



Racing Times

The Magazine of the Civil Service Offshore Racing Club

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www.csorc.org



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Welcome to the first Racing Times for over a year. To compensate for the delay this is a bit of a bonanza issue. Many of you will know that Wave Train spent two months out of the water after hitting a rock off the coast of St Vaast early in the year. This happened just as the season was getting into its stride and was a major setback to the season. Thanks to some excellent work from Bare Marine and yacht husband Keith Taylor we finally got back afloat in time for Cork Week. The season re-started, we put up a superb performance at Cowes under the captainship of Robin Miller – congratulations to skipper and crew. Also in this issue you can read about races to St Peter Port, Poole, and Cherbourg. Many thanks to all those who contributed race reports. We didn't compete in the Winter Series, due largely to a lack of skippers, partly to a lack of time to organise crews.

Now a new year has started and it's time to look ahead to a new season's racing.

CSORC AGM

The AGM was held at the Raven Hotel, Hook, Hampshire on February 22nd

The committee and officers were re-elected with a couple of minor changes. Trevor Drew succeeds Ric van Kempen as organiser of training and introductory sails. Thanks to Ric for all his good work. The role of membership secretary will be merged with the crew bureau, and Chris Stebbings is to take on organising skippers as well as looking after race entries.

It was agreed to drop the CSORC membership fee as this was thought to be an unnecessary administrative overhead, though temporary members will still pay £5 per event.

Treasurer Richard Palmer reported that the club had a £2000 shortfall last season, due to loss of use while the boat was out of the water. On the plus side the real value of the boat is significantly greater than the value shown in the accounts.

Wave Train - Maintenance

In April last year Wave Train hit a rock in the St Vaast JOG. Although there was no apparent damage, closer inspection revealed hairline cracks in the gelcoat under the floorboards in the saloon. Following a survey the gelcoat around the keel join was removed and her hull was repaired where the cracks were. This winter, after sitting on the hard for several weeks, cracks are once again visible around the keel join - probably the result of a subsequent grounding. We will need to have further work done on the hull before we resume racing for the season. As things stand we are expecting to get back in the water for the Le Havre at the end of April. At the moment we are also looking into getting a new mainsail. We currently have three mainsails but after three seasons use the Sobstad racing main is on its last legs and neither of the two dacron mains are competitive.

As ever Keith Taylor is looking for volunteers to help with the non-professional maintenance jobs. This won't be until nearer the launch date but if you can help then contact Keith on 01256 892154.



Wavey at Shamrock Quay, early 2004

The Forthcoming Season

Work on Wave Train means we won't be in the water until later this season. Where RORC and JOG races fall on the same weekend we anticipate giving precedence to the RORC events needed to qualify for the Fastnet itself, but we won't be forgetting favourites like the Round The Island Race and Cowes Week. The Sigma Nationals are in St Malo/Dinard, following the St Malo RORC. As ever it all depends on what people want to do. The full programme is at the end of this Racing Times and will be kept updated on www.csorc.org.

Race Report for 2004

No sooner does the club have a cracking year than the following year everything seems to go awry; and so it was with the 2004 season. A decline in the number of skippers actively sailing, and a mixed bag of weather, both did their bit to keep Wave Train off the race course. But the major culprit was a collision with a rock off the coast of France just north of St Vaast, which put Wave Train on the hard throughout the whole of May and June.

Spring Series

The Spring Series got off to a patchy start with a number of races cancelled due to bad weather (us 18th Mar). To compensate, two races were run on each of the later Sundays and in the end we managed to complete 3 out of 6 races with a best placing of 5th.

The Nab Tower JOG ended when we cut our losses and made for the Hamble (and dinner) after a very enjoyable but ultimately futile light wind sail. And then came the St Vaast JOG. This took place in mainly light winds. An attempt to beat the contrary current in the final stages led us inshore where we hit an uncharted rock. We were quickly off and with no apparent damage went on to finish 11th out of a fleet of 24. On

return the boat was lifted to check for damage and a number of hairline cracks were found. Following a survey it was decided to cut out all possible damaged areas and renew, which took us through to Cork Week.

Cork

As in 2002 the Sigma Nationals were held in Cork Week, which gave us 14th out of 19 overall, with two 10th places and an 11th among the results. In many cases the finishes were very close and only a few minutes separated several places. The Sigma 38 association presented the club with a prize for supporting the association.

Cowes

Cowes Week was a great success with a 9th out of 22 overall, our best result in some time.

The season finished with a 19th at St Peter Port, 23 out of 48 in class at Cherbourg and an excellent 9th out of 27 at Poole. A good result at Poole is becoming a habit: we normally do nothing special on the way out but are rarely out of the top 5 in the return race. We did not enter the Winter Series, largely due to lack of skippers. Hopefully this situation will be resolved for the 2005 season.

Cork Week 10th - 16th July 2004

Crew: Robin Miller (skipper), Richard Palmer, Crispin Allard, Ron Peasley, Nigel Poole, Graham Porter plus Jo Lloyd and Sue Antonelli.

Once again Cork Week was the venue for the Sigma 38 OOD Nationals, in which CSORC represented the CSSC. The CSORC yacht Wave Train finished 13th against a very competitive fleet of 19 yachts. On several occasions an extra 0.05 knots of boat speed would have gained up to four places (equivalent to 2 minutes in a four-hour race). Wave Train did manage to

make it into the prizes, but not as you might have expected. Now read on ...

Races

Sat Offshore/Overnight

Course No 1, 97 miles - chosen as the wind was 5/6 on Saturday afternoon. Following the previous fiasco in Cork Week 2002 all boats were asked to note times of rounding at each mark and record boats before and behind if seen. We started at 1800. By 0000 the wind was down to 3/4 and dropping. A gut-wrenching thump was heard in the middle of the night as Rebel and Vitesse came to blows in the entrance to Cork

Harbour. The race was shortened at Smiths buoy, to finish after 82 miles.
Wave Train – finished 10th.

Mon Windward/Leeward1

This should have been two races, but due to persistent recalls of the previous two classes we only got one in. 18th position reflected the problems we had with some of the sail changes.

Tue Olympic

Two races around an Olympic course with good consistent results, finishing 11th and 12th respectively.

Wed Windward/Leeward2

Race 4 was close all the way to the finish, where three boats had an advantage on starboard finishing just ahead and within 40 seconds of Wave Train! A top ten place narrowly missed to finish 13th. Race 5 finished 17th.

Thu Coastal

Very breezy, rainy and misty. We almost overshot a mark on the way back from Kinsale. Finished 16th. Adjourned to the champagne tent where crew spirits were miraculously revived by both sunshine and several magnums!

Fri Harbour race

This was the best of all – much like the Solent, with strongish tides and winds deflected by the nearby land. Again close racing to the end, with six boats finishing within 90 seconds of each other after 250 minutes of racing. A very satisfactory 10th place for Wave Train. And with only 0.1

knots between us and a top 5 place, we finished the week with a sense of “if only” and “just maybe”!

Social

Cork is always good for socialising and this was no exception. The Sigma dinner on the Tuesday was at Bunny Connellan's restaurant overlooking the Cork harbour entrance and was highly enjoyable. Ron Peasley, having quaffed a few glasses of red wine, became the choirmaster and divided the sailors into two choirs singing against each other – as if there had not been enough competition for the day already! This was much appreciated by the Sigma Committee.

Finding places to eat is always a challenge in Cork week but we never went hungry. After and sometimes before, there was music and dancing, Ron and Robin being foremost in the latter. On the Wednesday the crew partook of a fair amount of champagne - courtesy of Richard and Robin, which rounded the sailing off very well.

The Sigma Nationals culminated in an informal get-together with some fun prize-giving. The crew of Wave Train won a bottle of champagne for "their continued support to the Class over the years and a pleasure to know".

The Civil Service Offshore Racing Club was on this occasion representing Civil Service Sports & Leisure.

Cowes Week 2004

Crew: Robin Miller (skipper), Richard Palmer, Chris Little, Trish Oakley, Crispin Allard, Tom Knight, Muriel Stosic and Nick Huxford.

With Wave Train trimmed and ready, we set off for the Isle of Wight on Friday, August 6th - Cowes week this year was the second week in August to catch the neap tides.

Through the Sigma 38 Association, a berth was booked at East Cowes marina - a location worth avoiding. The berth was rafting on a pontoon with access to the shore by water taxi only, so no showers or loos. After the first race we started looking elsewhere but the Yacht Haven was booked up well before the week started, as was Shepherds Wharf. In desperation we

motored up river and tried Souter's Yard, next door to the chain ferry, and much to our relief the mooring chief let us in for the week. Souter's is familiar territory to some of us - the Sigma 33 fleet used to moor there.

The first race was a Committee boat start in the western Solent. A beautiful sunny, calm day (shades of 2003 Cowes Week racing with little wind and racing against the tide - or trying to). As usual the first leg for all six classes was up wind. By the time the class before us was starting - start 4 - they were flying spinnakers in a rapidly fading wind. We also flew a spinnaker and as the wind died the tide rapidly took the fleet back to the start line. Not surprisingly the race was abandoned

The next five race days were all RYC starts, heading in an easterly direction (toward Ryde), with the prevailing winds. As in Cork, Wave Train was very competitive in the group below the top, semi-professional five or so yachts. This meant that the usual Cowes ambience, i.e. much debating where to start and the shouting at each mark was greatly intensified, with seven or eight boats all rounding at the same time.

On the Sunday we finished 13th out of 21, a decent standing and our lowest position. The results from then on improved every day. Monday 8th, and on Tuesday 9th place, this time beating the overall weeks winner by two places! Wednesday and Thursday the result was 10th and 9th respectively. Thusday we were involved in a port and starboard (we were on starboard!), a minor collision with Assarain II ensued at one of the marks. We thought only the spreaders had touched, but an hour later the tricolour slid gracefully down the main and vanished into the wild waters of the Solent. Our protest flag was unfurled immediately however Assarain II were shouting the odds and at the next mark tried to reason us out of a protest – to no avail.

The wind had been increasing all week, and for the final, a committee boat start, it was a force 6 with showers forecast. The forecast was accurate and it was a damp and wild race! After an 8-10 knot spinnaker run the 6(?) miles to the committee boat, it was a cracking start with excellent teamwork after a week on the water. On the start there was much threatening from other boats in the fleet, especially Mustigo II (a long time friendly rival, who in the past thought we weren't much of a threat), calling for water trying to get us to turn off the start line (to their advantage). We cleanly crossed the line with Mustigo II in our wake. There were some tricky decisions to make, for example, whether to fly the (heavyweight!) kite or the number 1 genoa on some of the shy reaches. With the increasing winds and heavy seas we sensibly kept the number 2 genoa up for the last downwind leg. The decision was wholly justified as we looked about and saw masts tumbling, spinnakers exploding and massive broaches. And as the rescue helicopter circled overhead we congratulated ourselves on our decisions on which sails to use - and to stay afloat.

This, the last and most successful day of racing, we were very pleased to finish 6th, our best Cowes week result for a long time,

and this made our standing 9th overall, our best Cowes result ever.

As is often the case there were several skippers on board but overall the crew enjoyed a good rapport and worked well together, which shows in the results.

The social scene was more relaxed this year than in recent years, with the mooring being outside of the Yacht Haven. But it was more organised for food - we actually booked three meals and they were outstanding.

Guernsey JOG 27th - 30th August 2004

Crew: Robin Miller, Clifton Wray, Crispin Allard, John ?, Pete Shuttleworth, Frank Watson, Adrian Lumb, Clive Douglas.

1600 Fri 27th, Joining Wave Train

'Twas on the afternoon of the 27th August in the Year of our Lord two thousand and four that we set sail from Shamrock Quay in the River Itchen, for to take part in the St Peter Port JOG to the Isle of Guernsey. And I was blooming late, due to sheer weight of 21st century traffic, and was half expecting to arrive at an empty dock.

Fortunately this was not the case. After some initial confusion about the re-organised Shamrock, I located Wave Train and trundled my gear down to the boat in a trolley. Introductions were carried out, and I found that I had not sailed with anyone present before.

A number of the other guys seemed to be a lot more experienced than I, which I welcomed, as chance to learn. Robin is a respected Yachtmaster of many years experience, and I had heard his name mentioned before, by other skippers. John also seemed to be a very experienced sailor, and Americanisms peppered his speech, as this was where he had done most of his sailing.

We finally cast off at about 1620 and motored our way down the Itchen to S'Hampton Water. Start time for the race was 1800 so we had plenty of time. We motored until we were virtually upon the start line, and then put up the main and fore sail and started to manoeuvre for an advantageous position to cross the line.

Once the horn sounded we crossed the line and kept fairly well inshore to Wight, making short tacks as the wind was from the SW. This made for a full working day in about two hours for Frank and myself who were manning the genoa sheets. As we came up on Yarmouth we were further off

shore and it was possible to reduce the number of tacks, and we eventually cleared the needles just after dusk. Wind was about force 3. Richard was running the chart table and popped up periodically to see how we were doing, or if we had passed this landmark or that green marker buoy. Robin had us all in lifejackets and safety lines at dusk.

Night Sailing

We started running watches - 3 hours on 3 off - at about 2300 and I crashed immediately, and performed my usual trick of dropping off about 1 sec before hitting the mattress. Woken at two I was in a filthy mood - something for which I apologised the following day - however, no one had noticed, so that was all right (what does that say about my usual demeanour?) the usual cause of this is lack of food. In fact we hadn't eaten before sleeping simply because the matter was not brought up. Robin had said there were baguettes on the boat before we left, and to my delight, someone in the know dug them out and handed me one! Egg mayo at 0230 would not suit everyone, but was very, very, welcome in my case.

We could see the lights of ships moving against a velvet darkness, a full harvest moon lit a shimmering path across the sea to the south west until it set about halfway thro' our watch. With the moon set the clouds cleared, and a brilliant display of stars normally invisible on light polluted land left us breathless with wonder.

Our watch was led by John, and consisted of Adrian, Peter and myself. Everyone took a turn on the helm until 0500, when we woke the other team. When I awoke at 0800 things were much quieter and indeed the wind had dropped considerably, in fact at one point, we were doing only one or two knots. Alderney was in sight off the port bow as a low grey hump, under an azure sky picketed here and there by white cotton wool clouds. The rest of the fleet were scattered before, and behind us in the early morning sunshine. A few seagulls drifted after us on the light NW breeze and the odd bulk carrier passed us going north.

Sat 28th

The spinnaker had been put up under the previous watch, and John was working the spinnaker sheet. After about an hour or so, Adrian took this over. I mentioned to John that I had only done the task once before,

so John asked if I wanted to have a go. After a second's trepidation, I agreed and I spent about an hour ensuring the spinnaker stayed aloft, with helpful pointers from John on technique. By the time I handed over, I think I was managing pretty well.

After a couple of hours sailing slowly the spinnaker came down and the genoa went up. Wind was still generally from the northwest, and seemed to pick up somewhat, as we closed on a phenomenon that I had never seen before: the Alderney Tidal Race. Waves moved in all directions and looked for all the world like they were breaking on sandbanks just below the surface. As we started to cross this, our motion picked up considerably. So did our speed, because the tide was now with us and the wind had picked up enough for us to move at a good four or five knots.

Guernsey, with Sark to the east was now well in sight, as as we romped down the finishing stretch and past the northern point of the island, toward St Peter Port on the NE edge of the island. We had to go past the harbour entrance to cross the finish line, marked high on a castle that stood to the south side of the harbour. It was some time before we learnt our placing, but I can reveal that we came 19th in a field of 20. What the hell, we got there, and that's the main thing!

Arrival at Guernsey

We passed thro' the gap in the grey outer harbour wall at about 1400 on Saturday. On the right hand side of the harbour entrance were the low buildings and crane of a ferry terminal, and the outer pool was full of small commercial fishing vessels, a fishery protection vessel, two lifeboats and, unusually an ambulance. Harbour officers were waiting to marshal incoming boats up to a holding pontoon. And we eventually tied up alongside another racer four deep from the pontoon.

Without the wind, the sun was warm in the small harbour, and after we had tidied the boat and folded the sails, we slipped below to change our oilies and wellies for shorts and teeshirts, and Robin produced a couple of good bottles of red wine, which we sat and drank very companionably in the cockpit, while discussing this, and that, and the voyage down. I rang home to quiet the fears of wife and kids who thought I might be "drowned" or worse because I hadn't phoned home the previous evening. While we were doing this a young man in a RIB chugged up and charged us £17.00 for the privilege.

The harbour at St Peter Port is divided into an outer harbour and an inner marina.

On the inner side is a dock wall with a gap for the inner harbour and the town rising up

Results for 2004

Event	Position	Entries
Warsash Spring Series 1	DNF	
Warsash Spring Series 2	DNC	
Warsash Spring Series 3	8	
Warsash Spring Series 4	8 and 5	
Warsash Spring Series 5	DNC	
Warsash Spring Series 6	8	
Nab Tower JOG	DNF	
St Vaast JOG	11	24
Deauville JOG	DNC	
Fecamp JOG	DNC	
Brixham RORC	7	
Round the Island	DNC	
St Malo RORC	DNC	
Cork Week/Sigma Nationals	14	19
Alderney JOG	DNC	
Cowes Week	9	22
St Peter Port JOG	19	22
Cherbourg RORC	23	48
Poole JOG	9	27

the hillside above the harbour. The south side of the harbour is dominated by a castle, which presumably guarded the port in more violent times. It's hard to forget while you're here, that violent times were only 60 years ago for these islands, when they were occupied by the Third Reich. Reminders are everywhere, from the stone tablets on the dock wall, commemorating the return of the allies in 1945, to German concrete gun emplacements, decaying on hillsides or converted for other uses within the town. I even saw in one of the small shops on the dock front a postcard with a swastika on it - can you imagine?

The entrance to the inner harbour has a large concrete sill to keep a minimum level of water in, and at low water there is a considerable drop between this sill and the water in the outer harbour. It was this sill we were waiting for the incoming tide to cover, to a depth of 2.5 metres in our case. Eventually we were able to motor thro' the

entrance and moored outside a small boat called Mous'le.

Once we were settled, we started organising things like ablutions. Frank had a friend he planned to visit, and Robin asked if "friend" could recommend a good restaurant that we had a good chance of getting into that evening. I went off to buy a few piffling items I had forgotten to pack, such as soap, flannel, sunscreen, large towel etc. - it's a good job my head's firmly fixed on, I tell you! After this, a quick shower in the excellent facilities.

Once returned to the boat, we discussed our return trip. Robin favoured going to the JOG meeting at 12 on Sunday and leaving, relatively soon afterwards for Alderney where we would get an evening meal before sailing back over the Channel. There was no disagreement with this plan. It was decided to take a "whip" of £20 from each crew member and we ambled along to the yacht club overlooking the south side of the harbour, near the castle. Over a few drinks

it emerged that Frank had found us a restaurant up in the town, and after we had done, we strolled up.

The restaurant is called Courts Restaurant Bar Grill Steak House. It's in Merchant Street and the telephone number is 721782. I supply all these details because after the welcome we had, and the quality of the food, I have no hesitation in recommending it to anyone, and indeed putting a little business their way. Frank's friend knew the head waiter and he definitely saw us all right! Even down to complementary brandies all round at the end of the meal.

We took a slow stroll down to the harbour, during which time we managed to lose Robin and Frank. Don't know how we did that! When we arrived at the boat, it became immediately apparent that it was at an unusual angle, and this had nothing to do with alcohol consumed by the crew. Once on board we realised that the keel had settled in the mud on the bottom of the marina, and that the water retained by the marina sill was in fact less than our draught. However, there was nothing we could do about this and the crew started bedding down. John elected to sleep on deck, because of the snoring. I don't understand why everyone looked at me when he said this.

I was sitting up having a last cigarette, when Frank and Robin returned. Robin was quite concerned at the keel being in the mud and castigated himself for getting the draught of the boat wrong. We checked the depth meter while drinking some coffee, and he said we needed to move the boat while the tide was in the following morning, and recalibrate the depth meter.

Sun 29th Aug

In the morning we rose - not too early - before nine, however, this wasn't early enough to get us into the outer harbour. An abortive attempt to move out resulted in a close encounter with the concrete sill, fortunately at very low speed, and no damage resulted. Resigned to the idea of waiting for the next high tide, at about 1600, we moored outside two other boats near the entrance, and went off to get breakfast.

After this we had to find the JOG reception. This was arranged for all participants in the race, and had been scheduled at the Yacht Club at 1200, however the venue moved at the last moment to a hotel complex up in the town. After a bit of a climb up the hill in the town, we eventually found it. Prizes were given,

speeches were made, and orange juice was drunk - by some - and some members of the crew were able to meet old friends, and renew acquaintances.

Preparations to Leave

I took Crispin off fairly early to go some shopping for some supplies, I still had a tenner of the whip from the previous evening. We walked back down to the town with two guys off another boat, who were able to point us to a small supermarket. I picked up some pasties (all hail the pastie king, Dave Hartland), sausage rolls, some milk, biscuits and orange juice. The girl on the till smiled happily and not even slightly maliciously as she laid a Guernsey £10 note on me, but she knew, oh yes. Then we returned along the dock front to the marina and the boat. The angle was much less noticeable this time, as we were moored in slightly deeper water. We cleared up the boat, put the supplies away and awaited the return of the others.

When the others returned, we put the boat in order for sailing, and settled down to wait for the tide. After what seemed an interminable afternoon, punctuated by runs to the loos on the dock and the local shops (during which I ditched the Guernsey tenner and specifically asked for English money!), seawater flooded - there is no other word to describe it - over the sill from the outer harbour at about 1600. We had about another hour before we had sufficient depth, 2.5 metres, to clear it.

Goodbye St Peter Port

It hit 2.4 m and we were off, over the sill, through the outer harbour to the open sea. The main went up rapidly followed by the genoa and we were sailing again. As Frank remarked, after all the hanging about it was a positive relief.

It was a great day for sailing, with a steady force 4 westerly, bright sunshine with a few clouds. St Peter Port rapidly blurred into the mass of Guernsey behind us, and we settled down for the voyage to Alderney. As we progressed, the wind picked up. Adrian and I were "ballasting" on the port rail, when a wave came over and soaked us both. He had oilies on, I didn't. John and Peter were discussing putting in a reef, as the wind was getting up.

It was about a force 6 by now. John had noted my relative inexperience with heavy seas, and was reluctant to send me forward in these conditions. While changing below I nearly went ar*e over t*t over the table,

which left some impressive bruises and some formidable language ringing in the ears of all those near enough to hear.

While Peter went forward to the mast I manned the halyard from the pit. John cleared the reefing line at the outboard end of the boom. On the order I released the halyard and lowered the sail to Pete, who slipped the reef cringle over the hook. Pete pulled the reefing line thro' and winched it up while I winched the halyard back up. The whole operation was carried out very smoothly and quickly.

Difficult Approach to Alderney

As we passed up the western side of Alderney things seemed to get even rougher - a combination of tide and wind. As we rounded the north side of Alderney these conditions continued, and to complicate matters, Adrian, who was steering, started reporting very worrying depth readings. Robin was quite concerned, as those waters are notoriously tricky.

We were now trying to get the sails down, with the problem that every time we turned into wind we were peak and trough on big fast waves, I saw John who was kneeling right down on the foc'sle next to the genoa leave the deck in the kneeling position more than once in increasing dodgy conditions. I released the halyard and he and Pete got the genoa down, with some difficulty and lashed it. Pete stumbled back to the cockpit and we watched John finish lashing down the genoa.

At this point someone - I think it was Pete again - pointed to a large split near the reefing cringle in the mainsail. This was really bad news, and conditions were if anything getting worse. Robin gave immediate orders for the main to be lowered, if only to prevent further damage. There was just about time to get the topping lift on, and no time to hoist up the boom, before we were heading into wind again, with all the aggro that entailed. John, Pete and Robin were on the boom as I released the halyard, Adrian was still steering. Frank and Clive were in the cockpit.

I remember it quite graphically, a kaleidoscope of impressions and images, as you do with fraught situations. Trying to release the halyard, ensuring the jammer stayed off and the line ran free, trying to help the three on the boom control the sail with the other hand, someone throwing up hideously down in the saloon. I was right under the boom in the pit, and the boom and sail came down right on top of me,

struggling under the sail, one arm up on each side, it must have looked hilarious, oh dear me, yes.

A wave crashed across the top of the saloon and straight down the open hatch into the saloon, which I promptly slammed shut. Pity I didn't do it before! The halyard is caught around the stairs in the saloon, I'm head first down the stairs to free it. Was I scared? No, but thinking all the time about my kids. The halyard stopper knot was on the jammer so I struggled from beneath loose flakes of sail to find myself face to face with Robin on the other side of the boom. Pulling the sail in tight he look at me and gasped "Sail Tie!". So I dived down onto the ladder again, and grabbed a slack handful. As I came up again I saw John signalling that the halyard was off the sail and attached at the foot of the mast so I took up the slack. The motor was thumping like a heartbeat, and we turned toward the little port again, and suddenly all was peace and light. We all paused to catch our breath, and I reached over the sail and started to put turns of the topping lift on the winch, Robin stopped me and said "Wait 'til we get into the harbour!".

We agreed by mutual consent to file the events under "exciting", and Pete ventured the opinion that things had come close to exceeding the experience of most of those on board. They certainly exceeded mine! But I think we were all right, because Robin, John and Pete himself kept cool heads and never lost control of the situation. It's at times like this that sailors are separated from all the rest. Robin suggested that the strange behaviour of the depth gauge was due to the rough conditions and it was probably picking up air bubbles. We chugged into the harbour, over the last of the big waves.

Alderney Harbour and Another Nasty

On Guernsey, we had acquired a tourist magazine which had given the phone number of the Moorings Pub and Restaurant on Alderney which we had called to book a table. This was fine but the girl I spoke to said that last orders were at 2030. OK I said, we'll turn the engine on to make it in time. Can't life be ironic at times?

It was starting to get dark as we entered the harbour, and the restless sea outside and bleak hillside above us with its crumbling nazi gunports matched our sombre mood. As soon as we had moored to a buoy in the harbour, which took only a couple of tries, Robin flagged down a water taxi and asked the driver to return for us in

15 minutes. A good lad, he did us proud and turned up on the button, I've got to say, in those conditions, I wouldn't take his job.

We turned to and sorted the sail out properly, and it was at this point that the plan to put a second reef in for the trip home across the channel was abandoned. This was because a second tear was found at the top of the sail and a series of small rips down the luff edge. The main sail was at best undependable, at worst a write off.

We went below and changed. Frank and Adrian wished they had put on their wellies, because their shoes were soaked. Frank didn't have another pair. Robin was wishing he hadn't put on his wellies, because he had shot up on deck in a light jacket, shorts and wellies, which in the conditions had filled with water. He ruefully pulled them off, and emptied half the channel over the side. The thick socks he was wearing inside were running with water and squelched out wet footprints with every step he took.

My kit was still well wet beneath my waterproofs and my deckshoes were soaked. Fortunately I had a clean pair of jeans and trainers to wear. Just as we were ready, the water taxi returned, brilliant timing. By this time it was 2020, so we upmosted for the shore. As the boat turned, a spray of water shot over the side and soaked my dry jeans from knee to ankle. Robin had advised waterproofs, but I knew better. What a pillock.

As soon as we were ashore, Robin and Crispin hurried ahead to The Moorings. They arrived at 2031, and were told in no uncertain terms that meals service had stopped, in other words, Go Forth and Multiply. This was a bitter pill for eight hungry crewmen to swallow, so we didn't even stop for a drink. All members please remember for future reference. We stepped back onto the street of this one horse town and considered our next move.

First and Last

We tried a small restaurant further down the street, but they too turned us away. They must be rolling in money to turn away eight customers: about £200 worth of business.

Just on an off chance Crispin nipped into the First and Last to see if they could fit us in, without much hope. He didn't return immediately, so Robin and I followed him in. The lady running the show, bless her heart, had paused for an instant and then said she could fit us if we didn't all sit together. Crispin had locked up in shock.

We filed upstairs to two tables in the warm, stripped off our waterproofs, and drinks were not long coming. The repast that followed was respectable by any standards, not cheap I must admit, but Turbot with Chips and veg is not to be sneezed at. Full congratulations to all at the "First and Last" for knowing the meaning of customer service and hospitality, unlike some of their fellow islanders.

Departure - Motoring Home

We left at about 2230 and caught the taxi back to "Wave Train". After a little argy bargy we got under way at about 2345 and were clear of the harbour by midnight. We were mounting the trysail and genoa to stabilise and running the engine to power. I don't think the trysail accomplished much, but what do I know?

Mon 30th Aug

Watches commenced at 0030 - John's watch took the first, until 0330. It was a cloudy night and the wind was blowing, tho' it had dropped considerably since earlier, thank goodness. The moon was fuzzy behind a cloud, and the only lights we could see were fishing boat lights across the water, maybe miles away. After a quiet watch, we stood down and crashed until 0630 when we were on again.

This time as I struggled into jacket and life jacket I accomplished my second pas de deux of the trip, when reaching for a rail by the chart table to steady myself I missed it and ended up across the cabin in a heap in front of the stove. More inflammatory language followed.

When I eventually went on deck, it was daylight, and the coast of Dorset was just peering over the horizon. Pasties and tea for breakfast, and another quiet watch followed, while the IOW hove into view and the coast became more distinct. The sea calmed down. I took the tiller for the last 45 mins of the watch, I had previously been reluctant to do so, due to inexperience in heavy seas.

At 0930 we crashed again, and woke just before 1200 to see Calshot thro' the saloon window. We stood to, and lowered the sails, and started motoring up Southampton water. I did most of the steering for this, and picked up some very useful tips and practices. We eventually passed into the Itchen, under the BGB, and round the bend to where Shamrock Quay came into sight. John took the wheel for

docking and Pete and I took the mooring lines ashore.

Finale

Once moored, it was the usual post trip routine of clearing and cleaning the boat for the next crew. The main was removed and the genoa properly flaked. The lifejackets had to be sprayed with fresh water to get the salt off. Finally all personal items had to be removed and trolled up to the car park. We got changed.

A final rendezvous with the rest of the crew in the bar, to get log books signed and settle up. It came in at a reasonable £120 for CSORC, and £20 each for Robin, who had footed the bill in "The First and Last" when the whip ran out. I also claimed a pound from each crew member for the supermarket grub, and they showed their appreciation by paying me in Guernsey oncers, to a man. I have a host of friends!

Finally we all bid each other farewell, tho' I suspect it's not the last time I shall see some these guys, which is no bad thing! Then home to the bosom of my family, and the first decent cup of tea for four days.

Clifton Wray

RORC Cherbourg 24September

High pressure was approaching with all that is benign to go with it - fair weather and lighter winds. The race started on the Squadron line, east around No Mans Land Fort and Bembridge buoy, to a finish line just inside Cherbourg breakwater western entrance. The wind was N F4 but forecast to be NW backing westerly; the forecast was unqualified by the crucial *soon* or *later*. So, 65M for the course to steer calculation. Spinnaker all the way so a boat speed of 6.5 knots was chosen and a 10 hour diagram. The eleventh hour showed slack water in the critical area.

The stream was flooding neaps, less than a knot eastbound, and we reckoned mid line would give us tide, angle and position for just carrying a shy spinnaker on a bearing of 110° to the fort. Sail too far north and we'd lose the tide over the mid channel shallows of Ryde Middle. Sail low and we wouldn't get there. We started well in clear air and followed it with a good hoist and held position with near broaching conditions in the 30 boats combined class start for IRC1 & IRC2. We bore away at the fort but Redcoat, the Army Sigma 38, stormed up behind us on a puff, but were not able to complete the business. The last of the foul tide to Bembridge dictated we stay inshore and Redcoat fell away, sailing highand thus at the mercy of the foul tide. We gybed the spinnaker but not with finesse and had a sleigh ride doing over 8 knots for the next 4 hours in flat water sailing a course of around 200°.

The wind then fell light and veered (rather than backing as forecast) to torment us through the night and prompt two successive "course to steer" revisions. From 0600 onwards it did back sufficiently for us to have to drop the spinnaker to creep around the breakwater only to have to hoist again to complete the last mile to the finish and beat off Redcoat and the others.

RORC and Cherbourg Yacht Club had organised a magnificent reception and the fleet was in high spirits after a grade one channel crossing. We flew the CSSC/CSSA battle flag and commenced the arduous task of serious socialising with the Army boat and other people known and unknown. They gave us champagne, oysters and the like. We were a crew of 5 having lost 3 at the last moment due to overwhelming family commitments, so don't dismiss keeping your name on the race list. Great company and a great race to end the season series.

Dave Hartland



Wave Train – Race Programme 2005

From	To	Event		Berth Cost £
Sat, 30 Apr	Mon, 1 May ^{bn}	RORC Le Havre (Cervantes)		130
Fri, 13 May	Sun, 15 May	RORC Cherbourg (De Guingand Bowl)	qualifier	130
Sat, 28 May	Mon, 30 May ^{bn}	St Helier (Myth of Malham)	qualifier	130
Sat, 4 Jun	Sun, 5 Jun	Weymouth JOG		120
Fri, 10 Jun	Sun, 12 Jun	RORC Channel Race (Morgan Cup)	qualifier	130
Sat, 18 Jun	Sun, 19 Jun	Round the Island Race		130
Fri, 1 Jul	Sun, 3 Jul	RORC St Malo	qualifier	130
Mon, 4 Jul	Wed, 6 Jul	Sigma Nationals		†
Fri, 15 Jul	Sun, 17 Jul	Dartmouth JOG		130
Fri, 22 Jul	Sun, 24 Jul	RORC Channel Race No 2	qualifier	130
Fri, 29 July	Sat, 6 Aug	Cowes Week		†
Sun, 7 Aug	Sun, 14 Aug	Fastnet		†
Fri, 26 Aug	Mon, 29 Aug ^{bn}	St Peter Port JOG		130
Sat, 17 Sep	Sun, 18 Sep	Poole JOG		120
Fri, 30 Sep	Sun, 2 Oct	John Lewis Regatta		110

Bank holiday weekends are marked ^{bn}.

This is a provisional programme. The final choice will depend on the requirements to qualify for the Fastnet.

Fastnet. Fastnet crew will need to complete at least 300 miles of sailing in RORC events preceeding the Fastnet. This can usually be done in three races.

† CSSC representative events. The cost is yet to be decided but we anticipate that it will be subsidised by the CSSC. CSSC members will be preferred.

Charters

When not racing, Wave Train is usually available for charter to CSSA-approved skippers. Contact **Trish Oakley** (02392 785157 or tricioakley@aol.com).

For crew bookings contact **Nick Bowles** (01483 306954, csorc@madasafish.com)



Civil Service Offshore Racing Club - Crew Bureau / Membership form 2005

Name:			Department/Agency etc.:																																									
Address (home):			Address (work):																																									
Postcode:			Postcode:																																									
Phone (home):			Phone (work):																																									
Mobile:			Next of kin (name,address and phone no.):																																									
Email address(es):																																												
CSSC No.:	CSSA No.:	NI Number:																																										
<p>Your experience: To assist the crew bureau in ensuring that there is sufficient experience on board, please tick the appropriate boxes below to indicate your experience.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th>Racing, offshore</th> <th>Racing, inshore</th> <th>Racing, dinghies</th> <th>Cruising</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Foredeck</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mainsheet</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Navigator/Tactician</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Helm</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Watch leader</td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skipper</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td style="background-color: #cccccc;"></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						Racing, offshore	Racing, inshore	Racing, dinghies	Cruising	Foredeck					Mainsheet					Navigator/Tactician					Helm					Watch leader					Skipper					Other				
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RYA certificate (highest level only):			CSSA approved skipper Inshore / Offshore																																									
<p>Racing events: If you know which events you are interested in then please list them below. Berths for most events are allocated 'first come, first served'. 'Representative' events are normally only open to CSSC members. Contact Nick Bowles (01483 306954 or csorc@madafish.com) to discuss suitability and availability.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Event:</th> <th>Date:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Event:	Date:																																						
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<p>Cruising/Training events: If you are interested in introductory sails or cruising then please specify below. Training Contact: Trevor Drew (01932 357 637 or t.w.drew@vla.defra.gsi.gov.uk) Charter/Cruising Contact: Tricia Oakley (0239 278 5157)</p>																																												

Please send completed form to:
Nick Bowles, Flat 4, "Clevehurst", 12 Upper Edgeborough Road, Guildford, Surrey GU1 2BG