

RS 700

Sailing Today



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The RS700 associations e-Newsletter - Issue 18

| [Issue 01](#) | [Issue 02](#) | [Issue 03](#) | [Issue 04](#) | [Issue 05](#) | [Issue 06](#) | [Issue 07](#) | [Issue 08](#) | [Issue 09](#) | [Issue 10](#) | [Issue 11](#) |
| [Issue 12](#) | [Issue 13](#) | [Issue 14](#) | [Issue 15](#) | [Issue 16](#) | [Issue 17](#) |



Issue 18 contents...

[RS 700 Calendar 2009...](#)
[Chew Valley...](#)
[International Fleet takes to the water...](#)
[Breaking News...](#)
[Kite Blocks...](#)
[Pressure Testing Kit...](#)
[RS700 Kite Halyard Systems 1-2-3...](#)
[Goal Setting and Coaching...](#)
[Gold and Silver Fleet Split for 2009...](#)



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The season has kicked off with the Gul Winter Champs 2009 at Grafham and the first circuit event at Chew Valley Lake - Jon Heissig winner of both. Fleet training is planned for early April (details below) to assist those who wish to give him some competition!

RS 700 Calendar 2009...

18/19 April Racing Circuit, Hayling Island SC
 9/10 May Racing Circuit, Datchet Water SC
 30/31 May Racing Circuit, Weymouth & Portland NSA
 4/5 July Racing Circuit, Lymington Town SC
 27th-31st July Eurocup, Carnac YC, Brittany, France
 15/16 August Racing Circuit, Hunstanton SC
 26-29 September National Championships & Eurocup, Royal Torbay YC
 24/25 October Inland Championships, Queen Mary SC

RS700 2009 Circuit Chew Valley Lake SC - March 14th & 15th 2009...

The first event of the 2009 season kicked off at Chew Valley over the weekend. The event was interesting as we shared a start with the Musto Skiff fleet which allowed some interesting boat on boat comparisons on the water.

Race one started in a shifty and gusty f2-4 westerly which proved particularly challenging to the coastal sailors in the fleet. The competitors split across the course trying to find the most effective route up the beat, with Ian Nolan coming in from the left looking good until the first of a number of windward capsizes put him to the back. Jon Heissig eventually took the lead after initially being buried in the pack, which he held to the finish followed by Rob Jones and Steve Marshall.

The second race of the day saw Rob Jones discovering a personal lift on the right hand side of the first beat to lead at the windward mark. However it was again Jon Heissig who worked his way through and took the win from local sailor Rob Higgins who was showing great boat speed and excellent local knowledge. A very close battle for third saw Rob Jones and Steve Marshall in a gybing dual to the finish which Rob just took after ragging the kite to duck Steve's transom and take the place on the line.

Race 3 saw Jon lead at the windward mark closely followed by Rob Jones. These two quickly gapped the fleet as a gust shot them

down the first run, a lead they would never surrender. Rob shadowed Jon but was never able to really challenge whilst the best of the rest were Steve Marshall followed by Rob H.

With a very poor forecast for Sunday the Race Officer had prearranged a fourth race on the Saturday. With the fleet going left, it was Ian Nolan recovering from a poor start who went right and was then lifted beautifully up to lead at the windward mark. Rob Jones was next to spot the shift and followed into the mark and then managed to take the lead at the wing mark making the best of the very patchy conditions. Jon Heissig challenged Rob for the lead throughout the race and just managed to get by at the last windward mark. However Rob managed to repass just before the leeward mark, to sail a very nervous reach into the finish for his first ever race win in an RS700 event.

Sunday dawned a beautiful sunny but windless day. The fleet took advantage of this to do some bumbling and generally relax in the sunshine and with no sign of change the decision was made at midday to call it a day in time for the Rugby.

Congratulations to Jon Heissig for again showing us the way around the course and to Chew Valley for being excellent hosts. Local sailor Rob Higgins sailing with a borrowed mast deservedly took the silver fleet prize.

The first Duckhams award of the season must go to Rob Jones who found that at some stage two additional sets of holes had been drilled into his racks, in-board of hole one, probably to accommodate some intermediates. As a result, since he joined the fleet he has been sailing with wings two holes narrower than required. Having said that Rob's been going pretty quickly so with the extra power he may well have the last laugh!

The circuit continues in a month's time with the next event scheduled at Hayling Island on the 18/19 April.

1st Gold 882 John Heissig GYGSC 1.0 1.0 1.0 (2.0) 5.0 3.0
 2nd Gold 769 Rob Jones Weston SC 2.0 (3.0) 2.0 1.0 8.0 5.0
 3rd Gold 962 Steve Marshall Sully SC 3.0 (4.0) 3.0 4.0 14.0 10.0
 4th Silver 936 Rob Higgins CVLSC 6.0 2.0 4.0 (9.0 DNF) 21.0 12.0
 5th Gold 960 Ian Nolan Hunstanton SC 4.0 (5.0) 5.0 3.0 17.0 12.0
 6th Silver Blank Phil Underwood Cotswold SC (7.0) 6.0 6.0 6.0 25.0 18.0
 7th Gold 963 Mark Pollington Hayling Island SC 5.0 (9.0 DNF) 9.0 DNF 5.0 28.0 19.0
 8th Silver 911 Brendan Jenner Starcross SC (9.0 DNF) 7.0 9.0 DNF 9.0 DNF 34.0 25.0

International Fleet takes to the water...

Gul Winter Championship - Grafham Water Sailing Club - 14th -15th February 2009

With snow on the ground and the event clashing with valentines day and the 6 Nations rugby, it was only the truly dedicated who made the early season trek to Grafham Water for the 2009 Gul Winter Championship. Amazingly this included two guy's who came all the way from Germany to take part in the event and to pick the brains of the UK fleet.

The adverse forecast didn't help and proved to be pretty accurate with zero breeze forecast and the lightest of drifts delivered. The race management made the only sensible decision by abandoning the sailing for the day which allowed everyone to retire to the bar and enjoy the Rugby (despite England's performance).

With four races scheduled and a consistent F2-3 blowing Sunday delivered an excellent days racing.

The first race set the scene for the day, with a very close first beat to the windward mark avoiding RS200s and 800s on the way. Pete Purkiss arrived first, just ahead of Jon Heissig and Rob Jones. Heissig gradually eased past for the first of three wins. Simon Horsfield finished his first UK race in good style, beating the Class Rep and bimbbling guru Ian Nolan for fifth.

The second race saw a near perfect start on the pin from Rob Jones, and he followed this up with a close scuffle around the course with Phil Dickenson and Purkiss. A special mention has to go to the grandstand spinnaker finish of Anthony Herod, who correctly judged the angle to be tight but just possible.

A slight increase of wind provided even more fun in the third race, with Heissig clear ahead of Purkiss and Dickinson, followed by a very close tussle for fourth place with Rob Jones being covered closely by Ian Nolan, who was especially enjoying the extra breeze.

The wind eased again for the final race of the day, and the gradual boat tuning and some good work on the shifts lifted Purkiss into the front by the finish, followed by Heissig and Jones. Phil Dickinson managed to capsize on the last race of the day lucking Ian Nolan into fourth place.

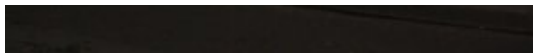
Congratulations To Jon Heissig for taking the title in such a convincing way and to Simon Horsfield for winning the Silver Fleet. Our thanks got Gul for their continued support and to Grafham Water for their excellent race management and warm hospitality.

Breaking News...

Seen by your correspondent during a recent trip to France, RS appear to have opened a new venture in the centre of Paris. What was of real concern was the items for sale. Rather than the branded clothing and sailing accessories you'd expect the shop was selling costume jewellery and Berets in bulk. Is this a new direction in response to the credit crunch or does Nick simply have something he'd like to share with us?

Anon





Kite Blocks...

If your boat has Harken kite blocks a simple and effective way to mount them is to pass the positioning elastic through the block and back down to the deck eye. This not only holds the block up off the deck to allow easier grasping of the sheet, but it also protects the deck from damage. A further refinement is to attach a small piece of pro-grip or similar to the underside of the block to complete the protection.



Pressure Testing Kit...

There is nothing more infuriating than a small and persistent leak which can be notoriously difficult to track down unless you live near a dealer and have access to a leak test kit. Well I don't have that luxury so I decided to make an adaptor myself. I won't go into a lot of detail as it's fairly self evident what to do, but you will need a replacement bung, a Presta (narrow) valve bike inner tube, a drill/hacksaw/craft knife and a little silicon sealant to make the adaptor and a bike pump, some tape to block the breather hole and some soapy water to find the leak. The whole thing cost about £10 and took half an hour to put together. Better than watching Eastenders!



RS700 Kite Halyard Systems 1-2-3...

The pump system is one of the defining aspects of the RS700. Working well it gives you the freedom to react to changes in the wind and waves keeping the boat under control at what are usually the busiest points on the course. Working badly, the system creates just as many problems as it resolves and can be the source of much frustration as well as the odd swim.

As supplied the system works well enough although there are a few legal tweaks which can improve things significantly. As time goes by and boats pass to their second or third owners, lines are often replaced and systems modified such that it is very easy to end up with a confused owner and a non-functioning system. The aim of this article is to demystify the pump halyard system and to give a step by step method for setting it up.

Throughout there are a few principals which are key to success:

- Be consistent – the system relies on elastic tension to work effectively. If you attach the various lines differently each time you

sail, this tension will be different and the system will operate inconsistently or not at all.

- Reduce friction – the pump handle imparts a 2:1 pull on the halyard which means you feel twice the tension actually imparted to the halyard. There are many opportunities to introduce friction into the system which will have a cumulative and undesirable impact on the work involved in hoisting and dropping the kite.
- If you are adjusting the length of ropes, initially leave a slight tail to allow for any fine tuning.

The intension is to follow these steps in sequence, although the first steps are the least likely to change. If you start half way through, please just continue the sequence to the end to ensure success!

Tack lines

The tack line consists of two pieces of cord, the tack line itself which passes into the bowsprit, round a floating block inside the sprit and is tied off at the end of the pole, and the Adjuster rope which is attached to the floating block and tied off to the front of the mast step. These two work in unison to allow the kite to be fully dropped into the chute whilst ensuring the tack is set as close to the pole as is possible when launched.

I use a simple knot to mark where to tie off the tack of the spinnaker and aim to be 100% in where this is positioned relative to the sail. With the kite tied on and the pole fully launched by pulling on the pole launch line, (n.b. if you do this by hand you can get the pole further out than is possible with the launching line), tie the adjuster rope so that the tack of the kite is as close to the bowsprit as is possible. If, when you are sailing and there is pressure in the sail, the kite starts to fly away from the pole end, shorten the adjuster but at the same time ensure you don't limit how far the bowsprit can extend.



Pole Launcher Line

In many ways this is the simplest line to adjust. It needs to be set so that with the kite attached as normal and fully dropped into the chute, the floating block does not hit the deck and forward bullseye. At the other extreme, with the kite launched the block should be a reasonable distance from the turning block which receives the halyard from the top of the mast. This avoids damage and ensures the halyard does not have to go through too acute an angle. Once again, and particularly if you detach this line when towing, it is important to be consistent in terms of how you attach the line to the block.





Tensioning Line

This is the line attached to the downhaul pump handle which passes around the front of the dagger board case and tensions the elastic purchase system. Ideally you want to maximise the throw on the elastic so you are aiming to have the floating block as close to the front turning block as is possible. Everyone has a different approach to pumping, some stand and do two or three big pulls, other frenetically pump 5-6 times, each of which requires a different length of line. Whatever your method, after each drop, have a quick look at the floating block and ensure that it is close to or touching the front turning block. The photo shows the maximum gap you should be aiming to achieve.



The Halyard

Firstly, as always, be consistent in the way you attach the halyard to the kite. I always make the bowline at the head of the sail as small as possible and tie a bowline loop the width of my hand on the downhaul (which avoids avoid clumping during the drops). With the kite in the chute and the elastic tensioned, adjust the halyard length (at the head of the sail) so that the floating take up block is just behind the mainsheet tower. By doing this we ensure the block is moving in a clear area minimising friction and avoiding any chance of snags.

The halyard in the photo works well but is probably at the lower limit and could be extended by 10-15cm.



The Take-up Elastic

In many ways the most critical part of the system. There have been a number of tensioning systems tried, ranging from 2:1 to 5:1 pulley systems using various thicknesses of shock cord to achieve essentially the same result. The boat as originally supplied had a 2.5:1 system which works OK although my preference is to extend this to 3:1 by simply attaching the free end of the elastic to the front tensioning block with a bowline or a swivel (see photo in the Tensioning Line section). This gives enough throw without having a lot of elastic and blocks floating around the boat.

The take up elastic is the last thing to set and is the area where we can 'fiddle a bit' to take up any tolerances. With the tensioning line fully released, the floating take up block should be right at the back of the boat to give enough slack for the kite to fly properly when hoisted as shown in the photo. If you set the elastic to this length you will be very close to the final position but may need to fine tune slightly.

If you have followed each of the above steps, your system will be pretty close to the optimum. There are a few articles from previous newsletters which can be viewed on the website and which supplement this one perfectly dealing with:

- Elastic take up systems
- Pump handles
- Reducing friction

If you are still having problems feel free to contact us through the Yahoo group and the answers will be easily forthcoming.

Cheers and Good Sailing

Ian Nolan



Goal Setting and Coaching...

Have you set your sailing goals for 2009?

It's worth doing. The first thing is to decide which events you want to do. Hopefully this will culminate in the Torbay Nationals in September! Set a realistic goal for you're your finishing place, or if it's your first year in a 700 maybe it's just getting round the nationals course without capsizing! Get dates in the diary & up on the wall, so all the family know! Write your target in it too, so it'll keep reminding you. Set some intermediate steps so you can monitor and re-calibrate yourself to a more realistic target if needed.

Now put some structure underneath. Don't just go for the obvious boat handling issues but start out higher up the chain by considering; strategy, boat speed, boat handling, tactics, physical fitness and physiology. (Are you sure it's not your mind that's stopping you execute the perfect gybe in big waves?) Make a list of your sailing strengths and weaknesses. Select a few areas that are going to make a significant difference to your overall performance and work on them. Give yourself a rating and keep a record of your improvement. Try keeping a notebook where after each big race you write what went well & what went wrong so you can keep focus. I know this is a bit like trying to keep a new years resolution, forgotten a few days later, but the discipline of writing things down really does work!

Chances are you are going to need some outside input as you strive to hit your targets, whether its get the last drop of speed from the 700 or simply just stay upright! You learn most by getting out and racing against other 700s that are better than you and talking in the bar afterward about how the other guys do it. Better still take some quality time to work on those weaknesses at one of the coaching sessions the RS 700 committee have organised. We are targeting beginners at the Datchet event on the Saturday 3rd May, the weekend prior to their open on the 9/10th. So no excuse for those with new boats not to get some technique sorted the week before the open. The coaching event at Hayling on 4th April is aimed at intermediates, with the club racing on Sunday being videoed to observe boat-handling technique in practise! The Hayling fleet would also like to invite visitors to leave their boats down and join in with the two-day event over the Easter weekend ahead of the Hayling open on 18/19th April. A good opportunity to pencil in some sea practise ahead of the Europeans!



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For the northerners we have arranged a special coaching event at Carslington also on 4th April with all levels welcome. We are starting to get several 700 sailors with coaching qualifications and so if you and friends have specific needs please get in touch and we will see what we can arrange. (You will know what those needs are because you all wrote them down didn't you!)

One aim of the early year coaching and support is to get all those who are new to the boat to be well equipped to join the fleet for the Nationals. To cement this we are therefore holding a Pre Nationals session on Friday 25th Sept aimed at sailors entering their first 700 nationals or those wanting to brush up on skills a day ahead of the 4-day event.

So, get setting those goals and I'll see you at one of the coaching events.

Gold and Silver Fleet Split for 2009...

Since in 2005, or was it even earlier, the 700 fleet has been split into Gold and Silver. Sometimes this has thrown up anomalies such as Stephen Butcher in the Silver Fleet at the Abersoch Nationals, but on the whole it has been an excellent idea and the basis for the buddy system at the Nationals which has worked well for many newcomers.

As time goes by and as new people come into the fleet and leave, it has been difficult for Ian and those doing the results at opens to keep track of who is where, so it is time to come up with some criteria. I have analysed all the events in 2008 and run them through Sailwave in several ways. I have looked at the effect of using different high point scoring systems which give more weight to the larger events, and also tried to take account of the results of those who don't do many events. This has produced some sort of fleet ranking but as some people do so few events (maybe just the Nationals) I have not been able to convert this into a reliable system. For example Paul Bayliss our National Champion should come out in the Gold Fleet even in a year when he only sails one event.

It has though allowed me to consider what specific criteria could be used to decide who goes into which fleet, and using the following criteria gives a similar result to the ranking, but pulls into the Gold Fleet some people who don't do many events but do well when they do.

In Last 2 Years (before the start of the season):

- Top third at the Nationals or other 8-10 race event (e.g. Garda/Travemunde/Carnac)
- Top 3 in more than one event in a season (moving into the Gold Fleet after the second top 3 event)
- Top 5 in the Racing Series (formerly Fat Face)

- Top 3 at the Inlands
- First in Silver Fleet at the Nationals or in the Racing Series (moving into the Gold Fleet at the end of the series)

As the series should be competed on a consistent basis, those meeting the criteria should not move to the Gold Fleet until the end of the series. If, as in 2009, the Nationals come after the end of the series, the top 5 and the winner of the Silver Fleet will be in the Gold Fleet for the Nationals, as will the top third at Carnac. In most years the Series finishes after the Nationals and before the Inlands so those in the top third at the Nationals (and Garda/Carnac), top 5 in the series and the winners of the Nationals and Series Silver Fleets will move to the Gold Fleet for the Inlands. This gives new people a chance at the silver fleet prizes at the Inlands which is a key event for new travellers.

Here is the resulting list of Gold Fleet sailors:

| | |
|----------------|------------------|
| Paul Bayliss | James Ross |
| Tim Johnson | Rob Jones |
| Jon Heissig | Andy White |
| Tim Poltglase | Dave Smithwhite |
| Nick Peters | Tim Dickinson |
| Dave Gorringe | Stephen Butcher |
| Aiden Mitchell | Nigel Walbank |
| Andy Brown | Rob Chaplin |
| Mike Dencher | Andy Irons |
| Andy Holland | Mark Nicholson |
| Ian Swann | Ed Reeves |
| Simon Lytton | Carl Vining |
| Steve Marshall | Griff Tanner |
| Stuart Riches | Harvey Hilary |
| Chris Wright | Philip Dickinson |
| Pete Purkiss | Christian Brandt |
| Ben Cooper | Mark Pollington |
| Matt Humphreys | Tom Offer |
| Ian Nolan | |

If you have met the criteria and I have left you off the list please let me know.

This does mean that a small number of sailors who have been in the Gold Fleet now find themselves in the Silver Fleet. This will now give them an opportunity to win more prizes, but if they would like to stay in the Gold Fleet we could add other criteria or extend the criteria to add that anyone who has been Gold cannot drop to Silver. I would prefer to leave in the opportunity to drop back - if I keep up my poor performance at the last 2 events of last year I will look forward to competing for the Silver Fleet prizes in 2011.

Where people have not competed seriously in any event for 2 years (like Alex Southon) we need to make a judgement at their first event back whether they need to climb the learning curve again or go straight back to Gold.



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This is not written in tablets of stone yet, and has only been shared with the committee up to now, so if you have any comments please send them to me and/or the committee or better still share them on the forum.

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