

NEWPORT USKMOUTH SAILING CLUB



THE PENNANT SEPTEMBER 06



The Summer may over but there is still time left for more sailing.

The sailing season is rapidly coming to an end after a long, beautiful warm summer. Fortunately we have had plenty of good sailing weather and many of you have had a fabulous season, be it at home or in foreign waters. If you missed out on some good sailing so far, remember that we still have the Regatta, two tide races, one Knickertwister and two cruises ahead of us. The odd cruise to Sully can perhaps be thrown in for good measure. The Recovery is after all only about 6 weeks away.

If you do not have a boat, just turn up at one of the sailing events or phone Ray Ford or myself and hopefully we will be able to fix you up. This applies in particular to the Regatta on 16th and 17th of September, when we hope many of you, boat owners and non-boat owners alike, will turn up to participate in the races and join in the social events. On the Saturday evening (16/9) we are planning a barbeque and will have a live band playing, so it should

be a good evening of family entertainment.

Our winter programme is due to start in November and this will hopefully encourage those of you not usually coming out on Tuesdays to turn up on our club nights, although some events may well be organised on a few Saturday evenings.

A programme of events will come out shortly and will be put up on the notice board in the clubhouse.

Working parties will also be resumed during the next month or so; a list of outstanding jobs will be published on the notice board. Please keep an eye on what needs doing or stay in contact with Chris or myself. It may make a difference in your pocket!

I hope you will continue to enjoy the current sailing season.

*Dirk Doorduyn
Commodore*

Don't Forget

The Regatta

16th & 17th September

Racing, Good Food, Live Music and much, much more.

It is the Newport Transporter Bridge's Centenary this year. As part of the celebrations, there will be a parade of sail up to the bridge on the afternoon of Sunday 17th. Wind permitting we may even have an upriver leg in the race so that all the club can join in this historic celebration.

Slow Boats To Lundy

My trip to Lundy started as all good journeys do, over a pint in the Clubhouse. Chatting to Walter Bentley, it became clear that we had both decided to spend four to five days cruising in 2006. Walter had a plan to visit Lundy, so it was agreed, we would leave in the last weekend of July with a return mid the next week.

Passage planning started with vague recollections of the day skipper course and was completed by asking the mound of wisdom that collects around the tea table on a Saturday morning. The plan was Newport to Blue Anchor for lunch then onto Lynmouth for a night stop, a single leg to Lundy, a day on Lundy followed by an afternoon leg to Oxwich bay, the next day to Barry, followed by the short trip back to Newport.

This being my first single handed cruise I expected to learn lots of lessons. I just hoped not too many of them would be learnt the hard way.

Saturday July 24th dawned early, (I had forgotten quite how early 4 o'clock was) still the outlook was promising and Walter was waiting as arranged at the Clubhouse. We slipped our moorings at 5 o'clock (first light) and with a light north westerly wind started down channel, by 6 o'clock we were at the Sewer buoy and the ever

helpful GPS was showing 12 hours to Blue Anchor, 7 o'clock saw us on the 3 degree longitude line (5 miles in two hours).

The engine was started at 9 o'clock by which time it was hazy and very hot, 11 o'clock saw low tide and 12:30 saw us at anchor with pasta for lunch, not a great start but with the afternoon tide we were hopeful of making Lynmouth.

High tide was at 17:00 so we set off at 16:00 to give us as much time with the tide as possible. The weather had other plans, the wind quickly veering to the West - bang on the nose.

The next four hours became a tacking battle between Proteus and Stardust. To my delight I slowly drew ahead but it became clear we would not make Lynmouth before night fall. Porlock was our best bet and we got there just before nine in the last of the daylight. It had been a long day with the full range of UK summer weather. As we closed on the bay I thought my eyes were playing tricks, a square rigger was at anchor; this was the Matthew making its way up channel to its home port of Bristol.

Ashore for a pint we were disappointed to not get a meal in the pub, dog tired it was back to the boats and some well earned sleep.

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The Matthew at Porlock

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The dawn brought my first hard lesson of the trip, Porlock is uncomfortable in a westerly wind and the boat was rolling a lot. I woke at four. I saw my breakfast twice and my log just reads 'sea sick at dawn' in small shaky writing. We left at 5 am with winds force 3 to 4, cold, wet, over-cast and bang on the nose again. We had another tacking battle along the dramatic North Devon coast in slowly improving conditions, by nine it was warm and just after midday we arrived in Ilfracombe anchoring in the outer harbour.

I woke at four. I saw my breakfast twice and my log just reads 'sea sick at dawn' ...

Feeling pleased with our two day, three tide sail we were delighted to see the friendly face of Dave Howells and his trimaran coming alongside, not so delighted to learn that he had left Barry that morning!

A lovely meal in the Ilfracombe Yacht Club was some consolation .

Monday 24th dawned with good forecast, so at 5:30am Walter proposed we try for Lundy. With the weather looking settled for the next two days it was the right decision.

Second lesson-Only stick to the plan if the weather permits it.

A six hour motor sail took us to Lundy, baking hot and more how I imagine a Mediterranean island must be. We anchored off Rat Island in 5 metres of water, amazed that we could see the sea bed.

Can this be only three days hard sail from Newport? (One if you have a fast boat).

We were aware that we were at the mercy of the wind and felt fortunate that it chose to stay light & easterly for the next 24 hours.

A quick lunch (lesson three, don't forget a tin opener) and then ashore to explore. Lundy is well worth the visit with the lively tavern and secluded coastal path giving something for everyone. Our afternoon was spent walking to the north point of the island. The tidal race known as the White horses was an impressive sight which I was glad to see from several hundred feet above sea level.

The evening saw us back in the tavern for a meal of Lundy hotpot and a pint of beer. The question was how to get home? We needed an incoming tide to get up channel and with low water at just after 1 o'clock the most logical route would be either Ilfracombe or Oxwich, then two more days to Newport. I now found myself short of food, money and time. The solution was to sail at 9 am against three hours of foul tide and, with a southerly wind forecast, make for Porlock.

This was not a great plan. Lundy seemed to hang behind us for hours, the southerly wind

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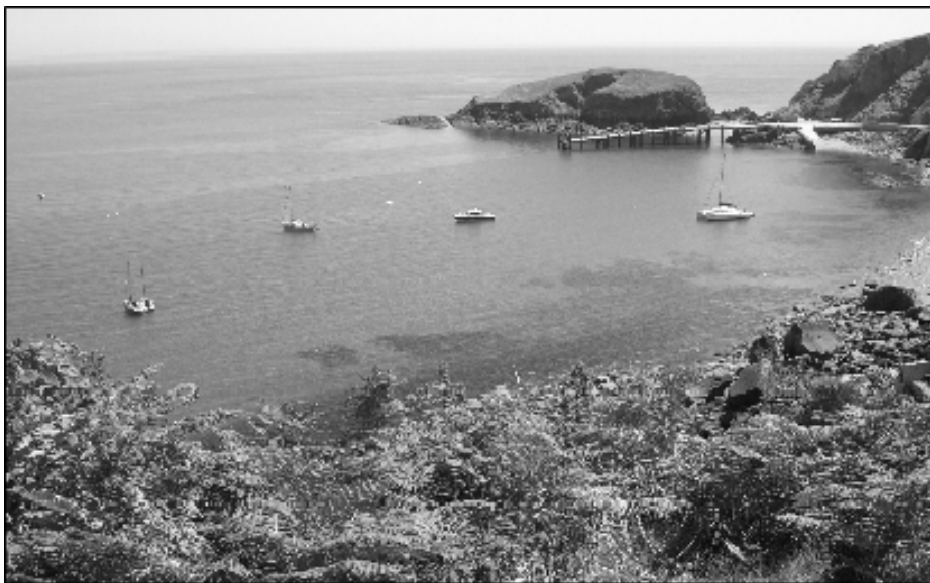
RYA SHOREBASED COURSE

ENROLMENT

Enrolment for this winters RYA courses will take place on Wednesday 13th September at 19:30.

It is hoped to run both the Yachtmaster and Day Skipper course this year.

For more information contact Howard Easton on 01291 671118



Stardust and Proteus at Lundy

(Continued from page 3)

failed to appear, all we got was cold fog and wind on the nose. After seven hours we were off Ilfracombe (that's about a three knot average)

Then the wind veered westerly, increasing to force 4 to 5 and with seven knots on the log and nine on the GPS the next four hours were a blur, fatigue was starting to play its part. We had become separated earlier in the day and were keeping in contact by mobile phone as the radio in Stardust seemed to be playing up (possibly as a result of our masts clashing while rafted up off Lundy). Proteus with its inboard diesel makes a great motorsailer, whilst the outboard of Walter's boat means in light winds he was failing behind. I arrived off Portlock at high tide about an hour before Walter. I hove too and waited, should we try for Watchet? Should we go into Porlock? Having learnt that Porlock in a stiff westerly was not the place to anchor I knew we couldn't stay there. It was dusk when Walter arrived. We were too late for Watchet and the prospect of entering Porlock harbour in failing

light was not one we fancied.

We decided to press on - a night sail against the tide towards Barry. Walter took the lead, and with Stardust starting to plane, it was now my turn to fall behind. The night passed slowly, Proteus rolling in the following sea and crash gibing whenever I nodded off. We seemed to be going nowhere (I later checked the GPS and we did 1½ miles in four hours). I don't know how Walter managed it, an 18 foot boat, little more than a dinghy, no auto helm and more than 20 hours non stop in tough conditions.

Still our luck held and we got to Barry as the tide once again turned and with dawn and a reducing wind, the decision to make for Newport was an easy one - 6:30 am saw us back on our moorings, a round trip of 160 miles with few errors. Next time I would take more food and when in doubt make for the Welsh coast; Swansea would have been the place to overnight. Still a trip to remember and hopefully repeat.

Alex Liberson

A claim to fame.

On August Bank Holiday Monday my son Jack and I dusted off our Mirror dinghy "Excalibur", and in a brisk northerly wind sailed from the club, up the Usk and under the new foot bridge in the middle of town.

Unless I hear otherwise, history will record that we were the first yacht to sail under this new Newport landmark.

Andrew Preece

The Children from Belarus

Once again NUSC were delighted to be able to host a visit of children from Belarus. These children, who are still suffering from the consequences of the Chernobyl accident 20 years ago, visit the UK each year for a holiday, medical treatment and a trip to the finest sailing club on the Usk...

NUSC's annual children's day took place on Saturday 29th July, for the first time in less than perfect weather. Friday 28th saw a fair few members arrive to help with setting up the games and tidying and cleaning the clubhouse. Thanks to all those of you who were there. The evening saw the arrival of a flotilla of small boats from Lydney yacht club. There were Wayfarers and a Drascombe Lugger to name but a few. Some of these were pulled ashore while others tied up to pontoons and their crews joined in a very pleasant and lively evening in the clubhouse.

Saturday dawned fair, if a little cool, after a hasty breakfast for most of us, we waited for the arrival of the Belarus children. By 09:30 the club was buzzing with members, visitors and children. An hour of mayhem ensued with getting visitor's boats off pontoons and getting club boats on them to load children. Eventually a procession upriver began. Guess who started the water fight? Yes, it was Glenys again. I should have guessed when I saw her load 4 carrier bags of water balloons onto "Unicorn" with the children. An hour or more of even greater mayhem ensued, with water bombs, water pistols, buckets and even cups being used to transfer large quantities of dirty water from the river onto various boats. I was on Moonraker with Ray Ford and there wasn't a dry bit of clothing anywhere. Our particular children decided that if there was nobody nearby to throw water at they might as well throw it at us. Ray, Steve and myself were slightly damp. Eventually sanity returned and we managed to get the children and ourselves

ashore and into dry clothes. The children then had some lunch and spent the afternoon playing various games; again the pistol shooting was the big draw. Sadly some light rain did prevent too many outdoor games but plenty of fun was had by all. After tea the children were presented with the usual rucksacks full of goodies, followed by the silly string battle and party popper broadside. The children left about 17:30, tired but very happy. Most of the adults then retired to boats, caravans or camper vans to grab an hours rest before the evening festivities began again. Sadly the inclement weather rather put paid to the plans for a barbie, but the galley crew came through in great style with roast chicken and all the trimmings. Good nosh it was to. A very pleasant evening followed during which a number of wives (mine among them) tried to drink the bar dry. I retired defeated just after midnight, I have no idea what time my wife came to bed. All in all a great evening in good company. I know Ray Ford wants to thank all those who once again put in such effort to make the whole weekend a great success, especially for the children. Mike for cleaning the clubhouse (as he does every week) Pete and Joane and family for their sterling efforts in the galley. Not forgetting all the others who were in and out helping all day and night. Thanks also to Glenys for helping and causing mayhem again, and to everyone who turned up and joined in any way.

Ron Paraman

Membership News

We currently have 157 members. 117 Full, 32 Non Boat, 7 Life and 1 Honorary. We would like to welcome four new members; Malcolm White, Sid Penman, Lee Harris and Martyn Higgs.

We are also sad to report that Mosytyn Withers and George Murdoch died during the summer. Both Mostyn and George will be sadly missed.

Day Skipper (practical) course with Tiger Bay Training

On the lookout for a good holiday during my wife's Whitsun half term, I proposed that we go on a Day Skipper practical course with Tiger Bay Training (TBT) out of Penarth Marina. Fortunately Rhian was very positive about it especially as TBT ran this particular course over two weekends instead of the usual 5 days. Having only started to (seriously) sail a year or so earlier Rhian and I were keen to develop our skills to enable us to undertake longer and more adventurous cruises. The cruising programme at NUSC had already taught us a great deal but a formal course would take us through different scenarios and emergency procedures. It would also force us to practice the good habits that we had been taught on the Day Skipper Theory course run at the club the previous winter!

Reporting to 'Starship', a Sigma 38, on Friday evening we met our instructor Julie and the other 3 students (not all Day Skipper candidates). Having stowed all of our kit, we adjourned to the local pub to get to know each other before returning to Starship and settling down for the night. Rhian and I had a double cabin to ourselves but even so were kept awake by the most horrendous snoring coming from Malcolm in the saloon. Eventually we gave up and slept in the car! Lesson number 1 – always take ear plugs – a quick trip to Homebase in the morning remedied this problem for the rest of the weekend.

Keen to get underway, we prepared Starship to slip and were soon heading out of Cardiff Bay and over to Watchet. Julie had taken us through all of the passage planning beforehand – this being the day where she demonstrated and taught the skills before handing over to her enthusiastic crew. A fairly rough Bristol Channel soon dented that enthusiasm with sea sickness except for Malcolm (the only one with a good night's sleep behind him!) but we arrived in Watchet safe and sound. Sunday was the return trip to Penarth, this time under the Day Skipper Students. With occasional input from Julie we put to sea in better conditions and really enjoyed the sail back. A lot of informal

tuition happened along the way which helped put much of the theory course into context.

The tide had allowed us to return early, so alongside in Penarth we planned our next excursion – a night sail around Flat Holm. This sail really did build our confidence as we had very limited night sailing under our belt. Conditions were quite good with plenty of opportunity to identify lights and practice night navigation. However Bank Holiday Monday was not good weather so we practiced different sailing drills in the Bay.

The next weekend was great – no snoring as Malcolm had only signed up for the first weekend on a Start Yachting course. This time we planned a trip to Portishead in glorious sunshine – so much more civilised! Another night sail was in the offing, this time up to Bristol. Unfortunately, having successfully navigated the river up to Bristol in the dark, we arrived to find the Bristol lock broken. We waited an hour to see if it could be fixed but at half past midnight decided to return to Portishead arriving in the early hours. Fortunately the tide necessitated a long lie in the next morning before our last sail back to Cardiff. Without incident we were alongside in Penarth mid-afternoon and it was all over bar a quick clean and hose down of Starship and the issue of certificates (the course also qualifies us for our ICCs).

In short, for inexperienced sailors such as Rhian and me, the course was excellent value (even at £405 each). It has made us far more confident in handling our own boat as well as introducing us to more destinations in the Channel. Certainly Rhian is much more positive at being able to handle and navigate our boat on her own if something was to happen to me. We both think that the investment was well worth it and would recommend the course to any inexperienced sailor.

Stephen Woodley