

NATIONAL SQUIB OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Committee Meeting held on Monday, 11th November 2019 at the Naval Club, 38 Hill Street, London, W1J 5NS, 2 – 6pm

1. Attendance and Apologies

Present: Nigel Grogan (Chairman), Marian Gibson (Secretary) Malcolm Blackburn (Chair, Technical Committee), Pete Richards (Chair, Championship Committee, Colm Dunne (Irish Forum), Dick Batt, Lou Bibby, David Biddle, Gerard Dyson, Mike Probert, Paul Studart, Richard Sullivan, Simon Vines, Ian Waite, David Wines.

Apologies: Penny Robinson (Membership Secretary), Tony Saltonstall (Technical Adviser, David Hall

Part 1: Administration Matters

2. Declarations of Interest:

Nigel Grogan declared that he is a Director of Hyde Sails. Dick Batt declared that he is a Director of Batt Sails. Ian Waite declared that his company prints Squibble.

3. Minutes

13 May 2019 Meeting

Approved (David Wines proposed, Lou Bibby seconded) Agreed nem con.
AGM 25 June 2019 approved for accuracy.

4. Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda

None

5. Chairman's Report

Since the AGM in Torquay the important points for the NSOA to consider and note would appear to be as follows;

1. The Nationals was a great success on account of excellent organisation by the NSOA members and very amenable hosting by the RTYC. The weather certainly helped and the venue provided challenging sailing for the just over 50 boats that sailed. Torquay and the Club between them provided a near perfect mix of bars and restaurants to suit all tastes. The average level of attendance has to be considered in the context of no local fleet. So although previous Nationals there have had more entrants the numbers could be considered good.

2. Other summer/autumn events seem to have gone well. Irish Nationals, with 24 boats, Cowes Week, Welsh Open, South Coast (only 19) Waldringfield Cartoon trophy, Burnham Week (22 entries) Jimmy Starling the Inlands (32 starters) and the John Lewis. Many clubs such as Haven Ports have had busy and well attended club racing in addition to these events. The total helm entrants for the Travellers Trophy was over 120. There were other events too which I am not conscious of, but no doubt will be reported in Squibble.

The observation has to be that participation in Squib sailing remains at acceptable, but far from record, levels. Growth looks possible in Scotland, Ireland (with the Nationals there next year) Portsmouth and the Solent possibly including Lymington. The East Coast clubs remain positive and active. Concern has to exist over Weymouth, Holyhead and SCYC - previous bastions of the class.

We have been successful in attracting some new and younger members.

3. Class finances are strong, especially after the belated payment of the agreed rebate on the cloth for the AQL deal, which netted the NSOA more than €3000. We could spend more of our money on marketing the class maybe. We have changed the accounting for the class and the membership secretary. We now need to look at subscriptions and their collection- ideally by DD. We also need to consider the costs of Squibble (which is now editor-less after the retirement of Ricky East - who has done such a sterling job) advertising, sponsorship

and entry fees. Should we look to use less money on Squibble and more on other promotion of the class including contributing to events (by either making them cheaper or adding value eg the free dinner at the Inlands paid for by Hyde)

4. The proposed "attitude survey" which will be conducted this winter is a vital part of assessing whether we are delivering what the class wants (and maybe what new-entrants want)

5. Earlier in the year the class voted by more than the required two thirds majority to:

1. Allow advertising chosen by an event organiser,
2. to allow jib furling while racing
3. to allow draft stripes on sails
4. to allow tell tale windows on jib
5. to allow an extra window in the mainsail 6. to allow an extra windowing the jib.

The ballot on the second set of proposed rule changes closed on 5th November and none of the proposals reached the 2/3rd majority required for a rule change (details attached). This second tranche of rule changes attracted a rather acrimonious debate on the Squib Facebook site. Dick Batt commented that the NSOA needs to ensure that systems are as modern as possible to enable any future rule change ballots.

6. New boat sales are non-existent. There seems to be little appetite for the new Rondar boat, which has to be a concern for the class.

7. We need a new Chairman. My term expires next June and we have no volunteers currently. We need to ask why this is.....(and we need to finish the work on the Constitution).

8. We need a new editor of Squibble/E-Squibber. Youth and modern attitudes to communication might be seen as the ideal prerequisites.

9. We need to define what the class represents and what the class needs to be to continue to succeed. This needs to be looked against the backdrop of declining participation in sailboat racing across the world (except in China and some other areas of the Far-East). My view is that Squibs are about affordable, close, tactical, one-design, traditional (ie non-asymmetric) keelboat racing.

The Events have to provide the right quantity and quality of racing at venues that are popular and convenient.

Club racing is the bedrock and if club racing declines so will the Events. At club level the convenience of jumping in a Squib and pulling up the sails is a major plus.

At Events and at club sailing the social side is as important - if not *more* important than the sailing side.

The class is not about chequebook sailing. Squib sailing has to appeal to young mixed sex teams.

The *spirit* of Squib sailing is an essential part of its DNA - a friendly, helpful, collegiate, long-standing atmosphere at all levels.

In the subsequent debate the following comments were made:

Next Chairman: One member has been asked to consider being nominated as Chairman and although flattered to be asked felt that currently the work load would not give time. A number of suggestions. DW commented that there had been a work overload in recent years caused by circumstances outside our control. Dick Batt wondered whether a more formal change in the structure with more work being done by sub-committees (Technical, Publicity and Championships) would help. He also commented that finding volunteers for any role

isn't easy.

It was felt that we need to define what the Class wants – with the forthcoming survey relating to Championships providing a start point.

What about club / fleet participation – it was noted that the local view was that Weymouth, SCYC and Holyhead were all stable, albeit in SCYC's case with a rather ageing fleet.

Dick Batt suggested an article for Squibble would be useful – and agreed to write one.

Noted that there is a general decline in sport activity and we need to define what we are about. The following were felt to be important to the class:
Affordable; Traditional; One Design, close racing; Right type of event; Club racing; Social side; NOT cheque-book racing.

Malcolm Blackburn commented that rather than constantly looking at the rules (which the majority of Squibbers are largely unaware of) to try to make the class more sexy we should be looking at promoting club racing.

Nigel Grogan remarked that we need to appeal to young(er) mixed sex crews as well as the "traditional" Squib sailor.

Overall the feeling was that the class was not in too bad a shape but that we needed to be aware of the direction of travel.

6. Finance Report

Richard Sullivan reported on progress with the finance system. Changing bank signatories has been a very prolonged process and the system is still not completely there. However we are now in a position to make payments! The next stage is to organise further read-only access to the accounts to simplify all accounting processes. Increasingly we will attempt to put new members onto direct debits using Go Cardless which should also work so far as Ireland is concerned.

RS proposed that the financial year end should be changed to 31st December, which would bring it in line with the subscription year and help to simplify the accounts. Agreed unanimously. A budget will be prepared for 2020. Subscriptions: 2020 AGM leave them at the present level.

Noted that the AQL spinnaker deal has netted approximately €3000 for the NSOA.

7. Membership Report

The current full membership number is 377 and there are 34 Associate members. Penny Robinson is now in full control of the system.
Noted that the RYA are undertaking a membership survey.

Agreed, nem con, that free first year membership for U30s should apply in a case by case basis.

Ian Waite proposed that Mike Barsby and Ricky East be made life members (AGM business).

8. Constitution update

David Biddle asked Committee members to go back with comments on the marked up version circulated so that a final document can be present to the next meeting for approval so it can go to the AGM.

9. Technical Committee Report

The report is attached and forms part of these minutes.

Noted that the RYA and the NSOA are still working on wording for the advertising rule

change.

Comments on jib furling noted.

Use of 2 spinnakers on 2 race days (C10.2): The committee agreed to allow 2 spinnakers simplifying the wording.

Buoyancy on the hybrid boat: Further calculations are needed to see if there could be an issue.

Part 2: Strategy

10. Rondar

Noted that new boat sales are non-existent and agreed that the Chairman would talk to Paul Young on the current position and his plans.

11. Championship report

Nationals are confirmed as follows:

2020 Kinsale

2021 SCYC

2022 Weymouth

2023 One tender in from Royal Forth

Noted that Kinsale organisation is well underway and there had been a very valuable meeting with Ruth Ennis and Victor Fosco at Rutland. Colm Dunne reported that ferry deals are still awaited.

Pete Richards wondered just what the remit of the Championship Chair is – it seems to have grown over recent years from just the Nationals to include Inlands and Travellers as well as co-ordination of Regional events.

Nigel Grogan commented that the Inlands had fallen into the remit of the NSOA nationally following the retirement of the previous organiser and the demise of the Rutland Fleet. In the last two years many issues regarding the Inlands have been addressed. It is an example of where joined up thinking on what is required has paid off.

Dates for 2020 Regionals are still being finalised. Noted that the East Coast would be at Lowestoft in 2020 and Medway in 2021. An attempt is being made to spread dates as much as possible to avoid conflict between events.

Colm Dunne reported that the Irish Regionals are spaced as one a month and co-ordinated by the Irish Forum

PR further reported that the Attitudes Survey, last done in 2011 is being prepared and some amendments are needed. The timing for the survey hasn't been finalised nor has the length of it.

Mike Probert commented that asking members why they do not attend events is important.

12. Marketing

Nigel Grogan reported that currently no real marketing is happening. Squibble needs a new volunteer editor and Esquibber needs manpower. Graphic design / web techies would be ideal. The website is going to need similar attention at some stage – the current webmaster is struggling with ill-health and is doing as much as he can.

It was noted that some classes are superb at publicity.

Reporting from Championships and Opens: Noted that Y&Y Online are very willing to take reports, photos and video from events. If they get these by the end of a weekend the reports will be up on Monday morning.

Dinghy Show: NSOA booked to attend. Stand still to be sorted. Portsmouth have been asked to provide staff again – they have done a superb job over the last couple of years. The question of payments for staff was raised. Noted that if we display a Squib with keel we will need to have steps that conform with H&S rules.

Southampton Boat Show: Should we exhibit there in some way?

Agreed that outside publicity for Nationals should be costed. In addition the use of outside resources for publicity generally should be costed.

Pete Richards commented that a lead person for the Marketing function is needed. A “job description” is needed to aid the search.

15. Any other business

a) Temporary Membership for Regional Events:

Agreed this could be a local decision where people are borrowing boats.

b) Date and Time of Meetings

Agreed that at this point in time we should continue with Monday afternoons. However this should be reviewed on a regular basis.

c) Measurement and cost of measurement

Ian Waite asked if cost is an issue where the NSOA should consider subsidising. At this stage it was felt that the issue was more one of supply of measurers and that pressure should be put on the RYA, following discussion with other National Classes to try to get the system to work effectively.

16. Date of next meeting: Monday, 27th April 2020

There being no further business the meeting closed at 5pm.

NSOA RULE CHANGE BALLOT AUTUMN 2019

		Total Votes	For	Against	Abstain	% in favour
		188				
1	Sailcloth rule delete word "mace"		66	122	0	35.11%
2	Front bulkhead specifically allowed		95	91	2	51.08%
3	Loose footed mainsail (delete Bolt rope on foot of main)		92	93	3	49.73%
4	Barber Hauler rule deletes "in one plane only" restriction		41	144	3	22.16%
5	Outboard Motor to be included in the minimum weight		18	170	0	9.57%
6	Increase minimum weight by 20kg		37	149	2	19.89%

Total eligible votes 378, turnout 49.74%

Marian Gibson
5 November 2019
15.00hrs

Tech Sub Committee report Nov 2019.

Rule changes from June vote.

Sail changes, and furling that were approved are all implemented.

However the advertising rule change is still causing wording problems:

To allow the same deal again as the 50th is not the issue, it can be covered as we did for the 50th. However it's the continued use of the spinnaker with advertising on it that is the issue.

The wording that the RYA came up with to cover this is "Advertising chosen by the person in charge is allowed on the spinnaker". This is necessary as other than the 50th any time the spinnaker is used at another event it is the "person in charge" that makes the decision to use and thus display advertising. However if this wording was adopted there would be nothing to stop any person putting advertising of their own on their spinnaker, which is specifically what the class does not want.

This opinion has been through the RYA Tec committee not just Rob Taylor and no alternative ideas for wording have been thought of.

Minor change proposal.

A bit of a minor point, but maybe better to clarify now rather than have issues later. I bounced this of the RYA tech committee who agreed it was logic to do this, also the Squib Tech Sub committee agreed. Long winded explanation following;

The current class rules measure the position of the forestay mounting at the front of the boat, the jib is traditionally hanked to the forestay, and thus the jib tack is attached to the forestay plate the distance of a hank behind the forestay. From a performance point of view in reality it is the jib tack attachment position that is important, not the forestay.

Now when a furling system is fitted, to fit the furling drum a plate is added to the forestay plate



(C.7.4. Fittings, (b) Jib furling / roller reefing device and fitting plate which shall retain the forestay and be fixed to the forestay plate above the deck). That actually moves the forestay forwards out of the way of the drum which is fitted in the jib tack position. See picture.

The furling drum is fitted to the Jib tack attachment hole, the set screw in front of that is the traditional forestay hole, and the plate moves the forestay forwards out of the way. The forestay wire you can see is pulled by elastic to keep it taught and out of the way when furling the jib. The swage for the eye can move forwards until it hits a stop and thus ensuring the forestay function of retaining the mast without the jib.

I would suggest that now furling is probably going to become more common place, rather than the critical measurement

dimension being the forestay hole it is changed to be the jib tack attachment position. This from measuring several boats of various vintages is between 18 and 22mm behind the forestay hole.

The relevant rule is

D.9.2 Dimensions.

Horizontal distance from centre of forestay attachment hole to forward end of hull 125 mm 145 mm

I would suggest that this is changed to read:

Horizontal distance from centre of Jib tack attachment hole to forward end of hull 143 mm 167 mm

By doing this the position of the forestay becomes irrelevant, the tech committee feel its retention as a safety feature is necessary, but especially on new boats it is unnecessary to restrict how the forestay is moved forwards in order to give room for the furling drum.

I should add that several classes of boats do furl the jib around the forestay, systems from other boats that do this attach the forestay and luff wire to the furling drum. I have tried this on the Squib and due to the Jib sheave in the mast being positioned very close to the forestay attachment, the system does not work as the jib halyard and forestay always wrap together due to the inevitable friction of swivel systems. However should someone actually perfect such a system it is important that the drum is fitted at the lower point to the jib tack position, not the forestay hole.

Use of 2nd spinnaker on 2 race days.

Within the current class rules we have the following wording

C.10.2 LIMITATIONS

(a) Not more than 1 mainsail, 1 jib and 1 spinnaker shall be carried aboard.

(b) Event Notice of Race or Sailing Instructions may permit an additional spinnaker to be carried. The second spinnaker shall be used **only if the first is lost or damaged beyond repair.**

Now it has been pointed out "who decides if it is damaged beyond repair"? The comment being:

"If a spinnaker is replaced during a race or for another race because it is torn, and subsequently deemed to be repairable (or simply repaired without reference to the Race Committee) this rule has been breached."

My thoughts are:

I think there are 2 intentions of the rule.

The main one being to avoid the development of different cuts to suit reaching or running or any other reason for different shapes. So that results in the limitations of only one sail on board for racing. Then because of 2 race days we need to allow for damage in the first race.

With that in mind should we really care if anyone changes a spinnaker during a race?

Additional is it fair for someone who makes a small tear to have to continue using it all race and risk making it far worse?

Are we just being too draconian and simply just allow 2 spinnakers on a 2 race days and drop any other limitation on their use?

What does the committee think?

Buoyancy in the Hybrid boat. The Rondar boat being foam sandwich carries flotation within the hull construction, thus if the front buoyancy chamber was holed the bow does still have some inherent buoyancy. The Hybrid boat does not. In the case of the Old Squibs we have the front tank and buoyancy bags. The risk of losing buoyancy after a collision is remote due to the buoyancy chamber being very low in the boat and not normally holed, and if it were the bags would still work. In the hybrid the chance of the front tank being holed is far greater.

The question is : should we insist upon some form of buoyancy similar to the stipulation for the full height aft tank, or are we happy that the fact that in the hybrid there is a very large amount of buoyancy contained in the under floor chamber that should ensure the boat stays afloat?

Malcolm Blackburn

Tech Sub committee chairman