



31 1/2

THE WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB MAGAZINE

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WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB
Hoo, Kent.

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The magazine of the
Wilsonian Sailing Club is
called 31½ because the club's
present headquarters, the
barge "Wilsonian" is
moored halfway between
navigation buoys 31 and 32.

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June 25th.

once more..... with feeling!

Yes, here we go again, the sailing season is upon us, so away dull winter care and let's get to it!

But wait, a quick dekho out the window and one's enthusiasm becomes somewhat dampened.....literally. The rain is sheeting down....again and the mercury in the thermometer is still struggling manfully to get past the 30° mark. Yes, perhaps next weekend might be a better time to take the boat down after all.

However, in spite of the weather quite a few hardy souls have made the effort and taken their boats down, the new Laser fleet seems well entrenched already and on Sunday April 17th were sailing around inshore of the barge, in the pouring rain, on a sail training session. I tell you, these lads are KEEN. Either that or all that capsizing they indulge in has given them water on the brain!

A Topical Tip. Because of the atrocious wet weather we've been having plus the factor of works vehicles churning around in the course of the new Club-House construction, the dinghy park is somewhat lacking of

Cont.

grass in places. Therefore if you take your boat down before things dry-out, chuck a spade and a couple of buckets in the boot with which you can bring up shingle from the beach to provide a decent base for your boat to stand on.

SEE YOU ON THE WATER.....EVENTUALLY!

Terry

SOME NOTICES FROM THE COMMODORE

CLUB MANAGEMENT.

The Commodore will be abroad on business during May and June. During his absence the Vice Commodore, Bob Jones, will be responsible for the sailing programme, Club boats and the general day to day running of the Club. The Rear Commodore, Clive Grindley, will look after construction of the new Club-House and House Committee matters.

CLUB-HOUSE BUILDING SITE.

Members are requested to treat the North West corner of the dinghy park as a building site and TO KEEP OUT. A token fence will be erected around the areas of the works and access will only be permitted to the site and later to the building under construction with the express authority of a Flag Officer.

It is important that members respect this requirement, which is contained in our agreement with Kent County Council (Community Enterprise Project) who are providing the labour for the work, both in the interest of their own safety and for security reasons. The Club accepts NO RESPONSIBILITY WHATSOEVER for any injury to, or damage to possessions of, members or their guests arising from the construction of the Club-House or associated works.

CLUB DUTIES.

Although it is early in the season, difficulties have already been caused by the failure of members to turn-up in time for their duties. Please remember the Chief Duty Officers tour of duty is from Midday Saturday until Sunday evening (or from Sunday Evening until Monday evening on a Bank Holiday). He is expected to stay onboard overnight and in no circumstances can juniors be left alone on the Barge.

On Sunday morning the Scow should be running by 9 o'clock and the Chief Duty Officer will require at least one of the Assistant Duty Officers to help him by this time. Racebox and Rescue Boat crews should be down at the Club at least one hour before the start of racing. Those doing kitchen duties are needed by 11

Cont.

o'clock to prepare sausages etc for lunch.

If you have to swap duties make sure that you inform the Duty List Secretary, Dick Jordan (Rotherfield 2901). Family members are also reminded that all those nominated on your membership application/renewal ARE REQUIRED BY THE CLUB RULES TO UNDERTAKE DUTIES.....THERE IS NO PROVISION TO OPT-OUT!

RESCUE BOATS AND SCOW.

The Club expects members scheduled for rescue boat duty or running the scow to be competent in handling the boats. The Bosun and his helpers spend long hours maintaining and fitting out the boats and it is heartbreaking for them to see the topsides scoured and paint removed by careless coming alongside. A rescue boat with a line around it's propeller is a liability and dinghies in difficulties are entitled to look for help to the rescue boat and should not regard it as a potential cause of futher damage.

The Club runs courses in rescue boat handling- use them. The last had to be cancelled due to lack of support. Contact Training Secretary, Brian Warwick on Medway 251446. If you are scheduled for duty make sure you read the standing orders for rescue boat crews (in the Club Handbook) and turn up on time and properly dressed- ie. with a wet-suit if you are to crew. Passengers are not allowed in the rescue boats but those scheduled for duty on a later occasion may, with permission of the Chief Duty Officer, go along as a third crew member to gain experience.

The Committee also wish to remind members that children may not be left in charge of the scow whilst carrying passengers and that they may only operate the controls if the Assistant Duty Officer is in the boat with them and is in a position to assume the helm immediately in an emergency.

GUESTS.

Members are reminded of the provisions of rule 10(G). If you bring a guest guests to the Club you must enter their names and addresses in the Visitors Book which is kept on the barge (this applies to visitors remaining in the Dinghy Park as well as to those going out to the barge). You may only bring two guests at any one time, the same person may not be introduced as a guest more than three times in any one season, and a member may not leave the Club premises whilst his guests are there. Please remember that even close relatives who are not in their own right members of the Club count as guests- ie. wives (or husbands as the case may be) of single members or grown-up children of family members.

To reinforce Chris's previous comments, here is a salutary tale from Bob Jones.

a bad day at the club

(A short story with a message)

Saturday's TV weather forecast gave 5mph winds, the mornings telephone forecast was force 4 increasing to 5. Outside it rained in a steady downpour, not a twig, not a leaf moved.

Arrive at the Club early (for a change!) someone has been using heavy vehicles in car park and on track and over upper end of boat park creating lots of mud. There are two boats getting ready, but NO DUTY PEOPLE-ITS 0945. Hooray! we have a complete rescue boat crew but no Chief Duty Officer. 0958, Chief Duty Officer arrives.....racing has to be postponed 15 minutes as unable to get scow and only rescue boat running in time. There is now a gentle breeze.

As the day goes on the rain becomes "showers" - every now and again, its as though you are in the shower, full on, selected to "Freezing"! The wind is force 3-4 but gusting with 90 shifts. Most boats finish with some capsizes.

The afternoon race is due and the wind is now gusting 3-5. At buoy 31 a Fireball capsizes on an outgoing tide and drifts onto the trots. The rescue boat steams in-unfortunately from the windward side, and so he soon has the trot rope around his propeller and is against the Fireball-effectively preventing them from righting it.

The wind increases.....a Laser is upside-down but there is no rescue boat.... GP14 capsizes, rights again but has lost his rudder so sails onto Hoo Island followed by another....then a Miracle seeks shelter on the Island. The scow is despatched and they free the rescue boat by cutting the trot rope. The rescue boat crew do not wish to upset the Hoo Club so they run a new trot rope (boats are still capsized) unfortunately the loose end of the rope they have just tied wraps around the propeller so the scow goes to check the boats in trouble.

The wind gusts force 6. The only remaining boat, the Bubble, goes to rescue the rescue boat.....two on the rescue boat bows, one in the Bubble sawing through the rope and eventually it is free. Their is just time to collect the Miracle and tow it home (the scow has towed in the rest or they have walked along the shore) Several boats are damaged and most have retired.

Cont.

MESSAGE. Unfortunately this story is true. If you are on duty PLEASE ARRIVE EARLY (one hour before racing starts for most duties but overnight or at LEAST TWO HOURS FOR CHIEF DUTY OFFICER).

If you are on rescue boat duty it is not a joy-ride (although I enjoy it) you must know what you are doing....if not contact Brian Warwick (Medway 251446) and get onto a rescue boat training course. We were lucky on this occasion, but we should operate on skill and professional standard organisation, which luck can help but is no substitute.

The 1983 Season Begins

The season started on 20th March. On Saturday 19th the members, their wives and children pushed the one rescue boat into the water. The Sunday was warm, sunny and a gentle breeze encouraged 18 boats onto the water for the first race. The following Sunday it was cold, wet and windy.

Easter comes along but for some unexplainable reason there were not many boats sailing on the Sunday, perhaps having to clear 2" of snow off the boats put one or two off?. The sun came out and there was a good series, the Lasers having the best turn-out of seven.

THE EASTER SERIES RESULTS WERE:-

Fireball	12908	Max Carnegie-Jones
Handicap	742	Derek McAuley
Laser	107066	Carl Palmer
Mirror	21171	Ken Crundwell
Topper	22110	Paul Tyler
Miracle	2110	Yvonne/Martin Jessop
GP14	12405	Alan Smith
Enterprise	20175	Dave Vettergreen

*Good Sailing!
Bob Jones*



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From Muddy Beginnings.....

With the new season now well under way many of you will have your boats down at the club and will have seen that work has started on the new clubhouse although there is hardly much to look at as yet other than a sea of mud which has engulfed the upstream end of the dinghy park.

We have done our best to limit the dereliction caused by the machines carrying out the excavations for the foundations and cesspool, but a wet spring, with twice as much rain as normal in April alone, has made it very difficult. Progress has been miserably slow but with a bit of luck and some dry weather - our farmers say it can only get better from now on - it won't be too long before the ground works are complete and we reach the significant stage when the superstructure can commence and there really is something to see.

The plan is to enclose the building site with a fence rather more than halfway back from the river and to allow access for the works only from the turning space at the bottom of the track. The rest of the upstream end of the dinghy park will then be left to dry out and afterwards levelled before we start putting boats in there: in the meantime John White and the Class Captains will try to fit everyone in the downstream half. Please be understanding if your boat is cramped or you have to move during the season: it will have been worth it when you stand in the new clubhouse next season.

Continued/....

At the moment the delay with the building although disappointing is not critical: let us hope for some good weather this summer both for building and for sailing - I think we deserve it.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several loops and a vertical stroke, located on the right side of the page.

FLEET NEWS

MIRACLE



Paul Absolom

I expect that most know by now that Martin Jessop, our long serving Class Captain, has had to stand down this year due to work commitments, and that I have taken his place for this season. I'm sure I speak for all of us in thanking Martin for his hard work and enthusiasm, that has contributed so much to our present Miracle fleet. Martin will still be sailing with us whenever the B.B.C. let him!

The Easter Cup was contested by three boats, results as follows:

2110	Martin or Yvonne Jessop	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Pts
2180	Paul Absolom	7 "
1329	John Cassell	8 "

Miracle 2110 won all four races, and was helmed by Yvonne Jessop on the Monday. Paul Cusson ably crewed for Yvonne, and Paul also crewed for 2180 on Sunday, so the Miracles certainly kept him busy!

Our Open meeting is on the 15th of May, and the Tasars/Lasers/Fireballs will be assisting on the day. Don't forget, we are due to reciprocate at their Open Meeting later in the year. It would be nice to have a good Club turnout for our Open, so come down and sail if you can.

Finally, if any of us have not yet renewed our Miracle Class Association membership, may I take this opportunity of reminding you of the excellent value it is!

MIRROR/TOPPER



Paul Tyler

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Topper and Mirror Fleets to thank Reg Kuhn for the amount of effort he put into his post of Class Captain for 1982 and my thanks are also extended to everyone who helped to run the Open Meeting.

My concern for '83 is to see a vast improvement in Red Sails. Please make a special effort to come down and RACE or even cruise. Hope to see you down there and racing.

Now that I have got my pen back from Uncle I hope that there might be more reports of GP activities than appeared last year. We seem to have had a slow start but the signs are that in the next few weeks the Fleet will appear in larger numbers.

As I write this the Spring Points Series is coming to an end with mixed results and weather conditions providing a less predictable result than previous years. The final result will be in the next report but appears to be between David Blyth, Ian Parris and Nick Leicester. Our one completed competition is the Easter Cup, as usual an early Easter meant a low turn-out but with tight finishes to all four races. After a promising start Ian Parris was unable to complete the series and the final result depended on positions in the last race between myself and Mike Doherty. The light winds did not do Mike any favours and although David and Ray Blyth crossed the line first, second place for me was enough to win overall, Mike and David sharing second place.

In answer to our Editors query in the last edition of 31 $\frac{1}{2}$, the Bell insignia that appears on our sails in fact not derived from Bell Woodworking but is symbolic of the Bells of Aberdovey Church. The boat was designed in consultation with members of Aberdovey Sailing Club, and the Church bells are a local feature which were selected as being appropriately commemorative of its origins..... obscure, but different.

P.S. Whatever happened to the occasional series "Other Peoples Boats". Has it died after only one article? (What indeed, the first boat was a Fireball. Ed.)

HANDICAP SOCIAL AND PRIZE GIVING.

Tom Keenan

A very nice evening was enjoyed by all those that were present. Martin Jones deservedly took Pots for every series he entered, the rest were spread among the rest of the fleet, with Lasers well represented, I believe showing an improvement over the season and a number of new faces received prizes.

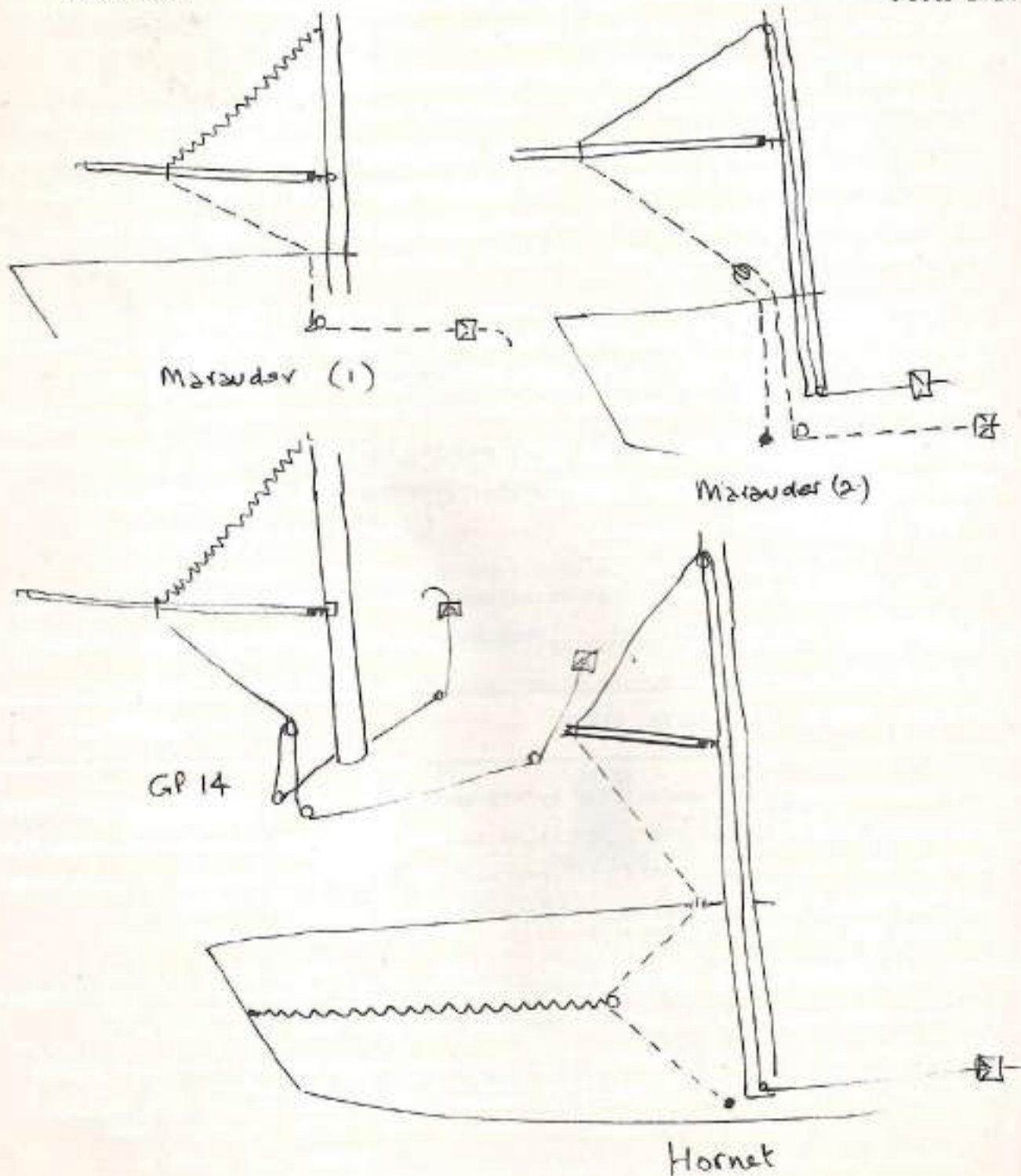
I hope to arrange a training weekend early in the season with a Laser training officer (this event has already taken place and from what I saw was well subscribed. Ed.) As you probably know the Lasers have been given fleet status this year, giving us our own start so courses can be shorter and more varied.

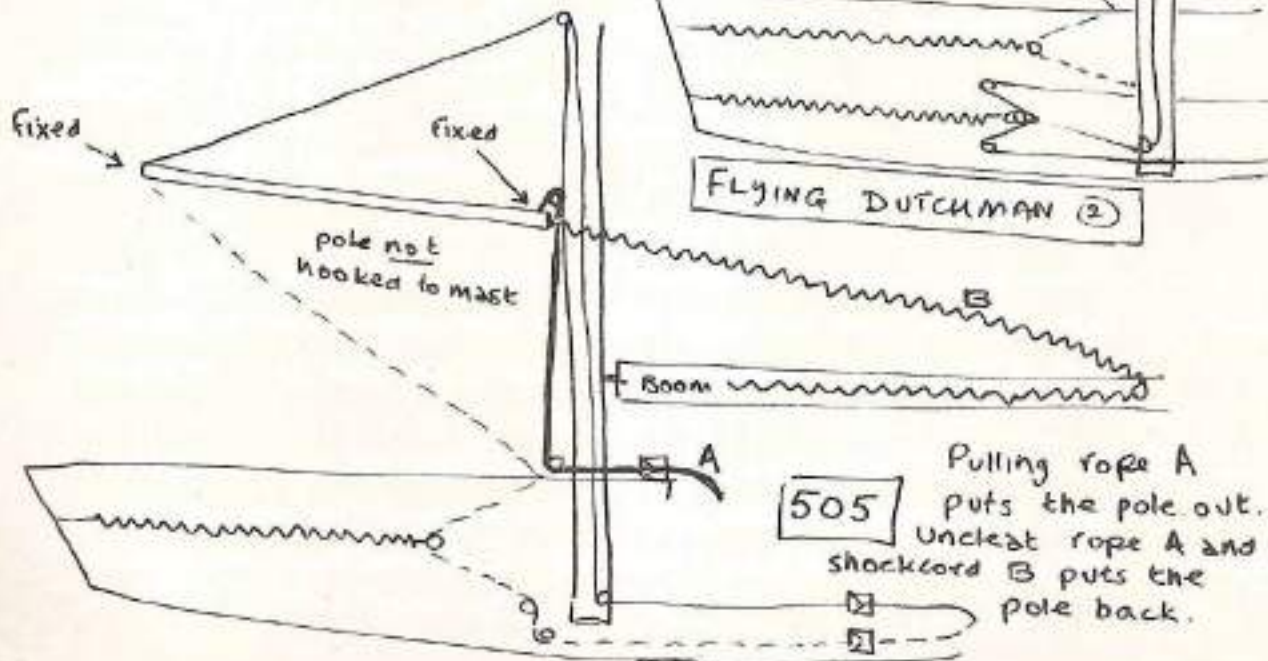
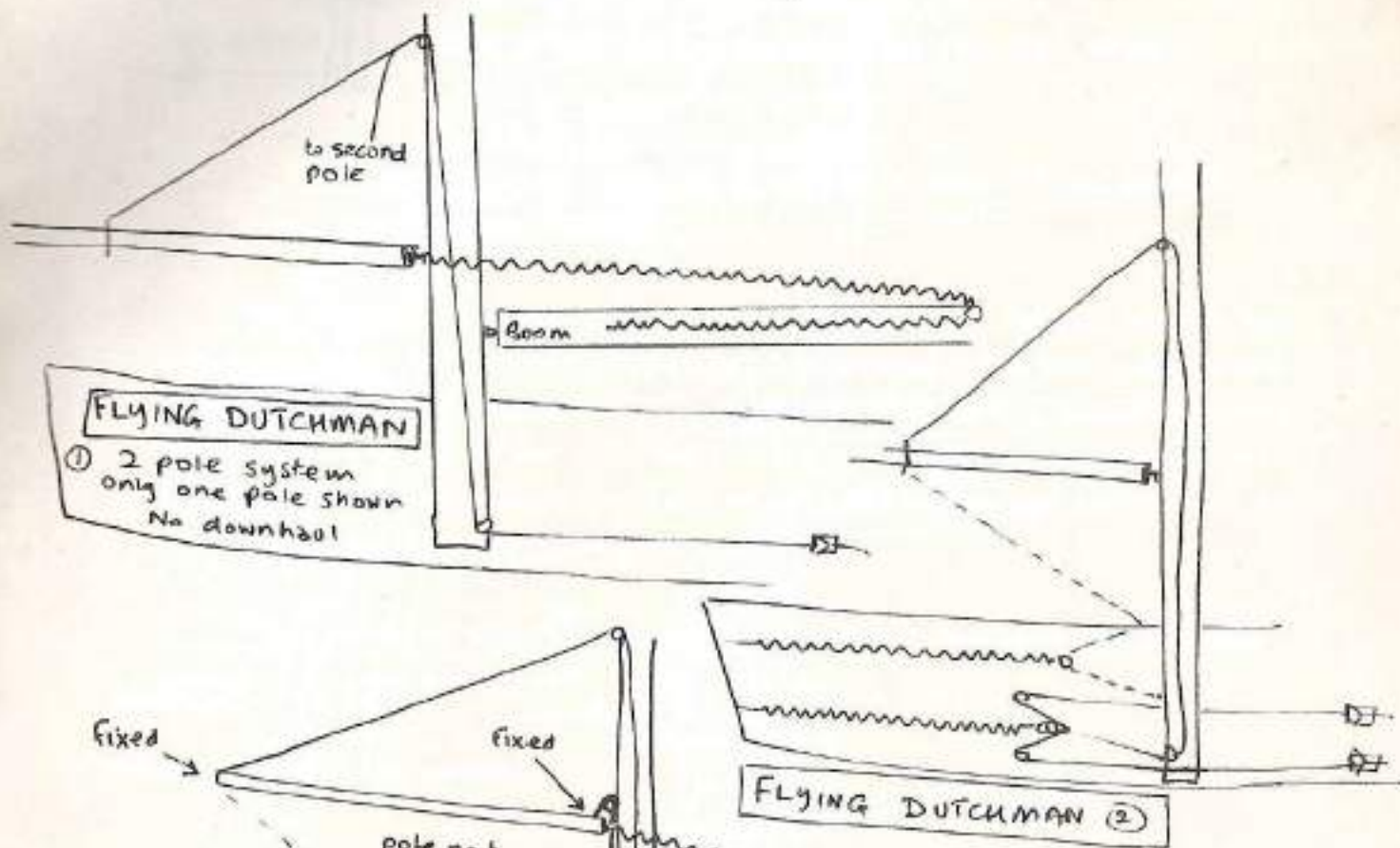
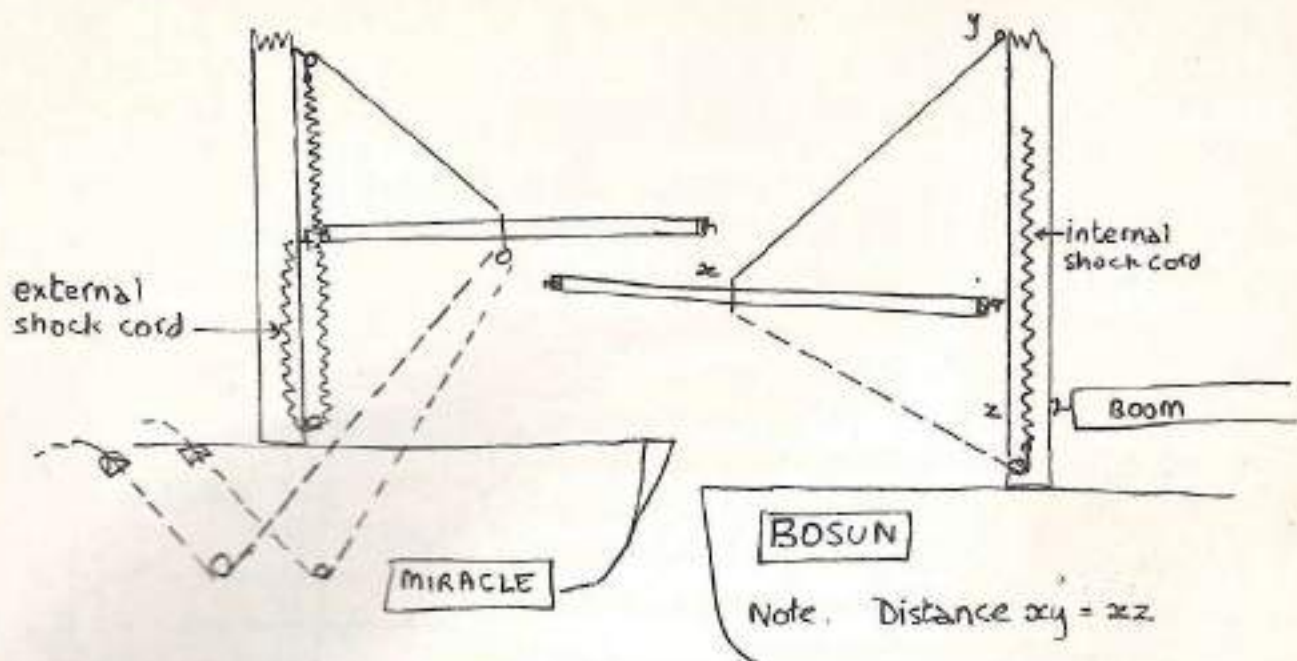
Perhaps members would like to offer some suggestions on this.

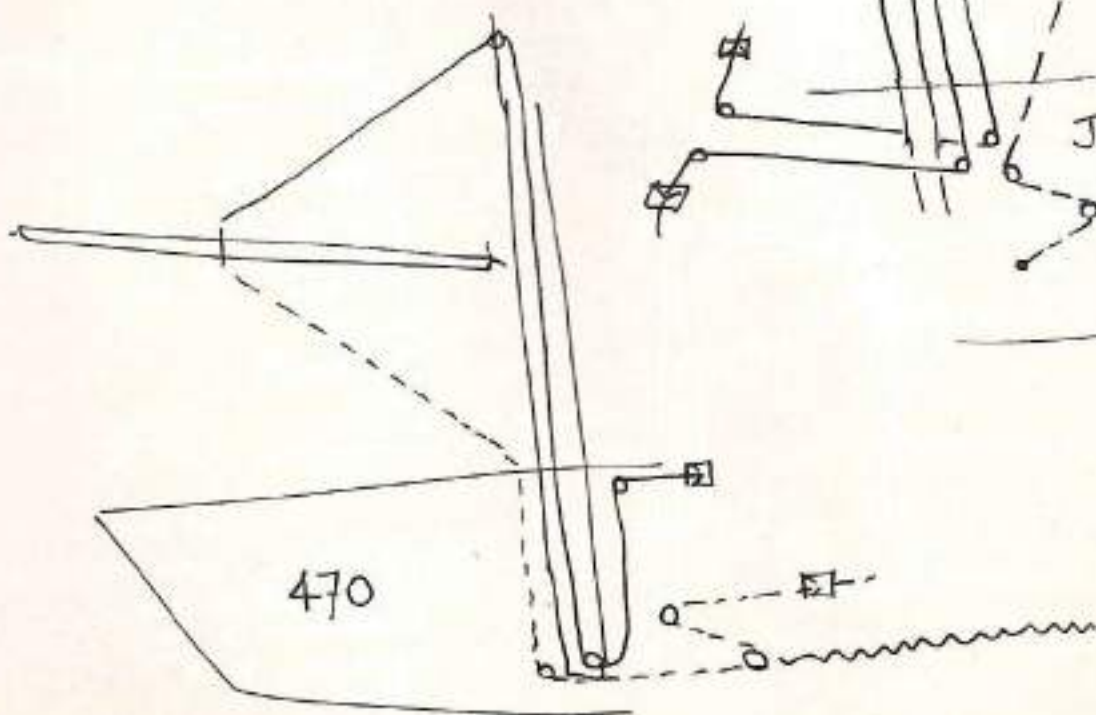
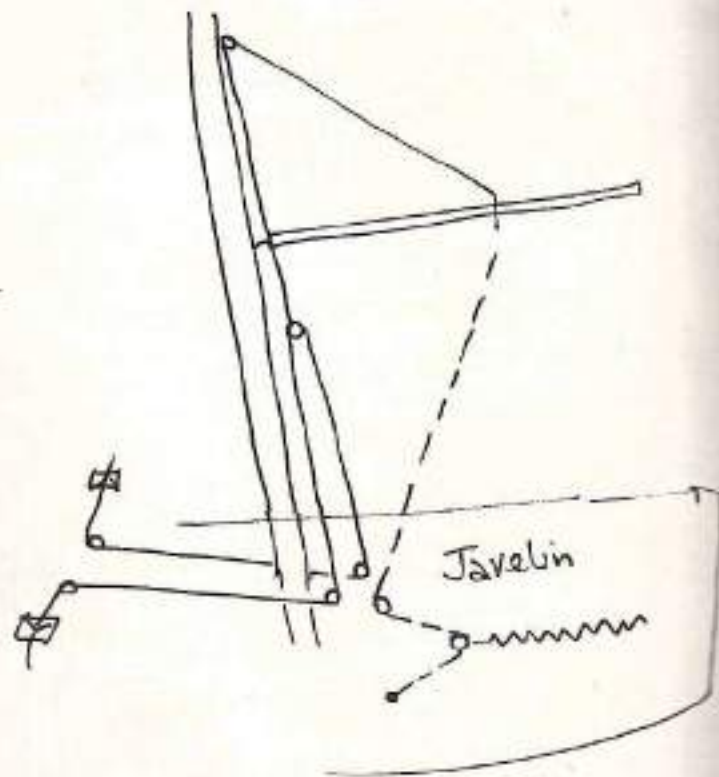
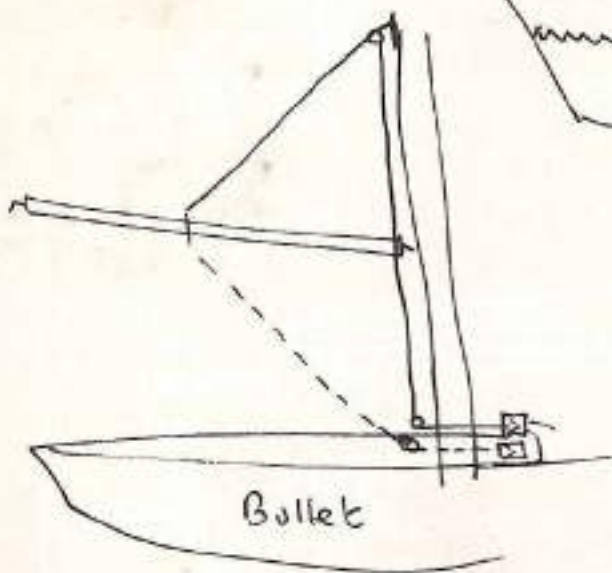
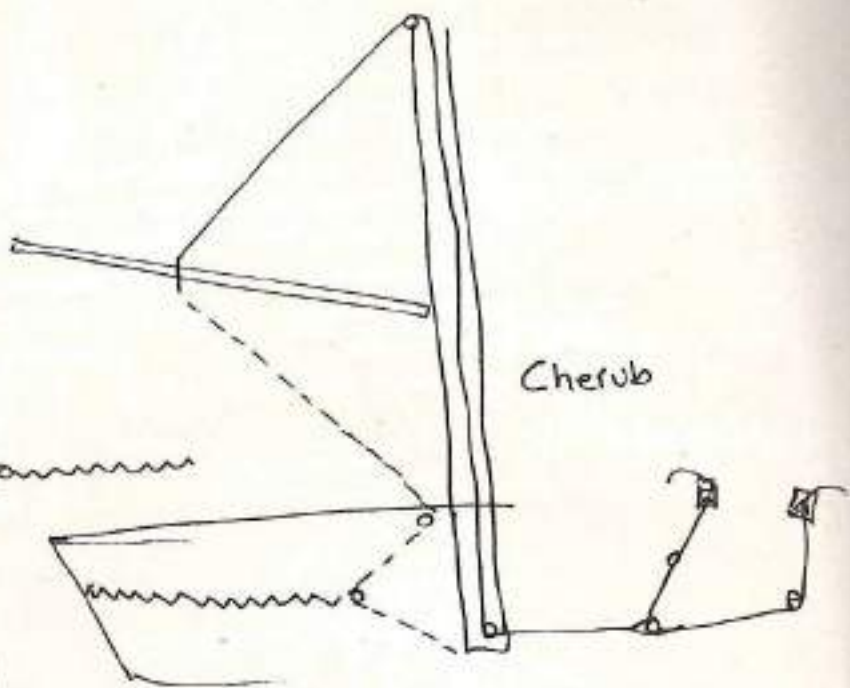
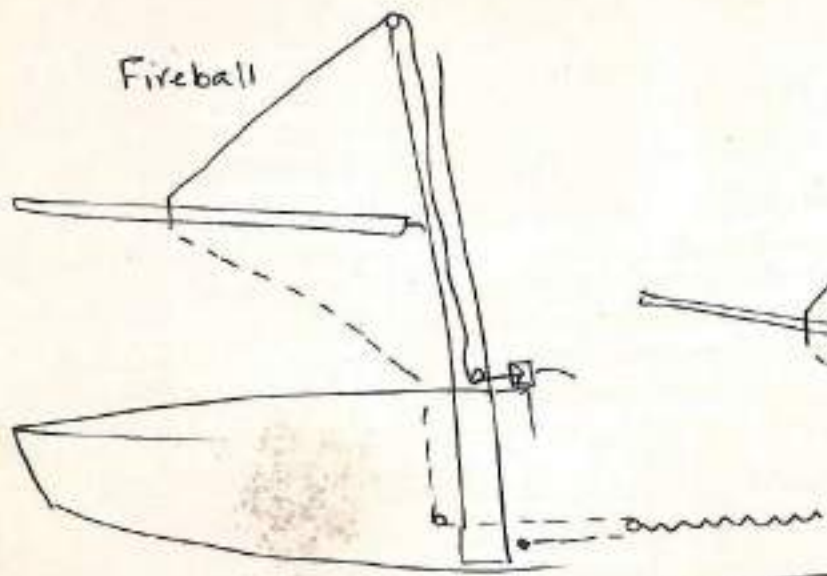
SPINNAKER...n. large extra sail of racing yacht. Thus the Oxford Dictionary describes that accursed, delightful, infuriating, exhilarating sail.

Which is the best way to rig a spinnaker? That is a question which is more likely to lead to argument than to a straight answer. To prove the point, a short trip round the stands at a recent dinghy exhibition with a note pad and a pencil provided an opportunity to record just a few of the many variations in current use. Some of them are reproduced on this and the following pages. For the record: ropes holding the pole up are shown thus _____; ropes holding the pole down are shown thus - - - -; shock cord is shown thus w w w w and cleats are shown thus □. Other bits and pieces are noted on the drawings.

Peter Bolton







SALTY TALES OF YESTERYEAR.

by SHELLBACK

2. " THE CAPSIZE "

The old chap chuckled quietly to himself, and took another long drink from his pint, as he heard voices raised and harsh things said from the group arguing about the day's racing that had just finished.

As is always the case when some-one does'nt take part, or show any interest in a conversation being carried on in loud tones, one of the participants felt it incumbent upon himself to ensure that the old chap was drawn into the heated discussion. This worthy turned to the old chap and said, " What do you think? "

"Think?" said the old chap. Then as if he hadn't answered the question the first time, he repeated, "Think?"

The questioner seemed to be slightly put out, and feeling that he was not being fully understood, blurted out his problem. "We were racing, and that chap there put himself in such a position that when I called starboard he couldn't get out of the way, and I hit him. I was in the right, because starboard-hand boat always has right of way, and he has got to retire. You know the rules, I'm right and he's wrong".

"Then you'm an idiot", replied the old chap. The aggrieved helmsman couldn't believe his ears.

"What?", he gasped.

"You'm an idiot", repeated the old chap. "Just 'cause some fellar gets 'imself inter a tangle, and cant get outer yer way, yer 'its 'im. You must be daft! I'll tell you a tale about an 'appening like that".

At these words the little group gathered round. The old chap was well known for his tales, and most of them contained more than a grain of commonsense, and some truth. He took a long drink from his glass, and began.

Cont.

"Some years ago, we young 'uns used to race reg'lar in the Medway Regatta. Lotta fun we used to 'ave too. In them days we started from the Gillin'am Line, cause we 'ad too many starters for the other line, and anyways we had clearer wind down there. Anyways one partic'lar Saturday mornin' we was gettin' ready to go down to the start, when the wind starts apipin' up.

By the time we was orf the Dockyard entrance that was blowin' about a six gustin' seven. One of our blokes 'ad 'is son with 'im. Quite a good sailor, was the son, but a bit light for them sort o' winds. Howsome-ever, they comes quite a cropper in one of them gusts, and over they goes.

"Comin' up astern of them, quite fast, is one of they Dragon Class boats. Now our chap, 'ose boat was named after somethin' to do with cigarettes, 'Fag-ash', or somethin' like that, is splashin' about in the water with 'is boy, sees this Dragon acomin' along, and the next thing 'e knows is that it 'as sailed right over 'is mast alyin' in the water, and nigh on 'it 'im and 'is boy.

"Well, our chap, 'e can't believe 'is eyes. 'Es lost for words, and that's somethin' that we never knowed of 'im afore. 'E sees that there Dragon go a-bout and sail back towards 'im. 'is first mind o' thinkin' was that the fellar was goin' to 'ave another go at 'im. But no, that skipper don't 'ave any ideas like that.

"The Dragon comes very close and some fellar leans acrorst 'er side-deck and shouts in one 'o them gin and tonic accents, 'Sorry about that ol' chap, but I was on starboard'. Starboard, I asks yer! What our fellar says in return to this ain't never been writ down nor never will be, I 'spect. Prob'ly just as well".

The old chap turned to the helmsman who had spoken to him in the first place. "So there you are my lad, just 'cause them rules says that a starboard boat 'as right of way, don't mean you can go a-clobberin' others as you sees fit, 'specially when they can't get outa yer way. Tell yer somethin' them rules don't say. Somethin' to do with good seamanship, good manners an' a bit o' commonsense. Things which, if I'm guessin' a-right, weren't present when you was racin'."

There was silence for a few moments until the old chap, peering into his glass said, "taint the only thing thats a-missin', durned tide's gorn right out. 'Ose goin' ter 'elp it come back".

As he held out his glass someone took the decision that it was preferable to keep the old chap drinking rather than talking.

the wsc AT CRYSTAL PALACE

Alan Smith

Despite my reservations we were able to put a stand together and my thanks go to Ray Fryatt and John Smith who provided display screens and a television, (this latter item being dug out of John's father's attic at literally the eleventh hour, on the Friday before the show opened on Saturday! Edit.) My thanks also to those club members who manned the stand throughout the week-end.

In general terms I do not think that the arrangements for club stands were very good this year, as being separate from the boat displays "passing trade" was not very obvious. We were however fortunate in having a prime site within the club area, such that all visitors to the building in which the clubs were located entered the hall by our stand, some clubs at the far end of the building reported having very few visitors.

I suspect that attendance overall may also have been lower this year. Certainly there appeared to be fewer of our own members visiting our stand.

A number of enquiries about membership were made and it was significant that many of them appeared to be from people who knew of the club already and were thinking about changing club's. Hoo Ness members were prominent but enquiries were also received from members of Gravesend, Blue Circle, Medway and Bawl Bridge.

As always, newcomers to sailing were particularly interested in training courses and undoubtedly this is a plus point when new sailors are considering clubs. We were able to compare ourselves directly with our neighbours as Medway Y.C., Gravesend and Sheppey were all present.

In terms of presentation Sheppey perhaps were the most sophisticated, using a video projector to good effect. Their films however were mainly of windsurfing in Hawaii and whilst interesting were uninformative insofar as the club itself was concerned. Gravesend and Medway used fairly basic displays but were at a disadvantage by virtue of their location within the hall.

Subscriptions made an interesting study, we still maintain a substantial differential with Medway and are on a par with Sheppey. Gravesend appear to be lower but their literature does not mention race fees and if all series and events are entered the annual cost is about the same as ours.

Cont.

Our video film was a great success with our own members and was certainly helpful in illustrating to new enquirers features of the club. It has subsequently been used to interest prospective members and seems to have a potential for "mail order", i.e. watch it at home and then come and see us.

See you at the show next year?

What follows might very well be construed as yet another of that old "SHELLBACK'S" tales, but I am assured by the contributor, who wishes to remain anonymous, that it's the Gospel truth!

PLACE..... WILSONIAN SAILING CLUB DINGHY PARK.

TIME..... A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF A NEW MEMBERS INTERVIEW MEETING.

CLUB MEMBER TO STRANGER, "YOU LOOK LOST, CAN I HELP YOU?"

STRANGER, "WHY, ARE YOU SOMEBODY IMPORTANT I SHOULD KNOW?"

CLUB MEMBER, "NO, NOT REALLY, I'M ONLY THE COMMODORE"

MORAL..... DONT SPEAK TO STRANGE MEN!

On the Tideline.

Some important dates for your diary from our Social Secretary Tony Moore.

SUNDAY MAY 29th. A BARGE PARTY ON "WILSONIAN".

SATURDAY NIGHT SPECIALS! These are Saturday Evening friendly, sociable gatherings on the Barge with the Bar open for business. What better way to while away a balmy Saturday summer evening, than leaning on the rail, glass in hand and an arm round the girl friend/wife, watching a visiting yacht slipping quietly up river on the last of the flood, or river wildfowl on their nocturnal meanderings.....and all that jazz!

Sounds like a great idea so note the dates, JUNE 4th, July 2nd, August 6th and finally September 3rd.

Looking well ahead to the Club's Annual Rave-Up, the DINNER DANCE, to be held I believe at THE INN ON THE LAKE again on NOVEMBER 19th.

The following is an account of a cruise in a sixteen foot gunter rigged dinghy from Bradwell on the River Blackwater to Broxbourne on the River Lea. The year is 1951, and it is interesting to note that there were then Thames barges still trading as they are mentioned in the log from time to time.

The crew consisted of two Merchant Navy apprentices, Robert O Tubby and Derrick A.G. Wright, the former I believe is possibly now involved with a boat chandlery business on the south coast, whilst the latter is now a Trinity House Pilot working out of Harwich. If the photographs reproduce well enough it will be seen that the sailing togs consisted of an old sweater and old grey flannel bags rolled up at the knee..... no Bri-Nylon, polyurethane or PVC wonder-wear in those days!. Neither did either of the crew wear life-jackets.

CRUISE IN "TOM THUMB". BRADWELL TO BROXBOURNE.

(the first few days were spent cruising in the Blackwater)

JULY 28th 1951. Saturday.

Get trailer hitched to Mr Coles car but lose half an hour pumping up a flat tyre on the trailer. Had packed all gear into "Tom Thumb" the night before. Tow quite easily down to Bradwell except for the offside brake-drum getting hot, eventually arriving at 1200. Have to take mast and sails off the boat to wheel her under barrier and then launch from the hard, tide low and ebbing.

Take the trailer back to the car and the Coles go off to Tucker Brown's to collect their new yacht while we wade and row out to a buoy, trousers already soaked up to the knees but a glorious day so it doesn't matter. Get mast and spars up, square gear up a bit and eat sandwich lunch then sail up and down until the Coles return aboard their new boat with Tucker Brown.

We go out ahead of them under jib and oar over the stern. L.W. was at 1500 and tide now making, we tack about outside until they appear but they go aground in the entrance. We get mains'l up and beat up river with the tide, off Stone at 1830, continue tacking up to Osea Island, drop main in a scrimmage and anchor 1905 amongst several other craft. Batten down and have supper. H.W. 2030.

29th Sunday. Had breakfast, squared up, then raised the anchor and sail up to Stone. 1020. Get sails down and pull into beach, I go racing while Lefty (D. Wright), lies off in "Tom Thumb". Get a 4th place after a rotten start. Go back aboard for lunch then race again in the afternoon and come in 5th this time. Lefty rows in for me and we pull out as we are now on a lee-shore, run

Cont.

down to Osea Island under jib then anchor and have tea. Decided it was getting too choppy so tried to run into Lawling Creek under jib but got onto the mud, so have to pull all the way back to the anchorage against wind and tide. Snug down for the night cold, wet and tired.

30th Monday. Have breakfast, tide coming in and wind blowing hard, no shelter on this anchorage now. Lefty gets a lift ashore from a girl off another boat, a five tonner. They manage to get some fresh water but no milk or bread as the island is now self supporting. We get storm sails set and up anchor and try to beat up to Bradwell but have to turn back before reaching Stone, as we were taking a lot of water aboard in the short seas. Run back to Osea Island in fear of gybing, the other boat, Lefty's girl friend tells us to make for Lawling Creek, as it is too bad for us to stay out for long. We go in, not without doubts after the other night's experiences.



Make fast to a buoy halfway in and get the trysail down, then run in under storm jib at H.W. following the buoys carefully. We anchor in not very calm water, lying head to wind and stern to ebb and sheer about a lot in consequence. Dry sails and our trousers in some glorious sunshine.

We take main'sl off gaff and put trysail on instead, which took about 2½ hours. L.W. about 1600, have to shift anchor twice to avoid drying out on the mud.

We get the awning up and have lunch, tea and supper! at about 1700. Wind eases off at about 2000. Finally turn in, in relatively peaceful surroundings.

31st Tuesday. Heavy thunderstorms during the night, but only a few drops come in, Lefty goes to sleep again in the middle of it. The wind comes round during the night, so after breakfast we are able to run out under the storm jib again at H.W. 0945. Run down very comfortably, Lefty steering while I flake out on bottom boards. We are off Stone at 1050. Get main'sl (trysail on the gaff) up at 1120 and beat up into Bradwell at 1230, tacking through all the anchored boats against strong ebb and stronger wind, its a real pleasure to see the way the old boat goes to windward, old Mr Burke on "Titbits" has his eye on us all

Cont.

the way. Anchored at 1300 after getting sails down alongside a converted Scottish fishing boat. Have bread, cheese and limejuice. Wind getting up all the time, SSW, up hook and drop down on the last of the ebb, Lefty goes ashore and manages to get some water, milk and bread. While I lie off the hard, shifting anchor to avoid grounding and getting colder and hungrier, I whip clip rings onto storm jib and get main's'l squared up a bit. When Lefty returns (after about 3 hours, "been waiting for the baker", says he) we drop down with wind, now low water, 1830, amongst some oyster smacks.

Snug down, have supper and tea with MILK for a change, wash-up, repair awning as the sun goes down, a red ball against a very stormy looking sky. We put anchor light on the topping lift and turn in just before the smacksmen come sculling back from the local.

1st August. Wednesday. THE CRUISE BEGINS.

Showers just before 6am and tide flooding. Have cornflakes in milk (luxury), showers again, wind now northerly. Clew up after rain stops and row into hard, Lefty goes ashore while I hold boat by slipway with boat-hook, he's only 10 minutes this time but manages to get 3 loaves, milk, 2 postcards and fresh water.

We get sail up on a buoy at 1150 and tack out against the last of the flood and a light wind. Ease out into mid-channel and drift down on the ebb. The wind then drops right away, so it's out with the oars. Start to have a light lunch drifting in an unknown position when breeze suddenly comes up and takes us up to the Bench Head buoy at 1400. Drift across on port tack to first buoys and then tack out to Batchelors Spit at 1500, a couple of sprits'l barges and a small cruiser pass going in the other direction. Tack and row against a very light wind and tide, now against us, to the Buxey Beacon. Tack out in a freshening wind between Ray Sands and Buxey Sands touching bottom several times, we get the West Buxey buoy on port beam at 1845. Lefty takes over and we tack past the River Crouch Buoy at 2000, sailing in with the flood to the River Roach entrance. Finally drop anchor below some



Waiting for the tide. Note main's'l of Stimpie barge on horizon.

Cont.

other craft but on looking up find other boats seem much further away than they were, so take a sounding....7 fathoms! Anchor is'nt holding, so get it up and pull in the now pitch dark, down to Eastend (although we dont know it's Eastend until next morning) eventually anchoring again at 2310.

We had been underway for over 12 hours without much to eat. Finally ciewed up, had some marmite sandwiches and turned in, very weary at 2440.

2nd August. Thursday.

Wake up to bright sunshine at 0830 with the tide flooding and wind sheering us around, the stern just missing a withy. After breakfast get sail up at 1030 and tack up against the flood past Great Potton sailing rather carefully over the causeway. Took wrong turning at Rushley Island and end up in Shelford Creek which is closed. 1445, we get our bearings as the tide starts to ebb and tack back against it, which is hard work, eventually anchor above the bridge at Havengore Creek at 1540.

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE...including how they get shot at and arrested!

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