

NEWS OF THE CCRC WORLD

ESTABLISHED 1988

NO.90/03

JUNE 1990

Class wins for GUNSHOT & RIMAU in The Round The Island Race - 2nd. for LYNX 2.

The 1990 jaunt round the Isle of Wight saw, once again, a strong turn out from the C.C.R.C., and in a year which was marred by a higher than average number of accidents, I am pleased to report that all members appear to have completed this year's race without mishap. A full report on the proceedings has been kindly provided by Freddie Kemp.

ROUND THE ISLAND on LYNX 2

It was dark when we arrived at the C.C.R.C. parking bay otherwise known as Osborne Bay. We worked our way as close to the shore as water and space permitted, anchored and settled down to grab a few hours sleep. Next to us was RED CLOUD and outside of her

was RIMAU. On the outskirts PENROSE III was to be seen. There were probably others but we couldn't identify them.

Reveille at 5.45 and as the deck was being prepared for the coming fray Graham was churning out bacon butties at a rate of knots. Pam down below, going quietly bananas as the cooking fat sprayed far and wide, going completely bananas as the fat encrusted stove was wiped down with the tea towel! But enough of the carry on below decks.

Anchor weighed, we slide past the great Apache Chief intending to wish them well only to be greeted by a battery of snores. Their start was an hour or so after ours. We were in the vicinity of the start line in good time and when our gun went we were in the position recommended by the tide chart and in the front rank. We picked our way down the Solent, the choice of the self-tacking jib seems right for the 5/6 westerly. No great excitement until VALSHEDA's main split right across and flogged majestically in the fresh breeze. A sight of BROWN BOMBER, but she was the only club boat seen during our lap of the I of W. Sound judgement by the team as to the traffic on our starboard quarter meant generally unmolested tacks on port across the Solent. LYNX

2 seemed to be going well and pointing as high as anyone. Rough water off Hamstead Ledge set her hobby horsing and the third or fourth dip would bring a thump which would drop her speed from six to three knots. A Contessa 32 would make mincemeat of that type of short sea. After Hurst VALSHEDA with a storm trysail in place of her main crawled past us close to windward, leaving us without any motive power for what seemed an age. As we were laying the Needles I was loathe to put in a clearing tack.

At the Needles I decided to grab a few lengths by cutting inside the main stream of yachts. Now, where was the wreck? The French boat that clobbered it and sank obviously hadn't arrived. There was no mast protruding above the surface to mark the spot! Some brave souls were cutting in even further. I looked for a smooth patch of water to make for, but there was none, alarming eddies were everywhere. We were approaching fast, nothing to do but go for it - a wing and a prayer job! No sickening clang or crunch, we're across. Up spinnaker and close in to the Needles to take advantage of the back eddy up to the cliff by St. Anthon Rock, then onto a broad spinnaker reach across Freshwater Bay point-

ing just inside St. Cats.

After a while we found ourselves in company with a Swede 36 and a boat of unknown lineage from Falmouth. The three of us with much the same boat speed kept company until we neared St. Cats, at which point the Swede 36 put in a couple of spectacular broaches and in fact was later seen broaching her way to Cherbourg.

"Lobster pots ahead!" came the call, two red marker buoys were right on our course, I shaped to take them to seaward. Too late we spotted the line tying right across our track. A back eddy at that point was running the line at right angles to the shore and our course rather than parallel to it. Suddenly we were hooked and dragging a lobster pot or pots behind us. Our speed jerked down from 8 knots to 2, and our companion boats shot ahead. Just as I was wondering how we were going to get out of this one when the boat lurched forward as the line cleared the keel and another as it hooked onto and cleared our rudder. Lord knows what state they are in now.

The convergence with other boats now brought us into the wind shadow of a Sigma 33 which we were unable to get shot of until we rounded St. Cats and could bear away onto a run. Well this is where all the excitement was. The short steep sea kicked up by the force 6 wind against the tide had most boats on a dead spinnaker run rolling wildly. There were broaches galore and the casualties were mounting. Pam was giving a running commentary on the mayday calls coming over the VHF. I didn't want to know, it was taking total concentration to avoid becoming one of them. The wheel (not my favourite steering device) was

RACE REPORT - RACE 6

CHI TO ST. VAAST - FRIDAY 27th MAY

As seen by the Hon. Treasurer whilst aboard Too Much

The race started with 18 yachts having negotiated a very low tide in Chichester harbour. So low indeed that Duchess had to attach a line to the top of their mast to haul them off a mooring that should have had enough water. Of the 18 yachts there were 13 Alphas; Alexis, Anna Louise, Brown Bomber, Criss-Cross, Enchantress, Goldeneye, Gunshot, Impromptu, Lynx 2, Petra, Tarquah V, Too Much, True Love and 5 Betas; Ard Righ, Penrose III, Red Cloud, Sareema and Duchess who finally started almost an hour late.

Walter on Ard Righ (sans dogs of course) blew for the start and spinnakers blossomed for a shy reach in a Force 4 easterly. Almost immediately different navigational and tactical decisions became apparent. Some yachts held up to the east not wishing to get caught down tide of Pointe de Barfleur whilst others sailed on or below the rhumb line perhaps anticipating spending longer in the east going spring tides. Only time would tell which was the right decision.

After the Nab tower was passed the easterly group of yachts were having trouble carrying their spinnakers with broaches seen on Criss-Cross, Alexis and True Love. Criss-Cross dropped their spinnaker and set their rolling genoa. They immediately started to catch us up on Too Much. Meanwhile we had been concentrating on staying ahead of True Love which has the same handicap as Too Much - Level rating (match!) racing at last for Trevor. As Criss-Cross caught up we dropped our spinnaker and speeded up (that's why we don't fly it too often on Caragh - honest!).

Behind us problems were developing on Penrose III. Apparently, as they tried to drop their spinnaker a few miles south of the Nab, the masthead block broke jamming the halyard. Despite efforts of Bill and the crew including the legendary strength of Uncle John, the

Continued Page 2, Col 1

RACE REPORT Sunday 1st July, 1990. RAIN STOPPED PLAY.

As we entered the second half of the year and the evenings began to draw in once more, the Great British Summer struck once again. For the first time in two seasons a C.C.R.C. race had to be abandoned before it began due to near gale force winds and very lumpy seas. Ironically, it was due to be the turn of Fred in Electronique to do O.O.D. duty, and the thought of the smallest boat in the C.C.R.C. fleet bobbing around at anchor was obviously too much for the sensitive A.S.S. who agreed to call the whole thing off in the early hours.

Continued from Page 1, column 3

being worked overtime to keep the boat on course. There was further commentary from the crew on a sinking yacht with people in the water and with helicopter and patrol boat in attendance. I couldn't look but had to keep my eyes glued to spinnaker and wind vane. We were now at gybing point, a particularly viscous roll brought the boom amidships.

"Let it go over" I said "we'll do the gybe now." The spinnaker was gybed and reset. Now we had a problem of a different kind. The kicker had slipped when the main was gybed and the sail was bending well forward of the spreaders. Too late I remembered my Finn days, never let the boom forward of the mast - it will roll you in. As we set the spinnaker the boat started to sail at a permanent angle to starboard. The little grey cells dulled by the hectic events of the day so far were slow in reacting. While I was trying to work out why the boat was sailing at such an odd angle, she suddenly swung to starboard. Helm hard aport but she still keeps going.

"She's going to gybe, heads down!", is the call, and crash gybe she does. Now with the boom stuck up in the air she is being held down in the water. She's not responding to port helm, boats are wizzing past on either side. Hey Ho, nothing for it but to work the pendulum trick. Helm hard to starboard turning her further into the water, then hard to port as she lifts, blast the wheel, too slow to switch the rudder (definitely not my favourite steering device!). Have another go, spin the wheel as she lifts, this time I catch her and she keeps on coming. Call to the crew "Heads down, I'm swinging her back on the other gybe."

They need no second invitation, with all heads well below the parapet the boom whips across. Well we're up and running, but, Oh dear, the spinnaker is in a mess! Down it comes, great work by the team, in a matter of minutes it is sorted and repacked. Up spinnaker and we are under full power again.

After Dunrose Point the sea flattens and with the slight course change to Bembridge Ledge the wind is now on the quarter, life is easier. 22 knots of wind showing. 9 knots on the speedo. 30 knots of wind - stick to the self-tacker. An inside berth at Bembridge Ledge and we're on the fetch to the forts. 4 Sigma 38s

ahead of us. They can't be very happy, they started ten minutes ahead of us! Round the fort and we're on the beat to the finish, but all is not well, the boat feels dead in the water and has no boat speed, boats we've passed start to repass us. Wish we'd put the blade up. Backstay off - try a fuller main - nothing doing. Mainsheet traveller down the track, mainsheet up the track, still nothing doing. A Dehler 34 with a bigger headsail goes past. Wind down to 15 knots our speed down to 4 knots - a disaster. Bang goes all hope of a good result. We plug on to the finish, at last out on the final port tack to the line. No, I just don't believe it! There's that blasted Valsheda coming to finish from the other side on starboard. Too big for the other boat finishing to hold on or bear away under her stern the whole flock are put about and with the wretched Valsheda on top of them, come bearing down on us. Not a pretty sight. We have no option but to swing onto starboard and are pushed down below the mooring buoy for the south line committee boat. At last Valsheda ponderously goes about and the bunch under her can now tack. Thinking unprintable thoughts about the floating leviathan we tack and make for the line. For Valsheda the finishing line is obviously too short and the tide carries her back across the mooring buoy holding the north line committee boat. Serve her right!

So to East Cowes Marina where later Walter Brown ties up alongside, his boat's name, I gather, was descriptive of their rounding.

When I joined the team in the ISC marquee after handing in my declaration and collecting my tin mug there were smiles all round. 2nd in class? I can't believe it, just two minutes off a class win. Remarkable! What adventures the others must have had then.

I wonder who is going to produce a T shirt with the caption "I survived the 1990 Round The Island Race".

Freddie Kemp

FOR SALE
Reland Juno 1 Synth
sizer - £2800.00.
This is a professional
unit. NOT a Dixon's
cov. Tel: 07913-6132.

Continued from Page 1, Column 4

halyard stayed jammed and the spinnaker continued to flog. Stuart Hunt volunteered to go aloft without a halyard (Penrose III has a rolling jib and Mainsail and therefore no spare halyards). With a safety harness on clipping himself to the mast as he went up, Stuart climbed the mast and released the halyard; all of this in a freshening easterly. Well done Stuart. He then retired to his bunk for the rest of the passage for a well earned rest.

After three to four hours we heard Solent Coastguard calling Goldeneye. Richard Creer had fallen and opened a 2 inch cut over his right eye. Medical advice was given by Professor Peter Sonksen on Impromptu, the smallest boat in the race, and Goldeneye returned to Northney. We heard Solent Coastguard arranging for an ambulance to meet them at Northney and we hope all is now well and Richard, Karen and the girls are back on the water soon.

Meanwhile, back in the race, the fleet began to separate. On Ard Righ, when the spinnaker was being lowered, the guy ran through the pole, the snap shackle snapped itself and it went overboard. Apart from infringing the dumping at sea rules Walter had to replace it in St. Vaast at bank holiday prices! As a fellow Scot, I know how painful that was. On Too Much we could still see True Love and Criss-Cross but the rest of the fleet were now out of sight as they took a more westerly course. Interest was maintained as the wind strengthened to an easterly five and each succeeding helmsperson tried to surf faster than the previous. Andrew was first into double figures at 10.1 knots. Lyndsay and Jim followed in Jackie Stewart's footsteps increasing the speed to 10.6 knots. With Trevor back on the helm we hoisted the spinnaker and bore away for the last 20 miles to the finish. Unused to these speeds and the stability of Too Much I donned brown trousers and cycle clips as the top speed rose from 13.1 to 14.5 knots as we surf down yet another wave. On the next one Lydsay was heard to say "Och, it's just 13.7 knots".

[It should be noted that the original manuscript of this race report blew overboard at this time as Trevor noticed Gunshot's spinnaker behind in the Barfleur race. The Hon. Treasurer was heard to exclaim (expletive deleted - Ed.) but it was decided not to practice a man overboard drill]

As we approached Barfleur, we surfed at 15 knots and then, with Rick at the helm and Trevor in the loo, 16.1 was achieved for 5 seconds. There was insufficient time for Trevor to recapture the record as Le Gavendest buoy was passed after 9 Hours 52 Minutes and 20 seconds of very exiting sailing. We thought we had done well but who was it on the horizon with a spinnaker flying. It couldn't be a cruising yacht as no-one would sail through the Barfleur race under kite in a 5-6 Nor-easterly unless they were racing. Gunshot crossed the finish line 45 minutes after us having flown their spinnaker all the way. Even though it was their small kite this was quite an achievement, Well done Peter, Colin, Di, Shona and Geoff who beat Too Much by fifteen minutes on corrected time to win the race. Another Storm, Petra, was third in the alpha fleet, well done Glenn and crew.

As we sat at anchor, waiting for the lock gates to open, we saw a number of yachts finish some with spectacular manoeuvres as they took down their spinnakers in the strong wind. In the beta fleet, Alan Froom's win with only two aboard must rank as a tremendous achievement in a very good race.

All in all it was a very good and quick race. All our thanks to Walter Brown and Peter Wallace for the organisation. To all of the yachts and crews that I have not mentioned, my apologies. In Caragh, everyone is normally ahead of us so we can see what happens, On Too Much I am too busy concentrating and keeping my cheeks together. Also my personal thanks to Trevor, Monica and the rest of the crew for giving me the opportunity to participate.

Jim Laing

EDITORIAL My appologies for the delay in distributing this edition of the NEWS OF THE CCRC WORLD. A recent change in the computer software, together with the intervention of holidays set things back a little! Thanks for the contributions, please keep them coming.

Brian-

Is the Price of a General Recall Too Much?

RACE 8 - 17/06/1990

How I love this time of year. Long nights with the Summer Solstice to come. Next Friday, 22nd, will find me standing on the end of Bosham Quay around 10.30 pm watching the daylight disappear North of Portsmouth over the Bosham Beefeater - it really can be beautiful - if it does not rain. However, today we had an early start 10.15 am for alpha. We had all the crew on parade on

Bosham Quay at 8 am, too early for Pat, our sailing club boatman, so we humped the rubber dinghy out of the 'Raptackle'. Attached our Mariner 4 and plonked it in the water. I started the engine and in good order we all got in with a large bag each. If all embarked and then an attempt is made to start the engine, my flying elbow can easily poke out an eye. As the freeboard was about three inches we potted down with the tide to TOO MUCH on her mooring.

It was sunny and tranquil with a South East wind of about 5 knots as we sailed down through the harbour. The entertainment was on the radio where the Race Officer of the day was discussing with the A.S.S. where to send us - on which course - because there is no windward mark from Chichester Buoy for a South Easterly? Also little wind was expected.

We arrived about an hour before our start and drifted around under main, having coffee, waving to people. It was very pleasant to have time to spare. Course 20 had been selected - Nab 3 - Deans Elbow, Nab 3 - Deans Elbow, Finish.

We watched the Beta boats start. I could not see one on starboard. It was then our opportunity to have a look at the start line and sure enough it was impossible to cross on starboard, but one could just about beat along it on starboard with the tide pushing one up to it. So, our strategy was decided. We would sail along the line on starboard and just before the start gun, tack onto port and bingo, off we go. GUNSHOT favours this manoeuvre also and it is good to follow him, as he can warn port starters if necessary that we have right of way.

Sure enough, just prior to the start gun we are a couple of lengths behind GUNSHOT on starboard on the line, but we found TARQUHA V between us. We ducked below her because he was tight on the line. When we were level he tacked. We saw GUNSHOT VERY VERY close to a port starter near the Commit-

tee Boat, seconds later we tacked. Bang went Uncle John's shotgun. We are off!! It is nice to hear the signal. Then Uncle John banged off his other chamber. Are we over? Probably TARQUHA. We note gesticulations on the Committee Boat. Is it TOO MUCH? TARQUHA is going back. Then after a reload, Uncle John bangs a third.

A general recall - what fun!!

So we now get an eleven minute bang, a ten minute bang, and a start bang. I hope he uses Bill Cartridges.

For the second start we made a repeat manoeuvre behind GUNSHOT on starboard along the line. We tacked seconds before the gun and LYNX 2 came close to taking our wind on a well timed start on port. Which is the 'downside view' of our manoeuvre, trying to accelerate before someone steals the wind.

We beat and fetched to Nab 3. Turned right (left it to Starboard). Ran down to Deans Elbow, had a couple of gybes on the way. Is it faster to run directly down wind - or to reach from side to side?

Turned around Deans Elbow, beat back to Nab 3 with several tacks, Ran back to Deans Elbow, turned round it and fetched to the finish. By this time we had passed all but one of the Betas.

We finished with a bang and we admired the Director of the day's deck chairs gracing the teak decks as we passed. Not too close. At Lymington Town at a Dinghy Area Championship I had a gunshot through my mainsail for passing really close to the Committee Boat!!

It was a perfect day for TOO MUCH and crew, beautifully bright, about Force 2, nice little waves. About thirteen boats in Alpha. Only spoiled by there being no true windward mark available for use in a south easterly.

Then back up the harbour on the tide, but it is too late, Bosham Sailing Club lunchtime bar is closed. That is the price for a general recall.

Trevor Rose

Heard at St. Vaast

The Treasurer kindly visited Gunshot to partake of refreshment. The crew were on their way to the shower and received true Scottish advice, "The showers at the yacht club are one franc cheaper than at the marina office".

THE CRUISE

After a riotous evening in St. Vaast the crew of five boats nursed their hangovers on a voyage of discovery all the way to Grandcamp. So challenging and exciting it was (12 miles, force 3) that no sails at all appeared on Gunshot and Red Cloud although Too Much, Brown Bomber and Ard Righ did make some attempt to sail.

On arrival at Grandcamp, Peter on Gunshot had a real shock; there were no boats in the harbour and upon going ashore he was told that the harbour was closed. What was not clear was if the lock gates would close or would the intrepid cruisers be ignominiously dumped on their sides: That is except Red Cloud and Ard Righ who were quite happy to take the ground. Luckily the harbourmaster visited us after half an hour and after much discussion in french Peter announced that he had some good news and some bad news.

The bad news was that, because the harbour was closed, we would have to leave - the next day: the good news was that, because the harbour was closed, the harbourmaster could not charge us!

All crews were invited on the commodores yacht! for lunchtime, mid-afternoon and late afternoon drinks and snacks. Snacks!! the noble crew of BB had brought five dozen no. 2 oysters from St. Vaast and Bert set too opening them and introducing some crew members to their delights. It was not clear next morning whether the oysters had done the trick! A memorable party.

On Tuesday five yachts made the passage from Grandcamp to Carentan. All except Brown Bomber hoisted spinners just outside Grandcamp and carried them all the way up the Carentan canal as far as the lock. Brown Bomber hoisted his iron topsail, could this be related to the commodores party and the commodores relaxed! state the previous night.

The no. of oysters consumed by the commodore might also have had some influence. Brown Bomber's arrival at the lock confirmed the delicate state of this crack racing crew when Ron tried to shorten BB's tiller with his head. Ard Righ true to his nationality did not even start his engine to enter the lock, the commodore obligingly applied the brakes.

The crews of BB, Ard Righ & Gunshot visited the Hotel du Commerce et de la Gare for a gastronomic experience, Foie Gras (with Sauternes of course), scrambled eggs and smoked salmon, Trou Normand, Breast of duck, Cheese followed by a magnificent sweet of fresh fruit marinated in calvados, flambé as a soufflé.

Heard over dinner in Carentan.

Paul: I'm looking forward to the cruise next year. I won't be commodore so I'll be able to relax.

Peter: If this is what you're like with responsibilities,

I don't think I want to be here next year!

Brown Bomber returned home direct from Carentan and the rest of us went on to Cherbourg to visit the shops and buy duty free. Most of the fleet ate in the yacht club and a very good meal was had by all, especially captain legless who was seen later that evening sitting on the deck of Gunshot totally at peace with the world! (pissed - Ed.).

Too Much and Red Cloud headed straight back from Cherbourg but Ard Righ and Gunshot, not needing to be back until Friday morning visited Omonville for lunch. For those who have not visited this delightful spot it is highly recommended, there were only two other yachts in the harbour. The visit was, however almost a disaster.

Upon going ashore the crews discovered that both restaurants were fully booked for lunch. Apparently this a popular spot for local businessmen to come for lunch. The crews looked so disappointed that the restaurant took pity on them offering a meal so long as everyone had moules. Six of us took up this offer but Jim, Di and Chris do not like moules and sat it out.

The waiter then took pity on them and offered to serve crab. When the others saw the size of the crabs I think some wished they had said that they didn't eat mussels. Still all was well that ended well.

Altogether a very successful cruise with excellent weather never interfering with the cruising and providing sun for most days. Put the cruise in your diaries for next year.

VICE COMMODORE WINS DEAUVILLE RACE

Whilst the majority of the C.C.R.C. were off on their annual jaunt across the channel, Hugh Caldwell forsook his beloved MONS MEG, and co-skipped another Contessa 32, POLAR STAR, in the Deauville race at the end of May.

The result was:- First Contessa 32 home, and First in Class 5.

This was a particularly satisfying win for Hugh as it enabled Rosie Kempner to win the Annabel Trophy for the second year in succession, the trophy which she herself presented in memory of her daughter who died early last year.

CRISS-CROSS SAILS TO HONFLEUR FOR PENTECOST.

After the race to St Vaast, CRISS-CROSS sailed to Ouistreham. The winds kindly backed from E to NE and good time was made. However, the lock did not open until nearly midnight, so the crew had a gourmet dinner at the Hotel Normandie. It is hard to imagine a greater contrast than that to the meal that was endured at the establishment with the same name the previous night, when the 'entente cordiale' was stretched to its limits! Furthermore CRISS-CROSS had to placate a drunken Frenchman who said he had landed on Gold Beach with the Free French two days after the skipper! He wanted to celebrate by buying a bottle of red wine but by that time the CCRC had drunk the house dry!!

After a visit to Deauville we were back in Ouistreham for the crew to catch the ferry.

That evening it was the owners turn to visit the Normandie.

We had heard that the Vieux Bassin at Honfleur was being dredged but would open on 1st June as on Pentecost Sunday there was to be a Benediction de Mer. When we arrived on Friday evening there were very few yachts in the basin as the dredger had only finished that morning.

We were alongside the visitor's pontoon and at the next entry an ex-KLM pilot and his wife in their yacht HER WAY came outside us. They were on a four and a half month cruise. They told us that their first yacht had been called MY WAY, and the next one HIS WAY. In spite of the name of the present yacht she didn't seem quite so keen on four and a half months!

When the morning lock closed on Saturday most of the French yachts had returned and were busy dressing overall. That evening many more arrived from Le Havre.

There was some consternation when Lloyds Bank entered with their huge DARK HORSE. There appeared to be no room until two fishing boats vacated their berths alongside the wall. DARK HORSE was immediately dressed overall with the longest set of signal flags. Not to be outdone CRISS-CROSS dressed overall too.

It was not until about six o'clock on Sunday evening that things started to happen.

It had been raining off and on all day and outside the basin the wind was 4 - 5. One large fishing boat which was decorated with a mass of orange and white paper flowers had the priest and choir boys on board, the mayor and

the press. Some other fishing boats had other coloured flowers.

When the bridge lifted many yachts went out including DARK HORSE with all thirteen of her crew dressed in wet weather clothing. We were still hemmed in by four boats so did not go out. As it was after six o'clock we celebrated the event appropriately with our Dutch friends when the bosun called "up spirits".

An hour later at the next lifting of the bridge all the yachts returned to the basin having made a trip the Seine for the Benediction. At least Royame Unie was represented at the ceremony by a Dark Horse.

Ronnie Crosthwaite

On Saturday morning Rentacrew prepared to join a substitute race to Lymington and, an hour after the start, reluctantly crossed the starting and, less reluctantly later, the finishing line where we met up with our Guide, Philosopher and Friend (henceforward to be known as GPF - God Please Forgive) in Shandie, together with Mons Meg, Goldrush, and Hetaira when we handed over a week's wages to the Lymington Marina for our one-night stay.

Dining in company with the above and a host of Hayling Sonatas, the Lymington Town Club provided a splendidly substantial yet economical meal. It was lightly suggested that we should consider cruising in company to Cherbourg on the following day. The very thought decided Rentacrew to finish the brandy and themselves aboard later that night.

At 0400 next morning or thereabouts (the chronometer said 0800 but was clearly lying) Mons Meg informed us they were off to Cherbourg forthwith with Freddie in a rush and would we care to join them? We duly reported this an hour later to our GPF, Shandie Lie-abed, who grinned and wished us well.

So we fought an adverse tide, threaded the Needles and headed out in glorious sunshine for Henri Ryst, determined to salvage something from the debacle. We hoisted out the Stowe log at midday and at 1300 the skipper was told it wasn't working. The silly oaf had forgotten to put in a battery. And was there a spare aboard?

Back in Lymington we managed to get what we needed from the useful Riverside Stores and set off again at 1730 that Sunday. As St. Katts faded astern the wind piped up from 3 to 4 to 5 and by 0300 on the Bank Holiday Monday was a screeching 7 accompanied by torrential rain.

Rentacrew, I regret to say, simply mutinied. However, we limped into Cherbourg by noon and after suitable convalescence made our number with Mons Meg and Goldrush who had enjoyed lovely weather and had even run out of wind by midnight when they arrived the previous day. Jammy. Our crew was not the only one to mutiny. Mons Meg lost theirs in its entirety.

Continued column 4

Continued Page 5

ALL OUR YESTERDAYS

Those C.C.R.C. members who had the privilege of knowing my great aunt, Miss Augusta Conduct, will be saddened to hear of her death while free-falling with the Paratroopers. She was 82. She will be sadly missed - in particular by the Cheltenham Old Girls, Ladbrokes, Tramps and, of course, by her disconsolate great nephew who categorically denies the Coroner's suggestion that he had interfered with her harness. The fact that his boat is sporting a new suit of sails is purely coincidental.

SAIL OF THE CENTURY

by Pickledas Arsons of Quadwrangles

"Come cruising to the sunny Seine Bay", wrote the C.C.R.C. travel agent. "Enjoy the bars of Barfleur, the honeys of Honfleur, the dough in Deauville and watch the sun sink romantically over Westerham. Not only the Seinic delights of France's loveliest coastline for ten whole days but the services of a super seaman and interpreter will also be yours to command. 'Shandie and me and baby makes three' will be there to act as your friendly Guide, Philosopher and Friend."

So we clipped the coupon and duly ginned up for the race to Ouistreham on Friday, May 22. The weather was poor and the forecast worse.

The shape of things to come that Friday was heralded by the come-hither L-flag on GOLDRUSH, but for QUADWRANGLES the very thought of launching a dinghy to get the gen was clearly distasteful. Owing to some unfortunate misunderstanding over a missing cheque the previous season Rentacrew had sent us what only can be described, tactfully, as motley. Their first reaction was to hoist another L-flag from the club bar - with minimal response.

One by one they left to catch the ferry back to England which says a lot about what Hugh Caldwell usually pays them. So we hired him one of ours for the cruise which meant we were down to three; Hugh, of course, including himself, had two; and the Kemps (what does Pam see in Freddie?) were likewise two-handed. And not a bridge school in the lot!

On Wednesday we set off, hopefully, for Honfleur with an alternative plan to deviate to Ouistreham if the winds fell light - which they duly did. But after leaving Cherbourg in the wake of Goldrush who boldly led us through the tiny Ile Pelee exit on a successful tide cheating ploy (a first for all three boats) we basked in genuine sun. En route Hugh shamed us by setting his spinnaker single-handed. To slow his boat to our speed Goldrush wore her smallest jib (and then I knew what Pam sees in Freddie). When the wind fell off completely Rentacrew stirred into action contemporaneously with our engine. Clearly this was more to their liking.

About 1800 after a 35-mile hike across the Seine Bay we put into Ouistreham where we moored alongside the pontoons to seaward of the lock. "No more of your so-called cooking", said Rentacrew. En masse - if seven is a mass - we set off for the Hotel Normandie who took one look and firmly told us they were fully booked. Cherishing happy memories of the 1980 food at the Metropolitan Quadwrangles led the way - not having the foggiest notion where the damned place was. An hour and a half later we found it: 500 yards from the Normandie. And guess what; it was shut. Pam pluckily piggy-backed an aching, cursing Freddie for the last three miles (how does she bear him?) and we finally collapsed into a little pull-up for carmen (alas, not a Relais Routier) where we mainbraced our parch.

Next morning, Thursday, the weather kindly reverted to norm and soaked us as we set off at midday in a 4-5 south westerly for Honfleur. As we hove into the Seine off Le Havre the wind fell away but, alas, not the rain and we motored up to Honfleur which is easily found even in rainsqualls by turning right immediately past buoy 19, with a large tower to mark the entrance which even Quadwrangles succeeded in identifying. Here an intrepid

Rentacrew was put on the slipperiest steps in France to take our lines so that we could moor alongside the town wall to await the opening of the lock.

With remarkable seamanlike skill the aforesaid crew member was lowered back aboard from the mole by winch as he was determined to motor in with us rather than face a 200 yard walk to our mooring in the harbour. Before lowering, Bill was tactfully asked, he being a genuine doctor, what we should do in the event of our having to cope with concussion and/or broken limbs.

"Just throw me overboard", he grunted. "I'd be better off".

The honeys of Honfleur - with on exception to be revealed anon - made up for it all. We asked a French chef, plodding off in full regalia for a quick Kir, what was the best restaurant in town.

"La-bas," he said. "L'Ancrage".

It wasn't until we spotted him much later in the evening toiling away in the bowels that we realised he worked there. But the meal was superb and the seven of us mellowed, so much so that Freddie even finished up what Pam had left, bones and all. (What does she see in the chap?).

Next evening, we agreed, we would sail to Le Havre to see if Mons Meg could shanghai a crew from the local employment exchange, or Sally Army doss house and thus return our fourth member to us, but sadly it was not to be. We never did see our fourth mate again.

All day in Honfleur, its dreamy mediaeval buildings a backcloth to our sunny stay. A nice thought, quite unrelated to what transpired.

The first we knew of Friday morn was the splintering of our perspex forehatch as a dainty little French miss making her way ashore to the loo, put a great hoof through it. We sent her back bladderfull to her boat to request her owner to repair aboard forthwith.

Rentacrew now came into its own for Philip was a solicitor and he duly nailed a writ to the French yacht declaring a malfeasance or whatever solicitors declare in such situations. I dare not relate what damage he caused in nailing

his damned writ to their mast which just happened to be made of aluminium.

"Incidentally", said she-who-must-be-obeyed-at-the-jump 48 hours later, "what was a French miss doing aboard with you in your pyjamas?"

"Looking for a leak" I answered incautiously, and I'm still explaining.

So Quadwrangles spent the day buying a hand drill, metal L-plates and waterproof tape to enable us to return to England without too much likelihood of our filling and sinking. Have you ever tried asking an elderly deaf French shop assistant with a stutter for an L-plate and waterproof tape? Don't!

Before setting off for Le Havre we topped up our tank with four gallons of diesel. It wasn't until half-way across that evening that we found the aforesaid four gallons in the bilges.

Funny, we thought. We don't normally keep it there, do we? So we looked at the tank only to find a twelve inch gap between filler and tank. Where had the pipe gone?

It took us an hour to work it out that it had gone nowhere but that the tank's holding nut to the bulkhead had sheared and the whole thing canted.

Cursing wearily we wrestled in the after hatches trying to reposition the tank en route to Le Havre and after we had arrived. Enviously we watched an immaculate Pam and a normal Freddie (what does she see in him?) set off for the posh Le Havre Yacht Club and dinner while we, covered in diesel and a covering of years of yucky hatchmess, soldiered on.

We hid our callous grins in a civilised manner when they returned airily mentioning something about being too late for food. The maitre d'hotel had taken one look at Freddie and unlike Pam saw nothing in him to grace his restaurant. By eleven that night (which is midnight French time, be warned) Pam had cooked a splendid meal for us all - God preserve her - and we slurped the odd bottle or two while we planned our 0430 departure on the Saturday and congratulated ourselves on escaping all harbour dues except in Cherbourg. And we did ask, honest.

No hitches, the forehatch held, the tank was secure. The other two boats, of course, curse them, were immaculately well found. Only one problem.

Fog. Twenty yards visibility. The mournful, ominous notes of foghorns warned us, as we crept through the narrow entrance, of the shipping outside. Freddie we lost sight of immediately but clung desperately to Hugh's coat-tails in the hope that he might know where the hell we were.

Then we lost him. Panic.

There's nothing quite like cruising in company in a fog with a lot of dirty great tankers playing boomp-sadaisy. We revved and bore to starboard and bliss, there was dear old Mons Meg's sternlight. We were safe. Rentacrew cheered and deftly hitched a line to him so that we wouldn't get lost again.

Half an hour later Freddie found us, too. Three weeks later the fog cleared, and the wind piped up, the sun shone and we sailed into Chichester on Saturday about 2100.

The Sail of the Century was over.

Next time I'll watch it on TV, and I swear I'll never touch shandy again, whom God Please Forgive.-

PENROSE III ROMPS HOME 8TH

PENROSE III came 8th in the Round the Island Race. Sounds goodif you are not from the yachting fraternity. They spoil it by asking how many were in your class. Well if you must know there were 26. And in spite of the blustery conditions we had a very nice sail round, although I could have done without first overtaking THE ADVOCATE and ELECTRONIQUE with spinnaker flying only to have them tack past us on the final beat. As for GUNSHOT AND RIMAU - never saw them!
Bill Carlidge
PENROSE III