

the magazine of Exe Sailing Club

EXE
news

Issue 79
Autumn 2006



Special feature
RS200 national championships

www.exe-sailing-club.org

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From the Commodore



What a great club we all have and the future looks bright! As I look back over my first season as Commodore it has certainly been one to remember, with lots of events and a real coming together of many of our new and older established members to create a friendly as well as active club environment that we can all be proud of. I believe regardless of the type of boat you sail or whether you cruise or race we should all be united under the burgee of Exe Sailing Club. The support I have received from the management committee members has been excellent and it was particularly pleasing to see some new faces this year, including Mark Jones, Colin Broady, Donna Best & Martin Williams. I am hopeful that we will see some more new members wanting to become involved in the future. We also value experience and I look forward to welcoming our Hon. Secretary Ivan Wilkinson back shortly, following his recovery from a triple by-pass operation. Our best wishes go out to both Ivan & Anne and I have to say that Anne has done a superb job for the last few weeks, making sure Ivan remains calm & relaxed. Not easy for a man who is used to doing 101 things at once!

As we all know and can see, the development of the marina area adjoining our club is now in its final phase, which sadly, in my opinion, has altered the look of the beach adjoining the North pier that we have all known for so long and also seen the demise of Spinnakers sailing school. Anyway, on a positive note the developers will shortly be building us a new start box that will have all mod cons (unlike the last one) such as electricity, double-glazing, running water and a toilet. Land & space around us is now very much of a premium and I would ask you all to consider this

when applying for a dinghy or tender space for next year. Our membership is at full capacity and it is not fair on others if an unused boat is taking up a valuable space and stopping someone else from sailing. We will be monitoring boat usage very carefully next year. The answer for some of you who may only use your dinghy a few times a year might be to consider hiring one of the four new club RS Visions instead. These excellent boats are available to all club members at a minimal cost; for information and bookings please speak to Rick Newcombe.

The sailing season has seen the usual events such as the River Exe Regatta hosted this year by Topsham Sailing Club, Exe series Junior Regattas, Clic race, organised dinghy cruises, wine run, Fulfords champagne challenge, cruiser and dinghy club racing and a full junior programme including RYA qualifications and race training organised by our own in-house RYA training centre. Thanks to Rick Newcombe, Noel Davis and everyone involved for giving up their free time as well as to the Royal Marines for their continued support. On the subject of our juniors I would like to wish our now Ex-Cadet sailors Jessica Blick and Ben Cornish well in their new fleets. Jessica will now be sailing a 420 and Ben, despite his horrific kite surfing injury earlier in the season, will be sailing in a 29er.

The highlight of the season had to be the RS200 National Championships held in August with an entry of 129 boats coming from as far away as Japan. It was great to see a past Exe Cadet sailor by the name of Lee Sydenham winning one of the races and flying the flag for our club. I would like to thank everyone involved in the week including the members that very kindly removed their boats from the dinghy park. The club made a huge profit, much to the cheer of our Treasurer and although there are too many people to thank everyone by name, I would like to mention Steve Best who was the main organiser and backbone behind the event. It was also good to see many of our new members and even potential new members getting involved and giving up much of their time. Your Commodore frightened himself stupid for the week driving the guard boat which had its moments with 129 boats bearing down on us during the gate starts. Exmouth Town Mayor Eileen Wragg joined me in the rib for one start and sat in amazement alongside Commander Perks in the aft quarters not quite believing what she was seeing or hearing! Thank you to Exmouth Town Council for sponsoring the civic reception on the Sunday evening.

Symon C Garratt

Commodore

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From the Editors

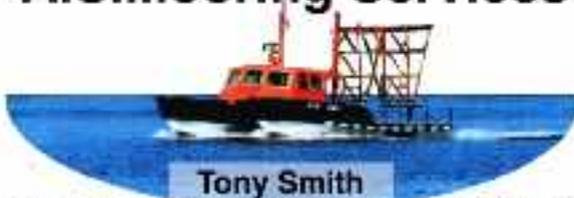
This is the issue where we look back at what a great season we have had and boy, have we had a great season! I will not attempt to list all the things that have been happening as they are covered very well elsewhere in this issue. But I would like to offer another viewpoint on the way the club worked together over the week of the RS200 championships. Since I started doing serious sailing photography in 2003 I have been privileged to attend world, European and UK national championships at clubs all over the country (well, I was never going to get there as a sailor!) You get a good feel for the quality of organisation at an event by observing the way things are going, on and off the water, and listening to what the competitors are saying. The Exe RS200 championships impressed me more than any other event I have attended so far, both on and off the water.

I'd like to take the opportunity to introduce a new member of the editorial team. Nigel Walshaw, who joined the club this year, has taken on the task of coordinating all the advertising in the Exe News. He has been so successful that I have decided we can once again afford a full colour issue! My thanks to all the firms who have taken advertising space with us, and I hope you will all give them your support.

Mike Rice

Editor

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The Cadet Scene

A report from No 33 Squadron (Exe Sailing Club)

It's been a busy year for the 9 Exe Cadets. It all started back in the cold days of January when Jess Blick offered some coaching on certain Saturday mornings to the new helms of the 2 club Cadets. With Jess and fellow national squad helms Ben Cornish and Tom Kinver disappearing once a month for squad training and Alex Horlock similarly occupied with the zone squad it proved difficult to find a weekend when the tides were right and we could get everyone together before the inland championships. However, a date was found in March and we invited our friends from Torquay and South Cerney to join us for a weekend training session run by Corky. 14 boats turned up and a good time was had by all.

Thursday evening race training ran from April to July and provided a weekly opportunity for all our young sailors, Cadet, Laser and Topper, to hone their skills.

The indicator events at Rutland, Parkstone and Draycote saw 90 boat fleets and passed with highs and lows but without the hoped-for ultimate success. Jess and James finished top Exe boat in 15th place with Tom and Erin close behind. Alex and Niall Lawson moved into the gold fleet at Parkstone and Emily Kinver and her crew Carragh Martineau graduated from the regatta fleet to the main fleet with distinction at Draycote Water. Alex was pleased to finish 3rd in light winds at the Eric Twiname Trophy.

Back at home base the whole town was shocked by Ben's accident, but despite initial gloomy predictions from the doctors, he was back sailing Fantasy with distinction at the Nationals in August. (See Alex's report)

In June, a second weekend's training, run by the excellent Jill Royse, saw 12 Cadets, many with novice crews, from the south west clubs converge on the Exe for some fun racing and training in light winds and glorious sunshine.

The Exe Open, also in June, saw 18 boats come to join us for some excellent racing out at sea. Tom Kinver and Ollie Bridge won in some close racing with fellow national squad member Ed Impey. Meanwhile Emily and Alice Kelly, and Laurie Ranft and Daisy O'Loughlin sailed the club Cadets in their first open event.



Jess & Jamie cross the line to win the R Exe Regatta pursuit race

The Torbay Open in September saw 3 boats from Exe do battle with their closest neighbours. Jamie Oaten from Torquay won convincingly but Alex and his new crew Shaun Spring sailed well to take 2nd place and bring some of the silverware back to Exe. Dom Langdon and Ollie were 7th, with Emily and Carragh 9th.

The Zone champs take place at Weymouth at the end of September which leaves Exe to stage the final event of the season, the Southwest Open Training weekend, on the 14/15th October.

If any young sailors would like to join in the fun and games of Cadet sailing please contact me, Bob Horlock, on 01395 271821 or bbhorlock@aol.com or see me at the club.

Cadet Nationals – Weymouth 2006

This year's nationals took place at sunny (and windy!) Portland harbour. There was a mass turnout of 108 boats in the main fleet and 17 in the regatta/novice fleet. On the first four days it blew up a nice friendly force 5, which saw many crews go swimming including myself and Niall!

Ben Cornish/Dominic Langdon had a great first race, after not sailing for most of the season due to Ben's accident, they finished a creditable 2nd. Jessica Blick/James Turl started consistently as usual getting a 26th and a 13th, sadly they had a fall out but Elliott Martineau stepped in to sail with Jess for the rest of the week. James went on to crew for Sarah Dallimore in the regatta fleet which they won.

After a few dips Emily Kinver/Carragh Martineau sailed well in the strong weather to achieve some good mid-fleet results, with Sam Jacklin and Christopher Turl following just behind. Katie Kinver crewed for Parkstone sailor Joss Haslam and finished almost exactly in the middle of the fleet. Tom Kinver/Oliver Bridge got decent results all week with a 3rd and a 10th on the same day! Alex Horlock/Niall Lawson got better throughout the week and had the title 'U14 national champions' in the bag...until the last race where we sailed well but not as well as the people we had to beat!

Well done to everyone and I think we'll all agree it was a great weeks sailing.

Results

Main Fleet

Ben Cornish/Dominic Langdon	9 th	
Tom Kinver/Oliver Bridge	23 rd	
Alex Horlock/Niall Lawson	34 th	2 nd U14
Jess Blick/Elliott Martineau/James Turl	41 st	
Joss Haslam/Katie Kinver	55 th	
Emily Kinver/Carragh Martineau	72 nd	1 st U13
Sam Jacklin and Christopher Turl	81 st	

Regatta Fleet

Sarah Dallimore/James Turl 1st

Alex Horlock

BUSA Team Racing Finals

Quite a few people this season have had a go at sailing a battered old brown Laser, which used to belong to Megan Burrough. I know the boat quite well, for it was the one I bought a few years ago to join the Exe Laser fleet, but that's another story...

In April I had a call from Megan, who is now studying at Cambridge University, to ask if I could photograph the British University Sailing Association (BUSA) team racing finals, at Grafham. I had a great day out, and so did Megan, as you can read in her report, written while Megan was on a university summer assignment in Africa!

Ed

At university level, team racing is definitely the most exciting sport around. In short, exhilarating races, two teams of three Fireflies battle it out, manipulating the rulebook to take out their opponents and enable their team-mates to get into a "winning combination". And for every university sailing team, the BUSA championships in early April are the event towards which training – on and off the water – begins in earnest in early October.

Every weekend throughout the year, teams travel across the country on the team racing circuit, to events such as the Oxford Magnum, Brummie Bender, London 6-pack, Wessex Winter Warmer, and Nottingham Snakebite to prepare and test themselves against the opposition. This year, Cambridge had a lot to prove. In 2005, they failed to make even the quarter-finals, as complacency resulted in silly mistakes and lost races. However, with BUSA held at our home water of Grafham this year, there were no excuses, and the team trained hard from the beginning.

Having performed well early in the season against both uni and alumni teams, it was clear that we were towards the top, and breezing through BUSA and UKTRA (UK Team Racing Association) qualifiers was reassuring. But it was when we won Oxford's Top Gun - the event used to seed BUSA - against the best of the university teams, that the expectations really soared. Being seeded first for BUSA meant that we wouldn't have to meet the strongest teams until the semi-finals, easing the pressure a bit.

Coming 2nd to GBR1 on a tie-break at the UKTRA championships – the highest university finish since 2000 - two weeks before BUSA, meant we could compete at the highest national level, and gave us a huge psychological advantage. So when on the first day of the championships a dodgy decision to sail with cutdowns was made despite a moderate breeze, the team was not fazed, and instead coasted through the races unchallenged, to finish top in the league and secure a place in the supergold. Day two, against Oxford and



Close quarter action on the start line

Nottingham, was therefore very relaxed, as once in the supergold, teams are assured a place in the quarterfinals regardless of their performance, so the heroes and villains party was hit without fear of hangovers. The day was made even easier for us when one of the Oxford helms was found to be over the limit on the drive to Grafham next morning, and held in a police cell throughout the day's racing. Consequently we dropped the only race of our competition to finish top of the supergold, giving us first choice of opponent for the quarterfinals.



All six Fireflies in about 3 boat lengths!

The third day of the championships opened with strong winds, and the mixed quarterfinals began. Though breakages frequently interrupted racing, we quickly saw off Southampton 3 in our quarter, while our second team unfortunately lost out to a strong Oxford Team, finishing as the highest placed second team in 5th place. In our semi-final, we faced Southampton 1, the team we saw as potentially the most threatening. The racing was the closest of the championship, but Cambridge were the better team, and despite a re-sail request being granted to Southampton for gear failure, we won the first two races of a potential three with slick conversions and fast sailing.

Meanwhile, Oxford saw off Nottingham to ensure that the final would be Oxford vs. Cambridge, a fact that the vast Cambridge presence at Grafham found very amusing. The finals were best of five, and we began well with a solid win, recovering well from a less-than-perfect start. Prepared for what was to follow, and unfazed by constant stoppages and gear failure, we sailed fast and carried out strong conversions in each of the following races to win the final 3-0, the Championships and accompanying champagne.

Megan Burrough

Training Centre News

Now firmly established at the club, the training centre has enjoyed a second very busy season. With Rex Frost's winter competent crew and day skipper programme, and the dinghy training actually starting in early March this year, we can truly say the training centre is a year-round operation.

On the water, we began at the end of March by getting the new racers on our "start racing" course out of the class room and onto the rather chilly waters of the estuary, this to be quickly followed by an assistant instructor course and the start of the youth training programme in April. In May we ran a level 1 course with this group then moving onto their level 2 in June.

Next we ran the RYA Seamanship course for the first time, a great course for those who want to sharpen up their sailing skills but are not into racing. Lots of anchoring, coming alongside, man over board, rudderless sailing and an introduction to tides and navigation.

We have also run two level 2 powerboat courses.

At the time of writing we have a final, fully booked, level 1/2 course set for the end of September, plans in place for a senior instructor course in November/December and I hope we will get another powerboat course in before the end of the year.

We will publish next years programme at Christmas but look out for another RYA "start racing" in March, level 1/2 courses at the beginning and end of the season, another assistant instructor course and, if there is sufficient demand, a 5 day dinghy instructor course. We can also run another seamanship course or, for Malcolm's cruising group, a day sailing course ☺.

The junior programme will again be based on the Friday evening, starting in late April with one full day Saturday before the end of the course. Those juniors who have obtained their stage 4 certificates this year may want to have a look at the junior race/coaching programme and, of course, some of the adult courses.

On the powerboat front we will run at least two powerboat 2' courses, one at the beginning and one at the end of the season. I know several people are interested in a safety boat course and I will try to get this sorted before the start of the new season.

If you want further information about any of these courses please feel free to contact me, richard@newcaredevon.co.uk. I will take bookings for places after the programme is published in the new year. I would be particularly interested to hear from those who would be interested in any of the proposed courses, day sailing, dinghy instructor and possibly the RYA performance sailing (an introduction to fast dinghies, trapeze and spinnakers. If there is sufficient interest I can then get these courses set up and into the programme.

Finally, my thanks to all who have helped in particular Noel Davis our chief instructor, all of the instructing team who have given so much of their time over the season and of course Royal Marine Commando Training Centre and the staff at the CTCRM boat house. No club can function without the support and enthusiasm of its members, and our performance this year with the training centre, junior section and in hosting the best national championship the RS fleet has ever had simply shows what a committed, competent and professional bunch of amateurs we are.

Rick Newcombe

Training Centre Principal



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Vice Commodore's Report

I hope most of you have had a good sailing season. In 'Sharima', we have been out as often as possible and have noticed that we appear to have had very little company on several occasions. Maybe everyone has gone out at weekends.

Our House Manager Mark Jones, has been out of action for a few weeks after surgery on his knee and will be having more surgery during the Autumn. We wish him a speedy return to full mobility during the winter months.

The extension of the balcony, together with the second fire escape was completed for use during the summer months and was much appreciated during the RS200 Championship Week. Mike Hill and Chris Perks produced a temporary awning for the patio, with many hours spent in getting an acceptable sheltered area at a reasonable cost; thank you, gentlemen. This was scheduled to have a permanent canopy, but funds were not available in time to get this completed before the championships.

The car parking comes under the umbrella of 'House' and there occasions when use of the car park has been abused. **Please remember to display your car park sticker at ALL TIMES.**

We have 500 memberships each allowed one car park sticker. If you live within a radius of $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the Club you are not allowed a car parking sticker.

Dinghy parking and cruiser parking comes under our berthing marshall, Ivan Wilkinson. Unfortunately, Ivan has missed some of the good sailing weather this year having had major surgery in July. We wish him a steady recovery during the coming months.

Eileen Underhill

Chairman, House Committee

New Catering Arrangements

It is with regret that we announce that Phil the Gap ' has decided to discontinue the catering franchise at Exe Sailing Club with effect from 29th Friday September 2006.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking Phil for all his hard work and commitment shown in building up the catering franchise at the club over the past number of years .

Phil will be remaining with Exe Sailing Club as bar manager.

Moving forward, clearly the provision of the right level of catering services is very important to the club and it's members and it is essential to make the right choice of caterer. In order that we can do this, the management committee will be working over the next few months in drawing up a formal tender and putting the catering franchise up for external tender.

We would hope to have a new franchise arrangement in place by January 2007 .

In the interim, during the winter months, a modified catering service will be available at the club. This will probably be available 1 or possibly 2 nights a week and will be run mainly on a voluntary basis .

We would ask for your understanding and co-operation over the next few months and will let you know as soon as possible details of the new arrangements .

Symon Garratt

Commodore

Management of the Exe - a (real) Progress Report

At last I can report some real progress in the production of acceptable proposals for the management of the estuary. Members will recall that we found that many of the original proposals produced by Exeter City Council unacceptable. Subsequently the Exe Estuary Users Association (EEUA) set about producing an alternative proposal. During the last few months Exeter City Council has been working with the EEUA to produce a compromise proposal for establishing a new authority. At a series of meetings in spring, EEUA members agreed that its representatives should negotiate changes to the draft Harbour Revision Order (HRO) based on four principals or 'Heads of Agreement':-

- 1 No harbour authority moorings licences.
- 2 More user representation on the board.
- 3 Reduced overall costs, and so reduced harbour dues.
- 4 Reduced scope of the harbour authority.

A new draft HRO has now been produced incorporating all of the above conditions and has been agreed by both parties. This is a very wordy document but the main features are as follows:

- Moorings licensing will continue as now i.e. through mooring associations including LEMA.) The Exe Estuary Navigation Authority (EENA), as the new harbour authority will be called, will have the necessary powers to require licensing of moorings but these powers will only become active if a mooring association or land owner wants them to, or if moorings in a particular area are not being managed effectively.



Busy Estuary – River Exe Regatta 2006

- In practice, it is likely that all or at most of the board members will have a direct interest in boating. The HRO requires that half the initial board must either have such an interest, or will have been appointed after consultation with a group representing user interests, such as EEUA. It is

envisioned that board meetings will take place on a rotation basis at club etc premises around the estuary, so ensuring that all boat owners have access to the board and that the board stay in touch with what is happening.

- To reduce costs, voluntary involvement is needed. In addition to a seasonal, part time (paid) Harbour Master (HM), the EENA will appoint voluntary Deputy Harbour Masters from the main clubs and other organisations around the estuary. The DHMs (for example, one of a clubs' commodores or other officers) will be responsible for local issues such as harbour dues collection, communication with the HM, and general overseeing of their 'patch'.
- Costs can be further controlled by reducing the scope of the new authority to that of the "Exe Estuary Navigation Authority". The principal duties of the Authority will relate to safe navigation on the estuary including responsibility for buoyage, lights and hydrographic surveys. The EENA will have overall responsibility for the management and licensing of moorings. The EENA would also have the powers to carry out dredging, removing wrecks, as well as making and enforcing byelaws.

It is estimated that a full professional service would cost £240K per annum; a fully voluntary service, £50K per annum, and the proposed compromise, £100K per annum. Under the government edict "the user pays," the total costs for navigational services must be paid for by boat users. It is currently envisaged that there will be a scale of dues which will be about £35-£65pa for a moored yacht and £8-£10pa for a dinghy.

This is a unique solution to the unique circumstances presented by the Exe and every one of the Heads of Agreement authorised by EEUA members has been met. The new Exe Estuary Navigation Authority will work in very close partnership with the user community. The Department for Transport's Ports Division is aware of the current proposals, and without commenting on its specific merits or otherwise, has indicated that it has no problems with the overall concept in principle.

Work is now being done to modify the business plan and it is expected that the documentation should be ready for formal submission to the Ports Division in November 2006.

Ivan Wilkinson

Hon. Secretary

Dear Exe SC Members,

A very big thank you to everyone who sent me lovely "get well" cards, photographs, letters, books, magazines, telephone calls, and those who visited me. There was even a chart of the Exe which shows the location of the 'Silk Purse By Pass' adjacent to number eight buoy, together with an 'Ode to Ivan' from Eileen Underhill. These have been really appreciated and helped me to get back on the road to recovery. It was good to have so much support and kindness from my friends and members of Exe Sailing Club at a very difficult, unexpected time.

Anne and I particularly thank the crew of 'Silk Purse'; Rex, Julia, Mike and Gill and Brian, for all their help and incredible support, without whom we could not have managed.

It is a long way back to health but I am planning to be back on the water next season and to be fully competitive again. There is even talk of new 'black sails' if I am to catch 'Alibi'!

Although I was not well enough to be directly involved in the progress of the Exe Estuary Harbour Revision Order during the five weeks in hospital and beyond I am now catching up with developments.

The Commodore and Officers of the Club have been fantastic in smoothing the waters and allowing me to recover without any Club pressures, but I am keen to get back in action as soon as my health permits.

Thank you everyone.

Ivan and Anne Wilkinson

Junior Newsletter

Juniors go Wild!

Don't worry committee! This is not a tale of the juniors dismantling the new balcony, or Stuart Birrel's pirates setting fire to the commodore's Trio. In fact, I am writing this report having just got back from Oxford sailing club. For the third year we took a team of boats to the RS200 youth nationals. This year we took five boats: Sam and Archie, Tom (Rainey) and Dale, Tom (Kinver) and April, Jess and Harry and Alice and Ryan. Although we only have seven 200s in the club, we had the best entry of any club at the event. A particular thank you to all the 200 owners who were brave enough to offer the kids the use of their boats. This was a youth event, up to 20, and oldest member of our team was 16. This was their first event in the class and most had sailed the boat only a few times before. Jess and Tom, with their experience of large Cadet fleets got the best results achieving some top 10 finishes. All sailed really well, gained much experience and as always were a credit to their club. They will be back!



Archie Miller concentrating downwind! (Rick Newcombe)

Elsewhere on the same weekend Sam Matson was sailing his Laser 4.7 at a qualifier in the midlands, seeking a place in the Laser National Squad. Oh, and Sam also won a very windy King Cup series, thrashing both me and the McAuslands in final race, force 5 gusting 7! Ben

Comish was charging around in his new 29'er at Hayling with a place in the RYA transitional squad (the step-up from junior to youth sailing) in the bag. Down in Torbay, Emily and Carragh, Alex and Shaun and Katie were racing in a Cadet open/ qualifier for squad selection.

What all this activity goes to show is that the junior section has enjoyed another hugely successful season. The Friday night format of alternate formal training and splashnight has worked well; 75 kids for the final splashnight! Fortunately, Noel brought along a load of fluorescent wrist bands so we could find all the kids we had left in the water. Around 50 kids have completed the RYA youth stage 1-4 awards.

The Thursday junior racing/coaching evening has averaged over 15 boats, with victory in the race series narrowly going to the Cadet of Alex Horlock and Niall Lawson. Great to see many new faces in this fleet. Bill Gott in particular looked very youthful at the beginning of the season as he repeatedly fell out of his Laser. I think we can truly say of Bill that he has tried hard all term and is now showing great promise for the future (yep, grown ups are very welcome to join us)

All of this is of course only possible because of the unstinting voluntary efforts of our teams of instructors, coaches and helpers many of whom are not parents, so as always huge thank you from the junior section to you all, please come back for more punishment next season.

Having mentioned next season we are not finished yet. Club racing will continue at the weekends until Christmas, and juniors are very welcome to join in. If there are enough of you we will ensure that the courses are suitable for slower boats. In addition we propose to hold a series of one day race / coaching days over the winter. See Bob Horlock's bit. As always, watch the notice boards and website for details.

Rick

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Junior Winter Race Training – the eXe Squad

Whilst those juniors fortunate enough to get into the Zone squads can continue to hone their sailing skills over the winter months, those left behind are often to be seen twiddling their thumbs and dreaming of summer days skimming over the water. To attempt to fill this gap this winter we are going to try forming the eXe squad.

Membership will be open to all juniors who have participated in this years Thursday evening racing sessions. The training will take place on one day a month (Oct to Mar) on a day when club racing is not happening. The first 3 dates will be Sat 28 Oct, Sat 25 Nov and Sun 17 Dec. Jan, Feb and Mar dates will be determined when the new tide timetables are published. The format will be similar to that of the Zone Squads with morning and afternoon sessions on the water (training and practice races) and theory when the weather is inclement. We will expect participants to be rigged and ready to sail for 09:30 and we will be off the water by 15:30 ready to finish for the day by 17:00. We are looking for commitment to the six month series from the junior sailors and it will be cold in the middle of winter. A small fee of £10 per sailor will be requested to cover some admin costs.

Have YOU got what it takes to be an eXe Squaddie?

If so see Bob or Rick or send us an e-mail:

bobhorlock@aol.com or richard@newcaredevon.co.uk



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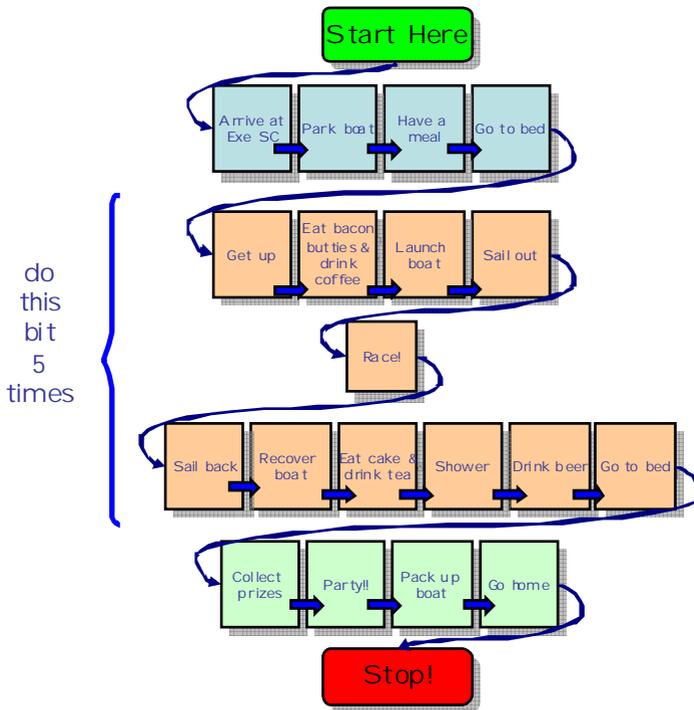
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The RS200 National Championships

The RS200 national championships, held at the club from Sunday 20th until Thursday 24th August, was the biggest sailing event hosted by Exe SC for more than 20 years. With 129 entries, it was also the biggest RS200 championships ever and the biggest two-handed dinghy championships held anywhere in the UK in 2006. It was also an amazingly successful and enjoyable event!

The success is due to the appointment of a first-class team, the thorough preparation before the event and the tremendous efforts of all who helped during the event.

Of course, from a competitor's point of view, it's all very easy ...



A competitor's view of the RS200 Championships

Now let's take a closer look....

Arrive at Exe SC, park boat

Berthing Master Mike Sydenham takes up the story...

As my son sailed an RS200, Mr Best in his inimitable way talked me onto the organising committee for the championships, and then asked me to look after the beach! Not long after, it became apparent that it would not be possible to berth all the boats on the beach at the bottom of Carlton Hill due to the sea wall repair work, and it was decided that we would have to berth them at the Club.

After much pacing around with tape measure in hand, it became apparent that we could get all the boats onto the club site, but there would be no car parking available for members and we would need the co-operation of as many members as possible to remove their own boats for that week – easy! We accommodated anyone who wished to use their boat by placing it in an accessible berth. The majority of members were, fortunately, very co-operative and willing to move their boats.

On the Thursday and Friday before the event, a team of workers moved as many boats as possible from the dinghy park – some were taken to Lavis's boatyard, and others were taken to Spud Rowsell's yard, and yet more were removed to members' gardens.



Part of the dinghy park during the championships (Nigel Walshaw)

At this point we were told we had 129 entries. The dinghy park was duly marked out with 129 berths. The next problem was how to get 129 boats into the sailing club. It was decided to instigate a one-way system – down Camperdown Terrace to the junction of the new road, where they were met by a team of people who unhitched the trailers and took them to their nominated berth, at the same time attaching a tag containing the berthing number and sail number to the trolley. The owner's car was then removed to the rugby club to the organised car parking. This system worked extremely well, due mainly to the club members who spent long hours bringing boats into the club - with the added problem of the security clamping van cruising around all day!

Eat bacon butties, cake, drink tea and coffee...

At several stages during the racing day, competitors and helpers alike needed to refuel. Gilly Newcombe and her team of volunteers ran the daily catering for the event, all from the downstairs kitchen with its one little cooker. As with all good operations, this one was planned well in advance and the ordering of food started two weeks before the event.

I think you'll agree the statistics are impressive:

Over the 5 days of the championships, the RS200 fleet and all the on and off water helpers consumed something like:

- 300 cooked breakfasts (anything from a bacon butty to the full works)



After cooking 60 breakfasts, it's our turn now!

- 600 filled rolls for lunch
- 2,500 portions of various home-made cakes
- Lashings of trifle (but no ginger beer?)
- A humungous quantity of choc ices
- 500 pasties
- 100s of bananas, apples, mars bars, cereal bars etc
- 100s of real Devon cream teas (an emergency resupply of jam had to be arranged on Day 3)
- At least 5,000 cups of tea or coffee (that's over 200 gallons)



The same team also prepared the puddings for the evening meals. Little wonder that Gilly and her team attracted the highest accolades from the competitors at the prizegiving.

Launch boat, recover boat

Back to Mike Sydenham.. Then came the problem of the best way to launch 129 boats off Shelley Beach, ensuring the trolleys were left in a safe and convenient position so that each crew could find its own trolley on coming ashore. Once again, a team of trolley dollies and wallies worked extremely hard in taking launching trolleys from people as they launched and returning them when they came ashore. The 129 boats were launched in under 30 minutes – much to the utter amazement of all the sailors, who had never experienced anything as efficient! The trolleys were then sorted and put into rows of ten trolleys in numerical order.



On the sailors' return to the beach, there were lists of sail numbers with berthing numbers, and as a boat came into view, the sail number was checked and the trolley was then taken to the boat as it arrived on the shore. When the sheer number of boats at any one time overwhelmed the helpers,

the crews would shout out their tally number and the trolley was then taken to them.

The team on the beach were superb, always kept a smile on their faces and wished the competitors good luck, even on the day we all experienced torrential rain at launch time!



Sydenham & Hill will fix it! (Nigel Walshaw)

Sail out, race, sail back



"The race team afloat was led by our unflappable race officer, Phil Morrison, who did a very professional job and of course managed to get a full set of races completed." Steve Best

Phil was ably assisted by John Evans, of Topsham SC, and the committee was based on "Trinitas", kindly loaned by Richard Jacobs.



Safety cover on the water was coordinated and managed by Chris Perks, supported by a fleet of ribs from the club, club members, Starcross YC and the Royal Marines.

"Mother ships" were also on the water, in the form of member's yachts and the Royal Marines' landing craft.



Marks were laid by Jan Morrison, assisted by Graham Sykes, who was there to make sure his excellent marks were properly looked after.

Drink beer (and Pimms, wine etc etc)

Bar chairman Martin Minter had a very good week, assisted by an energetic team of assistant bar persons. Takings over the championships were more than £10,000 – of which £2,500 passed over the bar during the final, prizegiving, evening.

Party!!

This activity is, of course, closely related to the previous one. It can reasonably be said that the RS200 fleet know how to party! The opening event was the civic reception on the Sunday evening. It's probably just as well that no pictures of the real, hard-core partying were submitted for publication.



Collect Prizes

In order to work out who should collect which prizes you first have to work out the results because, as we all know, it's the points that make the prizes. Points calculator-in-chief for this event was Malcolm Elliott:



Clubhouse packed to the rafters for the prizegiving – Malcolm is in the front row.

In previous championships I had always been on the committee boat, initially as a recorder, then as the time-keeper. David Rose, who was expecting a call for surgery at any time, had always produced the results but could not commit to doing so this time. As I thought I was reasonably computerate, it seemed the next logical step for me to take over from him. Unfortunately for David, but fortunately for me, his call for admission never came. Without his help I would have sunk without trace.

At the initial team meetings I was advised that the program 'Sailwave' was the complete answer to everything. I downloaded it at home, transferred it to the club's computer and after a few trial runs, and a session with David, was confident I knew all about it. This sophisticated program makes use of a large amount of competitor information, and can be structured to produce results in exact accordance with the sailing instructions and organisers' requirements.

More than 100 competitors were expected and, with each one needing to have tally number, sail number, helm's and crew's first name and surname, club and fleet class entered, this two finger tylist needed to have the data well in advance of the first day. Charlotte England, the RS Association's professional administrator, helpfully e-mailed me with details of the entrants as they registered. These were transferred by floppy disc to the club's computer and all was ready to go well before the start of the first race.



Class Chairman Pete Vincent & the table groaning with prizes!

The final number of entrants was 127 and with very close finishes, the starting/recording team of Mickie Ward, Jackie Thomas, Jill Morrison and John Evans was kept busy throughout their time on the water. It was necessary to check and cross check the two recording sheets to produce the final master copy, which was then handed over for me to key into the computer. This done,

and the results printed out within the hour, I could relax with a glow of satisfaction and go

home. An hour later a call from Beach Master Ken Hill destroyed any hope of a quiet evening. Sailwave had not added the results of the first two races together correctly and the placings were rubbish! Quickly back at the Club I printed the races out separately, without the series placing and went home for some serious head scratching.

Getting up at 4.45 am after a poor night I transferred the results into Excel, produced a simple formula to obtain the series placings, and was down at the Club before any of the competitors had surfaced.

David came in, solved my problem with Sailwave, and I felt sure all would be well. Mickie and her team brought in the result sheets for races 3 & 4 and these were quickly entered onto the computer. The series was updated and printed out. The program worked – partially! Discards were correctly allocated and displayed in brackets, but not excluded from the total, which meant the series result was again rubbish. I just printed out the individual race results and went home for another sleepless night. By 9.00am Rick Newcombe, Mike Rice, Ken Hill & I were sat in the office wondering just where I had gone wrong. It was Mike who came up with the answer. I had selected 'total' for the final column instead of 'nett'. Correcting that produced a perfect publication, and from then on it was all plain sailing.

On the third, fourth and fifth days results were brought in by Mickie and her team, any possible anomalies identified, and then put on the computer to be

published all within an hour or so. The provisional result was occasionally modified as a result of a protest, and on one occasion a helmsman was given redress from a DNF score on production of witnesses to confirm that he had indeed finished just ahead of them. It was all very easy and amicable, and served to demonstrate what an extremely difficult time the recorders had when a bunch of close finishers came in blanketing each other's sail numbers, even though there was another boat recording at the opposite end of the line, and John Evans recording into a dictaphone on the Committee Boat.

So, for the last three days Sailwave behaved perfectly, and by 6.00 pm on the last day I was able to hand the final result to the RS Association Chairman, Pete Vincent. E-mails had been sent daily to Charlotte (who had discovered a free internet wireless link in a corner of the dining room), and to Mike Rice, for publication on the web sites, and I could finally relax.

To sum up it was, for me, an intensely rewarding experience. I am extremely grateful to David, Mike and Rick for all their help and encouragement. I am proud to have been part of such a well-organised team and to be a member of such a happy, friendly Club.

All credit is due to Steve Best for organising such an exceptionally successful event.

Pack up boat, go home

Mike Sydenham again...

Twenty-five double stack trailers were also brought to the club, but as there was no room to keep them there, they were all taken to the rugby club. A problem could be seen in as much as 25 people trying to get their double trailers and cars back into the club car park on the final day to load their boats

From: Ajfwitham@aol.com

To: escwebmaster

Just a note to say thanks to all at Exe Sailing Club for a tremendous week. I know it isn't easy to organise but we were made to feel that nothing was too much trouble.

We will be back when you host the championships next time.

Many thanks to you all.

Regards

Tony Witham

1040

would cause mayhem. And so, after the boats were launched on the final day and we had sorted out the trolleys, Martin Wallbank, Andy Nelms, Ian Upton and myself pulled all the double stack trailers back to the club ready for the crews when they returned.

I can only just say a big "thank you" to all the people who assisted in moving boats from the dinghy park, greeting competitors and assisting in bringing their boats into the dinghy park, and then sorting the launch trolleys out on a daily basis. Although this was hard work, and involved long hours, we did have a laugh and I think most thoroughly enjoyed themselves. It shows the true spirit of the majority of Exe Sailing Club members!

And in the end...

The final word has to come from Steve Best, the event chairman, who pulled together the efforts of this large and enthusiastic team..



The change of venue from the beach to the club unfortunately disrupted members but actually made the championships easier to run and provided much more revenue for our club. The costs involved in using the sea front would have been considerable, as they would have included providing all night security, mini buses to run competitors between beach and club, providing changing and beachmaster facilities and of course fencing off the whole area. The class had expressed concerns about the extra distance from the club but in the event proved no obstacle.

The clearing of the club to make room for the visiting boats was a major undertaking but with the persuasion of Mike Sydenham and loan of land by two past commodores, Spud Rowsell and Ron Lavis, went relatively smoothly. My thanks to the many members who took their boats home for the week, without whose cooperation it would have been impossible to make the space.

The on-shore facilities were very well received, in particular the kitchen team led by Gillie Newcombe who provided wonderful fresh cakes and snacks not to mention the slimming breakfasts. Thank you ladies for all your tremendous hard work.

The trolley teams were very well received and all the e mails received from the class mentioned how helpful that was we call the ladies trolley dollies but are still seeking a definitive name for the men (*Mike S called them wallies - Ed*).

The results team led by Malcolm Elliot were under pressure to start with but with one early start of 5.45am for Malcolm they were ready before the sailors arrived. The Beach Master team under the control of Ken Hill did a thoroughly efficient job and endeared themselves to the sailors on the days they provided choc ices on tallying off.

The house team under the control of Mike Hill did a marvellous job in keeping the club clean and tidy and the drains running. Mike was always around to open up in the morning or to lock up at night when necessary.

From: Murphy, Richard P (GE Money)
[Richard.P.Murphy@ge.com]
To: Exe Sailing Club
I'm now back at my desk after a wonderful week's sailing in my first ever nationals.
I just wanted to drop a note to all of the people at Exe SC who did such a fantatsic job at feeding us, launching us, keeping us safe, setting great courses and entertaining us.
The organisation was impeccable and the friendliness and welcome we received from the club will stick in the mind for a long time to come.
Thanks also for sorting some great wind for us!!
All the best and thanks once again,
Richard Murphy

The camping at the Rugby Club worked well and surely helped to increase the entry. However, I would suggest that another time we let the class deal direct with the club as there were a few niggles regarding where the campers had set up and we had to provide a portable loo at the last minute as it had become necessary for the club to shut their facilities at night as they had been vandalised previously when left open, My sincere thanks to the member who cleared the blockage and tidied up the portaloos.

We were very fortunate in the support we received from Exmouth Town Council (including a grant towards the reception), the loan of committee boat Trinitas, mother ships, the support of Starcross Yacht Club in providing ribs and drivers, the Royal Marines again in providing ribs and their landing craft as back up, members who provided ribs, Raymond Brown for sponsoring the portacabin changing room, and the many members who loaned items from ice makers to fridges and freezers. Our thanks must go to Solar Safe for sponsoring the crew shirts which helped us to look a very professional team.

I believe the club has done a very professional job and should be proud of what they have achieved the comments of the competitors speak for themselves they have provided a memento picture with many comment which say it all the picture is in the upstairs club room ,the chairman asked me who to pick out for particular thanks at the prizegiving I explained it was a team effort so they promptly put a £100 behind the bar towards the helpers' party.

Finally, the club made in excess of £12,000 profit from the week, nearly bringing a smile to our treasurer's face.

Congratulations and thanks to all for making such a success of the week.

Steve Best



Cruiser Report

I am starting to write this on one of my favourite anchorages, just below the Anchor Stone on the River Dart. This is a truly beautiful tranquil spot with views of tree clad hills and Agatha Christie's boat house/plunge pool. Many Exe SC members were spotted on the Dart this year: Reg & Maureen in "Feasibility" (still take 1st Prize for being there most of the season!), Guy in "Yendor", Mike & Eileen in "Sharima", Ray in his new boat "Sandpiper" and more recently, now that he has a new engine, Robin in "Goldie".

Another of my favourite free anchorages is on the River Avon which can be entered about 1 1/2 hours before high water just to the east of Burgh Island in Bigbury Bay. With an evening high tide I have



Summer Wine first in Newlyn? See PBO Oct 06 for the full story

managed to get there in one day from my mooring on the Exe by leaving early and picking up the favourable tide in Start Bay. If your boat can dry out, this is a gem of the South West, and not to be missed.

My main cruise this summer was to the Isles of Scilly. It was a solo jaunt this time as "Goldie"

was engineless. Luckily the weather was calm, unfortunately too calm for much sailing, and but for some mist round the Lizard and many basking sharks to avoid it was an easy passage. This year I avoided paying vast mooring fees in St Mary's and anchored for free. My third superb anchorage must be Green Bay on the west shore of Bryher. Another drying anchorage but well protected from most directions. I met up with John and Janet on "Seahorse" in Falmouth (thanks for the white wine) and Tony and Sandra on "Maresa" in the Scillies. They had two weeks of wonderful weather there this year.

It would be good to hear about your favourite anchorages and overnight stopping places too. We could perhaps compile a handout for new members?

Ken Bolt in "Scott Free" has been day sailing a lot this year and his distinctive red hull is often to be seen off the Parson and Clerk and elsewhere off the Exe.

Eileen and Mike Underhill in "Sharima" have also done lots of day sailing this season and met up with their son in Falmouth. They say Falmouth still offers good value to visiting yachtsmen unlike Fowey and Salcombe.

Ray Winter in "Sandpiper" had a meeting with a mini tornado off Plymouth which turned the boat through 180 degrees and tore his foresail.

Bob Glanfield in "Sea Melody" had a successful cruise to Biscay and back only to get a rope round his prop off the Warren which led to his boat being quite seriously damaged.

Bob Green in "Hiva Oa" joined in the Wine Run this year and continued on to Omonville, Dielette, Carteret, St.Peter Port, Sark and Alderney. He writes: "I was also lucky to be invited on a Hallberg Rassy 39, "NIBO", for two legs of a Round Britain cruise. Firstly from Leith to the Orkneys and back to Inverness. Then I rejoined in Coleraine for a 500 mile trip around the West Coast of Ireland to Bantry Bay. We had some very heavy weather sailing so I was pleased to be on a proper ocean-going yacht. Spectacular scenery! We also had three dolphins with us for 4 hours from Lough Swilly to Bloody Foreland.

I expect that many of you know that John Walpole's boat "Reality" was broken into and lots of gear stolen on a Saturday night in August. Hopefully this was a one off, although this does not help John at all. We can all imagine how dreadful such an event must be for the owner.

Do you have a problem with diesel? This report has been written by Mike Underhill and submitted by a well known Vice-Commodore, cabin boy, navigator and galley slave often found aboard "Sharima":

For years now, the accepted wisdom has been, that when laying up boats at the end of the season, diesel tanks should be topped up to 'full' in order to prevent contamination - diesel fuel being hydroscopic. Should we now re-think this strategy?

Various organizations (including those selling 'miracle' additives) are saying that diesel fuels now have a shelf life of only 3 months. This is said to be because, in order to fulfil demand, refineries are using lower grades of crude oil to make it. So, should we use as much as possible before the end of the season and leave our tanks empty, or nearly so, in order to prevent worse contamination than we had before. The further complication this year is that we still don't know whether we shall be allowed to go on using Red Diesel next year. The European Commissioners' initial position is that, in general, it considers that the arguments in favour of extending the derogation "are not justified".

Not hopeful! So, if we leave our tanks empty, it may cost us twice as much to fill them up at the start of next season. Has anybody any answers? (See October PBO for their latest information on red diesel.)

Lift in dates are: Wall-Saturday 7 October and Dock- Friday 13 October.

Briefing Meeting 20.00 hrs on Wednesday 4 October.

Cruiser AGM: Thursday 23 November at 7 pm.

Finally I am stepping down as Cruiser Captain at the end of the year so please send any nominations to Symon as soon as possible.

Mike Harland, Cruiser Captain



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The Wine Run, 8-11 June 2006

Seven boats started and six arrived. It might seem careless that we lost one but it must have been doubly frustrating for the crew of Stardust who, having been obliged to make a late start due to work commitments, had to endure punishing south easterly head winds. They eventually chose the more sensible and comfortable option of a weekend coastal cruise.

Those who 'made it' to Cherbourg experienced varied conditions ranging from several hours motoring in flat calm conditions to some exhilarating sailing along the Normandy coast.

The crews of Speculator 2, with John Todd, Peter Butler and yours truly on board and Papagoy, crewed by David Bernard and Ian Watson, were fortunate in being able to depart on Wednesday evening. The mooring was dropped at 18.45 and we motored down-channel on a falling tide with the customary one eye on the echo sounder and the other ensuring we didn't miss the pronounced dog-leg in the channel between numbers eight and six buoys.



Nous sommes arrivees!

Our arrival at East Exe Buoy heralded the fact that 'Sodde's Law' was alive and well as we were greeted by a breeze right on the nose! Nevertheless, to the accompaniment of the rather intrusive throb of our trusty diesel we made good time and picked up a buoy in Braye Harbour, Aldemey at 07.45 on Thursday morning; an average speed of some 5.7 knots. We were followed a couple of

hours later by Papagoy who had been shadowing us for the whole trip.

After a trip ashore to stretch our legs and obtain additional provisions for our evening meal we cast-off at 14.50 in order to catch the tidal window to sluice us eastwards towards Cherbourg. We were rewarded with an exhilarating sail with our speed over the ground showing in excess of ten knots at times. Despite periodic stops no mackerel fought their way onto our hook and so we shall have to wait for another day before christening our newly acquired smoker.

As Friday progressed we were joined by Alert whose new owner Chris Perks had managed to cram in Mike Hill, John Hughes and Tony Hewitt, Hiva Oa with those intrepid mariners Bob and Trevor on board, Iggy Wigg crewed by Ken Hill, Stuart Sansom and Neal Ward and Steve Threlfall with crew Chris in his classically styled Hustler 35, Aeglos.

All told some seventeen persons sat down to an excellent meal in the Yacht Club. Those choosing the starter of plat de fruits de mer were rewarded by a meal in itself which apart from the usual goodies of langoustines and crab claws seemed to include a wide selection of unidentifiable shellfish and molluscs!

Due to the absence of certain regular Wine Run participants the Yacht Club were spared our usual attempts at karaoke. I don't think



we disgraced ourselves but I do recollect we were the last to leave!

We did not leave Cherbourg completely unscathed as, regrettably, one of the crew of Speculator infringed the harbour bylaws with an attempted 'walk on water'. He was reported to have said later that he was distracted by the parrot on board Papagoy!

An early-evening meal ashore and early turn-in preceded a Sunday morning cast-off at the unseemly hour of 04.20. The East Channel Light Buoy, marking the centre of the separation zone, was spotted on port beam at 08.00 and 18.00 saw us unloading in Exmouth Marina entrance. And, oh yes, we had a head wind for most of the return passage!

The Wine Run is, of course incomplete without the Wine Tasting Competition. This was held some ten days later. The winning crew entries in the three price categories were:

3 euros	Iggywigg
6 "	Speculator
9 "	Alert

My thanks are due to our commodore, Symon Garratt, who unselfishly dragged himself away from a rather important football match to present the winners with their prizes.

Thank you also to those who supported the event by taking part and to those back home who provided us with food, both for the trip and for the Wine Tasting.

Hope to see you on next year's Wine Run

David Palfreman

'Speculator 2'





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The Falmouth 500

The inaugural Falmouth 500 race took place this July. The race was for single- or double-handed entries and non-stop from Falmouth to a waypoint off Ushant, around the Fastnet Rock and back to Falmouth. Originally envisaged as a 500 nautical mile qualifier for those wanting to do the AZAB (Azores And Back) in 2007, it became an open event and I had entered in my Westerly Fulmar, Red Rider. Together with enthusiastic crew Ian Watson, we slipped my mooring late on Friday 30th June and arrived in Falmouth the following morning.

The race started on Sunday afternoon, 2nd July, between Falmouth's Black Rock and Pendennis point – an interesting addition to the usual sailing instructions was to avoid basking sharks in the bay as they were “unaware of the collision regulations”! The day was heavy and humid, with thunder and lightening, but initially a decent south easterly breeze. This became light and variable but picked up again and we made good progress under cruising chute and then spinnaker as nightfall fell. It then started raining and soon there was thunder and lightening, the latter streaking down to the sea and momentarily illuminating the darkness around us: for brief moments we would clearly see other competitors, and a panoply of fishing boats and cargo ships. In the early hours the wind again became variable and we tacked and gybed with the wind shifts, struggling to maintain speed and course.

By early morning, still raining but with the thunder and lightning having passed by, we were close to our waypoint off Ushant. We were unable to use the north Ushant cardinal buoy as a turning point for safety reasons and instead had a specific latitude and longitude to aim for and had to take a photograph of our GPS as proof of reaching this waypoint. I think we all made the mistake of regarding these co-ordinates as though they were some sort of race mark! However, there was no cross on the water or race can to aim for and in the light of the early dawn several of us could be seen meandering around trying to line up the required coordinates on our GPSs!

Waypoint reached and photograph taken, we then made off for the next mark, the Fastnet Rock some 200 nautical miles north west. Initially on a close reach we had the cruising chute up and made good progress. The rain had persisted and was now heavy and the day was dull and grey. Gradually the wind shifted and built so that we had to take the cruising chute down and faced a long beat to

windward. During the early part of the night the wind strengthened and we put in a reef, then later shortened the genoa. The sea developed a short steep chop and, in the darkness and rain, it was hard to avoid slamming into troughs so that both helming and off watch sleeping became challenges. At 03.40 on the Tuesday morning the wind hiked up to 30 knots with more in the gusts and we put in a second reef and shortened the genoa further. Another competitor nearby registered gusts of 40 knots at this time and it was feeling like a real slog to the Fastnet Rock.

Coming into the new dawn and as the day wore on the wind eased. By 08.30 the rain finally stopped and twelve hours later we sighted the Fastnet Rock some 7 miles distant. It looked as though we were going to reach the Fastnet in daylight but, frustratingly, the wind continued to diminish so that by nightfall we were desperately making the most of any zephyrs to edge closer. By midnight we were completely becalmed and drifting very slowly away from the Fastnet on the tide. We lowered the sails to ease our nerves from their constant slapping. I think we were both tired from lack of sleep and the effort of trying to keep some momentum in the light airs and could hardly believe that, 24 hours after being in strong winds we were now becalmed – such is sailing in British waters! At about 01.45 there was a rustle of wind and we quickly hoisted sail, moved about a mile towards the Fastnet before it dropped again, then the wind returned and we were round the Fastnet at around 04.00.

Now on a broad reach, as dawn broke we found ourselves among a group of 6 fellow competitors – we hadn't noticed them in the darkness and were amazed to think we had come all that way and so many of us were so close together. Tired though we were, we decided to put the pressure on and in the early light of dawn hoisted our spinnaker. The groan from the other yachts was almost audible as, slowly and one after the other, they responded by hoisting their own spinnakers. As the day wore on the wind increased to about 15 – 20 knots and we were sailing fast. The wind moved more astern so that it was a dead run, not an easy point of sail for my fractional rig, and the sea was building. The first spinnaker wrap, tight around the forestay, was tough and took us about half an hour to clear. We regained our breath and composure then re-hoisted. An hour later, another spinnaker wrap and it took the full effort of both of us on deck to clear it but more time had been lost and, although we were maintaining 6 knots on just the main sail, we were drifting south of our track each time. It couldn't happen a third time could it? We re-hoisted yet again, and yes it could happen a third time! Despite



It's a wrap!

using barber hauls and pointing a little higher to try and prevent swaying of the spinnaker, each wrap had been worse than the one before, each taking more time and effort to sort out. The third wrap was a real clincher – we heaved and pulled, tacked and gybed, in an effort to free it but all to no avail. A fellow competitor sailed by, we

thought to offer some moral support or something but he just took a few photographs! There were two huge balloons in the spinnaker and the sea and wind were continuing to build. After an hour of struggling we suddenly noticed, at a certain point of sail, a loosening of the lower wrap and took advantage of this, slowly freeing it. We then managed to tackle the upper wrap but tore the foot of the spinnaker in our efforts. By now, however, we were well south of our track and, with the forecast of the wind turning from west to south west, decided to go south of the Scilly Isles rather than try and make up lost ground to go between the Scillies and Land's End.

We heard the Irish coastguard responding to a Mayday during the night, saw a couple of fishing boats and a cable layer but otherwise had the Western Approaches to ourselves. Throughout the night we maintained around 7 knots and passed close to Bishop's Rock, the southern most point in the Scilly Isles, by early morning. The wind then became light and variable and the sky behind us darkened: we hoped this would presage the coming of the forecasted south westerly wind which would have been a good broad reach for ourselves. However, the wind picked up but stayed persistently in the west throughout the day and we continued on a dead run. Having repaired the foot of the spinnaker with tape, we hoisted but after a few hours felt there was better speed goose-winging. I was disappointed at having gone south of the Scillies and especially as the wind had not changed as forecast. As we rounded the Lizard in

the late evening, we started to hear other yachts from the race notifying the coastguard of their imminent arrival. The wind started to increase and, on a fairly close reach, we put up the cruising chute. We bowled along to the finish line at 8.5 knots. As the finish line between Black Rock and St. Anthony's Head lighthouse came closer the night began to draw in and we realised that we had a slight problem: because of a tangle with the cruising chute snuffer a few days before, I had taken this off. Now I wasn't sure how to get the cruising chute down without it! So, 50 meters from the finish line, we dropped the chute like a spinnaker. The chute came down too quickly and went in the water, stopping us instantly. With some embarrassment, and pleased it was now dark and there were no witnesses nearby, we retrieved the sail and crossed the finish line a little before 22.00 on the Thursday.

The next evening was the prize-giving, and a real surprise for Ian and myself. Despite having done extra miles going south of the Scillies, Red Rider took third place in her class.

Neil Matson



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Petit Bateau Single-handed Race Week

The PB2006 single-handed race week took part in late August (20th – 26th) and was entered by Neil Matson in his Westery Fulmar, Red Rider. The race, with 30 entrants from Holland, Ireland and Scotland as well as England, consisted of a number of legs held on consecutive days over the course of the week: Weymouth – Alderney, Alderney – St. Peter's Port, St. Peter's Port – Tregieur, Tregieur – Fowey, Fowey – Falmouth, and a final day of racing in Falmouth bay.

There was a wide range of yachts – including Open 40s, Figaros, Js (92, 105, 110), JODs, - with very competitive racing by experienced sailors (many having recently completed the Round Britain Race, and last years OSTAR). Weather conditions were often tough for single-handed sailing with head winds on many legs from force 5 – 7. Neil completed the 54 nm leg from Weymouth – Alderney in just over 7 hours. The night crossing from Tregieur to Fowey was perhaps especially difficult with a north westerly 7, rain, thunder, lightning, busy shipping lanes to negotiate, but the most amazing visual display of phosphorescence creating a surreal atmosphere.

By the end of the week 16 competitors remained. Neil came second in his open class and joint first on points in the IRC 3 class but given second place as he was beaten by OSTAR veteran Richard Hatton on the tie breaker leg.

Petit Bateau is a group dedicated to single or short-handed racing and has a web site: www.petitbateau.org.uk

Neil Matson

As this article was going to press an email was received, an extract of which follows:

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>The only change in the final prizes is in class IRC3 where Red  
Rider  
>now takes first place. Results on the website are now correct.
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Congratulations, Neil!!

Social update

A quick round-up of what's happening on the social front over the next few months:

Sat 21st Oct Laying Up Supper

Thu 23rd Nov RNLi Fund Raising Event

Sun 17th Dec Carol Singing

21st Dec Mainly Members Musical Evening

Tue 26th Dec Boxing Day Challenge

Sun 31st Dec New Years Eve Party

Sat 3rd Feb 07 Annual Dinner Dance & Prize Giving



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Caption Competition

Most of you will know that the RS200 championships was attended by two teams from Japan, both from Hayama Yacht Club, not far from Tokyo. It is heart-warming to see the efforts Rick Newcombe was making to put our guests at their ease and make them feel at home, but what on earth is he pointing out to them here?



Your caption here!

Answers please to the editor by 4th November. A selection of the most appropriate, amusing (and printable) captions will appear in the next issue. A bottle of wine will be awarded for the one which makes the editor laugh longest and loudest!

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