

THE OWL AND THE PUSSYCAT

- **The RS Venture Connect is one of the very few dinghies that reflects the ethos of MoB and that of true integration**
- It is one of the very few dinghies that does not give the appearance that it has been modified to accommodate sailors with a physical disability. i.e it does not have the big sign flying from its mast saying look at me 'I am physically disabled'
- Very stable and therefore reassuring for novices when both boarding the boat and when sailing it. An excellent 'teaching/coaching platform
- It offers easy access for those requiring a hoist.
- It can carry up to 6 adults. This is the same as the Drascombe Lugger.
- It is good for anybody with hearing impairments as helm and crew are able to sit side by side and close to each other. If helm or crew wish to lip read, the side by side seating allows them to face each other whilst still watching where they are going.
- It is good for those with visual impairments as the side by side seating arrangements allows them, (if they wish) to be easily guided by a sighted helm or crew. With the dual joystick it means that a sighted crew sailing with a helm with visual impairments can easily and instantly adjust the steering to reduce heeling or avoid a collision. (Same principle as driving and flying instructors who are able to regain control if anything goes pear shaped)
- The dinghy is also unique in that it allows for multiple helm /crew arrangements e.g helm in one of side by side seats, helm in central seat, helm using traditional tiller/tiller extension and sitting on the wide gunwhales. Similarly, crew can sit in any of these positions and control the jib and spinnaker.
- The seats provide good upper body support.
- Reefing the Venture afloat is simple and straightforward for anybody who is mobile.
- Due to the Venture Connects good stability and the relatively small amount of heel, plus the seats that provide upper body support, the crew on board a Venture do not end up sailing 'one handed' i.e with the spare arm/hand hanging on to the windward gunwhale. Many other dinghies inc Hansa and Skuds that are designed for those with physical disabilities often require the helm/crew to 'hang on' to the windward gunwhale when the boat heels. The SV14 has partially addressed this by introducing cantilevered seats – but I am still not convinced that it works that well – see photo below



HANSA 303 and 2.3



LIBERTY



SV14

- The Venture It is the perfect dinghy for progressing sailing skills; Complete novices who are very nervous of being on the water can start by crewing in either an RS Venture or our faithful Lugger, (large, stable, slow, no boom etc). Once confident in either boat they can progress to helming in the RS Venture (joystick steering) and/or move on to a Hansa (joystick steering). With some further experience in the Venture they can move to sailing with 3 sails or, if seeking more speed and challenges, move to the Weta with a central seat (lever steering) and a gennaker.

As many will know it has always been a top priority for MoB to have within its small fleet a range of dinghies (basic and more advanced) that are suitable and appropriate for those with physical disabilities. We also need craft that are attractive to potential members/sailors. Without such craft we have less chance of attracting new members, and finally we need dinghies that do not require a lot of maintenance. The RS Venture is in my opinion the very best dinghy that is currently available and meets these criteria.

Other benefits and opportunities

The Owl and the Pussycat does not require any maintenance. She is ready to sail and has everything that MoB would need.

The RS Connect can be modified further with an additional kit which allows the dinghy to be controlled by a small joystick or using a sip/puff electronic control system.

I would very much like to Committee to carefully consider the following options;

Option 1 – Accept the offer from Nicole, and for MoB to sell the Laser Stratos and one Challenger (not used and not suitable for novices).

Option 2 – Offer Nicole half of what is the current value of an RS Venture. (circa £11k, so a cost of £5,500 for MoB). Another way of looking at this is that MoB would have a really excellent dinghy in its fleet and Nicole would not have to go through the rigmarole of selling the dinghy plus she would have £5 – 6k to donate to Back Up

Option 3 – Let Nicole sell the boat (will take time) and for monies to be split between the two chosen charities. However, I don't believe this to be a sensible option unless MoB has a very clear plan for spending the money on something that would provide the Club with very similar benefits.

Richard