



## Titch wins the Esso Macnamara's Bowl for a record 5th time



Titch Blachford on her way to winning

Photo © Max

The 1990 Macnamara's Bowl was a five race series which took place in the West Solent during the weekend of 15th to 17th June. The event, run by the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, is competed for in J24's with a separate class for Channel Handicap System yachts competing for the Caulcutt Cup. Esso again provided sponsorship.

There was a total of 24 entries, 17 competing in J24's for the Macnamara's Bowl. A third of these were overseas entries, with teams from Holland headed by Marina Betist and Hanna Zuiderbaan, who have both attended the event year after year. For the first time there was also a Russian entry. The Russian team, skippered by Tamara Povethina, consisted of four Russians and one English girl, Lucy Proudlove. Their challenge was assisted by their British

sponsor, Charles Barker.

There were light winds each day, and racing had to be postponed until the afternoon on both the Friday and Saturday, when a light sea-breeze filled in to enable all the races to be completed.

The principal trophy went to Titch Blachford, for the fifth time. Her crew on *Jooler* consisted of Royal Lymington members - Ros Bond, Sue Hawkes and Clair Webb, with Caroline Aisher and Jill Ellis making up the full team.

Racing was hotly contested, with four winners over the five races. Titch did not emerge as the overall winner until the racing on the final day. The main rival for the title was her cousin, Mimie Currie, competing in *Pandemonium*. This was the first time Mimie had competed in the regatta since 1983, the last year in which the event was raced in

Contessa 32's. She won two of the five races this year. Other races were won by Berita van de Werff from Holland in *Crackerjack* and Helen Clements from Poole in *Red Alert*.

Seven boats took part in the CHS class this year, with top sailors such as Cathy Foster competing in an X-99. Racing was close throughout, culminating in a tie between Elaine Davey and Inga Featherstone which was decided on a countback.

The Caulcutt Cup was won by Elaine Davey sailing *Excelle* (Sigma 33) with *Harmony 87* (Half Tonner) sailed by Inga Featherstone in second place.

The 1991 Macnamara's Bowl and Caulcutt Cup will be held from 7th to 9th June 1991.

Lisa Barrow

## The Season's Cruising

This season's cruising was like the curate's egg. June was dominated by the weather which caused a number of cruises to be curtailed or abandoned. In July and August there was superb weather interspersed with moments of excitement. Some of these coincided with Club Meets. Regrettably, the season had its share of casualties, not all caused by the weather. Loftus Peyton-Jones broke a leg navigating from one yacht to another at the Spring Meet. Leonard Wesson suffered from clambering over rocks on the way back from Tatihou. Gordon Simpson had finger trouble in South Brittany and was invalided home. John Hines broke a leg in Corunna resulting in a voyage of heroic proportions by Margaret (see *Pushpa's Voyage Home*, p.3). Jackie Wilson had the misfortune to break a collar bone because of the ill-mannered behaviour of a beastly motorboatist.

There were also some less serious injuries.

As has been said above, the Club Meets suffered through adverse weather. The Spring Meet was quite successful, and the Tatihou barbecue was well attended and most enjoyable. Unfortunately, only one boat attended Le Havre (another followed, but was regrettably too late for the festivities). A small preliminary Meet at Ile de Brehat was also attended by only one boat, and this was blown off station. By contrast, the St Vaast Meet was a great success with 21 boats taking part. Lastly, the family Meet at Beaulieu was attended by only two boats, again due to the weather.

As for cruising, some found coping with the French canals tedious in the extreme. Others were delighted to discover previously unvisited ports in Brittany. Club boats visited northern Spain, Portugal, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, Scotland, Holland and other far-flung places. In short, it was a fairly normal cruising season.

Desmond Dewhurst



Photo © Max

## Douglas Baverstock B.E.M.

The last person to see himself as deserving the award of the British Empire Medal 'for services to yachting', which was announced in this year's Birthday Honours List, would be Doug Baverstock. For somewhat more than thirty years he has been the Club's Bosun and he has brought to his duties the outstanding dedication and sustained loyalty with which all members are so familiar. The distinction he has earned is a mark not simply of our gratitude for his years of

## Potter Ship

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effort but, in a wider sense, is recognition of a lifetime in the service of yachting here in the West Solent. Our warmest congratulations and appreciation are deservedly his.

A cornerstone in the Club's capacity to undertake yachting events of international importance, his untiring effort and support have been indispensable. Although at the centre of our activities, he has been and is still closely identified with other community concerns, notably the RNLI to which he has given life-long and practical support. Doug is a stalwart in every sense of the word.

Commodore

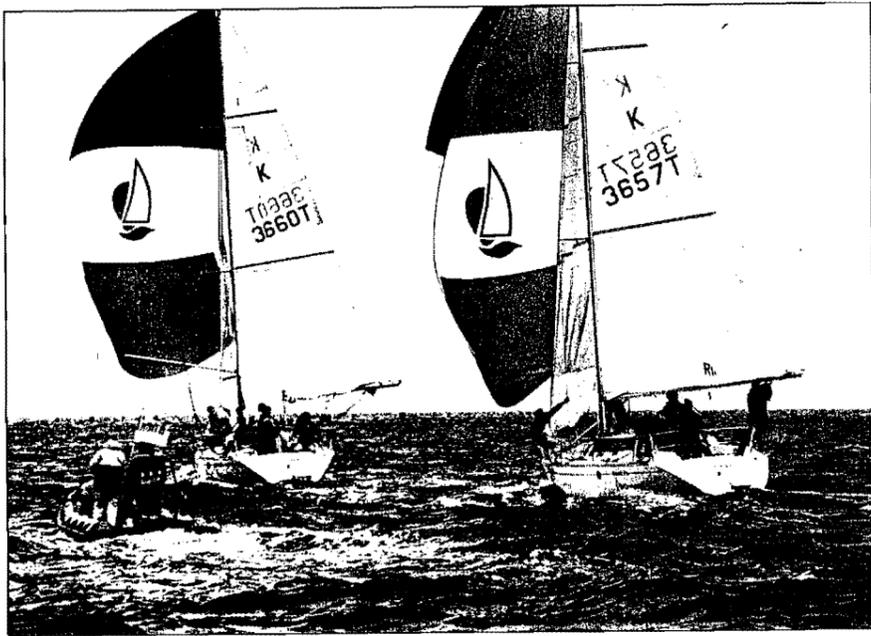


Photo © Bob Fisher

Eddie Macdonald, Ross Warden-Owen

## Some thoughts on the Royal Lymington Cup by an Umpire

The first thing that must be mentioned is the sheer organisational ability of the Club. During the past two years I have been fortunate enough to attend a number of other grand prix events on three continents, and I can happily report that, for organisation, the Royal Lymington Cup is Number One. The organisation starts off, from the competitors' point of view, with the first, unambiguous, invitation. It continues through accommodation, food, yachts, and race-management, and doesn't let up until the very last 'thank you, and see you next year, I hope'.

After all this effort on the part of the Club, it is up to the competitors to entertain us with skilful demonstrations of the art of match-racing: the pre-start dance - how to scare a spectator boat - the first-leg, that's not working let's have a tacking duel - the gybe set that only the skipper knows is going to be a gybe set - marks to port... or was it starboard? Thanks for the fun.

Umpiring of course has changed the skills required of a match-race skipper. Gone are the presentation and verbal skills required in the protest room. These have been replaced by the kind of bodily flexibility required to get the

arm holding the tiller somewhere behind the right ear in order to convince the umpire that nothing more could be done to avoid contact.

The life of an umpire is sometimes quite precarious. On one occasion, when the throttles were opened to get us into position, both the umpires fell over backwards and had a very good view of the sky as two yachts came together. Inevitably the skippers chose this occasion to fly 'Y' protest flags. Equally inevitable was our response: a green flag showing that we were not convinced that a penalty was appropriate. I bet David Bedford wished I'd fallen over twice more, in each of the semi-finals.

Every now and then we still end up with a conventional hearing, on this occasion it was a claim for redress from the Race Committee by Ross Macdonald. The issue was whether he had been recalled correctly for a premature start. Happily, on hearing the statements from the race committee and the line judge, he withdrew his claim. Thus we saw, in one incident, evidence of a really competent race committee and a truly sporting competitor. It was a pleasure to be involved.

Congratulations to Marc Bouet for a pair of fine victories over Eddie Owen in the finals. I am sure we shall see more of the current Soling European champion on the circuit in the future.

John Doerr

## Racing Notes.

Once again we have had a busy season, particularly early on. However, more recently the entries have fallen off dramatically in both the cruiser and dinghy fleets.

No report could start without a very big and heart-felt thank you to all the many members who, once again, have given up a great deal of their time to helping organise and run our varied sailing events. Thanks go to those who helped on shore and at sea, to those who lent their craft, to Doug and his team, and to the office staff.

The J24's have, I think, stolen the limelight this season, closely followed by the XOD's and the Cadets. Our J24 Club members have dominated the Solent regattas and gained a 10th in the World Championships and 3rd and 4th in the European Championships.

A good 2nd overall in the X Class Championships during Cowes Week should spur the fleet to even greater achievements next year. Our Cadets too are breaking through at the top of their extremely competitive class. This is largely due to the hard work and dedication of our Junior trainers over several years. All of them, past and present, can be justly proud of their achievement.

The early part of the season was very hectic. Four major open events in close succession made it very hard to find enough volunteer helpers. However, thanks to everyone's dedication and skill we came through without a blemish.

The mid-season events were let down by the weather and by a lack of competitors. The Clipper Hotels race to Jersey was all set for success when the weather stepped in and only three boats managed to reach their destination. This was a great pity. (see page 8) The annual West Solent Regatta which had been pretty successful in 1989 suffered from a lack of entries this year. Why has this lethargy set in? We tried to hold a dinghy regatta during our Regatta weekend, but this attracted few entries. Again, we must try to establish why this should be.

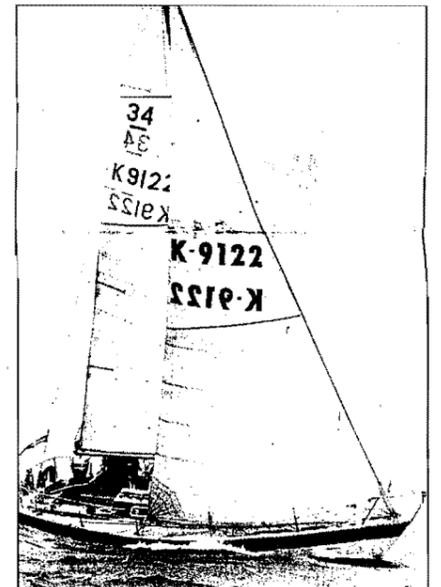
As has become customary, our annual Junior Regatta was well attended, and the organisation under Annabel Nurton

both on and offshore was impeccable. Strongish winds fired the enthusiasm of the juniors. In the odd gusts of 34 knots both the juniors and rescue teams learnt a great deal about capsizing drills; additional training of our many volunteer rescue crews is planned for this winter, particularly on the safest ways to de-rig our junior dinghy classes in a rough sea. On shore, the Barbeques were better than ever, many thanks to the noble members who lent their gardens.

Next year we are trying to rationalise our fixture programme so that we do not have periods of organised chaos (particularly in the office and in Doug's department) by ensuring that we have a few days respite between events. An early Easter will help in this respect. This rationalisation includes a proposal to combine some of our dinghy open meetings, for example the 420's and the Cadets.

Finally, may I thank once again all of those, too numerous to mention individually, who have given up their time to support our sailing programme. Without this help we could achieve very little. I wish you all good fortune, and hope for your continued tremendous support.

Stuart Jardine  
Captain of Racing



Riot - another successful seasons racing

Photo © Max

## Travels and Yachting



Photo © Peter Thorn

I had often heard of people, and even met a few, who travel around the world, sailing boats in places far from home. These people I refer to are not top class helms and crews, but people such as I who go yacht racing and cruising just for enjoyment. I took a year off before university last year and spent some of my time doing just this. Until these

recent travels, I had never realised how easy this is, and how welcoming is the world's yachting community. I travelled to Australia in November last year. Arriving in Melbourne as summer got under way, I was just in time for the height of the sailing season. I wanted a ride in the Sydney-Hobart, Melbourne-Hobart, or Melbourne-Devonport races just after Christmas, and so went around all the clubs in the area. Through contacts I had made from evening and weekend races I managed to get on a boat for the Melbourne-Hobart race. This runs in parallel to the Sydney-Hobart race, going down the west coast of Tasmania as opposed to the east coast. The boats from both races converge on Hobart just in time for New Year. This was quite an experience, with stronger winds and bigger seas than I had ever seen before: over 60 knot winds with 5+ metre waves at times.

Throughout the antipodean summer I sailed around the Victorian waters on a multitude of boats, everything from 24ft trailer-sailers up to ex-Admirals Cup

yachts. I was made very welcome by the Royal Brighton Yacht Club, from where I sailed. Everybody was extremely friendly and helpful, offering me more rides than I could take, helping me out with accommodation, and helping me find jobs.

The yacht racing around Melbourne is mainly handicap, IOR and local handicap systems. CHS is used but distrusted and will probably fade out all together as IMS comes in. There is not the great variety of strong one-design classes that exists in the UK, but one class which is very prominent is the Etchell class. Most clubs have ten to twenty boats, and at Brighton there are over forty. It is not unusual to have over fifty boats out during a weekend, making excellent close racing.

Port Phillip Bay, on which Melbourne is situated, is an ideal place for sailing and other water sports. It is an almost circular bay, about sixty miles across, completely surrounded by land except for a small gap a few miles wide where it enters Bass Strait. It has practically no tides except near the entrance. The relative shelter, close proximity to land, and lack of strong tides make it quite a

safe place to sail (apart from the sharks!).

Beyond the headlands, out of the shelter of Port Phillip, lies the inhospitable Bass Strait leading onwards to the Tasman Sea and Southern Ocean. Here some of the most exciting ocean racing can be found.

Most of my sailing was done around Melbourne, but I also had a few sails elsewhere on my travels. I took a boat from the Gold Coast down to Sydney, and then raced it from Sydney up to the Whitsunday Islands near Mackay. I was navigator for both trips, which becomes very interesting when you get up around the Great Barrier Reef. The race from Sydney was 1,000nm, the longest race in Australian waters. My last sail of the trip was in Hawaii, where I jumped on a boat for an evening race much like our own.

I have found all these rides just by going to yacht clubs and asking around. I have yet to find an unfriendly club, and hope that any foreign visitor coming over here would find the same hospitality that I have been shown. It really is an excellent way to spend a year off.

Peter Thorn

# Pushpa's Voyage Home

A month into our cruise, and we were at the Real Club Nautico, La Coruna, for provisioning before moving east. Close to Pushpa's bow there were two sections of pontoon with a 6" gap between them. While adjusting the lines, John fell into this gap, breaking his left leg. It was plastered at the local hospital, and there followed some days' uncertainty as to the best plan: stay at La Coruna for a month until the plaster came off? Try to 'port-hop' towards home as originally planned? Sail home with extra help, John navigating? Finally, we agreed that John would fly home and we would find someone to help me bring the boat back.

We had seen a Leisure 23 arrive, clearly single-handed, and anchor further down the harbour. Her owner, Michael Pilgrim, came aboard and when he heard of our problem offered his help. After a little thought and negotiation we gratefully accepted.

So, at 1100 on July 1st, I left John waiting for the airport bus: Michael brought his boat alongside and moored to our buoy, where the boatswain of the Casino Club could keep an eye on it during his absence.

We motored off at 1430 and found that the log did not work; two weeks in harbour was time enough for barnacles to colonise it, but they were quickly dealt with. The breeze was light although the forecast indicated more to come, from the south-west. Sure

enough, from motor-sailing at 1630, we progressed to three reefs and several rolls in the genoa by 1815. This rig took us steadily through the night and the next day, averaging 5 knots; good progress, but we both felt distinctly 'iffy' - Michael because of the very different motion from his boat, and I perhaps because the anxiety of the previous weeks had caught up with me. Then the wind dropped and we motored in the rain through the second night.

I knew that Decca often has to be re-established from the DR in the mornings when sailing so far from the transmitters. I had done this the first morning, but on the second nothing I offered to it produced anything sensible. So at 0800 I cheated; I called a ship, the *Silke*, and requested a position check. This showed we were some 14 miles north of the DR; a bonus for which I have no explanation unless there was a current. For the rest of the passage, the DR and Decca positions were very close.

The third day was sunny and windless. We motored all day, dozing and recovering. The evening forecast gave Force 6-7 so we furled the mainsail which was then 'rested' for some while. The wind remained in the SW, Force 6-8, for most of the next three days. On the fourth day I was alarmed to see that the Navik was not holding its course, and feared that it had been damaged by the quartering sea. Michael, who had

built his own self-steering, jury-rigged it with string and a plastic wedge and it worked. Had he not been able to do this, we would have had a real problem. (In fact the turret had just popped up, and reinstating it would have been quite simple, but we didn't know that at the time.) By now, we were crossing the edge of the continental shelf; the seas were shorter and steep. One of the lifebelts was carried away by a wave so I quickly shoved the other into the cockpit locker, since neither of us had any intention of taking a dip. The sight of several fish-pot markers confirmed the DR position, right on 'Parson's Bank'.

Meals became rather odd; we would have porridge, or a sandwich, or muesli, or a tinned pie, all at peculiar times.

The fifth day had us lying hove-to under a tiny scrap of jib. I knew John would have heard the forecasts of gales in most areas. He would be worrying, but we were about 60 miles south of Land's End - too far for a radio call to say that we were OK, despite gusts of up to 43 knots on our wind indicator (an 8-amp wind to the wind-generator!) This was actually the day when he attempted to call us via Land's End, having tried to second-guess our progress. The tide was making us drift very slowly towards the shipping lane; thanks to Decca we could monitor this closely. Needless to say, careful lookout was kept.

During the afternoon the wind

moderated at last and we got going again, gradually increasing sail through the night and the next day. Start Point was visible around midday and we enjoyed pleasant sailing until the evening when it rained intermittently. Realising that we would meet a foul tide at the Needles if we kept going, we decided to anchor at Studland for a few hours. Just to think of it! A calm anchorage! Bliss! But as darkness fell the wind backed and increased and the rain persisted. Unable to raise Niton Radio on VHF, I wondered if we had suffered more storm damage. The last twenty miles to Studland took longer than we would have thought possible. As the hook went down, I thought that the moon was coming out - then realised it was the dawn. So we had only two hours before we had to get going again, in a moderate breeze with just the genoa - a nice gentle 'doddle' across Poole Bay. I was relieved to get a call through to John (so was he!) and we secured to the Club pontoon on Saturday 6th July in good time for showers, several beers and lunch. Not bad timing!

I was touched by the number of friends who came up to welcome us home, both that day and since. I think half Lymington must have been worrying about us.

Margaret Hines



On Monday 13th August, 160 boats and more than 200 children launched into the seventh Junior Regatta.

This year the forecast was kinder. Only one day was cancelled - Wednesday - but the wind and rain eased to allow a bumper barbecue that evening in the Kalis's beautiful garden. In spite of bad mid-week weather the race officers almost managed to complete the full series of races. As usual with strong winds and inevitable midday low water, they had to stretch their ingenuity to set courses keeping us away from the ferries, out of the wind, and off the mud.

Scows, Optimists, Lasers, 420's, Cadets and Toppers were divided into four areas, together with their committee boats, mother ships, and safety boats - *Baverstock* was used for the first time in a summer Regatta, proving her worth in all weathers. What a pity we did not attract more Europes and Mirrors. Ros Lovett managed to squeeze all shapes and sizes of children into Scows - everyone who wanted to go sailing did. All the hired Toppers were booked as were the Club Optimists - mostly by children who have been coming regularly on Wednesdays. The Optimist Nationals, also this week, spirited away some of our very best sailors. We missed them but it gave newcomers a chance!

The first day was glorious and allowed competitors to settle down with

a practice race and their first series race. On Tuesday, the passage to Hurst also caught the tail end of the good weather and, in spite of one sunken scow and a dramatic rescue on the windward leg, everyone (competitors, picnics, safety boats with half the Optimist fleet in tow, all the club helpers and Doug, fully stocked) arrived safely on the beach. Thursday was still very gusty. The river fleet of Scows and Toppers managed under the helpful eye of Derek Pitt-Pitts. Ken Kershaw combined the Black and White Fleets in the Solent with courses cunningly contrived to fit inside each other, and Stuart Jardine coaxed the stalwart Optimists into slightly more sheltered waters.

Lady Boxer presented the prizes on Friday - a wonderful assortment of hats, books, scarves, jerseys and bottles collected by Amanda Dingwall and, of course, the usual trophies.

Our evening barbecues were a great success, ending with a super disco for which the competitors, amazingly, seemed to find a final burst of energy.

In conclusion, it was a very successful week which we all enjoyed and could not possibly have got through without the support of members, relations and friends. Thank you.

Annabel Nurton  
Captain, Junior Sailing

## Junior Sailing

The Junior section is having a busy and successful year. 'Wednesday sailing', devised and run by Jonathan Rogers, is as popular as ever. The top Wednesday children now receive instruction in the 'B Fleet' on Saturday afternoons, enabling them to progress to Cadet and Optimist race-training with the 'A fleet' on Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings. Annabel Nurton has been appointed to the new post of 'Captain of Juniors'. She is full of energy, and will need it!

We had a record entry for the Cadet National Championships at Plymouth this year. We are negotiating sponsorship for new sails and masts for our Optimists, and 'Aalco' of Southampton are being most generous. We hope to attract sponsors for 'child-proof' polythene Optimist hulls at £450 each to maintain our fleet. Suggestions?

The Cadet fleet now comprises thirty boats: the largest squadron in Britain.

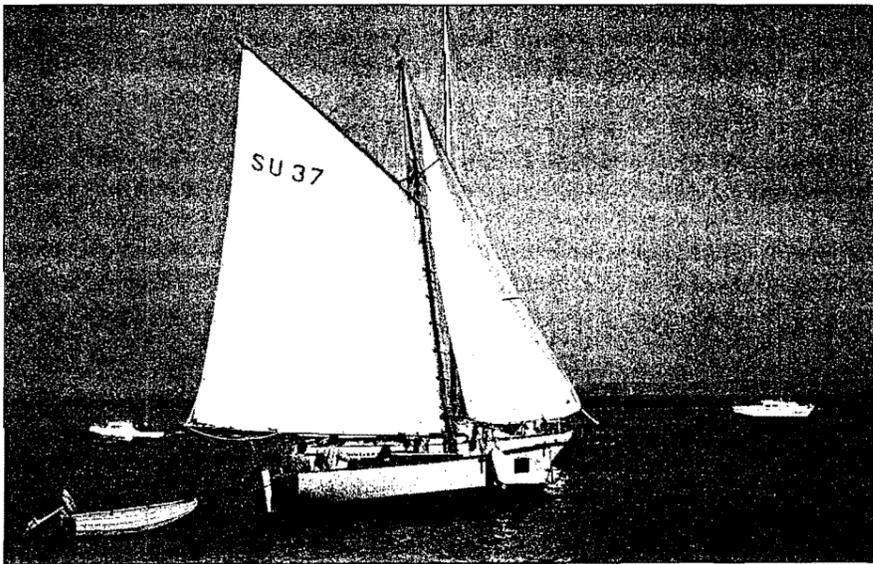
Stuart Jardine has negotiated to purchase some old Fireflies, and we will start a fleet to enable older, skilled children to have a go at the older, wiser,

adult helms ('age and treachery will always defeat youth and skill'). This will keep the sixth-form and college members involved, (as well as interested adult members), without undue expense.

We would like to record our most grateful thanks to the De La Caves for the generous gift of a Laser to the junior section, to John Claridge for the gift of a Europe (the new women's Olympic single-hander), to Eileen Elliot for a Scow, to Ren Clarke and many others who have donated so generously to the purchase of inflatable rescue-boats, as well as to Sanders Sails for 420 sails. Thank you to the many willing, able, and good-humoured helpers on and off the water who keep the show going. Contact Ruth Evans, our marvellous overseer of the Scows, if you are handy with boat maintenance.

Naturally, there is always an opportunity for members to help in any way they please, from distributing tea and cakes on Saturday, to running barbecues in the Junior Week, to maintaining boats, or helping children to have a go at sailing.

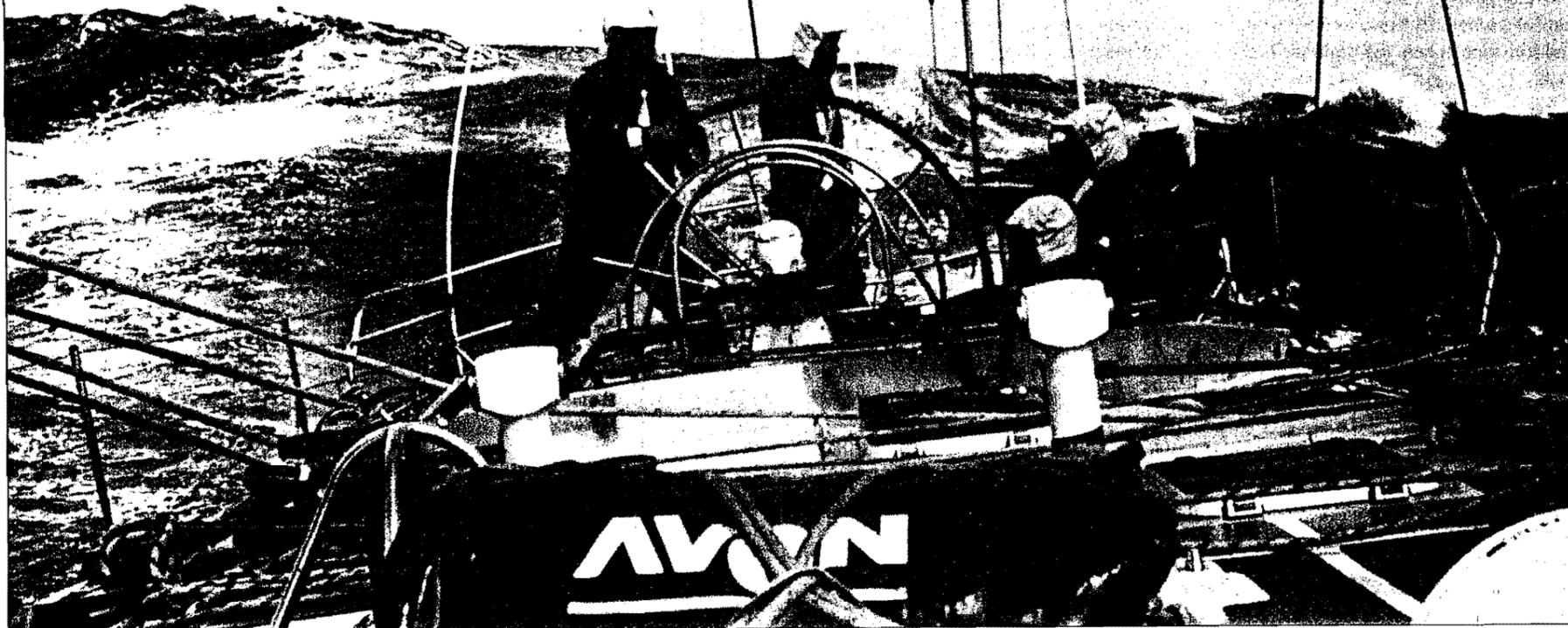
Tom McEwen



Alice - so often around and there for the junior sailors

# Man Overboard

## Some lessons to be re-learned



*Creighton's Naturally on arguably the most dangerous leg*

MAN OVERBOARD! Everyone who puts to sea is aware of the significance of this desperate cry. No matter how much practice drill one does for such an accident, it does not prepare one for the shock of hearing this call in the early hours of a black night in the Southern Ocean.

In the first Whitbread Race, three men fell overboard and were not recovered. It is a measure of the improvement of safety standards that there has been no further loss of life until this fifth race around the world. *Creighton's Naturally* was eleven days out from Punta del Este bound for Fremantle on the second leg of the Whitbread Round the World Race, when on Sunday 12th November two crewmen were washed overboard at a position 47° south 10° west. Both the crew were retrieved despite difficult conditions. Bart Van Den Dwey recovered consciousness after 15-18 hours, but Antony Phillips never came round.

*Creighton's Naturally* was running with three reefs, staysail and the blast-reacher poled out to starboard in 37-42 knots true wind with gusts of up to 50 knots. Exciting and under control. But in the darkness when a series of confused waves set in, the yacht was involuntarily gybed. With the preventer line parted, the boom broke the weather (starboard) checkstay. While bringing the main under control, the sheet got wrapped around the primary winch grinders and before it was cleared the main gybed back, ripping the pedestals clean out of the deck. Having been woken by the commotion of the first gybe, as I was about to go on deck a shower of gear boxes came crashing down onto the saloon table. The main sail was dropped and secured, then the crew set about clearing up as the yacht ran before the wind and waves. Bart was unclipping the port check stay from

the shrouds and Tony was measuring the holes in the deck. Within a minute of me taking the helm, a large wave broke over the starboard quarter, rolling the yacht sharply to port. As the yacht fell down the back of the wave, it rounded up to starboard setting the headsail aback until the pole broke away from the mast. The force of the water washing down the port side carried three crew along the deck, two of them falling through the lifelines.

The crewman clipped to the shrouds beside Bart gave the man overboard call and ran aft to assist with throwing the Danbuoy, two liferings and three lights over the side. With the spinnaker pole thrashing around on the foredeck, the priority was to control the situation and get the sails down without endangering anyone else. The engine was started and the boat reached up as high as possible to avoid getting too far down wind as the foresails were dropped. Then, turning back onto the reciprocal course, two complete checks were made to clear any lines over the side before the engine was engaged.

With a crew of twenty-one it was some time before a roll call finalised how many and who was in the water. Most of the off watch crew stayed below, to avoid confusion of too many on deck.

The three flashing lights gave a clear path back and the yacht was steered upwind of them to allow for drift. At this point a signal was received on the VHF/RDF from a personal EPIRB beacon, which gave a bearing off the bow to steer to. When this bearing lost clarity, two rocket flares were set off and the two men in the water were spotted only fifty metres (two boat's lengths) away and fifteen metres apart. The nearest person responded to calls. But stopping the boat, holding it in position, initially beam-to upwind of him and then reversing into the five

metre waves as the bow was pushed around, was not easy. Before a line could be secured to the man in the water, the boat was blown on. On the third pass and the third time that Julian Morris had jumped in fully clothed with a line attaching himself to the boat, he managed to get a line tied to Bart who was brought on board unconscious. A weak radio signal gave a bearing to Tony, who was spotted on the beam after circling around. It took two passes with Barry Mercer, wearing a diver's wet suit, jumping in, before a line was secured to Tony so he could be recovered.

Bart was breathing and was carried straight down below to a heated bunk. Another crew member got under the space blanket with him to warm him up. He responded to medication fairly quickly, moving around in bed as well as taking and passing fluids. But it was 15 to 18 hours before he remembers regaining consciousness. Unfortunately with Tony we never had any response to immediate mouth to mouth resuscitation on deck and then below for a further two hours. It was a sad and emotional ceremony when, two days later, after receiving his parents' consent, Antony Phillips was buried at sea.

After such an event there are the questions of why and the answers of what to do in the future. It took thirty minutes to recover Bart and forty-seven minutes to recover Tony in a water temperature of 7°C and air of 3°C, with the yacht drifting just over half a mile away from them. The first question is regarding safety equipment. They were both wearing the race rules safety requirements of safety harnesses and lifejackets, and carrying mini flares. In addition, they were both carrying manually operated Locata EPIRB transmitters whose signal is picked up by an on-board VHF radio direction finder which gives a bearing but not

range. The yacht has an excess to the minimum requirement for liferings with strobe lights. None of the equipment is automatically deployed if someone falls overboard and the personal equipment is all manually operated. The next question is why were they not clipped on. The two men were both particularly safety conscious and, as a watch leader, Tony was always checking that safety procedures were maintained. But on this occasion neither of them were clipped on, despite being next to deck clip-on lines and strong points. There is no explanation for this, apart from their own decision not to clip on if they believed there was no immediate danger. The third question is why did it take so long to recover them. This was a result of the time it took to get the boat and sails under control without losing anyone else over the side. It was impossible to consider sailing straight back as the spinnaker pole was still attached to the clew of the flogging foresail. The drift away from Tony and Bart was minimised by keeping the bow up into the wind as far as possible without losing steerage in the waves, whilst the fore sails were dropped and the lines overboard cleared before motoring back. If we had to manoeuvre under sail, it would not have been possible to retrieve them as quickly as we did. It took two passes to establish that the only way to hold the yacht stationary was to be up wind of the man overboard with the bow pointing about 30° into the wind to maintain steerage way. We had to bring them aboard well forward at the mast.

Due to the high freeboard of this eighty-foot yacht, it was not possible to reach down to the person as the boat rolled, so it was essential to have someone ready to jump in with a line, as the men in the water were unable to help themselves. The various recovery slings and strops on the market at the

moment would have been totally unusable in this situation. Having someone on board with diving experience and a wet suit ready to put on is the most efficient way to secure a person. The sails were dropped in a rush and inevitably the halyards were twisted in the dark as the boat rolled. The co-ordinated efforts of a number of people at the rail were the most expedient way to bring a helpless body on board.

How we actually got back to the right spot is largely a result of the EPIRB beacons sending out a signal which was received on the multi-channel radio direction finder and gave a bearing angle to steer. Although not originally intended for man-overboard recovery, the two of them would not have been recovered without these devices. But they have many faults; the signal we received which guided us back to Tony was not from his EPIRB, but from Bart's, which was washed back overboard after he was recovered. These EPIRBs only work properly when upright, but as they do not float this way, the signal was weak. One of Bart's strong recollections in the water was how hard it was to break the seal and pull the pin with weak, cold fingers. Also, during subsequent checks on the other Locata EPIRB units, it was found that there was a 15% failure rate. To be effective these units need to be small enough to be carried in a shoulder-high pouch on the oilskins, have a simpler activation mechanism and be less sensitive to the attitude of the aerial.

Bart's recollection of what happened

to him in the water is of interest. After coming to the surface, his first problem was to breath air and not water. He could not pull the tag to inflate his lifejacket until he managed to take his gloves off and open the velcro flaps on his lifejacket. With his jacket inflated he was able to take stock of the situation and saw Tony floating nearby.

Next he knew he had to activate the EPIRB which meant struggling with more velcro on the oilskin jacket pocket and then there was the problem of pulling the pin which he eventually achieved with his teeth. Efforts to go into a foetal position to conserve heat were not practical as the waves were constantly spinning him around and it was not possible to maintain one position. He also had an emergency light, and after another battle with the velcro to get it out of the pocket, he managed to switch it on. By the time he had done all these tasks and was holding up the EPIRB and light, he saw the yacht's masthead light approaching close by.

The three strobe lights thrown into the water were a great help to steer by initially until the VHF signal came through. But as a result of a man falling overboard from Condor in the 1977 race, Creighton's had one extra life ring and unconnected light to throw. However well they are mounted, the lines connecting the liferings, Danbuoy, lights, drogue and dye marker together always get in a tangle preventing instant deployment, and it was necessary to cut them apart in this incident. They should

be mounted together in an accessible place but definitely not all tied up. The two men overboard were spotted when two rocket flares were sent up, which were very effective despite the strong wind. The reflective strips on their Musto oilskins made it possible to spot them in the light of the flares and more importantly it was still possible to keep visual contact on the fluorescent hoods of the oilskins with torch light in the near darkness after the flares. One problem with the bright red oilskins is that at night with little light for the reflectors or hoods to show, they are totally black, making it hard to see the whereabouts of crew on the foredeck. There was one bright yellow experimental Musto oilskin suit aboard which made that crew man more visible in the dark. Blue is a hopeless colour for identification in day and night and white is difficult in breaking seas.

The question of what happened to Tony is not certain. He was in the middle of the yacht when the first wave broke on the quarter. From a mark on his forehead and a damaged stanchion midships, it is thought that he fell when the boat rolled over, hit the stanchion and was washed over by the next wave. As he made no effort to inflate his lifejacket nor set off his EPIRB, which were both tested afterwards and working, we have to assume that he was at least stunned by the blow to the head and drowned straight away.

The crew both individually and as a group were very shocked by what happened, but during the recovery

operation all acted with the utmost competence and calm. As one professional navigator on board commented, their conduct had been better than what he had seen from many professional seamen.

Yachting has a generally good safety record for a sport, though when something like this happens it is important to learn the lessons, and they can be summarised as this. Firstly to clip on to make sure one stays with the boat. The use of a proper self-inflating lifejacket is essential, but whether they are automatic on immersion is debatable.

Light foolproof personal position locating devices are paramount and better still if they are automatically set off when someone falls overboard. Use oilskins that are visible both night and day. Personal flares are only practical in warm, still conditions. Recovery routines need to be practised, and a crew man must be able to go into the water to secure the man overboard. The safety equipment needs to be as light and small as possible, otherwise people are reluctant to wear it, especially if it severely hinders movement. Devices thrown to someone in the water need to be simple and clear of multiple attachments.

As a result of this accident, there is already development underway to make improvements to safety equipment.

David Alan-Williams

## House Notes

### Bar Refurbishment

The plans outlined in the last issue of *Potter Ship* have now largely been completed, and the regulars have already staked out their claims to favourite positions at the bar (Keith Begg hasn't moved, he continues to command the far corner each lunch-time). The new alcove is proving popular, and John Macphee and his staff find the shorter bar easier to run.

The new carpet has been laid and gives the bar a cosier atmosphere. We have not yet been able, during the long summer evenings, to make the most of the recessed lighting; but winter is on the way.

We still plan to replace the old furniture, providing new occasional tables, as well as a few club chairs and stools. We are very grateful to Wellworthy's for generously giving the Club the splendid David Cobb picture which now hangs in the new alcove.

### Social Activities

As usual during the summer months, clubhouse activities have given way to other priorities, notably to providing back-up for activities on the water. However, we have continued our policy of holding a series of inexpensive and cheerful evenings. The 'Taste of the Caribbean Night' was well attended. The Casino Night to mark the opening of the new bar was also greatly enjoyed, and Michael Webb laid on an excellent buffet. Following the poor attendance at the 1989 Summer Ball it was decided that this event should be held every second year. Thought is already being given to the 1991 ball, and opinions are being sounded out as to what form it should take. While there is support for a conventional 'formal' event, there appears also to be a strong body of opinion which feels that, even at Club

prices, this would be quite an expensive evening. If you have any views, please let the House Committee know.

The Bar-be-Que at Thorn's Beach had to be cancelled because the date clashed with a number of other activities, notably the National Regatta in the Solent and the Lymington Carnival parade. It was decided, as an experiment, to re-schedule this event at the clubhouse, and to provide additional entertainment by making it a barn dance.

### Bar Food

From the end of April, Michael Webb extended the catering available to members by providing snack meals on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings. This service has not been as well used as we had expected. We hope that members will take greater advantage of it during the winter months.

### Kitchen and Servery Refurbishment

The current project the House Committee has in hand is to upgrade the kitchen and servery areas. Work on the cold and hot servery areas will probably begin during the autumn.

### Bar Prices

It is the policy of the Club to offer members a complete range of drinks at reasonable prices. A recent survey shows that, on average, Club prices are 25-30% lower than those in the popular public houses in town. This difference is particularly noticeable for spirits, where Club prices are over 50% lower. Not only is the price lower, but the 'Club' measure is half as large again - a quarter gill as opposed to a sixth gill served in the pubs.

### Winter Programme and Club Nights

The Winter Programme is now out, and there is full schedule of social events,

lectures, dinners, suppers, dances, and winetasting. The Christmas and New Year Programme includes a repeat of last year's successful carol-singing evening.

We would like to draw particular attention to the Club Nights which take place every Thursday. These are informal social evenings, just as much for the cruising members as for diehard racers. The Committee is anxious that these evenings develop, and that through them members will get to know each other better, helping to build the spirit of the Club. The idea behind these Club Nights is to build on the nucleus which already exists, so that when members

come to the Club on a Thursday evening they find people there, and do not end up drinking alone in an empty bar. In addition to drinks at reasonable prices, Michael will be laying on inexpensive suppers, and, from time to time, John will arrange music and other entertainments. So why not make a regular date at the Club every Thursday evening?

We have a tremendous asset in our premises, and a central mission of the House Committee is to see that it is utilised to the full. That can only be done with the support of members.

John Brown

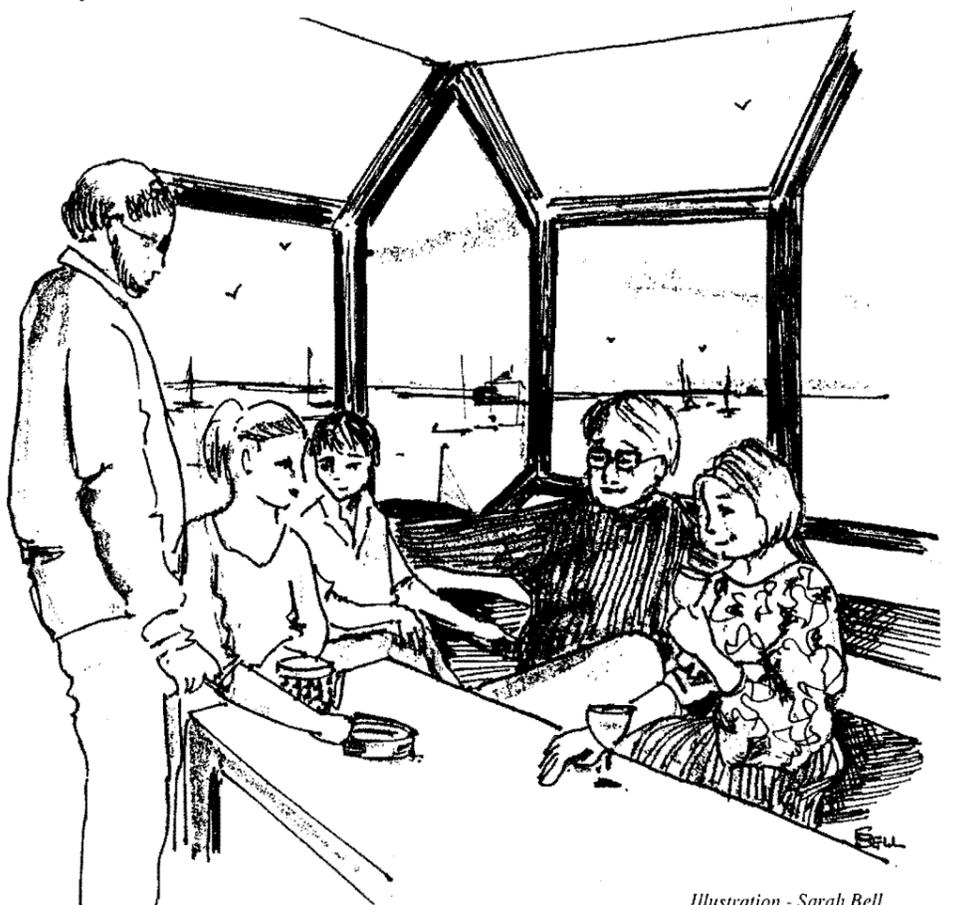


Illustration - Sarah Bell

Members interested in cruising, members interested in racing, members interested in good company, good parties and good sailing, in fact any member with a seaworthy cruiser, could consider entering the *Yachting Monthly* two-handed race. This biennial event next takes place in 1992.

This can only be a personal viewpoint of the 1990 race, which started from Torquay on the evening of June 9th. Several other Lymington boats and Club members took part.

Unlike the placid weather of 1988, this year's June weather was typically British. It blew hard from the south west and did its best to stop the competitors meeting the deadline set for scrutineering. For those of us who made the effort to meet that deadline it was frustrating to see boats arriving late without being penalised, even if this was meant to be in the spirit of the event. We felt that we could have stayed to do another day's work if we had known!

Things got going with a good party on the evening before the race at the Royal Torbay, followed by a reception at midday prior to the evening start. *Castaway*, with Vernon Nock and me aboard, slipped out after the midday 'do' and anchored for an afternoon's sleep in the little bay immediately west of the harbour and away from the hassle of eighty odd boats trying to leave at once.

Six o'clock came at last and with a pleasant full-sail force four. We were set a beat across Torbay before being allowed to bear away for Berry head and Start point. There followed a fine reach down to the Lizard which most of the fleet rounded during the following morning. As the course became hard on the wind the bigger boats started coming through to their rightful places and we settled down for a long slow slog to Cork.

The second night out we ran into a flat calm and sat for some hours waiting for wind. This was enlivened in the early hours by the arrival overhead of a helicopter with a floodlight, plus a Frigate, following the accidental triggering of one of the yacht's EPIRBs. We were amazed to note that this seemed to cause nothing but hilarity, even amongst the organisers, who presented the cup for the biggest cock-up of the race to the hapless owner of *White Oryx*. One would have thought, in all fairness, that a bill for a few hundred pounds would have been more appropriate, but perhaps it happened and no one told us.

So, in the fullness of time, a light wind filled and off we went again, still beating. All next day we beat slowly on, until in the early evening we were again becalmed ten miles off Cork.

This prompted Vernon and me to open up some Chicken Korma. If anyone wants to create wind, starting a meal is a sure fire answer! No sooner was it served than the wind came fresh and abeam, and off we set again, only to find it fading away as we approached Cork. We crept in closer, oh so close, and as Cork harbour emptied itself across the finishing line we were finally forced to kedge just a quarter of a mile from the line and watch boat after boat coming in off the sea to do likewise.

*Castaway* stayed thus until the early hours, and down the pan we went on that leg, finishing a lowly thirtieth overall.

For all the Lymington boats this was a poor leg, and as the results were on a

## Two Handed Frolic in June



*Castaways' distinctive Freedom rig*

Photo © Richard Kirkby - Freedom Yachts

points system over the three legs we really felt we had rather blown it.

However, we set to for an enjoyable but rather overlong stay at Crosshaven, consuming vast quantities of the famous Murphy's and attending parties various.

An evening start for the second leg found the wind now firmly south-east giving a dead noser to the Bishop light off the Scilly Isles. It took *Castaway* nearly thirty-six hours of flogging along to do this part of the leg and we rounded the Bishop in company with some dolphins around 1300 hours on Sunday. As we were meeting Carol and Jane, our wives, in Treguier on Monday morning we made a call to say that really there was no way we would be there on time. This was a clever ploy to the Gods because the wind veered and filled and away we went on a screaming reach straight down the rhumb line for the Basse Crublent buoy off Treguier. Here, *Castaway* rewarded our efforts at driving her by averaging eight knots from the Bishop, to arrive very early on Monday morning in near gale force winds and rain, and so enable us to tidy the boat for the wives to move aboard and then await them with some suitable liquid refreshment in the club at Treguier.

*Castaway* was placed second overall on this leg with Howard Lettie's lovely *Fondue* showing well in class two, a few places ahead of Dr Mike Thomas in *Coppice III*, with our executive member, John Bailey, crewing. It was Mike who was amused to hear over the loudspeakers commentating at the first mark off Torquay, that he was the oldest competitor at 70 plus a few. He felt that he had to do a war dance around the cockpit and wave a bit, to prove he was still lively!

Treguier was fun. The French seemed to have taken the race to their hearts and laid on rowing races in two oared skiffs, boules matches, and a reception complete with the town's pipe band. We all wanted to stay longer and yet all too soon it was time to leave.

The leg back to Torquay was again an evening start, in the entrance to the river, and was blessed with another near gale. Some elected not to start, but for those that did, it was an exhilarating sail. Heavily reefed and careering around in the crowd of boats surrounded by rocks and then heading out to sea via Le Corbeaux rocks.

The very badly written sailing instructions, backed up by an appalling briefing which left almost everyone totally muddled, resulted in complete

confusion. Almost the whole fleet ignored the buoy marking Le Corbeaux rocks and proceeded out to the Basse Crublent buoy to set course for Torquay. This made no difference to the result and no boat came to grief, but it prompted what one competitor referred to as a 'sermon' from Sir John Oakeley over the VHF, and he clearly considered himself whiter than white.

After the race, the result was protested and boats such as *Castaway* who are, let's face it, rather easy to pick out in a crowd, had to defend themselves at a pre-prizegiving protest. This protest was the first ever over the four Triangle events and was superbly and tactfully chaired by a flag officer of the Royal Torbay Club. Sensibly, in view of the ambiguous instructions, the case was dismissed.

Meanwhile, back to the race, as we rounded the buoy and set off on a screaming reach, the scene was wonderful. Sometimes just the tips of masts of boats a hundred yards away showed above the rollers. Sometimes one looked along an endless valley of water with little boats dotted along it before they all disappeared behind the next roller.

Two hours after the start at 2000hrs the wag on *Moonboots*, a Barracuda, put in a call to the Royal Torbay to ask what time the dining room shut for suppers as they were expecting a fairly fast passage! Back came the answer, 'we will stay open until midnight sir,' so a table was duly reserved! Poor guy, serves him right really, he became becalmed in the early hours off Start Point and let a lot of us catch up the necessary handicap time.

It was a hard night's sailing and we arrived in pouring rain and rising wind again to find that we had won the leg overall by some forty-six minutes, rather justifying the efficiency of the Freedom cat rig in off wind conditions.

Parties and celebrations followed, the prizegiving, and then a mass exodus of boats for their home ports after two and a half weeks of super sailing. Everyone we spoke to had enjoyed themselves, and let's face it, in these events wherever one finishes one has the satisfaction of exciting passages and good company. *Castaway* returned home having covered 1,050 miles since leaving Lymington, over half of it hard on the wind. What a relief to be cruising again, and to be able to press that little button that makes her go so well to windward!

George Tinley

## A Semi-Submerged view of the Club Regatta

The Club Regatta was notable for the force of the wind and the strength of the tide, conditions not ideally suited to the long lean estuarial hull of the I2 sq metre Sharpie. All six of these elegant boats from the Club started on Saturday, joined by three from Langstone SC, and in no time we were struggling, particularly off the wind, when the narrow bows of the boats tend to 'submarine' as, indeed, some unfortunates did. It was fascinating to see Robin and Penny Dent sailing in under all plain sail, totally awash following a broaching capsize. The afternoon races on both days were, sensibly, cancelled as the tide turned, and Rachel Nuding and her team must have had a tense weekend, with winds up to 35 knots. The rescue boats did sterling work, and although the Coronation Cup was lost to Langstone SC, we shall regain it!

Tom McEwen

## Cruising Conversazione

On Sunday 17th February 1991 the Club is breaking new ground with a Cruising Conversazione which will start at 1630 and finish with supper. The idea is to have tables manned by cruising folk with experience of the areas most likely to be tackled by newcomers to cruising, such as both sides of the English Channel, and some others besides. The members behind the tables in the library will do their best to answer questions on all aspects of cruising, not just the qualities and drawbacks of particular harbours and anchorages.

This event has been specially organised for the benefit of those members who find that their business and family commitments stand in the way of their attendance at the Cruising Lectures that are given on Wednesday evenings in the winter. There will be a crèche for young children, which will operate from 1625 to 1800.

James Harkness

## Updating the List of Members

A revised List of Members and Yachts is to be printed early next year. Would you please look at the present list and check that your name, address, telephone number, and boat name are given correctly? (London and Lymington telephone numbers have been changed) If any amendments are necessary, please inform the Club as soon as possible.

## Change of Programme

Since the winter programme was printed there have been a few changes. Please make these changes and watch the notice board for further developments.

### November

Friday 16th - Decca, Loran, GPS - Nicholas Heyes

### January

Friday 11th - Handicapping - Tony Blachford

### March

Saturday 23rd (afternoon) - Flare & Fire Fighting - Demonstration - Robin Richards

## Picture News



© Max

The Russian team who competed in the Macnamaras Bowl. All those who met them would agree they bought a lot of life and soul to the parties.



The day our Jean was kidnapped so that these gentlemen could claim a ransom to pay for their fuel bill at the local marina.

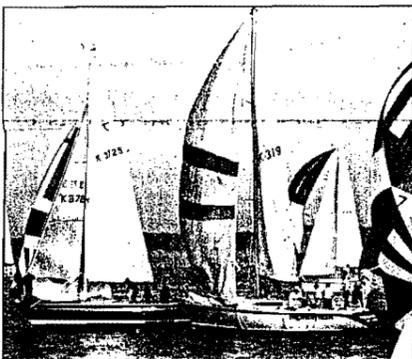


Photo - Andrew Salanson

The lazy days of summer - a typical Thursday evening race 1990 style. Both Dark & Stormy and Highwayman have been sold. Highwayman clocked up 21,000nm with Sir Peter Johnson. She is now in Holland. Dark & Stormy has had a successful career and is still in home waters.



Photo - Geoffrey Scott

Does the commodore know that not even a bowler hat will protect his head from the boom of a X boat. These were some of the crews invited for the annual invitation race.

**We would like Picture News to become a regular feature of the Potter Ship.**

**Please send your picture with a caption to the editors, whose publishing decision is final!! (no protests)**

## Then and Now

In years gone by the members of the Royal Lymington Yacht Club lived locally and, within their community, were familiar with the origins of the club and its premises. Today, when personal mobility is taken for granted, our members are drawn from far and wide; it might therefore be of interest to delve briefly into the past, since this would provide a perspective on our Club that may well be unknown to many of us.

Lymington itself was originally a trading port of importance on a scale that today is scarcely credible. For example, it is a matter of record that the Port of Lymington provided nine ships during the Hundred Year's War and 159 seamen to man them. During this period, its importance rivalled that of Southampton and certainly outshone Portsmouth. The closure of the upper river in 1731 by the causeway to provide dry-foot access to the Walhampton Shore so diminished tidal flow that the deep water, formerly adequate for quite large vessels, was gradually lost to silting. The tidal stream that used to extend on spring tides as far as Brockenhurst was halted, as was the ebb scour that gave the river its importance to shipping.

That part of the clubhouse now known as the library or reading room and, at ground level, the sail loft, was once a coastguard boathouse served by a sloped and roller slipway into the river, while beyond the existing RNLI station, facing east, were the cottages that accommodated the lifeboatmen of the day - these cottages are still there. In company with quays and other port facilities of the day, the boathouse became increasingly threatened by silting, so that it ceased to serve its original purpose; other influences must also have played their part in this decline - redundancy is not solely a modern phenomenon!

It was in 1914, when the Lymington Pram was at the centre of sailing interest, that the Lymington River Sailing Club was formed. The painting of 'Lymington Scows' by the renowned marine artist David Cobb, which now hangs in the bar, provides an evocation of this period. World War I halted the attempt to found a sailing club and it was not until 1922 that organised racing was resumed at the instigation of our Club's founder, Major Cyril Potter. His memory is perpetuated by a 'ship' of Thelwellian ingenuity made of silver, as well as an annual event in our sailing calendar and the title of our Club magazine.

Although 1922 was the year in which the club was founded, it was not until 1924 that the former coastguard boat-house was acquired as a clubhouse. Although it has undergone a number of structural changes, the older portions of today's premises still reflect the outlines of that earlier building, surrounded as it has been by additions of more recent origin. In the 1920's the membership was comprised of a compact group of friends, and club activities were wholly dependent upon the voluntary support of a small team of enthusiasts. The structure of management and the day-to-day conduct of club business have undergone marked changes over the years, but in 1990 they are still predominantly dependent upon an element of our membership which devotes an enormous amount of effort, in a wide range of activities, to 'keeping

the show on the road', as can be seen in some articles in this *Potter Ship*.

Of course, there have been changes in detail. With Lymington's mounting popularity as a centre for yachting, coupled with present-day mobility, our membership has doubled and redoubled in a manner unforeseen in those earlier years. This is all part of a broader trend. For a variety of reasons linked to the theme of expansion, the club has always sought to provide 'club facilities' for its members. It is arguably now the largest club on the South Coast in terms of membership, although not of premises, and this expansion has inevitably introduced strains.

Not wishing to dwell upon these strains, I will summarise their causes by alluding to an increasingly diffuse membership, the onset of mounting demand for yachting in all its forms, the cost pressures associated with this trend, and the need to strike a balance between certain club activities which might be viewed as outright commercial support, and other activities for which, during the nineties, volunteers may still be available to sustain a 'club' atmosphere. Those who meet the overheads of boat ownership today will need no guidance on the consequences of losing all forms of voluntary support!

This seems also to be a particularly suitable opportunity to express through *Potter Ship* our warm appreciation for all that our 'volunteers' provide. Drawn in the main from those who live close to Lymington or within a slightly wider neighbourhood, they are the hard-core of support for the entire range of Club activities. Our gratitude is due to all of them, whether boat owners who make their yachts available as committee boats, mother-ships, rescue craft or buoy layers or, for that matter, those who tend our Clubhouse and organise onshore activities. Proportionately, this element of our membership is growing smaller, so that individual loadings have become greater. Those who expect such facilities as we are able to provide should recognise that they bear upon fellow members and not simply the club's staff.

This is also a moment for us to acknowledge our debt to those whom we employ and who serve our needs loyally, and to mention that not all of us seem to understand the ethos of a club: some, when displeased, are apt to resort to admonition which would be more appropriate, perhaps, to other relationships!

Alan Boxer



Lymington Yacht Club - 1926

## Flag Etiquette



A common subject of discussion in the bar and on the pontoon, usually triggered by the bunting hanging (or not hanging) from one of the yachts alongside, is that of flag etiquette. The views expressed range between displeasure at some minor perceived irregularity to indifference to the whole subject. So is there any divine guidance? And, if not, is the whole subject now anachronistic?

To take the second point first: maybe it is - and maybe it isn't. When you dress, you cannot avoid telling the world about yourself; flags on ships have the same effect. So, if you have ever drawn a conclusion from the hat Matilda wore to church, you must be prepared to accept that others will judge you as a yachtsman from the way you dress your yacht.

But there are other reasons for taking flags seriously. One is that they convey factual as well as sartorial messages, which if missed could spoil your day. Another is that the laws of maritime countries impose obligations which it is in everybody's interests not to ignore.

Therefore flags matter. From where, then, can one obtain guidance? There is no unchallenged, up-to-date authority, though most almanacs and the BP guide booklet (if you can find one) are useful reading. There are, however, some sound principles, derived from usage and common sense, against which you can test your flag displays.

Firstly, are your flags unambiguous? If you have more than one signal on a hoist - such as Q below a house flag, or several burgees in a string - they are not. You should not be surprised if your diver is run down because your A flag is not hanging where it will be understood. Worse, if you have a dan buoy with an O flag permanently displayed, the time may come when you fall overboard and help passes you by.

Secondly, are your flags legal? You must wear a national ensign in foreign waters. If you are wearing a privileged (i.e. a blue or a defaced red) ensign, you must be on board in person, with the permit, and the issuing club's burgee must also be flown (it matters not to the law where it flies from; see manners, below). If you are returning from abroad, you must fly Q on entering British waters; by inference, it being a code flag, it must be on its own hoist.

Thirdly, are you showing good manners? The test is necessarily subjective, but most would agree that it is polite to fly only one burgee, from the senior position; always to fly the Royal Lymington burgee in the river or alongside the pontoon (unless you are also a flag officer of another club); and always to fly a club burgee when you are enjoying any club's waterfront facilities or hospitality. When abroad, you should give the host country's flag its own position on the senior hoist below your burgee.

The subject is as complex as the world around us, but one fact is inescapable: others will judge you as a yachtsman by the way you dress your yacht.

Jonathan Hutchinson

## Behind the Desk ...

Well, we finally made it back into the building following flood eviction last December, and to a transformed working environment, albeit incomplete. The half-built carcasses of a dozen desk drawers have laid untouched in my garage since the sailing season began, and seem likely to stay there till the sailing season is over. Meanwhile, the junk which habitually accumulates in our desk drawers is going straight into the waste baskets instead, which is no bad thing!

The end of the season is not far off at the time of writing, which brings to mind the winter programme. This year it is bigger than ever, for two main reasons.

Firstly, the House Committee has designated Thursday nights as 'Club Night'. The Club is intensively used on Thursday evenings in summer, and the thought is that the same sort of people ought to enjoy meeting each other in much the same surroundings all through the year, whether they start by sailing round the buoys or not. There is now a snack menu available on Thursday (and some other) evenings, and the new bar decor and lighting should do much to improve the atmosphere. More: the public address system, shortly to be overhauled and brought up to date thanks to a grant from the lottery fund, will be able to play soft music if that is what is wanted. So why not shape a course from the Fish or the Chequers, if those are your habitual watering holes on winter Thursdays, and give it a try?

Secondly, the lecture programme has been merged with the cruise planning evenings and all will now be described as lectures. There will no longer be any admission charge and the costs will be met from the administration budget. (Thanks to the generosity of our speakers, whose consistently excellent presentations are free, costs are limited to hospitality and the hire of special projection equipment).

In addition to these new or expanded events, the hardy annuals such as New Year's Eve are in their usual places - which moves me to mention booking.

Please read the advice on the back of the winter programme carefully. If an event is marked by an asterisk, it means that there is more to it than food alone and that the budget is run by the Club rather than by the caterer. Some of the expenditure (such as that on music) may be committed well ahead of the event.

Now, being a club, we strive to keep ticket prices to a minimum, and so work to wafer-thin margins. Very often, the margin is so small that the difference between surplus and deficit depends on the sale of the last two or three tickets. If a member books but cannot come, the arithmetic remains the same: either the member concerned or the other members collectively have to stand any loss. It is for this reason that the receptionist will always ask for payment in advance. The office will try to prevent wasted expenditure, *if told in time*, but if expense has been incurred, and it is too late to re-sell the cancelled ticket, the only response, I am afraid, is sympathy. This sometimes leads to ill-feeling, which I hope this brief explanation will do something to dispel.

Lectures are a special problem. Booking is by way of the notice board, and its purpose is to help the Steward to decide how many seats to put out. If the turnout greatly exceeds the number of names on the board, some members will be left standing - and they may be the ones who have booked. This embarrasses, firstly, the Steward, who has done his best with incomplete information; secondly, the lecturer, whose talk may be held up for some time while more seats are found; thirdly, the speaker's host, who is waiting to introduce the lecture and running out of small talk. The booking list will remain up until shortly before the lecture, so it is

almost never too late - but the earlier, the better.

So please, if you plan to attend a Club function this winter (and I hope you will be able to attend several) book early if the programme requires it, pay in advance if it is that sort of function, and withdraw early if you cannot come.

It is a well-known axiom that if you want to keep a secret, the best way is to write it on a notice and put it on the board. Whether this is true or not, it is a fact that answers to many of the questions put to the office are already on display outside. Much of the confusion arises from the densely-packed nature of the notice boards, which makes comprehension difficult.

The notice boards are being brought up to date and the space available has greatly increased. This has permitted some rationalization, from which I hope that clarity will improve. All 'standing' notices (such as the Rules) are now displayed on the board outside the Secretary's office, and other long-term information is pinned to the boards opposite the chartroom. Programme notices, and *ad hoc* notices dealing with social functions or other ephemera, take their place in the hall. The next step will be to display a whole range of sailing notices in the Old Sail Loft. Many of these will be of a kind we have not had room for before, such as the annual SCRA programme. There remains the problem of where, if at all, to display some or all of the many, many notices we are sent whose aim is to sell something. If anyone would like to take on the job of cataloguing and indexing these things for display in a reference book rather than by cluttering up the wall, I would be glad to hear from them: I have the impression that such a service could be very useful (for example by making discount offers more accessible) provided it was unobtrusive.

Jonathan Hutchinson

## X boats at Cowes, 1990

Never can it have been such consistently hot weather - with good winds coming in every afternoon, so no kedging.

It was a quiet Cowes Week - if more than seven hundred boats in twenty-four different classes all sailing different courses in a comparatively small patch of water with sluicing Spring tides can really be called quiet. But Admiral's Cup years do have a lot more razzmatazz!

The X One Design class, with seventy-six entries, were again the largest fleet at Cowes, and Lymington Division, fielding eighteen boats, had high expectations. The first day was encouraging when Michael White in *Lone Star* won the Hiscock Cup. However, for the first year ever, Hamble beat Lymington for the Phillipson Challenge Shield, as the most successful Division during the week. They also beat Lymington narrowly for the Team Race Shield.

Our hero at Cowes this year was Nick Dover, sailing *Gleam*, crewed by his son and by Bill Dunsdon. He came 4th, 2nd, 3rd and 2nd in the last four races and ended the week second overall to David Bedford of international fame. Nick has been a regular sailor in our Club's X boat fleet since 1978 and, as a septuagenarian, will happily admit the unlikelihood of bettering that performance. Well done, Nick!

Philip Grundy

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## Power/Sail News

In this year's Power/Sail calendar both major events were savaged by an excess of wind. A force 6-7 westerly battered the brave small fleet that completed the Jersey Race for the "Clipper Hotels Trophy" in June, and those daring enough to do the "Round the Island" fared little better.

For the "Clipper Hotels Trophy" ten entries were down to five on the morning of the race day, two retired and only three yachts completed the course. The Power/Sailors demonstrated greater determination than the Channel Handicap fleet, of which only two starters left the Lymington line and both retired, little further out than the Needles.

The fortitude and perseverance of the Power/Sailors in very unpleasant conditions was much appreciated by the sponsors, as the reception and prizegiving would have been somewhat of a disaster without finishers. "Goosander" lost her forestay at the Casquettes, but Mike Abraham and crew brought her safely to the finish line in first place. Second yacht in was "Squander". James Beattie had been prepared to retire, but his wife Derry, although poorly at the time, persuaded him to complete the course. Third yacht was "Jessica" with a crew of club notables on board. Secretary Hutchinson, Kershaw of the RYA and Ashmead of the RORC. Wheatley of

the new bar gave his all (ask Jonathan). In spite of this expertise they managed to loose themselves around dawn. Eric Broadley, the owner, received a nasty head injury, and it was a somewhat dishevelled crew that crossed the finish line at St Helier.

The survivors of this epic passage were entertained by Clipper Hotels at the L'Horizon Hotel in St Brelades Bay to a reception and prizegiving, followed by a disco. After a most enjoyable evening, both sponsors and crews promised to repeat the occasion in 1991.

The Power/Sail "Round the Island" race day dawned with easterly 5-6 and anticipated wind against tide around St Catherine's. Bastille day bode ill for the inexperienced or shorthanded yachts. Fifteen entries were down to nine starters, with discretion prevailing. Four yachts completed the rounding. "Squander" was first home with James and Derry Beattie demonstrating their "Clipper Race" heavy weather skills. "Marianne of Meon" would have been second but disqualified herself by exceeding the motoring allowance. They merely had to delay finishing for fifteen minutes to be placed, still second. A great pity after such a stalwart effort. Third yacht home but in second place was "Avalon".

Jonathan Hutchinson took "Zia Maria" into Beaulieu River for a late lunch. He had missed out a mark, but would still have been placed as a finisher, with

additional time penalty, as a reward for perseverance in the conditions. (As organisers we are fairly flexible and believe that yachts that make the effort should be rewarded with a result.)

The saddest story of the day concerned the misfortunes of "Ta Kymata", a previous winner. She gave the shore party a fright when we learned that a helicopter and lifeboat had been dispatched to her assistance somewhere in the vicinity of St Catherine's. We were very relieved to hear that all were safe and that the problem was a missing rudder. Ted Kilfoley had just made the decision to retire, and, upon going about in rough seas, the rudder blade just failed and steering was lost. Sails were dropped and a jury rudder was rigged, but, in the steep seas and strong wind, this was not very effective. Some progress could be made astern at slow speed under engine, but this was barely sufficient to keep them off the shore. Wisely a "Pan" call was sent out. In due course a helicopter arrived and displayed a blackboard with the chalked message "LIFEBOAT" and an arrow pointing back towards the Needles, and the "Ta Kymata" eventually had the indignity of being towed back to Yarmouth, very much to the relief of the Kilfoley family crew; a family tale for generations.

One expects the entry to be down when the weather is unkind, but the disappointment of 1990 was the lack of interest in both Short Power/Sail

events. Admittedly the Short West was far too close in time to the "Round the Island" event. This was the price we pay for and overcrowded Club fixture list. It was surprising that the Short East event only mustered two entries in September, leading to cancellation, and this lack of support is very worrying. In answer to the comment that "it is too complicated, and one should be able to enter from the bar on the night before the event", I have to say that the Power/Sail handicap system was always complicated and understood by few, even using the previous system. Whatever system is used, data is required that few, if any, owners have at their fingertips, such as their yacht's dimensions and propeller engine configuration; also simple rig dimensions to enable us to assess sail area. There is one major advantage for Power/Sail events, regardless of length or type of course. In effect you receive a new Power/Sail handicap each year with no effort by the owner. The handicapper has the information and the computer programme to calculate your handicap, unless you change your data; then merely let me know.

For the owner who has completed a 1990 handicap application, the only requirement, provided there are no changes, is for him to complete the disclaimer part of the race entry form and pay his entry fees. The Power/Sail handicap will be provided from our data.

Mac MacDougall