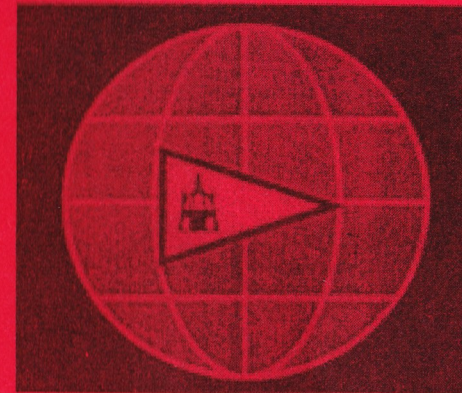


# News of the CCRC World

Spring 2001



## Chichester Cruiser Racing Club

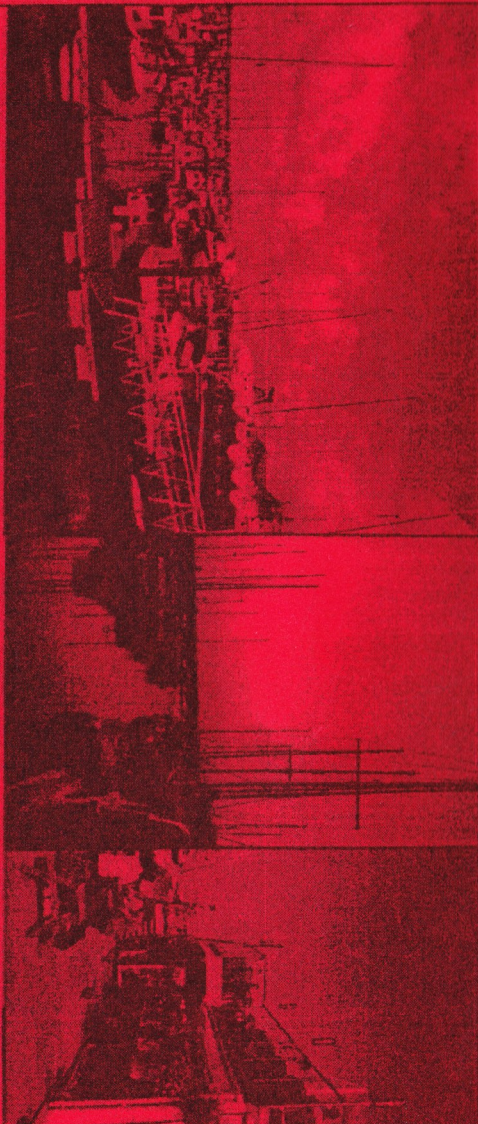
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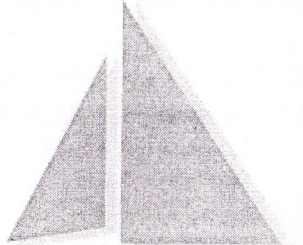
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Cover picture: Watersong (GBR 8420N) racing at Cowes Week



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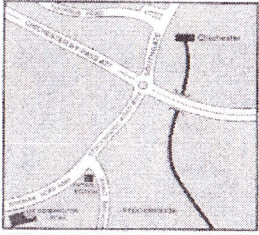
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## COMMODORE'S REVIEW OF THE 2000 SEASON

With this bumper issue in the depths of winter, we hope memories of the 2000 season will enlighten dark evenings and instil even more enthusiasm for the off-season jobs and expectations for 2001! First, I must thank the new team elected to support me, especially Andrew Wilson as Secretary and Pam Marrs, Sailing Secretary. They, along with continuing Treasurer, Rob McLeod, have the bulk of regular work to do for the smooth operation of the club. I also thank John Dunkley who has stepped in to make this issue of CCRC News possible and the ASSs, Glenn Jones, Trenter Ellis and Keith Feltham and all the other committee members. It is probably only past committee members who realise the amount that needs doing to keep it all running smoothly.

The format of the 2000 season remained as recently planned with Spring and Autumn series for the Alpha and Beta classes separately and a combined Summer Series, when numbers are reduced by other events and holidays.

The year started with an innovation, with a Saturday night Fitting Out Supper being followed on Sunday with the first bay race with an encouraging turnout of 12 boats, most in the Beta class.

As usual, we continued with the popular Bank Holiday weekend to Cowes and Beaulieu (excellent social venues) with a passage weekend and a bay race weekend to wrap up the Spring Series. This left time for the Ladies and Crew to have their time at the helm before the "summer" was supposed to start.

The cruise to France was due to be well supported as usual. Unfortunately a combination of boat defects and weather problems reduced the starters in the "feeder" race to Le Havre to only 6, with Sycorax also in company. What a day and night we had! Winds of 50 knots as the fleet approached the Seine caused mayhem but all survived! To many, the worst was coming into the pontoons in pitch blackness and then making fast for a storm tossed night followed by 24 hours of spray over the sea wall. After a suitable delay, the

cruise continued as planned to take in Deauville (for some), Dives and Caen where we had the opportunity to signal a naval destroyer in attendance with the Prince of Wales. The golf, boules and Driftwood pursuit competitions were enjoyed by all. My thanks to cruise leader, Trenter Ellis. By the way, the trip back was in zero wind and fog!

The Summer Series was not particularly well supported but was competitively raced all the same. Leading in to the Autumn, the late summer bank holiday "flexi-race" to Lymington, then Keyhaven, again had few entrants which was a pity since it gave us time to relax and socialise for longer than usual with a landing party to Hurst Castle.

The numbers improved for the Autumn series. I also hope that the many participants in the "Bender" enjoyed the gentle motor round the harbour followed by more frantic sand castle digging on East Head.

We continued our joint racing with various clubs. The CYC Bramidge trophy was retained, I believe no Bosham boats entered their joint race, but one of the few Itchenor boats won their Casket. However, we did have an excellent race and evening with new opponents, Channel SC, and our Betas won their Wooden Spoon. We have been challenged to a return for 2001. Many CCRC boats raced in the HISC winter series.

On the social front our annual dinner/dance/prizegiving at the Marriott, Goodwood, was well attended and a great success. We have re-booked for 2001 – please put 8 December in your diaries now! I can also report that I (with June) and other officers have enjoyed the company of many Chichester Harbour and Hamble clubs and of the Conservancy during the year. We thank them for their hospitality.

On outside events in 2000, I must mention the success of our mid-sized boats' team in the Round the Island who won the prestigious Jeroboam Trophy (with that amount of champagne!) against mega opposition. Arion won her class and her group with most other CCRC entrants showing well as always. Nick and crew also won their class at Cork, a fantastic achievement. Paul Chivers and family in BBIII won the Beneteau Cup to cap their great results in CCRC races. Another "outside" event is our Corporate Sailing

Day, organised by Richard Creer to great effect with fun, hospitality and racing with a substantial addition to Club funds - thanks Richard.

I thank Trenter for his questionnaire initiative and those of you who contributed. Many useful pointers have come out of this (and of course, many old chestnuts) and we have taken the views into account for 2001.

We look forward to the new season and renewing old rivalries on the water and the many convivial social get-togethers off it!

**Mike Tong**

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## CCRC Provisional Programme 2001

Date	HW	Event/Race	Venue
Sat 21 April		Fitting Out Supper	HISC
Sun 22 <b>Spring Series</b>	11.51 4.5	Bay	
Sat 5 May	10.52 4.6	Yarmouth	Pub
Sun 6	11.37 4.7	IoW Day	Pub
Mon 7	12.17 4.8	Return race	
Sat 12	15.49 4.4	Hamble	R Southern
Sun 13	16.21 4.2	rtn	
Sat 19	09.52 4.0	Bay	CYC
Sun 20	10.35 4.2	Bay	
Fri 25 – Sun 4 June		Cruise	Chnl Is/France
Sat 9 June	14.40 4.5	Bay (Bramidge)	Bembridge
Sun 10	15.18 4.4	Bay	
Thu 14	18.14 4.0	Corporate Sailing Day	Seaview YC
Sat 16	07.33 3.8	Round the Island	
Sat 23 <b>Summer Series</b>	13.47 4.7	Cowes	Island SC
Sun 24	14.40 4.8	rtn	
Sat 30	07.37 4.1	Southsea (Ladies)	Eastney
Sun 1 July	08.53 4.1	rtn (Crews)	
Sat 14	18.25 4.1	Bay (RNLI)	Bosham SC
Sun 15	19.23 4.1	Pursuit	
Sat 21	12.37 4.8	Hamble	Chinese
Sun 22	13.30 4.8	rtn	
Sat 28	18.35 4.3	Bembridge	Brading HSC
Sun 29	07.02 4.0	rtn	
Sat 1 Sept	11.57 4.4	Bay	Raft party
Sun 2	12.28 4.5	Bay	
Sat 8 <b>Autumn Series</b>	14.28 4.4	Seaview	Haslar
Sun 9	16.06 4.2	rtn	
Sat 15	10.27 4.6	Hamble (Channel SC)	RAFYC
Sun 16	11.17 4.9	rtn	
Sat 22	15.45 4.7	Itchenor Open Mtg	Itchenor SC
Sat 29	11.01 4.2	Beaulieu	Bucklers Hard
Sun 30	11.33 4.4	rtn	
Sat 6 Oct	14.32 4.6	Commodore's Bender	
Sun 7	14.55 4.5	Bay (HISC Nab Cup)	
Sun 14	10.13 4.7	Bay (HISC Sparkes Trophy)	



## CREW'S RACE 2000

What's this, a human crew on Mons Meg? Well, it does happen sometimes, and since doing OOD duty solo is rather stressful, I had enlisted the aid for the weekend of my daughter Alison and her friend Gary. He is more of a mountaineer than a sailor, but maybe we can do something about that.

There was little wind as we motored down the Hamble, but for the 10 o'clock start at Coronation there was a decent WNW breeze. Course 41 - a spinnaker start then, for North Sturbridge, or in our case a post-start spinnaker hoist as some of Gary's crew found out again what the various ropes did. Elusive went through our wind as we crossed the line, and Pegasus was soon leading the way as we headed south east for the Forts.

The drop, in fairly good time, was handled quite smartly; I've done a lot worse on my own. The dog-leg to Lucas was just about a beat, but a short one, and we were hard put to get the kite packed in time for the run to Chi. Rimau and Pegasus were both ahead of us now, going for the Forts, so to be different, and hopefully to get a better tide, we decided to take the Dolphin passage. It didn't seem to make a lot of difference in the end, since we were too far off the now north-westerly wind as we headed out towards Winner.

Hardening up slightly for Chi, we made good progress but had little hope of catching the leaders. Gunshot, the committee boat, was just dropping her hook as we passed the finish, so we took our own time. The crew were quite chuffed to learn, a day or two later, that we had come second, having been beaten by Rimau, but having pipped Pegasus on corrected time. Elusive and Asteraki followed us home, but we narrowly saved our time on them.

### **Hugh Caldwell, Mons Meg**

**Please see page 28 if you would like to crew with CCRC.**

## Chasing the Mayday Contessas

Monday 1 May started bright and breezy, unlike the last two mornings of this bank holiday weekend, and on Pegasus we motored from the moorings at Gin's to our start at Quinell. Determined not to be late for the start (as we had been once already this weekend) we motored at full steam only to find ourselves the only ones there with the exception of General Gamble, our start boat.

Eventually people arrived and at the gun two very different tactics emerged: Pegasus and Happy Hour going for the shorter and most direct route to the next mark, Clipper, and the rest of the fleet opting for the "Let's keep out of the foul tide" option and creeping along Southampton Water's west bank until crossing the entrance further up, and coming down the east side. As we met the boats coming down it was evident that the "Let's keep out of the foul tide" option was a winner.

By the time we all reached Clipper we were playing catch-up to the two Contessas, Green Pepper and Mons Meg. After rounding Clipper the wind strengthened a little and settled in direction giving us a nice close reach. Unfortunately, a close reach is not what you want when you are trying to catch two Contessas. These windward machines both started to fly and our progress in eating up the distance between them and us seemed very slow. We made some progress and by the time we reached Gilkicker we had them both within a few boat lengths. A bit of short tacking up the west side of Portsmouth entrance and we were able to sneak ahead of Mons Meg but had not managed any distance on Green Pepper. (I'm sure Contessas are not supposed to go this fast!) Still chasing, we rounded Boyne and headed for the Forts on our way to Cambrian. At last we seemed to be catching Green Pepper again and by the Fort both boats were only fractions of a boat length apart. This reminded me of when I used to race Contessas on the east coast. At that time, I would have been happy to be this close to such a well sailed Contessa but now, on Pegasus, it was exciting but frustrating. The more we looked and found extra speed the more Green Pepper seemed to match us, knot for knot. After trying all we could think of, we rounded Cambrian in



much the same position as when we rounded the Fort, only metres apart, but still no extra speed to get past.

As we both left Cambrian for the beat back to Chi we still could not find that extra bit of speed needed to pass so we decided to tack off from her stern and go it alone. Fortunately, Green Pepper did not cover us and we had free air and no other boats around us. As we crossed tacks for the first time we could see that we were pulling ahead slowly. Several more crossings of each other showed that we had found our speed again and were starting to open up a lead. Unfortunately, it was far too late to affect the final result. As we passed the line we took our time and with the sails down motored back to Chi Marina. An excellent bank holiday weekend concluded by an excellent day's racing

**Ray Welham, Pegasus**



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## **STORM RIDE TO LE HAVRE**

Weather from Marinecall:- SW 3-4 backing SE by the afternoon - a reasonable outlook for crossing the Channel for the CCRC feeder race to Le Havre prior to the annual cruise in company to enjoy the delights of French food and wine for a week.

From Excalibur, the OOD boat, Clare and I set the fleet off at 07.00 hours - course 160 degrees magnetic and just over 90 miles according to our GPS. Seven CCRC yachts were in attendance (6 in the race), some having fallen out with work commitments or minor gear failures and promising to catch up later. We were all able to hold our required course for some time in about 12 knots apparent, we using the number 2 genoa, saving the new no. 1 for important events to come. 10.30 hours and the wind lightened. The no. 1 was set with resolution to change down if the wind rose above 12 knots again. Performance improved and Gunshot and Happy Hour were reeled in as the wind backed so that a tack on to port was necessary, then later back to starboard. Excitement! We crossed Flagon and she had to dip us - this all of 25 miles from land! Also the first indication of a weather change - a gale warning, 7 to 8 from the SE but quickly veering to the SW, "imminent" for Portland and "later" for Wight - but Marinecall had still not changed their forecast.

We were now on port tack, heading towards the forecast header and the wind speed rose sufficiently for a precautionary change down to the no. 2. Soon a couple of reefs in the main were put in and the top reef line was pulled through with the messenger. Other competitors were still vaguely visible through the murk but increasingly spread out. Both shipping lanes were passed without incident, most of the traffic being westward going and only a couple of vaguely seen large tankers travelling to the east. VHF warned again, now of Force 9 from the west - trepidation set in and the storm jib was raised. Still we tacked on port 'til at last with the finish still at 160 a starboard tack at 120 was possible. This should be lifted if the wind veered as promised. By now it was dusk and we felt extremely alone. Our colleagues had disappeared, the French lights were still not visible (about 30 miles to go) and only a ferry passed near (with June aboard).



Again the gale warning was repeated, this time with confirmation from Marinecall. Quite suddenly, as promised, the weather sky darkened under lowering clouds and the wind rose to 30 knots as the front approached. The sea to windward whitened. The direction was still SE so we ploughed on as close hauled as possible. Spray cascaded across the deck and waves deepened. The surface was nearly all white. The last reef had to go in. I shall remember that trip to the mast on plunging deck for some time! Thank goodness the autohelm was up to holding us steady for the moments necessary. I fought to pull down the main while balanced precariously around the mast and the reef horns were frustratingly full of the first two slabs. At last the last cringle was lashed in place and the sail stretched out to the boom. There were 17 violent miles to go.

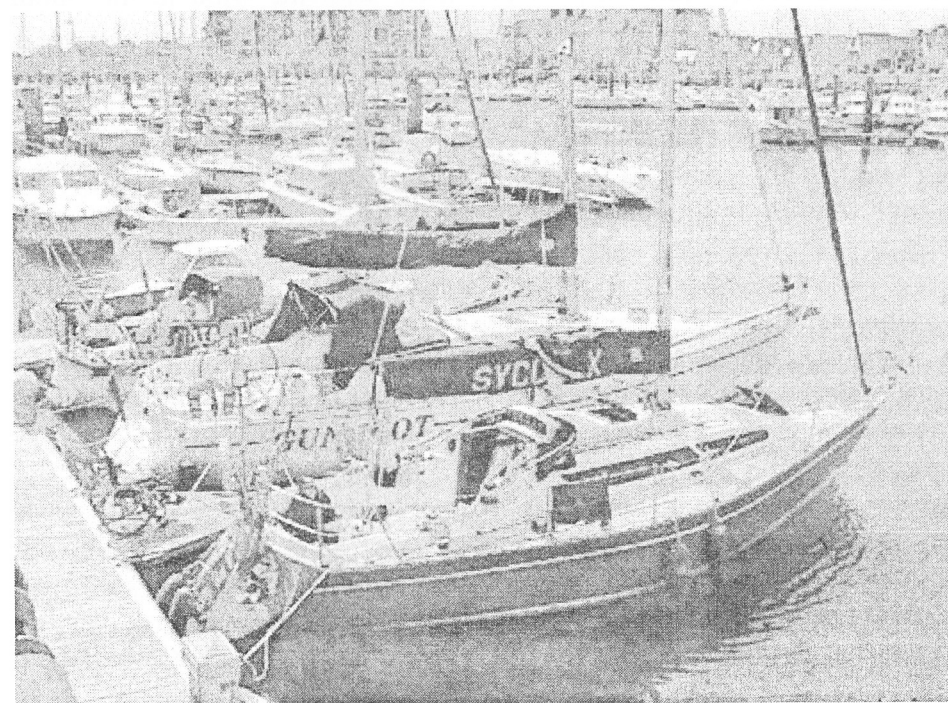
We crashed on at 120, then, as the wind veered, gradually up to the desired 165. Spray now hit the bow and disappeared horizontally to leeward - strange, the cockpit area was dry - apart from the rain, which beat down on cowered cheek. Speeds raised to over 10 knots occasionally in 40 knot gusts and the lights now visible approached oh so slowly. A call was heard from Sycorax (cruising over) and reply heard from Gunshot - thank goodness they're a sturdy boat! Brian needed a help in as his engine failed (air in the fuel it was found later, with the violent motion).

The finish buoy was plotted OK, now at 165, and a course was easy to hold with the wind now on the quarter. Even at this angle however there were constant broaches as the waves took over but, in between, progress by the log was fast. Concentration wavered - it had been a long day - and suddenly the buoy was at 300. We're not going back now - there's the harbour entrance. In we sped, ignoring the red lights and the freighter coming out (should I admit to this?). Turning into the wind to douse the remaining sails re-emphasised the gale across our deck. Even the marina entrance was hard to sight in the blackness (and I've been there before). Gunshot loomed up and then Sycorax. We found the berths and still it was not finished! Some were blocked by booms and we certainly weren't attempting the ones to windward. In we shot, and over one sunken boom. A helpful Brit, already in for 2 days, took our lines. Gunshot too was in with Sycorax alongside.

Over the next 3 hours all the rest followed, including Hugh on Mons Meg sailing alone - what a performance! The curry in Gunshot's heated cabin went down a treat!

The rest of the week went fine; gales for two more days in Le Havre, the winds reached 50 knots that night and reputedly 80 the next. It rained all day for our golf and the Prince of Wales delayed our trip to Caen. Still we had a great time, the sun shone in Deauville and Caen and we motored all the way home in zero wind and thick fog.

## Mike Tong, Excalibur



The CCRC fleet in Dives on the Spring Cruise (Photo: Brian Dandridge)



## CRUISE Y2K

*THE SHIPPING FORECAST ISSUED BY THE MET. OFFICE AT 00.15 ON FRIDAY 26 MAY 2000 – THAMES, DOVER, WIGHT, WESTERLY, BACKING EASTERLY OR CYCLONIC FOR A TIME, 4 INCREASING 5 OR 6. RAIN FOR A TIME. GOOD BECOMING MODERATE OR POOR. PORTLAND, PLYMOUTH, SOUTHWEST BACKING EAST 4 OR 5, THEN NORTH WEST OR WEST, INCREASING 6. RAIN THEN SHOWERS. MODERATE OR GOOD*

“OK crew. We’re going.” I said. “It might be a bit frustrating in the middle, but we should have a quick trip to Le Havre with the wind in the South West”.

It was 4.30am and the usual Sycorax cruise crew, Gerry, Robert, “Uncle” John and myself, were up and ready for the off. Passing the Chi Beacon shortly after 5.15 we realised that the wind was going to be in the East for some time and we would not be able to lay Le Havre in one as we had first hoped.

During the early part of the morning the Coastguards repeated the shipping forecast and we sailed happily on our way. Far back in the distance we could just make out the sails of some of the other CCRC boats that had started in the cross-Channel race.

Then came the mid-day Coastguard weather forecast – gale warnings for Dover, Wight soon and Portland imminent. We were about 45 miles out with a similar distance to go, so we were committed. In hindsight, with the wind behind us it would probably have been quicker to turn and run back to the Solent but the cafes of France and the camaraderie of CCRC beckoned and we continued.

As the afternoon wore on the wind increased and we put in first one then two reefs and furlled in half the jib. We were still making good speed but not in the right direction. I watched the plot on the GPS gloomily as we tracked further to the West than we required. Finally, I decided to tack on to

starboard which allowed us to point at where we believed the headland to be albeit some 19 miles distant. Our ETA was now showing as being around midnight. The wind was still freshening and the boat was on its ear, so to make it more comfortable and safer for Robert down below I decided to take in the mainsail completely and continue with just some jib and engine. This completed we settled down to a light supper.

“Sycorax, this is Gunshot”. Colin Wallace boomed out of our VHF. “We think that’s you a quarter of a mile from us”. We looked around and sure enough there was Gunshot up to windward and level with us going like a train. There was a brief exchange of information and pleasantries before we each continued on our way.

Then the gale struck. The wind rose rapidly to 40 plus kts. I was mighty glad I had taken the decision to get the main in early. With jib and engine we were making good speed but were once again on our ear. Then the engine died! We tried to restart but nothing doing. I was now very nervous. Sailing was no problem and the wind had come round to the South West so we had no problems laying Le Havre, but how were we going to do things when we got there?

We called up Gunshot and informed them of our problem and they turned back to see if we needed any immediate assistance. The next hour was fairly stressful as we closed Le Havre, keeping Gunshot’s masthead light in sight, trying to avoid the worst of the quartering waves which had increased considerably in size and trying to avoid any unlit marks and lobster pots. We were mighty relieved to shoot through the entrance to the outer harbour where we rounded up, furlled away the remainder of the jib and threw a line to Gunshot, which entered a few yards ahead of us. Excalibur had also just entered the harbour and was taking in her sails.

Gunshot towed us into the yacht marina where Peter recommended they pull us alongside and he would then motor us rafted into a double berth. All went well until we were committed to a dead-end passage with the wind howling up our stern.



"Oh. S...!" I heard Peter exclaim. Behind the various bulk of Gunshot, our spray-hood and Uncle John I couldn't see what had caused this outburst. It transpired that the French, in their wisdom, had laid out floating pipes blocking off the entrance to many of the double berths. Excalibur was already caught up on one. Fortunately Ed, up in the bow of Gunshot, spotted a berth free of entanglement and with an expert twist of the wheel and juggling of throttle Peter had both Gunshot and Sycorax safely tucked up in Le Havre. My, were we relieved to be in!! Many thanks to Peter and his team in Gunshot. Without them it would have been a very different story for us.

On the pontoon the crews of Sycorax, Excalibur and Gunshot together with a generous Englishman from a British yacht, Never Moody, rushed around tying up the boats, and set about extracting Excalibur from her precarious position.

A few minutes later Happy Hour arrived with an exhausted crew followed by Flagon II. We got HH into a berth with no problem, but just as John turned FII into his berth we realised it too was blocked off. He tried to back off, but the wind caught the boat and laid it across the sterns of several boats to leeward from where there was no way off unless we could get a line to him to pull him off. This we finally did and Flagon was also safely bedded down.

This left just Mons Meg and Jaquita unaccounted for from the known starters. We had spoken to Hugh on the radio from time to time and knew that he was approaching the entrance. Sure enough, the Contessa entered harbour some thirty minutes later. Of Jaquita there was no news.

Saturday dawned sunny but very windy. It was good to get ashore, have a shower, buy our first "pain au chocolat" of the cruise and join the other crews to gossip about the night before. We were relieved when Ted and his team in Jaquita appeared and berthed alongside Happy Hour. They had made it safely the night before but had gone through to the inner marina for a "quiet" night.

Saturday evening brought the cruise briefing in Le Havre Yacht Club and an excellent meal for the whole cruise party. There was talk of departure for Deauville the following day, but that night it really blew!

On Sycorax I had to get up four times as the wind, now a severe gale force 9, hammered the boat on to the pontoon and I forced more and more fenders into vulnerable places, laid additional lines and generally tried to keep things together. It was VERY bumpy, even in the protected waters of the marina. I saw John on deck on Flagon and knew he was attending to similar matters. Around us several boats from the JOG race to Deauville were coming in and looking for berths. They had an even more fraught time than we had had the night before and one boat reported recording a wind of 70 kts. over the deck.

Sunday was again sunny but windy. We stayed put in Le Havre. Many of us were feeling somewhat jaded after the two tiring nights so it was a somewhat depleted party that made it to the restaurant for the second night's evening meal.

Monday, and the wind abated. Gunshot, Sycorax (engine now working perfectly as John had cleared the air-block), Mons Meg and Jaquita headed off to Dives on the morning tide. Excalibur and Happy Hour decided to get an extra hour in bed and visit Deauville on the way, whilst John and Maggie on Flagon decided it was much too early and they would rest and come on to Dives on the afternoon tide. In the event Mons Meg decided she couldn't make Dives before the tide dropped too much to allow her to enter safely so Hugh decided to join the Commodore and the crew of HH in Deauville.

In Dives by 9.30 we enjoyed a relaxing day exploring the locality whilst the crew of Gunshot went off to practise their golf, hoping to gain an advantage for the tournament the following day. That evening Peter worked his magic once more and found us yet another excellent restaurant.

Tuesday – the day for the golf tournament. It rained and it rained and it rained! Nevertheless it didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the golfers. I joined up with Mike, June and Gordon to form the Excalorax team, only my second ever 18 holes. The tournament took the form of a Texas Scramble – no, I had never heard of one either before the event, but I am not going to describe



the rules here! Whilst, in our team, the Commodore made the majority of the running, I am pleased to say we all had our moments, and Gordon, who professed never to have handled a club before in his life, sank several stunning puts to help us complete the 18 holes in 76. Excalorax won the tournament from the Happy Hour team with Gunshot, in spite of their day of practice, third.

Back in Dives the remainder of the Sycorax crew had played host to the other non-golfers and we found a party in full swing when we returned to the boats. Unfortunately, this point in the cruise marked the point when a number of the Gunshot crew had to return to UK, although Colin had arranged for several friends to come out as replacement.



The Commodore's Party at Caen during the Spring cruise (Photo: June Tong)

Wednesday, the sun shone warmly once more and we motored round from Dives to the Caen Canal, pausing briefly at Pegasus Bridge for lunch. This was the first time we on Sycorax had visited this lovely town. Only recently I saw a documentary on TV showing how it had been destroyed by Allied

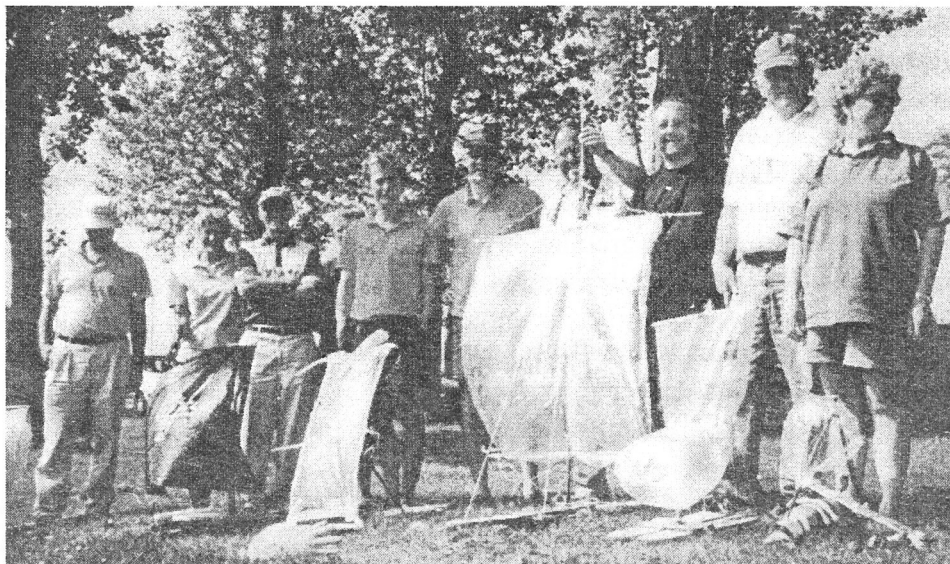
bombing at the time of D-Day. Today it looks wonderful. That evening we ran the traditional boules tournament and for once the Sycorax team, with the aid of Hugh from Mons Meg, were on good form. We quickly despatched Flagshot and, to our surprise, Excalibur to find ourselves in a head to head with Cruise first timers – Jaquita. Five games to play – first went to Jaquita, the second to Sycorax. The crowd was hushed, you could cut the tension, but then we fell apart. Congratulations to Ted and his team from Jaquita for winning their first trophy of the season.

Thursday was spent enjoying the sunshine, gathering raw material for the Driftwood Trophy race and exploring the castle. That evening we had the final group meal at an excellent restaurant close to the castle.

Friday and the cruise was drawing to a close – all too quickly as far as I was concerned. We hoped to depart from Caen at 8.30 but there was an announcement that due to the visit to Pegasus Bridge by HRH Prince Charles they would not release us till 11 that morning. This rather altered our plans as we had hoped to get down to Ouistreham good and early to prepare for the Driftwood Race. In the event there was plenty of time and the afternoon saw much activity and spying as each team tried to outguess the others.

On Sycorax we decided size mattered and our entry Broomstick was definitely the largest competitor. Some unkind wag suggested I had designed it for Robert to sail on! Hugh's design and implementation would certainly have taken the prize for elegance and construction had there been one. However, only one thing really mattered – get your pile of driftwood from the start to the finish first! At the off Broomstick took an early lead but then ground to a halt before deciding to go off in a different direction! It then went backwards and forwards until a sideways gust toppled it over. That was it for us! Excalibur II showed good speed but lacked directional stability. The Commodore was seen to render outside assistance three times and decided he had better retire before he was protested. Through it all the Jaquita entry, Goss II steadily worked its way to the finish without losing one of its bows! Congratulations to Ted and his team once again. Two trophies for the cabinet!





Competitors and their "craft" line up for the Driftwood Trophy race (Photo: June Tong)

Before setting off for home Jaquita hosted a drinks party on board – perhaps to celebrate their winnings! We all decided to get out on the 10 o'clock lock and in company with Excalibur, Happy Hour and Flagon II we set off for home. What a contrast to the week before – Force 2–3 saw us motoring all the way. The final excitement (which I could have done without) was fog off the Isle of Wight. Fortunately there wasn't any shipping around and we safely tied up back at Sparkes on Saturday afternoon. Many thanks to Trenter and Debbie Ellis for their organisation and preparation for the Cruise. Everything went smoothly and we really enjoyed the week – despite the testing trip over.

### **Brian Dandridge, Sycorax**

**The 2001 Cruise has been provisionally arranged from Friday 25 May to Sunday 4 June and plans to visit France and the Channel Islands.**

## **Bramidge Trophy**

The crew of Watersong awoke in Sparkes Boatyard on Saturday 13 May to a scene of glassy calm across the lower reaches of Chichester Harbour. The early morning sun promised a warm spring day, but the prospects for enough wind to have a decent yacht race were not encouraging. Today was the Bramidge Trophy race, a friendly contest between the cream of the CCRC and Chichester Yacht Club. On this day, many stalwart CCRC members who are also members of CYC defect to the opposition, and we were looking forward to crossing swords with them. By 10.15 we were motoring out over the Bar and there were enough ripples on the surface of the falling tide to indicate some breeze, sufficient at least for the smaller, lighter boats. The CCRC Committee Boat, Innatwist, set course 17 in the slightly increasing SSW breeze and the Beta start got away on time at 11.00.

The first leg was a long beat, four miles out into the haze to Dean Elbow. Early on the fleet split in two. On Watersong we decided to look for more tide and wind out in the deep water on the port hand side of the course. With us on this side of the beat were Memnon, the Sigma 8m sportsboat, which was moving frighteningly fast in the flat water, Pegasus, Petra and Sycorax (who was that lanky chap on the helm – it didn't look like Brian!), and the two Contessas, Mons Meg and Green Pepper. In ideal Sonata conditions, light wind and calm seas, we were holding our own against the larger boats and pointing well, with our trial Cowes Week crew, Andrew from Orkney, trimming the genoa. On the other tack, heading along the Hayling shore, we could see our main rivals, Kandy and Samurai, and we were pleased to observe that our pre-start tactic seemed to be paying off as they dropped to leeward.

In the poor visibility so typical of early May we were grateful to Bill Clinton for turning off GPS Selective Availability the week before. The shadowy green shape of Dean Elbow eventually appeared just where our little Garmin said it would. We laid the mark after only one more tack. The reach to Horse Tail looked a bit tight for the spinnaker, and we watched Green Pepper hang on grimly to their kite as we kept ours in the bag and powered along neck and neck with Hugh on Mons Meg. Still close to the Contessas, but losing

touch with Petra, Memnon, Sycorax and Pegasus, we gybed and set our spinnaker for a deep run down to Winner. On this leg the wind seemed to decrease and we were a bit dismayed that the fleet seemed to close up, with Kandy and Samurai, who had seemed well behind, growing menacingly closer as they battled each other for position.

At Winner we doused the kite and hardened up on to a fetch on port tack back out to Dean Tail. It was as we neared this mark that the Alpha fleet finally caught up with us. We heard laughter and shouts of joy from Gunshot as they overtook us, then looked ahead to see the source of their merriment, which was Lohengrin rounding the mark and hoisting their spinnaker sideways. It came down quickly, amongst much shouting from Trevor on the helm. Apparently Sycorax did the same but as we never saw this incident it cannot be reported officially!

Unfortunately, the wind was just a little bit too much in the south to make this course really interesting, and a bit of a procession ensued until our return to Chi. The course then called for a short beat to Hard and a final run back to the finish. The beat was enlivened by the proximity of a large and aggressive fleet of International 14s. We tacked to avoid their turning mark, but were entertained by watching Mons Meg and Samurai sailing right through them, without any of the drama we expected.

As we executed a successful windward spinnaker hoist (more Cowes Week practice) at the final mark, Hard, we could still see Sycorax and Pegasus finishing, which spurred us on down the short run back to Chi.

A beautiful sunny evening found us driving from Sparkes to Chichester Yacht Club for the dinner and prizegiving. A large gaggle of blazer and summer dress clad crews enjoyed a few drinks on the lawns of CYC. It was fun watching the long queue of boats waiting to lock into the yacht basin. Rumours were of a close result, and this turned out to be correct, with CCRC narrowly clutching the trophy from CYC by a few points. Amongst the CCRC boats there was only 9% difference between the winner, Memnon and the last boat, with several boats separated on corrected time by only a few seconds. On balance we were pleased with our third place, only eleven seconds behind Sycorax in a four hour race.

The dinner, as always, was excellent and a fine time was had by all. Our thanks are due to our opponents, CYC, for a good race and a very fine dinner, and to the OOD, Bill Woods for enduring a long afternoon anchored in the blazing sun to time all the finishers – hard work indeed!

### **Trenter Ellis, Watersong**

**Chichester Cruiser Racing Club was formed in 1948 to organise racing for the large number of people who keep their yachts in Chichester Harbour. The Club is a member of the Federation of Chichester Harbour Sailing Clubs and runs races in Hayling Bay and passage races in the Solent and across the Channel.**

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## Arion leads a CCRC team victory in Round the Island Race

The idea of getting up at 04.00 to drive to Hamble to get Arion over to Warsash to pick up the crew at 05.30 was not the best encouragement for the start of a long day! However, Bidy, who was very disappointed that she wasn't able to sail this year, delivered me to Port Hamble and I drove the boat over to the Harbourmaster's jetty at Warsash in a haze of sleep. The crew bounced aboard in an absurdly cheerful mood and we set off for the very atmospheric sail over to the start at Cowes among the usual cloud of boats emerging from every creek and marina of the Solent. Tactician Ed Gatehouse and I poured over the tide tables and tide charts with our navigator, Marc Atherton and we agreed that we would still stick to our usual start close to the West Bramble end of the line. The light wind meant we had to motor all the time to keep out of the way of early starters like the gigantic Playstation cat, which dominated our chosen end of the line. Our plan seemed to be fairly well appreciated by the early classes, as the tide was just about turning.

As our 07.00 start time approached, for Classes 5, 6, 7 and 8, we had a change of strategy and seeing a big tide boost gained by boats on the Island shore we motored flat out towards that end right up to the 5 minute gun and carried enough way with the slightly stronger breeze to get about 1/3rd of the way from the Squadron where we found a nice big gap, which we held open by sailing up very close to the line and then reaching along it for maximum speed. With our arch rival in Class 6, Software Mistress tracking us down the line, we had a good start and edged out ahead of the pack laying to the Island shore. We tried to pick wind shifts and tide advantages all the way up to Yarmouth, desperately trying to keep clear air through the back of the ISC handicap fleet ahead. Arion was still among the leaders of her start at Yarmouth but we felt we had not picked the very best route to that point and for once we failed to hit the escalator tide in the deeps at Sconce at the best position and lost out a little to class 6 boats Software Mistress, the evergreen Prime Cut and two J92s, Jammin, (our friend Mike Riley from Poole) and Just Enough, and the Beneteau 337, Jalicia, from Class 5. Still, we got to the Needles about third from our start with only the two J92s ahead and a little clear water on the boats behind.

Leaving more room than usual on the wreck, we started the slow run towards St Catherine's in a very light and fickle breeze. We had to heel the boat to windward to be able to hang the kite out in the faint airs. For a while Software gained, but we stuck to our plan to sail more or less straight to Brighstone Bay to catch the first of the beneficial tides along that shore. For a while the boats keeping close in round Freshwater bay seemed to gain but we caught and passed the two J92s and from about halfway to the Atherfield Ledges we pulled away from Software and those further inshore who were now more downtide. Prime Cut was going well and although behind, was not slow. We were paranoid about clear air on this leg, which was still very slow in a light breeze of less than 6 knots. As we came towards Brighstone we met the long trailing lobster pot lines (do they do it on purpose for the race?) and were very lucky not to pick one up. It was obvious that the tide was just starting to turn so we had timed our arrival inshore just about right and started to get a boost, which consolidated our position. Once around St Catherine's, we stayed well inshore out of the last of the foul tide and protected our slightly increased wind for all our worth, but we were consistently a few yards further out than Prime Cut, who was charging through close to the shore. The run down to Dunnose was enthralling but the temporary mark offshore at the eastern end of Sandown Bay spoiled what is usually a long leg offering many tactical choices. Having stayed on the inshore side, we arrived at the temporary mark for the gybe on the inside but could not convince the big cruiser outside us of what the rules required so we

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let him go and did our gybe behind him which allowed plenty of room for his ensuing broach! Prime Cut was far too close at this stage but we could see no other Group 2 boats ahead. The asymmetrics on the J92s had been a real disadvantage on the light runs against the tide and they were well back.

The wind had finally filled in and we kept upwind of the other boats to Bembridge Ledge where we had another exciting moment with a J24 which apparently could not see the two boats clear ahead of him as we steamed along with our bow alongside his. This amount of overlap was insufficient for him to feel he ought to give us room for the Sonar just ahead so, rather than splitting the Sonar in two, we spun round, tacked and gybed. We managed this while dropping the kite amazingly quickly and without any problems thanks to brilliant crew work all round the boat but particularly between my cousin Graham on the bow and his wife Anne on halyards. I was apoplectic with the J24 but the crew calmed me down for the fetch to No Man's Land Fort, where we held high right to the last and swooped down very fast carrying way through the calm which was allowing boats to be driven down tide.

A good clear wind and a lift pulled us well up towards Ryde Sands by lee bowing the tide, so we tacked only a few times, often ducking starboard tackers intent on investigating the sands but then ending up in dirty wind. The boat was pointing very high when necessary and going well with full main and our old no.1, but David Coulthard was working very hard on the mainsheet in the big gusts to really drive for speed rather than height. We had a trimmer on the genoa all the time just backing off in the gusts to get the speed. Other boats were still fighting to get further towards the Island shore but we felt we were laying Old Castle Point from well down the course almost direct from SW Mining Ground without tacking. Many other boats crossed us on starboard and some on port came up from underneath but we just ducked and let them go, just to keep the speed up.

As we rounded Old Castle Point we thought the wind would lift us but we needed a couple of tacks to get to the line and there we got a GUN! As first in our class and possibly our 07.00 start group, this was a real thrill for us all. The greatest surprise was that the race had finished - it seemed so short with

the intense concentration the whole crew had demonstrated all round the Island.

I jumped ship at Cowes and popped into the Island SC to see the results coming in. At the door I met Jim McGreggor, of Flair III, who congratulated us and said "Until you finished I was third overall, winning Class 4" - I thought third overall was pretty good until he said he'd lost 3rd. because we were LEADING by 13 minutes from Courier Nord in Class 1 !!!!! I have to tell you that, for a brief moment, was the most amazing feeling - until I remembered the wind had come up and was blowing even harder now so the smaller boats would gain an advantage. I had a phone call asking me to talk to the BBC correspondent but I warned them that the Group 3 boats were still to finish and they should wait a while. Then 20 minutes later Class 10 boats started finishing and four of them got ahead and I waited, agonised, for another half an hour for Class 12. Four more got ahead and we finished 9th - still a good result for a middle of the fleet boat but after the buzz of leading it was a slight disappointment.

When we saw the Group 2 Team result the disappointment was immediately forgotten as Jazz, Petra and Arion had won it for CCRC! What a Race!

**Nick Colbourne, Arion**

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## MAGIC MOMENT!

There we were in Hayling bay for the Nab Cup, first race of the HISC Winter Series, on the third leg of the race, broad reaching under spinnaker from Winner towards Hard in a steady F4. Excalibur was straining to improve her station, a couple of boat lengths behind Jazz, when attentive crewman Pat, looking for puffs from windward, shouted "There she blows!"

Now is this what the skipper wants, when eyes should be on the sails/course? All eyes swivelled to where he pointed. After a moment or two, there indeed was the unmistakable sight of a dolphin surfacing as it porpoised in parallel about 200 yards inshore. Soon it was clear that there was more than one and they were steadily getting closer. Shouts were made to Jazz (to spoil their concentration as well?) but it seemed that it was us the wonderful mammals were attracted to and soon three were on our bow wave and under the boat - is this what a new bulb keel achieves?

All aboard were delirious with this unprecedented (to all of us) experience. Gordon and Purita at the front end practically had their sailing boots brushed by the beasts. The rest could only stare in wonderment. The dolphins were large, bigger than I've ever seen, and showed most of their bodies as they arched up. The skipper managed to look away long enough to steer a straight course and Bev on spi-sheet duty kept the sail full.

The "moment" lasted for at least a quarter of a mile until we rounded Hard and headed inshore. Even then the dolphins played ahead of Gunshot and Rampage who were a little behind and it was even reported that one leapt clear of the water.

What a moment! Is this the affect of El Nino?

**Mike Tong, Excalibur**

## SEAVIEW FROM A STANDING START

There we were, Saturday morning in September, out by Chi Buoy at 11 o'clock, waiting to start our race to Seaview. It was to be the first of two races that day with the second going on from Seaview to Portsmouth to stay in Campers. The next day was to be the BT Global Challenge start and we were looking forward to an exciting time on their start line!

No excitement on our line - no wind! Undeterred, our OOD, none other than the Secretary, in Happy Hour, put up the usual flags, and at the appointed hour, took them down. The Betas were off - at least most of them were trying to point in the right direct (and many were not able to) and a couple, Kandy and Memnon from memory, actually managed to cross the line within the first five minutes.

Next our turn. When there was a little space as the tide carried the remnants of the Betas away, we felt it was unlikely that Excalibur could be placed near the line without danger of being taken over early with no hope of return. So why not use the anchor? Choose our favoured end - just near enough to the line so that the anchor line scope kept us clear. What are our rights? Do others have to keep clear? Can they? Anyway, suitable use of the motor (turned off well before the five minute gun) and there we were, stationary at the pin end.

All seemed well, the others were well up tide and as the seconds ticked by all looked good. Come the last 30 seconds a gentle haul on the anchor line gave a little momentum, enough to give us steerage anyway so that we could turn back in the right direction. A gentle zephyr ghosted us away westwards and then south into a marginally better tide.

What about the others? Well, Bomber was not too far away, Gunshot was over and retired, Lohengrin was rather late and Flagon more so. All waited

for the expected south-easterly with varying degrees of patience. Soon the VHF was full of reports of retirement as the delights of Seaview YC became more attractive than a misty drift. Finally we'd all given up - Flagon last - they insisted on outlasting the Commodore! Seaview's lunch was excellent!

And the afternoon - you wouldn't believe it! - the wind still didn't arrive and Excalibur made another standing start on the Seaview line. This time the race was marginally better, 50% finished, although this was only because the tide was so neapy and weak that the Force 1 SE was enough to propel us through the Forts against the ebb to a shortened finish at Boyne.

And the BT start - they didn't have wind either - and none used their anchors!

**Mike Tong, Excalibur**

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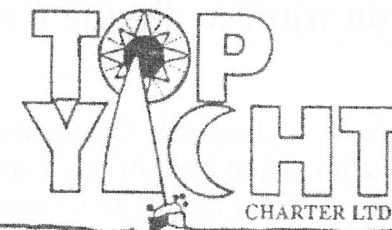
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## CCRC Trophy Winners 2000

ALPHA	trophy	BETA	trophy
<b>Spring</b>			
Lohengrin	<i>Cohoe Hook</i>	Green Pepper	<i>1/4 ton</i>
Lohengrin	<i>RNLI Pennant</i>	Petra	<i>RNLI Pennant</i>
Excalibur	<i>Coronation</i>	Innatwist	<i>Coronation</i>
		Memnon	<i>Bramidge</i>
Lohengrin	<i>Sea Trophy</i>	Pegasus	<i>Decanter</i>
Brown Bomber	<i>Ladies Salver</i>	Pegasus	<i>Ladies Plate</i>
Brown Bomber	<i>Goldeneye Decanter</i>	Rimau	<i>Marrs Mug</i>
Gunshot	<i>Jubilee A</i>	Mons Meg	<i>Jubilee B</i>
Arion	<i>Courtney Trophy</i>	Innatwist	<i>Marigold</i>
<b>Summer</b>			
Brown Bomber	<i>The Goblet</i>		
Innatwist	<i>Cowan Trophy</i>		
Rampage	<i>Mons Meg Ditty Box</i>		
Lohengrin	<i>Rosebowl</i>		
Kandy	<i>Shearwater</i>		
Brown Bomber	<i>Festival Cup</i>		
First Knight	<i>Citron Presse</i>		
Gunshot	<i>Storm Trophy</i>		
Mons Meg	<i>Major Gamble Trophy</i>		
Memnon	<i>Walter Brown Teapot</i>		
<b>Autumn</b>			
Brown Bomber	<i>Gunshot Shell</i>	Kandy	<i>Wooden Spoon</i>
Brown Bomber	<i>Kinross Bkt A</i>	Kandy	<i>Kinross Bkt B</i>
Excalibur	<i>Cruiser A</i>	Memnon	<i>Cruiser B</i>
Flying Boat	<i>Itchenor Casket</i>	Rimau	<i>Wallis Trophy</i>
Excalibur	<i>Harriet Shackman</i>	Memnon	<i>Davis Trophy</i>
Excalibur	<i>Conservation</i>	Goldeneye	<i>Conservation</i>
Excalibur	<i>Coffee Pot</i>	Kandy	<i>Silva Decanter</i>
Arion	<i>Excalibur</i>	Sycorax	<i>Bugle</i>



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## **Don't Forget the Bucket and Spade if you want to dig the Commodore's Bender**

Who could have doubted that Commodore (call me "All weathers") Mike would activate his action plan for the "Commodore's Bender" on 7 October? Rain? What rain? The Commodore had planned a "Digging for Treasure" Bender (after the style of Long John Silver), and "Shiver me timbers" if that wasn't what the nine crews who presented themselves for action were going to do. Accordingly, Commodorable June and Her Best Friend were put ashore on East Head, grasping umbrellas and with a promise of coffee to follow. We'll have no wimps here!

Stakes numbered 1 to 4 (protected by plastic bags: rain? what rain?) were placed strategically in the sand and clues cunningly buried. All one needed was a decent compass (I wonder if Anne – of Green Pepper fame – got her money back?) and strides equalling those of the Commodore to find this "treasure", unless, of course, you were from Pegasus, in which case a JCB might have been a good idea. Ray and Karen, keenly the first to "hit the beach", dug up a vast area. "Try eight paces south." "No? OK, try eight paces north." "No? OK, try four paces west. Oh, look what's that? THERE!"

Others, such as Flagon and Gunshot, were able to locate their clues with disappointing ease: perhaps, they walk about beaches in the same manner as the Commodore and have the same make of compass. Meanwhile, Rampage, the show-offs, landed their "big dinghy" on the beach (we'll have no tender here!) and leapt ashore in a most convincing display of bravado (perfectly justified, as it turned out). But, what's this? The Pirates of Penrose! Yes, P III put ashore an appropriately-clad crew of cut-throats - smiling benignly and clutching their spades! No party would be complete without them.

Well, eventually everyone had a set of clues - and the Commodore's first objective had been fulfilled. Shortly after the crews had returned to their boats to study the said clues a certain former commodore (and single-handed skipper) asked if the Commodore was operating under the same co-ordinate system as he was. (For the clues, dear reader, involved all sorts of intricacies

of navigation *without using charts* - probably devised with Gunshot in mind - remember Le Havre! - after all it was wet.) One can only assume that he was not, as there occurred shortly thereafter a small "going aground" as Mons Meg took too close a look at the East Head buoy.

The skipper of Brown Bomber III had a novel approach to the clue solving. No sailing around for this Birthday Boy. He simply retired to his luxury quarters and despatched 10 tenders to check out the co-ordinates; thus, eliminating any "going aground" problems at a stroke! What style!

Excalibur relaxed. June and Best Friend, back onboard and plied with a drink, contemplated the improving meteorological conditions and the plans for the next phase of the Bender. As the fleet regrouped and partook of lunch, we got out the "sports equipment". I was feeling very pleased that I had managed to locate (in my garage, which is rather full of a long-forgotten car) a long-forgotten rounders bat and ball. The Commodore, encouraged by Ray (bobbing about in his tender), decided to try it out. To my enormous relief - as the Commodore's range was a little short of Pegasus, at which it was aimed - the ball floated and Ray rescued it. The clue-sheets gathered, it was time to move on to the next "digging" exercise. Yes, the Sand Castle Competition. Everyone landed back on East Head beach and got into the Creative Phase. Tate Modern, eat your heart out! The exhibits were very impressive. The idea was to create a work of art, from sand, representative of your boat. P III produced a delightful "sand picture" (using a certain amount of poetic licence): highly original and very artistic.

Gunshot certainly had the most balls, all hand-moulded and much admired. Much moulding also went into a very perfectly formed x10 scale model of a pepper: necessarily sand-coloured. No prizes for guessing whose work that was. Mons Meg was depicted by a LOCOMOTIVE, not a cannon: Hugh's carefully planned dimensions being somewhat distorted by his willing and unable "Best Friend" assistant. Petra's edifice was probably the most intriguing. After all, how does one represent the excavations at Petra other than by a large hole and a lot of rumpled sand? As Glenn had undertaken a recent field trip, one had to assume that the exhibit was fairly authentic, accompanied, as it was, by a "rose" to represent the Rose City. Oh, how



perfect! Rimau gave us an exquisitely sculpted bottle of tiger beer: oh, so pretty! But it was Rampage that caught the eye of the judges, with a really superbly executed bull's head. And we all obediently posed in front of (or was it behind?) it, as one Bill Cartlidge took a group photo. Now, I suspect that that man really does have artistic potential: he could have a career in films, methinks.



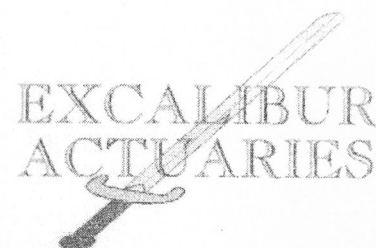
The sandcastle competition (Photo: Jacky Black)

Jacky then got a game of rounders underway, while the Commodore and his lady went off to do some marking. No blow by blow account, but it was great fun and involved a certain amount of wading in the sea by young Robert, a few stinging fingers on the brave hands of, inter alia, Maggie and Anne as they fielded at the very limits, a passing dog that refused to go home and a somewhat impressive, if unexpected, rugby-type tackle from Watson. Not *quite* rounders as you know it, Jim.

Then it was "Up with the Jolly Roger" and back to Sparkes to wind up the day with a Jolly Dinner at the Mariners. In the pauses between courses, the winner was revealed as Rampage and the remaining mysteries among the

clues explained. I think it was a good meal—June and I had to leave before the last course, when the party seemed to be in full swing. The Commodore had certainly enjoyed himself and, surely, that's what it's all about.

## Clare Gardner, Excalibur



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# Chichester Cruiser Racing Club

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Class..... Sail number .....  
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Signature .....Date.....

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