

*This is a transcript of a video update from Phil Aspinall (Vice Commodore) sent out to members by email on 14<sup>th</sup> May. It is available to view on Youtube.*

“Well here we are on the pontoon at the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club, still in lockdown itself, but look at that, over there the moorings are being serviced and refurbished, ready for us to go sailing. But let’s go up there and have a look at our balcony and take a view from there.

So here we are back again and as you can see it’s where I really want to be and I’m sure it’s where you want to be too. Really good news is- that’s 2 meters (measure on floor) and it is more than 2 metres that way too (depth), so it looks as though, not before the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, we will be able to get back on here and maybe open the club and practice social distancing. That is what the Flag Officers are looking at, at the moment.

There are three things I want to talk about today. First of all the members, most importantly, the great news is, so far we have heard nothing more about anybody and any part of our membership being hindered by this nasty virus. The latest news though is not good for Pat Buckley and Edwin (Admiral) Pat has been diagnosed with a rare blood cancer and has now got some serious cancer treatment, but the good news on that as well are that her family are going to do a virtual cycle from Lands end to John o Groats and they are looking for sponsorship, so please have a look on the website and give generously to that one, if you still have money left after helping protect and save the NHS and everything else.

So its good news for members and what we want to try and do now is get the members back out and onto the river and sailing and get this Club open. The basis of all of that though will still be the principles we set out when the lockdown was applied. We are going to stay within the government guidelines we are going to consult and take advice from the RYA and RNLI and the guidance they are giving as well as giving our own thoughts and interpretations of what we believe socially distancing means to a sailing club. Let’s face it; we don’t think that Boris Johnson should have sailing right at the top of his priorities.

So members are doing well, let’s talk about the Clubhouse, you see I mentioned the two metre and I mentioned that we can do nothing until the 4<sup>th</sup> July, but that is what we are working on, how can we have a one way system here, to have this open. Or do we use our open areas down by the boat yard or Dinghy Park or even the back of the club. That is what the Flag Officers are really looking at now to see how we can bring that together because I don’t know about you but I am really looking forward to having a beer from this bar and a steak from Simon.

So having spoken about the Club, let’s talk about the sailing because that is what we are here for really. We have seen the guidance that it is now Wednesday morning so if I wanted to be I could be out there with my son Eddie, who is recording this for us, out on the river, on our own, in a boat. But it is not really conducive to racing so what we are doing is looking again at how we might bring racing to the Club because private sailing is your choice. We’ve got a superb pontoon and it is more than 2 metres apart. The boats we sail are more than 2 metres long so there are lots of options we can look at. This could be the year of the Squib, we can sail them 1 handed, we can sail them 2 handed with someone from our household, although that after 7 weeks of lockdown may not be the

right answer! Dragons maybe they can sail two handed and what we need to do if we do this is take good precautions and consider, as the RYA suggest, to be considerate and conservative. So let's not do too much to put the RNLI who are probably our people we go to first, if we have real trouble out on the river. The RNLI are working with the RYA to provide that guidance. We expect it will be fairly positive. So that's the bit about being considerate, I think we also recognise that we need to be considerate to the local community as well and make sure that we're not looking to flaunt the rules and guidelines laid down by the government just to go elitist sailing- we know it's not elitist but not everyone agrees with us. So we are going to be considerate and then we are going to be conservative what we do every year is review our risk assessment of sailing on the river. We do that in partnership with the Crouch Harbour Authority so we will be doing that again but our risk assessment will take into consideration this year Covid 19 and social distancing. I was talking to the Flag Officers and you can visualise by yourself being able to arrive here by car, walk up the ramp down the pontoon and to the launch at least 2 metres away from everyone. The launch is well over 2 metres long, if we have a launch driver who is willing to take on that role then we can take people to their boats 1 by 1 and 2 metres from the launchman. When we are on the boat (even I see close to my crew, even if it is just Howie) so we'll be looking at how we might be able to do that. It's got to be worked through properly it's got to be a proper risk assessment and see if we can do it. But we really want to go sailing. So that's what we are looking at, we are continuing to consider the members and what is best for them. We need your input if you have good ideas on what can help how we can help with social distancing, how we achieve things in this building then we would like to know. We want our members to stay safe; we don't want a second spike. The way it currently stands, the way I see it, we are on for Burnham Week, but if we get a second spike that might be off. So we care about our members we want your input and we want your help. We are thinking about the Clubhouse, we are doing the measuring, we are looking at how we might get back up, no earlier than 4<sup>th</sup> July. For sailing you've got your own guidelines when you go private sailing, what we are looking at now is getting how we can bring racing and our Club back together so we can do what we all want to do, which is get back out there.

One final point, sailing hasn't started yet so there is still some good virtual sailing going on. The Karl Marx for the Dragons was done virtually, and I know that Scarlett Anderson is just organising Super Saturday, so if you want to do virtual Super Saturday go on the website, sign up by this Friday and you can do that.

But I know what we really want, and I feel like Boris here, is to get out there.

I should end by thanking you for listening to me, stay alert, let's get rid of this virus and whatever the other one is, which I think is- go sailing.

Thank you.