

NECRA Newsletter

October 2007



The 2007 NECRA season is almost over - just the AGM and Prize Giving to be held. The weather has not been particularly kind to us this year - curtailing several events. Yet it has still been a good season for NECRA in many ways. One of the most encouraging features this year has been the resurgence of the Whitby YC racing fleet. Not only did they have many more registrations than usual, but they turned out 5 boats new to NECRA racing. The Whitby rep, Nigel Robinson must take some of the credit for this development. Similarly THYC has seen a significant increase in registrations, although this has not yet been converted into more boats on the water.

This season has also seen a resurgence of the class 2 fleet. However this increase has to be balanced against the decline in class 1 entries. Classes 3 and 4 saw little change whilst remaining highly competitive.

Registered boats racing inshore

	Sb	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Total
2005		8	2	3	4	17
2006	8	9	2	6	3	28
2007	4	5	6	5	5	25

Registered boats racing offshore

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Total
2005	9	3	4	16
2006	7	6	7	20
2007	7	9	4	20

Whilst these figures seem to suggest that Inshore events are a little more popular than the Offshore, it must be remembered that Inshore events have a 'home fleet' of boats that form the bulk of the competitors. By contrast, all of the boats in a passage type event, by definition travel to other clubs. Whitby Regatta had only 4 visitors, Roker 7 and RNYC 4. This is a rather low number of yachts traveling to inshore events which raises the question **-Is the current Inshore format losing its appeal?**

Sports boat participation in NECRA, low compared with the number of sports boats on the coast, has declined further this season. **-Is NECRA really relevant to them?**

Class 1 seems to be in decline (despite lowering the class 1 boundary this season) - **Do we need to bring the boundary lower still? Or should we think of merging class 1 and 2?**

Class 3 consists primarily of sonatas. On the other hand, the White Sail class consists primarily of class 3 boats choosing to race white sail in the inshore series **-Is it worth creating a Sonata one design class?**

These and other issues will be discussed over the following months, but you can have your say by coming along to the AGM or posting a comment on the web site discussion board.

Race Reports 2007

Hartlepool - Whitby

Although the forecast for later in the weekend was horrible, the first race of the season was held in light winds and a flat sea. There were 5 starters. Early in the race White Magic, under spinnaker, led the fleet towards Saltburn. However, the wind went round to the SE and the sea slowly increased to create a beat for the remainder of the race. In these conditions the big boats pulled away, Bite the Bullet being the overall winner on handicap, closely followed by Cordon Rouge and Phoenix. Tarka and White Magic were the only entrants in their classes.



Scarborough -Whitby

This race saw an entry of 5 class 2 boats, all from Whitby. Light and variable winds at the start slowly filled in to produce a spinnaker run to Whitby, Samaki of St Hellier winning on Handicap from Icon.

Whitby Regatta -1

A wild and wet day with the wind and sea slowly increasing, a couple of the visitors took the opportunity to return north early in the morning before conditions deteriorated further. Only Classes 1 and 2 competed in the two bay races. The second race was shortened as conditions in the harbour entrance were becoming unpleasant. In the overall results for the day, Bite the Bullet took class 1 and Tarka class 2.



Whitby Regatta -2

The entrance was very unpleasant and racing was cancelled! Indeed, the visitors were not able to get away until Wednesday.

Bass Rock

A forecast of S or SE 5/6 increasing and poor visibility dampened the enthusiasm of competitors slightly. Only 4 NECRA boats took to the line and 2 retired immediately to make their way home before the worst of the weather came through. By Saturday the rest of the fleet had retired, finding their way safely back to Blyth.

Sunderland - Whitby

A beautiful forecast for the weekend saw just 8 competitors set off for Whitby on a spinnaker reach in very light airs and a flat sea. It remained light through the night. A couple of the class 1 boats gybed several times looking for boat speed, but the eventual winner, Tarka, carried the same gybe all the way and finished just ahead of Hussy. Barnstormer, adopting similar tactics, won class 1 convincingly from Jedi. It was great to see the smallest boat in the fleet, Storm in a G Cup, a Sonata, take second place overall and win class 3. Blue Max came in second in this class.



Whitby - Hartlepool

The weather remained sunny and the sea flat. A close fetch turned into more of a run as the 8 boats made their way north - Hussy and Storm in a G Cup being the only boats to carry their spinnakers all the way. Sadly, Storm in a G Cup missed out a mark in Hartlepool bay, thus gifting the overall win to Tarka who just beat the class 1 boat Jedi on handicap. In class 3, G Spot managed to win, for the third year in a row, by beating home Blue Max.

North Sea Race

There were 6 NECRA starters - one of the largest entries for several years (3 in class 1 and 3 in class 2). As is often the case the race started very slowly. In Scarborough bay boats struggled to get going under spinnaker. Even at this point, the eventual overall winner, Phoenix, made ground on the fleet in what was to be her last NECRA race. As the wind freshened and the sea increased on Saturday, many boats dropped their spinnakers but Phoenix carried hers the whole way. Class 2 was taken by Samaki (who incidentally was using this race as the start of their round Great Britain cruise!).



Farnes Race

An early start saw 5 NECRA competitors carrying their spinnaker in a SE breeze. Rather like last year, the wind slowly filled and veered as the day went on and the sea picked up to produce a long beat back to Blyth. Shotgun 6, the only class 1 competitor took the race overall, with Tarka winning a close race in class 2 from Samaki and Addict11.

Roker Regatta

The conditions were ideal on Saturday with a flat sea and building winds. Two races were held and 14 NECRA boats turned out. Risky business just won the sb class overall from Corkanut (taking 2 firsts on Saturday, sharing the honours on Sunday, and Corkanut getting the final result on Monday). Antix was the only boat racing in class 1. Sunday saw 16 boats on the water when in class 2 Tarka was well beaten by Buoy Racer (Tarka raced on her own the other two days). Monday's round the bay race, in much fresher weather, saw 12 boats starting. Class 3 was dominated by Storm in a G Cup whilst Ragtime convincingly won class 4 overall.

RNYC Regatta

This season RNYC were not quite so lucky with the weather as in previous years. It was a little wild on Saturday when the racing was curtailed to just 1 race. Sunday was even wilder and only classes 1 and 2 raced, the results for the other classes being determined by Saturday's race. Shotgun 6 was the only NECRA class 1 boat racing at this event. Class 2 was



fought out between Addict II and Sheevra, Addict II eventually running out the overall winner despite Sheevra taking the first race.

On Saturday, in class 4, Double Act won a very close race, finishing a couple of seconds in front of Blue Max. The sports boat, Filthy Gorgeous, in her first NECRA event, also managed a very close win from Corkanut.



Pen Portrait

As a means of introducing competitors and their boats to members, the newsletter is featuring a number of ‘pen portraits’. If you would like to contribute to one of our future editions please send it to webmaster@necra.co.uk.

Nigel Robinson – Skipper of Samaki

Nigel has been sailing on the north-east coast since 1966, always from Whitby. He started on a Firefly which raced against the rest of the WYC cruisers out in the bay. This wasn’t considered peculiar in those days. But he always yearned for more off-shore sailing and hopped on to a Hurley 22 to take part in his first NECRA race in 1968, a feeder race to Granton for a Royal Forth Regatta. The next season saw him racing on the family Scandinavian Folkboat, Cuprous, taking in more NECRA races, including his first Bass Rock, in some pretty breezy conditions.

A career in the RAF curtailed his north-east sailing somewhat. However, he did manage to get back occasionally and was always keen to sail with the legendary Bob Barleycorn on his several variants of “Rebel”, many of the races in NECRA. Sailing with the Air Force provided some invaluable experience including numerous channel crossings, a Tall Ships Race, several Mediterranean cruises, a Fastnet and a couple of Atlantic crossings. And it was all work!

Nigel returned to sail from Whitby in the mid 80’s in his own E-Boat, Encore, but didn’t manage any NECRA races in her. He then went on to buy his present boat, “Samaki”, a Starlight 30, in 1999. World volatility made sailing difficult to fit in at times, but since retirement two years ago he has found more time for his main pastime.

He enjoyed his first NECRA race for 30 years last year on the Farnes Race, and has managed a further 3 this year, which would have been 4 if he hadn’t chickened out of the Bass Rock! He is already looking forward to next year.

NECRA Inshore Series - 2007

Pos	Class	Boat	Owner	Club
1	sb	Risky Business	Risky B Synd.	RNYC
2	sb	Corkanut	N Atkinson	RNYC
3	sb	Jedi	J B Hughes	THYC
1	1	Antix	J Allen	WYC
2	1	Shotgun 6	D Morgan	RNYC
3	1	Bite the Bullet	A B Smith	WYC
1	2	Tarka of Tees	L J Wilkinson	THYC
=2	2	Addict II	C Stirling	RNYC
=2	2	Sheevra	J Wallis	RNYC
1	3	Storm in a G Cup	G Kirkham	SYC
2	3	White Magic	D Mathews	SYC
3	3	Stratagem	J Williamson	SYC
1=	4	Double Act	G Spenser	SYC
1=	4	Ragtime	J Ellis	SYC
3=	4	Blue Max	J Carter	SYC
3=	4	G Spot	R Bacon	SYC

NECRA Inshore Events - 2007

Event	Class	Boat	Owner	Club
Whitby Regatta	1	Bite the Bullet	A B Smith	WYC
	2	Tarka of Tees	L J Wilkinson	THYC
Roker Regatta	sb	Risky Business	Risky B Synd.	RNYC
	1	Antix	J Allen	WYC
	2	Tarka of Tees	L J Wilkinson	THYC
	3	Storm in a G Cup	G Kirkham	SYC
RNYC Regatta	4	Ragtime	J Ellis	SYC
	sb	Filthy Gorgeous	D Sharp	RNYC
	1	Shotgun 6	D Morgan	RNYC
	2	Addict II	C Stirling	RNYC
	4	Double Act	G Spenser	SYC

NECRA Offshore Series - 2007

Place	Class	Boat	Owner	Club
1	1	Phoenix	C Jackson	THYC
2	1	Barnstormer	H Usherwood	THYC
3	1	Jedi	J B Hughes	THYC
1	2	Tarka of Tees	L J Wilkinson	THYC
2	2	Samaki of St Helier	N Robinson	WYC
3	2	Hussy	A Burden	SYC
1	3	G Spot	R Bacon	SYC
2	3	Blue Max	J Carter	SYC
3	3	Storm in a G Cup	G Kirkham	SYC

NECRA Offshore Events - 2007

Event	Class	Boat	Owner	Club
Sund- Whitby	1	Barnstormer	H Usherwood	THYC
	2	Tarka of Tees	L J Wilkinson	THYC
	3	Storm in a G cup	G Kirkham	SYC
North Sea	1	Phoenix	C Jackson	THYC
	2	Samaki of St Helier	N Robinson	WYC

NECRA Club Championship

Place	Club	Points
1	Sunderland YC	16
2	Royal Northumberland YC	14
3	Tees & Hartlepool YC	12
4	Whitby YC	9

A Question from the Chairman

Whilst this season has seen registrations remain at the same level as last year, the number of boats competing on the water has fallen slightly. A more worrying feature of this season has been the apparent reluctance of boats to travel away from their home port. NECRA, as it is currently constituted, is an organization to support and encourage inter-club racing. It is difficult to see how this can happen without boats traveling between ports.

Another worrying ongoing feature is the apparent lack of support by the membership in the running and organization of NECRA. Poor attendance at the AGM and Prize giving, in previous years, seems to indicate a general lack of interest in the way NECRA is run. Also, despite many attempts to elicit members' views, the discussion board on the web site remains largely inactive. Membership must be aware that the current NECRA committee largely consists of the 'older generation' in part, by default. This is not healthy for developments for the future. We need new blood (young blood?) and new ideas in both the committee and on the water if NECRA is to thrive.

Running NECRA takes time and effort. If there is only limited support for what NECRA offers, then the question must be asked - **Has NECRA, as it is currently formulated, reached the end of its useful life?**

If you have any views on this question or any other issues please make them known by attending the AGM or posting a message on the NECRA web site or contacting your club representatives! Club representatives will be discussing this and related issues in the management meeting on 10 October, but ultimately this decision rests on the membership - the old adage 'Use it or loose it' comes to mind!

<i>AGM</i>	<i>8pm</i>	<i>Saturday 27 October</i>	<i>THYC</i>
<i>Prize Giving</i>	<i>8pm</i>	<i>Saturday 24 November</i>	<i>SYC</i>

The 6 photographs used in this Newsletter are the winners of the photographic competition organized by NECRA this year.

Bite the Bullet
Samaki of St Helier
Hussy
Start of North Sea
Risky Business
Shotgun 6

Hartlepool - Whitby
Whitby Regatta
Sunderland - Whitby
North Sea Race
RNYC Regatta - 1
RNYC Regatta - 2

Terry Hogg
Larry Wilkinson
Karen Wilkinson
Ian Kershaw
Neil Schofield
David Morgan