final race. At this point, with a 4th, 6th, 6th, 8th, 10th and 12th, I was 7th overall with a small chance of making the top three.

The final race started in good trapezing breeze, ideal for the Australians who rounded the top mark first, with us 2nd, and the South Africans (who were equal on points) third. At the end of the first triangle the positions were the same, although the wind was dropping. There was a westerly breeze blowing, so hard left was the way to go. The Italian and Irish boats, who had been 100 yards behind the leading three, tacked out to sea, seemingly intent on committing suicide - then came the big shift which, by the end of the leg enabled both of the boats that struck out to sea, to cross the fleet and lead at the windward mark. Now back in fourth place, with only one beat to go, all I had to do was to cover the South African, to climb to 5th overall for the Championship. As the leading boat reached the leeward mark disaster struck - the wind vanished completely, and the entire fleet was swept past the mark by the current. 2¼ hours later, as the time limit ran out, not one boat had completed the race which was abandoned - what a day's sailing! We therefore finished the week 7th. The Italians had done a fantastic job organizing the championship in what had been difficult and testing conditions for any race officer.

And next year? The Canadian are our hosts for the Worlds in May 1986, and between now and then I have got to get another new boat organized, hopefully learning from the mistakes made in this year's campaign.

Tuesday, 17th September saw the tandem meeting of the Kent Police Regatta and the P.A.A Regional Championship for 1985, held at Hampton Pier Yacht Club, Herne Bay. A forecast of high winds kept the number of entries down to 13. Three different police forces were represented - Kent, Sussex and the Metropolitan.

As things turned out, the weather was perfect for an enjoyable day's racing. There was sunshine and a fresh breeze from the west (force 4 to 5, dropping to 3 in the afternoon).

Two handicap races were held, and the first one took place on the flood tide. The 'wind over tide' conditions made the water rather lumpy, and the gybes quite exciting. In fact, there were quite a few capsizes, both at the gybe mark and elsewhere.

Dave Sinnock, sailing the club Albacore belonging to the Kent Police, took full advantage of the Race Officer's mistake in starting the first race one minute early, and shot off into an early lead. The rest of the confused competitors followed in his wake. However, his good fortune ran out at the first gybe mark, and he capsized. This allowed Roger Glass, sailing a Laser, and Peter Goodman, in his Albacore, to lead the fleet. They finished the race in that order, with Alan Gimes, in another Albacore, third. Dave Sinnock finished 4th.

The tide had began to ebb by the time the second race started, and this caused some problems to those competitors not familiar with this stretch of water, especially at the gybe mark. There were no problems at the start this time, and the fleet got away cleanly. A battle soon commenced between the 4 Albacores taking part and the leading Lasers. It was Peter Goodman (crewed by John Loake) that broke clear and then held the lead for the rest of the race. Roger Glass was trying hard, but could not get close enough to use his handicap advantage, and had to settle for second place. On the last lap the two Albacores of Gooch and Gimes, and the Laser of Chris Wilcox, all approached the gybe mark together. Gooch, who was slightly in front, failed to allow for the strong tidal flow and hit the mark. That allowed the other two boats to get ahead of him. Sinnock finished 3rd, with Wilcox 4th.

RESULTS:

KENT POLICE, REGATTA:	1st Albacore -	Goodman/Loake (Sussex)
	2nd Laser -	Roger Glass (Metropolitan)
	3rd Albacore -	Dave Sinnock (Kent)
	4th Laser -	Chris Wilcox (Sussex)
	5th Albacore -	Alan Gimes (Kent)
	6th Albacore -	L & J Gooch (Metropolitan)

P.A.A. REGIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP:	1st Albacore -	Goodman/Loake (Sussex )
	2nd Albacore -	Dave Sinnock (Kent)
	3rd Laser -	Chris Wilcox (Sussex)
	4th Albacore -	Alan Gimes (Kent)
	5th Laser -	Robert Bruce (Kent)
	6th Phantom -	Chaz Jordan (Kent)

This year's B.P.L.S.A. championships were held on Thursday 19th September, at Chasewater in Warwickshire, under the flag of Chase Sailing Club. The organising brain behind this meeting was that of Jim Sturdy of the West Midlands Police. These championships have become a regular feature of the police sailing calendar, thanks to the early work of Stan Laurenson-Batten, and a very popular feature too.

The championship was to be decided on the best two results from three races. With so few races, it meant that you could not afford to make any mistakes, well not too many.

The defending champion, Simon Hawkes (Avon and Somerset), was unable to attend, but 18 would-be champions from eleven different police forces did. Amongst them was Jane Loxley (South Yorkshire) and Bob Saunders (police pensioner from the West Midlands).

Jim Sturdy had almost done too good a job ordering the wind. The day started with a westerly wind blowing straight across the lake at force 4, gusting 5. This was too much for three of the competitors, who decided to sit the first race out.

In the first race it was Gareth Owen (Merseyside) who went into the lead right from the start, and he steadily increased that lead as the race went on. In his wake, Roger Glass (Met), Kevin Johnson (West Yorkshire) and Ross Elliston (Met) battled it out. Ross was sailing the Metropolitan Police Sailing Club's Laser, and making it go very well. Half way through the race, Kevin Johnson was unfortunate enough to have the top section of his mast collapse, which brought about instant reefing and eventual retirement. That left the Met pair to consolidate 2nd and 3rd positions. Nigel Jackson (Nottinghamshire) finished ahead of Derek Westall (South Wales) and Dick Sivers (Northamptonshire). Chris Wilcock (Sussex) finished 7th. Gareth Owen's finishing margin was more than 11 minutes over the second boat home.

Just before the boats took to the water for the second race, the sky went black and it started to rain quite heavily. Then there was the sound of a rushing wind, and a whole line of boats waiting on the beach to be launched were blown clean off their trolleys. Roger Glass watched his boat travel about 20 feet through the air before it crashed to the ground. Fortunately the only damage to it was a split tiller, which he replaced with a spare one he had in the car. With this squall came a wind shift of about 90°. This gave the race officer, Ian Gray, a headache, as he had only just finished setting the course for the previous wind direction. So there was some delay whilst a new course was laid and advertised. But it did mean that he could now set a long, testing beat from one end of the lake to the other.

At the start of the second race Gareth Owen went off like a train once again, into a lead that was unapproachable for the rest of the race. This time he was followed by Ross Elliston and Geoff Norman (Nottinghamshire). Roger Glass was using a different sail (a multicoloured one) this race and did not seem to be doing quite so well. On the second long beat Dick Sivers pulled up into 3rd place, ahead of Geoff Norman. But on the run back, it was Roger Glass that made up ground, and passed both Norman and Sivers. On the third beat the Met pair were back together again, with Elliston still in command. At the finish, it was Owen that took line honours, with a 1½ minute lead over Elliston. Glass crossed the line 11 seconds later. Norman was 4th. The 5th and 6th places were hotly contested, with Sivers and Wilcock approaching the line neck and neck. The race officer had the unenviable job of splitting them, and gave Wilcock the 5th place by an inch or so.

At the end of the second race, the results showed that the actual championships had been decided in favour of Gareth Owen, with his two wins. But the 2nd and third places were wide open, with Glass and Elliston both on 5 points, with similar positions (a 2nd and a 3rd). Both Nigel Jackson and his colleague, Geoff Norman, had a 4th position. If either of them could win the last race, they would be sure of the runner's up prize.

Although he had no need to, Gareth did sail in the last race. He was a little too eager at the start, and got to the line early. This forced him to reach along it and get mixed up with some other boats. So it was Roger Glass that made the break and took the lead. He was first to the windward mark, and led on the run back as well. But he then blotted his copybook by trying to round the downwind mark the wrong way. There he lost the lead and was pushed back to 7th place. At that stage Ross Elliston was 5th. Owen had gained by Glass's mistake, and was in the lead once more, with Jackson and Johnson in hot pursuit (Johnson had managed to borrow another mast). Dick Annelay (West Yorkshire) was just ahead of Elliston, and Norman was ahead of Glass. With Owen out in front, it made Glass's job easier. All he had to do was to concentrate on getting in front of Elliston, because even if Jackson did finish 2nd, he would end up with 6 points (one more than Glass and Elliston). Slowly, but surely, Glass started to overtake Elliston. Ross was doing his level best to cover Roger all the way around the course, but eventually Glass squeezed his way in front. They were so intent in watching each other that they were almost sailing a different course to the rest of the fleet. Derek Westall took advantage of this a swept through into 6th place.

At the finish of the last race, Owen crossed the line just over one minute ahead of Jackson. Johnson was 3rd, with Dick Annelay only 10 seconds behind him. Norman was 5th and Westall 6th. Glass was only 11 seconds behind the Welshman, but 13 seconds ahead of Elliston. 12 seconds later, Colin Cooper, from West Midlands, crossed the line. Behind him, the dynamic duo of Sivers and Wilcock were fighting for another photo finish. Today was obviously not Dick's day, because once again he was pipped at the post by Chris. There could not have been more than a whisker in it. It was all pretty exciting stuff!

So there it was! Gareth Owen was the undisputed champion for 1985. Roger Glass was the runner-up, but only by virtue of a lower discard than Ross Elliston.

OVERALL  
RESULTS:

1st	G Owen	Merseyside	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	=	$1\frac{1}{2}$
2nd	R Glass	Metro	2	3	7	=	5
3rd	R Elliston	Metro	3	2	8	=	5
4th	N Jackson	Nottingham	4	7	2	=	6
5th	G Norman	Nottingham	8	4	5	=	9
6th	D Westall	S Wales	5	8	6	=	11
7th	C Wilcock	Sussex	7	5	10	=	12
8th	R Sivers	Northants	6	6	11	=	12
9th	R Annelay	W Yorkshire	13	9	4	=	13
10th	K Johnson	W Yorkshire	rtd	10	3	=	13
11th	C Cooper	W Midlands	9	13	9	=	18
12th	J Leybourne	Warwickshire	10	11	12	=	21
13th	J Nelson	G Manchester	11	14	13	=	24
14th	P Skerman	Sussex	12	17	14	=	26
15th	B Kennedy	Nottingham	14	15	16	=	29
16th	J Sturdy	W Midlands	28	16	15	=	31
17th	R Saunders	W Midlands	28	12	28	=	40
18th	J Loxley	S Yorkshire	28	18	28	=	46

Len Gooch