



# THE WATER RAT

NOVEMBER 1989

Published by  
"LEANDER" (KINGSTON) SEA SCOUT GROUP

## SKIPPER'S SCRAWL

Thanks to Gordon Dodge and Nigel Fentiman for their response to my appeal for instructors last month. Gordon will take on map reading and Nigel, Weather and Radio Telephone technique. That just leaves Basic Navigation, First Aid, Rope work, Pioneering, Fire-fighting Boat repairs and Signalling - so, offers please! I'm sure there are Parents and Supporters who have the expertise and can spare 3-4 nights over the Winter months.

I was pleased to receive a phone call from the Great River Race organiser, who informed me the Troop gig came 3rd in the under 18 section and won a prize of £50. A marvellous result considering the crews average age was about 14! We have nominated the Scout Association Treloar fund for handicapped scouts as the charity to receive the prize money.

Thanks to Gordon Dodge and the Guild and friends, the Group Swimming Gala went smoothly, and I was pleased to see the Beavers and Cubs do so well - surely a result of section swimming nights. The lack of Scouts attending was, I feel, a poor reflection on the Troop, especially considering the time, effort and money invested in the event by the organisers. Unless there is a better response from the troop next year, I feel we shall seriously have to consider whether to continue the event or not. However, response from the Sea Rangers was good, and I congratulate them on their overall win on the Scout/Venture section of the Gala. Perhaps the Scouts should do some practice before next year!

This month's 'Sea Scouting Skills' is on safety aspects of boating - a must for newcomers to learn and perhaps a reminder to the experienced hands - please make sure you 'file' these pages each month for reference!

Finally, a new way of making money. The Scout Association has arranged a special promotion of loo paper with Kleenex! For every wrapper we collect between now and the end of November, Kimberley Clark will donate 5p to our funds and 5p to the Scout Association. There's also a chance for a family to win a holiday worth £3,000. Entry leaflets are attached to this Water Rat, further copies for the family together with a free trial pack of bathroom tissue are available at Section meetings. For Groups collecting more than 12 wrappers per member, there's also a chance to win Scout Shop vouchers for equipment - so please get all the family to participate.

G.S.L. Keith Maund

### Dates for Diary.

- |               |   |   |
|---------------|---|---|
| 11th November | - | - Bazaar - H.Q. 14.30hrs.<br>County Cub Gala.   |
| 12th November | - | - Remembrance Day Parade. Troop/Venture Scouts only<br>Meet at 3rd Kingston H.Q. 10.15hrs. <u>sharp</u> |
| 29th November | - | - Cubs Parents Evening. <span style="float: right;">Continued overleaf.</span>                          |

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- Dates for Diary - (continued)
- 6th/7th January - - Scouts Winter Camp
- 15th January - - Section Leaders Meeting - H.Q.

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CHIEF'S CHAT (Report from Scout Leader)

Lets all congratulate the boat crew of the Great River Race. Overall we we came third in our class, the U/18. Well done, to Simon Leo, Jonathan Merry Paul Livesey, Richard Merry and Jane from the Sea Rangers. Of course, this was down to the cox who would not let up when the going got rough (me!) I would also like to thank the Fulwell crew, who we used as our pacer. A great achievement for Leander. I would laso like to congratulate the boat handling team, as yet again, Leander got the first. Well done, Stuart Livesey, Simon Leo, David Leader, Leo Gould, Andy Nutt and Paul Livesey. I can only say as a County event, it is a great pity that this challenge is not taken up by every Group, as I am sure 1st Surbiton would only be too pleased to have a real challenge regards our boating knowledge.

Now, regards our own Swimming Gala that took place during October. All I can do is apologise to all who took part in the organising for this event, regard: the attendance of the Scout section. It was the lowest attendance by us since have been with Leander, and I am sure, in its history. We try to give the boys our best, and the return is why should we bother. Eight boys turned up, this was out of thirty four. Most of the Cubs and Beavers were there. No Scouts, - and it is that which stops me going to Torpoint with the boys.

How was the rest of October spent? We had a very good Saturday afternoon in Richmond Park, thanks to coxwain who did the programme for it. Two teams set out going in opposite directions, crossing over a central section. The object was to retrieve a secret message- it was sitting in the middle of a pond - and a white box hanging from a tree. This all had to happen without being attacked by the second team. Great fun was had by all.

Of course, our Badgework is still going strong. We have nearly completed the firefighting badge and just started the airman's basic course, and what with having just finished a canoe course and a sailing course is just about to begin, you can see that we are busy all the time. Attendance on a Tuesday is pretty good, around 75%. Missing a few of the PL's on Saturday attendance. By 2pm I seem to be looking for a boat crew, as therest seem to come in by 2.30pm. It is 2.pm sharp as we want to have the boats launched by 2.30pm, at that will give us 1½ hours for boating. Uniforms are still a weak point, please lets get back to how it was **FULL UNIFORM FOR EVERYONE, WE ARE NOT A YOUTH CLUB YET !!**

Winter Break: Last Tuesday is 19th December 1989.

Return 1990: First Tuesday is 9th January 1990.

Chief. Mick Chinnock

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"SOCIAL CLUB SNIP ITS"

All parents and friends of Leander (not just members of the Social Club) are invited to this year's Theatre Trip to the pantomime "Aladdin" at Wimbledon Theatre, starring Cilla Black, Gareth Hunt, Gordon Honeycombe and Bob Carolgees. We are planning to go to the 7.30pm performance on Wednesday, 3rd January 1990. The tickets are £8.50p. If you would like to go please phone Geoff Bevis (546-8048) who can give you further details.

Mick Duffin.

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DECEMBER EDITION + WATER RAT. Reports from ALL Section Leaders etc to

be with me BY...1st DECEMBER

For January/February Edition By.... 1st FEBRUARY - THANK YOU.

Editor.

P.S.A. ANTICS. (Parents & Supporters Assoc. Report by Chairman)

I hope all of you who came enjoyed the Halloween Party on 28th October, we had a fine, if blustery evening. Phil and Geoff who organised the fireworks at the end of the evening literally had to hold on to them to make sure the Roman Candles went up rather than sideways! Many thanks to them for an excellent show.

The evening started with Bruno having the unenviable job of choosing the most terrifyingly\*\* dressed youngsters and adults. People had gone to a lot of trouble with their costumes,makeup etc. It was no easy choice. Whilst the parents kept out the cold with some mulled wine, Val and Mike and the Leaders organised some excellent games which got a number of the parents quite as excited as the boys! I do admire the ability of the Leaders like Val and Mike to run games without letting things get out of hand. It was good to watch them in action. The full resources of the kitchen were then turned on to producing hot dogs an jacket potatoes to make sure there were some warm stomachs around before we ventured outside to the wind and the fireworks.

Many thanks to all of you who turned up for making it a fun evening, and to the 'gang' (they know who they are) for organising the food and the drink. If the Water Rat is published before next Saturday, I do hope you will all be there supporting the Christmas Bazaar - Saturday, 11th November at 2.30pm. We will then have a break over the Christmas period. Our friends in the Social Club are organising a visit to Wimbledon Theatre on 3rd January - details under 'Social Club Snip -Its'. We have to have a full programme of Supporters events for 1990 to raise money for new equipment and so on. This year we have made about £3,000, lets try to beat the total next year. In the meantime many thanks to all of you who have helped

Vivian Brown

\*\* Don't know if we can use this word Vivian - as a certain grammarian, and orthography specialist Water Rat critic, may think it to be grammatically unacceptable!! - Ed.

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Scouts - Swimming.

Just an observation with respect, regarding non-attendance of 26 scouts at the Swimming Gala. Could this problem be to do with the age group of these Scouts? Swimming is usually deleted from the schools curriculum after the age of 9-10yrs as a regular sport. Therefore, unless it is a personal favourite sport of the boy, most boys of this age group no longer have an encouraged interest in competitive swimming. May I suggest that to restore the fun of participation by these boys in the Swimming Gala, that it could be possible for them to have a swimming evening included in their Programme perhaps once a month? - Also I think as they spend much of their time on the water, it is important for all concerned that their swimming abilities are strengthened alongside with the important skill of life-saving.

Respectfully - Editor.

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SPELLING I am pleased to note Water Rat is read in detail by the Scout District Newsletter Editor -Keith Southan. This month, apart from quoting Plato, he queried our spelling of 'weigh'. We are but simple Sea Scouts, not English masters - however WEIGH is correct according to the Oxford dictionary definition :- "WEIGH -Raise from below water(weigh anchor), start for voyage"

G.S.L.

"SAFETY RULES"

The following notes can only be a guide to the more elementary points to bear in mind when going afloat. Anyone who takes a craft on the water owes it to himself, to his passengers, and to other river users to guard against accidents.

For the novice, these points should be regarded as no more than an introduction to safety afloat. For the experienced hand they may serve the purpose of jogging the memory.

FOR THOSE IN ROWING AND SAILING CRAFT

- 1) Always wear soft soled shoes. Dress appropriately for the weather, but do not wear clothing which would make swimming difficult if you fall in.
- 2) Always step right into a small boat, one person at a time. Never stand or sit on the gunwale, nor hold onto the gunwale with your fingers over the side. Never jump in or out of a boat.
- 3) BEFORE casting off from the mooring or berth, look to see if the way is clear.
- 4) Never stand up in a small boat. If it is necessary to change places, move along the centre line, and preferably perform this manoeuvre as close inshore as possible.
- 5) Keep a sharp lookout for any hazards, including bathers. They may not be a hazard to you, but you certainly are to them
- 6) Keep clear of boats engaged in races, whether rowing or sailing.
- 7) Avoid weirs and patches of fast running water. Allow plenty of room to manoeuvre.
- 8) If rowing against the tide, keep inshore as close as possible to minimise the adverse effect. If rowing with the tide, keep out into the stream to gain maximum advantage, but again watch out for commercial traffic.
- 9) Beware of driving across the bows of barges moored at buoys in the river, or being carried against the pier of a bridge.
- 10) Crews of sailing craft should always wear lifejackets. In sailing dinghies, life jackets must always be worn.
- 11) In a small sailing boat always hold sheets in the hand. Do not make them fast.
- 12) At night, always have a powerful waterproof torch ready to hand to warn others of your presence. Shine it towards approaching craft and also on your sails.
- 13) Always tell the leader in charge where you are going, even if its only to Ducks Island.  
When on a river trip, tell a responsible person:
  - (a) Where you are going.
  - (b) What time you are returning
  - (c) Stick to your itinerary, or if it has to be changed, let the responsible person know!

Continued.....

(14) FOR CANOEISTS

Most of the points already made obviously concern the canoeist too, but in addition to these, the following points should be borne in mind.

- 1) Never attempt to change places.
- 2) Always wear a lifejacket or buoyancy aid.
- 3) It is advisable to have buoyancy bags or flotation units in a canoe. In the lower reaches of the river, this is an absolute must.
- 4) In the lower reaches, or in bad weather, use efficient spray covers.
- 5) Never canoe on your own - there must be at least 3 canoes together.
- 6) Generally do not proceed at night, but always have a powerful waterproof torch ready to hand.

SOUND SIGNALS WHICH MAY BE USED ON THE THAMES

These signals are made by power driven vessels to indicate their own intended actions to other vessels. However, with the ever increasing use of VHF R/T by all classes of vessels, especially by commercial craft, there is less likelihood of sound signals being used. Small craft should therefore be extra careful when in the vicinity of commercial vessels.

<u>MEANING</u>	-	<u>SIGNAL</u>
1) I am altering my course to starboard (RIGHT)	-	1 short blast *
2) I am altering my course to port(LEFT)	-	2 short blasts *
3) My engines are going astern	-	3 short blasts *
4) I do not consider you are taking sufficient action to keep clear of me; or, I do not understand your intentions or actions.	-	5 or more short blasts *
5) I am turning round with my head(BOW) swinging to starboard(RIGHT)	-	4 short blasts followed by 1 short blast. *
6) I am turning round with my head(BOW) swinging to port(LEFT)	-	4 short blasts followed by 2 short blasts. *
7) I am about to get underway, i.e. depart from moorings, jetty or dock entrance.	-	1 prolonged blast *
8) I am about to overtake on your starboard(RIGHT) side	-	2 long blasts followed by 1 short blast * (The reply by the vessel being overtaken indicating readiness to be overtaken is 1 long blast & 1 short blast, 1 long blast & 1 short blast *
9) I am about to overtake on your port (LEFT) side.	-	2 long blasts followed by 2 short blasts *

( The reply by the vessel being overtaken is the same as Item 8 )

\* The Term 'Short Blast' -a blast of about 1 second duration

\* The Term 'Long Blast' -a blast of about 4 - 6 seconds duration