



MOCRA 2018 Review



Officers Reports • Race Reports • Cruising Reports


GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

2019 IS THE GOLDEN JUBILEE FOR MOCRA, WHICH WE THINK IS SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE. WE ARE PLANNING EVENTS AROUND THE REGIONS AND AT THE AGM TO MARK THE OCCASION. THE EVENTS WILL BE PART OF:

1. **SOUTH WEST: THE NATIONALS IN PLYMOUTH
30TH MAY – 2ND JUNE**
2. **SCOTLAND: ROUND MULL RACE
28TH – 30TH JUNE (TO BE CONFIRMED)**
3. **EAST COAST: BANK HOLIDAY WEEKEND OF BURNHAM WEEK
24TH - 26TH AUGUST**
4. **SOLENT: BEMBRIDGE REGATTA,
7TH – 8TH SEPTEMBER**
5. **MOCRA AGM AT ROYAL THAMES YACHT CLUB, LONDON
23RD NOVEMBER**

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR DIARY. THE DETAILS HAVE YET TO BE FINALIZED, SO IF YOU HAVE IDEAS OF WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO, PLEASE LET US KNOW.



 www.mocra-sailing.org.uk



For 2019 MOCRA membership remains at £25.

The cost of a rating certificate remains at £26.

Anyone requesting a Rating will need to be a MOCRA member.

Selling your boat?

Just a reminder.....

If you as a MOCRA member sell your boat to someone in the UK you can give the new owner a FREE year's membership of MOCRA.

If you would like to email me at mrdrwlee@gmail.com then I will send you the application form.

The membership will be for the remainder of the calendar year and a MOCRA Rating certificate is not included.

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Editors Note

This is your Annual Review. We can only publish the articles you write. So please think during the coming season if there is anything you could write up to share with other members. So also a big thank-you to all our contributors in this edition.

Fair Winds **Matthew West**

Commodore's Report 2018

Looking back over the 2018 sailing season it has to be remembered as the summer of sunshine and occasional sea breezes. For MOCRA it has been a year of steady growth in membership and consolidation of established and growing fleets in the East, South West and thankfully the Solent. A great indicator of the rejuvenation of MOCRA racing has been the issue of 30 new rating certificates to boats that had not previously had a MOCRA rating. All in all it's fair to say that our 49th year has been a good year!

Nonetheless, in common with many other associations we do still struggle to get the numbers at cruiser rallies and race regattas back to a level we enjoyed 10 or so years ago.

Thank you to those who replied to the members' questionnaire sent out in 2017. The objective of the questionnaire was to try and find out what members are looking for from their Association. The feedback found that a only a handful of members do more than 50+ days sailing a year, the majority 10-20 days and quite a number less than 10. Bembridge continues to be a popular venue and with the pressures of modern day life the preference for racing appears to be for a few, well attended weekend events with a social aspect included. Interestingly we are seeing steady growth in numbers interested in the RORC Offshore events spearheaded by Simon Baker and other Dazcat owners.

2018 has seen the smaller end of the MOCRA fleet dominating the major inshore regattas. Congratulations to Nigel Talbot on Nitric for a convincing win in the MOCRA Nationals in Poole. Nigel had 5 first places and 2 seconds. After 10 hours of concentrated effort and blazing sunshine, Origami helmed by Nick Wood again won the Round The Island Race from a fleet of 25 MOCRA boats. Nick also won the Multihull class at Royal Burnham Week and Nigel also won the Bembridge Regatta. On the offshore scene it's been the domain of the larger MOCRA boats. Congratulations to Peter Aschenbrenner on Paradox for winning the Caribbean 600 in particularly challenging conditions which saw only 4 finishers from 11 starters in the MOCRA fleet. Chapeau to our octogenarian President, Mike Butterfield - Mike once again took part in the Caribbean 600 but sadly had to retire due to gear failure on Dazzla, as did Nigel Passmore on Apollo and David Liddell on Wow. A special mention for Shaun Carroll on Morticia - a modified SeaCart 30 who somehow managed to complete the 600 miles on surely the smallest and wettest boat in the race.



The 2018 Round Britain & Ireland Race saw strong representation from our SW members with five entered in the Multihull class. Congratulations to Simon Baker (Biffa) and crew who once again took this title.

At last year's Annual Prize giving dinner we heard from Mike Golding OBE, a three times world champion, multiple record holder and past multihull sailor on Formula 40's, Extreme 40's and single-handed Transat and RBI competitor on his small trimaran, Gazelle. At this year's AGM and dinner on Saturday November 17th I'm delighted that Mike Samuelson was our guest speaker. Mike is a long-term friend of MOCRA having organised the very successful Bembridge Regattas for us for many years. Mike is a tremendous speaker and shared many tales from his life-long love of sailing, his days in the Marines, The Falkland Conflict and his involvement with the RNLI. It was a fascinating evening and to continue the RNLI link the AGM and dinner this year was held at the RNLI College in Poole.

Looking ahead into 2019 we have something special to celebrate with MOCRA's 50th birthday. The Executive Committee welcome your suggestions on how we should celebrate this "Golden Anniversary". Ideas so far include having appropriately themed (and financially supported) regattas in each of the principal race areas, a passage race/cruise and a celebratory dinner, possibly in London with presentations in the afternoon.

We already have confirmation that the RWYC in Plymouth will host our 2019 National Championship on 30th May to 2nd June. Plymouth Sound is a superb racing and cruising area, and do I urge everyone to come along and join us.

Finally, a plea to all members. Your Executive Committee members are all volunteers and we have all served on your committee for many, many years. It would be wonderful if we could encourage some new faces onto the Committee both to ring the changes and to share the workload. If anyone is interested, please do get in touch. Thank you.

May 2019 bring sunshine on your face, warm breeze on your back and favourable tides under your keel.

Phil Cotton
Commodore

Rating Secretary's Report

The MOCRA Racing Committee considered proposed amendments to the Rating Rule for 2018.



These were reviewed against race results and amendments made to the measurement of boat length (harmonising with Multi 2000 Rule), the effect of boat length, the propeller correction factor and a factor added for canting masts.

89 MOCRA Ratings were issued for 2018, excluding 6 complimentary ratings for the Bridgedeck Cruiser Class in the ISC Round the Isle of Wight Race. The certificates were emailed to the boat owners and have been published on the website.

A couple of multihulls were weighed during the year using the MOCRA Loadcell.

Simon Forbes,
MOCRA Rating Secretary

Membership Secretary Report

The membership currently breaks down as follows – 2 life members and 183 paying members. There are 9 people who pay MOCRA a sum but as it is below the current membership fee they are not classed as members.

Looking at the historic numbers –

2015 177 members

2017 188 members

2018 185 members

The figures suggest a reasonably stable situation.

In 2015 there were around 50 members who had not fully paid up. Of those, a handful are now paying the full subscription and the rest have left or retired perhaps because of age or simply because they are not sailing multihulls anymore.

There are currently around 120 people who pay by BACS at the start of the year and are best considered to be the core members. Few of these have a racing handicap.

The other 63 members include organisations such as the Brazilian



Multihull group who use the MOCRA rating as a basis for racing, and then predominantly non-UK members. They nearly all have a handicap and it would seem logical to assume that is why they join. In 2015 they numbered 35, and in 2018 this has increased to 41.

Whilst there is some consistency in the names, particularly for the larger multis / Ultimes, the majority would appear to be joining because of their racing plans. This is not only for RORC races but also for racing in the Adriatic. There are a small number of UK members who only join when they need a handicap and then lapse membership. It is therefore difficult to always tell if a member is a “new” member or simply someone who wants to

race this year; at a guess there are 5 new “members”.

There are currently still 35 members for whom we do not have an email address; it would be greatly appreciated that if you are one of this group if you could provide one please.

I am standing down at the AGM and would like to take this opportunity to thank Matthew for providing a strong administrative base and Simon Forbes without whose help keeping membership records would be tricky.

Bruce Sutherland
Membership Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer's report on MOCRA Accounts for period ending 31 December 2017. This report reflects the change to our financial year end, from 31 August to 31 December as agreed at the 2016 AGM and therefore, covers the period from 31 August 2016 to 31 December 2017. Subsequent financial accounts will coincide with the calendar year.



The audited statement of this financial report covers a 16-month period and is therefore not strictly comparable to previous years.

While there are explanatory notes within the accounts, I nevertheless wish to comment upon the following:

Income

Income receipts from Membership Subscriptions are in line with previous years, and as the majority of subscriptions

are received within the first couple of months of the calendar year the comparison with 2016 and 2015 is acceptable.

However, receipts from Racing Ratings are noticeably more volatile from year-to-year depending upon the domestic and overseas racing calendar, in addition to fluctuations in the absolute numbers of entrants.

Due to lack of volunteers to help with finding, contacting and chasing potential advertisers, there was no revenue from advertising this year.

Expenditure

Publication costs are notably lower than in previous years due to changes in production and printer services.

Expenditure associated with racing is a new item within the accounts. This shows that the cost to MOCRA from Racing is covered by income generated from Racing Ratings.

In addition, website costs also appear as a new item as we anticipate that this is likely to grow in future.

Elsewhere, the historically high expenditure associated with the AGM/ Dinner is due to there being two over the 16-months accounting period and includes the costs of having a couple of high-profile speakers - Sarah Ayton and Mike Golding.

Balance Sheet

Current Liabilities refer to fees yet to be paid to our Auditor.

Reappointment of Auditor

I am pleased to say that the auditor is prepared to be reappointed for another year, and I recommend that we do so appoint him.

Summary

Overall, the MOCRA finances are reasonably healthy with expenditure closely aligned to - but not fully covered - by income. Furthermore, the accumulated funds within the Balance Sheet are in excess of one year's expenditure.

Tim Wilson
Honorary Treasurer

Racing Secretary's Report

2018 has been the year of no wind with the odd short and sharp gale or storm thrown at us, undeterred the 2018 racing has been well supported and varied, with every type of race to appeal to most us and ignite our passions for racing our Multihulls, I hope 2019 continues to expand our opportunities to race across the globe.



2000nm trip with challenging conditions, this time mostly light winds, rowing and the odd storm thrown in. Matt Baker's full report can be found later in this Review.

There has been some interest coming from The Channel Islands, with a number of local boats wanting to grow their racing fleets, the MOCRA Facebook page might be a good place to look.

Looking forwards to May 2020 the RWYC and Newport YC the OStar & TwoStar are running alongside the Transat Race. The races coincide with the Mayflower 400 celebrations of the departure of the Pilgrim Fathers from Plymouth to the New World. This feels like it could attract a number of entries from both sides of the Atlantic as a great opportunity to follow in our forefathers wake. <https://www.mayflower400uk.org/news/2017/october/next-ostar-and-twostar-editions-sail-in-2020/>

The AZAB, a race to the Azores and back for both Single and Doubled handed yachts, starts on 1st June 2019 and the first time the entries have been opened up to multihulls in quite a few years, on the entry list so far are Chris Briggs on the Edge and Paul Brant on Freshly Squeezed. <https://azab.co.uk/>

Scottish Peaks racing has been dominated by Gordon Baird for many years, he has changed his ride from his trusty Outremer 45 to a Dragonfly 32, with his son Ian Baird taking over the Skipper's role and looking like they are still the ones to beat. Joining them, also in a Dragonfly 32, was Simon Thorpe with Triptych. Rumour has it that one of the West Country Dazcats is heading up North next year to join in, we hope you take good care of them Gordon and show them the way round.

The Three Peaks Yacht race also welcomes Multihulls for the first time in

many years and starts 15th June, they require a minimum of 3 multi's so please get in touch with the organisers and see who else is interested, <https://www.threepeaksyachtrace.co.uk/copy-of-enter> Last major race of the year in Europe the RORC Middle Sea Race took place in October with Maserati and former Concise 10 renamed Powerplay the flying MOD 70's leading and the larger fast cruising catamarans of Allegra (83') and R-Six (66'), congratulations to Giovanni Soldini for your win.

New for 2018 is the use of the MOCRA rating rule in in the Far East, The Royal Hong Kong YC are considering its use in their offshore races, great news that our rule is reaching so far.

The Route du Rhum saw six Ultim's launch themselves from St Malo to Guadeloupe, setting a new record time despite some carnage in the fleet. Followed by six Multi 50's, last but not least the twenty-one strong Rhum Multi class made up of several MOCRA members both past and present. Despite the carnage particularly early on in the race, we are pleased that everyone is safe.

Meanwhile in the Solent

Royal Victoria offered a series of races over the season for the Solent based boats we hope this series will grow in strength with its ideal central location. Nigel Talbot, formally Nitric, has a new boat a Farrier F82R coming for 2019 and is the local man to talk to, if you need any further information.

Tony Purser has hung up his sailing boots following many years of competing in both Backlash & Backlash 2, his Schionning catamaran has changed hands and is now being campaigned by our Hon Secretary Matthew West.

February, as usual brings the Caribbean 600. This aspirational race continues to grow in popularity with 11 in the MOCRA class up from 7 in 2017. Sadly only 4 managed to finish in what were very challenging conditions. Congratulations to Peter Aschenbrenner with Paradox, who were first over the line and also went on to take the win on corrected time. Unfortunately, Fujin succumbed to one of the massive down drafts from Saba Island and its 3000-foot tall volcano, she capsized in the dark, thankfully all crew were picked up and are safe and well. Our President Michael Butterfield was another of the unlucky ones not to get round, but I think we must all agree he is the lucky one to still be competing in one of the bucket list races at 86 years old. Congratulations must also go to Shaun Carroll and his Seacart 30 for completing the course.

Back in the UK, the East Coast fleet is growing in strength, with Simon Barnes beating the drum, so there is plenty of activity locally. Trimarans seem to be the weapon of choice, and the numbers are increasing with the arrival of new builds, Morpheus Andrew Fennels 40' Shuttleworth carbon trimaran and Freshly Squeezed a Grainger 36'er all the way from South Africa, now on the water.

The South West offers a number of racing options that are well attended starting in Falmouth or Plymouth, from Round the Cans racing in Falmouth Bay and Plymouth Sound. The season starts in April with Saltash SC offering Saturday afternoon can racing, Coastal races to Falmouth, Fowey, Salcombe and the Isles of Scilly. Cross Channel to Trebeurden and the Channel Islands, as well as Oceanic options.

Lloyd Kyte and Bernard Phelan are bringing an International 23, Double Arrow, back to life and are new members from Devon, ready to join the SW fleet for the 2019 season, showing that you don't have to have brand new boats to join in the fun.

RB&I saw 5 multihull entries for the trip around the British and Irish Isles, a



Cruising Secretary's Report

We hope he follows in Tony's footsteps and gets many offshore racing miles completed.

The Diam 24's have decided to use the MOCRA rating to enable greater participation in UK racing, our MOCRA Commodore Phil Cotton with Buzz 2 was inspirational in bringing these zippy day boats to the UK.

Round the Island race, was a slow one, which suited the, lower rated F27's with Nick Wood and Origami winning once again closely, followed by Nigel Stevens on Triassic. Third place went to James Holder and his Dazcat, Slinky Malinki.

Ross Hobson, new owner of Seacart 30 Buzz, already competed and won 2 RORC races this year, with the bit between his teeth this new partnership could be the one to watch on the RORC 2019 circuit.

2019 is also a Fastnet year and with plenty of chatter on social media it sounds like there might be 12-15 or even more multihull entries, just be ready to enter on line in early January.

MOCRA Rating certificates issued, shows a better year, with a continued positive trend.

2018 – 86
2017 – 69
2016 – 76
2015 – 75

2018 saw the Race Committee make some changes to the rating rule;

- Prop factor
- Canting Rigs, are now taken into consideration within the rule.
- Measurement of Hull Length has been brought in line with the Multi 2000 rule
- Length Factor within the formula has been changed from 0.2814 to 0.315

Details can be found within Simon Forbes report and the up to date rule and list of rated boats at <https://sites.google.com/site/mocrarating/>

For those members who wish to get more involved in MOCRA and our racing, please get in touch with your input. I have been Racing Secretary now for 8 years, so perhaps it's time for someone else to bring forward some new ideas.

2019 sounds like it should be a great year, so don't forget to let others know what your plans are to ensure we have competitive racing. Please look at the MOCRA Google Calendar for event dates and let us know if there are other events that you would like to add.

Simon Baker
GBR788M Hissy Fit



The MOCRA cruises continue to be organised using Twitter and direct email, as proposed in the last 2 Cruising Secretary reports but for 2018, the cruising dates for the year were published on the MOCRA website in January.

This consisted of 7 dates during the year with the detail of where and when to be left until closer to the date, allowing for changes related to weather and preferences. Cruising event dates for this year were therefore announced prior to season start as was the primary feedback from the 2017 season.

The early part of the year suffered from the "Beast from the East" wind pattern and so we were unable to find interest in the April rally. The May rally to Bembridge was due to be well attended but on the morning of the rally a significant bank of fog prevented some of the crews from reaching Bembridge before the tidal gate closed and so only 2 crew were at the event. A good turnout was experienced for the June event and 4 multihulls enjoyed the visit to the Folly Inn as part of the weekend festivities.

The good part of the summer weather had by then returned and the rallies planned for both July and August were abandoned with skippers preferring to take longer trips away during this period. In past years we have avoided organised rallies in August because of this phenomena and this year's experience seems to again suggest this is good practice. In September a rally event was held at Newtown Creek with 3 multihulls in attendance.

The weather was kind and everyone seemed to enjoy their raft up and meal together. The final rally of the year was planned for the 13/14th of October but was moved later due to weather conditions and is predicted to be well attended with up to 5 boats looking for berthing. This final rally is to Bucklers Hard, in the Beaulieu River and is often well attended.

In summary, the changes to publish weekend dates early in the year to allow skippers to plan their weekends seems to be working. The unusually hot weather seems to have taken a toll on some of the mid-season rallies but if this results in more sailing usage rather than less then that can only be a good thing. Generally, 2018 for multihull cruising was better than many previous years.

For 2019 the rally programme will again be published on the MOCRA website by the beginning of the new year. This programme will include at least one combined event with the racing crews, probably around the MOCRA 50th Anniversary event.

For those interested in joining MOCRA cruising rallies in 2019 or who just want to hear about MOCRA cruising then please contact me on aquataur11@yahoo.co.uk or on Twitter at [@mocra_cruising](https://twitter.com/mocra_cruising).

Mark Jarvis
Cruising Secretary - MOCRA



Annual General Meeting 2018

18:30 SATURDAY 17TH NOVEMBER 2018, AT THE RNLi TRAINING CENTRE, POOLE.

1. Welcome by the Commodore

The Commodore welcomed members and guests to the AGM.

Present: Jonathan Hill, Nick Wood, Simon Barnes, Roderick Walker, Nigel Talbot, Simon Forbes, Simon Baker, Phil Cotton, Mark Jarvis, Matt Baker, Matthew West, William Lee.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies have been received from Rupert Kidd, Bruce Sutherland, Lindsay Knight, Chris Cooper, Mark Upton-Brown, Steve Culpitt, Daryl Morgan, David Lowe, John Milsom, John Davey, Edward Potts, Michael Thornelee, Tim Wilson.

The number of proxy votes cast is ten.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Previous AGM

Proposed: Nigel Talbot, Matt Baker.
Carried.

4. Matters Arising

There were none.

5. To receive the Commodores Report

Proposed: Matthew West, Nigel Talbot.
Carried

6. To receive the Treasurer's Report

(Note: the accounts this year covers more than 12 months because of the change in the accounting year agreed at a previous AGM).

Proposed: Mark Jarvis, Simon Barnes.
Carried

7. To reappoint the auditors

Proposed: Matthew West, Phil Cotton.
Carried.

8. To receive the Membership Secretaries Report

Proposed: Simon Barnes, Matthew West.
Carried.

Bruce Sutherland indicated in his report that he was standing down as Membership Secretary. The meeting gave a vote of thanks for his work as Membership Secretary.

9. To receive the Cruising Secretaries Report

Proposed: Simon Barnes, Matthew West.
Carried

10. To receive the Racing Secretaries Report

Proposed: Phil Cotton, Nigel Talbot.
Carried

11. To receive the Rating Officers Report

Proposed: Simon Barnes, Matthew West

12. Executive Committee Resolutions

There are none

13. Members Resolutions

The constitution states: "Any member wishing to propose a motion shall give notice of the same to the Honorary Secretary at least twenty-one days before the meeting."

There are none.

14. Election of Commodore and Executive Committee

The constitution states: "Nominations for officers and committee members shall be made in writing at least fourteen days before any Annual General Meeting except that additional nominations may be made at any Annual General Meeting to fill any vacancy remaining."

No nominations had been made prior to the meeting.

Matt Baker stood down as Safety Officer, and Bruce Sutherland stood down as Membership Secretary. William Lee indicated his willingness to stand as Membership Secretary. Other existing members of the Executive Committee indicated their willingness to continue.

The following were therefore nominated:

President	Mike Butterfield
Commodore	Phil Cotton
Vice-Commodore	Simon Baker
Rear Commodore	Rupert Kidd
Honorary Secretary	Matthew West
Honorary Treasurer	Tim Wilson
Hon. Membership Sec.	William Lee
Racing Secretary	Simon Baker
Cruising Secretary	Mark Jarvis
Rating Secretary	Simon Forbes
RYA Liaison Officer	Simon Forbes
Social Secretary	Phil & Miranda Cotton
Affiliated Groups Rep.	Vacancy
Safety Officer	Vacancy
Publications/Editorial	Vacancy
Trophy Secretary	Mike Butterfield
Scottish Area Representative	Gordon Baird

Proposed: Matt Baker, Rod Walker.
Carried.

15. Any Other Business

Any matters raised under Any Other Business cannot form part of the official business of the meeting and thus may not be proposed as formal motions. This item is included purely to afford members an opportunity for informal discussion.

There was none.

The RORC Caribbean 600 on Board Dazzla, D1395 kit-boat – not quite the Caribbean idyll



Competing in the 2018 RORC Caribbean 600 on board Dazcat kit-boat 1395 Dazzla, with the oldest crew in the race was totally epic...when Mike first invited me to join him on this race, just half an hour after we had met for the first time, it sounded to my unprepared ears like a more grandiose version of the great British politeness that goes something along the lines of 'you must come to dinner sometime'.



FIRST MEETING WITH MIKE JUST BEFORE FASTNET 2017.
PICTURED WITH SIMON BAKER

When presented with this statement, the stock response is 'yes of course, I'd love to', which I uttered accordingly (apart from wanting to provide the polite response, who in their right mind would answer with 'no thanks, I'd rather stay in cold grey Cornwall in February'). I clearly had a lot to learn about Mike as I never for a second imagined that he actually meant it and that in due course I'd find myself racing on board Dazzla in the beautiful turquoise waters that I'd last seen in 2000...

Veteran multihull sailor and racer Mike Butterfield (86 years old at the time of the race!) was not only a founding member of MOCRA in 1969, but also tells me that it was his idea – he wanted to make multihull racing respectable and bring it into the mainstream. A goal he continues

to pursue and over the years has worked hard for multihull entry to races like the Fastnet to be allowed. He was also among the first cohort of multihulls to do the Round Britain and Ireland in 1968. With all this in mind, I set off armed with a multitude of questions about Mike's racing and sailing history, few of which I'm able to answer even after spending ten days with him. I'm sure he did answer most of my questions interwoven in tales of high adventure and fun but the stories were told in no particular order, prompted by things people said or something that was happening, and all the while the Caribbean winds were whipping up a frenzy around us. So, I failed in my mission to bring you a comprehensive history of this remarkable man who has competed in and won so many races. Instead I hope that through this write up you can catch a glimpse of what keeps this particular multihull owner coming back for more.

As the time to leave came closer I was beside myself with excitement but I also started to feel a little nervous. I'd done a bit of research about the

race and realised that this is no typical offshore race with great long legs on one tack. Oh no. This 600nm challenge could potentially be quite gruelling as we tack through the islands, coping with random lulls and wind shifts behind the more mountainous islands, as well as areas where the wind might tunnel and the seas are confused. We would cover every point



of sail, several times. One sailor last year said they changed sail a grand total of 60 times – an average of every 10 miles! To me that sounded almost like sailing around the cans but for 600 miles! To add to this, I had never seen the boat or met any of the crew and was due to arrive just 20 hours before the race start, which wouldn't allow much time to get to know either.

Back at the yard pre-departure it transpired that one of the yard team had been on board when Mike's previous boat capsized during a crossing. Of course they took great delight in recounting the drama to me in all its detail...meanwhile, Simon, my boss and usual skipper, seemed alarmingly keen for me to take both an EPIRB and a PLB. Although I was dismissive it inevitably raised some doubts in my mind and I did go to some lengths at the last minute to make sure I collected them and registered. I was also just a little confused as to why Mike had asked ME to join them. The general consensus back at the yard was that I was going along for my galley skills, though Mike had volunteered in several conversations that that wasn't the case. He said he wanted me for my sailing skills, but how did he even know if I had any? In the weeks leading up to the race I took up cycling in a poxy effort to increase my fitness. I figured it might be helpful either for swimming or racing, whichever I ended up doing most of, and with that put my worries away, ready to enjoy whatever came my way!

I met my first crew mate at Gatwick. David, a good friend and sailing companion of Mike's, would be our rigger and sail repair man. He was travelling out with wife Justine who would stay ashore enjoying the delights of Antigua while we raced. Meeting them put me at ease as we all seemed to get on well. Mike's son John arrived from Toronto just half an hour after our plane had landed so we waited for him before heading across the island to the Antigua Yacht Club in English Harbour, site of the race 'village'. John would be our skilful navigator and, as I would soon discover, frequently added his own often hilarious twist to the tales that abounded on board!

The island had that beautiful, tropical smell of heat and dust and spices. The dusty roadside scattered with a random mix of brightly painted shacks interspersed with ramshackle huts and extravagant bungalows, colonial style houses and teetering brick buildings



that could be homes, flats, commercial properties or any combination. Vibrant bougainvillea, oleander and hibiscus everywhere making exuberant displays, palm trees and music... We were definitely in the Caribbean!

It was comforting to walk into the clubhouse, teeming with competitors, and immediately spot the crew of Apollo (Dazcat 1495) who were also taking part. Apollo had been shipped over earlier in the year specifically to do the race.



There was no sign of Mike or the rest of our crew so we joined Apollo for some drinks and waited while I battled with my complications of wi-fi, local sim cards and two different phones in a desperate effort to get communications set up while I had the chance. I was here in dual roles – not just as Mike's crew, but also in my role as Dazcat Media I felt a responsibility to keep the world updated with our adventures. I'd spent quite some time researching the options and had eventually contacted a local superyacht yacht agency, BWA Yachting, to ask if they could purchase me a local sim card as I'd be arriving without time to go to the local mobile shop and get one for myself



even if it was open, which it wasn't on a Sunday. To my amazement, the woman who responded to my email offered to lend me one for the duration of the race

and even went to some lengths to leave it where I'd be easily able to collect it when I arrived. Massive big up to BWA Yachting! I hadn't however anticipated that I'd have to walk to the nearest petrol station to activate it and buy my first top up, or, how much the local network would be struggling with all the extra load. I eventually found myself with a small group of others engaged in their own electronic nightmares, wandering the race village site and surrounding marinas in search of stronger signals. Several drinks and strange encounters later I seemed to have succeeded and Mike had now turned up with the rest of the crew so we all joined the Apollos for another cocktail!

Peter Ellison, Mike's long-time friend, would be our skipper. This was the first time Mike had handed over his boat to another skipper - an acknowledgement of his age which must have been hard. At 77 Peter is hardly a youngster but the two have sailed many 1000s of miles together and their combined experience and familiarity with each other made for a happy boat run with quiet authority. There was also Colin who would be our engineer. He was quick to let me know that he'd pre-prepared and frozen a selection of meals to keep us well fed so I didn't feel obliged. I was hugely relieved and grateful to hear this as although Mike had assured me I wasn't along to be a galley slave he'd also raised the point several times that he didn't know when we'd have time to victual the boat. Before leaving home, I'd searched online for late night supermarkets, just in case. There is only one, on the other side of the island... it was never going to be pretty; getting off a plane, drinking several rum concoctions then late-night shopping for a crew you didn't know, a galley you'd never seen in a shop full of ingredients you're not familiar with...I felt at that moment as though the biggest potential hurdle of the trip had been sidestepped, thanks to Colin! As the light began to fade we made

our way across the bay to Dazzla, her distinctive lines recognisable from a distance and I was pleased to finally meet her. Dazzla had entered the race last year but lost the rig during a squall. Determined to give the race another go, Mike had made the decision to leave her in St. Martin where she was rigged with a new mast ready for this year's race. Unfortunately for Dazzla, in September hurricane Irma, boasting the highest ever recorded wind speeds, hit St. Martin. At first glance her damage (two windows



blown out) had seemed negligible compared to the destruction all around, but the violent storm had blown salt water and grit (and towels!) into everything and the full extent of the damage unfolded before our eyes as the race progressed... although that first night we knew nothing of what was to come there was evidence throughout the boat of repairs and works done. Most of these had been done by Peter and Colin over the previous six weeks and they pointed out improvements and changes that they had also made as they showed us around the boat for the first time.

We wobbled our way through some pre-race preparations – sails off, sails on, lines checked, watch plans and so on. To be honest, by now the very early start, jet lag and some potent Caribbean beverages were combining to form a bit of a blur, but we got it done and before long were heading back ashore for a quick dinner



then collapsed into our bunks. Mike had very kindly provided me with his favourite bunk, tucked in behind the saloon seating and nav station in the starboard hull but fairly central. David had the bunk opposite, lower down in the hull with a gangway between us while Mike and Peter shared the aft starboard cabin and John and Colin shared the aft port cabin. They all seemed horrified by the idea of using the forward cabins and even though that is my usual berth on board Hissy Fit I agreed to stay where I was allocated! I was also instructed not to use the heads. I was proudly shown the 'thunderbox' which was built into a cubicle in the cockpit, no instructions needed as it is simply a hole through the deck with a seat on it. More on this later....

The next morning there was a fine breeze and Peter and Mike agreed that we'd start with two reefs in the main and as few turns in the jib as we could handle. With the average crew age well over 60 we were all agreed that our goal was not to win the race, though of course we would sail as hard as we could. For Dazzla, her owner and her crew, the pleasure would be in joining the race and completing the course to the best of our combined abilities. That morning the thrill was there. The wind gusted up to 30 knots as we passed by the committee boat for inspection and a 'good luck' salute from them. We were among a long line of boats emerging from all corners of the large bay, some well-known, some beautiful, some interesting and others indistinct but all seemed to be emitting that special exhilaration present at the start of a big race. As we rounded the entrance, the sight (and chop) of 84 boats along with all the spectator and support craft, the helicopter swooping overhead, the cliff top lined with spectators all added to the excitement. We were ready, hearts full with the anticipation of what was to come!

But then, with our start about 20 minutes off we were manoeuvring still under power when a somewhat concerning smell started to linger around us, shortly followed by billows of black smoke. After a quick investigation below Colin ascertained that the port hull was pretty much full up with water and the engine, now under water, cut out. For some reason the bilge pump didn't



seem to be working and it was coming in faster than we could get it out. 11.25 and crushing disappointment as the decision was made to turn back and investigate, just five minutes before we were due to start. The mood on board was sombre as the uncertainty of what we might find slowly formed itself into a reality in our minds and we informed RORC that we'd turned back. It was brutal to watch the other multihulls gather and fly off into the distance as we limped our way into port. By 11.40 we were back at our anchorage passing buckets to empty the bilge.

Once cleared of water Peter and Colin spent the next hour and a half upside down in the bilge. First, a shredded greasy towel emerged. A vicious little present left by Irma that had wrapped



itself around the shaft and ultimately causing the stern gland to give up and start importing seawater. Next emerged smaller pieces of the same towel that had clogged up the bilge pump. This was followed by much swearing, more discussion, a bit of magic and before we knew it the engine was up and running again, the stern gland somehow repaired and resealed. By 13.30 we had informed RORC that we were off again and had



crossed our start line! It was sometime around that point that I spotted the two locator beacons that Simon had insisted I bring. I had been dismissive at the time but as my eye alighted on them they suddenly looked quite comforting so I attached them both to my shorts, one either side, and there they remained along with my knife for the rest of the race regardless of whether I was on watch, sleeping or cooking. The other thing,

maybe the only other thing, that stayed firmly in place throughout the race was the dastardly towel that had tried to sink us. When it was pulled out of the bilge we'd placed it on the back deck to dry out a bit before bagging it up to dispose of later. Clearly, we had other things on our minds and promptly forgot it was there so it was with total astonishment when we finally arrived back in Antigua and I was going for a swim that I noticed it clinging doggedly to the deck where we'd put it. After all we'd been through and the thing was still with us!

We set off with three reefs in the main and three turns on the jib, making between six and eleven knots through



THE OFFENDING TOWEL!

that first day depending on the wind angle. We weren't pointing or tacking at all well. This was almost certainly down to our batten breaking just as we crossed our start line. We had watched helplessly as it worked its way out of the sail and gracefully plunged into the receding waves in a kind of slow motion death dive. This arrangement, flapping main and all, turned out to be our sail plan for pretty much the whole race so my fears of sail changes every 10 miles were unfounded, but still I was grateful for my pre-race cycling efforts as we took quite a battering. At some point that first day I was obliged to visit the thunderbox. Within seconds of sitting down I was soaked from head to toe as we hit a wave and the sea shot up through the hole to drench me, I could hear the laughter in the cockpit as I squealed! Once I'd escaped from the box I politely enquired whether there was actually anything wrong with the 'real' head. The answer was no, so from that point on I made use of the nice electronic loo installed for the purpose. I never did quite understand why the rest of the crew never went near it and continued to use the saltwater bidet/ shower for the entire time!

The wind was consistently high and for the first 24 hours seasickness hit half the crew quite hard. Although we'd agreed there would be three to each three-hour watch, this was soon abandoned as the crew went down, making for very long watches for those left standing. There was also little interest in food and it wasn't until the very early hours that I insisted everyone should eat one of Colin's pre-prepared meals. Regardless of whether it was coming back out we needed

sustenance so at 5 am, somewhere just past Nevis, we sat down to our first meal aboard, a choice of stew or curry.

At some point that first night the watch

crew had also discovered a 100 ft of rope, with a buoy attached, tangled around our dagger board. We have no idea how long it had been there but suspect that it had been the primary cause of our tacking troubles as despite the flappy main it all seemed to go much more smoothly after that. Well, that is till the 3rd reef line snapped and there was temporary chaos until David and Peter devised a fix.



That day, although the wind continued to

gust at around 30 knots we'd settled into a bit more of a routine so we were working



well together by the time we turned into the Anguilla channel at about 11pm. We managed the countless tacks flanked by rocky unlit shores without any problems, but it was another long night as we'd had all hands on deck for the channel, which meant our watch system had gone awry again. We had our second hot 'dinner' at around 3am as we left the channel and the other watch went down...

The next morning, with the wind gusting steadily up to 35 knots we were doing fine, plodding through the wind and seas with our not-exactly-hot-shot crew. We had no idea of the carnage that was beginning to take place around us. We even managed a cooked breakfast and with spirits lifted and having thoroughly enjoyed the reach down past St. Barts we decided to give ourselves an easier time of it and take Montserrat on the lee side.

It may not have been the best tactical decision but we certainly enjoyed the sail down and it was perhaps the closest we came to what most imagine when they picture idyllic Caribbean sailing conditions. We even managed the first sit down together lunch, even if the crackers did keep blowing away! By six



that evening though, as we approached Guadeloupe, the wind was steadily increasing, regularly hitting 40 knots and coming in with huge rain squalls. As we crept behind Guadeloupe we were briefly protected by the island but before long it was funnelling down between the islands and hitting us with even greater force, from the precise direction we wanted to go in. We came on watch at about 2am to the news that the genoa had ripped so had taken a few more turns. Probably not a bad thing as the wind was ferocious and the rain that came with it was like razors on your face. For moments at a time it was impossible to open your eyes as the combination of horizontal rain and salty spray were completely blinding and even wearing glasses was not enough to prevent this. I later learnt that ski-goggles are essential kit in this situation but in the thousands of miles I'd previously spent at sea and experienced extreme weather in the form of typhoons and waterspouts in the South China seas, hurricanes in Biscay, monster Mediterranean storms and some fairly fruity Caribbean conditions I've never encountered that searing, blinding spray before. Eyes and face already raw with the salt and under serious assault from what felt like a million tiny knives thrown

at you at 50 mph! Up until that watch I'd taken my turns on the wheel undaunted but now I was very grateful to Peter who just took it as soon as we came on watch, and stayed there. With lee shores to both sides of us, seriously reduced visibility and gusts up to 44 knots (that we saw) I appreciated his quiet air of competence and dependability. Both fully focussed on the situation in hand barely a word passed between us as I stood by, keeping as good a watch as I could manage, constantly scanning not just the water but also the boat. I was concerned that something might give and if it could be spotted ahead of time...eventually we needed to tack and with the huge gusts Peter asked me to wake John up a little before his watch so we had a third hand on deck. We tacked safely away from the lee shore and in due course I went below to make hot drinks for us and the others about to come up. We were nearing the middle of the channel when there was an almighty bang. I turned off the gas and hurried into the cockpit to see the main sail flopping down over the bimini top and billowing into the cockpit obliterating John on the wheel and his view of anything. There was no sign of Peter. The others, now all fully awake started to struggle into their gear. After checking that John was ok I crossed the cockpit and looking forward saw first, with great relief, that the mast was still standing and appeared to be stable. Then I spotted Peter up on the foredeck, grappling with the large metal furling drum. It was swinging around uncontrollably on the end of what had, until very recently, been our forestay. Somehow, he managed to get a hold of it and secure it so it didn't kill someone as it pendulumed wildly with Dazzla's pitches and rolls. We then worked to get



APOLLO IN FULL FLIGHT!

the mainsail out of the cockpit and into some sort of order. My assessment of Peter's competence had proven right – within seconds of the forestay breaking he'd run up and dropped the main to reduce the load on the mast. The sudden drop had broken the lazy jacks hence the sail covering the deck, but without his remarkably quick response we might very well have lost the rig. Thankfully by now we were in the lee of the land, wind was down to between 25-30 knots and there was little swell. Daylight broke onto a sad sight, with Dazzla in total disarray and her crew in a mild state of shock as we assessed the situation. Peter had ascertained that the pin holding the furler to the deck had bent, thus causing the stainless mount to twist and break free. Having come this far we were all gutted at the idea of having to retire though I seemed the only one who was keen to try a jury rig. Peter, unwilling to further jeopardise the boat or crew, was having none of it. He felt, quite rightly I'm sure, that it would put undue strain on the rig and possibly bring it down so we admitted defeat and turned on the engines. With no electronic nav aids or computer on board and infrequent and brief mobile signal, we had been unable to track other boats through the race. At that point we had no idea what was happening with the rest of the fleet. We were to find out later that we were one of the last to retire and that in the end less than half completed the race; one boat capsized, some sustained damage, others had injured crew members or crew so seasick they couldn't continue...of the 84 boats that started, only 41 finished. We had done amazingly well to get as far as we did and were, I believe, 3rd in MOCRA at the point when we had to retire. It turned out our fellow Dazcat 'Apollo' had retired the previous day after suffering electrical failures, although not before Tim Wright had managed to capture a totally iconic photo of her flying off St Barts. The thing that really stunned us was that she was carrying full sail! The old story of the tortoise and the hare so very nearly came true, if only that dastardly fixing hadn't given way...We finally had that hot drink I'd started to make about three



hours earlier, shortly followed by a good breakfast to cheer us all up, though the mood on board understandably remained heavy for some time.

The motor back to Antigua was hardly less epic than the race itself. Peter's Heath Robinson style indoor steering position really came into its own as we emerged back out into the wind and waves. To his great indignation we'd initially been quite sceptical of it but as conditions deteriorated again, one by one we conceded that it worked well (with me,



the stubborn one, being last to do so) and it was infinitely preferable to sitting out in the wind and rain as we chugged into the waves and rain squalls. There was no auto pilot on Dazzla so being able to stay warm and dry was some consolation for the indignity of motoring.

However, by mid-afternoon the port engine wasn't sounding too healthy and before long it started to overheat. We



tried to nurse it along to no avail and had to turn it off. This caused some considerable difficulties. The wind was up again and with just one engine Dazzla was struggling to maintain her heading. We found ourselves in the frustrating situation of having to 'tack' under power for several hours in order to be sure we'd make our harbour, at one point a full 360 was necessary to get ourselves back pointing where we needed to be! We were now

back on deck in our efforts to maximise visibility and I once again found myself standing by the helmsman, John this time. He seemed to be pitting his will against Dazzla's as he fought to keep her heading in approximately the right direction while I kept an eye out for shipping and the leading lights on shore, which seemed so close yet so far out of our reach! The abundance of cruise ships and huge gin palaces created a mad cacophony of light rendering it almost impossible to identify their nav lights and ruining night vision for everything else. By 10.30 we were finally anchored up and exhausted fell into our bunks after sharing a celebratory whiskey - by this time we felt quite happy to be back, irrespective of having had to retire! It had been a tense finale, or so we thought but Dazzla hadn't quite finished with us yet!

We awoke the next morning to water gently lapping above the boards in the starboard hull! We quickly galvanised ourselves into the now familiar bucket routine. We'd had some difficulty anchoring up the previous night, with Dazzla refusing to go astern properly to get the anchor to bite. It soon transpired that the reason for this was that the port prop was missing. Absent from its shaft. It seemed that it had lost the pin holding it in place so as we'd gone into reverse it had simply unscrewed itself. And the water? Well that had somehow found its way through the stern gland again, only this time on the starboard

side. So, there we were at anchor with one engine that had started the race underwater now overheated and propless and the other, more recently and more thoroughly underwater, totally immersed and with a damaged stern gland. We were immobilised and I'd rarely seen a sorer looking pair of engines. We'd also run out of fresh water by then...



Colin and Peter set to work once again and to my total astonishment had the starboard engine running again within a couple of hours. I was by now firmly decided that they were actual magicians, all they need do to complete the show was conjure up a new propeller and all would be tickety-boo! Of course, they couldn't actually do that and as the water was still too choppy and churned up to think about free diving to search for it we contacted Dazzla's Caribbean home yard in St. Martin to see if they could source one that fit. A day of frantic messages back and forth with St Martin and the yard back in Millbrook to ascertain sizes. A visit ashore to the incredibly helpful BWA yachting agency to find out the shipping and customs clearance process, talking to divers and local yards about options for fitting it once arrived... By the end of the day it seemed that maybe the yard in St. Martin had found a suitable replacement and the following day they would start looking into getting it shipped. It appeared that weather permitting, using divers experienced at the job would be the best way of getting it fitted. Finally we could relax and in the following days, joined by

David's wife Justine (they were now both staying ashore) we swam, we drank rum punches and enjoyed delicious food, we wandered every pontoon in the harbour marvelling at the magnificent display of boats of all types, swam some more, visited the famous Shirley Heights and had an unforgettably good moonlit BBQ accompanied by a steel band and later a local reggae band.

There was also of course the prizegiving and we were immensely proud to see Mike receive a special mention for being the oldest competitor, he very definitely deserved that recognition. Before the race I was respectful of Mike's past achievements in an abstract kind of way. Now, he had earned my massive respect not just for his resilience, determination and good humour but I had also come to understand that he thrives on the 'why not' attitude. He embraces whatever life presents him with in full confidence that he can deal with it, though he very definitely (and admirably) does things his own way. For him it seems to be all about just getting the boat out there sailing, the rest will fall into place... I had arrived armed with multitudes of questions that remain unanswered, but as I was leaving I had one burning question that I needed to know the answer to. I looked him in the eye and asked "How did you know I'd be able to handle it Mike?" he looked astonished and replied simply "You just know". Although still dubious, I'm grateful for his confidence in me and I had an amazing time. He brought together a disparate group of strangers with a range of skills, all able to get along well and each find their roles on board with

no fuss. We had laughed our way around the course, telling stories and joking as the wind howled around us. It was a particular pleasure to see father and son sailing together and to hear of the many adventures they had shared, often with Peter. For them, this was just another Butterfield frolic!



Dazzla had one last surprise for me. I told you earlier that I'd been using the head in the starboard hull. It had a nice little privacy curtain that closed it off to the rest of the boat, but was otherwise open to the forward bunk area. This wasn't a problem as no one would sleep there, or so I'd been led to believe... I wobbled my way back to the boat late one night, Peter and Mike had returned earlier. I carefully closed the curtain and was halfway through relieving myself when a loud snore came from behind me. I jumped so hard it nearly caused an accident! Hastily pulling up my shorts I turned around to see that Peter, previously unnoticed by me, had moved into the bunk! It turns out the bunk is only rejected at sea. I still don't know whether he was just protecting my decorum by claiming to know nothing about my late-night visit and I never summoned the courage to ask if he'd been in there every night since we got back to port, I preferred not to know!

There are a hundred more stories I could tell within this one. Not just those recounted on board of past adventures, but new ones created by the people we met, funny things and frustrating things that happened, things we saw and heard. It could go on and on but actually, I urge you to go there yourself and make your own stories! And thank you Mike for letting me become part of one of yours.

In June Dazzla underwent repairs to her forestay and Mike returned to the Caribbean to bring her back home. They arrived safely and in time for his 87th birthday. If you'd like to watch the video of the race you can do so here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=udVM32CHCyw>

By Oriel Butcher



Triangle Race 5,6 & 7th May



The Triangle Race has become something of an institution for the South West MOCRA boats and was well attended again this year with 8 MOCRA boats in a fleet of 18 cruisers, 5 double handers and 10 IRC, 41 boats starting in total. The fleet was keen to head out and enjoy a bank holiday weekend race in what was to be the hottest May on record. Unfortunately the hottest May had the side effect of being one of the least windy which made it more of a light airs endurance race than we had expected.

Belladonna is a 10m Dazcat built in 1998 and had been out on the hard at the Multihull Centre in Millbrook for the winter and after what seemed like an age of sanding and antifouling in the snow, a bit of strengthening here and there (many thanks Carl, fantastic job), a new set of North sails and a re-rigged bowsprit she was ready to go.

We launched in April in time for the Saltash Spring Series so she had been sitting in Millbrook mud, growing a nice covering of slime and barnacles for a few weeks already. Matt Theobald and I were trying to get in as many races as we could



before our two handed Round Britain and Ireland race later in the summer and were doing the Triangle two handed as a practice run. Given the awkward tides we left Millbrook on Friday night and moored up behind the Mount Batten Breakwater for a very cold dip and bottom scrub, not to be recommended unless you're a fan of the ice cream head effect, but at least with a hull each it didn't take too long.

Saturday morning arrived and after the traditional bacon roll, breakfast of champions, we headed out to join the line-up. MOCRA starts are always fun with jostling for position. For once we knew where the start line was and got there on time. An uneventful start saw us mid-field watching the bigger boats battling for the lead with light wind and a bit of chop. Short seas are Belladonna's nemesis and we watched the larger boats pull away. By Rame Head the wind was lessening and the sea flattening. Once round it was a game of watching for wind shadows and trying to avoid the increasing number of holes.

With her new larger sails Belladonna kept going as others decided the call of the pub was more enticing than slow progress. One by one other boats started to motor on to Falmouth. With our single outboard, motoring is never really a good option for us so we kept going. In the end only the Edge, Sueños and us were left racing. The Edge typically working her magic in the light stuff sailed away and took line honours. So now it was just Sueños left to race and fortunately for us we could see her ahead stuck in a big hole. We caught a lucky break, sailing

a shadow of wind a couple of hundred meters to her port side and trickled past. Agonisingly slow progress saw us carry on slowly to Falmouth and a pint, maybe Sunday would hold more wind.

Sunday's leg was the run from Falmouth back to Fowey. A very fluky wind saw us start on port, with everyone else starting on Starboard and closing the coast. We got lucky and the wind filled just enough for us to fill the spinnaker, handholding the clew to keep it as full as we could we trickled along to the front of the fleet. Even less wind than Saturday and this was looking like the longest Falmouth to Fowey run ever. We stayed at the front for several hours until the Edge came drifting by, sterns out and maximum sail area deployed. Once again the call of the pub was too strong and one by one boats started motoring past us. We kept The Edge in sight and once she started motoring we packed it in too and chugged on to Fowey, that's DNFs for the whole MOCRA fleet. Only three IRC class boats out of the whole fleet of 41 completed the leg, all three missing the pub and finishing long after dark, hats off for their commitment.

Hangovers in hand the final leg from Fowey back to Plymouth saw slightly better conditions for the run home. We chose to stay further offshore on the way back and had a great spinnaker tussle with Easy Tiger our 10m sister ship, we thought we had big sails till we saw Easy's spinnaker. We traded places all the way home with us finally just pulling away from Easy Tiger in the flat water in Plymouth sound.



It was a longer set of races than we were expecting but we got a sun tan, had a lot of fun along the way and in the end won the race on corrected time. I'd recommend the Triangle as a great race with plenty of shore time to socialise, we'll be back next year.

Dominic Gooding - Belladonna

Poole Regatta Race Report 2018

The MOCRA National Championships were this year staged as part of the biennial International Paint Poole Regatta, excellently coordinated throughout by the Combined Yacht Clubs of Poole. MOCRA circuit stalwarts Nitric (Corsair Dash 750) and Tympanic (Dragonfly 28 Sport) were joined by class newcomers Aquafly (Dragonfly 28 Supreme) and the recently-built Grey Goose (Farrier F-31), alongside three boats from the rapid DIAM24 one-design class – Buzz Race Team, 3 Wise Monkeys and Team Maverick SSR (Raygun).

Piers Hugh Smith's young crew aboard Raygun holding their nerve to take the gun and the overall lead, just 24 seconds ahead of Phil Cotton's Buzz in second. 3 Wise Monkeys ensured the DIAM domination continued, sailing home in third place. Nitric closed the gap on Grey Goose during an efficient final lap to take 4th on corrected time.

With the breeze freshening to 13-15 knots and storm clouds brewing ominously over Bournemouth, the Racing Committee promptly got the final race of the day underway, this time setting a lengthier

followed by Grey Goose and Aquafly. With 3 Wise Monkeys struggling for momentum in the unfavourably light breeze, Grey Goose and Nitric seized the initiative to pull ahead downwind. Over a tightly contested final lap, both Grey Goose and Nitric avoided the deadly wind holes scattered across the gusts to consolidate a lead, Nitric taking the win by less than 40 seconds on corrected time. The ever improving Aquafly sailed home in 3rd, with Tympanic rounding out the top 4.



DAY 1

Racing got underway in a variable and gradually increasing 10-12 knots of breeze, Dick Linford, setting an Olympic-style upwind/downwind course. Nigel Talbot's Nitric claimed the pin-end at the start and was quickest off the line, John Hutching's 3 Wise Monkeys also making a nice getaway. David Vinten and crew aboard Grey Goose plotted an excellent course up the opening beat to overhaul Nitric and round the windward mark just behind the three DIAMs. Over the following two laps 3 Wise Monkeys sailed a solid race to stretch out their lead and take line-honours and the overall win as part of a DIAM 1-2-3, Raygun narrowly edging out Buzz to take second. Nitric managed to stay in touch with Grey Goose to claim 4th on corrected time.

Race 2 followed a similar pattern, Nitric getting away cleanly off the line before being overhauled by the three DIAMs and Grey Goose, who were all extracting good boat speed in the increasing wind. Raygun and Buzz were again involved in a lengthy tussle at the head of the fleet,

and more unconventional course around the marked buoys of Poole Bay, with a doglegged downwind finish feeding the fleet back into the harbour mouth. 3 Wise Monkeys sailed a cracking race to hold off Buzz and claim a second bullet of the regatta, both boats showing off the spectacular performance of the DIAM in stronger winds to take first and second on corrected time. Grey Goose also revelled in the windier weather, stretching its legs across the final downwind legs to power away from Nitric and break the DIAM monopoly by taking 3rd, forcing Raygun into 4th spot.

DAY 2

Following a lengthy but pleasant delay due to insufficient wind, a gentle 6-8 knot sea breeze finally kicked in allowing the Race Officer to get the day's racing underway. Neither Buzz nor Raygun made it out to the course for the first race, with the remaining boats struggling to reach a heavily pin-biased line at the gun in the light and shifty airs. Nitric and 3 Wise Monkeys nevertheless made good starts to lead the fleet up the first beat, closely



Race 2 began with little change in the conditions, the returning DIAMs of Raygun and Buzz adding extra spice on the start line. All boats got away well, with a short first beat creating a bunched rounding at the top mark. Nitric and Grey Goose were again able to keep pace with the DIAMs in the gentler breeze, and the fleet remained close throughout the race, Nitric making some savvy decisions up the second beat and final downwind leg to take another win, Grey Goose again having to settle for second. In fast faltering breeze, 3 Wise Monkeys and Raygun did well to hold off a resurgent Aquafly for 3rd and 4th respectively, Raygun pipping Aquafly by a mere two seconds on corrected time.

DAY 3



The final day dawned to beautiful sunshine and almost no wind. With two scheduled races remaining, DIAM 3 Wise Monkeys retained a slim lead in the overall standings on 13 points from Nitric and Grey Goose on 15 and 17 points respectively. Another lengthy delay of almost two hours provided the perfect opportunity for a preparatory swim and

Round the Island Race, 2018

sunbathe before a fragile 5-7 knot sea breeze settled over the racing area. The first race got underway with an Individual Recall, an overexcited Nitric jumping the gun by a boat length. The rest of the fleet made a solid start, Grey Goose and Aquafly continuing to go well in the lighter airs. Upon dipping back through the start line, Nitric played catch-up to good effect and was back in the mix by the leeward mark. In a tight battle over the final lap, Aquafly and Nitric found the better breeze and sailed cleanly to the finish, with Nitric taking a series-clinching win from Aquafly in second and Grey Goose in third.

With the wind steadily dropping, the Race Officer managed to squeeze in a final race. An audacious attempt at a port-hand flyer by 3 Wise Monkeys very nearly came off but for the bellow from Nitric, who hit the line with good momentum and were able to tack into a clear lane up the opening upwind leg, thereafter benefitting from a delicious wind-bend that lifted them all the way to the windward mark. With a sizeable lead over the fleet, Nitric held its nerve to find the puffs of breeze and maintain a gap downwind, Aquafly breaking free from the chasing pack behind. As the doldrums fast descended on the Bay, the Race Officer prudently opted to shorten the course at the end of the first lap, meaning a 4th-successive 1st-place finish for Nitric and back-to-back 2nds for Aquafly, Grey Goose again taking third spot ahead of the DIAMs, who were once more left ruing the weather and their luck.



Thus an enjoyable and closely-fought regatta came to a close with Nitric the overall victors, 3 Wise Monkeys taking second and Grey Goose third. Congratulations and sincere thanks to the Race Officer and his team for putting on three excellent days of racing in what were often very challenging conditions. We look forward to returning to Poole in 2020!

Andrew Talbot
Nitric

After several years of best intentions 2018 finally saw me get myself organised enough to enter my F27 trimaran Triassic into the annual race around the Isle of Wight. Taking part in this iconic race had always been on my bucket list, however various things kept conspiring to prevent it happening, not helped by a reluctance on my part to commit to anything without being properly prepared!

I'm still relatively new to this yacht racing scene and I guess I had allowed the prospect of trying to race amongst hundreds of other boats intimidate me slightly, but my crew Jon and I had been on a steep learning curve over the past few years and felt we were finally up for the challenge.

We towed Triassic down to Wilsons boatyard on Hayling Island the Thursday before the race and caught the afternoon tide out into the Solent where we spent some time exploring Ryde sands. The forecast for the weekend was for very light winds and all the race guides I had read beforehand mentioned how some tide relief could be sought here, so it seemed an ideal opportunity to try and gain some "local" knowledge!

After a very peaceful night on a pontoon at Folly Reach Friday morning saw us bright and early setting off down the Medina to the start line off Cowes. We were 24 hours early for the race.....but given neither Jon or I had sailed this part of the Solent before we wanted to try and explore the course without having to contend with the chaotic melee that everyone promised would be present on race day! It was a stunning morning with only a few knots of wind from the North West, pretty much exactly what was forecast for the Saturday, so we

spent the morning working our way down to Hurst Narrows and then around the Needles. We made several passes through the gap between the Varvassi wreck and the lighthouse making sure we were comfortable with the clearances before slipping around into Freshwater Bay where we posed for photos and ate lunch.... neither of which we expected to have time for the following day!

Friday evening found us back at Folly Reach where we found many of the MOCRA fleet assembling. Nick Wood and John Galloway were both there with their F27s and it was great to catch up with all the latest news over a few beers, although Jon and I were both too tired from the days exploits to extend that too far into the evening. Perhaps we were taking this all a bit too seriously..... Saturday morning arrived exactly as forecast with hardly a breath of wind and the MOCRA fleet motored gently down the Medina in line astern past the hive of activity that surrounded us on the pontoons at Cowes. Jon and I had already decided on starting as far out into the Solent as the line permitted to get the best of the tide, so we set off for our designated holding area near Bramble Bank whilst watching the fleet due to start before us, all super big monohulls, wandering apparently aimlessly around under motor with limp sails..... Fortunately the weather gods were watching over us all and with less than fifteen minutes before the start a gentle breeze started to fill in from the west.

By now the area was absolutely packed with yachts of all shapes and sizes zig-zagging all over the place. It was exactly as had been described to me and it was virtually impossible to put together any



kind of start plan. Being a complete novice to this event I had made sure I had read all the various instructions around where to wait and to keep clear of the line, but it really did feel as if I was the only one who was bothering. Even the actual line location seemed a bit vague. Jon and I had gone to great lengths the previous day to sail the transit marks as described in the instructions all the way out to the ODM but it seemed to us that pretty much everybody else thought the line was further west, which might have helped explain why we were being surrounded..... With all the other sails around us it was almost impossible to work out where the rest of the MOCRA fleet were, with the exception of the MOD70 Concise 10 whose massive rig completely dominated everything around it, so we made the decision to follow their lead for as long as we could, remembering of course that they were the only boat designated to start the other side of the ODM! As it turned out a monohull motoring straight across our bows with thirty seconds to go forced us to make a couple of tacks leaving me almost dead in the water and somewhat unappreciative of the situation. We recovered and got going just in time to dip the stern of another trimaran who had clearly also been baulked and was stuck head to wind... it's a long race I reminded myself!

Once clear of the line Jon and I found ourselves in some space and quickly took stock of our situation. We seemed to be well placed in relation to the majority of the MOCRA fleet many of whom had started closer inshore and most importantly we were in clean air with virtually no chop. We had a Val trimaran and a Dragonfly for company and they both seemed to be following our strategy of making fairly short tacks to keep ourselves in the deep water and we crossed each other several times whilst simultaneously avoiding the huge wind shadows cast by the fleet of Clippers as we passed them. I think I might have made a poor call as we went past Hurst castle as I tacked early towards the Island and lost a fair bit of ground to those around me that stayed further out, but we were still well placed as we slipped inside the Varvassi and launched the spinnaker to head off towards St Catherine's point on a distant horizon.

The fleet had split slightly with a brave few heading out in search of more wind whilst the majority, including us, elected to stay fairly close in to get out of the tide, but not so close as to be masked from the wind. We enjoyed a long and

close gybing match with Grey Goose, a beautiful F32 sailed by David Vinten and Ken Whyte, who were not only kind enough to snap a photo of us but forgave me parking Triassic right in front of them when I mistimed a gybe!

By rights an F27 had no place in this company but we were fortunate that the weather conditions had played right into our hands. The wind just wasn't strong enough for the bigger boats to get going properly and Triassic, being dry sailed with no antifouling and only two people on board, was in her element. We held our own all the way down the back of the Island and around towards the Bembridge ledge with the wind chasing us round nicely. I'd been keeping a careful eye on the various boats ahead of us and managed to dodge the odd wind hole as a result, but my luck was about to run out. About half a mile from the Bembridge buoy we ran into a hole and stopped dead in the water with the spinnaker collapsed. Grey Goose who was a matter of a hundred yards to starboard kept going nicely, a monohull a short distance ahead just sailed away, and we just sat there and watched what seemed like the entire fleet coming up behind us split and sail past either side. I could have (and might have) cried! It was around twenty minutes before we finally got a whisper and managed to get moving, even if it was in the wrong direction initially.

Jon and I put our frustrations behind us and set about working even harder to keep Triassic moving and building what apparent wind we could. We weren't the only people suffering, Nitric, another f-boat sailed by Nigel Talbot, had also managed to find a hole and we felt his pain as we sailed past, but he too got going eventually and together we slowly reeled in the rest of the fleet. We caught Nick Wood in Origami just past

Bembridge harbour and managed to get back past in another gybing match as we headed for Ryde sands. Using our recently gained knowledge we got all brave and headed for the shallows, to such an extent that one of the safety boats came racing over with the crew shouting for me to turn around. I assured them we were fine but a couple of minutes later another RIB tried cutting across our bows to head us off. By now we were running with the board and rudder completely up so it was no surprise to me when they suddenly came to a halt and their outboard kicked up... Jon and I immediately gybed away pausing just long enough to ask them if they were OK!

We continued to hug the shore, still unbelievably under spinnaker which had been up since the Needles, until the wind suddenly died off Fishbourne. I could see those ahead of us towards Cowes getting what appeared to be a breeze from the west, so we quickly dropped the spinnaker and set first the screecher, but then as the wind filled in rapidly switched to the jib for the final close reach to the line.

Overall a great result for us. We didn't beat Origami by enough to offset our rating difference, but sixth line honours and second on corrected time was far more than we had expected at our first attempt and we were delighted. It was a race where you certainly needed your share of good luck, and we certainly had that both in terms of the actual conditions and how they fell for us. I know that with only twenty odd minutes becalmed we were more fortunate than some, but it still felt pretty good as we shared a bottle of wine and watched the sunset that evening!

Nigel Stevens, Triassic



Round Britain and Ireland 2 Handed Race 2018

The Royal Western Two Handed round Britain and Ireland race is one of my favourite ways to spoil an otherwise perfectly good June. It's a rare combination of fear, boredom and camaraderie coupled with bouts of light drinking and beautiful scenery. I can't recommend it highly enough.

The race this year started on the 3rd of June in Plymouth. The fleet consisted of 18 boats, 5 of which the multihulls were.

- The Edge 40' Irens tri
Chris Briggs and Andy Carr
- Suenos Dazcat 1195
Rupert Kidd and Elliot Wilkinson
- Belladonna Dazcat 10m
Domonic Gooding & Matt Theobald
- Bare Necessities Dazcat 1150
Bruce Sutherland & Alison Busfield
- Hissy Fit Dazcat 1495
Simon Baker & Matt Baker

The first leg over to Kinsale in Ireland was about as champagne sailing as you can get.

A reach out to the Eddystone and a 15 kt run down to the Scilly Isles. The Edge led the way with the rest of us in close handicap order. Then once over the TSS it was a fast shy reach in 15-20 kts alternating between white sails and a screecher. Then about 20 miles out the wind started to shut down. We had installed some proper rowing sculls off the back end of Hissy and it was time to try them out. With a tiny bit of breeze on the beam we could get the sails to fill and row/sail at about 1 ½ kts. Not very fast but on several occasions it allowed us to



either cross from one patch of breeze to the next or row across a finish line and save hours of wallowing (in self pity). The Edge managed to get in first in a mere 22 hours, with Hissy second, Suenos, Bare Necessities and then Belladonna.

It was a very easy start to the race but even so the Edge need some serious Plexus surgery to the back beam, involving a 150mile round trip to Shannon in a 1970's Austin Maxi. After 2 days of getting our fill of Murphy's (not Guinness in the south of Ireland I'm told) and great live music we were on our way to Barra.

Leg two started with as little breeze as we finished with and meant hours more rowing. Eventually we crept down to the Fastnet and the wild West Coast. This is where things start to get seriously beautiful as the scenery becomes truly magnificent. Past the abbey on great Skellig is a wonderous sight on an oily sea with a long Atlantic swell and makes me want to return and go cruising. Here the wind started to shift into the north and fill. Poor old Suenos got completely dumped in a private hole despite being almost next to Belladonna and ended playing catch up.

The Edge piled off into the distance and we soon lost him on the AIS, thinking that would be the last we would see of him. A lonely next 48 hrs as we trudged out to the NW initially, looking for a shift to take us back to the rum line. The shift came and despite the softening forecast we kept moving well.

As we closed on Barra suddenly The Edge popped up on the AIS about 15miles in front and by the time we'd done a few gybes down to Barra Head we'd closed him down to about 2 miles. He had the last laugh though as the early morning breeze shut down just after he'd crossed the line and we then had to row for 2 hrs to make the final couple of miles. Bare Necessities had a great run and were next in, only a couple of hours behind us. Then the big surprise of Belladonna still in front of Suenos and going into the lead on handicap.

The stop in Barra was stunning as the sun shone and the wind wouldn't have troubled a lit match for the whole two days we were there. However the storm clouds were building.



A big low promising more than 50 kts was on its way. We anxiously planned for bolt holes up the coast all the way from Barra to Sheltand. The Edge left a few hours in front of us but the lull before the storm meant he didn't get far. Then the Hebridean firing range got involved and Briggsy and Mr Carr were right in the middle of were they wanted to test torpedeos. A few fraught conversations over the next couple of hours with range control saw The Edge forced off to the west and waste valuable time. The battle was on to get round St Kilda before the breeze came on and it was a very tense period. Hissy Fit eventually got round at one in the morning but we had no idea were The Edge was as we'd lost them on AIS.

We sailed down the back of Lewis and the forecast breeze started to build, We were miles behind our routing and made the decision to stop in Loch Roag as the wind hit about 30kts. We thought we'd have to anchor and so didn't want to leave it too late and risk not finding a good sheltered spot.

This is were the race started to get a bit weird. After we got in we found out that The Edge had gone back to Barra to seek shelter. Suenos started but once round Barra Head put back in and sought shelter on the next island up. Belladonna stayed in Barra and Bare Necessities retired and headed for the mainland.

I haven't mentioned the monohulls up til now as they hadn't proved to be much of a problem. Now however, the leading class 40 Cariberia had left Barra

Round Britain and Ireland 2 Handed Race 2018

on the way to St Kilda and without AIS or a tracker had gone off the radar. The remaining monos had all stayed in in port but were now petitioning the Race Director to shorten the course by not going round St.Kilda, going into Lerwick via the south (eg not over the top of Muckle Flugga) and shortening the stop over in Lowestoft to 24 hours.

The unsheduled stop in Lewis then got seriously windy and we were stuck there for 36 hours whilst it blew dogs off chains. St Kilda reporting 60 odd kts. Luckily we found a pontoon in a really sheltered spot and had plenty of hospitality from a local wildlife watching outfit. We left Lewis as early as we dare with the wind still blowing about 30 kts and a 6m swell. Two reefs in and the screecher up and we ripped down past the off lying islands of Sula Segir at consistant speeds in the teens.

The course had been officially shortened now as mentioned and we gygbed away between Ornkney and Shetland to head into Lerwick from the south. At Sumburgh Head we got stuck in a rather dramatic set of overfalls that saw us going backwards for nearly 5 hours and took the shine off an otherwise good leg.

As we got closer to Lerwick we had no idea where the class 40 was. Had they sought shelter or had they toughed it out. As we rounded the harbour there she was, looking more than a little battered with torn sails on deck and soaked auto pilot motors stripped and drying. It turns out they had just got to Muckle Flugga when the storm came on from the west and despite being in the lee of the Shetlands they couldn't make Lerwick and had to run off under bare poles. After a conversation with the Coastguard they had gone to bed, then the Coastguard not hearing anything more from them had launched a lifeboat and a helicopter to search for them.

So we now had a strange situation where the lead boat had been round St.Kilda and Muckle Flugga. We had been round St. Kilda but not Muckle Flugga and everyone else hadn't been round either.

I'm glad it wasn't up to me to sort out the results...

The Edge came in 6 hours later minus a bowsprit. They still had all the bits mind and spent much of the stopover sticking it back together with the help of a local who had been part of the original build team. Suenos had a blinder of a leg and had pulled out 11 hours on Belladonna, who got stuck in the same overfalls as us at Sumburgh.

The next low was on its way and we hoped we wouldn't get trapped again. Cariberia left 14 hours in front of us and by the time we left it was blowing 40 kts in the harbour entrance. A few hours with 3 reefs and a heavy jib and we appeared to be out running the gale. The beam reach down most of the leg was bloody freezing with the wind again up to 40 kts and Biff and I had to alternate one on, one off for quite a bit of it to stay warm.

The Edge had a bit of a moment at their start when, with 3 reefs and a staysail up, the genoa unfurled and then refused to go back to bed. It flogged itself to death and nearly had the boat up the rocks. The boys were left with no option but to go back in and cut it all free. By the time we got to Lowestoft Hissy Fit had taken a big chunk out of Cariberia and was only 4 hours adrift. The other multis had all fallen a long way back and it was starting to look like a two horse dash for the finish. We had a good run across the entrance to the Thames estuary and our new J zero that had arrived in Lerwick finally got an airing. It was a big improvement in the sub 10 kt department and meant that Hissy's Achilles heel was somewhat healed. As we neared Eastbourne our

nemesis was in sight. A few swapped tacks and a trip right under beachy head, (if someone had jumped, they'd have landed on the foredeck) and we were up with them. Then off the Isle of Wight as night fell we wriggled into the lead. As day broke the breeze disappeared completely and it was time to kedge off the back of the island. Cariberia lost 4 miles as they drifted back past St Cats in the deeper water. The wind continued to be fitful all the way down the coast and it was a big struggle to keep moving. By the time we got to Salcome we had 15 miles to go and a 5 mile lead. The gods weren't done with us yet though and turned the wind off again. More rowing and more kedging saw Cariberia sail up to us and stop so close we talked about what we'd all had for breakfast. This was getting painful! several more park ups before Plymouth and Cariberia being marginally faster in the sub 3 kts of breeze, she pulled out and beat us across the Western club line by about a mile or 43 minutes.

Happy we had done all we could, we had to be content to take the Multihull win overall and on handicap. The Edge was next in, followed by Suenos and Belladonna, who came second on handicap. An amazing result for, Domonic and Matt, the smallest boat in the whole fleet and one that's 20 years old at that.

A massive thanks to the Royal Western, David and Vianney Searle the Race Directors, who did a great job in difficult circumstances. Also a big thanks to Biffa for inviting me to race with him. It was a bit different from the last time I did the race in 2006 on the 10m tri Paradox, which was a brutal experience, Hissy Fit is just a massive floating palace by comparison. RBI 2022 anyone??

By **Matt Baker**

RANK	NAME	CLASS	RATE	ARRIVED	ELAPSED DD HH MM	CORRECTED DD HH MM	CLASS RANK	CORR RANK
1	CARIBERIA	Mo	1.220	24-JUN 15:02	21 03 02	17 05 37	1	6
2	HISSY FIT	Mu	1.251	24-JUN 15:45	21 03 45	17 17 02	1	1
3	THE EDGE	Mu	1.547	25-JUN 13:37	22 01 37	23 07 26	2	4
4	BELLADONNA	Mu	1.155	26-JUN 12:12	23 00 12	18 11 45	3	2
5	BOMBARDINO	Mo	1.020	26-JUN 15:08	23 03 08	16 10 52	2	2
6	JACKDAW	Mo	1.041	26-JUN 17:36	23 05 36	16 21 35	3	5
7	BLUE JAY	Mo	1.011	26-JUN 18:36	23 06 36	16 10 54	4	3

MOCRA Bembridge Regatta

15th & 16th September 2018 - MOCRA Bembridge Regatta - incorporating the Diam 24od National Championships



Six MOCRA multihulls and four Diam 24ods enjoyed two challenging days racing off Bembridge over the weekend of 15th & 16th September. On Saturday the main challenge was the variable wind conditions, both in strength (F2 occasionally F4) and direction (W/SW/S); on Sunday the direction was reasonably steady but it was not until the final race that it strengthened to mid-F4.

For the first two races on Saturday and the two races on Sunday, the format was that the six MOCRA boats started five minutes ahead of the Diam 24ods. The first race got away to a slightly hesitant start after a 20 minute postponement waiting for the breeze to settle a bit. Arlette (a Farrier 25), helmed by Graham Goff, was first round the windward mark (Footprint), with Nigel Talbot in Nitric (Corsair Dash 750) and Mark Upton-Brown with his family in Alini (Farrier 9a) not far behind. Although by no means a procession, there was no change to the order as they rounded the leeward mark (Moreton) and headed back to Fitzwilliam to go through the line for a second round. Although finishing nearly four minutes ahead, it was not quite enough (20 seconds) to beat Nitric on corrected time. In the Diams, 3 Wise Monkeys helmed by Jon Hutchins, after getting stuck in irons at the start headed into the Bembridge shore and picked up their own breeze which got them to the windward mark well ahead of the other three boats. They held their lead until the second run to Moreton when the young crew of Maverick,

helmed by Edward Connellan, suddenly shot ahead and crossed the line nearly a minute in front.

The start of the second race was considerably more competitive for both classes. Although the first leg to Under Tyne was not very long, Arlette was still able to get ahead by quite a way; on the long run to Nab East Nitric found her legs and had soon overtaken Alini and Tympanic (Dragonfly 28 Sport) helmed



by Lindsey Knight. The beat back to Under Tyne saw the fleet split as they tried to work out the windshifts and the tide. Nitric continued to whittle down Arlette's lead and crossed the line, just over thirty seconds in front; enough to win on corrected time by over two minutes. Molly 5, helmed by Stephen Homewood with his family crewing, had an excellent race after a cracking good port tack flyer at the start and came in second on corrected time.

Start of Race 2 (MOCRA)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KX0zIE2yCi4>

All four Diams were well off the pace at the start, but this soon changed with Gaetana 3, helmed by Riccardo Pavoncelli leading the way round the windward mark and holding onto it on the long run to Nab East and beat back to Under Tyne; mind you it was a very, very close run thing with Maverick never far away and Phil Cotton in Buzz Race Team always a threat as the breeze varied in both direction and strength.

After a lunch break, the multihulls were joined by two Redwings and four One-Designs for a combined non-scoring Barts Bash race. The previous occasion a combined race had been run with the keelboats and multihulls was the inaugural Barts Bash race in 2014 when the keelboat turnout was considerably larger, however at least we tried! For safety reasons (and to make it more fun) it was essentially a 'reaching' course with the start line divided with the keelboats on the left of the Committee Boat and the multi-hulls on the right. The windward mark was Derrick (K) which was fine for the keelboat helms who knew where it was, but unfortunately the multihulls had problems identifying the right mark so took a very circular route to get there! It also did not help that some of them failed to hear or see the course change for the second round! Maverick (Diam 24od) was the first to spot where the keelboats had gone and found themselves a long way out in front; Jonathan Nainby-Luxmoore in Snowgoose was the first Redwing to finish and Helen Mathieson in No 1 was the first One-Design. 'Best laid plans ...' comes to mind!

The same line was used for the final race of the day which meant another reaching start. As they were ready first, the Diams were the first to start. It did not take them long to get to Warner and then they flew eastwards to St Helens. The beat back, initially to Under Tyne, then a reach to Janson before the final beat to the finish close to Garland might have been less exciting but nevertheless proved quite challenging. The slightly increased wind strength was lapped up by the young crew in Maverick who screamed into the finish well over a minute ahead of Gaetana 3 with Buzz Race Team having to grit their teeth and make do with third.

The two Redwings and four One-Designs were next off and remained closer inshore. Jonathan Nainby-Luxmoore in

Snowgoose lead the way and although a couple of mistakes would have allowed Robin Ebsworth in Quintessence to get through, it was not to be and Snowgoose finished two minutes ahead. There was little to separate the four One-Designs; however on the final couple of legs, Jos Coad in No 8 moved into the thirty second lead ahead of James Beart in No 5, Sarah Marshall in No 7 and Rob Mathieson in No 1.

The six MOCRA boats meanwhile were following the same course as the Diams. The conditions were perfect for Arlette who finished three and a half minutes in front of Alini with Nitric in third another three minutes later. This was enough for Geoff to win on corrected time by ten seconds; Mark in Alini was second and Nigel in Nitric was third.

It was touch and go whether there was going to be enough water for the boats over-nighting in the harbour to get out. In the event the Homewood family in Molly 5 decided to head home early in case the wind got up too much, and the West's in Backlash found themselves trapped on the inside of the Visitors Pontoon so they were unable to join in.



The plan for the first race was a 'short and sharp' course, however with the breeze sticking at around 8 knots, it was not as frenetic as it has been in the past. Both fleets had excellent starts and it was not long before they split tacks as they headed for Garland. Arlette was the first of the MOCRA boats to round with Nitric, Alini and Tympanic reasonably close behind. Tympanic then had a problem with her asymmetric so retired. On the second round Arlette increased her lead

albeit she was unable to get far enough ahead of Nitric to win on corrected time; had there been another round (as originally intended), the result would probably have been different.

Start of Race 4 (MOCRA)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gw_kXHoeel

Buzz Race Team, having been inch perfect at the start, were well ahead of 3 Wise Monkeys at Garland with Maverick in third. At one stage it looked as if 3 Wise Monkeys was going to take the lead as they weaved their way down on the run to Ruthven, but it was not to be and Buzz Race Team finished about a minute and a half in front.

Start of Race 4 (Diams)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=psl1d_eJso

The breeze began to pick up slightly after the start of the final race which certainly made for some exciting racing for the four Diams. After very good starts both fleets headed towards the Bembridge shore where an inflatable windward mark had been laid. Arlette was again the first of the MOCRA fleet to round with Nitric, Alini and Tympanic (who made up a lot



a minute ahead, which was just enough to allow them to hold onto third place on corrected time.

The four Diams meanwhile flew round the course as the breeze increased to 15 knots. At the front, there was little to separate Buzz Race Team and Gaetana 3 and it could have been either boat crossing the finish line first; in fact it was Buzz Race Team who found the better layline on the final tack and screamed across the line on one hull, twenty seconds ahead. Although never in contention for the first two places, Maverick & 3 Wise Monkeys had a similar close race with the latter just able to maintain better boat speed on the final couple of tacks to the finish line.

Buzz Race Team finishing at speed:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISIUeg7_G68

Two excellent days racing; congratulations to student Ed Connellan and his young crew in Maverick who were the overall Diam 24od National Champions one point ahead of Phil Cotton in Buzz Race Team who were second on a tie break with Riccardo Pavoncelli in Gaetana 3. Similarly congratulations to Nigel Talbot and his son in Nitric who finished three points ahead of Graham Goff in Arlette with the Upton-Brown family in Alini third in the MOCRA fleet. Philip Cotton and his crew of Buzz Race Team who is the Diam 24od National Champion,

A big thank you to everyone who entered and to those involved in making it all work. It was good to hear a number of "thank you and look forward to seeing you again next year" remarks as they headed back to their home ports.

Flickr album with photos by Mike

Samuelson & Jerry Summers:
<https://flic.kr/s/aHsmsyTNJp>

Y&Y Report

<https://www.yachtsandyachting.com/news/210129/MOCRA-Bembridge-Regatta>

The Crinan canal for me

A Warm Scottish Summer Cruise

Over the last 40 years a few sailing pals have disappeared into the wilderness and unique rural communities of the Scottish West coast. Paradoxically retirement has not made cruising time any easier to schedule; however, splitting it up creates opportunities. Over the decades there has always been a worry that the northward passage of urbane pseudo-sophistication that has altered the Clyde and the urban mainland will have changed the qualities that define its charm; particularly in August school holiday time; but we went anyway. So, we wanted to get to some old haunts (the Crinan canal) and some new and completely remote spots.

With a day wasted stormbound at home, we left Stranraer marina early in Tri Mhor (Gaelic for big three) our newly acquired Dragonfly 32. A delivery crew of Iain (Scottish Peaks Record holder) and Eric, a long time sailing companion, majoring as raconteur and bon viveur enjoyed a stunningly picturesque Loch Ryan, one of Scotland's less known lochs. Completely sheltered it is the only harbour accessible to yachts at all states of tide or weather between Liverpool and Troon. Beating up the loch we had a cooked breakfast preparing us for a fetch to the Mull of Kintyre, about 40 miles. Getting the tide is crucial and with up to 16kts on the log we arrived early. The overfalls were barely noticeable as we louped along as the wind moderated and came further North, and by early evening we ghosted into Craighouse on Jura.

Iain and I have been in many times on the peaks race; rowing; beating in the dark through the narrow rocky entrance in 35kts apparent; hitting submerged objects; and always a dinghy transfer. On our last visit Iain escorted our two runners through an outdoor wedding being conducted on the pier! This time

all went well. We charged past the rock ledges at 6 knots under screecher but on mirror like sea. This well charted navigational hazard is easily identified by large gouges and antifoul staining. It was noted by most of the moorings occupants which was packed with visitors to a music festival. Although there is plenty of room to anchor, there is kelp and a shallow pontoon that allowed us to moor alongside (with appropriate permissions) into less than 1.5 metres at high tide. Jura being an amphidrome, we didn't go aground. A few remarks about our spectacular entrance and ability to get a premium berth made us quietly proud of Tri mhor. A pleasant meal and the obligatory malt gave us a wonderful end to an almost perfect day. Jura malt



THE 2018 PEAKS RACE WITH A PAP IN THE BACKGROUND. IAIN AND OUR 2 RUNNERS HAD TO RUN THROUGH THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY ON JURA PIER!



THE PAPS.

is famous for precipitating the famous leather allergy, a condition characterised by waking up still wearing shoes. What else could be the explanation? Wisdom comes with years!

We left early the next morning in light winds to get the north going tide. Jura is Scotland's 8th biggest island but with only about 200 people. It is owned

by seven landlords, six of whom are absentees; the presence of 5,500 deer demonstrates the priorities of these landowners, some of whom date back to the clearances; I suspect their attitudes to the island prosperity align more with the 19th century than the 21st. A priority for deer has replaced sheep, the latter having displaced people to profit already rich absentee landowners. In the north, overlooking the infamous Corrie-breacan whirlpool, Eric Blair/George Orwell finished 1984 during his last illness.

A stunning sail to Oban through the magnificently narrow Pladda sound for Iain to catch the train to work was for-shortened by light winds; rather than motor we pulled into Ardfern in loch Craignish. The pontoons are welcoming and there is a sea eagle nest on the way in (she wasn't there). A pleasant enough pub meal at the only hotel was a comfortable end to the day. Iain left by taxi. 2 good and one bad day is an acceptable ratio for Scotland, even in August. An otter regaled us as we left the next morning and a sail and motor to Oban allowed us to enjoy the city lights of the North West.

There are new pontoons at Oban north pier and they are very nice too; very efficient but limited to 2 nights. Even for a short stay though Kerera marina has it all. Under new and very efficient, professional and friendly management it has



SUNDOWNERS AT KERERA MARINA



JURA WITH THE PAPS IN THE BACKGROUND; TIED UP AT THE PONTOON.

everything you could want. A remote island setting but a 10 minute journey via regular ferry service takes you to the fleshpots of Oban with the recently re-opened iconic Oban Inn (established 1790 it survived everything but the exciseman in 2007 who closed it until reopening in 2016) a short crawl back to the ferry and a friendly helping hand aboard allows the best of both worlds. Don't miss it! Seafood and other restaurants abound in Oban with supermarkets best accessed by a short taxi run. Yet only 10 minutes ferry from the bustling tourism we enjoyed an island walk, meeting only 4 or 5 people over the 3 mile walk to the other ferry where we completed a circular tour. The restaurant on the island is low key, friendly and exceptionally good. The view is sensational the food and drink affordable and high quality.

We had to leave the boat for a few days to pick up my brother Alan, and Rod from the Glasgow train. Despite worries about the accommodation, Tri mhor proved most comfortable for 4 grumpy old gits.

Tobermory proved too tempting to pass and after a gentle sail up the sound of Mull we had a good curry followed by a pleasant few pints in the MishNish, an establishment that has retained its character over the decades. Tobermory never disappoints, despite many changes over the years. The Mishnish is a place where sailing plans are made and on the return failures are consoled. We planned to go to Hellisay in the sound of Barra, a destination talked about for years, but requiring courage, good weather and meticulous navigation. For this last we came with the invaluable Antares charts, which have re-surveyed many remote anchorages and have made pilotage easier and safer. The consequences of error are unchanged! As it turned out Hellisay has neither VHF or cellphone reception so the consequences of grounding or worse are considerable. Alternatives considered were Arinagour

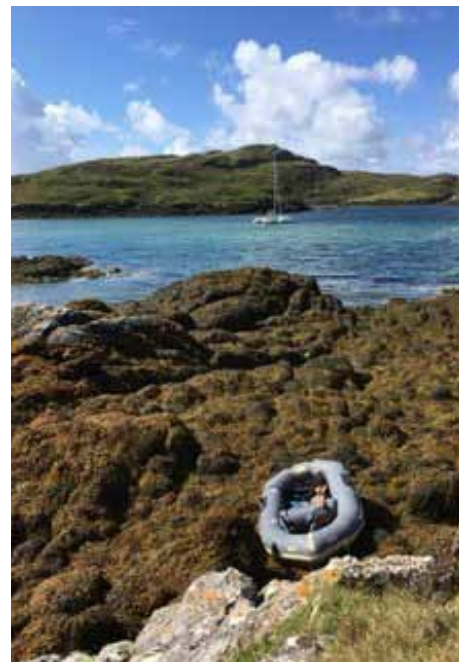


FROM HELLISAY LOOKING TO GIGHAY.
BARRA IN THE DISTANCE

on Coll or Castlebay, Barra.

An early start and a light breeze gave us a passage speed of 6-8 knots and a tribute to the new boat was the freshness of the crew on our arrival at a jagged Hellisay entrance in the large part less than 50 feet wide with a tide just to make it interesting.

On arrival we anchored and opened a bottle of wine to drink to the health of the welcoming songs of seals, and our sea view was enhanced by the arrival of a Golden Eagle that perched on the cliffs of Gighay later joined by a Sea Eagle on Hellisay. Hebridean magic. We spent the day exploring the island and over a sundowner or two (a rather unusual experience in the hebrides) planned an island walk followed by a short sail to the fleshpots of Lochboisdale and the new marina - every isolated spot discovered has to be tempered with a safe alternative bolthole.



ASHORE ON HELLISAY. FROM ONE DESERTED ISLAND TO THE OTHER. NOTE THE NARROW ENTRANCE.
THE SANDBAR DRIES



LOCHBOISDALE MARINA; SUNSET OVER THE HOTEL.

Lochboisdale is well marked, safe access and has a new marina. The village is tiny and there is only one hotel within walking distance. Even here becoming stormbound would be a 2 day trip home. The waiter was a prospective university student and was quizzed about the menu.



CHAMPAGNE BREAKFAST

"Is the fish local?" "No - it was landed at Barra". Barra is 10 miles away. "Well its bound to be fresh then" "Well not so fresh, it was landed yesterday". We had the fish. He's going to be disappointed with city student fayre.

It was Eric and Iain's birthday the next day; another glassy sea and the prospect of a long motor back seemed a let down. The champagne was accompanied by a cold cooked breakfast courtesy of a pod of dolphins. Rod was crew of Silurian of the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust and this was the first of four dolphin sightings. Boring motoring was further eased by a Minke whale and two basking shark encounters. The second 3 sharks with one breaching 4 times! This is very rare behaviour only ever recorded on the West Coast and thought to be a mating display.

Tobermory arrival coincided with breeze and so we closed our return journey at Oban with a seafood dinner, a lot of Sancerre and even in the face of a bad forecast a happy crew. The Crinan canal beckoned, early because for the first time in a decade, we could fold and navigate it. Despite pouring rain and high winds, there was limited water and time restrictions. The canal is a beautiful waterway and we enjoyed the water shortage and

low traffic. The Cairnbaan hotel was welcoming and we had a good rest after our 2 long days. Try the langoustines. There was no Sancerre when we left.

The trip to Ardrishaig, with a tidal restraint for locking out delayed our start. A walk overlooking the deer inhabited marshes, and then locking out to Loch Fyne, always splendrous yet in comparison to the Hebrides where we often could see no other boats the whole day it seemed positively crowded, often with 2 or 3 sails in view. Another night in the Clyde hotspot of Tarbert which has lost none of its charm, left us fresh for a passage past Inchmarnock, Arran, Bute, the Cumbraes and back to Troon for a night then the train home.

The Hebrides remain largely unspoilt. The Crinan canal is essentially unchanged. Our new boat is a consummate cruiser. Please don't tell anyone. They'll just come up here and spoil it. For a week our only worry was how the Lochboisdale student will survive on city food.

By Gordon Baird - Tri Mhor



THE CAIRNBAAN- WONDERFUL LANGOUSTINES AND GREAT VALUE - WHO NEEDS TO CROSS THE CHANNEL FOR A SEAFOOD EXPERIENCE?

Jersey to Barcelona on a Dragonfly 32 via the Garonne and Canal du Midi



Towards the end of 2017 we decided to do the St Helier Yacht Club race to Biscay and then keep going south. Given the prevailing wind, the idea of sailing off-wind down the west coast of France appealed but then to take it through the canals joining the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

The start of the race was 12.30 on Saturday 21st July for which we had a 7 kt north-westerly wind. Unfortunately, the wind was to drop as we sailed along the south coast of Jersey which was an omen for what was to come during the race. The course took us up towards Guernsey then south west and along the Brittany coast. We were a team of 4, both my daughters, Laura and Emma and a friend Paul Ellison who has just obtained a MOCRA rating for his boat. With the light winds there were a number of tidal gates where the fleet parked itself and the race effectively started again, a big advantage for the slower rated boats. After 289 miles of racing we took line honours getting in to Concarneau late Tuesday afternoon. Now the cruise began, the race team left and my wife Fiona joined me for the trip south.

The West Coast of France is a beautiful cruising area and we had so many varied experiences, whether on the mainland coast or the many Islands, such as Belle



Île, Île d'Yeu, Ars-en-Ré or Ile D'Oleron. The versatility of the Dragonfly 32 has helped us to explore many areas, travelling up rivers and estuaries and ultimately canals. The mud in the water on both the Charente and Gironde Estuary took some getting used to, however the trip up the Charente to Rochefort was well worth it; such a peaceful experience, as was the return journey in the early hours of the morning to make maximum use of the flow downstream. This was a marked contrast to the mighty Gironde Estuary and we took heed to navigate it over a neap tide. Even then it still added to our boat speed by some 5 knots at times. Then, there is also the debris that flows up and down with some sizable pieces of wood. We sailed up to Pauillac to take the mast down. The entry to Pauillac was made difficult by the silting making the entrance narrow and then there is the flow of water through the marina making a challenging mooring experience! The mud must have been at least 2 metres in places as on one of the pontoons a keel boat had sunk into the mud, but stayed upright, no need for legs here!

We had toyed with the idea of taking the mast on the boat, but very quickly decided to send it overland both in the interests of safety and convenience. We thus set off motoring up to Bordeaux, but only after visiting a Chateau and other wine establishments with some tastings! We stayed in the heart of Bordeaux on the Ponton d'Honneur, which is very close to the Place Royale with its mirrored

reflection. The quay is buzzing with live music and many cafes, bars and restaurants. Within walking distance there is also an excellent wine museum which ends with a talk of the wine area and of course it is necessary to smell and taste the local produce.

Now on to the canal system, at Castets-en-Dorthe. There was a considerable stream on the estuary to start with, but it gradually diminished and we realised when we had reached the river flow, as we were no longer in muddy water!

We reached the first lock too late to go through, so spent the night on the waiting pontoon before tackling this double lock in the morning. There is a lock keeper which was just as well given the rise of water and also as it was our first experience with the boat in a lock. On the outside of the fenders we had placed wooden planks to help protect the boat. Also by passing through the canals in October there are very few other boats and so far it hasn't been necessary to share a lock with another boat. At the time of writing we are on the Garonne, almost at Toulouse, heading towards the Canal du Midi, although there are currently reports that part of it has been closed due to flooding. Anyway, hoping we will be reunited with our mast at Port-la-Nouvelle to sail down to Barcelona where the boat will stay for the winter.

Jeff and Fiona Speller
Aquaflly
Dragonfly 32 Supreme

Island hopping along the Frisians

We continue the voyages of our Iroquois, having cruised North Brittany, through the Rance/ Villaine Canal to South Brittany and Biscay France, then back to the Solent and along the south coast. We are now heading East to the Dutch Frisian Islands.

Departure Lowestoft, 0630 bridge to sea 0700 but the slack was nearly two hrs before. Outside the piers all a mess of tide driven chop and the wind now at about 25kts. Yikes!

So after the lifting bridge, we pulled out the channel to talk it over. I said to Trina, "it's supposed to drop really quickly- but it does seem breezy still, we could pull in to the yacht club moorings for a while- check the latest weather"

We discussed this, but without the latest password, the Wi-Fi wouldn't work- nothing to be done, we checked over the boat and ourselves for one last time, stem to the east, out to the wild weather. Under jib alone 6 knots through the water, only 3 over the ground with a foul spring tide westerly wind astern, through the Newcombe channel and out, a bit of a sleigh ride. Trina mentioned that it might be better to go back, but all was too wild for that, no chance. Only one-way tickets today.

Pleased to be jib alone, the main is always a bad idea with the wind astern on a breezy day. The first hours past with a very knobbly ride indeed. But at the 4th hour Trina discussed the possibility of turning round- it had not moderated. But there was no way back. By the end of the 4th hour, the wind dropped completely leaving a big gnarly swell throwing us all over the place. We set the spinnaker to try to keep sailing, but it made little difference, the wind was gone. I lowered the outboard, turned the key. Nothing. Not even a click.

But not to worry. It hasn't started on the key for 3 years, no surprise there.

First pull of the starter chord, we are away again, the crossing continued at five kts through the water, no wind, swell slowly decreasing. By 1600, crossing the deep water traffic route, 1800 half way, the swell was down to 2 meters, the wind, still very light and dead running south of the rhumb line route due to the new wind farms. 2100 crossing the south end of South Breeveertein Traffic route, 2300 the Imjuiden Crossing Traffic scheme, then continuing to the east running south of the Ijmuiden traffic lanes.

It had hurt to buy the latest admiralty chart 1408 the day before, 25 pounds, but the situation with the offshore wind farms is so irresponsible- these farms crop up where you don't expect them. When under construction, they are unlit. It is all so dangerous. Sure enough as the night passed the field under construction had lights on 20% of the turbines. The rest could just be seen in the light of the full moon. There may or may not be guard boats, but, as with all the other fields we have passed over previous years, we have never seen a guard boat.

Sunrise, now the wind a couple of knots from the south, the swell less than one meter, a call on VHF 61 to Imjuiden traffic and the awesome tide rip of the north flowing spring flood tide pushing around the south pier, but we are approaching from the south side so all ok, we are swept in.

Our plan, to moor in the Sea Haven Marina, and see what happened with the weather. If it was bad, then to Amsterdam, if good, to the Frisian Islands. But for now,



ROUTE PLAN

some sleep. The Almanac says visitors to pier M so followed the pier till close to the gate and moored on the finger pontoon at 0500. Then some sleep.

So, it's 10 ish, up to the showers and pay our bills, some laundry to the laundrette, tea with a view is found upstairs at the yacht club. This marina is said to be not welcoming and expensive but we found it very welcoming and reasonable. Our daily charge, 9 meters, 23 euros, great facilities, so- it's ok.

While the laundry was doing what it does, upstairs for tea - we started with tea but now almost lunchtime so followed with shrimp croquet and salad, all for 18 euros, Martin, the owner, an ex-trawler man, fishing from here, was really helpful and the food, vg. (The Dutch Admirals, 0255-560307).

The buses to town run every 15 mins from outside the port office, so a bus to



LOCALS, OUT ON THE WADDENZEE

town and not really much to see here, the town was wrecked in the last war, nothing left and all rebuilt. As I recall there were German submarine pens here. A call to Herman the chandler (0256-512962), he came to pick me up, we tried to find a new batten to fit my lower pocket, the elastic in the pocket is stretching and the original batten is no longer held in. No batten to fit, but a piece of expensive teak that would fit so bought it. He kindly agreed to stop at the garage to fill an empty fuel can on the way home, the marina fuel system being down. SO cutting down the teak runner to fit, the new batten fitted, and off to the Dutch Admirals, for dinner in the evening with the sun setting and a view over the wide sandy beach.

Morning- we should have left at 0430 but instead it was 1430. Not sure where the day went, but at 30 degrees, bright sunshine, a lovely day, filled the second fuel can at the now functioning marina fuel system and north to Texel. Sea like glass, following the beach. At 1430 Dutch time, tidal assistance negligible, but by 1700 the tide was running at a knot with us, but bad news the wind was 25 knots pushing on to the now lee shore, on the beach. Fortunately just a local squall- so setting the main to help drive off, keels down, we drove well enough, off the shore, but then the rain started, visibility closed in and the lightning was all around. We discussed our contingency for lightning strikes- on the job list was an earth line from the port shrouds to sea- not yet done.

This continued, the speed rose, 2 knots of tide now, 1900 approaching the Shulpengat channel at Den Helder, a huge dredger just visible between rainsqualls, 3 knots of tide with us now, decided to leave it to stbd, just as well as when really close, we could see the dredger had a large discharge hose to the beach, that could be seen on the other- east-side. Now 4 knots of tide with us, sucked into the Maasdeip the rain and wind stopped, the sea once more like glass. Now safely in the Waddingsea, sails furled, engine pushing along the east coast of Texel to Ouderschild.

We had been phoning the port for 2 days (0222-321227), no answer, just a recording in Dutch. so getting into the harbour to find a sign closed- harbour full, was disappointing. We went alongside a 50 ft. cat in the outer fishing harbour, had tea and planning. I hiked off to investigate, met a Dutch couple and discussed the sign- they said don't take any notice, that sign is always up, and don't bother to call them, they never answer the phone.



TEXEL OUTER HARBOUR- THE INNER HARBOUR WAS FULL



ONE OF THE LOCALS, WAVING!

Our conscience a little clearer, we motored past the no entry sign, and found a berth alongside – just as the Dutch couple had suggested – up at G pontoon, reserved for yachts greater than 50 ft. We were 30’.

A relief to be in. Noodles and rolls -not quite the Dover sole and salad from last night!

Saturday the 6th – the day of the round Texel catamaran race. The day dawned with bright blue sky and 25 kts. A stunning day – but would they cancel the race? And our plan to cycle round the island now less than ideal- every chance of being blown off the bikes- yikes! A visit to the HM-paid 56 euros for 2 nights and arranged a berth that was a bit better – where we were then blocked in by a motor yacht – so moved to the end of the hammerhead on B pontoon. Right in front of the clubhouse.

Off in the morning with a plan to explore Texel but not sure how- we had read that the main town was Den Burg, so bought phone-a -bus tickets there and back from the harbourmaster. We also heard the round Texel catamaran race was passing, the leaders that is, passing the pier heads at 1100. We were on the grass by the pier with about 1000 people as the first cats came hammering to windward along the island shore, very impressive, and with them, windsurfers.

A short walk by the old commercial harbour, over the dyke to the village of Ouderschild, where the windmill sails could be seen- but no way in? So continued down the Heemskerckstraat and some shops selling Texel wool stuff, on to the Museum- the Kap Skil Museum. We guessed we’d be there an hour or so, so called the bus to book our ride. 1 hour wait.

The museum was vg, a 60 ft. long model of the island and anchorage with 40 ships from the Golden age at anchor in the roads, the best anchorage in Holland. And a huge amount of shipping history, as well as historically made up houses from

different periods of history and a lot more. Loved it.

Our bus showed up and the girl driver chatted on her phone as we drove the 5km to town, but we were the only people on the bus. When she stopped chatting, we tried to talk. But she didn’t really want to know. We wanted a bus tour. But the way this works, is you phone a bus, say where you want to go and they plan it. We booked to Den Burg, so that was it. But was it? Some negotiating continued, and after we got to town, she agreed yes, next pickup was the north end of the island, yes we could ride along- we had our bus tour.

There are many sheep and a lot of sand. But also one or two small villages, with historic churches. We passed a skydiving centre and farms, to the north point, we thanked our driver and tried to negotiate a ride back- she refused as was full of pickups on the way south, but kindly called the bus company for our ride back. 1 hour wait. So to the beach café for lunch and watching the kite buggies speed across the huge white sand beach in strong winds.

The bus back took us the scenic route, interesting trip through villages and the coast, to Den Burgh. A hike round the town- bigger than we expected, the old historic church locked but no one at home. Then to the dock at Havenpavilion for sundowners.

Texel to Vlieland

Next morning. – Sunday- up at 6 , out at 630 and set course- this was a low water departure, the strong flooding tide and all sail including 650 sq ft spinni had us to



APPROACHING VIELAND

10 knots in no time, so after avoiding the huge shellfish farm that crosses the centre of the channel, uncharted, we reduced sail to seriously navigate the channels. We followed the northerly through route east and then cut the corner leaving the Orndraai bank to stbd, through the old Oude Vie channel but had to lift our keels at this point, only 2 ft of water as were a bit far north for the rise of tide – 3hrs. After LW at Vlieland. We re-joined the channel north. The chart was 0.5 at this point, but the chart was wrong, which is not unexpected, as the banks are always moving.

Following the channel north against 3 knots, sometimes 4, of flood tide, under engine now as into the strong NW’y, following the channel by the Zuidwal gas platform, to the Wolfshoek where the drying height of 0.6m now was within 2



TRADITIONAL BOATS IN TERSHELLING

hrs of a 2.5m hw, so tidal height of over a meter should be found cutting across to the Vlielandburg channel.. Other yachts and old commercial Tjalks and Bidders were seen along the route and it was ok.

There were some uncharted buoys n the route and we had 5 ft of water on the sounder.

Into Vlieland. There is only one harbour (0562-451729), I had the VHF on 12, should have called before entering but as it was just a marina, and the airways full of Dutch, I didn't call before entering. But then found in the entrance channel, a big 100 ft traditional boat sailing out, a RIB with 25 thrill seekers in the channel coming out and other yachts milling around.

The HM walked out to meet us, was quite cool and we negotiated a berth near the showers and the dock. Plenty of room in the dock, finger pontoons. Plugged into power and logged on the free wifi.

After lunch, the island had to be explored. Few people here, there is a bus to the south end, but the wind was not that strong, negligible traffic so assembled the fold up bikes and into town, the only town, Vuurduin, 1 km away. Very pretty. Then continued south to the Posthuys (0562 451262), the famous café at the south end, 5 miles further on. Hard work on the bikes, a bit of a struggle out to the SW, into the wind, but rewarded by Spoonbills, Oystercatchers Brent geese Shellducks and other birds we couldn't identify. Butterflies too. Well wooded in places, grazing land in others, lovely. Coffee, Dutch apple pie from Beuer and

the girls, the café- which is the old post office- heaving with cyclists, then back.

A bit exhausted, Sundowners at "DE Dining" on the quay. After omelette for tea. We should have had dinner out there-vg and a reasonable price.

Vlieland to Terschelling

Slow start, Trina bought fresh orange juice, fresh pastries and fruit from the delicatessen on the quay.

Sailed at 1100, on the direct route in the new uncharted gap in the banks, the HM gave us the lat long co-ordinates of the gap. Current 4 knots against, open sea condition F6 against, so a bit rough, into the wind, but over pretty soon, 1230 in the dock. The new channel shown with yellow special marks, with a few other yachts going through.

Lunch of soup, fresh bread and cheese out with the seals.

Then into the dock (it's a short crossing) and a bit slow, as we had planned on a day off tomorrow, but now finding ourselves with an afternoon free, perhaps we could do something now. The weather was rough tomorrow, hence the day off, but the forecast was improving. Perhaps a go. Besides, it was a bit dull being at a loose end. Lots of maintenance to do on the boat. But a bit slow. After a bit of discussion, off to town for exploring, in the usual way. No bikes this time.

Tourist info in the middle of town, a bus timetable and a walk round town till then. There are two Museums, closed and an

old church, closed. The town was full of kids off the ferry, lots of cafés. Then caught the bus to the North end of the island.

The north end has no roads, so we continued on foot and watched the birds – the oystercatchers had all



EARLY FLOOD, PASSING SLEEPING SEALS THROUGH THE CHANNEL

marked territory, I guess for nesting, V. Noisy. Shellducks, knots, but no spoonbills today, though they do live here. cormorants, seagulls of different types. Horses in the fields, some sheep. The tide was going out exposing the mudflats.

After the hike, waiting for the bus, coffee at De Heeren van Der Schelling, outside, the sparrows and wild birds very inquisitive, beautiful sunshine, warm out of the wind till the bus arrives. Back in town, the shops are closed when the last ferry leaves, about ½ hour previously. All the Cafes open though. The girl in the Delicatessen in Vlieland recommended a meal at "Zeericht". We had a great view of the harbour from there, Mirat and the staff changed around the menu for us, really helpful. Prawns and Salmon – VG - but at 36 euros. 0562 442953. A walk home through the scores of moored traditional trading vessels.

Terschelling to Ameland

25 miles across the banks. Leaving at half tide rising, 0930, arrived 1600. The ebb very strong against us, for the last 7 miles. Perhaps three kts. And too late to do much but visit the Café, the "De Piraat", on the quay.

Out at lunchtime, having had a morning doing what I'm not sure? But it was 11 ish, by the time we had showered, seen the HM, built up the fold up bikes, etc. Heading into town, we found the tourist information in the village of Nes, the nearest to the harbour. Two girls on shift, talked about what was on that day. It seems there is a lot on, but you have to be on the right day at the right time. In the afternoon, today, nothing much. There is a duck decoy exhibit that used to trap 1000 ducks a day, for the Princess, as the island belonged to the royal family and



PASSING A SAILING BOTTER

had a palace in the next village. Closed today. The guided mud flat walk, over, as it was 1100 that day, the windmill was run yesterday, 2 days till it runs again, there was lots happening but not now.

Into town, lunch at De Jong's Reeweg 29, Soup and salad and toasted cheese sarnies, all vg. Then into town, tried the church, locked, then walked past Kiewiet bike hire, (fletsenoppameland.nl) and noticed a side-by-side 2 seater- with an electric motor. After negotiating the rate for this amazing electric bike, we were mobile and electric powered. So with assurances the battery would last 35 km, we headed west at medium power.

5 km to Ballum, we headed off the cycle path into town, a quick circuit. Then back on the path, by the road, for another 4km. Lots of wildlife, a Marsh Harrier, Knot, Oystercatcher and Shellducks, Cormorants and not sure what else. The end of the island is the lighthouse. All quite lovely, this end of the island is well wooded and such a stunning day with a bright blue sky, all is green and blue, and the lighthouse.

But it is the end of the road, so turned back to town, Hollum, close by.

First stop the windmill, they were not running today, but they had the flour from yesterday's grinding – we bought some. Lovely windmill. Then riding through town, to the museum. Interesting museum, much history, then thru town to have coffee before the ride home. Now the electric motor doing the hard work against the wind, power level medium, the 9km at normal bike pace, pedalling easily till about 1 km short. Power faded and died. Oh NO! It is so tough to go half the speed of a normal bike!

Evening, some shopping from the Spar supermarket, Toremstraat 7, and home. An evening working off the compass illumination and plotter brilliance controls.

Ameland to Schiermoonikoog.

Departure planned for two hrs after LW. About 1030. Only 20 miles but two sets of drying banks in our way. Sailing on schedule, against the wind and finding 2 ft of water at times. We found the buoyed channel not as charted, but that is pretty common now. No overlap on the Dutch chart folio, and accidentally mixed up the channels for 100 meters on the chart border- heading for sea- but turned round, followed the correct channels, thanks to the Open CPN plotter. These digital charts as backup on an old laptop were pretty accurate for all of these drying channels.



THE DRYING CHANNEL AND BERTHS, SCHIERMOONIKOOG

Engine giving half power (later put down to fuel quality- too much alcohol in the cheaper petrol mix), 25 knots on the nose, a bit slow, a bit choppy, less than ideal, got in at 1830 at HW. Very windy, very shallow. We were out of the channel at times, finding unclear marking with withies- keep to port close to the withies. The harbour is charted as staying afloat but it is not true, it is drying. Two free berths.

Evening comes, out for drinks and food at the Café by the harbour, called simply "The Marina" up on a mound overlooking the harbour- lovely view, Melinda served up some Ciabata bread and Beer!

Friday – up and out, to pay the HM and showers, built the bikes and first stop tourist info in town. Then coffee and apple pie from Alex at the Graaf Bernstorff, Reeweg 1 (named after the last private owner of the island) in the middle of town, then to the church- locked of course. An Art gallery, and on the road – path around the island on bikes. Lovely day,

warm, light winds. Looked over the widest beaches in Europe. The birds coming close to persuade us to pass by their nests quickly, Lapwings, Knots, Oystercatchers, Curlews. Past a little girl crying in the road, tried to find her mum (we tried to help), Back to the town to pick up some art from the Gallery, and coffee again with Alex.

Sailed two hrs before HW, 1715 just managed to get out, 2 ft water again, couldn't find the buoys for the shortcut channel so went the long way round to Lauwsoog. Locked in the last lock of the day. Berthed on the first jetty. Dinner on board, hot showers on the quay and the yacht club for drinks on the way home. The guys were having the pre-race briefing for the Borkum race. We considered it ourselves, but the risk of gales on the first leg was not helpful. We didn't enter.

Early morning, we are greeted with sunshine shortly followed by gales and heavy rain. Saw the HM, paid our 14-euro



BLEAK WEATHER, LAUWERSOOG



BRIDGE KEEPER- 5 EURO IN THE CLOG ON A STICK!

mooring fee, and negotiated a monthly rate of 240 euros a month if we needed to leave the boat. Jachthaven Noordergat 0519349040. Not motivated to leave till the rain eased at 3pm, tough motoring across the lake, some windsurfers out having a wild time, followed the route to Dorkum, 2 or 3 hours. Arrived seven ish, found the showers over the bridge. Walked round town, had a meal at the Hotel Van de Meer, by the canal. Martha the waitress looked after us, very atmospheric but a bit expensive; we had crepes for 15 Euros. Beach volleyball in the rain on a homemade beach, they dumped sand in the town square to make a beach. Saw the HM late in the evening. Out on his bike, paid our 11 euro's. Hikes out to the windmills, very Dutch!

Next day, off at nine, as the lift bridges start at nine. I believe Dokkum was the first of the pay bridges, where they send down a clog for the money. 5 euros, maybe. Not sure. But the bridges were a bit hit and miss. Couldn't get anyone for the first one, no phone number and no one answering the radio. In the end someone showed after an hour of wondering what to do. They work 9 to 8, an hour for lunch 12 to 1, and an hour for tea, 1615 to 1715.

On to Leeuwarden at lunchtime, this one about 7 euros in the clog, for all the town bridges.

On passing the park in the centre of town, there was a choral music festival by the canal. We moored by one of the five stages, stayed for the day. Lunch at De Koperen Tuin, Prinsentuin 1, in the park. Alkoored looked after us, 5 stages with different performances, remarkable and lovely day, met a British couple of a motor yacht. On their way south but slowly.

Later- we hoped to get to the moorings at Earewald before sunset, but planned badly- stuck at the lifting bridge in the middle of nowhere till the morning. Very cold again, showers of rain.

Monday- up at nine, the bridge opened on time for another boat, but then closed as we tried to go through, had to go full astern. The bridge master walked over to us to say this bit of path, we were moored to, was chargeable after 1800. Nine euros. Paid up and was let through. Another hour and we were at the moorings at Earewald, phone 06 12142631, negotiated a monthly rate of 240 euros a month, if we needed to leave the boat. An excellent location, supermarket, fuel, café, and in a national park, close to the lakes. The centre of the summer traditional boat race series, (Skudgies?) with the Traditional boat museum and Koopmans art gallery.

Sailing on, after fuelling up and taking stores from the co-op, across the lakes, to Sneek. Moored up after the last of the bridges by the medieval towers, into town for sightseeing, bought badges for the rucksack, not as Dutch as the others, no windmills, but spent a few hours there anyway, then on the road again, across more lakes, sailing at 5 to 6 knots, wind astern, spinnaker pulling us south to the last bridge at 1945 and cold and windswept into Stavoren town quay. Moored. Went to the showers and off into town, to the Hotel de Vroume van Stavoren, Havenweg 1, down by the old outer harbour, from Froukje and Tamara. First order 1 Glas Witte Wijn, 1 Hertog Jan Glas- to numb the pain- 2 nd order 1 Dagschotel Zalm, 1 Aanbfeding Schol for energy to get over the day! A Lifesaving meal, a hot meal in the warm, with a view of the harbour, and home to a warm boat, the heater being left running.



THE SKUDSIE

Now on the Ijsselmeer. We had to get home soon, other commitments. Enkhuisen, on the other side of the Ijsselmeer was recommended. So crossing the Ijsselmeer with a NW on the beam, we berthed at Companieshaven, they were a bit expensive but as with most things, you get what you pay for. We would recommend Companieshaven, and based here for exploring N Holland. If you want to leave the boat, you need to talk to Mennow, he is really helpful. There is a station, busses, good roads and the



LEMMER ARC

best maritime museum you have ever seen! And then to De Mastenbar for the best apple pie and coffee in Holland.

We sailed on- to a week sightseeing in Amsterdam, from the Sixhaven, then on the way back, to Volendam, Marken, Edam with its historic cafés and if you



TJALK

are lucky, the cheese market. Hoorn with its sheltered anchorage and Wijdenes only accessible at less than 3 ft draft. Later to, Urk, with its long beach and lighthouse, Lemmer, a picturesque mooring, taking the arm passing though the village, mooring in the middle of town, towards the yacht lock and the home of the "Lemmer Arc", now raced with great enthusiasm by the locals. Then Hinterloopen, Home of its own furniture painting traditions, coffee and apple pie at the skating museum, as this is on the 11 cities Friesland ice skating race (the Elfstedentocht) and if you are lucky the end of August "fish and folklore" festival, and Medemblik, with its steam train and the Steam Punk festival with a memorable Dutch Bagpipe band with an enthusiastic one armed drummer. We love this place, it is possibly the best sailing area in all of Europe- we can't wait to go back!

Carl and Trina Buck
Macavity



www.mocra-sailing.org.uk

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The Multihull Offshore Cruising & Racing Association is the association for seaworthy Multihulls in the UK.

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The MOCRA Rating Rule is a measurement rule to provide fair racing for seaworthy multihulls.

To apply for a rating go to: <https://sites.google.com/site/mocrarating/>
or contact: Simon Forbes, 12 Queens Court, Peninsula Square, Winchester SO23 8GL.

Email: simonforbes3@gmail.com Racing and cruising programs are organised.

A Calendar and Newsletters are published.