



MOCRA 2020

Review



OFFICERS REPORTS - RACE REPORTS - CRUISING REPORTS

Editors Note

Dear Members,

It has been an odd year, so if you managed to do any sailing, well done. As a result, this edition of the MOCRA Review is a bit unusual. There are only a few race reports, but still some cruising reports, and although I didn't sail, Backlash has continued to be under refit ashore, and I report on her refit so far. Then to add to the mix, our Commodore, Rupert Kidd, has dug into the memory banks for a couple of articles, one about his rescue on board Fiery Cross when crossing the Atlantic, and another about his more recent cruise around the Canaries. Several others have also taken the time to retell some more unusual stories both past and present, so we have ended up with a bumper edition. I am very grateful to all our authors and I think the result is a very interesting and diverse read, perhaps even better than usual.

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

Backlash

Publications Secretary



www.mocra-sailing.org.uk



For 2020 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 the Hon Sec, James and Melanie Holder at jh03140@gmail.com then they 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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Commodore's Report 2020



It has been a tough year for all of us for obvious reasons, but let's start by looking back at the positives.

First of all I would like to thank my predecessor, Phil Cotton for guiding MOCRA through the last 4 years as Commodore and for his contribution over 14 years as a member of the Executive Committee. Despite my best efforts to escape this role by missing the AGM, through a delayed train, I arrived just as the meeting finished to learn that you had still elected me as Commodore. It was good to see the 50-year anniversary lunch at the Royal Thames Yacht Club so well attended and it was delightful to see our President and Founder of MOCRA, Mike Butterfield in such fine form. I thought the seminar style after lunch meeting led by Nigel Irens and Darren Newton was excellent and we extend our thanks especially to them, but also to all the participants who joined in such a lively discussion.

The Caribbean 600 was an exciting race with 8 fast multihulls taking part with the MOD 70's match racing all the way round. Just when those of us in the UK were starting to prepare their boats for the season Covid 19 hit us and the shut down left us looking out on weeks of lovely sailing weather, during which we could not venture out. Some RORC organised racing out of Cowes returned, which Simon Baker will tell us about and The Royal Western Yacht Club's Lonely Rock Race was run, but only two multihulls entered. Apart from that there was no racing and cruising was very restricted too.

While some countries did open up many remained closed or closed again as the second wave of Covid 19 appeared in Europe. Personally, we did manage a couple of lovely trips to the Scillies on Suenos and a little local cruising from Falmouth. We were very grateful for that. At the moment it remains very uncertain what next year will bring, but we live in hope that things will open up much more by the spring.

With so little activity there is not much for the Executive committee to report. Our meetings have been virtual, some of which I would have proposed we should do anyway, even without Covid 19. We also lost, from the Executive Committee, our new membership secretary, William Lee, whose medical commitments understandably had to take priority. Our need for new Officers grows even stronger, but above all that of a replacement for Matthew West, our Honorary Secretary, who has been the mainstay of MOCRA for many years, fulfilling a number of roles as detailed in last years AGM statement in last years review.

To some extent MOCRA is a victim of its own success. Back in the 1980's when I first joined, multihulls were few in number and regarded as often unsafe and unseaworthy, on occasion with some justification. Mainstream races such as the Fastnet and other RORC races were off limits to multihulls. It was only the more innovative clubs such as the Royal Western Yacht Club, which ran short-handed races such as the OSTAR, Round Britain and Ireland, TWOSTAR and others that welcomed multihulls. Now, in some part, through MOCRA's efforts multihulls have been welcomed into the mainstream and regularly take part in races alongside monohulls. On the cruising side there has been a huge expansion in multihulls especially in France. For example

when we did the ARC in 1998, there were only 3 multihulls taking part, whereas last year there were over 40. At the moment MOCRA's biggest role seems to be running and issuing MOCRA ratings for racing, which in a normal year also provides a significant portion of our income. This is an important role, but I think we should not overlook the contribution MOCRA can continue to make toward promoting multihull racing and cruising for the benefit of us all. However to continue to do this we need your support and as Phil Cotton said in his final Commodore's report especially younger blood on our committees. We look forward to more of you stepping forward to take up these roles.

Rupert Kidd
Commodore

MOCRA Rating Secretary's Report

The MOCRA Racing Committee did not make any amendments to the Rating Rule for 2020.



51 MOCRA Rating Certificates were issued for 2020, compared with 102 in 2019. The certificates were emailed to the boat owners and have been published on the website.

One trimaran was weighed during the year using the MOCRA Loadcell.

Simon Forbes
MOCRA Rating Secretary

Racing Secretary's Report 2020

2020 What a year, not quite what we all expected as the season was about to start.



The lucky ones were those who got the RORC Caribbean 600 under their belt, just before the world stopped. On 22nd February 8 multihulls were on the start line. Congratulations to Allegra, the 78' Nigel Irens cruising catamaran, for taking the win.

Then there was a long pause before any proper racing took place, in Plymouth we were lucky enough to be offered "Phase 1 Return to Racing" the idea dreamed up by Keith Davis took it on his own to offer what turned out to be a very enjoyable Sunday morning trip around some buoys where you could cross the line at your own chosen time, record your elapsed time around the course and if you were lucky enough to have deemed to have sailed well, there was a bottle of Plymouth Gin handed over to you the following week. By week 3 there were 40 plus boats moving around the course, with a What's App group sharing photos, it was genuinely some of the most enjoyable Sunday morning racing / sailing that I have taken part in. The bonus was that even non-racers were happy to parade around the course as there were no contested starts. Thank you Keith, his Sponsors and Supporters.

The first and only big proper race in the UK calendar turned out to be a new version of a classic race. RORC managed to organize "Race the Wight" on the 1st August, with a maximum of 6 on-board in line with the Covid times, some of the larger mono hulls were looking a little

under staffed. 11 multihulls took part within a fleet of 150 on what was an excellent days racing in 15-20 Kts for the whole day, which was quite a change from the usual snakes and ladders of the Round the Island race days. Close results saw the Mod 70 Powerplay take line honours and corrected time win, closely followed by James Holder in Slinky Malinki, Al Wood in his Dragonfly was 3rd.

October brought the Middle Sea race and six entries made it to the start line, with Maserati taking line honours.

MOCRA Nationals, were due to take place during Burnham week in August 2020, unfortunately they fell by the way side as well. So fingers crossed for 2021. To finish off the South West sailing season "The Last Hurrah", an informal race manged by the sailors. A 20 kts Easterly breeze sent the 7 mults flying out to Hands Deep a gybe straight to Fowey. Massive smiles all round as the fleet moored up on one of the river pontoons, even though the shifting winds in the river played the usual twists and turns to get across the finish line. Working with the RWYC the SW fleet are hoping that they will be offering a Triangle style race with stopovers in Southern Ireland / Scilly Isles, in 2021.

Sadly there will be no MOCRA prize giving supper this year, let's hope 2021 allows us to contend properly once again.

The MOCRA Facebook page is the best place to hear the latest and share your thoughts.

All the best over the winter months and see you back out on the race track in 2021.

Simon Baker

MOCRA Racing Secretary
GBR788M Hissy Fit



Treasurer's Report

Financial Report for 12 months ending 31 December 2019.



Membership subscriptions remain at a healthy level, although continuing their steady, but slow year-on-year decline. Racing ratings remain strong, and following a particularly good year are now over a third of our total income.

Within expenditure, our main costs remain the publication of Newsletter/Yearbook and Calendar. There have been some 'one-off' items of expenditure that relate to MOCRA's Gold Jubilee (see note 3 to the accounts).

As a result of the additional expenditure associated with our Gold Jubilee, we had a notably deficit of £2,712. Hopefully it will be another 50 years before that happen again.

Our Balance Sheet however remains healthy with Accumulated Funds of £8,011, which is in excess of a typical years' expenditure.

Tim Wilson

Treasurer
20 October 2020

Scottish Region Report 2020



The Covid situation meant that virtually all racing has been cancelled in 2020 and especially the Scottish Islands Peaks Race which was going to be contested by Ross Hobson returning after many years absence.

Cruising – which for Scotland mainly consists of visiting remote and isolated communities – was severely curtailed as many marinas were closed and prevalence of the infection was low or absent in many areas, especially islands.

We look forward to being able to offer a Scottish welcome to MOCRA members next year and are meantime grateful to the committee for all the work they do to promote the sport. If anyone wants information on passage options from the deep south or good places to visit while here, please get in touch with me personally.

Gordon Baird

Scottish Region Representative

East Coast Region Report 2020

It has been very quiet this year on the East Coast with no racing and most boats not even going in the water. Nick Wood (Origami) had some great cruises up the Essex and Suffolk coast. A few of us were planning on coming to the South Coast and doing RTI but as you know this was cancelled.

Due to Covid-19 there has been a huge delay on the new Royal Burnham Yacht Club pontoon having lost part of the old one during a winter storm in 2019 which made accessing boats difficult this season. This is expected to be completed in the next few months once all ridiculous red tape has been cut through so all being well we will all be back on the water for a great 2021 season.

In 2021, we are planning to run our usual Whitsun bank holiday event (29th – 31st May) and the "Burnham Week" regatta (28th – 30th August) over the Bank Holiday in August and all are more than welcome.

As you know, following the cancelation of 2020, Burnham is still hoping that over the coming few years on the other side of Covid-19 we can re-schedule the MOCRA nationals at some point as we are sure we can make this a great event for all.

Simon Barnes

East Coast Region Representative



Minutes

1. Welcome by the Commodore

The Commodore welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence

Attendance: Neil Boughton, Simon Baker, Simon Forbes, Matthew West, Andreas Hofmaier, William Lee, Rupert Kidd, Tim Wilson, Gordon Baird, Bruce Sutherland, James Holder, Roderick Walker, Simon Barnes

Apologies: Matt Baker, Jeff and Fiona Speller (proxy received).

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Previous AGM

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

4. Matters Arising

There were none.

5. To receive the Commodores Report

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

6. To receive the Treasurer's Report

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

7. To reappoint the auditors

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Matthew West. Carried by acclamation.

8. To receive the Membership Secretaries Report

There was none.

9. To receive the Cruising Secretaries Report

There was none.

Annual General Meeting 2020

19:30 Tuesday 10th November 2020, using Zoom

10. To receive the Racing Secretaries Report

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Matthew West. Carried by acclamation.

11. To receive the Rating Officers Report

Proposed: Matthew West, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

12. To receive the Scottish Region Report

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

13. To receive the East Coast Region Report

Proposed: Simon Forbes, Second: Simon Baker. Carried by acclamation.

14. Executive Committee Resolutions

There are none

15. 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.

16. 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."

There were no nominations for the Executive Committee prior to the meeting.

The following were nominated from the floor.

Commodore

Rupert Kidd

Proposed by Matthew West
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Vice Commodore

Simon Baker

Proposed: Matthew West
Seconded: Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Honorary Secretary

James Holder

Proposed: Simon Baker
Seconded: Rupert Kidd
Approved by Acclamation

Honorary Treasurer

Tim Wilson

Proposed: Matthew West
Seconded: Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Membership Secretary

Andreas Hofmaier

Proposed: Matthew West
Seconded: Simon Barnes,
Carried by acclamation.

Racing Secretary

Simon Baker

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Cruising Secretary

Gordon Baird

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Rating Secretary

Simon Forbes

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

RYA Liaison Officer

Simon Forbes

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Trophy Secretary

Mike Butterfield

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Social Secretary

Simon Barnes

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

RYA Liaison Officer

Simon Forbes

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Scottish Area Representative

Gordon Baird

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

East Coast Representative

Simon Barnes, Nick Woods

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

Publications Secretary

Matthew West

Proposed Rupert Kidd,
Seconded Simon Barnes,
Carried by acclamation.

Webmaster

Nick Bowles

Proposed by Matthew West,
Seconded Andreas Hofmaier
Carried by acclamation

The Commodore welcomed new members to the Executive Committee.

17. 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 no other business

Multihull Offshore Cruising and Racing Association

Income and Expenditure Account

for the year ended 31 December 2019

[note: 2019 and 2018 are both for 12 months whilst 2017 is for 16 months]

	Note	2019 £	2018 £	2017 £
Income				
Subscriptions		5,090	5,134	5,332
Advertising	1	0	0	0
Racing Ratings		2,862	2,096	1,842
		<u>7,952</u>	<u>7,230</u>	<u>7,174</u>
Expenditure				
Newsletter and Yearbook		2,620	2,467	2,572
Calendar		2,160	2,914	1,546
Racing		348	118	179
Administrative expenses		0	109	331
Website		304	674	64
RYA and other subscriptions		200	200	200
Audit and accountancy		210	210	210
AGM / Dinner	2	1,660	313	1,652
Gold Jubilee	3	2,720	0	0
Insurance		442	439	432
		<u>10,664</u>	<u>7,444</u>	<u>7,186</u>
Net (Deficit) / Surplus of Income		<u>£ (2,712)</u>	<u>£ (214)</u>	<u>£ (12)</u>

Notes

- Advertising Income
Due to the lack of volunteers, to help generate advertising income, the income for the year is £ Zero.
- AGM / Dinner
Relatively high net expenditure due to London location, guest speaker expenses and low member attendance.
- MOCRA 1969 – 2019 Gold Jubilee
Social events, MOCRA branded caps and associated postage.
- Fixed Assets
The load cell was written down to a nominal £1 in 2000.

Multihull Offshore Cruising and Racing Association

Balance Sheet

as at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019 £	2018 £	2017 £
Fixed Assets				
Cost		337	337	337
less Depreciation		336	336	336
	4	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Current Assets				
Sundry debtors		0	60	0
Cash at bank		8,430	11,499	11,326
		<u>8,430</u>	<u>11,559</u>	<u>11,326</u>
Current Liabilities				
Accrued expenses and creditors		420	837	390
		<u>8,010</u>	<u>10,722</u>	<u>10,936</u>
		<u>£ 8,011</u>	<u>£ 10,723</u>	<u>£ 10,937</u>
Accumulated Fund				
Balance as at 1 January 2019		10,723	10,937	10,949
(Deficit) / Surplus for the year		(2,712)	(214)	(12)
		<u>£ 8,011</u>	<u>£ 10,723</u>	<u>£ 10,937</u>

Tim Wilson

Honorary Treasurer

Auditor's Report

The Income and Expenditure Account for the 12 months ended 31 December 2019, and the Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2019, reasonably reflect the position of the Multihull Cruising and Racing Association, as presented by those records made available to me, and in conjunction with the explanations and assurances made by various officers of MOCRA. The scope of my audit must be limited by the very nature of MOCRA, which in common with many similar organisations, cannot operate the detailed financial controls which should be expected of a sophisticated business.

Barry JY Lomas FCA - Auditor

19 October 2020

RORC Round the Island Race

We did not imagine that the RORC Round the Island Race would be the only competition of the year we could do on Sanity, but were really happy that RORC gave us a concession to join in. 8.2m multihulls are normally not allowed to enter as they are undersize.

Sanity had myself, my middle son Richard and my 'Club' crew member Richard Rae on board. Richard Rae is former owner of the Dragonfly Blue Chaser, and this year bought 'Strider', a new Dragonfly 32, which he sailed back from Denmark with Al Wood. My normal crew member and youngest son was locked down in Hackney so couldn't make it.

We had an eventful race from the start – we were just behind the collision on the start line, a nasty full on T bone. It took a bit of time to extract ourselves from the resulting congestion, however the rest of the beat went well and we enjoyed overhauling the monos up to the Needles. We then steered a course to round the needles between goose rock and the Varvassi, but as we were overtaking a large mono within a few metres of the needles, they decided that they were not going to make it and tacked right on top of us, the

collision was not a hard one thankfully. We managed to push ourselves clear, but it broke our long tiller extension, and caused us to tack a couple of times to get back on course. We could now only helm from the tiller, and then for some reason messed up our spinnaker hoist, probably still unsettled and recovering from the collision. However we got the spinnaker up and started to enjoy the south of the Wight. Conditions were pretty perfect, perhaps gusting at times to 20 or so knots we were loving it (would have been even better if the helm could have sat on the wing). Then just before St Catherine's we got a big gust and the spinnaker exploded into many small pieces. Perhaps the messed up hoist had caused a tear? We

recovered the wreckage and put up the screecher, average speed dropped drastically, it was the end of a decent time overall for us. However, as we were limping along, a pod of dolphins decided to keep us company. You can't be unhappy when sailing with dolphins. We rounded Bembridge Ledge and kept the screecher flying, it was close but paid off as we clocked 17.1 knots, and made up a few places. It was a really good leg back to Cowes. No tack required. Took down the screecher and went through the line close hauled. Overall a really enjoyable race. Thanks to RORC for taking the trouble of organising it.

Nigel Talbot
Sanity

La Cinquecento Trofeo Pellegrini

The „La Cinquecento“ Story

The birth of La Cinquecento dates back to 1973 when members of the Circolo Nautico Porto Santa Margherita of Caorle (about 25 nm northeast of Venice, Italy) proposed to establish a new challenging race.

It had a unique feature for its time: crews were made up of only two crew members and the race was called 500x2. The „La Cinquecento“, which owes its name to the length of the course, was the first long-distance race designed exclusively for double-handed crews, a format that no one had thought of before, neither the most renowned yacht clubs on the Italian peninsula, nor

our friends in France, who indeed have a long tradition in developing pioneering adventures in sailing. The first edition of 500x2, was the experimental one of 1974. Today, the double-handed race format has



been widely adopted, both in Italy and abroad, but the myth of the 500x2 remains unchanged and is still considered a "classic" in off-shore racing.

Since 1994 the race was officially called „La Cinquecento“ and is open

to both crews and double-handed racers, referred to as 500x2 and 500xTutti.

The direct course is about 500 miles long; from Caorle (start and finish) to the island of Susak (Croatia), further on to the Tremiti Islands (Italy), back to Susak and Caorle. The fascination and special challenge of the race, in addition to its distance, is the uncertainty and irregularity of the winds one may come across in the Adriatic sea. Frequently there is a north-east wind - sometimes up to gale and even hurricane force, the „Bora“, which may be an advantage going south to the Tremiti Islands, but could be quite a burden on the way back. One may also encounter the „Yugo“ (which goes also by the name of „Sirocco“), a southeast



La Cinquecento Trofeo Pellegrini



wind, which is usually weaker in the area of the Tremiti Islands, but in turn can enable a fast ride back to Caorle. There are numerous prestigious boats, professionals and many amateurs, who over the years have raced the 500 miles from Caorle to Tremiti Islands via Susak. The race's "hall of fame" includes a number of internationally renowned sailors like: Stefano and Alberto Rizzi (record in 1997), Simone Bianchetti, Dario Malgarise, Ambrogio Fogar, Mauro Pelaschier,

Vasco Vascotto, Giovanni Soldini, Vittorio Malingri, Philippe Monnet, Patrick Phelipon and Miranda Merron amongst many others.

The current record of 500x2 is 67h 36' 34" and is held by „Calipso IV" of Piero Paniccia and Chicco Capecci, done in 2008.

In 2011 the VO70 E1 of Aegyð Pengg, with its Crew of 12 professional sailors from Austria, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Russia,

achieved the current 500xTutti record of: 53h, 31' 05".

The 2020 „La Cinquecento" Edition

Usually, the race would be held at the end of May / beginning of June. Of course, in this Corona year everything was different. The start had to be postponed to the beginning of September. It is indeed a big credit to the organising club, all involved authorities, and the participating crews that the race could actually be held. The fleet assembled on Friday, Sept. 4th, in Caorle. A socially distanced briefing session was held outdoors on Caorle's central Piazza Matteotti. The start signal was given the next day at 13:00 in perfect weather conditions; sunshine with a nice following breeze to the start gate (a good mile from the starting line right in front of Caorle's Madonna dell'Angelo church). All boats gave a good airing of their downwind gennaker and spinnaker sails. Close contact infighting occurred at the starboard buoy of the gate. From there the fleet set out southeast to the coast of Istria (Croatia) giving the traffic separation zone in the area a wide (in some cases not so wide) berth. Having started nicely „SAYG I" (our Corsair Cruze 970 trimaran) flying its jib and screatcher sails en route to Istria made excellent progress, which brought us a very satisfying position among the leading 3 boats of the fleet. We had been banking on the fact, that we would be able to reach the coast of Istria just in time before the breeze dies in the evening (a not uncommon phenomenon in this stretch of sea); so we would then be nicely positioned to catch the night breeze once it sets in. Well, we nearly made it.



In sight of the charming Istrian coastline, we just missed out with about 2 miles to go. Others had been a bit smarter and sailed a more direct course towards the coast. As they caught the night breeze first under the coast, we had a perfect view of them sailing slowly but steadily by, when we were still desperately waiting for the breeze to reach us too. After what felt to us like an agonising eternity, we finally got our share of the night breeze and were able to join the drag race to the southern tip of Istria, where the fleet had to round the historic Porer light house. Onwards from there comes an infamous stretch of sea called the „Kvarner“, which can be fairly nasty when a stormy Bora is blowing. We were lucky this time and made good progress in a fair wind towards the island of „Susak“ (or „Sansego“ as it is referred to in Italian). Susak has to be rounded on its Eastern side (i.e. it has to be kept on the starboard side). Upon rounding Susak on Sunday early afternoon we had gained a few positions in this continuing drag race. Now the tactical fun part of the race started in earnest. The breeze had turned into a moderate Yugo and made this an upwind course.

The big question is how long a boat would follow the Croatian coastline and when to start the crossing back to the Italian side of the Adriatic for the final approach to the Tremiti Islands. We decided to stay close to the Croatian side a tad longer and began our crossing in the area of „Dugi Otok“ (which translates as „Long Island“ from the Croatian language). The wind held rather nicely during the night until the next morning. Frequently the wind eases with the sunset early in the

morning. Fortunately, it didn't die completely this time and we always kept sailing in the right direction. From noon onwards the breeze picked-up constantly and the approach to Tremiti was refreshingly swift; for many hours in the solid double digit boat speed range. In the evening hours the Tremiti Islands came in sight. As usual the boats were spread out on the open Adriatic, but suddenly seemed to emerge out of nowhere a few miles off the Tremiti Islands. The islands have to be rounded west by east (i.e. to be kept on the port bow). The more distance we made good towards the Tremiti Islands the more shift the wind became. We rounded the Tremiti Islands shortly before midnight in close company of „Tokio“ and „Black Angel“. Right on cue, when we started our stretch back north to Susak, a brisk Bora set in with wind speeds around 20 to 25 knots and gusts reaching 30 and slightly above. So this became another close hauled tack with rather nasty short and steep waves (which the Adriatic is infamous for). A first reef in the main kept us flying through the night. The flight pattern until well past midday the next morning was: take off on one of the



La Cinquecento Trofeo Pellegrini



bigger waves; flight phase (which felt like a few exciting moments of zero gravity, especially when one enjoyed some off duty nap time); landing phase: being either rather gentle arrival on the back of a following wave just rolling under the boat or a less gentle smack in the front of an approaching white cap wave with a boat shuddering deceleration. Fortunately, my crew member Joerg Christian and I do not easily succumb to sea sickness, so we actually enjoyed the rather rough ride.

There is usually quite some traffic in the middle of the Adriatic and the more or less close encounters with freighters, tankers, ferries and fishing vessels can create some additional excitement. Thanks to AIS the encounters mostly work out fine and, in some cases, can result in some good VHF communication with the ships involved.

On Tuesday evening we were approaching the Croatian coast again at the southwest end of the Kornati national park (a protected maritime area consisting of a stunning collection of islands and reefs; a highly recommended cruising destination by the way). And, of course, about have a dozen race

boats suddenly appeared out of nowhere. We decided not to stay too close inshore, but pursued a more offshore course tacking up the outer Croatian islands chain towards Susak. First daylight showed that we had made fairly good progress and kept our friends from „Black Angel“ at a good distance.

Rounding the island of Susak can be a tricky affair due to the sometimes unpredictable local weather and current systems. This time was no different. Whilst our approach worked well, the final stretch

became another torture experience. We stayed well northeast of Susak (close to the two islands of Mali Losinj and Losinj). What at first seemed to be a fairly good decision, was quickly turning sour once the wind left us and we had to watch competitor boats which had stayed closer to Susak passing us as they found a workable breeze there again. Naturally, this wasn't exactly a mood enhancer and we felt a bit frustrated when making our long tack back across the Kvarner.



Well, Fortune is a capricious lady and whilst we were losing precious miles on the other boats, we noticed on the satellite tracker that they all parked in a widening no wind area west of the city of Pula (Pola in Croatian). Hence, we gave the Porer lighthouse and southwestern tip of Istria a wide, wide berth. Our speed was agonising slow at this point in



La Cinquecento Trofeo Pellegrini



the race - just 1-3 knots, but the others seemed to fare even worse. This time we caught the new breeze first. Thanks to our new screecher, which performed superbly, we were able to steadily decrease the distance to the boats ahead during the night hours whilst going up the Istrian coast. On the final sunrise of the race, Thursday morning, we were able to spot our immediate competitors in the distance. This gave us a well appreciated dose of new motivation for the last 30 miles dash across this northern part of the Adriatic for what was just one thrilling gennaker run towards the finishing line. With a gentle Bora blowing out of the gulf of Trieste, we could lay a direct course towards the finishing line right in front of the city of Caorle. Interestingly, we were able to point a bit higher than our direct competitors in the increasingly abeam wind. On the very last few miles, Caorle already being well insight, we caught up with the others and were able to gain one position. Then two things happened: the breeze started to die and the finish line was already way too close for further position improvements. „Tokio“ finished only

a few minutes ahead of us, whilst we were able to just get over the line on the last puffs of the dying breeze merely a minute ahead of „Gecko“, which we had just caught up with in time. A few minutes difference in sailed time with a sailed distance of well over 600 nm is the perfect proof that this was another thrilling edition of „La Cinquecento“. Our sailed time was 117h 45' 04" and we finished in 7th place overall. Being the first multihull home wasn't too difficult this time; there weren't many others. Given the fact that we were one of the smallest boats of the fleet and the clear potential to improve our race tactics in the future, we were reasonably satisfied with our performance. Of course, we can and want to do better and are therefore eagerly awaiting the next „La Cinquecento“ edition in 2021. The prize giving ceremony was held on Saturday evening in Caorle's central Matteotti square. Even in this year - with all the social distancing regulations in place - it was another exciting get to together and ceremony; a very fitting finale of the race.

Remarks:

„SAYG I“ was crewed by myself - Andreas Hofmaier - and Joerg Christian Seit in 2020. Special thanks to CNSM for providing details on the great race history of La Cinquecento and some brilliant race photos. It is a privilege to participate in this race and if there is one wish for the future: Can please more multihull crews join in this outstandingly exciting Adriatic classic. You just need a valid MOCRA rating ;-)

Photo credits: © Andrea Carloni / CNSM, Andreas Hofmaier.





As a preamble to this log, I include the following extract from the crews pre-race preparation process. This detail may provide a little more guidance to the character and general make-up of the coterie, as the story unfolds.

The ship's owner has an undistinguished history of planning and executing assaults

on pre-planned excursions, which are generally of a ridiculous nature, or end ridiculously. A visit to the pub at New Year is the usual spawning ground for these endeavours and on last year's trip, it was decided that in an effort to follow in the footsteps of the owners idol – Bill Tilman – we would enter the 3 peaks challenge. Major Bill Tilman was an

extraordinary chap who fought in two world wars, made many Himalayan ascents between hostilities and in later life when most people would be considering backgammon and a Sunday afternoon pint as a physical extravagance, he pretty much circumnavigated the planet in a succession of ancient Bristol cutters in search of hidden away mountains.

Three peaks race Log

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Three peaks race Log June 2019

Like ourselves, it was in the pub one night when he and his pals decided that it would be a good idea to have a sailing race which included the ascent of the UK'S highest tops. When asked about his opinion on the rules of engagement, Tilman lent back in his chair, sucked on his pipe and said 'Ah, rules...yes, rule one, they'll be no rules'. So the 3 peaks challenge has run since with the only proviso being that it must be completed under sail power alone, apart from getting in and out of the three harbours.

The race demands that the runners are ejected from the boat to run up and down the mountain and then re-join. Once they've completed Snowdon, we charge off to Whitehaven for them to run Scafell and then on to Fort William in order to complete Ben Nevis. First boat to complete is the winner subject to handicap.....

It all seemed to be pre-ordained, especially when the organisers advised that there was no category for our multihull, but that we would get a trophy anyway.

Preparations centred around clearing our local chandlery of every conceivable safety item available and lightening the boat in anticipation of 5 crew members and their gear. Not to mention enough tucker to sustain a small army. An Owen Sails spinnaker was also ordered to take advantage of the definite southerlies....more on that later.



Our runners took to the challenge spectacularly and spent the preceding year running up and down the Scottish highlands. The owner and navigator determined to push the envelope and spent two nights on the boat and sailed round Ailsa Craig from our home port of Tighnabruaich, which was a 'furthest south' endeavour, into previously uncharted 'here be dragons' territory..... We met the skipper for the first time on race weekend.....

Of course, one major consideration was to actually get the vessel to the start line from the sweet water of Tighnabruaich on the Clyde. Which in the event, was no small potato for the owner and Dr K the navigator.

Up to this point, we knew little apart from not very much at all, although our Ailsa Craig sojourn had

confirmed our suspicions that the boat was not happy sailing to windward and that Dr K should redistribute his lunch to leeward. Never the less, with a last check that all life insurances were in date and that the whisky and cigar was properly stowed, the intrepid two set off South.

Our trip highlighted inaccuracies with pilot books, which promised fuel where there had been none for decades and marina opening times which related to the Mayan clock. Apart from that, we also delved into our own depth of resource with confident navigational decisions and frontier like engineering solutions to keep the old tub going in the right direction.

Notable moments included the necessity of applying the confidence

The crew list assembled as follows:

Skipper	Dave Parker	As a boy, played with sticks and puddles, as he got older the sticks and puddles just got bigger.
Navigator	Kenneth Robertson	Ships medic and wit.
Cook	Andy Sim	Ships owner
Runner	Texa Sim	Phd Marine Biologist and happiest when exhausted, wet and muddy
Runner	Roddy Sandeman	With a genetic disposition which enables him to run forever and an ancient family tree which branches to a very weird religious sect, his credentials were ideal.

to aim the boat at the very solid entrance wall of Caernarvon Harbour, in the certainty that the 5 knot rip and screaming gale; across the mouth of the very narrow opening, would drift the boat between the harbour pillars and not into them. Kenneth hanging off the bow like some kind of Cassandra, screaming encouragement that I must keep the pedal to the metal, is an image I will take to the grave.

Then there was the beaching and subsequent laying of kedge anchors to get us out of tiny Pirates Cove, with the resultant middle of the night sail into total inky blackness, on and towards Bardsey Sound, with a glimmer of sunrise behind ones back. The rising bile like feeling of panic as the boat whacked off some unknown obstacle, looking at one another in wide eyed horror, with the subsequent scramble to get below decks and the hunt for what we felt must be a gush of incoming... and the subsequent relief and nervous nonchalance when all was reported well and sound.

I must also mention our Isle of Man arrival, where the loss of the radio in mid instruction left us debating whether the harbour master had said left or right after the harbour entrance. Literally ending up the river confirmed to us that he had in fact said right... and not left.

The final jump from Bardsey Sound to Barmouth saw us running for lee shelter in the biggest, ugliest seas we have ever had to deal with. A deluge of water breaking over the boat, a scrap of sail and Dr K checking his medics bag for the oxygen bottle had me questioning our sanity and was wholly responsible for the ensuing wet gusset moment. Our adrenalin fuelled giggles when we eventually got out of the weather, just off the

beach, confirmed my suspicions that we are both technically insane.

Anyway, we made it to Barmouth. Dave the skipper, with Texa and Roddy the runners, arrived in Cara's Camper and we retired to the pub to eye each other up and down.



Leg one. Barmouth to Caernarvon.

The anticipation, excitement, camaraderie and organisational excellence necessary to administer and run an event of this nature is well documented elsewhere and I will leave it to others to illuminate the scene which greeted the crews on race day. Suffice to say, that for those of us of a bent who, for whatever strange reason, wish to illuminate our fears, weakness's, possible strengths and on my part general ineptitude, to all and sundry, the 3 Peaks Challenge, with its instant internet connection to the whole planet, has to be amongst the best there is available. Even before the start gun, I feel that the race had already been won by the organisers themselves, so much fantastic sport and adventure is put together by so many willing, driven volunteers in our country, that the actual participation at whatever level is almost of secondary importance. And here we were about to kick off in a perfect example of the genre.

The cool, calculating, composed form of Skipper Dave got us over the start line once we executed a rather embarrassing gybe which

was necessary for us to cross on the correct side of the buoy. This was Skipper Dave's immediate baptism of fire into the murky levels of the inability of a catamaran to point into the wind. Dr K and I nodded sagely at one another and sucked our teeth knowingly....What none of us knew at this point was that we would be beating into unusual head winds for the next week. Half way to Bardsey Sound however, most of our competitors were a mast on the horizon. Our initial advantage of skipping across the bar due to our incredibly shallow draught was eroded in the speed differential and pointing ability, between the thoroughbreds and our old donkey.

Never the less, despite the realisation that we had a job on our hands to keep in contention, more pressing matters required careful consideration and immediate execution. With tea time approaching fast, my first attempt at plum duff would now be making an appearance at supper time instead. This bombshell was almost superseded by the realisation of the oversight that a cooking receptacle had not been packed... until we lit upon the toilet wash basin. I will gloss over the remarkable skippering, navigation and skimming involved in rounding Bardsey and scraping over the Caernarvon bar, in deference to the production of my first glass case worthy, plum duff.

I still can't believe that we didn't bury the boat and lodge it permanently between the steel girders of the Caernarvon wharf, as we ejected our runners for their assault on Snowdonia and then again on our return to the yawning jaws of doom to recollect them. The fact that neither of them fell to their watery death in between the boat and these horizontal idioms of man's stupidity in the name of doing

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Leg Two Caernarvon to Whitehaven

We elected to take our chances on the navigation of the Menai there and then. It seemed like the thing to do. Why delay the inevitable? Dr K suggested that tide, wind and general ineptitude might well be a consideration in the process, but no one listened. Due all in part to Kenneth's excellent navigational skill and Dave's confident handling of what to him was a very strange vessel, we slalomed through under the bridge in a fashion Roddy described to me at the time, as similar to his descent of Glen Etive in his white water kayak.

The hoolie which was blowing by the time we popped out the other side of the straight contrived with other forces to make a proper mess of our halyard and other bits and pieces which were hanging in tatters from the top of the mast. Being the lightest, I was charged with the task of ascending the mast in order to effect repairs. Dave did his best to keep us hove to with what sail and

something different of a weekend, leaves me marvelling in wonder. As it was, our intrepid two ran up and down in spiffing time, and it was only due to our slow progress to Caernarvon in the first place, that we then had to sit and wait for the tide to turn to get us through the Menai Strait. The crew grabbed some sleep, while Roddy sat an anchor watch. The combination of a stout Westerly and tide change was so effective in suddenly dragging our anchor; with the resultant 4 knot rearward velocity, that I lost, what I am sure will be the once in a lifetime opportunity, to scream down the companionway – 'All Hands On Deck!' It took the rest of the trip for the combined efforts of the crew to extract me from the lethargy resulting from this vocal calamity.



off shore lee was at his disposal. I must testify that sixty kilo of flesh and bone, under the influence of pendulum, lever, ricochet and elasticity, combine to catapult the meagre human frame so far from the top of a flaying mast, that a full circumnavigation of said mast outside the limit of the spreaders, not once but twice, is not so much a case of possibility but more one of downright probability. With the job complete, I descended to the relative safety of the deck with wobbly knees and a very large go faster stripe down my helmet (head gear in this instance) which was not there on the way up.

We sailed through the night towards Whitehaven and once again our speed was dictated by the nasty north westerly. Having to circumnavigate the shooting range and shipping channel only exacerbated the issue and our passage was slower than anticipated. At this point, it became apparent that our mistake of introducing Watch rota too late in the day, was an error which hampered our abilities and is a lesson for next time. Trusty Cara was waiting at the dock for us with the bikes; which are a requirement for the trip to the mountain, and a great deal of encouragement. Once again, the runners excelled themselves, although the combination of running along what sounded to me like the M6, this, combined with Texa's knee troubles, began to pull the runners' aspect of this sport into a sharper focus for me.

In the meantime, we had trouble in the dock. Shortly before the athletes were due to return, we could not get the engine to start. (secondary power is permissible only for manoeuvring in and out of the moorings). Minutes before they arrived, we traced the fault to a

corroded earth lead from the coil. We set sail into a gale and what was sure to be a long dark night. An hour from the harbour, our mast lights failed. Despite employing our steaming nav lights, Dave elected to return to Whitehaven to effect repairs in the safety of the harbour and give the crew a good night's sleep. We ran a new electrical supply to the base of the mast and set sail at first light.

Leg Three Whitehaven to Fort William

Very light wind from the wrong direction made our trip to the Mull of Galloway a fraught affair, with much calculations as to our chance of rounding the Mull or ending up in Luce bay. While we managed to round the Mull, it was to be the next step to the Mull of Kintyre which was to prove to be our nemesis. Once again the light westerly was making us gaze longingly at the shiny new spinnaker bag and combined to fill our heads with visions of running down our southerly. Had our longings been those of the appetite persuasion and I had been that spinnaker, I would have been worried about getting eaten.

We sneaked past the Mull of Kintyre and Skipper Dave assembled us all for a serious discussion as to our options. His estimation was that we would struggle to reach Fort William in time for the runners to complete the ascent of Ben Nevis and get back down before the cut off heralding the race finish. Bowing to his not inconsiderable experience, we glumly switched on the engine and dropped into the challenger class. We also decided that Dave should get back to work for the Friday, as was his pre-race plan, and that we should divert to Crinan, in order to enable him to catch a bus back to Glasgow.



It was around this time that we heard and saw a float plane, which very quickly got much bigger as it buzzed around our mast. The sea was so calm that it landed alongside the boat and Cara popped out the door and threw us plastic bags full of shortbread, Tunnocks tea cakes and piles of caramel logs. Wee Dram, stationed at Prestwick and flown by Hamish Mitchell, was a very welcome addition to the cast of bizarre influence which was our continual passenger. It occurred to us later, that had we not switched on the engine, this outside sugar rush assistance would have dropped us into the challenge class anyway.

We dropped into Gigha to get engine petrol and met a woman who recounted her experience of a Bay of Biscay ship wreck during a massive storm, when her vessels cabin lifted off the hull... it was around this point in the sinking when she lost consciousness and woke up on the beach. Aghast, I asked her if she'd ever been in a boat again... 'Oh yes, I sailed around the world after that, I just don't cross the Bay of Biscay in November anymore.' We sailed off to Crinan, with me carefully checking the join where our cabin meets the hull, and gently seeking reassurance that the bay of Biscay didn't lie between us and Fort William.

Dave the skipper jumped ship to bus at Crinan and we had another long tide delay in order to get across the Dorus Mor. At last we got a blow and we flew towards Loch Linnhe and our final step. Our hopes of astounding the natives by sailing

Three peaks race Log June 2019



right into Corpach, were dashed when, once again, the wind dropped and we sneaked through the darkness towards the journey's end.

The indefatigable nature of the wonderful organisers was evidenced once again by their combined welcome at Corpach Lock. Despite us being last boat and holding them all back from a very long journey back to Wales, they welcomed us in heartily and vociferously. The runners set to at first light and once again completed the last of what was basically, three horizontal marathons in less than a week. As sailors, we failed to keep the wheels on the competitive bus, but our two intrepid runners smashed all of our expectations and came home across the line in fine fettle. Once again, the organisers made

sure our finish was memorable, loud and supported. I wish to solemnly thank our crew... Dave, Kenneth, Texa and Roddy and Good Old Cara who drove all over the country in pursuit of a boatful of idiots and reprobates. I must also draw attention to our 40 year old cat, Iroquios - 'Mary J' who sailed wonderfully and coped admirably. We had an absolute ball and I will

do this event again. There were a number of 'what if's'... However, in the immortal words of John Byrne - 'Should ifs and buts be pots and pans, Rock 'n Roll would be skiffle'

Andy Sim Ships Cook and Owner
Blanefield July 2019



Fiery Cross mid-Atlantic rescue



Rupert sitting on the outrigger that broke off before the start.

Fiery Cross mid-Atlantic rescue, boat and all 30 years ago.

This is the unedited original record of the above rescue during the 1990 Two-handed Trans-Atlantic Race, which was written whilst still on board the container ship Nürnberg Atlantic with Fiery Cross lashed to the guardrail of the ship on its way to Halifax, Nova Scotia after the boat's mid-ocean conversion from trimaran to catamaran.



SUMMARY OF EVENTS IN RESCUE OF FIERY CROSS BY NURNBERG ATLANTIC

Date of Rescue: Thursday 14th June, 1990
 Position When Mayday Call Was Made: 48° 11'N, 20° 47'W
 Position Picked Up: 48° 15'N, 20° 46'W
 Approximate Time of Events (GMT):

- 0400 Outrigger starts breaking.
- 0415 Activated 406 EPIRB.
- 0438 Second Mayday call using 25 watts, Channel 16 VHF, answered immediately by Nürnberg Atlantic, which was 42 miles to the NW. Nürnberg Atlantic turned immediately to head for position given by Fiery Cross.
- 0450 Remains of outrigger cut adrift.
- 0500 Reported revised position and increased rate of drift to Nürnberg Atlantic. Also advised Nürnberg Atlantic that EPIRB had previously been activated.
- 0606 Nimrod Rescue 51 reported to ship Nürnberg Atlantic by Portishead Radio to be on its way.
- 0625 Nürnberg Atlantic picked up radar target 12 miles off.
- 0705 Fiery Cross had visual contact with Nürnberg Atlantic about 3 miles off. Reported this to the ship.
- 0717 Ship had visual contact with Fiery Cross at 0.8 miles. Wind was from 210° at Beaufort Scale 7-8. Waves about 10 feet in passing rain front.
- 0730 Ship alongside Fiery Cross.
- 0740 Picked up Fiery Cross.
- 0745 Fiery Cross crew aboard Nürnberg Atlantic.
- 0800 Nimrod Rescue 51 over ship
- 0810 Fiery Cross lashed on board ship. Rescue reported to Portishead. Deactivated EPIRB.
- 0825 Nürnberg Atlantic resumed course for Halifax.

RESCUE OF FIERY CROSS DURING TWO HANDED TRANSATLANTIC RACE

Fiery Cross mid-Atlantic rescue



On Thursday, 14th June, Fiery Cross was making about 13 knots, sailing close to the wind on port tack in a south westerly direction in a fine 6 to 7 southerly wind with about 10 foot seas. We had two reefs in and a half furled genoa, having taken in reefs successively as the wind built up during the night. At about 0400 GMT, when it was still dark, we heard a muffled grinding noise that sounded like something had broken. Andy Clode, who was steering at the time, reported that the wheel had gone light. I was below and checked to see if there had been any failure of the steering system; all looked OK. I heard a noise from forward and wondered whether the centreboard on the centreboard case had broken. It was then that Andy reported that the starboard outrigger had broken and the bow section was breaking away.

We let the mainsail go and immediately set about getting it down. This was difficult as the boat now lay beam on to the wind and sea, but as the outrigger broke up, it dragged the boat to starboard so that the boat gybed. The port runner was released so that we now lay on starboard tack effectively

hove to with the genoa backed. The mast was waving around wildly. I had hoped that only the bow section of the outrigger was broken, but I soon saw that the central section between the two beams was also breaking off at the forward beam to outrigger joint. Once this broke, the aft beam to outrigger joint also went. Meanwhile, we struggled and eventually succeeded in getting the mainsail down. The mast was staying up by virtue of the now detached central section of the broken outrigger being dragged through the water by its attachment to the cap shroud that remained intact. Tightening the starboard runner and later the port one helped stabilize the mast.

At this stage I expected us to lose the mast, when the cap shroud attachment broke or if we had to cut the remains of the outrigger free. We decided to put out a Mayday call before matters got worse with the mast coming down or the boat capsizing. It had been extremely fortuitous that the boat had gybed, before the outrigger broke up completely this avoiding a certain capsize and then the cap shroud stayed attached keeping the mast

up after the outrigger had broken away everywhere else.

At first, there was no response on the VHF, so we activated the 406 EPIRB, with a little difficulty as the pin broke when we pulled it. I went back to the radio and realised that in the dark, I had been transmitting on 1 watt only. Transferring to 25 watts, I called again and immediately got a partially audible response from the Nürnberg Atlantic. With some difficulty, I gave them our position given by the Loran at 48°11'N, 20°47'W. We were somewhat concerned about the reliability of this position as we were at the extreme range of the Loran Iceland chain. The Nürnberg Atlantic was 42 miles away toward the northwest and had been proceeding westward bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Mayday was acknowledged at 0438 GMT. No other ships responded to the Nürnberg Atlantic's relay of the Mayday call. The Nürnberg Atlantic reported that they would reach us in a little over 2 hours.

The broken outer section of the outrigger was still dragging in the water, but was now in danger of holing the main hull as it came progressively closer as the starboard netting which was holding it away gave way. Using the bolt croppers, we cut it free, quite expecting the mast to go over the side the other way. However, the angled out backstay was enough to hold it up. We tied down the mainsail to reduce windage and furled in the genoa further, leaving the boat to forereach at about 3 knots in an easterly direction. We advised the Nürnberg Atlantic on the increased rate of drift and gave an updated position, as well as reporting that we had previously set off the EPIRB.

*Fiery Cross off the SW of Ireland on the Round Britain Race in 1989,
in which we won our class and were 6th out of 80 boats.*



Fiery Cross mid-Atlantic rescue

We then sorted out gear for abandonment and put on dry suits. We had had lifejackets on for some time now, having expected to capsize. At around 0700, we spotted the Nürnberg Atlantic about 3 miles off coming straight towards us. It was now blowing steadily at over 32 knots. The Nürnberg Atlantic had picked us up on radar about 12 miles away, but was not able to see us until less than a mile away in the rain. We had not put the radar reflector up as I knew the mast gave a good reflection signal from previous discussions with passing ships while in fog on the Grand Banks in the CSTAR two years earlier. I had also wanted to keep the radar reflector in case we lost the mast. Until the Nürnberg Atlantic reported that they had us on radar, we could not be sure of being picked up as our position could have been wrong and although it was flashing, we did not know if the EPIRB was transmitting.

After establishing that the Nürnberg Atlantic had a crane, we tied rope straps around the beams in case there was a chance the ship could pick up the boat. The Nürnberg Atlantic stopped upwind at an angle of about 20° to our course. Once we were in her wind shadow, she drifted down towards us. There was a scary moment when it looked as though Fiery Cross would swing round, so that if caught by the wind again, would capsize. However, we were soon bumping alongside with the starboard beams, minus outrigger, forming a magnificent fender. Pounding against the ship did not seem to cause further damage. The ends of the beams neatly caught on the loop of rope, the crew of the Nürnberg Atlantic had strung along the port side of the ship, holding us in. We then drifted back down the ship's side a little and they lowered the crane



Fiery Cross lashed onto the side of the Nürnberg Atlantic. There was no space on deck that the crane could reach.

hook. The hook had a weight above it making it a little dangerous as it swung around our heads, but we got the rope stops on. We had made them such a length that the boat would tip forward keeping the mast fitted away from the crane. Unfortunately, one of the loops of the aft strap came off the hook so that it lengthened itself and the boat came up level instead. There was then an anxious moment as the ship's crew checked to see if the straps were strong enough. Understandably to them, they did not look very strong, but we knew how little the boat weighed and the feeble looking aft strap was in fact Kevlar. Once satisfied the straps would hold, the boat was raised up 30 feet and swung round so that we could step off the bow. We were taken up to meet Kapitan Neumann, while the crew secured Fiery Cross to the ship's rail.

I have nothing but praise for the superb handling of the rescue by Kapitan Neumann and his crew. It is no mean feat to bring a 39,000 ton, over 800 foot long container ship alongside a 35 foot disabled, but still moving, trimaran. From when the Nürnberg Atlantic received a Mayday call, 42 miles away and

steaming away, it took only 3 hours until Fiery Cross and its crew were safely aboard the ship. It was a little embarrassing to be sitting down having breakfast on the Nürnberg Atlantic by the time the Nimrod Rescue 51 reached us in response to the EPIRB.

The question of why, and what failed first and how cannot be answered at this stage. Did we hit something? Immediately before we first realized there was something wrong, there was no noticeable sound of any collision, although I do remember being thrown sideways a few minutes earlier much harder than usual. That was accompanied by a loud crash, but I assumed at the time that it was only a wave. Fiery Cross had sailed up to then about 13,000 miles including two Atlantic crossings and the Round Britain Race. The boat had been through rougher conditions and been driven hard before. We were driving the boat hard upwind, but not excessively so and after all, that was what the boat was built for. The points at which we took time out of the opposition in the RBR were upwind in a good breeze. Two reefs and a partly furled genoa is the right amount of sail for about 25 knots of

Fiery Cross mid-Atlantic rescue

true wind (33-35 knots apparent). It was pretty bumpy doing 13 knots upwind in 10 foot waves, but no more than on many previous occasions.

The complete failure of the outrigger rather than just the forward part was a little surprising.

Our position, when the outrigger broke at 48°11'N, 20°47'W was about a quarter of the way across in less than 4 days. We must have been more or less level with our class V competitor Curtana, and well placed overall. Since Fiery Cross is clearly quicker upwind than Curtana and the windward part of the race looked set to begin, we were well set to win our class and break the under 35' record. But alas, it was not to be. Such a catastrophic failure in a proven boat in only moderate conditions remains perplexing.

Rupert Kidd

On Nürnberg Atlantic
18 June 1990



Fiery Cross with new outriggers, here at the start of the return leg of the 1995 AZAB, Rupert's second and last single-handed ocean race.

Postscript 30 years later:

There were one or two points left out. When one of the two loops of rope attached to the aft beam jumped the crane hook I was standing in the cockpit and put my head down to speak to Andy, who was down below. As I did so, the rope flashed through my hair (I had rather more than!). Had I been standing up, it would have undoubtedly taken my head off. I think I left this out so as not to give friends and family any more reason to dissuade me from more multihull ocean racing. Crashing up and down 12 feet or more at a time against the ship's side was also pretty unpleasant as the weight would come off the crane as we went up to come back with a hefty jerk as we dropped back down. I remember picking up the VHF as I could see the captain of the ship had one in his hand and saying "I think now would be a good time to pick us up". He waved to the crane crew and as we came up, it all went wonderfully

peaceful as we bumped up against the side of the ship. Apparently what persuaded the captain of the Nürnberg Atlantic to go along with our proposed rescue plan was the calm and matter of fact reporting

of our situation over the VHF, whilst they were coming to pick us up. I don't recall feeling that calm, although I think we did find time to make a cup of tea! Less than 4 hours from outrigger breakage to being on board the ship without

getting our feet wet was a pretty civilised rescue.

What caused it? While we might possibly have hit something, I think in retrospect, much more likely, we were simply driving the boat too hard. A little earlier we had snapped a 14mm jib sheet in two! In reality I think any of these boats can be broken if we push them too hard. At the time she was built Fiery Cross, with the power of a 33-foot beam, was probably the fastest 35-foot boat in the world. Boats are now much tougher and stiffer, but we can still break them!

As regards where we were in the race, Brian Thompson, later told me they were close enough on Curtana for them to be able to hear the ship talking to us on VHF. Not long after they too had structural problems causing them to pull out of the race and return to Plymouth.

Fiery Cross was rebuilt on Nova Scotia with two new strip cedar outriggers, designed by Merfyn Owen (Fiery Cross designer and builder), which were more sea kindly with some v shape. We sailed the boat back the next year with Isa on her first ever trip offshore (only 2000 miles to the Azores!) and Chris Briggs on his introduction to multihull sailing. The trip included 1500 miles of sailing with a forward beam cracked down the back face and lashed together with a sawn up sail batten. The crack only grew when we stopped dead hitting a whale 5 miles off Ponta Delgada in the Azores. The pounding against the ship's sides had caused more damage than could be seen.

In my ownership of Fiery Cross we went on to complete another Round Britain Race in 1993 and AZAB in 1995.

Cruising Reports

KIDNAPPED 130



In the footsteps of RL Stevenson

Having with a heavy heart taken the decision in June not to launch my F27 Trade Winds due to Covid-19 uncertainties and a deal of family catching up to be done after lockdown my thoughts turned back to the summer of 2016 and an adventure that included sailing around and trekking across Scotland.



Kidnapped 130

The adventure was based around Robert Louis Stevenson's book *Kidnapped*, a book that has fascinated me since my youth. The story is in short; (spoiler warning!)

Set in 1756, the recently orphaned country teenager David Balfour is swindled out of his rightful inheritance by an evil miserly uncle who has him kidnapped and bundled aboard the brig Covenant to be sold into slavery in the Carolinas. The ship goes north around Scotland and in thick fog off Skye runs over an open rowing boat, but Jacobite mercenary sympathiser Alan Brek-Stewart survives and takes up with the poor incarcerated David. The two fight off the murderous ship's crew, are shipwrecked, washed ashore on a deserted Scottish island, witness murder of a Government tax collector and then flee across Scotland pursued by Redcoats. The two eventually reach Edinburgh. David collects his inheritance and Alan heads back to France to his beloved and exiled Bonnie Prince Charlie.

A classic ripping yarn if ever there was one and a story so masterfully written by Stevenson who wraps his wonderful fiction around real historical characters and events.

Kidnapped was published in 1886 so 2016 was the 130th anniversary of the book and in an idle moment the notion of recreating the adventure

came to me – excluding, of course, kidnap, ship-wreck, murder and being pursued by Redcoats! To stay true to the tale would involve a 500 mile non-stop sail from the Firth of Forth, north to Orkney, south west to Cape Wrath, south down The Minch, going outside Skye and then turning around the south of Tiree for the small island of Erraid that sits near Iona at the south west corner of Mull. There after a 240 mile yomp beckoned to follow David and Alan across; Mull, Morven, Glen Coe, Rannoch Moor, passing down through The Trossachs, Stirling and on back to cross the Forth at the Queensferry to finish in the heart of the Old Town in Edinburgh.

As it turned out the full 540 mile rounding Scotland involved a mere four tacks, and these were all in the last 12 miles. We also succumbed to some fairly epic blisters!

Unlike my previous solo adventures, Kidnaped 130 was to be in company. Two of my regular Scottish Islands Three Peaks crew were press ganged to join the escapade. Willie Gibson and I would do the full trip. My long-time sailing buddy Richard Marshall would help with the sailing passage and once Willie and I had jumped ship would take Trade Winds the short hop from Erraid back to a mooring in Oban bay.

Trade Winds was rigged up in her carbon neutral long passage mode with wind turbine, additional solar panel along with bullet proof blade jib and victualled with pre-cooked and freeze dried meals, cake, cereals, energy bars and an eclectic range of essential music.



The crew were on standby and when the weather presented a stable SW pattern we slipped lines at 12.45 on 20th May from Port Edgar Marina, North Queensferry. As we passed under the old railway bridge Trade Winds lifted herself and set off out of the Forth Estuary on a wonderful following SW breeze under one reef and full jib. Spirits were high and we were soon abeam the Fife Ness light and heading due north aiming to be about 20 miles off Aberdeen and Peterhead before the open stretch to The Orkneys. We settled in to our 2hrs on, 2 hrs off, 2hrs standby rota and enjoyed a very pleasant evening as we slipped north through the night passing St Andrews, Dundee, Montrose at 04.00 when the light was coming in we were off Aberdeen, had an average speed of 7.7 knots over the past six hours and were now out of sight of land.

The breeze was forecast to increase and importantly to remain out of the SW. By mid-morning we were in a 20 – 25 knots of breeze in a following quartering sea. The North Sea is not one of my favourite places and the grey chop and dismal mood aboard only compounded my very ungenerous feelings toward this stretch of water.



Willie, more of a hill man than sailor, was not happy being so far offshore. Born and bred in the hills the concept of a building sea and all this open water was unsettling him. As this was not a race, we throttled right back under two reefs. With such a sail-plan we fell off the waves and only caught the odd surf. The main thing was that nobody was spooked, and we were working our way north. Keeping crew well and in one piece has always been a priority to me over the twenty or so Three Peaks Races and this trip was no different. Despite the 'throttling back, we ran a six hour average speed of 6.4 knots.

As we prepared to head out into the 100-mile gap between Duncansby Head and Shetland to Orkney the bale out options were reducing one by one. Over to port, Peterhead was soon too tight on the south westerly wind to hike up to, then followed Fraserburgh and Macduff. Carrying on into the open North Sea meant Kirkwall was the next available bale-out port to consider. We pressed on in an uncomfortable following sea and then as if by order Orkney in the shape of Start Point came into view on the east side of Sanday.

Our northerly rounding point was to be The Dennis Head light (59.23 N) on North Ronaldsay and then a westerly heading for Papa Westray. The red and white hooped North Ronaldsay lighthouse gave us a visual check on our position. We decided to dip in-shore to try and get out of the tide that was due to race south within the next couple of hours. By now the wind was next to nothing and by 20.00 we were still too far offshore to anchor and not wanting to use our engine we started the painful journey back south, on a strong and unrelenting Orkney tide.



After an agonising period of attempting to sail against the flow, the tide relaxed its grip and we managed to make headway to make Dennis Head. The wind was still very light and we realised the 20 mile leg across the top of Orkney could not be managed within the tide. None of us really took to the idea of missing the next tide in a stretch of water called The Bore Rost. Reluctantly we fired up the engine and motored about 12 miles to Noup Point on the west side of Papa Westray. The rounding of Orkney had been a painful affair having taken us 24 hours to cover 70nm from abeam Kirkwall to turning south at Birsay. No sooner had we rounded a light breeze filled in from the North West and we were soon reaching South West. We had 258 miles run, half way there, and on a straight line towards Cape Wrath that lay just over 75 miles away.



Sailing in these latitudes at midnight in May is a wonderful experience. The skies remain light with blues, pinks, purples and this particular evening offered uninterrupted cloudless views to the darker heavens beyond. It was a very cold night sail, but the warm morning sun soon dried the dew off the decks and took the damp air off the boat.



Cape Wrath did not live up to its name and we rounded on a smooth undulating swell. We even had the temerity to go close in to study the sheer cliffs and cock a snoop at Dulsic Rock that is strategically placed to catch unsuspecting vessels rounding the headland.



We now entered The Minch on what can only be described as a perfect west coast of Scotland day. The sky and sea were a matching blue and we were reaching and on a 217° heading on a 70nm straight line to Comet Rock buoy off the North West tip of Skye. With the wind well aft on a deep port reach and with the slate grey outline of Harris out to the west we passed key port-hand mainland landmarks; Handa, Steor Point, my home waters of

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Loch Broom, Loch Ewe and Gairloch and we continued to shape our course deeper into The Minch and to the NE corner of Skye.

It was a fabulous warm day to sail the length of The Minch. To maintain boat speed, we had climbed up a few degrees so in what was now a dark and black night we would meet the un-lit Shiant islands head on. Two more gybes saw us away from the Shiant islands and through the 1nm gap between Eilean Trodday and the Comet Buoy. By the time we were passing Waternish Point and Neist Point a grey morning light was opening up our views. Skye is a remarkable island from our sea level vantage point with views to the layer upon layer of volcanic rock stacked high and sheer. The log read 410nm.

It was time for Willie to take the helm and verifying the heading to stay inshore of the TSS I turned in for a sleep as the last shift had left me chilled and tired. Richard was not yet roused and on the assumption that my well-aimed kick would rouse him I lay down on the narrow starboard saloon bunk and instantly fell asleep. I was conscious of a noise and coming too from a deep sleep I could hear Willie shouting down from the cockpit. "Come and check this please". Aware there was an uncharacteristic urgency in his voice I sat up. Richard was still horizontal and had missed his standby shift. I stepped up into the cold cockpit, shivered and turned to look forward. Bearing down on us was a large north bound cruise ship. Willie pipped up. "Port to Port or will I stay down this side?" "FFS, don't cross him" was my response. We did continue down the shoreline passing the big white hulk starboard to starboard at 05.00 hrs. On my return below Richard was invited, in succinct terms, to get on deck!



As the morning opened up, we were treated to a brilliant view over to the Small Isles of Canna, Rum, Muck and Eigg. On a lightening breeze we passed to the west of low-lying Coll and we had Tiree on our port bow. As the day wore in and early mists burnt off the breeze dropped to all but nothing and we were well and truly stuck in a hole to the NW of Tiree. It was times like this that the F27 comes into her own. With the merest of zephyrs, she slipped along accompanied by that wonderful sound of water lapping at the hull.

Rounding Tiree is a job that requires a clear head and respect for the Dubh Sgeir (Black Rock) reefs. To a tired and fuzzy head, it appeared the course would take an inordinately wide dog-leg to clear the reefs. The breaking of water on the smooth swell reminded us to hold our course before making east for the mainland.



We turned to port and wafted ourselves along the south shore of Tiree and Hynish Point. A breeze started to fill in from the east as we entered the last 22nm of the passage. We laid off to the south of the uninhabited and unlight island of Soa that lies 1nm below Iona and rounded up into a short beat over the Erraid/Mull shore with the plan to slip into Tinkers Hole. The crew settled into the unfamiliar routine of tacking, the first of the passage.

Our arrival at 01.59 on the black unlight shoreline of Erraid was eventful as the area is littered with reefs and small islets. One, aptly called Rankin's Rock, a little 'jaggy' that snarls at half-tide. The Covenant had come to grief here in amongst the Torran Rocks and David was washed ashore. We picked our way in by plotter, torch beam and both Richard's and my knowledge of the place. We entered a deserted Tinkers Hole anchorage and without any ceremony dropped anchor slap bang in the middle of the bay. We celebrated with some serious food intake, a few beers and couple of drams to celebrate the safe arrival and completion of the sailing leg.



Morning broke to perfect conditions for Willie and I to set off on foot for Edinburgh some 240 miles or so overland to the east. Our route had been painstakingly researched from the Stevenson book and many of the learned texts about his writings.



Our aim was to replicate the route as closely as we could, travelling light, camping out at night and collecting food parcels from pre-arranged drop points. From Erraid we trekked through the heart of Mull, took the ferry across the Sound of Mull to Loch

Aline. From there it was a painful and long day on tarmac across Morven to Loch a Coire on the shores of Loch Linnhe. Richard was to meet in the bay and on the following day convey us over to Appin on the mainland. Our feet were burning after a 27mile day, mostly on tarmac. It was a relief and delight to come on the bay to see Richard's Nordic Fulmer sitting at anchor.



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We slept and ate well and, in the morning, motored across Loch Lhinne to land at Appin. From here it was up into the mountains, through Glen Coe, Kinlochleven and a night at Loch Charain mountain bothy. After that we headed out into the wilds of Rannoch Moor. Willie was taking the lead and with some excellent routing and navigation kept us right on track. Over the seven days since we jumped ship we had covered 136 miles and 18,200 ft of ascent over some fairly rough terrain. By now our soft sailing feet were protesting and badly blistered. We reached the shores of Loch Rannoch and it was apparent that our feet were in a bad way and to continue into the next high hill

section would be foolhardy. We agreed we should stop, recover and muster again when all was well with our mutual undercarriage.

After 9 weeks of recovery and fitting in with the work/diary etc, Willie and I re-assembled at our stopping point and over the following seven days made the 137 miles and 11,200 ft of 'undulations' back to Edinburgh. Our route took us through The Trossachs, Dunblane, Stirling and on to north Queensberry. We had one final challenge to overcome. Stevenson has our heroes row across the Forth in an open day boat. Ahead of the challenge I had arranged to meet up with the local Queensferry rowing club.

The St Ayles skiff pulled into North Queensferry harbour bang on time. With some surprise Willie and I were each handed a large wooden sweep and were now part of the crew and not passengers. On what was quite an 'active day' on the Forth we rowed across the Estuary to our starting point at Port Edgar marina and in doing so had crossed our outward track. From there we were accompanied on foot by friends the last 12 miles into Edinburgh. It was somewhat surreal tramping through the Festival jam-packed streets in our mountain kit, dishevelled, looking somewhat 'ragged' and coming to terms with busy pavements after such a wonderful time in the wild.

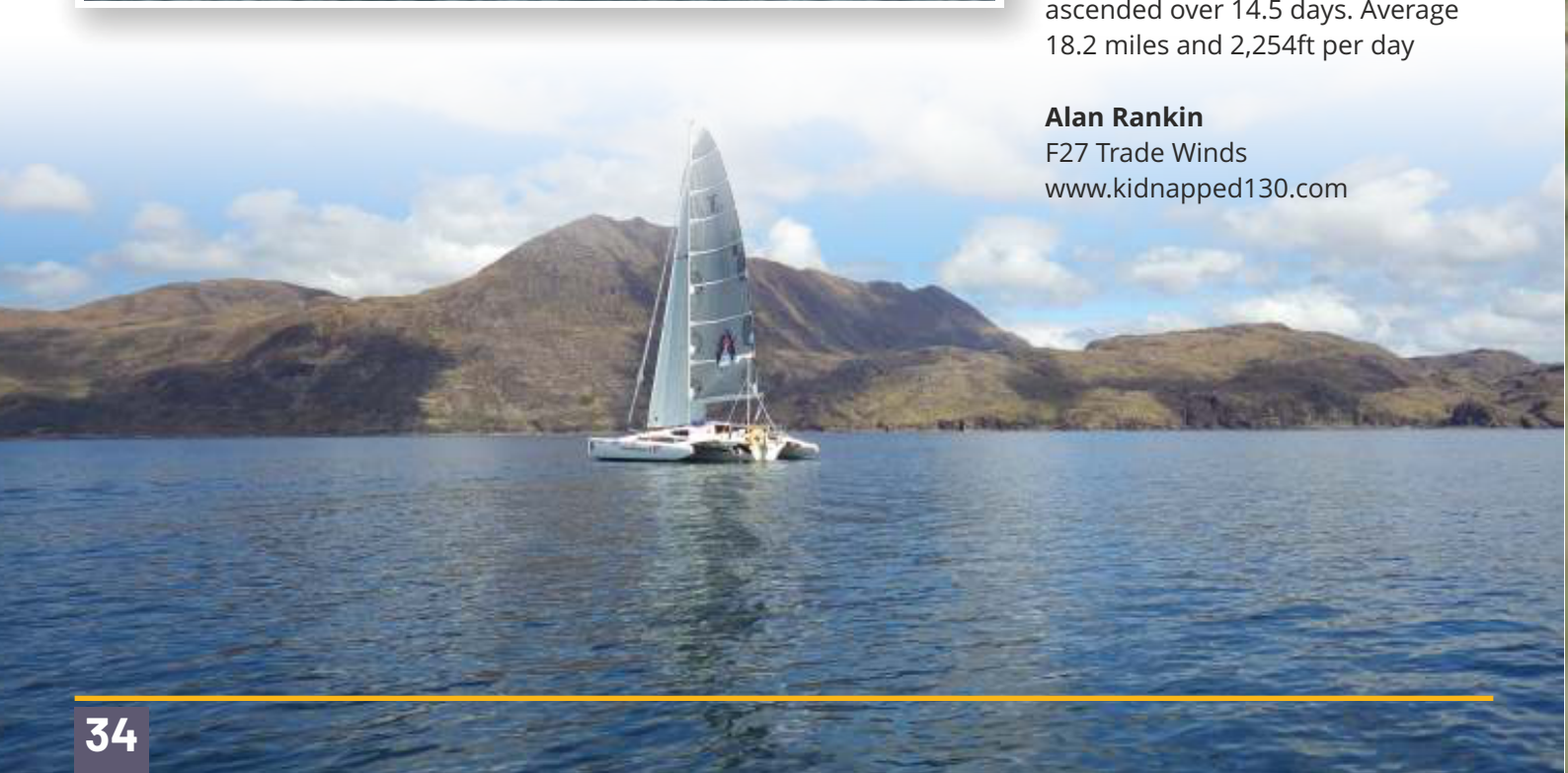


We completed our adventure as David Balfour did at the doors of what we think was the site of the original British Linen Bank. Unfortunately, not to collect our fortune but to share a pint and a handshake after a wonderful and truly enriching adventure at sea and on land.

540 nm sailed over 4.5 days.
Average 122nm per day

273 miles trekked and 33,816 ft ascended over 14.5 days. Average 18.2 miles and 2,254ft per day

Alan Rankin
F27 Trade Winds
www.kidnapped130.com



Scottish Islands Peaks Race 2020. Covid!



The remoteness of islands with their small communities and a dearth of medical services, makes them uniquely vulnerable to epidemics. St Kilda was decimated with smallpox and

later influenza, the latter in 1926 leading to the eventual evacuation, and it is now Scotland's best-known uninhabited island. Of over 900 islands only about 94 are inhabited. The Scottish Islands

Peaks race visits Mull (pop. 2,800), Jura (pop. 196) and Arran (pop. 4629) so in 2020 it was no surprise that the race was cancelled to limit importing diseases from hundreds of visitors from all over the UK.

Scottish Islands Peaks Race 2020. Covid!



For me, 2020 sailing was limited to 2 trips to and from Troon on the basis of a need for maintenance work. Even on the Clyde, there are uninhabited islands to visit, Davaar at the entrance to Campbeltown loch can be walked to at low tide and in one of the caves there is a most moving rock painting. Inchmarnock and little Cumbrae are also interesting and offer reasonable anchorage in good weather, but none offer the grandeur and wildlife of the most identifiable Clyde island, Ailsa Craig, which happens to be a great lunch stop halfway through the 40-mile trip between Lochryan and Troon.

It is special to me for another reason. My Grandfather was the GP in Ballantrae and provided the island community medical support; only called once, before wireless telephone communications were established on Ailsa Craig in 1935, the lightkeepers and employees of Ailsa Craig Granites Ltd used to depend on pigeons for the conveyance of messages. A pigeon house was established at Girvan and pigeons were provided by the Lighthouse Boatman at that time, who received an annual payment of £4.00. When a doctor or supplies were required urgently in stormy weather when it was impossible to have messages taken by carrier pigeon, a system of signals by fire was used. One fire on the castle path showing the Lighthouse to the North indicated "bring doctor for Lighthouse"; two fires on the castle path (one at the same place as the Lighthouse fire, and the other 20-30

yards above it), meant "bring doctor for Quarry Company"; one fire at the north end of the Castle Flat showing the Lighthouse to the South indicated the provisions were required. In any case, he had only one call, and was rowed out to the island, where bashful parents apologised for their children, by then suitably chastised for pyromania and concealed to prevent further censure. The reactions of the lifeboatmen were thankfully not recorded.

So a short island trip to an easily accessible stop replaced our usual 2-3 day adventure, but no hardship as it remains one of the most spectacular islands in the UK, and one which contributes to Olympic sport.

The anchorage is just north of the pier in 10-15m. The bottom is shale and boulders, and a tripping line is advised. The pier is derelict and often used by day trippers who rarely risk being alongside. Alternatively take a circumnavigation while leaving a party ashore. Neither group will be disappointed. The island teems with wildlife, seals singing on the beach,

slow worms, on hot sunny days and rabbits but thankfully not rats which were dispatched using 5 tons of warfarin and as a result puffin are now enthusiastically breeding. Other seabirds include 33,000 breeding pairs of gannets. The island is steeped in history; a castle from the 1500s, a Stevenson lighthouse with outhouses (and 2 foghorns) 2 narrow gauge railways, and granite quarries which supply 70% of curling stones ever used.

A 340m climb to the top via a rather precipitous and slippery path, is rewarded at 247m by a lochan that represents a volcanic remnant and the views from the summit to Arran, Jura and Islay, and Ireland are worth the effort.

This is just one of many amazing Scottish islands. It is remote in character yet reasonably accessible and so spectacular and diverse in its appeal, that it deserves a top 10 ranking.

Gordon Baird
Tri Mohr



A letter from Mallorca

Matthew West's request for contributions together with the fact that, like most old codgers, I seem to have rather more time on my hand than I would wish, has encouraged me to put pen to paper.

Having started I'm immediately wondering why I am bothering. My boat and I have been reunited for less than two weeks this year due to the dreaded lurgy and total distance covered for the season was approximately 400 metres from my buoy to the marina's hoist. That said the past 12 months have not been uneventful as you will see below.

By way of background "Flying Circus" is a 2005 vintage Dragonfly 920 that I purchased as a 65th birthday present to myself in 2012. Initially she was berthed in Portishead and my first year of ownership was spent fighting my way up and down the Bristol Channel together with cruising The Isles of Scilly and the south coasts of

Devon and Cornwall. I learnt a lot during that year, specifically, if you're not out of the restaurant in Penarth when the flood starts you probably won't make it back to Portishead. I also decided that I was not the man I used to be when it came to chilly evenings, Atlantic depressions and massive tidal ranges.

Accordingly the next June I set off for the Algarve via the Isles of Scilly, Brest, across Biscay and down the Portuguese coast turning left at Cape St Vincent and finally arriving in Lagos where I decided to spend the winter as the delightful young ladies in the marina office allowed me to leave the boat unfolded for the price of a nine metre monohull.

Lagos is a bit like Portishead without the tides and rain, it was very limited in terms of attractive places to sail to so by the end of May I was off again sailing down the Spanish coast en route for Tangier. Another left turn took me down the North African coast to Ceuta, then across

to the fleshpots of the Costa del Sol and on to The Balearics where I finally sailed into the Bay of Pollensa on the north east tip of Mallorca early in July.

At this point I had a stroke of what turned out to be extreme good fortune when an English live aboard advised me that the buoy I was circling had been vacated by a Spaniard who had sold up and returned to Madrid. I immediately picked it up and I have been securely attached to it for nearly six years.

2020 has been a year like no other for all of us. My additional problems started in September 2019 when I returned from a cruise to Sardinia and Corsica to discover that my usual place on the marina hard where "Flying Circus" spends the winter months was required for member's boats displaced by major works to the marina. In true Spanish style the other main marina on the east coast was also planning similar works and it soon became clear that



A letter from Mallorca

demand for space ashore was outstripping supply by a significant margin. I was now running out of time, sailing to the mainland would have been the sensible option but I had no crew and the medium term forecast was not great. Just to put the tin lid on it a rig inspection revealed a couple of areas of concern so I reluctantly resolved to spend the winter on my buoy. Before flying back to the UK I called in the diver who replaced every shackle, swivel and chain, he also lengthened the main 30mm chain that connects my mooring setup to my blocks.

On 20th January Storm Gloria hit the east coast of Mallorca. The wind funnelled straight into the bay and from all accounts the waves were huge and wild. The bay is not deep and this would have exacerbated the situation. Over 30 boats either dragged or broke free from their moorings fetching up on the harbour wall, the beach or the rocks. I must consider myself fortunate as only one of these craft hit me on the way through and damage was limited to my port ama. From the reports I was receiving from other live-aboards it could have been so much worse. Some of the craft drifting through the bay were over 50 foot and had one wrapped itself round my bows my ground tackle would have struggled to deal with the load and the damage would have been massive.

When I flew out at the beginning of February I found that many boats were still stranded on the shore. My priority was to get "Flying Circus" out of the water and I spent three frustrating days trying to find a marina that could accommodate me. Having drawn a complete blank on this I then moved on to inland storage and on the day before I was due to fly home I managed to sort out a lift, transportation, a police escort and an inland storage facility for 1st April.

I can't recall the subsequent sequence of events but suffice it to say that by the time the due date came round both the UK and Spain were in lockdown and a few of EasyJet's aircraft were starting to turn up on eBay. Happily the only payment in advance had been to the police for the escort. Did I detect a giggle when I suggested a rebate might be appropriate?

A very sad aspect of the aftermath of the storm was the way the Spanish authorities dealt with the stranded boats. The local lockdown meant that owners were unable to come out to try to salvage their property and the town was keen to clear the beaches in anticipation of the pending season that never really got underway. I wasn't there but my local chums tell me that the authorities brought in a salvage company that cut up the craft in situ, everything went into skips, hulls, rigging, fittings, even personal possessions.

A knock on effect in the aftermath of Gloria has been a backlash against all the moorings in the bay. Our tenure has always been at best dubious and at some stage during most seasons there are rumours that the authorities are going to clamp down and clear out all the craft. During May the town announced in the local press that the time had come to take action. In addition to the resolvable problem of poorly configured and badly maintained moorings they cited the pollution caused by the boats as the justification for taking this action. It was subsequently pointed out that the town discharges all its sewage into the bay between 1.00 and 2.00 AM every morning and everything went quiet again. A mooring association has now been formed to fight any proposal. When I joined I was number 80. It turns out that other members include officials from the local council and the police. Encouraging news, we shall see!!

I am pleased to report that "Flying Circus" came out of the water during the first week of September and she is now back in her normal place on the hard. To use an accountancy analogy; as she settled on her chocks she was transformed from a liability to an asset and the relief was total.

Although it is fairly self-evident I thought it might be useful to set out the lessons I have learnt or remembered in the wake of Gloria



- In any buoyed area one is always vulnerable if other buoy owners do not adhere to high standards for their equipment and its maintenance. If you are damaged by another craft you will be fortunate if you can identify the culprit.
- My diver goes down twice a year to check my mooring setup. With the exception of the 30mm galvanised chain all shackles, swivels and other chains are replaced and re seized every two years. I am always surprised by the levels of wear particularly on the galvanised shackles where the threads exhibit significant deterioration. Bear in mind that my mooring is only used for the five months every year and for two of those I am usually away cruising.
- To secure Flying Circus to my buoy I use a bridle with a doubled up safety line on each side and a chain shackled to an anchor point on my bow. These ropes take a lot of wear at their extremities and are changed every year. They need it!

It is a while now since I have cruised UK waters but when I was regularly crossing the Channel 20 or so years ago it was obvious that weather patterns were changing. This is certainly also true of the Mediterranean and anyone who disagrees with that should have a word with the local fishermen. I shall end my ramblings on another weather related note and an incident that occurred in September last year on the south coast of Mallorca in an anchorage aptly named "Cala des Hombres Mort" (Dead Man's Cove). I sheltered in this cove for six days while strong south easterly winds persisted outside. After a couple of

days the wind veered causing a significant swell to enter the cove making life rather uncomfortable. My partner was due to fly back to the UK so we struggled ashore in the dinghy and drove to Palma. When I returned at dusk that evening the wind was howling and the boat was bouncing around like a cork. Having congratulated myself for doubling up on the bridle and the round turns I was overcome by the lure of the local hotel.

The next morning the wind was still blowing but the sun was out which always helps. I made my way back to my dinghy. On arriving at the beach my jaw dropped as I was confronted by the very sad scene illustrated in the photo below. The day before this had been a 60 foot ketch that lived on the other side of the bay. Nobody needs to be reminded of the moral of the story.



Cruising to the Canaries and back on Sueños

Over the 2018-2019 winter, we took Sueños down to the Canaries. The sailing down and back has been covered quite extensively in videos which have been published on the Dazcat media website by Oriel Butcher (aka Dazcat media), especially the return journey on which Oriel came with us as crew herself. So in this article I do not propose to cover the sailing down or back in much detail, but aim to give some guidance on the experience of cruising through the Canary Islands.

Our trip was motivated by my son Oliver's desire to spend six months cruising in his gap year and our wish to go somewhere warm for the winter, while we had some building work done on our house. Our friend Alan Mitchell (with whom I did two Round Britain Races on Fiery Cross) joined Oliver and me.

We left the second week of September with a good forecast but the high pressure ridge we expected to cross kept moving south with us in Biscay, so we motored for a long way. We stopped in the rias south of Finisterre and for a couple of days in Baiona, which has one of the most stunning yacht clubs inside an old fort



overlooking the harbour and town. From there we made our way down to Portimao on the Algarve, where we left the boat for a month before coming back for the sail down to Lanzarote at the end of October, where my wife Isa, joined us. An easy sail down, apart from pulling the headboard cars off the mast, somewhat inexplicably as we had two reefs and a screecher up for civilised downwind cruising at night. Many cruisers only visit the Canaries as part of an Atlantic crossing; often their only stopover is Las Palmas for the start of the ARC, which is precisely what we did back in 1998



on our Outremer 50, Bagheera. This is something of a shame as the islands are an attractive area to cruise and explore. The seven islands are spread over 250 miles in a ENE-WSW trend and are quite different. The temperature through the winter,

November to February varies from 18 to 23 degrees C, with sunshine most of the time, so if you like a pleasant climate rather than hot and humid such as the Caribbean they are a great place to spend the winter. There are some issues that need

considering in cruising through the islands, especially in multihulls. The islands do not have any natural harbours, the only area that might just about pass as an all-weather anchorage is on the south side of Graciosa or in Estrecho del Rio, the strait

Cruising to the Canaries and back on Sueños

itself, between Graciosa and Lanzarote. However this area is now a marine park and there is only one bay where you can anchor, for which you need a permit that can take weeks or months to get.

There are plenty of other anchorages in the islands, but these are weather dependent. The prevailing wind is from the NNE, while there is nearly always a significant NW swell coming in from the Atlantic. Thus the most promising anchorages are on the south sides of the islands. Being volcanic islands the depth generally drops off steeply so one needs to anchor fairly close in. Quite often the swell from the NNE wind or the NW swell (and occasionally both!) sweep round the edges of the islands to make the anchorage rather uncomfortable as the swell tends to hit sideways on, since the boat is facing the northerly wind. Should the wind shift SE, which does happen every so often and can be quite strong, there tend to be no pleasant anchorages. While it would be possible to move round to the NW side of most islands, this may be safe but it generally would not be very comfortable. Thus for a relaxed cruising experience, you need to use the marinas.

This can be a problem. Before the mass exodus for the Caribbean in late November, understandably most marinas are full. To get in, you need to book in advance and then there are few marinas that will accept multihulls. We found it helps if you have a fluent Spanish speaker to persuade the marinas to find you space. Even though I can speak reasonable Spanish and quite a few of the marina staff could speak English. Once we got Isa, who is Colombian, to do the marina booking we got much better results.



Our experience of the different islands is below. This is based on our route along the south side of all the islands, which we chose so that wherever possible we could anchor and not have to stay in marinas. Hence we did not go to the big marinas on the NE of Gran Canaria and Tenerife, but if you want supplies or spare parts the marina at Las Palmas on Gran Canaria, where the ARC starts from is the place to go. Las Palmas is also the biggest city on all the islands.

Lanzarote: The nearest, most north-easterly main island, Marina Lanzarote, in Arrecife was difficult to get into, but the RORC Transatlantic Race was about to start. Although there were only a few boats this did include two MOD 70s.

We did anchor our first night in the north corner of the harbour as Alan advised he had done some years back, but subsequently we were told that anchoring here was prohibited. There is an anchorage we used for a



Cruising to the Canaries and back on Sueños

couple of nights in the old heavily silted up harbour to the south of the town. We stayed a number of nights in the Puerto Calero marina, which, while expensive is a lovely marina with lots of bars, cafes and restaurants to choose from, many quite reasonably priced. We had some difficulty getting in. This was clearly the centre for catamarans with about 15 along the outside wall. It was also convenient for renting a car and going to see the unique volcanic landscape. This is the driest of the islands, but in our case the only place where we had a number of days of rain unfortunately coinciding with our daughter, Sarita's, visit. One of the best anchorages in the Canaries is Papagayo bay at the south end of the island, which we visited several times and also saw the RORC Transatlantic Race fleet sail by from there. The most sheltered part of the anchorage is right off the nudist beach!



Fuerteventura: the longest island, which is only 60 miles from the African coast. We stopped for a night off Isla de Lobos, which was a lovely spot until the tourist boats arrived in the morning. Further down the coast we anchored on the south side of Puerto del Rosario, which is the capital of the island, but does not have a marina. This was fine for a

night and a quick visit to the town. Sailing on south we went to the marina at Gran Tarajal. This was three quarters empty and was the cheapest marina we came across. The marina is a little austere, but it is only a short walk to the town with an attractive sea front along the beach. It is certainly the best (or only) place for a catamaran while you visit the island.



Fuerteventura is probably the least touristic of the four main islands. On the southeast are spectacular sands of Jandia, where windsurfers and kite surfers mix with nude people on the beach. There is a big hotel complex, but absolutely no other facilities. We had hoped to be able to anchor along some of the more remote parts of this coast, but the wind continued to have too much east in it for it ever to get calm enough. The very south of the island at Morro Jable is heavily built-up with hotels and apartments and the visitors part of the marina inside the port was unfinished so we opted to anchor off Punta Jandia 10 miles further west at the SW extremity of the island. The NW swell swept round the point and made a decidedly rolly anchorage, but it was a good spot to leave at dawn for a

daylight sail across the 70 miles to the south side of Gran Canaria. Bear in mind this is the northern hemisphere winter and in December you only have 10 hours or so of daylight and with no marina bookings we needed to find a good anchorage, which is much easier in daylight. In the event we had a lovely sail across and comfortably made the anchorage. We saw no sign of the famous acceleration zone between the islands, where the wind can go from 10 knots to over 30 knots almost instantly.

Gran Canaria

Having discovered how difficult it was to get into marinas we decided to book somewhere for the busy Xmas and New Year period as Sarita was flying out to visit, but our booking was a week away so we spent the intervening time at various anchorages along the south side of Gran Canaria. Some of the most protected anchorages were in bays surrounded by high-rise blocks of flats and hotels. Not exactly our idea of an idyllic anchorage.



Cruising to the Canaries and back on Sueños

Puerto Mogan where we spent Xmas is a pretty marina with houses built on small canals draped with bougainvillea and attractive shops and restaurants around the marina and also along the beach to the east. Suenos was the only catamaran and despite our booking, the space was very limited and in an easterly wind the swell caused many of the boats including us to hit the harbour walls. From Puerto Mogan we explored much of the island including a visit to Las Palmas, which was the only city we visited during our whole cruise. The interior of the island had some spectacular winding roads through the mountains, where I enjoyed looking at the geology, although the swarms of motorcyclists were something of a hazard.



Tenerife: From Puerto Mogan we sailed the 60 miles across to Marina San Miguel on the southern end of the Tenerife, which was the only marina to offer any space. That was limited and we had to clamber over an impounded powerboat that we were tied up alongside. The concentration of 8 or so other catamarans confirmed that this was the place for multihulls. The marina was also quite windy and generally lacking facilities.



By car we visited most of the island except the tourist resorts. The highlight is the 3715m high Teide volcano, but some of the routes round the coastal cliffs were also quite spectacular. On Tenerife you can see how these islands form with ridges formed by fissure zones radiating out at 120 degrees from the central volcanoes. There are then massive landslides that leave huge scarps after the collapse of the lavas and ash falls along the edges of the ridges. These avalanches carry the debris out as much as 60km along the sea floor sometimes with 1km size blocks, potentially causing huge tsunamis.

Gomera: It is only 25 miles across from Tenerife to Gomera, but this time we finally got to see a wind acceleration zone. About half-way across we were sailing to windward in a pleasant south-westerly when we started to get short breaking waves coming from the north. Sensing what might happen; we put in 3 reefs and partially furled the jib before continuing. Sure enough after 10 minutes the wind came in at 30 to 35 knots from the north with very short, steep waves. The waves were only 1 to 2m high, but beam on it gave us an exhilarating but very wet ride, all the way until just 50m from the San Sebastian harbour wall, where the wind cut off. This was our only experience of a wind acceleration zone. They are not a problem but in a multihull you had better anticipate them or it could get rather exciting with full sail.



Gomera is a lovely island with much less tourism than Tenerife. The marina at San Sebastian, which we had to book two weeks in advance, is wonderfully sited at the top of the harbour, just out of the strong wind outside, and right in the town. The island is good for walking and has

Cruising to the Canaries and back on Sueños

forest on the top fed more by mist than rain. The English boat alongside us had had the berth there for 17 years, but the owner often took the boat out for the day. We spent about 3 weeks there and were joined by Alan and his wife Sheilah.



La Palma: Leaving San Sebastian we went round to the south of the island and anchored off Puerto De Vueltas for a night before heading across to La Palma. With its triangular shape with a narrow ridge to the south, where there have been relatively recent volcanic eruptions, there are no promising anchorages. We went to Marina La Palma, which is at the top of the harbour right in the town of Santa Cruz. Here there was lots of space, but it soon became apparent why. Despite specially constructed gates, an almost continuous surge makes its way up the harbour.



La Palma is a lovely island much greener than the other islands as it gets more rain than the others and as a consequence is the only island that does not need desalination for mains water. At the height of the Spanish Empire Santa Cruz was the third biggest city in their empire and the main departure point for ships sailing to the Americas, especially because of the fresh water. Santa Cruz has some lovely old

architecture along cobbled streets. The centre of the island is dominated by the 2000m deep Caldera de Taburiente, which was formed by the lateral collapse of the Cumbre Vieja volcano. The volcanoes along the southern ridge with the recent eruptions are also interesting.



To the south there is a good view of El Hierro, the only main island we did not visit, partly because the southern coast, which has good anchorages, is now a national park and anchoring is forbidden.

Return to Falmouth

It was now February and it became evident we needed to return home to sort out our house building project. Isa, Oliver and Sheilah left us, and Oriol Butcher came at the last minute to join Alan and I on the sail back. We had spotted a promising weather window with the NNE wind swinging round to SE. The trip home is covered at length in Oriol's video, but in view of the interest in this at the time, I will add a few comments. The great advantage of cruising today, compared to the past, is that the weather forecasts are so good, that you can comfortably make such trips in winter with the confidence that you can avoid heavy weather.

While we did motor quite a bit, we also had some lovely sailing, heading first to Cascais and then up the Portuguese coast to Baiona. Starting from La Palma it is 100 miles further to Portugal than from Lanzarote but it saved us a 250 mile sail back ENE. In the event we sailed the 720 miles direct to Cascais rather than going to Lagos or Portimao on the Algarve. I checked the weather for about two months afterwards and there were no similar weather windows, so a later return trip would have required lots of beating. The best way to do this would be to start further east and head on a fetch to Madeira. After making our way from Baiona to Sada (just east of La Coruna) we left Sueños there, as a huge Atlantic wide depression was coming in, Alan and I returning two weeks later for a March sail across Biscay. In the whole trip we did not see a single boat sailing outside sheltered waters. For the last 150 miles we had a wonderful gentle sail making 6 knots in only 6 knots of SE wind with flat seas. In all Sueños had been away for 7 months in which time we sailed nearly 4000 miles.

Summary: The Canaries are a great place to sail to spend the winter. The sail down is relatively easy if you time your departure right. The climate is pleasant and the islands are easy and cheap to get to. Be prepared to put up with rolly anchorages or to spend more time in marinas than many cruisers would like. In this case plan your trip and book the marinas in advance. The sail back is more challenging but you need patience to wait for a good weather window or be prepared for a long beat. An alternative in early summer might be to head out toward the Azores and then return from there.

Rupert Kidd
Suenos

Backlash Refit



Figure 1: Back



About five years ago, I realised my sailing priorities were going to change. As long as sailing was mostly about sailing with a few other grown-ups, then Wandering Glider, my Dragonfly 920 Extreme, was ideal.

However, I had recently acquired grandchildren, and since I want to share my passion for sailing with them, then I was going to have to accommodate three generations on the boat, and Wandering Glider was just too small. I was going to need a bridgedeck catamaran, but I still



Backlash at Bembridge Regatta. Photo courtesy of Mike Samuelson.



wanted one that would sail well, so that meant one with daggerboards. This really narrowed the field, especially when you considered the budget available. At about this time Backlash, a built-from-kit Schionning Waterline 1160 came up for sale. Backlash had been built some 10 years previously, was fairly stripped back and had had a fairly hard life racing, as the survey showed, but she also had the potential to become what I was after with significant modifications, and being a kit boat meant those modifications would be easier to make. So after haggling, a price was agreed and I bought her in 2018. However, the survey showed there were some immediate repairs necessary before we could sail her back from Plymouth to the Hamble. These completed, we sailed her for the rest of the season which gave me a good idea of what changes I wanted to make.

In October 2018, Backlash came out of the water at Port Solent and Compass Marine appointed to do the work. She was then tented up so work could begin. The refit has been long and tortuous. A few things I have learnt:

- You can always find something else that needs fixing,
- It can always take longer than you thought,
- It can always cost more than you thought.

On the plus side, I am expecting to end up with something that is close to what I am after, even if the process has sometimes been frustrating, with the impact of Covid being not least among the challenges we have faced.

Rather than give a blow-by-blow account, I'll describe the changes by area, so you can skip over anything uninteresting.



Figure 2: Some damage around the port dagger board slot needing a proper repair.

Hull - Backlash had had a hard time. The survey revealed some thirty problem areas on the hull, some damage that had been patched but needed fixing properly, and others, areas where there had been water ingress, and rot had followed. The main structure of the hull was made of Duracore, a Cedar/ Balsa/Cedar strip that was glued. This effectively prevents rot spreading, so only small areas were involved mostly resulting from damage of one sort or another, so only non-structural areas like steps, where plywood was used was the rot substantial. In addition, there were several small areas of delamination, and these also needed fixing.



Figure 3: This front part of the catwalk was rotten.

Backlash Refit



Figure 4: The front few inches of the catwalk have been rebuilt, and a new arrangement for attaching to the tongue on the beam.

A particular issue was the front beam. Water was weeping from the hull joint, so we decided we had to remove it to be sure, since it was not something we wanted to have to come back to later. It turned out that was not a problem, but we discovered there was a lot of rot at the front of the catwalk where a tongue from the beam supported the end of the catwalk, so we were justified in our decision. Removing the joints for the beam was problematic, so when we replaced them we used a neoprene sheet to seal the joint to the hull so it would at least be relatively easy to remove in future.

The hull portholes were crazed, and rather small, and non-opening, so we opted to replace them with standard Lewmar opening portholes. This turned out to be more difficult than expected because of the curved shape of the hull, and the need to add material to give a flat landing for the portholes. The result is aesthetically pleasing though and improves light and ventilation.

Obviously, the hull was going to need re-fairing, and painting. We went for white Perfection Pro as the



Figure 6: White topsides with red stripe, bright orange underside, coppercoat bottom, and escape hatch.

paint for the hull, Coppercoat for the antifoul, and grey/white deckpaint for the topsides. The finishing touches were a red detail and name. You need to have some bright paint on the underside in case you end up upside down and in need of rescue. We found a fluorescent orange paint, and opted to paint the whole of the underside of the bridgedeck in this colour rather than the few square metres required by racing regulations.



Figure 7: White hulls, grey deck, Coppercoat underwater decals, and note the porthole.



Figure 5: The new portholes open providing extra ventilation. Notice the new stanchion bases and netting too.

The bridgedeck windows were cracked and of mixed vintage/material. I also wanted to improve forward visibility, so we replaced ventilation hatches with windows with hatches in them. This means the visibility from inside is good enough to help the boat from inside on the autohelm in inclement weather.



Figure 8: Bridgedeck Windows, before...



Figure 9: Bridgedeck windows, after. Note the steps on the anchor locker.

Safety - Backlash came with a good inventory of standard safety kit like EPIRBs etc, however, she was very much set up with adults in mind. She has a deep and secure cockpit, which makes a good start point for a safe environment for young children. However, there were a number of safety additions we made.



Figure 9: Original fibreglass stanchion base.



Figure 11: one of the new custom made stanchion bases.

The stanchion bases were moulded fibreglass continuous with the hull skin. It was clear that on more than one occasion when someone had fallen against the lifelines, some of these had delaminated from the deck. We opted to replace these with stainless steel bases bolted through the hull. The issue here was the continuous curve of the hull, which meant that each had to be custom built. This makes a good start, and the Dyneema lifelines work well, but I decided this should be backed up by stanchion netting to make it harder to slip between the lines.



Figure 14: The steps to get onto the boat, saloon window, and hull portholes - before.

The trampolines on Backlash were just fishing net, at a size that could trap small feet. Indeed, it was difficult to navigate for adults to. I was always impressed by the trampolines on Dragonflies, so Batts Sails made up some similar, but with a larger hole size to aid drainage. Another consideration is that once you are outside the cockpit there is no flat surface, so if



Figure 12: Before



Figure 13: After. The beam has been powder coated.

you drop something it goes overboard. The trampolines therefore are attached with a slot on two edges giving you a chance of recovering something dropped. The result is aesthetically pleasing too.



Figure 15: After, note the picture window and chartplotters.



Figure 16: Here the new seat and liferaft location.



Figure 17: The top step is new, as are the railings. Not so much of a scramble to get aboard.

At the back of the boat, the steps to get up onto the hull and into the cockpit needed quite some confidence to negotiate. So we added an extra step on each side

and guardrails to help make it easier to navigate for those less certain of their footing young or old.

Backlash is a few inches shorter than is necessary to have a safety hatch in each hull. She had escape hatches, but they had been sealed up. We decided to open these up and put acrylic escape hatches in. This has the added advantage of being able to see underneath the boat.

The liferaft was attached to the rear of the cockpit, but the attachment points were causing a problem, so we opted to move the location to the rear of the helming seats (see below). This puts the liferaft close to where you would leave the boat from in an emergency. However, it is quite high up, so it might not be convenient if the boat was upside down. However, that alone is not likely to be a reason to take to the liferaft. I will however look into an automatic release in case it is submerged.



Figure 18: Boarding access. Note the emergency boarding ladder (bottom left) and the shore power socket (left of name).

One thing Backlash did not have was a boarding ladder, especially for emergencies. The lifting rudders mean that there is not sufficient real estate to mount traditional boarding ladders on the hull transoms, so we opted for on Osculati flush mounted emergency ladder for each hull. This can be accessed from the water. We have actually rescued someone from the water, and I must say that

Backlash Refit

even without the emergency ladder the casualty had no trouble negotiating the low freeboard offered by the stern steps.



Rearranging Deck Gear - The deck gear was largely worn out and in need of replacement or refurbishment, and this has been done. In addition, the lines from the mast have been re-routed to simplify their route to the winch. Finally, we added additional tracks and cars on the outer edge of the coachroof. These are for the recut small Code 0, which we found worked well in very light winds upwind.



Anchor - Backlash came with a delta anchor with 10m of chain and warp, together with a Fortress kedge. There was a non-functioning windlass, and a bow roller on the front beam that had seized. Apart from the anchors, I decided we would start again.



The Fortress anchor was paired with 40m of line with the first 10m leaded. This makes a good lunchtime hook, as well as whatever else you need a kedge for. The bower anchor now has an anchor swivel, 30m chain, 60m warp, and 35m Ankoralina. An anchor roller has been installed under the catwalk, with a hatch for access so a bridle can be attached and the anchor recovered if necessary. The chain then comes into the anchor locker from underneath the trampoline to a Lewmar Pro 1000 windlass. The anchor locker has a new hinged lid (including steps to get onto the coach roof) and a rope bin installed above the storage for the warp and chain to take ropes from the mast.



Helm Seats and Outboard Controls - I've always considered a good all-around view from the helming position was important. Backlash has tiller steering, and a single seat (with two bases). However, this did not give a good view over the coachroof, and we found that we were very often perched on the guardrail bases on the rear quarter of the hull with both a good view and good leverage on the tiller extension. So we decided to replace these with seats for two made out of stainless steel tubing. I'm pleased with the results.



Tied to the helming position was the decision to install dual controls. Backlash has two 10HP Yamaha outboards. These were controlled from the centre of the cockpit, which meant you had to stand on a table to see forwards, and use a pole to steer. Not ideal. I decided to put dual controls in, close to each helm seat. Work on this is ongoing at the time of writing and has not been without its challenges.

Instruments and Electrics - Like much else on Backlash, the electrical and instrument systems were a mixed bag of ancient and modern. The modern included a Raymarine autohelm, the ancient included the radar system, chart plotters, and the shore power. The shore power system we installed put a shore power socket in the steps at the back of each hull. This runs to a three position switch before going to a mini distribution panel from which a circuit was run round the boat to various 13 amp sockets, some with USB charging sockets as well.



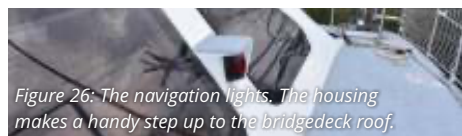
For the 12V system, we tripled the solar panels on the coach roof, added four MPPT controllers so that charging would be minimally affected by which side of the sails the sun was on, and added a Rolls

S12-290 AGM battery to the existing 2 Varta 80 Ah batteries, now in a backup mode.

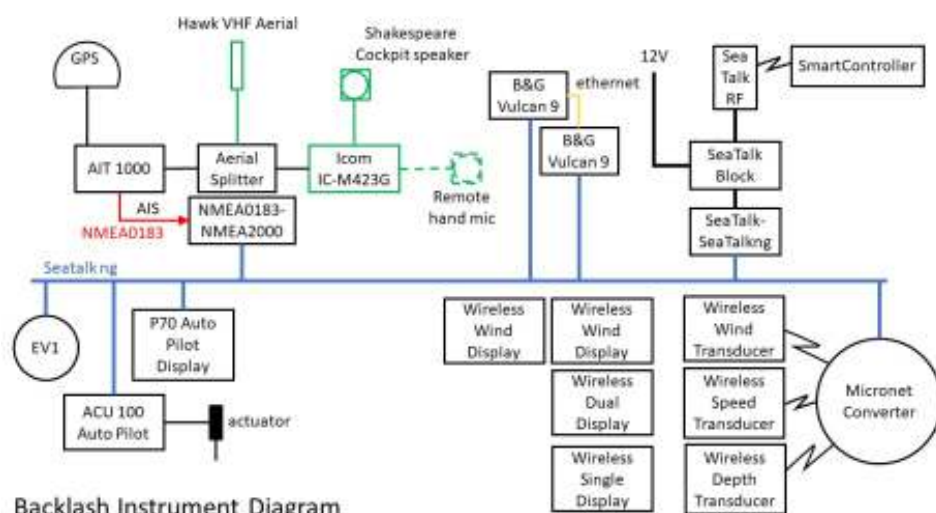
On the domestic side, we replaced the FM radio with a DAB/FM radio with speakers, and also provided a 12 V 22" TV. We also installed floor level lighting in the hulls, with lighting for the bridgedeck still a work in progress with the headlining still to do.

The biggest change we made to the instrument set up was to replace the two steering compasses in the bridgedeck bulkhead with B&G Vulcan 9 chart plotters. I like to be able to see a chart plotter from the helm, and this meant one on each side. This also means a tablet can be used as a remote station at the chart table.

Another key change was the addition of a splitter so the AIS can use the masthead aerial rather than one on the guardrail, much increasing range, together a converter to put the output on the NMEA 2000 network with a VHF with DSC. A remote was added for the autopilot. The schematic shows the full layout.



Finally, the navigation lights were replaced with LED lights, and the port/starboard lights put in housings that both set them vertical so they light more accurately and provided a step up onto the coach roof from the side deck.



Backlash Instrument Diagram

Interior - The original intention was not to do much to the interior and leave that for a second year, but the timing was that we were not seaworthy for the 2019 season, so work might as well continue on the interior. Then, of course, Covid came along and halted work for three months so that we did not make it into the water for 2020 either, so work is continuing.

Backlash has a down galley in the starboard hull. It would have been nice to put it up on the bridgedeck, but there really was not enough room. As it happens, the galley is quite well equipped with two rings, an oven and a fridge, the latter running off 12 V, 240 V or gas. The gas pipework needed replacing, but otherwise everything seems to work well.

The seating in the saloon has been remodelled, together with a new dining table and optional coffee table so that the dining table drops down to make a double bed when required. The cork floor has also been replaced with lino, and the interior has been repainted throughout, with the headlining and wall coverings being renewed. On the plumbing side, the water tank has been secured and the filler moved to be more convenient (it was in the anchor locker before).

Also the holding tank, which did exist, had never been plumbed in, so that is now done.

Tender- Backlash came with a 3D Twin Air 250 tender, which is light, but has limited capacity. I decided to go with a ZAR Mini Rib Lite 9, this has an aluminium V hull, and is quite a bit bigger, but also somewhat more seaworthy and I'm getting a 4HP outboard to go with it.

Sails - The sail inventory on purchase was strong. The Main and Genoa, are recent and in good condition. There is a large (actually huge) Code 0 that is good for light winds reaching, a small, flat Code 0 that I have had recut to be good as a light airs upwind sail, a small spinnaker (only just bigger than the large Code 0), and new large spinnaker. Then there are storm sails just in case. So just about the right tool for every job.

One change I have made is a new mainsail cover. The old one was an over the sail cover, I've had one made that you drop the sail into, and zip up, as I had on Wandering Glider.

Covid continues to make progress problematic and sporadic, but I am hoping that we can launch for the 2021 sailing season.