

ONE DESIGN FLEET AT WEST MERSEA

SONATA CHOSEN!

A well attended meeting took place on 14th July at WMYC to discuss the development of a One Design racing fleet at West Mersea. Chairman Simon Clifton outlined the agenda and the objective of the meeting - to work through people's requirements for their Mersea sailing before endeavouring to select the boat which best satisfies these requirements. Five boats had been shortlisted :-

Sonata
Squib
707
Projection 762
J80

Data, features and costs relating to each of these boats were presented to the meeting by individual owners and members who had researched the boats, including Burnham 7-0-7 Fleet Captain Phil Bennett who had even brought his boat along for inspection. Topics discussed included the potential difficulty with moorings, the need to avoid excluding potential owners on financial grounds (both purchase price and running costs) and the desirability of selecting a boat which attracts younger crews. There was some debate over the format of potential racing, but this was considered a secondary matter to determining the right boat.

The attendees were surveyed via a secret ballot to establish their budgets – for both the capital cost of a boat and its subsequent annual running costs. Out of 34 completed reply slips, 17 revealed a capital budget of £5000 and a further 10 a capital budget of £10000. It was recognised that a more expensive boat could lead to shared ownership's, giving the disadvantage of fewer boats being purchased and raced.

The meeting then concluded with voting, with votes only from attendees who were serious about purchasing the boat they were voting for. This led to the Projection 762 and the Squib being eliminated. The final round of voting saw

Sonata	6 votes	(+ 7 boats in existing fleet)
707	6 votes	
J80	3 votes	(+2 boats in existing fleet)

With six votes, its existing fleet, and the prospect of some attendees who voted for the 707 and the J80 acquiring one, the Sonata clearly has the potential to be 15+ strong and offer close and pure one design racing.

THE SONATA HAS THEREFORE BEEN SELECTED AS THE BOAT FOR WEST MERSEA!