

Minutes of the National Sonata Class AGM

Held on Tuesday 11th July 9.30m at Dabchicks Sailing Club, West Mersea

Present: Chairman Alan Hassel, Membership Secretary Tom White, Technical Officer Martin Hartley, Publicity Officer Catherine Hartley, Boats for Sale Steve Tribe, Webmaster Jack Hardie plus 25 members of the association.

1) **Minutes of 2005 AGM** – it was noted that the “minutes” from the last AGM included notes of subsequent events rather than what happened at the last AGM. There were no comments from the floor.

2) **Chairman’s Report** – the chairman reported that the state of the class was good and looked to be secure in its future.

3) **Treasurers Report** – AH reported on the finances of the Association. The total income in 2005 was lower than usual as the membership money was not collected. The association had net assets of £7000 and had invested £5000 in a high interest account.

4) **Membership Secretary’s Report** – TW apologised for inability to send out the membership reminders as usual in October 2005. Reminders have now been sent out and there are a total of 109 paid up members of the association. The membership is stable now after a lull 3 years ago. TW encouraged sonata owners to let him know of boats that are not members of the association and persuade them to join.

Question from the floor: How do we attract new members? – Response from the floor included discounts/free membership for the first year to new members which would get their details onto our database **ACTION TW**. Current members and area reps were encouraged to look at their own clubs and find boats which may not be members.

It was proposed that the advert in Yacht and Yachting be reinstated twice a year (seconded and passed at the meeting) **ACTION CH**.

5) Area Reps Reports

North: Andy Laurie reported that after the success of the Northerns at Sunderland last year the class would return again this year on 23/24th September. The format would be 10 races over two days. Also the Inland Championships would be held at Coniston Sailing Club on the 21/22nd October. Details for both events would be on the Sonata website. The Windermere Cruising Association would be running its winter series from the first Sunday in November every 2 weeks until March 2007.

South: Tom Hewitt had received lots of enquires about the Sonata class and people wishing to buy and sail boats. The Southernns were held as part of the Biannual Poole Regatta on May BH weekend and had 10 boats. Cowes week already looked good with 11 entries.

Scotland: Neil McLure talked on behalf of Peter Booth. The Scottish Series had been a great success this year with 17 sonatas, making it the biggest one design class of the regatta. The Scottish fleet continues to be very active.

Medway: Mike Harrison told the AGM that the Medway now had 27 sonatas including 3 new members and racing took place every Saturday afternoon.

Thames: Roger Sydenham spoke on behalf on the Thames fleets including Dabchicks and West Mersea. The sonata fleet has been there for 15 years and has the biggest one design fleet every week. This is now there 3rd time to host the nationals.

An idea from the floor was to create a map of sonata members in the UK, including active racing fleets (**ACTION: JH and TW** to create map using member database and activate on the website).

6) AGM Arrangements

The AGM in recent years was held at the London Boat Show in January, although previously it had been held at the National Championships. The membership felt that at the nationals there were a large number of active racers present, including travellers and all the area reps, therefore a good audience to get input and discussion about the class. It was felt that using video conferencing or meetings at the boat show in the future would not achieve the same input from the class, only from committee members. It was voted unanimously that the AGM continues at the National Championships. (**ACTION JH** to publish AGM minutes and agenda on the website). Points for discussion should also be put onto the bulletin board prior to meetings.

7) Election of Officers

TW, CH, MH, ST, JH willing to continue in their current posts.

TW reminded the membership that the Sonata Class constitution states that members may be elected onto the committee and the committee then decides on the positions of officers.

AH offered his resignation as Chairman from the end of 2006. Neil McLure was proposed, seconded and voted onto the committee. Andy Laurie was also voted onto the committee. A vote was taken by the membership to recommend to the committee that NM would be the next chairman of the Sonata Association.

Alan Hassel was proposed as the Class Historian/Archivist. Deputies have been appointed to some of the committee members where necessary.

8) Nationals Information

Congratulations were passed from the floor on the organisation of the 2005 Nationals at Abersoch.

There were no comments on the current nationals.

2007 nationals will be at Sunderland YC, Dave Matthews expressed the delight of the club in holding the event. The format was still to be decided but a note had been put on the bulletin board for discussion of the format and dates.

2008: Strangford Lough has confirmed their intention for 2008.

2009: Poole YC and RWYC offered to hold the championships. This will be confirmed in the next 6 months.

Question from the floor: Could we not offer the nationals as part of a bigger regatta where the race management and socials are bigger? It was felt that Cowes week would not be suitable for this, nor Poole as it was only biannual. An area championship would probably be more suited to some of these large events but not every time – our own class events allowed people to travel to lots of different clubs in the UK. A question would be added to the bulletin board (**ACTION CH**)

9) **Publicity** CH reported that there have been 2 articles featuring the sonata class recently. In Practical Boat Owner (April 2006) there was an article on Blue Chip 24ft boats including the sonata and a cover shot of John Putt's boat Piccolo. In Yachts and Yachting (April 2006), Justin Chisholm wrote an article in his column Even Keels about one design boats.

Battle Flags are still available at £17.50 each. The stickers using existing artwork would be restarted (**ACTION CH**).

Comments were made from the floor about the good quality nationals t-shirts, Roger Sydenham would look into obtaining more t-shirts. We will look into having sonata class t-shirts, although it is noted that most events have their own shirts (**ACTION CH**).

Website: JH reported that the website is going well but does rely on contributions from the membership. He offered to put articles onto the website if people wanted to write something eg technical, cruising. The bulletin board has been made more secure due to recent Viruses and a request has been made for people to use their own names rather than aliases on the website (**ACTION JH**).

Boats For Sale: ST reported that about 25 sonatas are sold each year through the website board. He has had some problems with hoax callers. Steve works closely with JH to keep the list up to date.

10) Measurement Rules (MH)

The Class rules need to be formatted in order to comply with the Equipment Rules of Sailing (RYA). If we do not format them we will lose our National Status. We can comply and send a draft by September with the new rules submitted by November 2006. There is little cost involved only time. This is fairly straightforward in practice, we need to shuffle our rules to a new format, plus add a definitions section and formal provision for updates and additions including correct procedures. The RYA has sent a copy of our own rules, an example and the template for the new rules. MH also offered that some class rules need to be clarified or changed but this would happen after the new format has been accepted by the RYA. Any ideas for changes will be posted on the bulletin board and sent out to the membership for comment, before they are accepted at a future AGM.

Questions from the floor: 1) could major championships write into their SI's that crew numbers remain the same during the event unless notice is given to the race committee. 2) There was a problem at Dabchicks with large numbers of unmeasured sails which puts pressure on the organisers to find a sail measurer for the event. It was stressed that all sails should be measured prior to an event and it was the owner's responsibility to do this – the marks on the top of the sails are not the measurement mark, only the sailmakers mark. Also the rule regarding the batten pocket measurement on a no. 2 Genoa needs to be checked (**ACTION MH**). A request for a list of registered sail and boat measurers to go on the website was agreed (**ACTION MH**). In addition MH was now a boat measurer for the class and has already measured 7 boats this year for new certificates. It is a simple process with only a few measurements required from Section D of the Class Rules, providing the boat already has an GBR 8*** number. Any unmeasured boats will need to be fully measured. The procedure for boat measurement will be put onto the website (**ACTION MH**).

11) AOB

Training : prior to the Windermere Cruising Association Winter Series there will be a weekend training session on Lake Windermere run in conjunction with LDBC, WCA, Steve Goacher and local chandleries – details will be posted on the website nearer the time.

12) 2007 AGM to be held at Sunderland Yacht Club during the National Championship

A presentation was made by Tom White to Alan Hassell in appreciation of the work he has carried out over the last 6 years as Chairman of the Association.

The meeting was closed at 11.30pm.