

## **L.E.S.C Brown Cup Coaching Weekend & Scottish Schools Championships 2008**

### **Brown Cup 1959 – 2007**

The idea of widening sailing competition beyond club membership to local schools was the idea of Jack Brown, who was the Commodore of Loch Earn Sailing Club from 1960 to 1962. He put up the Brown Cup for annual competition. Thus the Club began hosting a June regatta, specifically for sailors still at school, which is unique in Scottish sailing circles.

Jack's daughter, Morag Donaldson, mother of present member Graham, was also to become Commodore some years later and kept up the family interest in the event.

In the early days fleets were small and largely dependant on the children of members conning a day off school in June to compete in their parent's boat. There were also entries from establishments like Morrisons where sailing was on the curriculum. The boats were mostly wooden hulls and masts.

Harvey MacMillan (Commodore 1992) was probably responsible for the most significant modern change in the format (excluding this year) with his successful attempt to make the regatta more National. His invitations to schools all over Scotland brought entries from Oban to the Borders and the event is now a fixture in the sporting calendar of many Scottish Schools with fleets in the range of 40 – 70 boats.

Mark Champion, gave the event a fantastic boost in 2002 by bringing in Sponsorship from Skandia.



*2005 preparations with the Skandia Banners up alongside the Clubhouse.*

Mark and his team continued to work with Skandia through to 2006. During these years the event has had some great support from Skandia, in particular Andy Hazel, which resulted in Team GBR helping out. In 2006 Steve Mitchell, who was campaigning the Star, and Sparky, Team GBR Head Coach, came up for the event, passing on some great advice to the sailors taking part; in the form of a pre-event briefing, on the water coaching and a de-brief at the end of the event.

Mark handed over to Colin Tait for the 2007 event. With the help of Cammy Murray then Vice Commodore, Alan Forsyth then Commodore, Neil Morris training principal and continued help from Jack Halcrow (again to name but a few) Colin continued the progress made by Mark. The continued support of Andy Hazel from Skandia and Roy & Graham McCubbin from RYA Scotland made last years event a great success. In 2007 Andy also enlisted the help of Gul who very kindly supported the event with branded rash vests for all entrants.



***2007 Fast Handicap Fleet action in the Laser Radial note the Gul rash vest.***

Andy and Colin were keen to see the event evolve further. During the lunch break last year Colin, Andy, Roy and Alan had a discussion on the future of the Brown Cup resulting in the plan to expand the event to a Weekend Coaching Camp followed by the Brown Cup on the Monday.

## **Brown Cup Coaching Weekend & Scottish Schools Championships 2008**

Loch Earn Sailing Club hosted a training weekend on the 31<sup>st</sup> May / 1<sup>st</sup> of June to provide race coaching prior to the Brown Cup scheduled for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. This was the first time the Club had tried this format with the aim of providing a way for the Scottish Squad / Area Squad sailors to sharpen up their skills and more importantly to provide a taste of what coaching is all about for School Children who had no previous coaching experience.

This year the event was sponsored by Subsea 7 & gforce sailing with all the competitors receiving free t-shirts. RYA Scotland provided an excellent coaching team for the weekend. The coaches led by Roy McCubbin RYA Performance Manager were Graham McCubbin, Kirsty McSeveny, Richard Evans, David Sword, Michael Gorzkowski, Craig Moffett and also on site was double Topper World Champion Cambell Davidson who was passing on some excellent advice and tips to the Topper Dinghy fleet.



38 boats entered the training weekend; On Saturday they were split up into groups led by a coach. Mornings were spent working on and improving their sailing techniques followed by lunch onshore. The afternoon was spent practising starts with numerous short practise races.

A barbeque was held on Saturday evening and with the wind filling in a few boats took the opportunity to get in some more practice.



Sunday followed the same format as Saturday with the coaches concentrating on improving sailing techniques and boat handling. The wind freshened in the afternoon with the fleet taking part in a series of short races with separate starts for the Topper & Laser Fleets. This gave an excellent opportunity to practise their starting techniques ahead of the Brown Cup.

After the sailing on Sunday a debrief session was held and Cambell passed on his advise on what it takes to become a World Champion.

On Monday morning 20 more boats arrived from Schools all over Scotland giving a fleet of 58 boats for this years Brown Cup Scottish Schools Championship.

Unfortunately the wind refused to fill in and reluctantly the Brown Cup had to be cancelled.

The training event proved to be a great success this year and Loch Earn Sailing Club will be running the same format next year, this time hoping that we get the wind for the Brown Cup which will be celebrating it's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year.

Colin Tait  
Sailing Secretary  
LESC.