

## Aldeburgh Swallow Fleet 2014 Season

The fleet had a disappointment when the owner of Hanna (4) decided that because of pressure of work she could not go in the water this season. She is now being stored in a barn in Suffolk and is in need of restoration and a new owner. This was a magnificent wooden boat built by Rassmussen for the 1948 Olympics and has won many races. The deck is in need of attention and anybody interested in restoring her and showing her should get in touch with Alexander Gimson email: [gimsons4@btinternet.com](mailto:gimsons4@btinternet.com).

Sadly our fleet was depleted by the loss of Advice (2) owned by Jeremy and Trish Davis which was sold outside the UK following their move to a more sedate Loch Long. Derrick Well's Trumpet (25) is still in a barn and we are all hoping she will make an appearance this year. Derrick had a heart bypass operation last year and has made a remarkable recovery and we hope to see him in action this year.

The three remaining Swallows, Panther (28) (Tony and Shirley Graham-Enock) Spindrift (43) (Bobby Rusack) and Jacana (56) (Richard and Michelle Keane and Catherine Walker), continue to enjoy close and exciting sailing with a keel boat ideally suited to racing on the Alde as Swallows are able to reach all the racing marks given favourable tides.

The season as usual started slowly with Spindrift first in the water closely followed by Panther and Jacana. The Saturday handicap racing is a successful compromise and allows for a reasonable race if only the Loch Longs will not try and join in and use the handicap start A as a practice for their later start! It is so important that classes keep clear of other classes start line at least 5 minutes before the start.

We had an exciting August Regatta with excellent weather and strong winds at the beginning of the week. It was not without its incidents as on day one on the Sunday for the second year running Jacana lost her main halliard to the top of the mast just before the start but with some excellent manoeuvring alongside the pontoon at the club our boatman, Brian, did a brilliant job in lassoing it by standing on top of the club launch with a long pole – last year Jacana had to go alongside Slaughden Quay! On the Sunday the crew of Jacana was suffering from the Marmalade Club Ball the night before and Michelle Keane was replaced in the middle by Geoff Walker who was making his annual appearance after the Ball but probably overdid the dancing as on the first beat to Lower in a force 5 he put his back out and spent the rest of the race groaning at the bottom of the boat. Panther scorched away with Spindrift starting on the wrong side of the river but Jacana after some close tacking with Panther pulled away to win after some exciting close reaching with spinnaker to the line, with Panther second and Spindrift third. On day two the wind turned round to the north-west with a force 5 and Spindrift got clean away sporting a set of very nice looking Hyde sails and Jacana had great difficulty in making any impression on her until Bobby missed a mark and then hit a sticky mound of mud just up from Cob Island on a falling tide named Keane's Mount as Jacana did exactly the same last year and had to be towed off. Jacana came through to win largely by default. Orford Day was another classic day for the Hannah Bundy Memorial Trophy and both Jacana and Spindrift thought they were both over the line and went back and left Panther to romp away from the Aldeburgh line in very shifty force 4 conditions. Jacana got through Panther with Spindrift lagging some 300 yards behind but

both boats failed to cover Bobby after a massive windshift and Spindrift was never challenged after rounding Dove Point first. With each boat having won a race it was all on the last race on Friday when in lighter airs Jacana made the best start and with some superb spinnaker handling by Catherine Walker and excellent roll tacking from Michelle, they were never challenged to the finish giving Jacana the overall trophy of the Chadwick Cup and individual cups to Panther and Spindrift. Panther's middle crew left them mid-week and Tony and Shirley did remarkably well 2 up for the final two days

We particularly enjoyed some close handicap racing against the Dragons and have been able to beat them on occasions in medium winds.

Swallows now have a non-spinnaker handicap for use in the Wednesday evening series which will enable them to be sailed competitively single or double handed. Picking up mooring does remain challenging for the single handed sailing!!

We all look forward to the four Swallows that have been in dry dock for over three years to be in the water in 2015.

The best quotations for the season are:

Richard "I owe my success to my lovely girl crews, for Catherine's spinnaker trimming and Michelle's ace roll-tacking providing they don't chatter when they see an Avocet or a Bar-tailed Godwit on the mud"

Bobby "We really ought to know the courses by now"

Tony "I leave this to you Shirley"

Report compiled by Richard Keane and Bobby Rusack with thanks to our Class Captain Shirley Graham-Enock.