



Commodore's Bit

Ahoy

Welcome to the autumn edition. All our cruiser racing has finished for the year; time to think about scrubbing the bottom, changing the oil, clearing the filters and dreaming of how much better we will sail next season.

I want to especially thank the Cruiser Fleet Race Committee on their management of all our river races; without their efforts we would not be able to enjoy the close racing that makes Topsham SC such a special place to sail from, their and our success is evident in the turnout for our evening racing where we average over 20 boats, a number down-river clubs can only dream of.

Yawls will sail on to the end of November; if you want a winter sail contact the Yawl Captain who will try and find you a crewing job. If you want to sail in the winter you could keep company in your boat with our two hard men John Domaille & John Ostle who sail their Lasers right though until the days start to lengthen.

Thank you to all who came along to the pontoon party at Dartmouth. We sank the pontoon in less than 15 minutes, a record, and I am assured the amount of pontoon under water was also a record. If you have never been to Dartmouth Regatta then go, if only for the pontoon party. We had a good turn out and club members did well, some very well, in the bars and tents with some going on to do well on the water.

It was great to see so many club members taking part in the swim organised by Mike the Ferryman for Estuary League of Friends and as a club we were pleased to help out.

TSC also proved their sporting prowess is not confined to the water as we won the inaugural Topsham Tug of War Challenge, which involved a team on each side of the passage ferry crossing doing their best to pull the other team into the water. TSC was under the captaincy of your V-C; we did not even get wet. *(Editor's Note: Wet? No. Muddy? See picture for details)*

There are a whole series of social functions coming up over the next few months, do come along. Skittles starts soon, if you want to play let me know and you can join my team.

Yours aye

Tim



Ladies Sailing

Well it started with a request a while ago (probably 2 years) when organising other courses from Powerboat Level 2, Safety Boat, First Aid, VHF and Sea Survival amongst others.

A willing tutor and boat were found from Dartmouth Yacht Club and the sessions arranged.

An initial meeting involved those who had expressed an interest, from this group 10 willing ladies signed up for the first two sessions. The activities involved:

- Hoisting sails
 - Tying knots (did you know that a certain member of Topsham Sailing Club is knotlexic!)
 - Tides, wind, weather
 - Navigation - including secondary ports!
 - Where to eat that night, sampling the delights of Kingswear, Dartmouth and Torquay - did you know that Royal Dart Yacht Club serves 10 different types of Gin (shame my session was during Lent and I had given up alcohol and chocolate)
 - That the only thing to wear under your wet weather trousers is 'Boden' plaid - or was it Budleigh Salterton PJ's?
 - Taking turns sailing, man overboard drills, coming alongside, springing from a pontoon, tying up alongside - sometimes some of us had to take a larger step than others
 - Enjoying piped music in the shower blocks
 - Visiting a German Naval 3 master schooner
 - Sitting below decks passage planning to keep out of the rain and high easterly winds
 - But mainly having fun
 - Some of us had better weather than others, but as they say 'that is sailing'
- Other sessions are being organised. For further details please contact Sally Penn - thenibs@ukgateway.net or phone 07891134587

Hi Dinghy Sailors

As I write we are removing the dinghies from the club yard and thoughts are turning towards the autumn dinghy meeting. This is to be held at the club at 19:00 on Friday 23rd October. Please note the time 19:00; this is so that cadets can attend.

The meeting gives opportunity for all to say whatever they wish about dinghy sailing at Topsham Sailing Club. Please come along and do just that so that we can take notice of your feelings and in due course do something about whatever it is that concerns you.

It is felt by some that the dinghy section would operate more effectively if it was run by committee. This would probably mean that the dinghy captain would chair a committee made up possibly of persons responsible for the yard organisation of dinghies responsible to the yard marshall, Secretary, Bosun, responsible for club boats, topper training, cadet sailing, adult sailing, preparation of food and social functions.

Although the safety boat control and rota is a club responsibility it is perhaps wise that whoever is doing that job is invited to attend all dinghy meetings as, of course, is the Commodore and all main club committee members, if they wish to do so.

Below are pictures of some of the dinghy people who had a lot of fun in their dinghies on the river this season.

I look forward to seeing those of you who can come at the forthcoming dinghy meeting.

Best wishes

John Domaille



Yawl Report

The final Tom Blanks race was held on the 18th September with Ed William-Hawkes winning overall first for the series in 351. Ed was followed closely by Shane Buckley in 349 who came in second position overall. Congratulations to all who took part in the series; the number of yawls racing is well up on last year.

Congratulations to John Skelton for coming second in the Dartmouth Regatta, Devon Yawl final results. It seems like there were a few more Yawls attending this year compared to last.

John also did an excellent job of organising the TSC Yawl Only night on the 16th September; thanks to all those involved.

It's a fond farewell to Richard Hollifield and DY339 who have departed from the fleet however a warm welcome to Richard Babbage and DY 100 who have recently joined the fleet and already sailing competitively.

Team Racing results may already be out by the time this goes to print however a strong team is being assembled for the weekend of the 26th/27th September against the Yealm DY Fleet.

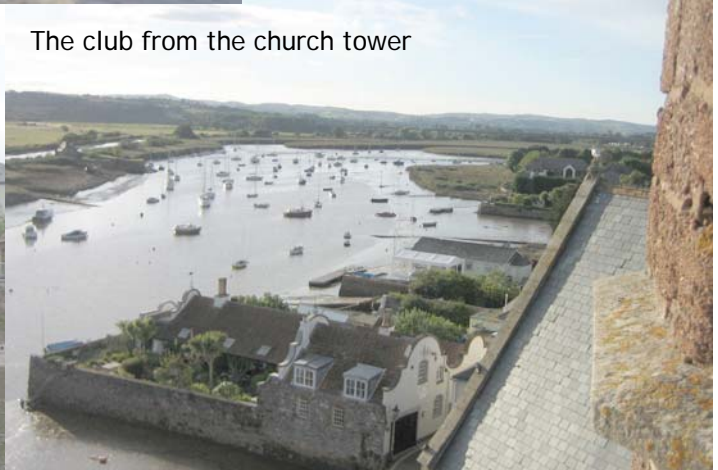
Watch out for the Bottoms Cup Handicaps which will shortly be going up on the club board.

Please remember all Bottoms Cup races will start from the Club House Line. Race Officer names will also be up on the board so please keep an eye out.

For those of you who can make it we have the Autumn Yawl Forum on the 20th October so come a long if you have time in your diary. Helms, Crews, and potential yawl owners all welcome.

James McNaughton

Devon Yawl Fleet Captain



The club from the church tower

Cruiser Report

Only the Final Fling to go now. The September Series has been wrapped up today after two light wind races this weekend. On count back, Brian Thomas' *Blue Jay* has won, with *Kithros II* on the same score and David Jeffry's *Toroa of Axe* coming third in his first full series. The club did well again in this year's Dartmouth Regatta with Martyn Grant taking second place in *Xante*, and Sheryl Savage third in *Out of the Blue* in PY3. Seven other TSC boats took part, probably giving the highest turn out for some years, and providing plenty of attendees at Tim's (sink the) Pontoon party, which proved highly enjoyable and successfully sank the corner of the main walkway - no mean achievement as it meant submerging the main walkways in both directions. What a standard to set!

Evening racing has continued to be the mainstay of the club's activity. The handicap committee has managed to contrive to create a situation in which both the Beach and Norton Cups were decided on the last race of the year, with four boats in contention in both fleets and eight in total fighting for a podium place in the Norton fleet. The Bruford fleet was still slightly reduced in numbers, and with Graham Pateman sailing *Seeclipse* in most races in the series, he stole a march on the rest and won with a few races to spare. Richard Stevens' *Dare Devil* was second and Pete Williams' *Shimera* third. Dave Pearce and Robinson were so confident of success that they took *Mallard* out of the water with three races to go, but were pipped to the post by Will Tarr in *Chaika*. Patrick managed to sneak into third in *Alouette* in the last race. Godfrey Whitehouse will remember to look at the start signals next year after *Artemis* managed to delay the whole sequence by one minute. *Fooster* started a minute early as a result and had to deal with a full spinnaker before returning to restart. They caught up to within a few seconds of *Lucille*, but couldn't get past with the end result being that *Lucille* won the cup for the first time since 1993. *Xante* took third, with the last two light wind races not providing the conditions the Fulmars revel in.

In the coastal races, the Babbacombe race was won by Colin Leach in *Red Fox*, with *Fooster* second and Gerald Sturtridge's new boat *Charlotte* taking third. Liz Stanley sailed Kate Hattersley's *Beeline* to first place in the Tinley Bowl, and Kate has won the Rose Bowl for the aggregated results of the series. Well done to all the winners - looking through the results the places seem to have been spread around more different boats than has occurred for many years - should mean a good turnout for this year's Dinner Dance and prize giving (details elsewhere).

Next year's programme is already being prepared, and will be available at the cruiser meeting on the 14th October. Come along and have your say for next year. See you there,

Neal Ricketts

Cruiser Fleet Captain

Farewell to the Caribbean

By Trevor Coleman

Part 1 of several:

Takaroa was a home-built Rival 38, completed at Tremletts yard over 5 long years by 1984. After 12 years cruising in the Mediterranean and 10 years in the Caribbean, based on English Harbour, Antigua, we decided to head back to the Pacific, during the winter of 2008/9.

Jane and Sophie joined me in a gentle sail down to Grenada (about 300 nautical miles), visiting our usual haunts of Deshaies on Guadeloupe, Isles des Saintes and St Pierre on Martinique, all seriously damaged by Hurricane Omar. After that we visited the Hummingbird Restaurant in Soufriere, St Lucia then went on to Bequia for Christmas.

Next we visited Tobago Cays with its wonderful clear water and excellent reef before going on to Union Island, PSV, Carriacou and Grenada.

Here we had a crew change, before meandering down the outer islands of Venezuela (to avoid the pirates) visiting Testigos, Marguerita and Los Roques.

Thereafter we visited the Aves reefs, Bonaire and changed crew again in Curacao, one of the ABC islands. We did not encounter any pirates but tried to avoid anchoring in lonely anchorages and known trouble spots, such as Potamar in Marguerita.

This area on the north coast of South America is known for its strong winds but for most of the time we had under than 20 knots of easterlies, but suffered from uncomfortable cross-swells and cloudy water.

The Raymarine chart plotter was up to a quarter of a mile out in many of the Venezuelan islands and in particularly Los Roques, where extensive areas are marked as totally uncharted.

After leaving Curacao, we bypassed Aruba as the wind was so favourable, sailed past the rocky islets of Les Monjes by night, and then skirted this windswept coast seeing practically no fishing boats or yachts until we reached the 'Five Bays', Columbia, none of which had been properly charted. Fortunately we had obtained some waypoints from the Australian yacht *Alga*, and were able to eyeball our way in, avoiding several reefs en route, to drop anchor in a national park rather similar to Scotland, but with palm trees instead of pines and magnificent surrounding mountains. There were no other yachts to be seen but as we were approaching the Five Bays, we saw an impressive 18,000 ft peak of the Andes covered in snow and ice, up amongst the clouds.

Next day we intended to pass the Magdalena River (the longest in Columbia), known for its rough seas as 'The Cape Horn of the Caribbean'. However, as it was blowing 43 knots outside the bay, we popped round the next headland with 17 rolls in the jib to Guaira Bay, where there was comparative shelter and spent a day

fitting out and setting the storm jib!

As it turned out this proved unnecessary as the following day we had a good sail past the Magdalena River under jib alone, admiring the difference in colour of the breakers where the fresh river water met the salt water. That evening we spent the night with the first British yacht we had seen for some time called *Rebellious*, behind an uncharted sand spit in 30 knots of wind.

From here it was a short sail to Cartagena, which we entered through the North Channel, well marked by buoys, near the centre of the city, and anchored off the old colonial Spanish 'Club Nautico', which was full of liveboards, who made us very welcome.

The old city of Cartagena has been beautifully restored and we spent 24 hours exploring the old city, where the Columbians we met were quite charming. As time was pressing, we then had a 2-day passage in large swells on to the San Bias Islands, making our landfall on Isla Pinos. This autonomous region of Panama, (just above the Darien Gap), is occupied by the Kuna Indians, who are forbidden to marry outside their own race and who, for the most part, live in palm leafed huts and still paddle their dugout canoes (no outboards being permitted).

Charts here are fairly worthless and the electronic chart put us on land most of the time! However, there was a brilliant pilot book called 'The Panama Guide' by Eric Bauhaus, with multiple waypoints, which made detailed navigation possible. The water here, for the most part, is cloudy as is the sky, but the Kuna Indians could not have been more hospitable. We particularly enjoyed Mamitipu, one of the most hospitable and traditional villages, but they are all at risk from global warming and high tides and strong winds, with water a foot high, sweep through the villages at high water. Paul and his family, who

run a small hotel here, were particularly helpful and he spoke English.

The north west area of Kuna Yala, near the island with the capital of Porvenir on it, has become spoilt by too many visiting yachts and cruise liners and the Indians no longer expect to trade but just beg for clothes etc, and expect to get them for nothing. There are proper charts of this area, hence the unfortunate influx of tourists.

to be continued ...

Committee Nominations

Within the next few weeks the Hon Secretary will be posting on the Club notice board the notice inviting nominations for the post of the Club's Officers and the General Committee members. Candidates must be Club members and proposed and seconded by Club members, but that is all the qualification you need, so why not put yourself forward for the Committee in our 125th year?

TSC Children's Christmas Party

Sunday 13th December 2009
15:00 - 17:00

Special appearance by

Magic Rose

Children's magician and party entertainer

Enquiries to Colin and Ann Leach
01392 276 759

TSC Dinner Dance

The Topsham Sailing Club Dinner Dance will be held on the 5th December 2009 at Duckworth Suite And Mews Bar Exeter Golf And Country Club 19:00 for 19:45 prompt Carriages At 01:00 Dancing To 'Data Disco'

To book tickets at £28.50 each (and cadet tickets at £19.50 each), complete the form on the club notice board and return with your cheque made payable to Topsham Sailing Club by 14th November 2008 to Tim Baker, 10 Strand, Topsham, Exeter, EX3 OJB

Small Ads

Mooring to let for 2010 season
40ft. opposite Trouts
Simon Purser 877013

2 person 6ft inflatable punt, in good condition. Solid floor/outboard bracket. Plus pump and oars. £150 ono
Colin Leach 01392 276 759

Letter to the Editor

Sporting Ethics

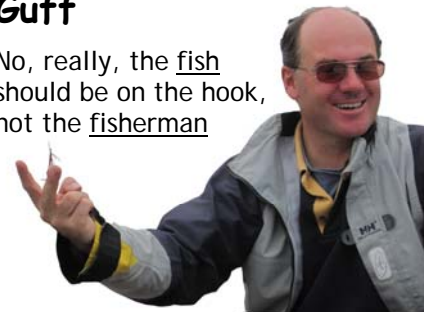
In most sporting events such as the Derby, Grand National, the FA Cup or the Calcutta Cup, the winning post or goal posts remain in the same place. Even in the Ashes, the stumps are always 22 yards apart! However, when it comes to the Topsham Sailing Club Evening Series, it seems acceptable that the finishing line for the last two races is moved!

Perhaps we could have a serious discussion about this at the next cruiser meeting.

Charles Potter
Nimrod - Norton Fleet.

Guff

No, really, the fish should be on the hook, not the fisherman



RNLI Autumn Coffee Morning

Saturday 7th Nov 2009. 10:00 - 12:00 at TSC.



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