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www.fossc.org.uk

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Laser Open - Sat 28th October

Start of Winter Series - Sun 5th Nov

Work Party - Sat 11th November - (Mc to M)

Annual General Meeting - Wed 15th Nov 7.30pm prompt

Laying Up Supper & Prize Giving - Sat 25th November

Grand Quiz Evening - Wed 6th December - 7.30pm

Curry Lunch - Sun 17th December 1.00pm after sailing

John Sangwin Pursuit Trophy

Tuesday 26th December 11.00am

True Grit Pursuit Trophy

Monday 1st January 11.00am

Commodore's contribution

This will be my last Newsletter contribution as Commodore. This is for two reasons. I am standing down as Commodore at the November Annual General Meeting but perhaps more crucially this is our last Newsletter as such and going forward we will be communicating by electronic means instead. Ken Elsey has put in a great effort over many years producing not only the regular Newsletters but also the annual Year Book as well. Our grateful thanks go to Ken for all the hours of hard work he has put in. During my four years as Commodore



I have had five Vice Commodores but for a variety of reasons non felt able to take over as Commodore. Until very recently the only person willing to take on the role of Commodore was David Greenfield and the club should be thankful that he was willing to consider a third term of office. However, very late in the day, the "dream ticket" of David Coates as Commodore and Henry Beck as Vice Commodore has emerged. Over the last decade Frampton Sailing Club has had five years of David Greenfield and four years of me so it is particularly pleasing that others are emerging to lead the club into the future. I wish the new team well and promise that whenever help is needed David Greenfield, myself and other long standing members will be around to assist if required.

One very happy bit of news is that after being nominated by the Club earlier in the year our President John Veale has won a Lifetime Contribution award from the Royal Yachting Association which will be presented by Princess Ann in November at London. A very well deserved recognition for a very nice guy - we should all be very proud of him.

The work party volunteers continue to do a great job converting the old boat store into a super new Ladies Changing room and permanent Disabled / Family changing facility with an Office / Meeting room above. The old grey box outside has now gone so we are saving the rental costs and the club surrounds look significantly better than before. Members will have an opportunity to inspect the new facilities immediately prior to the AGM so please come early and see what has been achieved.

In the new year we will hold a grand opening party which will give us an opportunity to thank the small team who have been doing the work under the direction of John Jordan without whom the scheme might never have happened. The longer term plan is to bring the Men's Changing facilities up to a similar standard. The huge savings made by using volunteer labour has meant that the cost has been kept so low that the work has been funded out of our current yearly account instead of spending any of our reserves.

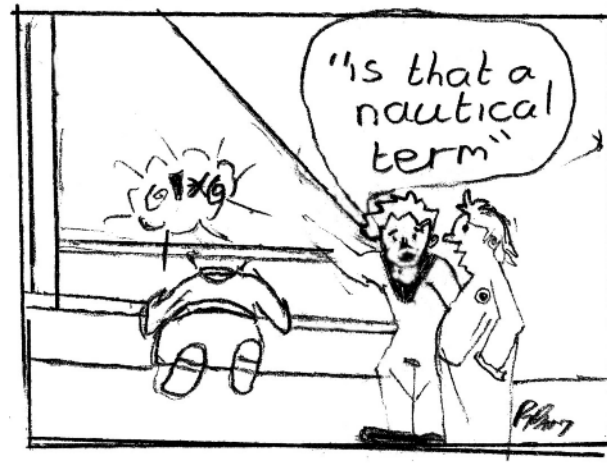
Recently the club have entered three bids in the Aviva Community fund (a Nationally publicised Community competition), and these have all been accepted in different categories.

The winners will be determined via a public vote which opens on the 24th October. Our bids are for:- Disabled Access to our first floor Club Room, Solar Panels on the new Boat Shed and a safer Launching Dock area. Members will be informed how to vote and it will obviously be in the Club's best interest if you all vote for our projects and encourage family and friends to do so as well.

(Cont'd on page 4)

HEADHITTERS NOTES

In some ways it is very sad to be writing this last piece in this last Newsletter. I have had 2 long periods when I have been writing and compiling the Newsletter, but it only works if there are enough members supplying contribution. News and articles will be transmitted by more up to date means in the future. Remember to keep your email addresses up to date with the Membership secretary so that you receive all the necessary information.



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORMS

These forms need to be filled in and returned to our membership secretary as of 1st November with your payment. You will still need to send the form back even if pay electronically. If you joined recently, can you also send the form back to keep our records up to date. This will keep our records straight and make sure that you will receive all club information next year. You have to paid your membership fee in order to take part in the AGM, so make certain you renew on time. The AGM is one Wednesday 15th November starting at 7.30 pm Prompt.

Good news - Matty Cohen has been selected for the Topper Junior National Squad after a successful summer of National Series events. He has pimped up his boat and is ready for a

winter of residential coaching events across the country and looking forward to one more racing season before transitioning into a 29er next summer.

Plus Finn Hartshorn has been selected for the UK Intermediate Optimist Squad this winter after good results in events over the Summer. All this means a lot of travelling Family and Juniors

STOP PRESS Following Sunday's International Paints Trophy won by Rhonwen James, Sue Beynon has been confirmed as Club Champion, Mike Crowley was second and Rhonwen was third. Well done ladies to break up the male dominance in the Club Championship.

Due to lack of interest the Halloween Party on Sat 28th October has been cancelled.

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CONTACT INFORMATION

Please send your items, reports, photos, ads, etc for the Newsletter to: Ken Elsey, ken@elseyk.freemove.co.uk or send to 2, Park Brake, Highnam, Gloucester, GL2 8EJ. Please send any documents in Word or .rtf formats. **Do not include your photos or pictures with the Text, but send them separately as .jpg or similar formats.** This will reduce the time I have to spend compiling the Newsletter.

As in the last few years Frampton has suffered from low summer water levels and excessive weed growth in the shallower water. To see if there is anything we are able to do about this annual problem going forward a small sub committee has been formed and some progress is being made. We will be having more discussions with the Fishing Club and then our Landlords Frampton Court Estate before approaching Natural England who govern the lake and surrounds as the site is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest. In the meantime get out your prayer mats for RAIN

We hope to complete our refurbishment and improvement building works in the next year or so, after which the next priority will be to seek to renew some of the club training fleet of dinghies. Most of the current fleet of Gulls, Wanderers, Optimists, Toppers and Fevas are fairly old now and we need to look into ways of replacing them with newer craft. We are seeking to find ways to do this in a phased and hopefully affordable way.

Finally, thanks for supporting me over the last four years as Commodore. It has been an honour to serve again. Many changes have taken place since I was last Commodore in the 1980s but FOSSC continues to be a very friendly community Sailing Club and I look forward to many more years as an ordinary member.

Ian Cook



Removal of the Portaloo at last!

Junior Club Is Launched! *(Relaunched - Ed)*

The Junior Club exploratory meeting was held on 25.09.17. It was agreed that we would start a junior club in Spring 2018 with a monthly session on a Saturday morning, from 10am, running alongside Sailability - the first session will be in April - date to be confirmed. There will be a rescue boat on the water and informal activities aimed at developing sailing skills and confidence - similar to junior week. The minimum age will be 8, all attendees will need to be able to sail at RYA level 2, and parents will need to be present during the meet. It is hoped that the junior members will take the club in the direction that they want, with the support of parents and the expertise available at the club. If you (parents or junior members) have any questions or ideas, or are interested to join and/ or help, please e-mail fosscjuniors@gmail.com.

Day Skipper Practical - 2017

Having completed the Day Skipper theory course at Frampton during the winter of 2016/17, Ian Mounce, Pablo Garrido and myself (David Coates) decided that we would like to do the practical during the Autumn of 2017. When I mentioned this to Tony Heming, he jumped at the opportunity as both he and I, together with our respective families, are interested in going on flotilla holidays somewhere warmer than the UK next year.



Looking at courses available in September, the most cost effective option would be if five of us hired a boat and trainer for the week from an RYA registered training establishment, so a quick email sent to all FOSSC members by Henry Beck bought an instant request from John Rosser to join us.

We settled on the week commencing Sunday 10th September and after some "messaging around" secured a booking with Cornish Cruising who are based down in the Falmouth area. The course was to start on the Sunday afternoon at 16:00 and run through continuously until the Friday afternoon. The booking included a provisioned boat (excluding the booze!), life jackets, wet weather gear (if required) and we would sleep on board at night.



we would cope with the course.

During the few days leading up to Sunday 10th, we were all focused on the long range weather forecast, which was not what novice or fair weather sailors would like to hear. With predictions of gales up to force eight, some concerns were being banded around as to just how

We all met up on the Sunday afternoon at Falmouth Yacht Marina, which was a modern marina with excellent facilities and were introduced to our instructor, Tim Jones. Tim in turn helped us with bags and provisions into the berthing complex and to our boat, "Donna Louise", a new Bavaria 37. Once settled in, Tim spent over two hours familiarising us with the boat and going through various safety briefings, but due to the weather conditions left us in the marina for the Sunday night.

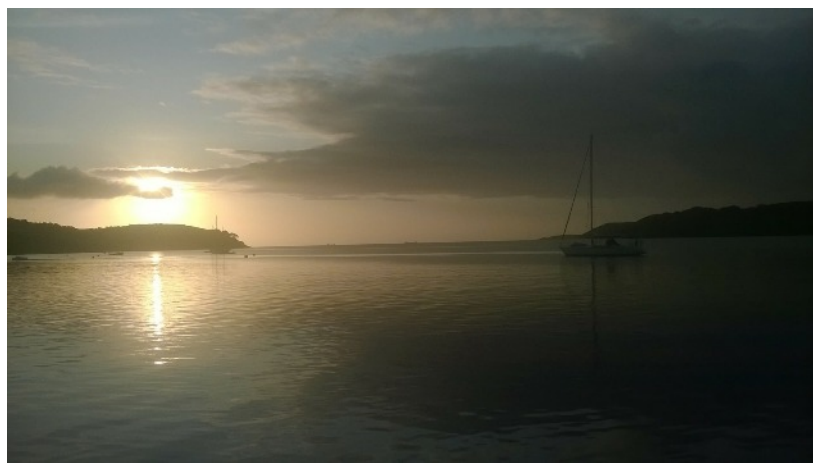
On the Monday morning we were all ready for action by 09:00 and Tim took the boat out of the marina and into the river, then it was up to us. The morning was spent getting used to the behaviour characteristics of the boat and then, after mooring up in a sheltered spot for lunch, it was sails up (well, limited sails) and off out to sea. Comments were made that all the other sailing boats were coming in and we were the only ones going out. Well, we soon found out why !

We were introduced to another member of the crew, "Bob", who usually lived in the rope locker and didn't say much, which is just as well as during the afternoon we probably drowned him several times and he would have died from hypothermia. The weather was a good force six, bordering seven and we had to give up rescuing Bob before we had all had a go. That evening, Tim found a sheltered anchorage spot in the Helford river and we all found out what an excellent chef Pablo was.

We woke on Tuesday morning to stunning views but in the back of our minds, we knew that once we went back out to sea things would be very different. Once out on the water we heard a Mayday come over the radio from a sailing vessel that had lost its steering off Falmouth. Tim worked out that the boat was only a mile away from us but decided that we wouldn't engage, but instead, remain in the area and watch the rescue unfold. It was very interesting to watch, another yacht had responded to the call and sailed toward the stricken boat and within five minutes, three small power boats were on the scene. Then in the distance, the white spray on the Falmouth lifeboat could be seen as it powered out to effect the rescue. Once on the scene, the other boats dispersed and the yacht was taken in tow by the lifeboat.



The remainder of Tuesday was spent in the Falmouth Bay, with strong winds and reasonable sea conditions. In the evening we came back into the marina which in itself was an interesting experience, as the boat had to be secured to a pontoon, no more than fifteen feet in length. That evening we could all have showers and eat in the marina restaurant.



Wednesday morning, it was back out into the Falmouth Bay, practising manoeuvres, getting better acquainted with Bob and navigating up the river Fal and mooring off Trelissick House and Gardens (National Trust) for lunch. In the afternoon we started practicing coming alongside a pontoon, which proved more challenging than anticipated when standing on the seaward side of the boat and counteracting the effects of both tide and wind. That evening, Tim let us come back to the marina as the forecast was for a force eight and I think that he fancied

sleeping in his own bed, rather than being tossed around with all of us on a mooring somewhere. Once back in the marina, Tim reviewed the Day Skipper practical course syllabus and we were all surprised at just how much of it we had already covered.

Tim left us on our own on the boat during Wednesday evening, so the lads let their hair down (well, what we've got) and did some Karaoke and drank beer. We found out that Pablo does a mean Elvis impression !!



On Thursday, it was back out into Falmouth Bay, practicing a variety of skill topics and in the afternoon we went up the river Fal again to the pontoons, practiced some more approaches and then moored up for a rest. Tim then announced that we each had to prepare a portion of a pilotage plan, which would initially take up further up the river, then back down the river to St Mawes. Once we had made our plans, we were not allowed access to the maps or satellite navigation, only the echo sounder and our view of the surroundings. We all managed this and ended up mooring off St Mawes just as it was getting dark. Pablo then treated us all to one of his culinary delights after which, Tim announced that we needed to take the boat to two specific points on the map (one off the coast and one off Falmouth) before navigating back up the river Fal and on into the Truro river where we would anchor up for the night. Once planned, no maps or satellite navigation would be allowed. When we thought that the two spot points had been reached, Tim would record the Lat and Long and advise us how accurate our navigation had been.

The whole exercise was carried out using the boat's engine, and all that we had covered on the theory course suddenly came flooding back, tidal charts, secondary ports, back bearings, transoms, light sequences etc. Both spot points were achieved with an accuracy of less than three boat lengths and we "felt" our way up the river without any problems, finally mooring up just after 01:00 on the Friday morning.

On the Friday morning, after typical English style breakfast and a de-briefing on the previous night's activities, we worked our way back down the river and back to the marina, where we serviced and cleaned the boat before coming ashore. As we approached Falmouth, Tim announced to us all that we had all successfully completed the Day Skipper practical course.

In summary, it was an excellent week's training, with excellent facilities and well equipped modern boat. We all feel that we have benefited from being out in such heavy weather and are confident to handle non idyllic conditions in the future. Our skipper/instructor, Tim Jones, was extremely knowledgeable and professional, but then that is to be expected as he started his sailing life at a sailing club in Frampton on Severn !!!!

David Coates

Topper with a spinnaker, surely not? (Tony Heming)

Well the answer is quite simply yes! I was in the loft of the garage and thought it was about time an old bag of sails should be thrown out, so got them down the ladder and to my surprise, it wasn't what I was expecting. Many years ago we scrapped an old Albacore and I thought they were the sails from that boat, but they turned out to be 2 jibs and 2 spinnakers from another much larger completely unrelated boat, that we sold back in 2003.



George saw the smaller blue spinnaker and decided that it would look good on his Topper. So without any further ado, Diana put the sail through the washing machine and it came out as good as new.

On bank holiday Monday (28TH August) it was a glorious day at the club and seemed like the prime time to see if this was possible, so George, ably assisted by Carwyn, set about rigging his topper, no. 29306 with a spinnaker. Many of the on

lookers were seasoned sailors and had their doubts on the outcome. Was it just the exuberance of youth or would it work?

As can be seen from the following photographs, it worked a treat and they had a great couple of hours flying up and down the lake!

Ed - There is another challenge for George and Carwyn. Back in 2013 we organised the Summer Splash (Junior Week for Adults) just before the August Bank Holiday. The aim



was to look at different aspects of racing and have fun on the water, involving Match Racing, Team Racing, racing in different boats, lots of different



racing exercises, etc. On a windless day it was decided to race Toppers, not normal Toppers, but boats with 3 sails, hence the Topper T3.

Enterprises at Frampton on Severn

Ken Weaves his Marvellous Wind Magic!

Very light winds greeted the 7 optimistic or loyal enterprises who had turned out for the annual open meeting at Frampton on Severn. With mill pond conditions the OOD 'Ken' announced that there would be a 30 minute delay to let the breeze settle. "What breeze we all thought". With a forecast of 3 knots the term may have been relative.



However true to his word as the first race got underway a light breeze started to fill in and the



beat was square. Phil Kirk and Charlie Barrett started at the pin end found a little more breeze and lead Ian Wakeling and Tom Brander at the windward mark. Bill Gribble and Amanda Bradbury held a solid 3rd place. These places stayed the same until the finish.

Race two started in a little more breeze (you could actually see ripples on the water and had to sit on the side deck). 'The Force was strong'. With 3 boats over the line the first beat gave some close racing however it was Phil and

Charlie who snuck out in front at the first mark this time followed by Geoff Coxe and Sue Beynon. Ian and Tom recovered to third during the race. During the race Richard Leach and Carol Jones has a close Battle with Nicola Barrett and Martha Green for 5th with Richard and Carol being the final victors.

After a long lunch in which the wind died completely changed direction and settled back where it had started Ken started race three. This time Geoff and Sue had the best start and led from Phil and Charlie for most of the race with Ian and Tom in 3rd. All was looking good for the leaders until Phil and Charlie slowly pulled past them to take the lead at the final mark and win their third race. The battle for fifth was won by Nicola and Martha.

Ken's magic was starting to fade during the final race with the wind being noticeably lighter. Almost mill pond conditions again. Charlie and Martha both having earned their IOCA grade 3 badges earlier in the year took the helm of their respective boats demoting the owners to crew. In the challenging



conditions the whole fleet made a good start and remained close at the first mark and down the first run. Ian and Tom took the lead followed by Geoff and Sue. Charlie and Phil were hot on their tails but could not find an overtaking lane. After 1 lap Charlie relinquished command but Phil could do no better finishing in third. Martha completed the race finishing 6th.



Phil and Charlie won the event ahead of Ian and Tom and Geoff and Sue who were tied on 6 points.

Despite the difficult conditions everyone had enjoyed the day. It was good to see 3 juniors in the fleet having fun and learning lots. Ken's magical powers were rewarded with a bottle of wine hopefully next year will be a windy one!

Phil Kirk

Rank	Sail No	Club	Helm	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	Nett
1st	22975	FOSSC	Phil Kirk	Charlie Barrett	1	1	1	(3)	3
2nd	21067	BCYC	Ian Wakeling	Tom Brander	2	(3)	3	1	6
3rd	21867	FOSSC	Geoff Cox	Sue Beynon	(4)	2	2	2	6
4th	22893	FOSSC	Bill Gribble	Amanda Bradbury	3	4	4	(5)	11
5th	23140	PYC	Richard Leach	Carol Jones	5	5	(6)	4	14
6th	18	FOSSC	Nicola Barrett	Martha Green	(6)	6	5	6	17
7th	21986	FOSSC	Charles Cutts	Hannah Green	7	7	7	(8DNS)	21



John Veale enjoying his 90th birthday at the club with Amy and her mother at the last Sailability session of the season.

Happy Birthday John.

Mirror Open Meeting at Frampton

The weather conditions were very trying for for the Mirrors. 3 boats were on the start line for the first race. Tony Latham went over to left of the course on the first beat, initially it seemed to have paid off, but after he tacked onto port to make the mark, he ran out of wind. This left Andy making his way up the middle to reach the first mark in front. In second place round the mark was Adrian English with Tony in 3rd. Andy increased his lead throughout the race. Tony was slowly catching up Adrian but was Tony was just in front at the last mark. Both tacked onto port for the line with Adrian just edging it over Tony.



In the second race the trio were joined by Jonathan and David Preece. Again Andy drew away from the rest of the fleet with the wind slightly stronger, and Tony in second place. After lunch Andy shot away giving him the open after just 3 races. In the final race it was just Tony and Jonathan on the start line with Tony consolidating 2nd place with a win.



Rank	Sail No	Club	Helm	Crew	R1	R2	R3	R4	Nett
1st	70363	FOSSC	Andy Tully		1	1	1	(5 DNS)	3
2nd	66075	FOSSC	Tony Latham		(3)	2	2	1	5
3rd	1243	FOSSC	Jonathan Preece	David Preece	(5 DNS)	4	3	2	9
4th	7839	FOSSC	Adrian England	Derek England	2	3	(5 DNS)	(5 DNS)	10



Frampton-on-Severn Sailing Club



LASER OPEN

Laser Grand Prix - Wessex

Saturday 28th October

First Race: 11.00 Briefing at 10.30

4 races, 3 to count

Two races back to back in the morning and two back to back in the afternoon.

Entry Fee:- £10 including

lunch and Prize-giving nibbles at the Bar

For directions visit the club website at www.fossc.org.uk



For more info contact John Rosser (jirosser@tiscali.co.uk)

Mark Smyth (msmoby@gmail.com)

Upcoming Membership Renewals



Go on - give your membership secretary an early Xmas present, and make his life so much easier by doing the following:

- 1. Renew** within two weeks of receiving renewal paperwork.
- 2. Post** your signed renewal form back to him.
- 3. Pay** by online banking (if you can).

The Bristol Channel Holms Race

By way of explanation, from the Portishead Cruising Club website:

"The Holms race is the most high-profile event in the club calendar with a typical entry of over 50 boats from clubs around the Bristol Channel. It is held in late August or early September and is a down tide race starting and finishing off Portishead, with a course of NW Elbow to port, Flat Holm to Port, Steep Holm to port, NW Elbow to starboard and finish. Competitors choose their own start time from $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours after high water based on the tidal streams and the wind with the aim of passing between the Holms at slack water. The elapsed time taken is corrected for open handicap and with a tidal correction to correct for the natural advantage for slower handicap boats on down tide races."

I first discovered the Holms Race in pretty much the same breath that I realised there were people daft enough to sail on the Bristol Channel, and from that moment very much wanted to have a go at it myself. We did just that in 2015, our first year with "Calstar" in Portishead, had a great time and really wanted to do it again in 2016, but a gig got in the way. So the second they announced the 2017 date, a big black X went in the band's diary; no way was I going to miss it a second time. Being kind of "between" yacht clubs at the moment, we entered our Westerly Griffon "Calstar" as an FOSSC boat on the entry form. Nobody seemed to question it or mind.

The day of the race was Saturday 9th September and the forecast in the upper reaches of the Bristol Channel was grim at the beginning of that week; Force 5 gusting 7. A spring tide running out against that would add an extra 6 or 7 knots to whatever you already had, so it wasn't looking too promising. But as the weekend approached, the forecast for the really nasty stuff pushed back to Sunday and Monday, leaving us with a relatively more moderate F4 to 5 expected for Saturday afternoon. 20 knots out in the Bristol Channel isn't to be taken lightly, but we've managed worse.



In 2015 we took 21st place out of 39 boats finishing (ie. not counting the retirements, a couple of which were in quite dramatic style), completing the 42 nautical mile course in 6 hours and 11 minutes. My only real ambition for the race this year was to not break anything and to improve on that. Oh, and not involve any lifeboats.

Saturday morning's start-line opened at 1100. The idea is to time your start to the performance of your particular boat so that you reach Flat Holm at low water, cross between the two islands in relative slack, then pick up the flood as you turn Steep Holm. Low water Flat Holm was 1615. Back in 2015, in similar conditions to this year's forecast, it took us 3 hours 15 minutes to cover the 16nm down to Flat Holm. Being one of the slowest boats in the

fleet, we were, not unexpectedly, one of the first to start, but arrived a little early at the island so didn't make the best of the tide.

The risk, of course, is if you leave your start too late you won't get to Flat Holm before the tide turns. Which means you won't get to Flat Holm at all.

I had my mind settled on a 1300 start. This year, contrary to being one of the first boats to start, it had become obvious over the course of the morning that a good number of the 54 boats that had entered were planning to start somewhat earlier, most of them clearly bigger and thus faster than us. I have to admit, the belated realisation left me anxious that I might've miscalculated something. But the lock had been booked and we were committed. We locked out at 1230, sun shining, winds feeling light in the shelter of the headland. The lock was packed three abreast, and once down it opened to disgorge us out into the shelter of an even more packed Portishead Hole. We picked our way out through the crowd, intending to make our way direct to the start-line and get on with it.

Looking over the breakwater, the sea looked relatively benign. I'd pulled two reefs into the main in expectation of a blow, but thought, briefly, about shaking them out. Then I heard Bristol VTS reporting over the VHF to some outbound shipping that the wind-speed out there was 18 knots. I decided to leave the reefs in a while longer.

In any case, the sky down channel looked black and angry.

We'd barely left the shelter of the wall and entered the Kings Road shipping channel, and were getting ourselves ready to go head to wind and put the sail up when the squall hit. Slamming us broadside, the little yacht heeled to 20 degrees or more under her still bare poles, Dad struggling to bring the nose up into the wind, cold rain hammering down in drops as big as golf balls, smearing his prescription sun-glasses and effectively blinding him at the helm.



I briefly toyed with the idea of heading back in, but kept the thought to myself, not wanting to even tempt Dad with the idea that doing so might even be possible. Dad gunned the throttle to bring the bow up into the wind, then cut it back, holding it there as much through guess work as

judgement. I hauled up the main, both reefs firmly in, and pulled the kicker on tight, then as Dad guided the boat off the wind, pulled the genoa out until it was just shy of the two dots on the foot that marked the second reef.

The sails filling, Calstar heeled hard over to the wind as we cut the engine and began our beat down to the start-line, a couple of other boats ahead and one astern. Misery likes company; the sky was as black as sin, visibility grim, and silt laden seas were breaking over Calstar's bows as she ploughed through a heavy churn of wind over tide.

We called up Race Control on the VHF to give them our sail number and advise that we were approaching the line. They replied that visibility was so poor that they were having trouble working out who was who and asked us to call again as we crossed.

We went over the line close-hauled on a starboard tack, cutting 4 knots through the water but close to 9 over the ground. With the hood up, we at least had some shelter from the vicious downpour of the rain. The squall began to ease, and with it the sea. We slowly gained on one of the two boat ahead, which was a little unexpected but not unwelcome. Closing with the shore, we tacked to get out into deeper water and the faster flow and then, having done so, tacked back again.

Sometime in all of this, at first quite unnoticed by me, the rain had stopped and sky had cleared, although the turgid darkness in the sky further down channel suggested more might be coming our way. The wind was still blowing hard, but the seas had eased and the sun was breaking through.

For the moment, things were looking up, at least in our little bit of sea.

We stood in towards Clevedon until we began to lose the tidal flow then tacked on to port to stand out towards Middle Ground. This put us straight in the path of another yacht closing from astern on starboard. I held course for a moment or two thinking we'd clear ahead, but couldn't be sure so tacked back, waiting for the other boat to tack off themselves which they did soon enough, leaving us free to tack again and push out from the shore to find the best flow of tide.

The darkened sky down channel cleared ahead, instead pushing in over the Somerset shore and leaving us happily alone. The wind strength built and eased; we kept both reefs in the main but eased rolls out of the headsail as it dropped and pulled them back in as it hammered us again, keeping Calstar close hauled on her apparent sweet spot of 20 degrees heel, and cutting through the water at between 4 and 4.5 knots.



Leaving North West Elbow some way distant to port, it became pretty obvious we were going to be too early on the tide. But not as early as some. There was a scattering of boats around us, but a big clutch of sails ahead, already at the Holms far too early and another mass some way behind; the faster, later starters. The sea was intemperate, sometimes relatively slight and at other times far too eager to throw us around.

Still out over the deeper part of the channel looking for the fastest water it became obvious we were not going to lay Flat Holm. So as we passed the Monkstone Light we tacked to try and get up to the layline. Close-hauled and hard to the wind, the port tack set us slightly against the tide, our speed over the ground dropping from over 8 knots to less than 4. A slow, painful progress so we held it only for so long as we thought we'd need to before tacking back onto starboard.

As we closed with Flat Holm the lead boats in the fast fleet astern began to catch up and pass us. Another short tack to be certain we'd clear the rocky shallows, then we tacked back to lay the Holm.



We rounded the island at 1532, moving at 4.2 knots through the water, 6.8 knots over the ground and with 19.8 nautical miles behind us as we bore away to cross

the gap to Steep Holm. Arriving 43 minutes earlier than I'd aimed for, it wasn't perfect but was tolerable, and with the front runners of the serious racers now catching us up, I was happy we'd timed it okay, with only a little bit of tide still left to ebb.

The short crossing over to Steep Holm was lively. A beam reach, I eased a little of the genoa out but soon regretted it as we cleared the tidal lee of Flat Holm and hit the confused race between the islands that forms past the Mackenzie Shoal. It smoothed a little past Holm Middle and the deep water of the main channel, but the tidal race off Rudder Rock on the western tip of Steep Holm was in fine form and gave us an enthusiastic battering as we pushed on into it, our little boat charging along at a good five knots, mostly taking the confused seas abeam well enough but every so often falling off a particularly tall wave with a slap and a thump.

We'd largely left the steerage to the trusty autohelm for the beat down, but I'd now taken charge of the tiller myself since bearing away around the first island. The Raymarine is a fantastic gadget, as good as a second pair of hands, but it has its limitations. Reading ahead the thrust and pull of the sea abaft and abeam is one of them, especially with a crowd of other boats about us to account for as well.

We rounded Steep Holm at 1600, gybing onto port, and set off on the return leg, punching about a knot of foul tide, but the ebb fast fading now with low water on this side of the channel expected for 1610. As we cleared the gravel spit on the eastern end of the holm we hardened up a little to lay North West Elbow again.

By now the later starters were catching up, crowding around us or, for the much faster boats, pushing past. To windward of us, in a direct echo of the last time we were here in 2015, was a yacht called "White Spirit" of Portishead Cruising Club.

White Spirit is a boat of similar shape, size and vintage to Calstar. I think she's a Bavaria 26, although I might be wrong. And she's a hardened, veteran Bristol Channel racer. In 2015 she placed in the top three of the Holms race; I think a Sonata called "Fantasy" took first place from her. I recall there was some chaos over application forms lost, originally assumed to be not submitted that caused some confusion in the lead places.

In 2015, White Spirit caught us at Steep Holm, slowly pulled away from us towards North West Elbow, then hoisted her kite and disappeared ahead. As the faster boats screamed by, White Spirit again kept us company for the leg back to the next mark.

It was, at first, a fairly deep reach with most of the fleet sailing high as if they knew something I didn't, so I kept with them, but let them mostly pass well clear to windward.

The sea state smoothed as Steep Holm fell astern, so I returned the tiller to the autohelm and, with the wind abaft and now with the tide, let out the full genoa, but kept the double reef in the main.

Our speed increased as the flood tide began to take a grip in earnest. Ahead I could see boats crabbing up. As the tide bit and the miles flowed away beneath us the wind was veering, heading us and turning a comfortable reach into a lively fetch as we all converged onto the next mark. As we approached North West Elbow we were on a close reach. I was back on the helm and the rolls were back in the genoa; we were doing 4.9 knots through the water and 8.4 over the ground, 32.6 miles now behind us.

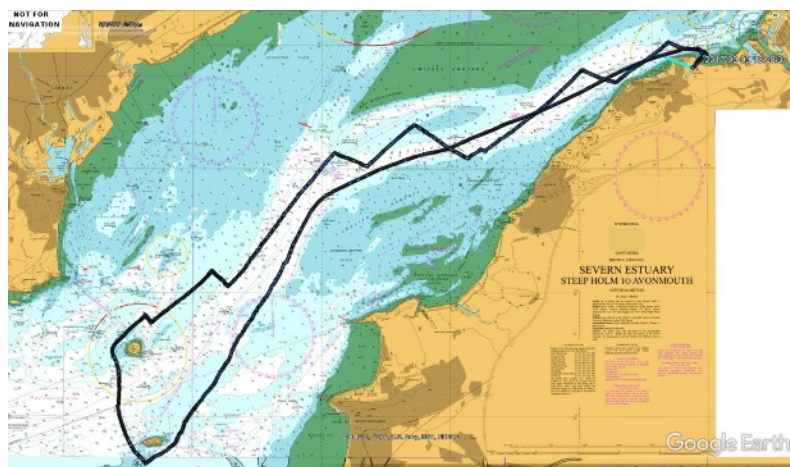


And, again just like in 2015, I was both beginning to feel quite dehydrated and desperate for a pee, but didn't dare leave the helm for the moment.

The hard work for North West Elbow proved worth it. As we bore away to lay the finish line, the lifting of the wind meant our course was back to a beam reach, with none of the genoa collapsing, "should I wing it out with the pole or reach from gybe to gybe" anxiety that a broad reach would have brought. It also meant that nobody else got to use their kite, so we kept up with the pack for the rest of the way home, only falling out the back of it in the last few minutes, in company still with White Spirit.

We crossed the finish line at 1827, 5 hours and 28 minutes after we'd started, and a good improvement over the time of our previous race, giving us a respectable 20th place out of the 54 boats that started. There were 10 retirements, presumably boats that had left their start too late and not made Flat Holm on the tide.

Although our time was much improved, our position only improved by a single place. On the rare occasion we race Calstar we're only ever really racing ourselves. I was pleased with the position, pleased with the way we handled the boat and especially pleased with the improvement we made on our overall time compared to the 6 hours and 10 minutes of our 2015 race.



It took a couple of hours to get back into the marina at Portishead, 31 other boats ahead of us. The lock was packed. We waited it out at anchor just outside the Portishead Hole; the wind had dropped as the race finished, the sea was calm and we were treated to a gorgeous sunset out over the Bristol Channel.

Bill Gribble



E WISH YOU A



Grand Quiz Night Wed 6th December

The cost for the evening including

Ploughmans is only £5,

£4 for participants under 14

This is a fun evening for all club members. Start 7.30pm

This is to get you into the Christmas Spirit ready for the holiday.

Teams can be made up from your fellow class sailors, from family or just a group of friends. All are welcome.

Teams should consist of a maximum of 4 team members. If you cannot form a team, enter anyway and we can adjust the teams on the night.

From the catering point of view, please let me know the name of the TEAM and the contact, plus how many will be attending.

Send to ken.elsey@gmail.com or phone 01452 412467

Fastnet Race 2017

By Phil Kirk

This was my 7th Fastnet Race and would be the most challenging because I was sailing Arcsine, a 37-foot yacht double handed rather than fully crewed. The popularity of double handed sailing has increased over the last 10 years and there were 60 double handed boats in the 400 strong fleet. The weather forecast indicated that we might be beating all the way to the Fastnet Rock with winds between 5 and 25 knots before returning across the Celtic sea and into Plymouth under Spinnaker. All the races that I have done have taken between 4 and 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ days making it likely that we would finish late on Thursday evening. The fleet is split into IRC handicap classes 0,1,2,3,4 as well as level rated fleets for the open 60's, class 40's and Volvo 65's. It was great to be able to see some of these high tech racing machines in the flesh if only briefly. We were one of the slower boats in class 3 and so keeping up with other boats in our class would be a good performance.

To improve safety the sailing instructions for the race make the shipping traffic separation zones (TSS) around Casquettes, the Isles of Scilly and Fastnet obstructions creating tactical decisions for each boat. The route we took past these would depend on the wind and the tide at the time we passed them.

The race started on Sunday 6th August in a typical 12-18 knot south westerly and with 70 boats in our class, the start line was crowded. With the tide behind us we soon reached Hurst Castle and the Needles channel. We tacked close to the shingles bank to gain most from the tide and at one point bore away to avoid going aground. Just to windward of us another boat went aground. Several boats meet this fate each race providing the rest of the fleet with something to listen to on the VHF as the Pan Pan or Mayday is broadcast and managed by the coastguard. This race was nothing different. Once clear of the channel we stayed on starboard tack until well into the strong west going tide before tacking west towards Anvil point. While we picked up some useful tidal advantage we reached St Albans Head just before the tide turned to set east. The first tactical decision was to either tack out into the channel avoiding the stronger tides across Weymouth Bay and around Portland Bill or hug the coast in Weymouth Bay and round the Bill using the inshore passage. We chose the former although many boats used the inshore route to good effect. By sailing south we came close to the Casquettes TSS and picked up a lift when we tacked on to port. As all the boats closed on Start point the following morning the advantages of each of the



inshore and offshore options had evened out and we were only 2 miles behind one of the much faster favourites in our class. So far we had been looking after ourselves quite well getting some sleep in turns and having meals on schedule. We knew that the winds were going to pick up later in the race and sailing double handed it was important to be prepared. We tacked out again to avoid the strong tides around start point but in hindsight not far enough. In lighter winds than day 1 we found ourselves going very slowly off Falmouth that afternoon for a couple of hours. We can use AIS to see what our competitors were doing within about a 10 mile range and this is useful to identify boats being slowed ahead and to determine which side of the beat to take to avoid the hole. With only 2 of us on the boat we



couldn't watch this constantly. We approached the Lizard on Monday evening sailing under full main and the code Zero in 7-10 knots of wind watching a spectacular sunset and then passed Lands End later that night. The tide was heading North so we used this a tacked onto Port between Land End and the first TSS.

The following morning (Tuesday) we were heading West into the Celtic Sea with a slowly

increasing wind and a very short sea. The boat slammed hard occasionally and each time this happened the boat slowed by half a knot. At mid day we tacked to get a bit further north. The wind was due to swing and blow from the north later so putting a hitch in now should put us onto the inside of the lift and gain us an advantage. Not long after tacking we slammed on another wave and the Port D2 shroud broke. This wire runs diagonally between the outboard end of the lower spreader up to the inboard end of the upper spreader and stops the mast from sagging to leeward at the height of the second spreader. Without this support the mast was now bending under the pressure of the main sail and flexing on each wave. We put in two reefs to reduce the pressure on the mast watching it continue to flex but not so badly. We carried on sailing North to make sure that we could receive the stronger winds on stbd tack. We probably sailed too far north and lost some ground to our competitors. The broken wire was swinging around as the boat sailed over the waves and we later found that it had holed both main sail and jib in many places. The rough sea state made it too dangerous to go up the mast and secure it.

When we made our tack on to stbd the mast, now properly supported, behaved as normal. The wind built with gusts of up to 30 knots. While we reefed the main we kept the full jib up to allow us to power through the waves. The seas were still rough and the waves short making it impossible to avoid slamming. We were fortunate to have a full moon allowing us to see the waves and try to avoid launching the boat off many off some of them.

Off watch and trying to sleep through this was only possible because we were now both tired. There were times where it was impossible to sleep and from my bunk I could hear the moaning of the wind outside, the rushing of water past the hull, the occasional slamming which felt like the boat had landed on concrete not water and the creaking of internal furniture as it resisted the boat flexing. There was also the occasional clang as the loose shroud wire hit another shroud or the mast and the more unsettling vibration of the whole rig after each slam. All these sounds seemed to be amplified down below. On deck the wind and the slamming dominated. We took it in turns to helm the boat but the person on deck is not only steering but adjusting the sails and keeping a look out for other ship's and yachts. To avoid slamming it was necessary to bear away 10 degrees from close hauled to meet the sharp waves at 45-60 degrees. In bearing away the boat heeled further and accelerated.



As dawn started to break we noticed that the luff of the Jib was slack. This was unusual but we winched up more halyard and carried on. As we approached the Fastnet the wind eased and headed us. It was light enough to go up the mast so I was winched up to secure the end of the D2 at the lower spreader. Kathy (the skipper) was sailing the boat using the auto pilot whilst winching me up.

Once around the lonely lighthouse on it's outcrop of rock we hoisted the asymmetric spinnaker to start the return leg. We found that the jib wouldn't come all the way down and realised that something else was wrong up the mast. There was nothing that we could do with the number of boats around us so we made sure the sail was tied down where possible and carried on. As we navigated around the Fastnet TSS we changed the asymmetric to the Symmetric spinnaker which we held all the way to the isles of Scilly. This leg took nearly another day. Now sailing down wind the mast was behaving ok and not sagging and flexing as before. With the reduced compression loads from the back stay and the jib halyard and the forwards pull of the spinnaker the D2 wasn't as important but we kept an eye on things to make sure. We sighted dolphins on several occasions during this leg. As we sailed into Wednesday night the wind increased again. We were sailing down wind and surfing on waves taking it in turns on the helm and to sleep below. After midnight Kathy decided that things were a little on edge and we should both stay on deck in case we broached. On my second windy helming shift the boat felt like it was on rails and responded positively to the helm. As the wind peaked at 25 and 26 knots this feeling rapidly changed and I came close to broaching twice. Both of us managed to record top speeds of 13.4 knots. As we approached the Isles of Scilly and dawn started to break, the wind shifted and we took the spinnaker down and put the jib up.

After a short sleep we put the code zero up took the jib down to where it was sticking and Kathy decided it was calm enough for me to go up the forestay to retrieve the stuck sail. If

being winched up the mast at sea felt insecure then ascending the forestay was doubly so. Luckily I only had to go 1/3rd the way up to reach the top of the stuck sail but the motion of the boat meant that I was rotating through 180 degrees round the wire as the boat rolled. Holding on with one hand I used the other to tie a thin line to the end of the halyard to secure it and then released the sail. We were now able to use any headsail with the spare jib halyard.

Through much of Thursday the winds were light and we slowly left the isles of Scilly behind. We made ground in the light winds both with the code Zero and then the asymmetric using the autopilot to keep a steady course so we could trim the sails. We were also able to get some sleep each. The light winds allowed the fleet to bunch. As we approached the Lizard I could see 75 boats around us. The wind increased at the headland heralding a fast 50 mile reach to the finish. After a few hours the wind increased further and we were unable sail close enough to the wind without broaching. We eventually dropped the spinnaker, raised the jib and sail back up to the fleet to windward of us. Soon after we dropped the asymmetric the wind eased and the fast and furious conditions became light and tense. We soon found that we could sail to the apparent wind making 5.5 knots of boat speed in only 6 knots of wind. To keep in this sweet spot it was key to watch both the boat speed, the apparent wind angle as well as the sail trim. We gained some places and once back with the fleet we were able to hoist the code zero. We eventually finished close to other boats in light winds at 01:30 am on Friday morning.

Our final results put us just above mid point in class 3, the double handed class and overall. We had lost some time with our broken shroud and then encountering light conditions both at the Fastnet and around the Scillies. From the tracker it was clear that we had not made any other tactical mistakes and we were pleased with our overall result. What is clear is that the whole race is becoming more and more competitive.

SAIL & POWERBOAT TRAINING 2018

This is the last Newsletter being sent out to members, as a result, next January 2018, the Sail Training Application will not be sent out by post. **It will be only be available online on the secure side of the website in January.**

Please make sure that you can get onto the secure side of the Club Website before January. An email will be sent out to all members in January saying that the form is now on the website. Just print off the form, fill it in including your club membership number (number is on your membership renewal form) and **post** it to Mark Barrett, our Training Principal – details will be on the form.

The website is www.fossc.org.uk and your initial user name will be your email address. If you have problems getting onto the secure side of the website, go to the contact page, scroll to the bottom of the page and send your problem by email to the “Webmaster”.



Laying Up Supper
Prize Giving & Fun Quiz
Saturday 25th November 2017 from 7pm
£15 per person



Starters

Smoked Mackerel Pate
Butternut Squash & Carrot Soup (v)

Mains

Braised Beef & Red Wine Casserole
Quorn Casserole (v)
Chicken Supreme

Desserts

Blackberry & Apple Crumble with Custard
Fruity Pavlova

**Please email staceybeck@gmail.com with
your menu choices and send a cheque
payable **FOSSC** to **Gardeners Cottage,**
School Lane, Whitminster GL2 7NT**