

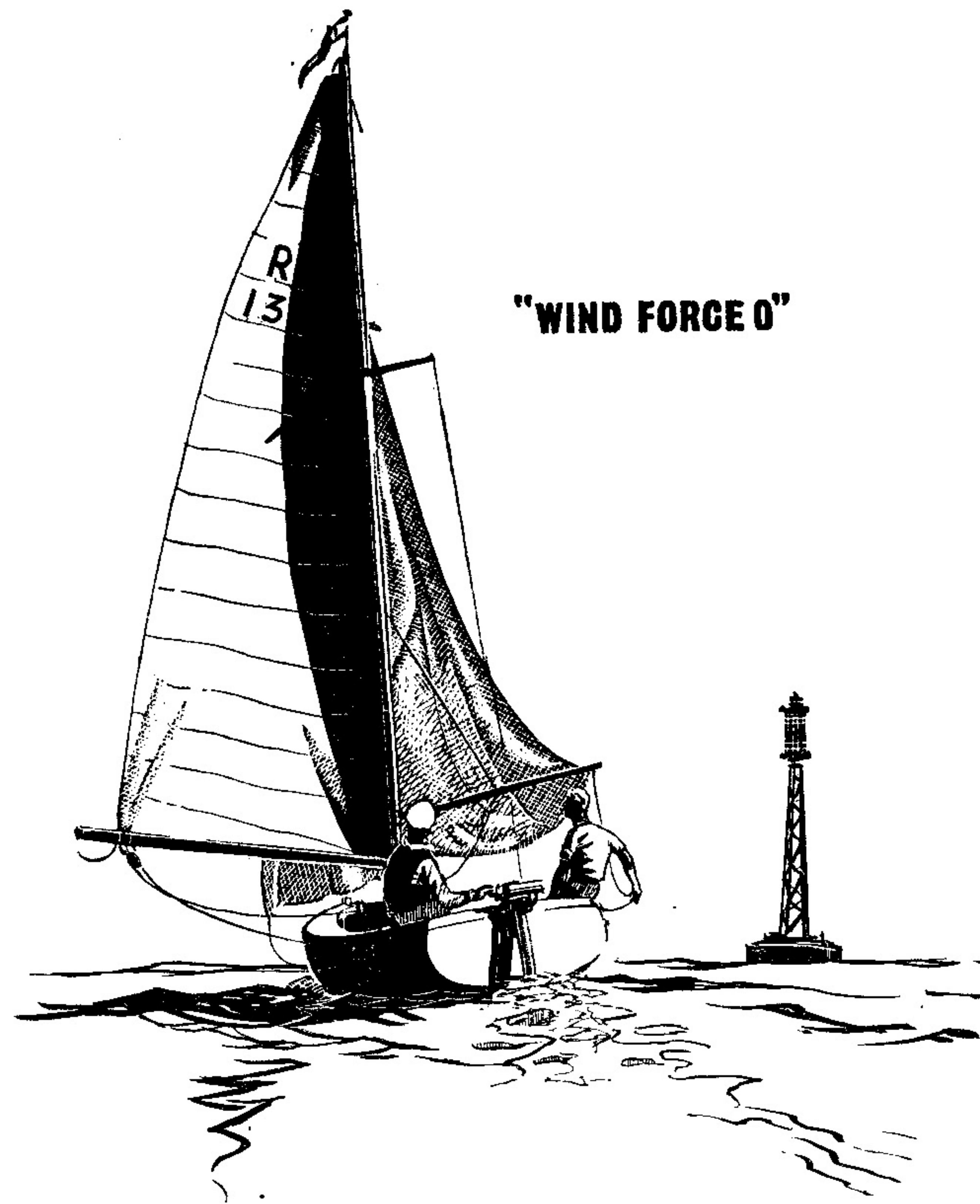
The Silhouette Owner

The journal of the Silhouette Owner's Association

Number 7.

June 1961

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Number Seven

WITH this issue, *The Silhouette Owner* enters the second half-year of its existence. We should like to thank all those who have contributed accounts of their adventures and sailing experiences: the journal owes everything to its contributors, and it may interest those who have helped to know that we have received requests for the journal from as far afield as Mafeking in Bechuanaland. We should also like to thank our advertisers, whose faith in *The Silhouette Owner* in its early days, and readiness to support it, has helped to provide the financial backbone without which no publication can exist. We cannot claim a circulation to compare with the vast figures of the larger Press, but we do feel that we offer to advertisers a readership of keen sailing men and women, who have a direct and very personal interest in goods or services brought to their notice through this journal. *The Silhouette Owner*, in common with all newspapers, cannot report what it does not know about. We do appeal to all members to send in accounts of personal experiences with their boats, to ask questions and to offer suggestions on ways of going about things which may be of the greatest interest and value to other owners. We invite, and welcome, criticism, and are always delighted to receive suggestions on ways in which the journal might be improved. Even the best of suggestions may not always be practicable, but we promise readers that all suggestions will always be considered very seriously. May we wish all readers good sailing, and happy landfalls throughout the season?

A Note On Kicking Straps

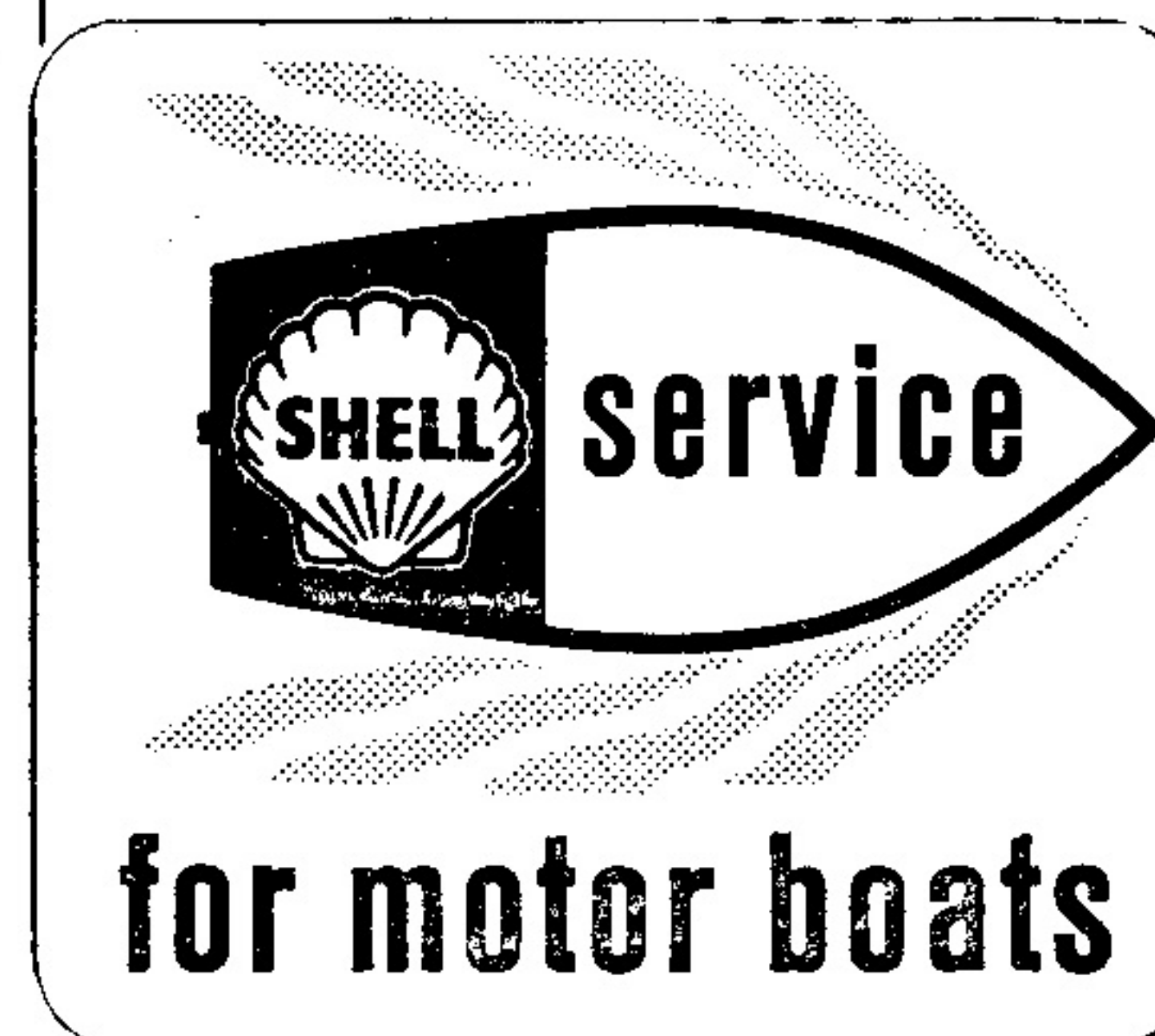
By Robert Tucker

TO many cruising men the kicking strap is a device peculiar to the racing dinghy, yet those who have used it on small cruisers find it an invaluable aid. It is a device peculiar to the modern Bermuda rig, but our racing dinghy friends have shown that its use is not synonymous with bar-taut rigging.

Perhaps its greatest function is to remove all terrors of gybing, for it allows the main to swing over in a single plane, instead of the boom riding wildly upwards to foul the backstay. It also allows the boom to be well squared off when running, for the head of the main cannot go very far forward of the boom, as it does when no kicking strap is fixed. This is particularly valuable on the Silhouette, with its small mainsail and aft-set rigging.

However, because the Silhouette was designed in 1954, before this device had proved its usefulness in cruisers, the boom of the original boats is really too low to allow an effective kicking strap. It

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was solely for this reason we increased the height of the mast when producing the masthead rig.

There are many varieties of kicking strap fitting in the chandlers, and the items selected should be those designed for the bigger dinghies, since the strain on the fittings of a Silhouette at sea are much higher than those of a dinghy of comparable sail area. The normal fitting on the boom is a key device which fits a keyhole plate; this means chiselling a slot in the boom to take the key, and the keyhole plate should preferably be let into the wood so that it lies flush. The more ingenious owner will investigate the many proprietary types of claw ring now on the market, since the simple keyhole device is useless when the sail is reefed by being rolled round the boom. However, the problem is to keep the claw in position, since the tension in the strap itself will tend to pull the claw towards the gooseneck. Probably the best solution is a stainless-steel or brass tube, about 5/16 in o.d., welded, or brazed, to a plate which slips over the square shank of the gooseneck forward of the boom end.

The kicking strap itself should be made of $\frac{1}{4}$ inch Terylene cord, with a block at each end to give a threefold purchase; the fall can be cleated, or made fast round the standing parts. Of course, since adjustment is not frequent, bow shackles will do as well as blocks at rather less cost.

The lower end should be made fast to an eye bolted through the aft face of the tabernacle as close to the deck as possible. On steel tabernacles the solution is to weld an eye plate in place. On my own boat the bitter end of the strap is made fast to the becket of a small block at the boom end, passes round a similar block at the tabernacle, round the sheath of the boom block, then through the eye on the tabernacle, the fall being made fast round the standing parts. The claw ring or key should be about 21 ins. aft of the mast.

One final word—don't try setting up your kicking strap until your main is properly set, with the final luff tension provided by the sliding gooseneck. Either you get no luff tension, or no kicking trap.

Summer Programmes

THE North West Group has arranged a full programme of sailing events throughout the summer. All members of the SOA, in whatever waters they normally sail, will be very welcome to take part in any of these events. If land accommodation on Anglesey is required by visiting Silhouette owners, Geoff Walton, who lives at Beaumaris, will be glad to do what he can to help in the way of making inquiries and offering suggestions. His address is Apple Tree Cottage, Wexham Street, Beaumaris.

NORTH WEST PROGRAMME

June	
3	Royal Anglesey race
10-11	Cruise to Traeth Bychan. Start 09.30
17	Royal Anglesey race
18	Race to West Constable. Start 09.30
24-25	Cruise to Aber Menai. Start 10.00
July	
1	Royal Anglesey race
2	Race to Conway Fairway via Ten Foot Bank and back. Start 10.00
8	Night sail. Start 20.00
9	Menai Bridge Boat Club cruise to Aber Menai. Start 10.00
15	Royal Anglesey race
16	Cruise to NW Light. Start 06.30
22	Royal Anglesey race
23	Menai Bridge Boat Club cruise to Puffin Island. Start 10.00
July 31—August 12	Isle of Man Cruise and Menai Straits Regatta. Details to be announced later
August	
13	Menai Bridge Boat Club cruise to Aber Menai. Start 11.30
19-20	Cruise to Caernarvon
26	Royal Anglesey race
September	
2	Course A race. Start 11.00
9	Royal Anglesey race
10	Menai Bridge Boat Club cruise to Aber Menai. Start 10.30
17	Cruise to Puffin Island. Start 09.30
23-24	Race to Conway.

Race and course instructions will be distributed the evening before the event. Unless otherwise stated, all races except Course A will start at Beaumaris Green. All cruises will start from moorings off Glyngarth, opposite the Gazelle. Personal bouyancy must be worn by all crew members during races and off-shore cruises. The Royal Anglesey Yacht Club insists that lifejackets must be worn by all on board during its races and regattas. Infringement of this rule means disqualification.

Plymouth

THE Plymouth Silhouette Sailing Association has a most enterprising programme for the season. Points racing began on April 29th, and continued with events fixed for May 6, May 13 and May 27. Races in this series for the rest of the season are:

Date	Starting Line	Club
June 3		RPCYC
June 24		RSWYC
July 1		RPCYC
July 15		RSWYC
August 12		MSC
August 26		RPCYC
Sept 2		RSWYC
Sept 9		RPCYC
Sept 16		RSWYC
Sept 30		RSWYC

The Plymouth Association organises competition for the George Hurley Cup, presented by George Hurley.

In addition to the races listed above the Plymouth Association has arranged passage races from Plymouth to Fowey on July 1 (return races next day), and from Plymouth to the Yealm on August 19 (Yealm Regatta).

The Hon. Secretary of the Plymouth Silhouette Sailing Association is P. M. Nicholls, 16, Torr Crescent, Hartley, Plymouth.

South East Activities

MEMBERS of the South East group are putting in a lot of good work to try to make the Silhouette National Class Championship meeting during Southend Yachting Week the success that it deserves to be. There will be racing over two week-ends, Saturday and Sunday June 10-11, and Saturday and Sunday June 17-18. This is in the heart of the South East area, and it is hoped that as many Silhouette owners as possible will come along to support the competing fleet, even if distance or other commitments make it impracticable for all to come with boats. The organising clubs are being most generous with their offers of hospitality, and the SOA very much appreciates the help and encouragement they have given. A report of the racing will appear in next month's journal.

The Up River Club at Hullbridge-on-Crouch is holding an Open Silhouette Race on Sunday, October 1 (HW 06.00, start 08.00). Details can be obtained from the Hon. Sailing Secretary of the Up River Club, he is J. J. Beales, 33, Park View Gardens, Ilford, Essex. (Tel: Snarebrook 3344). The programme of the Up River Club

THE SILHOUETTE OWNERS' ASSOCIATION

Officers and Committee

Chairman : Bernard Collins, Hilltop, Lincoln Road, Rochford, Essex.
Rochford 56876

Vice-Chairman and Hon. Editor : J. R. L. Anderson, The Old Hall,
Marple, Cheshire. Marple 1458

Hon. Secretary : G. R. Oliver, 52, Middle Road, Higher Denham,
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Sail Number Registrar : W. H. Chambers, 79a, Adelaide Grove,
London, W.12. Shepherds Bush 3856

S. Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.

Herbert Firth (co-opted member) 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley,
Cheshire. Altrincham 0765.

Hon. Technical Adviser : Robert Tucker, 58, Southbury Road,
Enfield, Middlesex.

The Association exists to promote the interests of Silhouette
Owners throughout the world. The annual subscription is 15s.

included one Silhouette race during last month (a report of this race appears elsewhere), and three more will take place during the season—on July 23, August 20, and September 17. These latter club events are, of course, limited to Silhouette owners who are members of the Up River Club.

Brian Fairman has been elected chairman of the South East group. Stan Morgan (44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex) is Hon. Secretary, and the Hon. Treasurer is K. Heales. On the committee are F. Powell (North Thames), Dr J. C. Newman (Colne), P. H. Trigg (Blackwater), J. Beales (Crouch) and R. Cheeseman (Maylandsea). R. Cheeseman has also undertaken to act as construction assistant. Bernard Collins, national chairman of the SOA, has been invited to attend all committee meetings in the South East as an ex-officio member.

The Roach Rally

THE South East group's Roach rally on April 29 was a most enjoyable affair. Stan Morgan writes: Bernard Collins arrived first in *Bellatrix*, and with the party from the Up River Club came Ken Heales and Betty, and Gilbert Broomfield and Babs in *Cas Catala*. Tom Jones and son came in their boat, and myself, Eileen and Jackie (and dog) in *Midnight*. We all went ashore and walked about a mile to the George and Dragon on Foulness, and about 21.30 in walked Dr Wilkie and June. From what I gathered, they had grounded on the Buxey, and to get her floating again Doc Wilkie jumped overboard and pulled her over the top into the Crouch.

The Initiation of Valerie Ann

By R. M. Shardlow

THIS is a short account of the first venture into the Bristol Channel by *Valerie Ann*, a Silhouette II, sail number 596. The occasion was the first cruiser race of the new season run by the Weston Bay Yacht Club.

At 09.30 on a rather blustery morning, the various crews could be seen assembling around the club house at the mouth of the river Axe, all looking rather bleary eyed from Saturday evening's activities, and from having risen at 06.30 to listen to the shipping forecast. This had not been particularly encouraging, with a promise of rain and Force 5 and 6 winds to contend with. After a final briefing by the Sailing Captain, in which we checked that the race was to start from Weston Bay, up Channel and around the English and Welsh Grounds Lightship, and finish in Barry harbour, we all dispersed to our respective craft. Half an hour later, having stowed all the provisions and cut adrift a surrounding patch of weed, which creates a problem at this time of the year to us in this river, we motored to the starting positions in Weston Bay. As this was to be an anchor start we had ample time to observe our competitors. There were four of them, two life-boat conversions of about 25 ft. overall length, an 18 ft. centre-plate cruiser, and an 18 ft. converted life-boat.

After an uneventful start, in which we were first away but were soon overtaken by everyone else, we (that is, a fellow boat owner who had volunteered to crew for the race and myself) settled down to the broad reach up to the lightship, and to contemplating how much faster she would have gone with a Genoa. However, on coming up to the lightship we were delighted to see that we had overhauled them by a considerable amount, but rather dismayed to see why. The reason for our rapid closure was only too obvious—the area beyond the lightship was completely obliterated by a huge black cloud stretching right across the channel, and appearing to rest on the water. As we arrived at the lightship, other craft, which had all been becalmed, began to feel the wind that was obviously going to come. After rounding the lightship, and calling out a greeting to those hardy enough (or unfortunate enough) to be on deck, we set course close-hauled down channel. The wind which was rising steadily and against the now ebbing tide, began to pile up the sea. As we were not reefed the crew stretched out on the weather deck to correct the heel, and appeared to go to sleep.

On reaching Lavernock Point (which I was told later is nicknamed "Hell's Point", because of the way the tide scythes up to seven knots around it) the sea began to heap up very steeply, with overhanging crests and we estimated the waves to be about 15-18 ft. high. As the wind was now blowing at about Force 6, we had four wraps around the boom, and the sheets all fastened to the weather deck to prevent the need to unfasten a lee-deck pleat. We had by now lost all

sight of the other boats and learned later that they had retired on arriving at this point. We had also changed position and I found that sitting up to windward with nothing much else to do had a decidedly unsettling effect on me. However, after I had unshipped some of the salt water that I had been swallowing for some two hours or more, I felt rather better, and we settled down to a long hard, exhausting beat up to Barry. On this beat we experienced how difficult a jib sheet can be to haul in, having to wedge our feet against the bridge deck and pull together to accomplish it. When we finally tied up in Barry harbour at about 18.30, having spent seven hours in the crossing, we were astounded to learn that we were the only arrivals. As I, not having obtained oilskin trousers in time for the race, was both exhausted and completely wet through, my first thoughts were to catch the steamer back home. However, I had a complete change of clothing on board, and after sampling the hospitality of Barry Yacht Club in its delightful club house overlooking the harbour, I began to feel much better. We decided to sail back. This we did, having a most enjoyable trip back running before a by now Force 4 wind, in bright sunshine, though the most bitter pill was yet to come. This became apparent when we arrived in Weston Bay at low tide about 21.30. We found that, though we knew there was sufficient water in the river, the onshore wind, combined with the big swell and fading light, made it impossible to enter, owing to the breakers forming about half a mile out from the entrance. So we spent a most uncomfortable four hours, riding at anchor to the swell sweeping in from the channel, before entering at 01.30 with the tide. On tying up at the moorings, we both affirmed our complete faith in the boat throughout the race, concluding that she could undoubtedly take much more than the crew.

* * *

Valerie Ann repeated her performance on May 14, when she and Mr Shardlow were again the only finishers in a race round the Break Sea Lightship. This won them their club's cup for cruiser races. We should like to congratulate Mr Shardlow and Valerie Ann on a most impressive achievement.

Circumnavigating Puffin

PUFFIN Island, or Priestholme, stands off the tip of Anglesey, and divides the North-Eastern entrance to the Menai Straits. It is situated, according to the *West Coast Pilot*, about four cables North-Eastward of Trwy Du, where there is a lighthouse with a mournful bell and a rather grim legend painted on the tower—"No passage landward of the lighthouse." Puffin Island is steep to, with forbidding cliffs, and Puffin Sound can be a horrible place in a gale. The island has known human inhabitants, and there are some ruined buildings on it, but it is populated now by dense colonies of seabirds. To anyone enjoying the

sailing waters of the Menai Straits for the first time, the island simply asks to be circumnavigated. But local advice holds out a good many cautions—above all, choose your weather.

On Saturday, April 22, the masters and mates of a small fleet of North West Silhouettes, with a Leeward and a Caprice, assembled at Glyngarth, about ten miles SW of Puffin, agreed that the circumnavigation of the island should be carried out next day. Sunday, April 23, was horribly wet. But the weather, although uninviting, was not bad from the sailing point of view. After some discussion on Sunday morning, we agreed to start. *Dolphin* (Herbert Firth), *Mary Lane* (John and Helen Anderson), *Sampan* (Don McKnight) and *Ilena* (Storm and Mrs Bate) set sail from Glyngarth, having arranged to meet on the way Geoff and Herbie Walton in *Two Gees*, who were putting out from Beaumaris.

The rain fell pretty solidly, but there was a fair wind, mostly from the South West, and we ran pleasantly before it. I was on *Mary Lane* with Helen, David (4½) and Timothy (2¼), and we were particularly lucky to have on board a friend of ours, David Fairhall, an East Coast sailor of much experience. His wife, Pamela, helped to crew on *Dolphin*. We ran quickly to Beaumaris, and stood around, "darning the water," as they say, while waiting for *Two Gees* to join us. David Fairhall was at the helm and he experimented with making *Mary Lane* heave to, which she did quite docilely, although we didn't have long enough to see how long she could be kept hove to.

The tide was with us, and we ran on for Puffin, although the wind fell light. Goose-winged, with the jib boomed out on the boat-hook, we kept going and we tried hard to make Puffin Sound under sail, but the wind left us, and as the tide was on the turn we began drifting slowly back. So we shipped the Seagull, and went through the sound, and round the island, under power. The others had also gone on under power, and our insistence on trying to sail when there was no wind had put us some way behind the fleet. When we rounded the island we found the fleet anchored off its one landing place—a stony and inhospitable little beach. We were making there to anchor too, when we saw *Dolphin* up anchor and make off. Since it was then raining very hard, and we had a ten mile beat back to Glyngarth, we decided not to anchor but to follow *Dolphin*. We learned later what had happened. Herbert Firth had sensibly taken a couple of bearings when he anchored, and on checking them a short while later he noticed that *Dolphin* was dragging. It was not an attractive place to drag, so wisely he decided to sail out. The others, whose anchors were holding, thought that they might as well finish lunch.

We wanted our lunch, but we wanted also to get the children home. They had been exceedingly good, but we were a bit doubtful about how they would take a ten mile beat on a wretchedly wet day. There was a fair amount of wind, Force 4 gusting to 5 or thereabouts, and the first time we heeled over properly a loud crash came from below as David and Timothy, with an assortment of their possessions, cascaded on to the lee bunk. We waited for howls of protest and fright,

but instead, a moment later, Timothy's small head popped up through the cabin hatch, and he announced grinning happily, "I - do - like - boat - up - down - up - down." He also said that he was hungry.

David Fairhall had the tiller and I the jib sheets, while Helen went below to produce lunch. With two children dancing with glee in the cabin every time the boat went over, she had a job, but she produced some jolly good thick sandwiches. Then she relieved David, and he got the stove going and made tea. Rain and spray stung our faces, but it was a magnificent sail. After his tea-making triumph, David came back to the helm, and we raced back to Glyngarth. There we sat and waited at our moorings, because we had no dinghy. After he had made *Dolphin* fast, Herbert Firth came over in his dinghy and rescued us. Ashore, we had a second tea at the Gazelle hotel, and felt that we had earned it.—JRLA.

Racing at Hullbridge

THERE were seven starters for the Silhouette race in the Points Series of the Up River Yacht Club at Hullbridge-on-Crouch on May 7. Stan Morgan writes:

The course was approximately 25 miles from Hullbridge to Branklet Spit Bouy and back. The wind was a strong Easterly, Force 6 gusting to Force 8. Of the seven boats starting, *Sapphire* (Tom Jones) and *Black Viking* (Ron Ransom) retired—"broken spreader", and "too much for infant crew" respectively. In addition to being in the Silhouette Points Series, the boats were also racing against other boats for the RNLI pennant. The racing committee has restricted the boats to working sails or less, with no distinction in handicap for masthead or standard rig. The Portsmouth Yardstick ratings were used, of 116 for all-Terylene sails and 120 for cotton sails. The results were:

	hrs.	min.	sec	hrs.	min.	sec
1. <i>Catriona</i> (R. Garrod)						
Standard Terylene	5	42	30	4	54	25
2. <i>Midnight</i> (S. Morgan)						
Standard cotton	6	17	30	5	14	12
3. <i>Secondus</i> (J. O'Brien)						
Masthead Terylene	6	7	30	5	16	30
4. <i>Cas Catala</i> (K. Heales)						
Standard Terylene	6	40		5	44	48
5. <i>Joybell</i> (J. Beales)						
Masthead Terylene	6	42		5	46	30
<i>Sapphire</i> (T. Jones)	retired					
<i>Black Viking</i> (R. Ransom)	retired					

I think that, given a mixed bag of weather over the season, the standard rig will be well in the running. However, we shall see.

SOA REGIONAL GROUPS

The Silhouette Owners' Association is the national body representing Silhouette owners and responsible for class rules. After the last Annual General Meeting the association was reorganised, and it was decided to form regional groups in different sailing areas, so that members wherever possible could meet and sail together within reasonable distance of their homes. This policy has met with a most encouraging response, and a number of thriving groups have already been formed. Each group has its own committee, arranges its own programme, and runs its own affairs, but all members of the SOA are welcome to take part in any of the activities of any group. The groups are linked to the national association partly through nationally elected members of the committee, who personally are also members of different groups, and also by having their own representatives on the national committee. Since formal provision for group representatives on the national committee requires alteration in the association's existing rules, which can be done only at an AGM, the committee has decided to use its power to co-opt members by inviting all groups as they are formed and recognised to elect a member to the national committee. The committee will ask the next AGM to agree to a change in the rules to allow for this. Regional groups which have already been formed are:

South-East. Hon. Sec. Stan Morgan, 44, Station Crescent, Rayleigh, Essex.

North-West. Hon. Sec. Herbert Firth, 5, Mossgrove Road, Timperley, Cheshire. Tel. Altrincham 0765.

Solent. Hon. Sec. J. H. Taylor, 15, Bolley Avenue, Bordon, Hants.

A Bristol group is in process of formation.

The Plymouth Silhouette Sailing Association. Hon. Sec. P. M. Nicholls, 16, Torr Crescent, Hartley, Plymouth.

All new Silhouette owners are invited to get in touch with the group secretary nearest to their own part of the world, who will gladly arrange membership both of the national association and the group and do all he can to help with problems of finding moorings, and the like. In time it is hoped that there will be active groups in all parts of the country. Members of the association willing to help in the formation of groups in areas not yet covered are invited to get in touch with the national secretary, George Oliver. Their help will be greatly welcomed.

Cruise to Traeth Bychan

THREE boats of the North West fleet cruised round the North-East coast of Anglesey to Traeth Bychan on Saturday, May 20. The idea was to anchor for the night off Traeth Bychan, and this they did, but had a rather rough time. There was an on-shore wind and heavy surf. Anchors held, however, and although those on board spent a somewhat anxious night no one suffered any damage and they had a splendid sail back on Sunday morning. On Sunday afternoon the Traeth Bychan party assembled with another half dozen boats in the Straits and everybody had some grand sailing on Whit Sunday.

The North West Fleet

THERE are now 25 Silhouettes in the North West Group of the SOA, and five bilge-keel boats of other classes, whose owners have joined the group as associates. The main body of the fleet, at present 16 boats, lies to moorings off Glyngarth or Gallows Point nearby, on the Anglesey shore of the Menai Straits. There are four boats at Conway, two in Cumberland, and single boats at Holyhead, Caernarvon, Port Dinorwic, Liverpool, and St Anne's. Three new members of the group have not yet finally decided where their boats will live, although, of course, they will sail with the fleet in Menai waters as often as they can. The five boats which are not Silhouettes include three Caprices one Leeward and one Mystic.

The Solent

THE Solent Group of the SOA invites all members to a meeting on June 3 at Southampton Corporation Transport Offices, Southampton. Time, 3 p.m.

Notices and Opportunities

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