

CCRC NEWS

Autumn 2005



the journal of
Chichester Cruiser Racing Club

CCRC Officers 2005

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Commodore's foreword

by Jacky Black

Welcome to the Autumn edition of CCRC News. To any new readers or non members, I hope you find this an interesting read and that you might consider contacting one of our committee with a view to giving us a try!

We are a friendly bunch of like-minded people who enjoy sailing and socialising. We are so lucky to have such a wonderful environment in which to do this – Chichester Harbour, Hayling Bay, the Solent and the Channel ports of France and the Channel Islands are all favourite haunts. Check our programme for next season and come along to an event to see for yourselves!

It's been a busy year for CCRC and we have enjoyed some great races and super meals at clubs around the Solent and in France. The weather has generally been kind and we have had some excellent racing without any need to cancel due to too much wind. Lack of wind at some starts has resulted in occasional postponements but, almost without exception, we have held races as planned.

We had a great start to the season with our three-day event taking in Seaview, Gunwharf Quay and Cowes, and later in the summer a really memorable trip to Lymington and dinner at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, where we were welcomed by John Bence, their Commodore and a former Commodore of CCRC! We have already pencilled a repeat of this into next year's plans.

The cruise to France was a splendid affair despite a rather mixed week for weather – many thanks again to Brian Dandridge for the planning and to Peter Wallace for his input with the 'French – Communication' aspect.

This autumn has seen some exciting racing with good turnouts and a real Indian summer – I've hardly had my oilies out of the cupboard. One disappointing aspect of the season has been the lack of support from other Federation members for our joint events – a great deal of time and effort was put into the planning of these and the negligible turn out from other clubs made this very frustrating for all concerned! However, the Channel Sailing Club event was well supported and some of their members are keen to join us in other events!

Several of our members have had outstanding success in events outside the club. Most notable were Rob McLeod's second overall in the Round the Island Race – he is now the proud holder of The Silver Roman Bowl – well done! Guy McBride took part in the Santander two-hander and finished a fantastic second overall in what turned out to be a gruelling race – again well done! Chris Staples and Graham Nixon were both in the Fastnet and Chris finished a very creditable 41st overall – hearty congratulations to you both!

Many CCRC boats went southwest in the summer – we passed *Gunshot* heading south in the Chenal du Four as we made our way home from La Rochelle. Others had a mini-social event in Treguier waiting for better weather. Further afield John and Maggie Skillicorn sailed *Jezebel* south to Portugal en route to start this year's ARC race to the Caribbean. I for one will be watching their progress with interest on the ARC website when the race starts in November.

My thoughts are turning to winter lay-ups and whether to get *Arwen* measured for IRC next year.

Good sailing if you are still afloat. I look forward to seeing you all at our annual dinner dance and prize giving on Saturday 12 November and on the water next season.

First race of the season

Bay - 24 April 2005

by Jacky Black (*Arwen*)

Having enjoyed a very 'liquid' evening at the CCRC Fitting Out supper the previous night at HISC, I was not sure how well the team onboard *Arwen* would perform for the first race of the season! However my doubts were soon banished as we left Sparkes Marina and everyone set about the various tasks of getting the boat ready for the start. As we came round the corner and out of the shelter of the wall at the end of the marina the breeze seemed fresh and we anticipated a good race – the Windex showing 13knots.

We set off for the start line along with several other CCRC boats – it was good that the turn out for the first race looked promising. *Penrose III* was on station at Chi buoy and Bill announced the course and starting procedures clearly on Channel 72 as per the new race instructions. It was to be a broad reaching start with Dean Elbow as the first mark. We decided to hoist the cruising chute at the one-minute signal and along with *Arcadia* and *Mons Meg* chose the starboard end of the line, with us being the windward boat. I was pleased with the result as we crossed seconds after the gun in clear wind and soon had a small lead on the rest of the fleet. However, our boat does not sail well dead down-wind so we had to perform a series of gybes to reach the mark. Meanwhile behind us *Kandy*, *Mons Meg* and *Samurai* appeared to be going well and we soon saw the blue spinnaker of *Jo Jo Gunne* in the Alpha fleet catching up with the tail-enders of the Beta fleet. We had a slight 'navigation' error on this leg as for several minutes I was heading for the wrong green buoy – fortunately Bertie (very useful crew member!) soon put me right and we did get to the mark before the rest of the fleet. *Samurai* and *Mons Meg* were close behind us and the faster Alpha boats *Sycorax*, *Jo Jo Gunne* and *Gunshot* were snapping at our tails too. Sadly, the wind speed gradually died and as we all attempted

to beat back towards the next mark, Winner, the effects of the westgoing tide were soon very apparent. Not having a large headsail, our boat speed dropped off rapidly and we were soon involved in cross tacking with the Alpha boats; *Sycorax* passed clear ahead of us on port but *Gunshot* had to give way to our starboard tack (you did come very close Peter!). *Jo Jo Gunne* also passed us and then *Samurai* and *Mantra*! However, we held out tack into the Langstone shore and this seemed to pay off as the next time we met we were ahead of everyone except *Sycorax*, which held to her port tack to the southeast. We had to tack back on to port and head for the buoy and again the progress was painfully slow – at times we were only making half a knot against the tide. Fortunately we could see that *Penrose* was anchored at the mark and seemed to be flying the shorten course flag – thank goodness.

It was a close call at the finish for the leading Alpha boats and the wind lifted a little, with *Sycorax* storming in on starboard while *Jo Jo Gunne* and *Mantra* battled it out on the line. I think the J109 got the gun with *Mantra* second and *Sycorax* third. We finished next, closely followed by *Gunshot*. We were not able to see any of the Beta fleet boats in the murky visibility but assumed that some did finish later. Lunch called, so we started the engine and headed back to the harbour. It was good to take line honours for the Beta fleet and we had all enjoyed our first race of the season, albeit a bit frustrating at times with the lack of wind.

Obscured by bank holiday fog banks

by Brian Dandridge (*Sycorax*)

As a racing weekend, it was a bit disappointing. But as a CCRC social event the bank holiday weekend of the 30 April to 2 May lived up to all the best traditions of the Club. It was the first of three CCRC mini-regattas with a race to Bembridge, lunch at Seaview and an evening at Gunwharf Quay on the Saturday; a race to Cowes, with dinner at the Royal Corinthian on Sunday; and then a race home on the Monday.

The weather in the week before had been particularly foul, with rain and strong winds almost every day. This was our second race weekend with the new *Sycorax*, our Swan 36, and we were still very much in learning mode. I was very pleased to have on board Tony and Ann Salzman, who had raced the boat with Trevor and Monica Rose in years gone by; Bob Garrett, who had done a motoring delivery trip on the boat a few weeks earlier; and Anne Bonwit, who had never been on board before, plus Gerry, who had just completed her Day Skipper course.

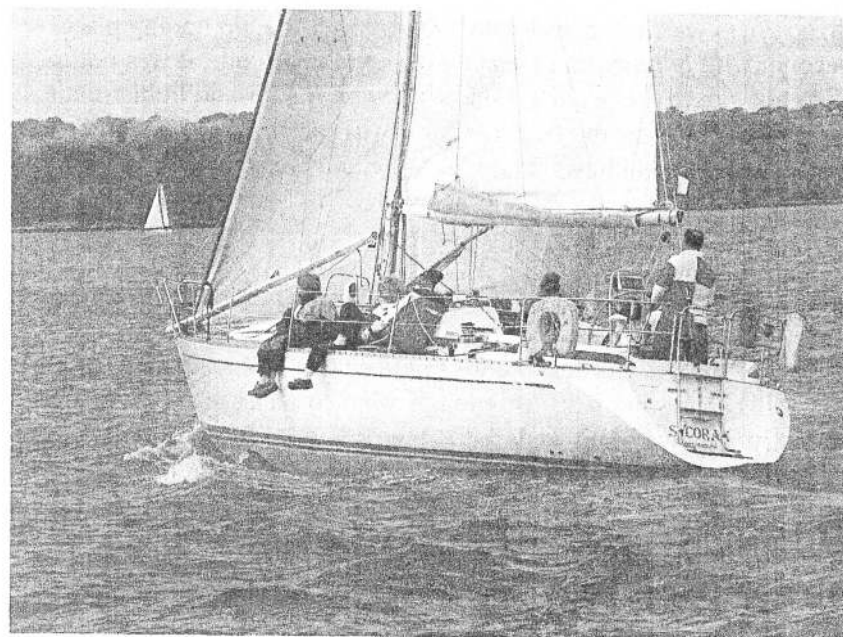
The weekend weather was a complete contrast – very light winds, sunshine and fog! When we got up on Saturday morning we were faced with two problems – getting out of Sparkes at dead low water, and barely seeing the other side of the marina in the thick fog. I turned on the radio and the airwaves were full of chatter from CYC motor boats which had planned to go to Cherbourg for the weekend but were now sitting it out waiting to see if the visibility would improve. One boat reported being aground on the Winner.

I had a discussion with Peter Wallace, ASS for the weekend, and we decided to go out and have a look at the conditions at Chi before reaching a decision. This is where problem number one kicked in as both *Sycorax* and *Gunshot* stuck on lumps of mud getting out of Sparkes and round past the HISC pontoon. Thankfully, neither boat was held up for more than a few minutes and we were soon finding our way out to the Beacon and round to where Race Officer Bill Woods was waiting. It was clear we couldn't start a race in the fog, so Peter took the decision that we should motor in convoy across to Seaview. This was an excellent opportunity for us on *Sycorax* to calibrate the electronic compass and gain familiarity with the radar system. Both worked very well and I could clearly see the big ships at anchor and the ferry coming up the shipping channel – very reassuring.

Seaview YC was as hospitable as ever and it was great to see new members Gavin and Susan Marriott out in their Swan 36, *Markova*,

along with their crew. They were on an even steeper learning curve than us, having not raced cruisers before, but this was a great weekend to meet CCRC and get to know a good number of the regulars.

Peter and I had lingering hopes that we might run the Saturday race after lunch but these hopes were dashed when at 15.00 the fog was even thicker and we couldn't see the dinghies moored off Seaview, let alone our boats! That evening we held a Pimms party on board *Sycorax* at Gunwharf Quay and were delighted to welcome everyone on board to wet the boat's head.



Brian at the wheel of *Sycorax* (Photo: David Perrin)

Although the wind picked up on Saturday evening and the fog cleared,

Sunday dawned still and we could see a fog bank outside the entrance to Portsmouth Harbour. We motored out and were delighted to find a bit more breeze and lifting visibility, so the race was started on time by our Race Officer for the day on *Arcadia*. The Betas got away beating to the first mark, Browndown, followed 10 minutes later by the Alphas. We made a reasonably good start and were right on the line as the gun went, although we had arrived a bit early and had to go down the line to the leeward end before hardening up. All went off on starboard tack but *Gunshot* soon tacked inshore, looking for the tidal advantage. For the next twenty minutes the fleet, which included *Jo Jo Gunne*, *Mikado*, and *Saphire*, tacked towards Gilkicker Point. As we neared the headland *Jo Jo* was in the lead with *Sycorax* and *Mikado* trading places for second, with *Saphire* and *Gunshot* not too far behind. It was not to last. As we closed the headland the wind went lighter and lighter until we were not stemming the tide. *Mikado* was the first to get the hook down and in the few minutes it took us to get ours ready we were drawn some fifty yards back. All around us other CCRC boats were kedging in the hope that things would improve.

We heard the first retirement on the radio as *L'Aquarelle* said they were going to Osborne Bay for lunch – very wise move, Keith. We sat in the sunshine and enjoyed our lunch until I noticed that *Mikado*'s crew were lifting their anchor and had just enough wind to make some progress. We quickly followed suit and for a few minutes pulled away from *Gunshot* and *Saphire* and gained on *Jo Jo*. But it was not to last and we soon had to drop the hook once more to avoid being sent back to the start – without collecting £200. At 13.45 I could see no sign of any wind coming in and, having listened to a number of Beta boats announcing their retirement, decided to pack it in and head off for Shepards Wharf in Cowes. I felt very frustrated; after calling the Race Officer and almost as I hung out the ensign to formally declare our retirement the wind finally arrived! Too late for us, but enough to enable the rest of the Alpha fleet and some of the Betas to get a finish.

CCRC hadn't been to the Royal Corinthian YC for many years. It was great to be back and they provided an excellent evening meal and hospitality. Another opportunity for the *Markovas* to enjoy CCRC, this time joined by more new members – Jonathan and Celeste who were out on their beautiful Starlight 39 – *Blue Moon*.

The final day of the weekend dawned with very little wind but, fortunately, no fog. After a discussion the night before about trying to fit in two races, it was decided that the conditions did not support this and we would have only one start. The fleet was joined by *The Harribelle*. David and Sandy Perrin must have had an early start to be off Cowes when we went out at 09.30.

I don't know who designed the course – Peter Wallace (ASS) or Keith Feltham (Race Officer), but it was excellent. We started at Seascope, [at the bottom o Southampton Water] beat across to East Bramble and then to DAKS in Osborne Bay, before a spinnaker leg out to the Fastnet Insurance buoy. During these early stages we went very well and were not far behind *Jo Jo Gunne*. More importantly, we were ahead of *Mikado*, *Gunshot* and *Saphire*. We were soon pulling through the Beta fleet and rounded DAKS ahead of *Arwen* and *The Harribelle*. *Markova* had already rounded and along with *Jo Jo* was on the first and, as it turned out, only downwind leg of the race. This is where the fleets split.

We had our kite up and were on our way towards Fastnet Insurance. This was only the third time we had had the big blue spinnaker out of its bag since we took over the boat and we had yet to gybe it. It was the first time Bob had done the foredeck, which is very different from the old *Sycorax*. In the normal way of things we should have planned the gybe, talked it through, and, ideally, rehearsed it without the pressures of a race. This was different! We were almost dead down wind and Tony and I were discussing whether to gybe the kite when the wind decided it for us. There was a substantial shift to the east and the boat

gybed – ready or not! Fortunately we only had around four knots apparent wind but with all the running around things inevitably went wrong and when the pole went up on the starboard side the port spinnaker sheet was the wrong side of it – more rushing around, pulling, letting off, shouting, shaking of heads – unsympathetic grins from Mr Creer and his crew as *Jo Jo* went past us on their way back from the next mark. We took the kite down and for a few moments were bare-headed whilst the crew sorted out the foredeck before we could re-hoist the No 1 genoa. My apologies to my crew. I really shouldn't have expected everything to go perfectly with the first gybe. We are very much on a learning curve but every skipper wants it done NOW and done RIGHT. Anyway, it was an excellent learning exercise and we were able to identify where we went wrong.

After Fastnet Insurance our course took us to Peel Bank and then up to Saddle near the Forts before a short downwind leg to Outer Spit. During these legs we pulled away from *Gunshot* and *Saphire* but couldn't shake off *Mikado*, which seemed to be tied to our stern as they were always there a couple of hundred yards astern. Approaching Saddle, I anticipated that we would be able to carry the kite round Outer Spit and back to the next mark, North Sturbridge, but we could see *Jo Jo* was struggling with her asymmetric, so we had no chance. As the leg from Saddle to Outer Spit was only about a quarter of a mile we decided it wasn't worth getting the kite out of the bag, and white sailed it.

The breeze held while we fetched North Sturbridge but as we rounded it went very light. Fortunately, the tide was with us, so with sails hanging limp we were carried towards the forts at around two knots over the ground. This was our opportunity to shake off *Mikado*. Looking astern I saw them creep towards the mark but by the time they rounded we had drawn out the best part of a mile. I heard later that *Saphire* never lost the wind and Peter Wallace was frustrated as, struggling to find enough wind to stem the tide, they saw Bill Woods and his team come up from astern to cancel out all the distance they had had.

The lesson for today is taken from REEDS ALMANAC Chapter 3, Verse 15 – Make sure of your navigation! The final mark in our course was Illustrious – not a mark we normally use and not one I had put in my new GPS chart plotter. I thought I knew where it was and as we came through the forts – narrowly missing the incoming ferry – we bore away to the north of Cambrian making a good seven knots. Scanning the horizon we finally picked out the small yellow wreck buoy with the Race Officer in attendance – well to the south. We now had to tack and beat down to the finish. Not so *Mikado*, which had held up and clawed back the advantage we had pulled out since rounding North Sturbridge.

Anyway, it was a great weekend with another excellent turn out. When I turned on my e-mail later that evening I had a delightful message from Gavin Marriott (*Markova*) thanking us for the most enjoyable weekend and for being made so welcome by CCRC. I look forward to seeing them and all the other new members during the rest of the season. Thanks again to Peter Wallace, the ASS for the weekend, all the Race Officers, who had to contend with difficult and frustrating conditions and to my crew for helping me host the first Pimms party of the season.

***Tarka* sweeps the board at Antigua Week**

***Tarka* won four trophies in Antigua Sailing Week (25 to 30 April 2005): first British boat, first in the team event, first in the Racer/Cruiser Fleet, and first in Racer/Cruiser Class II. The crew included CCRC members Glenn and Nicholas Jones, and Nick and Biddy Colbourne.**

Glenn Jones selected the following extracts from *Tarka's* log:



The *Tarka* crew with their trophies.

Wednesday 20 April

The *Tarka* crew begin to assemble in English Harbour, joining Nicholas and Suzi who have race-prepared the boat to perfection – including a new paint job below the waterline. Nick and Biddy Colbourne divert to St Maarten to collect the “mother” ship - the commodious Dufour Athol 43 – *Barbuda*.

Thursday 21 April

Final preparations to convert *Tarka* from her Caribbean cruising role to full race mode. (i.e. – no coffee, tea etc.)

Friday 22 April

Nick and Biddy arrive with *Barbuda*. David Barrett assumes command of *Barbuda*, but also joins *Tarka* for the first shake down sortie out into the Atlantic to check the sails and race trim.

Saturday 23 April

With the full crew now assembled, a practice session is organised. The core of the successful Cork Week crew is supplemented by local talent and comprised: helm Nick Colbourne, tactician Tim Thubron, mainsheet Neil Morton, genoa trim Jeff Orford, crew boss Ross Applebey, pit Jennie Austin, spinnaker trim Biddy Colbourne and Tom Horsfall, spinnaker preparation Suzi Lawicka, bow Nick Jones, navigation Glenn Jones.

Prior to starting this training sortie, we had assessed the likely conditions and received various reports from those who had ventured out during the morning. The consensus was “very little wind”. However, no sooner had we completed the first windward-leeward legs, than Ross noticed a large black cloud, extremely reminiscent of Atlantic squalls, but coming straight at us from the west! Plans were modified and the spinnaker and genoa lowered, but we were still caught out by the severity of the squall and were forced to nurse the rig through 40 knot gusts all the way back into harbour.

Although not the best preparation, it transpired that whilst we had been safely at sea (!) a certain amount of carnage had taken place in the harbour, on the dock and amongst the moorings. With numerous reports of anchors dragging and boats slamming into one another, perhaps we fared quite well! Back on the dock, we were pleased to renew our acquaintance with Marshall Murphy on his 40.7 *Aya Sofia*, whom we had last met in Las Palmas at the Beneteau Atlantic Rally for Cruisers party. Marshall had purchased his yacht in Turkey and was on his way

home to the east coast of USA, obviously enjoying himself along the way. Although not actually taking part in the ARC, Marshall and his father had sailed the Atlantic at the same time as *Tarka*, and wintered *Aya Sofia* in Antigua over Christmas.

Sunday 24 April - Race 1

The pre-determined course was from English Harbour on the south coast to Dickenson Bay in the north west of the island, west about. Although we made a steady start and were first to the windward mark off Shirley Heights, it was clear that the French built, Dutch owned A40 *Sete Mares* was going to cause us some trouble. About 40 of these pretty yachts have been built, but this is the first to be fitted with a bowsprit rig somewhat similar to the J109 although, if Richard Creer will allow me, somewhat more 'racy'; and a clear off-wind flyer in a breeze. Thus, off the wind, we were not surprised to find *Sete Mares* steadily overhauling and passing us before we reached the turning mark off the SW corner of the island. [We later discovered that the *Sete Mares* crew included a French sailmaker who we had met on board the yacht *Paprec* in the 2004 Commodore's Cup.] Being an "off wind" course, we were also fighting hard to keep at bay the J120 *Paulista* (an American boat – competently sailed by a French crew), vying with us in a French built boat sailed by our English crew, and both desperately chasing a French boat owned by a Dutchman now living in St Maarten – truly international sailing in idyllic surroundings! Although it was clear that *Paulista* was sailing below her potential, she was matching our every move and demanding our close attention; and, all the time, adding to our concern that *Sete Mares* was disappearing into the distance. Indeed, *Paulista* caused us lost time when she first passed to windward, then allowed us to regain the inside berth at a turning mark, but then re-passed us - again to windward, by the time we had close-reached to the finish at Dickenson Bay. By then, *Sete Mares* was almost out of sight although we were able to estimate she was about six minutes ahead. When we had finished, our rough calculations lead us to

expect second place but once ashore we were elated to find that we had won by just 16 seconds! A very satisfactory start; and cause for gentle celebrations at the evening beach party (sponsored by Virgin Atlantic and attended by Sir Richard Branson himself) a raucous magnificent barbecue extending for some four miles alongside lapping waves, with Caribbean bands playing well into the night.

Monday 25 April – Race 2

The day dawned windless, with the promise of no more than 5-6 knots later. Indeed, the fleet emerged from its slumbers to find some boats anchored in new positions, the lack of wind overnight producing numerous problems with various keel configurations causing boats to slew in every direction. In fact Nick J and Suzi had found it necessary to re-anchor *Tarka* during the night to avoid other swinging boats. Conversely, the good ship *Barbuda* – weighing in at 13 tonnes - and with tackle to match – suffered no difficulties at all! After a one hour delay, the Race Committee set a satisfactory windward-leeward course and got the whole fleet away with few difficulties, but in a fitful 6-8 knot breeze. *Tarka* soon settled into light-wind mode with the usual arrangement for minimising windage – i.e. dad sits down below!

This sacrifice soon began to pay dividends and at the windward mark *Tarka* was seven minutes ahead of second placed *Anticipation* (Pete Newlands' 40.7, being sailed by a team representing the Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club) which, in turn, was just ahead of *Sete Mares*. Although the light winds clearly did not favour *Sete Mares* with her small furling headsail, we were unable to capitalise on our advantage because the breeze now disappeared altogether.

However, with her extensive Solent experience, *Tarka* was soon ducking and diving in search of the next shift, achieving some success and confident of making the leeward mark with the next puff. But it was not to be as, sadly, the Race Committee decided to abandon the race;

regrettable but understandable with boats heading in all directions, and the very real prospect of a lottery developing. Unsurprisingly, after a further one hour delay, racing was abandoned for the day and the participants headed for Jolly Harbour, the venue for the second night of regatta revelries. Further frustration was caused by the heavens opening soon after our arrival. So we all went swimming in the Beach Harbour Pool (alongside the bar), where we were all very happy to get very very wet, both inside and out!

Jolly Harbour having become Suzi and Nick's second home of late, their intimate knowledge of the staff and shoreside hostelries soon had us moored up in the cosiest berth and ensured pole position in the Dock House Restaurant. Another fine evening.

Tuesday 26 April – Race 3

The start area for the third day's racing was off the SW corner of the island, beyond Curtain Bluff and the nearby reef – a six mile motor to get there in good time. Although the wind had returned, it was still fitful enough for the 'racing big boats' to have their "round the island race" postponed, so they raced the south coast course, starting about half an hour ahead of the racer/cruisers.

Tarka, racing in Racer/Cruiser II, had a fine start and was soon playing the shifts on the beat towards the turning mark beyond Falmouth Harbour, and led into the run west towards the Legacy mark south of Curtain Bluff. With *Tarka* finishing first by a margin of just 36 seconds over *Sete Mares* and with *Anticipation* second on corrected time, *Tarka* was able to consolidate her overall position in first place - a good reason for confidence going into the halfway stage of the regatta. In truth, it was emerging that *Tarka* had an enormous speed differential over the other boats, due mainly to Nicholas's attention to detail and Suzi having spent the whole of her time in Jolly Harbour polishing the hull and appendages. This gives *Tarka* an edge as soon as she is in

clear air and is obviously leading to some frustration towards the back of the fleet.

In Racer/Cruiser I, our friends on *Disco Inferno* racked up a win, just ahead of the friendly, Hamble-based Russians on board *Murka* (with whom we had raced across the Atlantic in the ARC). *Gienah*, our team mate, finished fourth and *Spirit of Jethou* third - good news all round for Great Britain!

Wednesday 27 April - layday

After three days of exhausting racing in temperatures in the 90s, a quieter day was to be very much appreciated. But not so for *Tarka*. Ever since Antigua Sailing Week 2002 (on board *Gunshot*) we had planned a special outing for lunch at Harmony Hall and the returnees were just itching to show off the secrets of this little corner of paradise. So, in the wake of our CCRC friends, by 10.00 hrs *Barbuda* was underway, with the laggards on *Tarka* deciding in favour of a lie in and an off-road taxi ride to the romantic, Italian hilltop restaurant.

Harmony Hall is located on the edge of Brown's Bay, in the SW corner of Nonsuch Bay, on the west side of Antigua, necessitating a six mile sail out into the Atlantic, to the west of English Harbour, and south of Shirley Heights (do you remember the Epsom Derby winner of that name?) and then north to Green Island, all memorable locations for those on their first visit to Antigua.

David Barrett and I, having successfully navigated these shores with Maggie and John Skillicorn back in 2002, were confident of finding the way in but, nevertheless, wisely chose to set waypoints and proper courses to avoid the numerous reefs. By 12.00 hrs we had crept past Green Island and along the south coast of the Bay and were safely anchored near to the Oceanis 411 *Pink Lady* (another ARC competitor) and preparing ourselves and the dinghy for ferrying to the shore. Now, I know some of the *Barbuda* crew are considered to be a bit fussy about

anchoring, and tend to take their time with such chores, but we really did not have time to draw breath (let alone change our shorts) before the Classic 70s S&S Swan 44 *Pavlova* arrived with a flourish, looking truly beautiful in her bright red livery, complete with young and fit crew, who were soon ashore and striding up the footpath towards the bar.

However, here is a classic case of the hare and the tortoise for, within a few minutes, the ever alert Jennie, Tim and Neil had noticed that *Pavlova* was on the move, slipping between two other yachts and heading for a lee shore. No problem! "*Tarka* to the rescue!" Without any thought for their own safety, all three leapt into the *Barbuda* tender and were soon alongside *Pavlova*, boarding the wayward yacht, recovering her hopelessly inadequate anchor, and nursing her back towards safer waters. Meanwhile, Glenn had been on the VHF to Harmony Hall summoning the *Pavlova* crew who soon returned at high speed using the restaurant's launch. Further discussions (including the matter of recovery charges) lead to *Barbuda* lending *Pavlova* the spare kedge anchor, chain and line – all gratefully received (and returned in tidy form later in the afternoon).

So on to Harmony Hall, where the chastened *Pavlova* crew were quick to honour the agreed salvage fee – plying us with copious quantities of chilled white wine which, incidentally, was also consumed by the land-based bleary eyed members of the *Tarka* crew (and what had *they* done to share in our reward?) What a wonderful place this is. A fine location with good food from the ever attentive Ricardo and staff. We were soon joined by Marion and Charlie, long standing residents of Antigua, whose son lives in Chichester, and not even a stone's throw from Woodies Wine Bar (well known haunt of Nicholas, James and Lucy). Charlie had lent *Tarka* his garage for the duration of our stay in the Caribbean and was looking forward to removal of the dock box – now only a few days away! Ed Holton also came along – having been taken into the fold as first mate aboard *Barbuda* for the trip round to Dickens Bay. Ed belongs to Royal Southampton YC, where he sails

his J110.

Whilst lunching, we also met up with *Pink Lady's* Mandy Poole – the winning lady skipper in ARC 2004 – who is now on her way back to Jolly Harbour prior to leaving *Pink Lady* for shipping back to the UK (with *Tarka*) and joining the crew of *Flica* – another fellow ARC entrant, to help her sail back to the Med.

The afternoon swept by, until - with memories to cherish - we let *Barbuda* slip her anchor for the sail back to English Harbour, witnessing yet another wonderful sunset. But we digress – is this not supposed to be the crew that "never stops racing"?

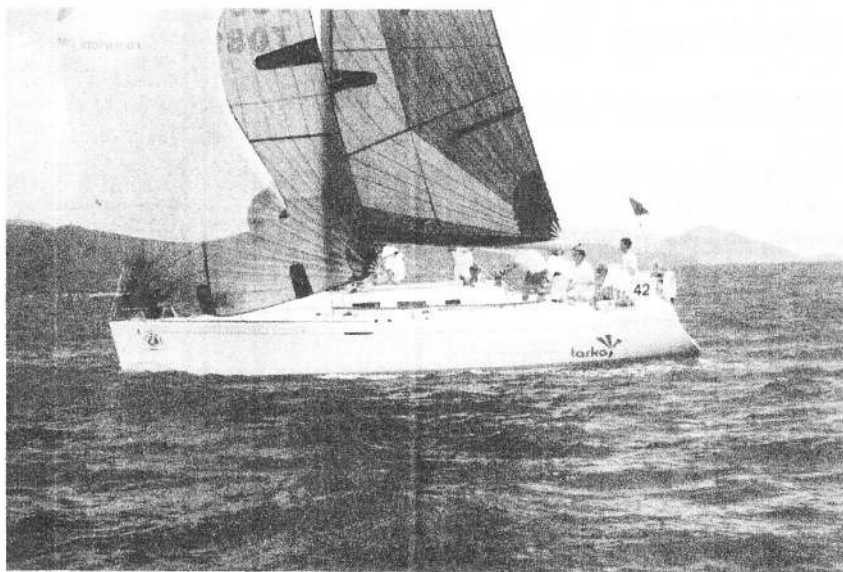
Thursday 28 April - Race 4

Today the racing big boats undertook their postponed round the island race, with *Titan XII* (a Reichel Pugh 75) setting a new record of 5 hours 4 minutes and 45 seconds for the 44 mile challenge. *Titan XII* was sailing with America's Cup helm Peter Isler on board as tactician – so no excuses there !

The rest of us sailed the south coast race, looping between buoys off Falmouth Harbour and Curtain Bluff. Starting in Rendezvous Bay, the OOD soon noticed that the outer distance mark had been dragging and indicated a short postponement whilst it was re-laid. However, when our turn came, Tim and Nick C were fairly sure the buoy was still not perfectly placed and planned their most audacious start of the week – on port at the pin end of the line! All worked well except that one other 40.7 *First Away* had noticed the same bias but (wisely?) decided to start on starboard! So - port start it is, but necessarily followed by a very nippy tack onto starboard as *First Away* bore down on us. Once again, we just had the edge on boat speed and soon worked through *First Away's* lee to establish a clear lead. Cross-tacking the fleet on port was the most satisfactory consequence, and a just reward for dealing with

the basics and planning the start properly.

From there on, it seemed easy to build a commanding lead before we turned the spreader marks (Tuna and Cat) off Falmouth Harbour and set off west towards Curtain Bluff, continuing to extend the lead to about seven minutes ahead of *Aya Sofia*, which had been improving steadily throughout the week on this, the first ever regatta for Marshall Murphy in his new boat. He promises to be a force to be reckoned with when he gets home to California. *Aya Sofia* was closely followed by *Sete Mares*, which once again had found enough breeze to raise her skirts.



Now, as part of the amendments issued at the start of the week, the Race Committee had extended the south coast course by inserting an extra loop between Legacy buoy and the leeward mark – something which *Sete Mares*' navigator may have overlooked, as became clear when they sailed on past Legacy seemingly without any hesitation, but on a course

which encouraged the *Tarka* crew to ask the inevitable question of Glenn – “Are you sure you planned the correct course?” (Well, I ask you? - there being no sensible answer to this quite frivolous question!) Happily, *Aya Sofia*, had no such doubts and soon consolidated second place by following *Tarka* around the Legacy buoy – albeit seven minutes after the ‘*Tarka* Inquisition’ had got underway!

Aya Sofia then, more or less, followed *Tarka*'s wake up the final beat prior to finishing on a run into Rendezvous Bay, but 13 minutes behind. *Sete Mares* did a good job of catch up, managing to pass *Aya Sofia* in the closing stages but 18 minutes off the pace on corrected time. The polished entry from Guadeloupe, *Nouf Nouf*, (a GibSea 414, handicapped to receive nearly three minutes an hour against us) finished 22 minutes behind *Tarka* on the water, but moved up to second on corrected time, just 10 minutes adrift.

Subsequently, we heard of an incident at the leeward mark where the 40.7 *First Across* had clattered into the stern of *Elandra* (owned by our good friend Ken Aycott and sailed by a Scottish crew who now race their J80 out of the Hamble), causing considerable damage which brought her regatta to a premature end. It saddened us all, but there was little that could be done quickly enough to repair the damage. Fortunately, Ken had much happier news the following day when he became engaged to Kay, who he had met exactly one year ago at Antigua Sailing Week 2004 – we wish them the best of luck for their future together.

For *Tarka*, a third bullet to take into the final day's racing (nervy, eh!). Today, *Spirit of Jethou* finished second in class and *Gienah* third, so looking good for the team prize.

Friday 29 April - Race 5

Only light winds today for one of the more demanding races, the ocean

race, so-called because the windward mark is set well out into the Atlantic and appropriately named Africa. The tactician on *Tarka* now had a dilemma, for a ninth place would secure a class victory, but would not rise to the challenge of securing first place in the fleet – ahead of our Hamble friends on the winning Racer/Cruiser I yacht *Murka*.

Glenn urged caution. Tim and Nick C planned to be first across the line (as usual). So into the mêlée we ventured, perhaps being slightly cautious in steering clear of the pin end bias, but slipping too close to the First 42 *Augustine* (sailed by a crew of heating and ventilating engineers from Hastings, and placed 13th in Class at this stage).

So - the crew of *Augustine* seized their opportunity – indeed as their highlight of the week – they luffed *Tarka* over the line! “Sail No. GBR 7080 – you are OCS” boomed the OOD over the VHF, no doubt for all to hear (and chuckle!) A sharp luff and a slow gybe soon saw *Tarka* back behind the line and making her second port tack start of the week.

The light winds again made stealth and trim the order of the day, and of course that debatable tactic – minimising windage by venturing below decks into the sauna. Add to this *Tarka*’s blistering boat speed, and we soon began to overhaul the opposition. By perhaps staying further offshore than the majority, *Tarka* was in the lead even before we were half way towards Africa! Indeed, at the windward mark, we were mixing it with the tail end of Racer/Cruiser I, had already passed our friends on *Disco Inferno*, and were right on the tail of *Murka* – and could nearly see the whites of their eyes!

Thereafter, we were able to defend our lead for a further beat and a run to the finish and secured victory by eight minutes (and, incidentally were 55 minutes ahead of *Augustine* – sorry!) So we finished with a perfect score – four first places in four races. A great credit to the crew and in particular the painstaking preparation by Suzi and Nick. *Tarka* truly does still look as good as new – even with 5,000 miles under her keel.

Good news today – *Titan XII* was not first in Fleet; so they now have six points and *Tarka* has just four points – i.e. the lowest score of the week! But we then discover that only the Racing Division qualifies for Boat of the Week – so that accolade still goes to *Titan XII*. We must invoke the rules for “a moral victory”!

During the afternoon, we were taken aside by Mrs Jan Santos, the ASW Race Manager, to meet some of the Race Committee and to be presented with the crew prizes for the winning boat. Mrs Santos feels strongly that the owners tend to reap all the prizes and leave the crew with nothing so had decided to make sure that at least one of the boats was given crew prizes for everyone – all much appreciated. This rather private affair included an interview with Alastair Abrehart, a journalist with “Sailing Week” and “carribeanracing.com”, based in Tortola. Alastair also took some photographs which we hope to see in due course.

In the evening, we were privileged to attend the Nautor Swan Reception – presumably because we were part of the winning British team which, otherwise, comprised only Swans, and so began a (small) ‘orgy’ of celebrations, including dinner at the Copper & Lumber Hotel.

Saturday 30 April – Prize giving

Well – two prize givings actually. With a wet day making it difficult to re-provision *Tarka* as a cruising yacht, there was some frustration although, even as I write this log, the memory of the rain has dimmed – probably because there was so much else going on and that - after all - and as we now well know – the rain is only ‘liquid sunshine’!

At the afternoon prize giving, we were marched on to the podium as part of the winning team – together with *Spirit of Jethou* (Swan 601 – second in Racer I Class) owned by Sir Peter Ogden and *Gienah* (Swan 62 – third in Racer/Cruiser I) sailed with a crew drawn from *Aera*, the

Sydney-Hobart victors in 2004. So we were in very good company. For the team prize we were presented with the Commander Nicholson Cup. This was followed by the award – in our own right – as “Best British Boat” in Division A, for which we received the Fletcher Trophy.



The Winning Team, photographed before Tommy and Neil had to head back across the Atlantic (by air!)

Late in the afternoon, and between the prizegivings, Suzi and Biddy, together with Anni Matthews from *Fizz of Cowes*, organised a dockside barbecue attended (it seemed) by 300 of our closest friends! Conscious that our adventure was coming to an end (Neil Morton had already had to leave to catch his evening flight) Anni and Suzi wanted to be sure we had a chance to celebrate with all the friends we had made along the

way (please re-read the ARC log if you have any doubts about that, but suffice it to say that we first met *Fizz* in Las Palmas back in October and John Danby the month before, when he sailed on *Tarka* in the Little Britain Cup).

Anyway, a good time was had by all before setting off for the evening at the Nelson Ball, where we received:- The Sandhall Trade Marks Trophy for first in the Racer/Cruiser Fleet and the Air Canada Cup for first in Racer/Cruiser Class I, together with a special prize for Nicholas – an Oceanus titanium watch (not yet on the shelves of your local jeweller – and a great relief to Glenn, who can now hang on to the Cork Week watch for a little longer).

During this process, with Tommy, the MC, dressed as Nelson and the Governor General of Antigua in full pristine white regalia with plumage et al, the heaviest downpour of the week threatened to bring proceedings to a premature end. However, His Honour the Governor General was made of sterner stuff, and insisted on continuing through to the end (he probably has two full regalia costumes at his disposal!)

During the evening, we met Sue Pelling – a journalist with *Yachting World* (well – actually Nicholas first sprayed her with champagne – Formula 1 style – and then we met Sue Pelling!) Sue took the opportunity to carry out an impromptu interview which has already found its way onto the YBW web site and, perhaps, heralds more glory in the July issue of the magazine !

Sunday 1 May

With some sadness, Sunday dawned and we went on a further tour of good-byes – especially with the *Fizz* crew.

But then it was time to leave, with Glenn joining Nick and Suzi to get round to Jolly Harbour to honour the commitment to unload Charlie's garage, and get some sails stowed on board *Tarka* in preparation for

shipping. Incidentally, this perpetuated a minor crisis when two – yes TWO – cockroaches were discovered on the pontoon about to make a dash for freedom via *Tarka* and the North Atlantic! Needless to say Suzi foiled them with the “F Off” spray – no contest!

Meanwhile, the *Barbuda* crew took a more leisurely route to engage in snorkelling and the like – as a preface to the cruise back to St Maarten.

Sadly, during the day Nick and Biddy discovered that their house in Bosham had been burgled and that the news had taken nearly a week to reach them. We hope that not too many irreplaceable items have gone missing.

In the evening, we took advantage of the hired car to drive round to OJs, a shore side bar; but the service was below par and we were all rather tired by the end of the day. However, we did have a good view of the Southern Cross constellation whilst awaiting the long-delayed main course. Pretty impressive!

Regrettably, overnight, there was a spate of pilfering in the marina; with Glenn losing a few dollars but others missing more serious money and a laptop computer. But we didn't let it spoil the holiday. (Message – “Never let your guard down!”)

Monday 2 May

Do Nick & Biddy ever sleep? This morning, leaving *Tarka* to complete their provisioning, they had us up at 06.00 hrs and on our way in *Barbuda* to Nevis (named by the Scottish sailors after Ben Nevis). Along the way, we passed near to the (very) small island of Redonda and Biddy read us stories about its various Kings. By mid-afternoon, we were moored in Tamarind Bay, expecting to dine at the Beachside bar. Jeff was delivered ashore to make the arrangements, but discovered that a private party was about to “erupt” (which it did); so we moved down

the coast and Jeff set off to Charlestown to seek other possibilities. In fact he found a very suitable restaurant in the Golden Rock Beach Side bar and we had a very pleasant evening. We also met the proprietor who organised our very own “*Tarka* Island Tour” the following day.

Tuesday 3 May

We were ashore by 10.30 hrs to meet Steadroy, our guide for the day, and set off to tour around the whole island, viewing historic artefacts and then the Lord Nelson Museum which is particularly poignant this year – being the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar. Evidently, Nelson met and married Lady Nesbit here and was on the island just five weeks before his death. Overnight we sailed to St Barts. Setting off at dusk we sailed north along the west coast of St Kitts (see previous reports) and then south of St Eustacia and north east towards St Barts - into a stiff easterly.

Wednesday 4 May

Arriving in St Bart's in *Barbuda* at 03.00 hrs, rather earlier than we had planned, we found our preferred anchorage but were quickly ushered away by a vociferous Frenchman who said we were in amongst moorings - not that the chart said anything of the sort. Nevertheless, we bade him farewell, found a more suitable location just 100 metres away, and retired for the night. In the morning, we discovered *Tarka* was anchored nearer to the north shore and so decided to check out the fore and aft moorings inside the harbour. This proved to be very satisfactory and *Tarka* was immediately summoned to join us. By 11.00 hrs. we were in the French cafes of St Tropez (well nearly) where Nick C expressed complete satisfaction with his double espresso. By 13.30 we were lunching on the quayside, where the vin was ‘OK’; and by 20.00 hours we were dining in the Blue Palm Pizza house (Tres jolie, trop cher); joined by Teer, a friend from the Finnish yacht *Never Never* – another ARC competitor. A very satisfactory day.

Thursday 5 May - Biddy's Birthday

After quiet celebrations, again in the very early morning, we set off for St Maarten, hoping to get to Marigot Bay before the Immigration Office closed (they do not keep user friendly hours). We arrived at about 11.30 and put Nick C ashore - on the "wrong" side of the inter-island ferry port - where, somehow, he persuaded the officer in charge to let him through. Meanwhile Jeff steered *Barbuda* round to the fuel station, which provided diesel but not petrol (for the outboard) - no matter - we tried our best. Thereafter, now cleared to leave the island the following day, we spent a relaxing afternoon in Friar's Bay and then moved on to Anse where *Tarka* was already anchored. A barbecue was prepared for the evening, and the *Barbuda* crew began to prepare their bags for departure the following day.

Friday 6 May - Homeward bound

The day dawned absolutely miserable - incessant liquid sunshine - but probably a good sign for those of us returning home. We even dressed in our swimmers for the short trip into the Port Lonvilliers Marina, anxious not to get our travelling clothes too damp. Nick and Suzi decided to spend the day in this very well protected marina, and helped tidy *Barbuda* prior to checking out. A taxi was arranged to take us on the one hour drive to the Princess Juliana Airport, on the south of the island where we boarded a LIAT Dash 8 (Jeff knows about these things) for the flight to Antigua, via St Kitts.

In Antigua we had to clear out through Customs and then back in through Emigration - all part of the tedious bureaucracy no doubt set up by the outgoing British regime. Whilst waiting in the departure lounge we were pleased to see Anni and Jan from *Fizz*, also now at the end of their long adventure. The flight back to UK was uneventful apart from the immigration delays at Gatwick, which surpassed even the standards set by the Antiguan officials, such that we were very pleased indeed to see Jayne with David's car immediately outside the link bridge, to

whisk us away.

Finale

So - here we are near to the end of our adventure. Nick and Suzi have sailed on to Virgin Gorda and will soon be loading *Tarka* onto the Peters & May ship for her trip back to Southampton. Thereafter, we have some UK charters booked and hope to be joining in a few RORC events - but will it all seem a bit tame?

In a month's time, our fellow Chichester yacht *Jezebel of Cowes* will be setting out on her voyage south to join ARC 2005 and spend 2006 on the Caribbean circuit. We wish her well and - incidentally (you surely will understand) - are pleased to confirm our availability to attend J boat receptions, Nautor Swan and Beneteau Dinners etc etc. and if necessary, at (very) short notice. (and courtesy of the wonderful Virgin Atlantic Airways).

Praying to God - trusting in radar

A cruise passage to Cherbourg

by Brian Dandridge (*Sycorax*)

If you have watched the classic 1967 movie, *The Battle of Britain*, you may recall a scene where the Minister for War is talking to Air Chief Marshall Dowding. The conversation goes something like this: Minister - "So what you are asking me to tell the Prime Minister is 'You are trusting in God, and praying for radar'". Dowding - "No, I am praying to God and trusting in radar".

I know exactly how he felt. The 2005 CCRC annual cruise to France was due to start at 06.00 on Friday 27 May, two hours ahead of our usual start time to take into consideration the 08.00 low water. However, with Robert on board, *Sycorax* doesn't take part in the race

and usually sets off independently ahead of the fleet. With an efficient Autohelm and four people capable of taking watch I decided to set off after supper on the Thursday evening in order to enjoy a full day in Cherbourg. I had spent the day down at the boat getting things ready and keeping an eye in the weather. All looked good with winds forecast as F3 – 4 easterly, going round to the south during the course of Friday and increasing to F5 on the French side. After a week of fresh south-westerlies this was good news.

During the afternoon "Uncle" John Hampton joined me and helped to complete the preparations and we waited for the rest of the crew to arrive – Pat Morrell, Gerry and Robert. They came at around 19.00 and I was surprised to hear from Pat that Brighton was fog-bound. We had supper on board, after which I popped my head out of the companionway to see a thickening mist heading in from the west. As the evening light dimmed so the mist thickened until by 22.00 visibility was down to less than half a mile and decreasing.

With our old boat there was no way I would have even considered setting off in these conditions, but when I bought the Swan from Trevor and Monica Rose back in January I took the decision to update the boat's electronics. I had a completely new system fitted comprising Raymarine ST60 instruments, and the C80 integrated GPS/chart plotter/radar system. I had never used radar before but had a couple of opportunities a few weeks earlier to try it out in clear visibility so I was comfortable that it was working and that I could identify targets.

At 22.15 we slipped from our berth at Sparkes Marina and felt our way out into the gloom. Visibility was worse than I had expected and we felt our way along past the HISC pontoon. "I can't see any sign of Sandy," I said to Pat. Bang! We hit Sandy. Fortunately HISC have replaced the old metal buoy with a plastic one so there was no damage – apart from to my pride and nerves. As we turned the corner past HISC we tried to pick out the way to the Bar Beacon, but we couldn't identify

any meaningful lights. I asked Pat to take the helm whilst I went below and stared hard into the chart plotter to see where we were and called out instructions to Pat to enable him to keep in the channel. We passed the Beacon but could barely make out its shape even though it was just yards away.

Solent Coastguard had put out the shipping forecast including "patchy fog" in our area. I called in to report our departure and passage plan. "Are you aware of the fog?" the coastguard asked. "Yes," I replied, "you said it is patchy fog. Do you have any indication as to how patchy?" I asked. "No," came the answer. "If you are going, perhaps you could tell us. Do you have radar?" "Yes," I replied, not letting on that I was a complete novice with the system!

A few moments later Hugh Caldwell came on the radio. He had set off a little earlier, got as far as Dean Tail and decided the visibility was too bad and was feeling his way back in. We kept a wary eye out, as in these conditions we could collide without warning. Then we saw a strange sight – a red light, a white light several metres to the left and higher, and a second red light a further few metres to the left of the white. All the trained yachtmasters and day skippers on board tried to work out the meaning of this combination. Whatever it was, it was less than quarter of a mile away, heading in our direction. We decided that discretion was in order and turned to port, away from the apparition.

"*Sycorax*, *Mons Meg* here. Is that you over there?" Hugh's voice came over the radio. "Yes, Hugh. Is that you over there?" we answered. We exchanged blasts on the fog horn and realised that the strange formation of lights was in fact *Mons Meg*. The second red light was the white stern-light shining through the red ensign!!

After a brief conversation over the VHF Hugh decided to trust in our electronic eyes and felt that if he could stay in close company he was happy to go with us.

In close convoy *Sycorax* and *Mons Meg* set off towards Cherbourg motoring in the light breeze at around five and a half knots. During this stage of our passage Pat remained at the helm whilst I stared into the chart plotter/radar screen. After about twenty minutes we reached the Nab Channel, which we crossed near New Grounds. At this time I had the radar configured for short range so that I could clearly monitor our position in relation to the various marks in the vicinity. This meant I would have relatively little warning about any ships approaching. Sure enough when we still had around 100 yards to go before reaching the safety of New Grounds, and with *Mons Meg* a further 50 yards behind a large blip appeared on the screen coming through the marks on our starboard side. I called Hugh to let him know and watched the relevant blips on my screen very carefully.

Fortunately the ship, whatever it was, passed astern safely. The next 20 to 30 miles passed uneventfully but with little sign of any improvement in the visibility. We were still under engine mainly because there was only about six knots of wind and also because I was unsure how much of a drain on my batteries the radar would be. After many miles with almost nothing showing on the radar we started to pick up a number of large blips – we had reached the westbound shipping channel. In my ignorance I concentrated on the blips showing in the top half of the screen, i.e. those targets ahead of us. They moved steadily from left to right and I could see there was no cause for concern. However, after several minutes I realised that the two blips showing at around 7 o'clock on the screen, i.e. on our port quarter, were closing the range without any appreciable sign of any change in bearing.

This is when I taught myself how to use the MARPA (Mini Automatic Radar Plotting Aid) facility on the C80 system. It is brilliant. I pressed the button to select "target tracking", moved the cross-hair to cover the nearest blip and pressed the button to "acquire target". After a few moments I was presented with information regarding the range, bearing,

course and speed of the target. That was the good bit. The not so good was the fact that the bearing wasn't changing and the range was now down to around one and a half miles with the target coming at us at around 22 knots!

I called Hugh, who was a few yards away on our starboard beam and relayed the information so if we were hit he would at least know it was coming!!

Fortunately, as the range decreased the bearing began to change more and more rapidly. Finally, the target passed astern but only by around a quarter of a mile and totally hidden from us. It was then time to focus on the second target approaching from the same direction. The story was repeated and again the other ship passed safely but fairly close astern.

That was the end of the adventure in that as dawn broke, the visibility improved and we were soon able to see for several miles. The wind increased and we hoisted the main and unfurled the genoa. The engine was switched off along with the radar and we had a great sail the rest of the way to Cherbourg.

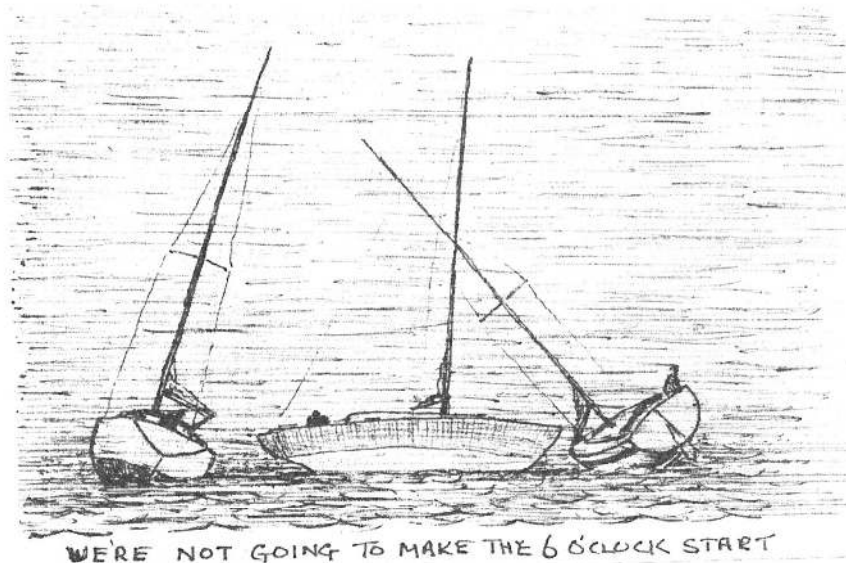
As I said at the outset of this report, this was the first time I have had to use radar in anger and I was very impressed by the system. I can certainly recommend the Raymarine C Series to anyone. It was easy to use, easy to understand and very effective.

Cross Channel Race

Only four of the eight starters finished in the race from Chichester to Cherbourg on Saturday 28 May. *Jo Jo Gunne* (Richard Creer) took line honours with an elapsed time of 11 hours 20 minutes and beat *Gunshot* (Peter Wallace), the only other Alpha participant, by about two minutes

on corrected time. *Penrose III* (Bill Cartlidge) led the Beta fleet across with an elapsed time of 11 hours 35 minutes and *Markova* (Gavin Marriott) was second with a time of 13 hours 6 minutes. *Jezebel*, *L'Aquarelle*, *Green Pepper* and *Arcadia* retired.

In e-mailing the results to members Results and Handicapping Officer Pat Morrell commented: "I hope that I have included all participants, but it was a little difficult to establish which boats started and retired, which boats having gone aground, subsequently started and then retired, which boats having gone aground did not start and the boats who having entered didn't like the look of the conditions or the forecast and so didn't start. If there is anyone not included in the results who thinks that they should be included, please let me know."



Aground in the fog (Cartoon by Freddie Kemp)

CCRC Spring Cruise – Chi to Cherbourg Race

Friday 27 May

By Anne Bonwit (*Gunshot*)

May is also time for the Brighton Festival. At 10.20 on Thursday evening the audience's enthusiastic applause died away and I was able to leave the stage at the Dome in Brighton where I had been singing in a performance of Sir Arthur Bliss's *Morning Heroes* – which you will hear on Radio 3 later in the year! A quick change from one uniform (long black) into another (sailing gear) and a quick march to my friends' car – lovely people who had offered to take me as public transport could not get me there in time for the early start on Friday – for a not so quick drive to Hayling Island. Navigating those twisty island roads through the fog was exciting.....but we made it in good time and I arrived to board *Gunshot* at midnight.

Morning was light, but we still couldn't see a lot. If anything the fog had thickened during our five hours sleep. So the departure from the marina out to the proposed start of the race was not quick either! Once at the buoy we started to see other boats looming through the murk. It was not a cold morning and we could just about make out that the sky was blue above us. Pete decided that a race would likely be possible as the wind was beginning to disperse the greyness. We heard on the radio that CYC had postponed their trip.

At 06.00 we all set off, apart from three boats which were resting on the mud at the time and which followed a tad later after being pulled off. The wind had got up by this time. Soon we were making very good progress and with vastly improved visibility could actually see the Island – in fact it flew past. The sun shone – a gorgeous day!

Eight boats started the race: *Jo Jo Gunne* and *Gunshot* in the Alpha fleet, *Markova*, *Penrose III*, *L'Aquarelle*, *Green Pepper*, *Arkadia* and

Jezebel in the Beta. *Jo Jo Gunne* set off at a tremendous rate and was soon pulling away until later on she was a blue and white speck on the horizon, eventually disappearing altogether.

The forecast said that the wind would go from east to south west later, and it certainly took its time. Meanwhile, it was up and down, and so was the spinnaker. The sun shone, the sea glistened – it became so mirror calm that we did worry that we might not reach France in time for dinner.....then Di spotted a distinct blue line to the south west and we rushed to get the spinnaker down before the forecast strong wind reached us. It turned out to be not so very strong, and in fact quite fickle as we dodged from zephyr to zephyr. *Penrose III* had passed us around this time and were ahead – *Jo Jo Gunne* nowhere to be seen.

As we neared Cherbourg the wind strength increased and we just made the harbour entrance with the spinnaker up and very shy! We had made the crossing in just under 12 hours – 2 ½ minutes under! We believed that Richard was well ahead of us – and we were surprised to learn later that on corrected time he had beaten us by less than 2 minutes!

Penrose III won the Beta class, with *Markova* in second place. The other members of the Beta fleet retired – they definitely didn't want to be late for dinner. This was a memorable crossing – made so by glorious weather and close results. It certainly set the mood for a wonderful week to come.

The Alternative Fleet adds power to CCRC's Spring Cruise

Having raced with CCRC for many years in a number of different yachts, including several Dehlers and a 101, former Commodore Freddie Kemp and his wife Pam acquired a power boat, *Lynx VI*, so that they could continue to enjoy life afloat. They have now been joined by Trevor and Monica Rose, who sold their Swan 36

Lohengrin to Brian Dandridge and replaced it with a motor cruiser called *Lowongin*. Together they have formed CCRC's Alternative Fleet.

by Monica Rose (with help from Trevor, Pam and Freddie)

Having been members of CCRC for umpteen years and having raced yachts all that time, this year saw us on our first motor cruiser. It is taking time to get used to not switching the engine off just outside West Pole but the advantage is in getting there faster and drier.

The Alternative Fleet on the Spring Cruise consisted of *Lynx VI*, a Nimbus 32, and us - *Lowongin* (christened by the *Penrose* skippers when the real name of our yacht was *Lohengrin*). We thought it a catchy name to continue with. We have an ACM31 built by Dufour, and for such a small size it is very cosy and has all the comforts of home. Being a motorboat brings unused-to hopes. When sailing we would hope for a force 3-4; now we hope for as little wind as possible, which means getting up early and departing before the breeze sets in.

We set off for Cherbourg on Friday 27 May in company with *Lynx VI* having had a shakedown visit to Southsea Marina for lunch the week before. This is how we discovered that Freddie was a boy racer/speed merchant. He had been racing yachts for 50 yrs and I suppose it's in the blood. Freddie and his wife Pam have also been CCRC members for umpteen years, but more umpteen than we have.

We left Sparkes Marina at 05.45 in thick fog, but we were happy to know *Lynx* had radar. On our approach to Chichester Bar Beacon and West Pole we spotted four yachts, some of which we recognised, lying quite well over in the sand.

We thought about approaching to help but even with a one metre

draught we could be of no help, so we continued following our leader. Fortunately the sun came out half an hour later and we had a good crossing, although a bit bumpy in the middle. We were across the shipping lanes in no time at all with no worries. On our arrival in Cherbourg five hours later we heard that Frank of Hayling Rescue had managed to get them all afloat. On a falling tide we thought this was a heroic rescue. Frank really does know his stuff.

Cherbourg in time for lunch! Unheard of in our sailing days. One by one the racing fleet arrived. Some had raced but others had not, due to lack of, and fickle, wind. The programme for the week with our CCRC friends was ably organised by Brian Dandridge of *Sycorax* and Peter Wallace of *Gunshot*. The cruise has been our most favourite holiday previously and we found that it still was. The company, companionship and camaraderie are a special feature of our Club.

All boats left Cherbourg for St Vaast but there was little wind for the sailors. It was here that we had the oyster party, ably presented by the *Penrose* skippers and crew who had been playing CCRC golf that day. Hugh Caldwell of *Mons Meg* supplied champagne as he and his Contessa 32 were celebrating a 'big' birthday, complete with log book dates and places visited during that time. This was followed by the usual singsong, in which The Music Man is a must as the favourite song of Robert, navigator/son of Brian and Gerry Dandridge on *Sycorax*. After the singing and BBQ it was very late and an early rising was expected for the boules tournament. This was well organised by Martin and Andrew of *Arcadia*. Teams of four joined from different boats to compete for the trophy (it is very competitive with some really good players). Needless to say, after a late night we were not at the start, but the other half of our team, Rita and Martin of *Carisma*, held the fort for us and won their round.

At the afternoon lock we left for Carentan, all except *Lynx* - Freddie had decided to stay on in St Vaast as this is one of Pam's favourite

places. It was obvious from the number of CCRC visitors on board his vessel that he is a well remembered past Commodore.

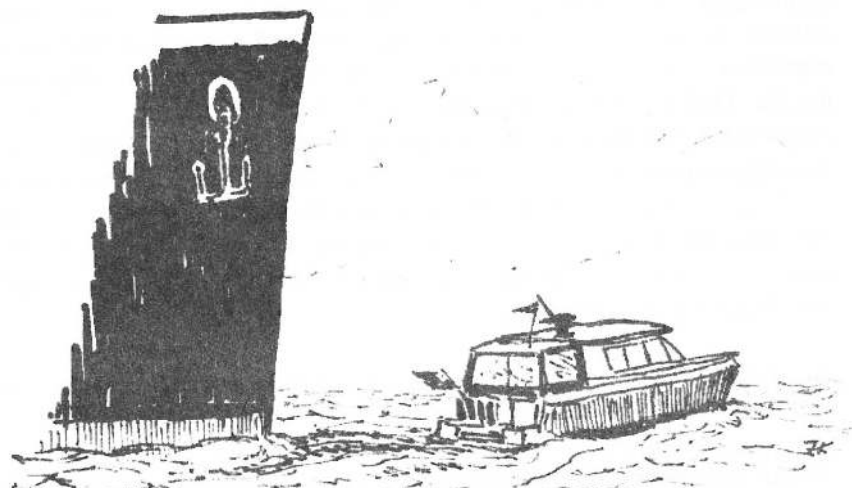
We wet our new baby's head with everyone on our arrival in Carentan after the short trip from St Vaast, again with little wind, which we appreciated. This was the place for the culture-vultures. A short train journey to Bayeux to see the Tapestry and Cathedral had been organised and was most interesting. This was followed late afternoon by the Driftwood Challenge on the river. It was won by a well constructed, polystyrene hull with green (hi-tech carrier bag) main made in a few minutes by Tom and Denise of *Denicia*, while the other entries had been working for hours to come up with a vessel. Some even did not make the five minute gun and were still sawing and fixing at the start. One, who shall be nameless, was disqualified for a "flying start" (an illegal use of balloons).

We did not take part in the go-kart racing this year, age catching up with us, but it was well attended and exciting for everyone.

On our last evening in Carentan on our way to dinner we saw the Meteo forecast and learned that the sea was due to get agité. Commodore, Jacky Black of *Arwen*, entertained us all to drinks before we walked into town to the CCRC annual cruise dinner. The menu and venue were organised by gourmet diner Peter Wallace. It was superb, with copious amounts of wine. Yet another late night back on the boat and another early start for the first lock at 05.00 BST. This was good planning by Trevor as the sea was flat calm and sparkling all the way home. Our only 'happening' was five large ships, more in a bunch than a line in the shipping lane, and we had to slow down and go around them. We were home in time for lunch!

On the strength of a benign forecast in the Capitainerie at St Vaast, *Lynx* headed for home a couple of days early. However, by mid Channel the sunshine disappeared and the smooth sea became choppy. The

forecast over the VHF had Worthing and Lee-on-Solent reporting wind force 5 and raining. In a fog bank in the westbound shipping channel, two ships passed within a mile, according to radar and they didn't see hide or hair of them.



THE WRETCHED THING IS UNDER WAY

Cartoon by Freddie Kemp

SW of the Isle of Wight, with the sea now on the rough side, in rain and spray with windscreen wipers hard at it, *Lynx* sighted a ship dead ahead, apparently stationary. As they came up to it, both Pam and Freddie clearly saw the anchor chain. At this point they altered course to pass a couple of ships lengths ahead, but as they came up to it, it appeared that the tide (thought not due to change for a couple of hours) was sweeping *Lynx* towards the ship. A further alteration of course to keep clear didn't appear to do the trick. The bow was now dangerously close. At this point they made a very very quick U-turn and started heading back to France. It was only then that they realised the ship had weighed

anchor and was under way.

The moral of this must be, unless you have clear visibility and can see what is going on, if you are passing close to any ship at anchor, always pass under their stern. You never know when one of these ships can suddenly up anchor and pounce on any unwary yachting.

Almost "always the bridesmaid" - Round the Island and other races

A round up of CCRC's season by Pam Marrs

Many congratulations to CCRC Vice Commodore Rob McLeod and the crew of *Sareema* who were second overall in this year's Round the Island Race and won the Silver Roman Bowl, finishing just 1 minute and 40 seconds behind the winner of the Gold Roman Bowl, Tony Dodd's Hamble-based 25 foot quarter tonner *Purple Haze*. Other CCRC yachts among the 1,648 entries included *Arion* second in division and 22nd overall and *Jo Jo Gunne* second in division, *Tarka* fifth and *Gunshot* 10th in division, and *Saphire* ninth just ahead of *Exeat* 11th in their class and just seconds apart on the water. Congratulations also to *Mikado*, second in the Classic Racing Yachts. Other CCRC participants included *Sycorax*, *Scarlet Jester*, *Mantra*, *Tantrum* and *Leo Lady*.

Exeat was first in class and second overall in the Royal Southampton YC double-handed Santander Race. *Mikado* was second in class at Cowes Week. *Scarlet Jester* also competed

Tantrum and the new *Leo Lady* survived this year's gruelling Fastnet Race.

Green Pepper and *L'Aquarelle* took part in Fowey Regatta Week.

Several CCRC boats were seen around the Brittany coast in August in

not the best of weather! *Sycorax*, *Denecia* and *Jo Jo Gunne* had a brief encounter in Treguier, whilst *Arwen* sailed further south to La Rochelle. *Jezebel* was spotted heading south for the Canaries.

With so many seconds it seems as though CCRC is always the bridesmaid, which leads me on to the great news of the engagement of Amanda Jukes to Patrick Marshall of *Mantra*. Congratulations to you both and many best wishes for the future.

Wrinklies add brains to Tarka in RORC Cowes - St Malo race

by Glenn Jones

Tarka did well in the RORC Cowes to St Malo race on 2 July. She finished first in the First 40.7 Class, in which there were 10 entries, fourth in Class IRC 1, in which there were 48 entries, 19 of which did not finish, and 29th overall among 209 entries, of which 81 did not finish. The crew that assembled at Swanwick Marina on Friday 1 July consisted of Nick Jones (skipper), Suzi Lawicka, Glenn Jones, Ed Nettleton, Patrick Morrell, John Aldridge and William Wootton

There is a special RORC award for this race – The Newcome Hoare Memorial Trophy which is awarded for the best boat which has 25% of the crew under the age of 25 years of age. Some of the *Tarka* crew felt that a new award is now warranted – targeting the best boat with 70% of the crew over the age of 50! To explain, suffice it to say that, for this occasion, I had assembled a large contingent from Chichester Cruiser Racing Club and the old Storm 33 crew and adversaries. Plenty of brains but rather lacking in brawn!

At 12.20 the IRC class started to the east, just behind the smaller IRC 2 and 3 boats and 10 minutes ahead of the largest (IRC zero and IRC super zero). *Tarka* planned a long run in from the direction of Gurnard

but hoisted the spinnaker too early and had to drop it back to the deck as the Squadron line approached rather too quickly. However, at the gun, the spinnaker was re-hoisted without trouble and we followed our old adversary *Anticipation* down the Solent. At the Forts it was clear that the spinnaker would need to be dropped and Nick called for the No.3 genoa. Unfortunately the luff tape split on the first hoist and some time was lost whilst the heavy No.1 was dragged from below and hoisted in its place – not the ideal sail as we were then somewhat hard-pressed tacking south against the tide outside Bembridge Ledge and West Princessa. However, the crew knuckled down and we held our own for a two hour beat past Dunnose.

As evening set in, and the tide turned in our favour, *Anticipation* was hauled in and, with the wind strength increasing, Nicholas decided that he could now re-set the No.3 having made some adjustments to the luff tape and with a particularly careful hoist.

Saturday 2 July

During the night, good progress was made to the west and it was decided to make a tack south. However, after a further hour, Nicholas was clearly unhappy and decided we needed to make another seven or eight miles to the west. So we tacked again. This proved to be a canny call and enabled us to clear the Casquets on the next tack south and then make plans for a comparatively easy rounding of Les Hanois. This was achieved circa 11.00 hours and with the very real prospect of finishing late afternoon. Unfortunately, the failing breeze eventually petered out altogether with about 20 miles still to go.

We then experienced a mix of emotions, from elation – on viewing the Volvo 60 *Zest of Belgium* overhauling us from astern (where had she been?) - to frustration, when it appeared that *Anticipation* was ½ hour ahead drifting towards St Malo. This drift continued for two to three hours and was eventually replaced by the lightest of breezes giving us

just enough way to clear the SW Minquiers and plan an evening finish. At this stage we honestly had no idea where we stood in the race. Our sighting of *Anticipation* turned out to be wrong. But the Class 2 French J109 *Pen Azen*, a full-on race boat which was part of the French 2004 Commodore's Cup Team, and with a much reduced rating, was definitely ahead, and the HOD35 *Zarafa* was right on our heels. Nevertheless, we plugged on with everybody taking turns at helming – a most testing time for all. We were now spinnaker reaching towards the finish. John Aldridge seemed to have the best feel for the helm. But we had to time our gybing for the finish line with great care and this provoked considerable debate! In the event, we gybed a little too early and, as the finish came into sight, could see that we were drifting the wrong side of the line. So, just ½ mile from the finish, we had to gybe again and stem the strengthening tide to creep over the line at 19.14 BST, after one day and 7¼ hours at sea.

An hour or two later, in a St Servian Bar we met the crew of the A40 *BPO Granville* (a sister ship to *Sete Mares*, a competitor in Antigua Sailing Week) who seemed quite sure they had finished second just behind the IMX 40 *Maverick*. This raised our spirits as we knew we had beaten the other IMX 40 *Meta Baron* and had not sighted any other competitors behind us (where the strengthening tide must have been proving to be a considerable problem).

So, in the morning we set off for the prize-giving and were elated to find that we had finished fourth in class, nearly two hours ahead of *Anticipation* and just 20 minutes behind *Aon*, the French X43 (another member of their 2004 Commodores Cup Team). Very satisfying.

In the event, the last IRC boat to finish – a Trintella 50 – did not arrive until Sunday afternoon, 18 ½ hours behind *Tarka*, and 19 boats did not finish at all !

Owing to the large entry in our class, Nicholas was awarded a RORC

medallion for fourth place and another for winning the First 40.7 class. Not bad with a crew of wrinklies!

Things we want to know?

The names of the three CCRC boats that went aground in the fog at the start of the Chichester - Cherbourg race?

What was the mysterious missing item in *Gunshot*'s essential emergency pack that so amused the Commodore at her Bender?



Has someone we know had a makeover? This photo was taken in Treguier by Brian Dandridge during his Brittany cruise in August.

Smashing Wooden Spoon Race for the handicapped

by John Dunkley (*Marigold*)

Marigold had a smashing Wooden Spoon Race. So much so that we found it necessary to visit Southampton Boat Show a couple of weeks later to repair the damage. Long experience has taught us that if you visit the show on the last day you can pick up some bargains.

The problem started when I smashed a rope clutch. Not just any old rope clutch but one of those double state of the art jobs that are essential kit for the boy racer. The problem is that I'm no longer a boy racer and the rope clutch has also seen better days. We were, to say the least, handicapped. After the race I removed the damaged item from the coach roof and visited a certain chandlery to seek a modestly priced replacement. The man behind the counter shook his head in disbelief. "Are you prepared to take out a second mortgage, sir?" he asked. I tried to look nonchalant. "How much?" I asked. I'm not sure if he saw me wince.

The damage was done on Saturday 10 September during CCRC's team race against Channel Sailing Club. CCRC were holders of the trophy, which we had won on a race to the Hamble followed by a jolly party at the RAF Yacht Club two years previously, and we were eager to maintain our racing reputation. I had conscripted Stewart and Peter, Laser sailors from Tamesis, my Thames based dinghy club, as crew and had sailed to Gosport the afternoon before to be sure that we would be at the start in good time.

Captain Legless (aka Colin Wallace) was Race Officer and with the help of his able assistant had anchored *Gunshot* just south of Spit Sand Fort, ready for the off. I listened carefully as he announced the course on channel 72 – Bob Kemp, Horse Elbow, Southsea Marina 3, Southsea

Marina 2, Southsea Marina 1, with the finish off Portsmouth. Hang on, I thought, I don't have the Southsea Marina buoys entered as waypoints on my GPS. I had sailed past them many times and had a rough recollection of their position but I had no idea which was 1 or 2 or 3. My chart didn't even show them. It was a relief when the Commodore's reassuring voice came over the vhf giving us all the co-ordinates. I was endeavouring to enter the first one when I was called back on deck for the start.

The line clearly favoured a port tack start and it looked like being a close reach to Bob Kemp in a light south easterly. Most boats were bunching at the pin end so, along with *Arwen*, we aimed for a less congested start near the Committee Boat. Unfortunately, one of the opposition yachts decided to come in on starboard and *Arwen* and *Marigold* were squeezed into *Gunshot* with nowhere to go. We avoided a collision - just - and then had to harden up to avoid the oncoming boats from the pin end.

A slight shift in wind direction turned the first leg into a shy spinnaker reach with *Mons Meg* setting the trend for the rest of us to follow. Kites had to be dropped for the tack round the mark and the fleet set off on a white sail reach towards the Forts with *Penrose III* among the front runners. Another shift, and spinnakers were hoisted again. Anxious to make up lost ground, I slammed the rope clutch handle down and it snapped off, leaving the spinnaker pole halyard jammed in the clutch, with the pole set high. Meanwhile, Captain Legless was announcing a shorten course over the vhf. As the fleet struggled to make progress over the now westgoing tide, *Marigold* was the first to benefit from a slowly strengthening sea breeze. Soon we were shy reaching across the tide at up to five knots. Handicapped or not, it was a smashing finish. We may have looked a bit odd carrying a pole without a spinnaker on the way back to the supper at Hornet SC but we didn't care. Channel SC had won back the Spoon but they didn't finish first! On handicap, of course. Can anyone recommend a good mortgage broker?

Crew Register

Many of our skippers are looking for crew, so if you are interested in sailing with CCRC please join our Crew Register. Don't worry if your experience is limited – we were all new to sailing once. Please fill in this form and send it to Hugh Caldwell, 3 North Close, Wade Court, Havant, Hants., PO9 2TE.

Name

Address

Age.....Previous sailing experience.....

Telephone Home.....

Office.....

E-mail

PRIZEGIVING

Don't miss the annual prize giving dinner dance on Saturday 12 November at the Langstone Hotel, Northney.

Chichester Cruiser Racing Club

Application for Membership

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone (day).....(evening).....

E-mail.....

Occupation.....

Name of yacht

(Please note multihulls are not eligible)

Class.....Sail number.....

Where moored

Membership of other yacht clubs

My cheque for £50 (full member) or £15 (crew member) is enclosed to cover my subscription for one year. I understand this will be returned if I am not elected.

Signature.....Date.....

Please send this form to the Secretary: Pam Marrs, 42 Bracklesham Road, Hayling Island, Hants PO11 9SJ.

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The flag measures 1500 x 1000, is printed on woven polyester for longevity and is available from the Club Treasurer, Andy Reynolds, for just

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See Andy's contact details in the CCRC Handbook