

March 14, 2021

Dear Jester Challenger or supporter, past, present or future,

You will probably have heard that after sixteen years of extraordinary leadership of the JC, Ewen has finally decided to retire from organising the challenges. No words can express the gratitude that we all owe him for his vision, hard work, inspiration and humour. We're sure that over the next months and years, a lot more will be said about this, and many ways will be found to thank and honour him for everything he has done for us.

As a start, we are happy to announce that Ewen is forthwith our new Patron. Many thanks to Paul Mead for reminding us that we have been patron-less since the days of Mike Richey and Val Howells.

It is of course unthinkable that any one person could take on Ewen's mantle, and so it is fitting that he has charged the three of us, George, Howard and Roger, to continue the work of delivering the challenges. This is an honour and a responsibility that we take very seriously. Under Ewen's leadership the JC has developed into a unique phenomenon in the sailing world, allowing ordinary sailors to develop their full potential in a supportive and approachable environment. The JC ethos of personal responsibility, good seamanship and humility is of course paramount, and we will do everything possible to maintain and develop that ethos.

Jesters are by nature averse to committees, and the three of us are resolutely not a committee. We have decided to call ourselves the Jester Helm, as we currently have our hand on the tiller, but welcome as much help and input on the steering as people want to give. Our role will simply be to facilitate the challenges themselves, no more, no less. The Jester community is talented, vibrant and largely self-organising: witness the number of dinners, meetings, online events, social media groups and so on that have developed of their own accord over the years. All of this self-generated activity is a vital part of the Jester movement. Long may it continue!

One priority that we have already started work on is putting together a



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comprehensive mailing list of all Jesters, so that we can communicate quickly and efficiently with everyone. We will of course have to abide by data protection protocols, and anybody who doesn't want to be on the list will be able to unsubscribe. Howard has taken charge of this. It is of particular importance given the uncertainties and fluidity of the current COVID situation, which means we may have to get information out very quickly.

Our main short-term priority is of course delivering some sort of Jester Challenge this year. This is fraught with many a problem, but we are confident that something can be done. We will be writing almost immediately to all those registered for this year's events to update them on our current thinking and planning.

This has all happened quite suddenly and unexpectedly, so we hope you will allow us just a little sea room while we get settled on our course.

Best wishes

The Jester Helm:

George Arnison  
Howards Chivers  
Roger Taylor