

November 1994

KNOTS is the magazine of Sutton Dinghy Club. Contributions for it are always welcome - contact the Commodore (Charles Sargent) at 601 Blackberry Lane, Portmarnock, tel. 8462211, or any Committee member.

COMMODORE'S ADDRESS:

This edition of KNOTS is actually your call to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Club, which will be held in the Clubhouse on Monday 28th November at 8.00 p.m. - the official notice for the meeting and the agenda are on the other side of this sheet.

The main business of this year's AGM will be to discuss a radical new direction for the Club, a new joint venture which is intended to re-launch Sutton Dinghy Club as a centre for dinghy sailing on the north side of Dublin Bay. At last year's AGM, concern was expressed that Club activity would die out in the foreseeable future - for various reasons, but mainly due to the fact that the steady intake of children to the Junior Training had all but dried up in the Sutton area. The annual Adult Sailing Course has proved that there are people out there who would like to learn dinghy sailing - but with our Club resources, using members and their boats, this could only be run for one week, and there was no adequate "follow-up" to enable trainees to continue sailing without buying their own boat.

One of our members who spoke on the subject at length at that AGM was Hugh Gill, who has been representing the Club at the top national and international level of the GP 14 fleet. Since that date, Hugh has become involved with the Irish National Sailing School, who presently operate out of Dun Laoghaire. He has discussed the situation both with his colleagues and with the Committee, and this has resulted in a proposal to extend the I.N.S.S. activities to the north side of the Bay, basing a fleet of dinghies and a rescue boat in Sutton Dinghy Club, using them to provide sailing courses for the general public and for Club members. The objectives of this arrangement, which are designed to be of interest to both the Club and the Irish National Sailing School, are as follows:

- 1. *To broaden the appeal of sailing to the wider public.***
- 2. *To develop Sutton Dinghy Club as a base for sailing tuition.***
- 3. *To implement a marketing strategy to encourage full take up of sailing courses on offer.***
- 4. *To promote Club membership among course graduates to participate in Club activities.***
- 5. *To increase Club sailing by providing a fleet of 10 Topper and GP 14 dinghies for instruction and charter by these graduates and other Club members.***

The proposal is to provide an on-going series of Adult Sailing Courses, and Junior introductory courses, throughout the sailing season, with a view to attracting as many of the graduates as possible to take up Club membership. In addition, the full I.S.A. Junior Training programme for Stages 1, 2 and 3 levels would be provided for our Club juniors, using the Club rescue boats in addition to the I.N.S.S. boat. When the I.N.S.S. fleet of dinghies are not in use for adult training, they would be offered for charter at Club sailing times when rescue cover is available.

I believe that this proposal should be supported by all Club members, as it provides an opportunity to attract large numbers of people to come and try sailing in our Club, in small groups on a continuous basis throughout the year - we do not have the resources to do this with our own members and their boats, and the Irish National Sailing School have the marketing capability to reach a far wider sector of the public than the Club could ever hope to do. The finer details of the arrangements can be worked out over the coming months, but I would ask all Club members to come to the AGM to discuss the proposal and its opportunities - we cannot ignore the stark reality that Club activity (and the Club itself) will die away unless new members can be attracted in.