



# GRAPEVINE

*Winter 2006*



The Magazine of  
**LIVERPOOL YACHT CLUB**

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If you have anything you think will be of interest to members please feel free to put pen to paper, or, preferably, fingers to keyboards and send to me. The deadline for contributions for each Grapevine publication is listed in the current year dairy. Please remember that Grapevine is now published on the Internet on the LYC website so if you would rather personal details are removed for the web version let me know.

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**Covering photographs:**

Front: North Wales Wind Farm

Back: Gullmaren

Both courtesy of Neil Thomas.

## From the Commodore.....

Hope you all had a lovely Christmas, as I did, and I wish you all a Happy New Year and a splendid 2006.

Last year we had the annual laying up party on October 14<sup>th</sup> organised by the Rear Commodore and his house committee. It was a brilliant night. The music and food were excellent. Big thanks goes to Mike, the Bar and Restaurant Manager, and all his staff. Thanks Mike.

The Dining Club celebrated 200 years of the Battle of Trafalgar at the Athenaeum Club in Liverpool. The meal was delicious and we all finished the wonderful evening with a glass of Port to toast the Victory at Trafalgar on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1805, and to the immortal memory of Lord Nelson. Thanks go to Angela. I hope she can arrange an evening there again in the future. If you like good food, I can really recommend the Dining Club as we dine in some really nice places.

The last of the Low Water Racing was the Low Water Regatta held off New Brighton and although very enjoyable for some boats, not for me I'm afraid. This year the weather was atrocious, with late lock ins on both days. My boat *Quilla* was in the yard for three weeks for repairs.

For those who took part in the race on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December Father Christmas greeted the finishing boats onboard '*Gullmaren*' on return passage from the Pier Head. It was a superb sight as the boat crews returned greetings. Father Christmas then sailed into the Marina to attend the children's Christmas Party, wished them all a Merry Christmas and handed out wonderful gifts. Father Christmas was assisted by Trish, Mary and Angela. It was a magical afternoon with face painting courtesy of Helen Blanchard. Again, thanks to our House Committee.

Ann and I were delighted to supply sherry and mince pies to club members on the Commodore's night for the festive season. The annual club draw organised by Geoffrey Collard was a great success. There was a wonderful array of prizes. Did you win any? A great deal of work went into this event and our thanks go to Geoffrey. The draw is held every Christmas and is non-profit making so it is up to the members to buy draw numbers to make it a success. I would imagine it must be a mammoth shopping expedition to purchase all the prizes. Let's face it we all like to win a prize. If you would like to help organise it next year (we really need two people) please have a word with the Commodore.

The Commodore's Tinsel Star Race on New Year's Eve, was great fun and thanks to the following yachts for taking part: *Musketeer, Genevieve, Artful Dodger, Quilla, Tango, Poppy, April, Ameera, Quattro, Jezabel Retribution*. First prize around the cans (forwards & Astern-

wards) was won by Steve and Rachele on *Quattro*. First prize for best overall Crew Dress and Boat Decoration and points in the race was won by Mark and Helen Blanchard on *Genevieve*. Thank you all for taking part and making the race a great success.

Just a quick word or two about the LYC Management Committee:- Richard Baldwin an elected member of the committee has now taken over the position of Publicity Officer for the Club. Thanks Richard for the start you have already made. I know you will make a difference.

In case you hadn't noticed, race results are now published in the Liverpool Daily Post, and our Advert in the 2006 Marina handbook looks superb.

We are also looking for a volunteer to take on the position of Regalia officer as we have now been a couple of years without one. Anyone interested please talk to the Commodore or the Rear Commodore.

Good Sailing for 2006.

**JOHN D'Henin**

## .....From the Vice Commodore.....

HAPPY AND SUCCESSFUL  
NEW YEAR TO ALL !

2005 was quite an eventful year for the club, a pretty full racing programme in spite of a few postponements due to adverse weather. Highlights included two regattas (Summer and Autumn), the Lyver Trophy race to Ireland, the acquisition of MFV *Gullmaren* and the start of the Clipper Round the World race. On top of all this Doug, the Cruising Captain organised some very successful cruises.

The only disappointment, and it is only a small one, was the lack of visitors for the Autumn regatta. So when you take part in other clubs events please spread the word about how great LYC's Autumn regatta is. Maybe this year we can have an even better event. Perhaps we could have a social occasion on the Saturday evening, how about it House Committee?

For 2006 the sailing programme is even better than 2005. There are also a few changes to note; first, the Class structure and TCF splits (see later article), second, the updating of the Club Sailing Instructions.

In addition, the Cruising Captain has more events up his sleeve for the blue water girls and boys.

*Gullmaren*, in addition to supporting other clubs, will be going to Ireland for "Cork Week" to act as support vessel for all our club boats attending whether racing or not. Undoubtedly this will enhance the incentive to go as she will be able to carry spares and equipment and generally act as mother ship. So let's make our presence felt.

We will be laying two new racing marks. One mark on the start line transit to help keep racing boats away from the Brunswick lock entrance. The other mark will be midway between G7 and E2 near Middle Deep. This is to improve variation for race course setting. Again more about this later.

The Dinghy Section is gaining ground but it could do with a bit more support and help with the safety boat etc. It is a great way for kids to learn to sail. This year it is hoped to run sessions on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and some Sundays once they start up again in March.

SEA SAFETY: For some years

the Club has supported the RNLI 's sea safety check scheme and the Sailing Committee would like to see more boats taking part. The service is free and can be carried out by our club RNLI rep (it may cost you a brew up whilst the Club Rep. is on board ) and is purely advisory. For more information contact myself or Geoff Collard.

With the new class system up and running I would like a

representative from each class on the Sailing Committee. This would help the Racing Captain and provide a conduit for information to and from the Committee as well as promoting the needs of the class. So, if each class can nominate (press gang) a class representative then let me know and we can push onto even greater things.

All the best and great sailing,

**Derek Sparks**

.....and the Rear Commodore

Yippee, the shortest day over and spring is on the way. Parties, dinners and our social calendar to organise, so first things first - THE ANNUAL DINNER.

Please can I ask for your help in getting all the names of boats and their guests to myself or another house committee member so we can plan your tables as you would wish, this year it will be held at the Crown Plaza and if you need to book rooms I would do so soon. The tickets will be available shortly along with the price (cheap as chips).

Your House Committee members are Vinny, Trish, Angela, Helen Blanchard. As you all know we try to put as many functions on as possible but need your input and idea's - I am running out of birthdays. While we are on the subject of birthdays, the next one is Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February. The Bare Necessity Blues Band need your support (or a surgical one), with all monies going to the Commodore's sea cadets.

Well folks that's all for now so please give your all and lets make 2006 a special L.Y.C. year.

**Vinny. X.**

## From Race Control....



### LYC RACING MOVES UP A GRADE YOUR RACE DAY \*\*\*\*\* YOUR COURSES !

Following the decision to introduce three classes of keel boat racing, the dilemma of how Race Officers would produce three distinct courses for yachts as diverse as Prima 38s and Achilles 24s certainly challenged the grey matter of Race Control and the Sailing Committee.

While some Race Officers have embraced Richard Booth's famous P.P.P.P.P.P. exhortation, it has been obvious that some have written their ideas on the back of a cigarette packet half an hour before the race start. This inevitably results in a disappointing day's racing.

Race Control decided that the best way to assist Race Officers in their choice of suitable courses would be to provide a choice of 'ideal' courses based on wind direction and wind speeds on the day.

To this end a 'brainstorming' session was set up where experienced yachtsmen from each of the three classes were invited to design courses for the new system

The wind directions went from North, North West, West etc. round to North East and back to North; a total of eight possibilities. The volunteers were asked to produce the eight ideal courses for boats of their class sailing in light wind conditions up to 12 knots and in heavier wind conditions over 12 knots. A total of sixteen courses.

Class 1 was represented by Neil Thomas and Pete Growcoot; Class 2 by Steve Harrison, Jon Oliver, Adam Kyffin and Mike Inman; Class 3 by Warwick Telfer, Andy Napper and Richard Baldwin. Stuart Lofthouse and John Myerscough submitted their thoughts to Race Control later. The Sailing Committee is grateful for the input of these members who spent many hours diligently pursuing their task. The hope is that in future members will race more challenging courses appropriate to their own class of boat.

It is envisaged that in keeping with the philosophy of

inclusiveness, Class Captains will be appointed or elected to further fine tune the quality of racing and react swiftly to any issues that might arise.

The sailing committee will analyse the results and after a testing period during which Derek Sparks and Race control will assist the early year race officers,

it is anticipated that 'course cards' will be produced for use by all members. In the meantime, courses will be posted in the usual way at the lock-house for all three classes. The Race Officer will have the information, but ultimately they will always have the option to making their own decisions.

### ***WHAT'S IN A NAME ?***

A new racing mark is to be laid between G7 and E2. The mark has been designed and initial construction started by John Myerscough. In the meantime a soft mark will be laid in its place from *Gullmaren* before each race.

The mark will be identified on the lock-house course board by the letter 'M'. However, Race Control believes that LYC's laying of its first permanent racing buoy on the Mersey deserves a grand title. Suggestions so far include:

- **'Midway'**, bound to ingratiate us with our American cousins, though perhaps not with their Oriental partners.
- **'Middle Earth'**
- **'Narnia'**. Andy Napper can explain that one.
- **'New Zealand'** No, I don't know either; better ask Karenza.
- **'Clock Face'** Why not? Can you think of anything better ?

Answers on the back of a cheque made out to the *Gullmaren* restoration fund or on the notice board.

# **RACE OFFICER TRAINING COURSE**

**SATURDAY 18TH FEBRUARY 2006  
AT THE YACHT CLUB, 09.30 HOURS TO 15.30 HOURS**

This training course delivered by Derek Sparks gives skippers who are new to race control the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the way LYC performs a competent race duty. For others it gives the opportunity for a refresher.

This years course will include a talk on the implications for race officers of the new class split and the setting of appropriate courses. All skippers are urged to encourage crew members to attend as the expectation for competent race duties has become more demanding each year.

We will meet in the marina bar at 09.30 hours for coffee with lunch between 12.00 and 13.00 hours.

All those wishing to attend should add their name and details to the to the sign-on sheet on the club notice board.

For further details contact Derek Sparks on 0151 339 3638 or Jim Connolly on 0151 426 0851.

## **LOCK HOUSE**

Unfortunately, once again it is necessary to remind members that The Race Officer and his team are guests of the lock keeper who has a responsible job to perform and must be allowed to conduct his duties without distraction.

People not directly involved in the race duty should avoid congregating in the lock control room as far as possible, but are welcome to make use of the excellent observation room.

Again we must remind members that accompanied children may only use the observation room.

# FINAL RACING RESULTS 2005

<b>CLASS 1</b>	<b>CLASS 2</b>	<b>L.B.S.A.</b>
<b>BRASS MONKEY</b>		
1. Flash 11	Dyna-Mite	Lady Dorothy
2. Daydream	Clarevouyant	Folksong
3. Retribution	Skukusa	
<b>LOW WATER SERIES</b>		
1. Chia Chia	Di-Rich	Lady Dorothy
2. Mighty Max	Quilla	
3. Defiance	Spring Onion	
<b>EASTER BUNNY</b>		
1. Flash 11	Di-Rich	Tango
2. Chia Chia	Quilla	Folksong
3. Dv8	Catch 32	
<b>SPRING SERIES</b>		
1. Flash 11	Quilla	Folksong
2. Mighty Max	Impact	Lady Dorothy
3. Musketeer	Tango	
<b>EVENING SERIES</b>		
1. Chia Chia	Tango	Folksong
2. Musketeer	Quilla	Lady Dorothy
3. Flash 11	Di-Rich	

**CLASS 1****REGATTA**

1. Another Nods
2. Chia Chia
3. Mighty Max

**CLASS 2**

- Catch 32
- Clarevouyant
- Ragtime Blues

**L.B.S.A.****OPERAS**

- Fidelio
- Country Girl
- Silvana

**SUMMER SERIES**

- |                |          |          |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| 1. Flash 11    | Di-Rich  | Folksong |
| 2. Retribution | Skukusa  |          |
| 3. Musketeer   | Catch 32 |          |

**LONG SERIES**

1. Chia Chia
2. Ragtime 3
3. Ulula

**BRITANNIA TROPHY**

1. Mighty Max
2. Flash 11
3. Quattro

**LADIES RACE**

1. Musketeer
2. Flash 11
3. Catch 32

**L.Y.C. OFFSHORE COMMODORE'S CUP**

- |                  |               |
|------------------|---------------|
| 1. Chia Chia     | Di-Rich       |
| 2. Ragtime 3     | Tranmere S.C. |
| 3. Dina-Mite Too |               |

**CORY SALVER CLASS 1**

1. Another Nods
2. Chia Chia
3. Jenevieve

**EARLY AUTUMN**

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1. Mighty Max | Clarevouyant |
| 2. Chia Chia  | Hocus Pocus  |
| 3. Jenevieve  | Skukusa      |

**CORY SALVER CLASS 2**

1. Hocus Pocus
2. Skukusa
3. Di-Rich

**CLASS 1  
LATE AUTUMN**

1. Flash 11
2. Another Nods
3. Mighty Max

**CLASS 2**

- Skukusa  
Clarevouyant  
Catch 32

**L.B.S.A.**

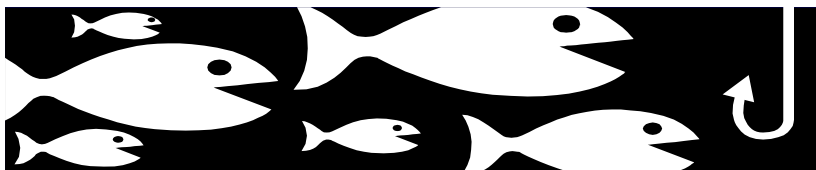
**AUTUMN REGATTA**

1. Another Nods
2. Chia Chia
3. Jenevieve

- Hocus Pocus  
Skukusa  
Di-Rich

**TINSEL STAR**

- Quattro



**IRC CERTIFICATES 2006**

Skippers are reminded that new IRC Certificates need to be 'in force' for the start of the Spring series. Spring 1 race will now take place on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2006 in place of B.M.9. There will be no race on 26 March 2006 because the Annual Dinner Dance and prizegiving takes place on 25 March 2006.

Please ensure a copy of your certificate is passed to either Jim Connolly or Karenza Evans, Secretary of Race Control in good time.

## ***LYC Dinghy Section - 2006***

Well we've now packed up for the winter, to be resumed at the end of March 06. We had some great times during 2005, out in all winds, up to 22 knots!

Many thanks to the regulars and newcomers alike for your continued support including: Lyn and Jaqui, Angie, Jeff, Alan (Olympic swimmer), Jack (Hilton) and Darren. Mustn't forget the younger members too, including Joe, Scott, Jack, Luke, and Paul.

With no exceptions, the dinghy team are now sailing with great confidence and many have progressed onto LYC member's keelboats as crew. Many have passed their RYC level 1 and 2 courses and now want to sail with Spinnakers.

For 2006, due to the popularity, we intend to sail on Wednesday's, Friday's and Saturday's, that's the good news. The bad news is we have been forced to increase the cost, primarily due to fuel for the safety boat fuel and berthing fees etc.

From April 2006:

<b>Adult Member</b>	<b>Non Member</b>
£2.00	£2.50

<b>Under 16-member</b>	<b>Under 16 non member</b>
£1.50	£2.00

Even with the price rise, this still represents excellent value taking into consideration the cost at other sailing venues on Merseyside and the fact we have a dedicated safety boat.

Finally, please don't forget the dinghy section is open to ALL members and their families, we have great fun and everyone is welcome.

*Dave Butterfield (Dinghy Captain)*

# Down under



Fremantle by way of Dubai and Sydney is a long way to go for Christmas but there were good reasons. These included the fact that I had worked in Dubai 25 years ago and wanted to see the changes, our children had been to Australia on gap years so now it was our turn, and the Clippers were to be in Fremantle preparing for the start of the next race. Travel arrangements made by Trailfinders in Manchester were impeccable and their advice, and Emirates Air, made for a relaxed trip.

Dubai is astonishing with developments on a colossal scale including the world's largest indoor ski slope with real snow, the world's tallest building about to start, and lesser buildings under construction everywhere. A marina project was backed by twenty 40 storey buildings all under construction at the same time. A bill board in the desert simply said 'We build cities'. Sydney provides a complete contrast and being there is like stepping back half a century after Dubai, but there is a cosmopolitan and easy feel to city living. Boats are

everywhere and the most pleasant way of getting around is to use the ferries that ply between the centre and outposts around the bays. Lovely parks full of strange fauna and flora, great sea food, thronged cafes and bars, icons such as the Harbour Bridge and the Opera House, and of course the Sydney to Hobart race.

Coverage of the preparations was on a par with the Australia v South Africa test matches which were on at the time - a premier event about which everyone knows something. At the Cruising Club of Australia I said I was from Liverpool Yacht Club but this cut no ice. "I didn't know Liverpool was on the sea", said the receptionist, followed by; "We are very busy here – busier than Cowes - but you can have a look around."

All the impressive and expensive yachts were there, but it was disillusioning to find that *Wild Oats* the eventual winner, and other mega yachts, run their engines throughout the race to power the winches and swinging keels. However, a few days before they started we crossed the continent to Fremantle.

As we kept hearing, the city was transformed by the 1983 America's Cup racing and it hasn't looked back since. There were 18 yachts participating and each consortium spent around £1m a year for 3 years in the area. This catalysed redevelopment of the docks and shows how a major one-off event can transform a city. Of course the Cup was won by *Australia II* on the last leg of the last race, and she is installed, complete with waxwork crew, in the superb maritime museum.

The Clippers were being checked out on-shore at the Fremantle Sailing Club where maintenance of any kind could be carried out in their magnificent facilities. In addition to the usual honours boards in the Club they have one for 'Circumnavigators' and with a few more clipper crew as members we could do the same. By the time we got there some of the boats were back in the water and berthed at Fishermans' Harbour, an atmospheric collection of old sheds turned into restaurants and swanky new apartments. Huge helpings were dished out in brown paper parcels from establishments boasting 'Freos best fish n' chips', whilst in others lobsters, prawns, and chilled chardonnay were served with tranquil

views over the Indian Ocean.

LYC was well represented by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, several crew members on *Liverpool 08*, Paul Herbert, and us. On our first day we went out with the ex-lord mayor of Liverpool Ron Gould who, with his wife Tina, was visiting family and their guests on a Clipper.

A feature of Fremantle is the offshore breeze which kicks in as regularly as clockwork at noon, blows about 30 knots, and is called the Fremantle Doctor because of its cooling effect. With temperatures of 30°C this makes for very fine sailing, but in days of old the coast was regarded as a highly dangerous lee shore, impossible to claw off in a square rigger and the site of some famous wrecks.

On Christmas day a group of 30 Clipper team and crews went by high speed ferry to Rotnest Island about 12 miles offshore for a barbeque. The sun shone, the pure white beach was deserted, at the edge of the sea a huge sting ray undulated past, and our special licence allowed drinking from 1200 to 1400 only. The island is home to the unique 'quokka' a sort in miniature kangaroo - one of which duly obliged and

wandered about as we packed up after a vigorous game of cricket.

Another day Sir Robin arranged a sort of Commodores' Cup by inviting five local clubs to provide 10 sailors each to join a Clipper with its skipper and skeleton crew of regulars. The morning was spent becoming familiar with the boats and in the afternoon there was a race over a triangular course. The local sailors were completely up for it as they used every trick to jump the Le Mans start whilst not being penalised, and treated the occasion as a way of settling old scores with rivals. After very close racing the skippers were pleased to have their boats still in one piece at the finish.

The start of the leg to Singapore was on 1<sup>st</sup> January with clear blue skies, hot sunshine, and no sign of the Fremantle Doctor. Many crew members had left and new leggers joined so there was a learning curve to be accommodated. The course set by America's Cup John was challenging. Yachts started outside the mouth of the Swan River which at its entrance to the sea is a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide with hard dock edges on both sides. At the starting gun the breeze was with the yachts who were making

good speed, but had not reached the harbour where there was still an on-shore wind. Hearts were in mouths at the prospect of a complete reversal of fortunes within a few minutes. The commentator (Americas' Cup John) became hugely animated as he predicted outcomes to the watching crowd.

Then the Doctor came to the rescue and the line of wind on the water could be seen just a few metres in front of the boats – very dramatic – and as the boats entered the harbour they carried on at 10 knots in very close company. The clippers are at their best in open oceans and this was round-the-cans stuff with 30 ton boats, new crews, hard edges, a stiff breeze, and calls for water. America's Cup John was in his element as he described the occasion and the crowd melted back as the bowmen/women reached out close enough to touch them on the tacks. On the way out *Liverpool 08* nudged a mark with the satellite aerial on her stern and did a 360°.

Followers of [www.clipper-ventures.com](http://www.clipper-ventures.com) will have seen how the drama continued: Cardiff hit an obstruction and damaged her rudder

necessitating a return to Fremantle Sailing Club and losing two days, Glasgow had a crew member injured and had to put in to port to land the casualty, Jersey wrapped a spinnaker around her keel and lost time. *Liverpool 08* was second overall at the start of the leg but the competition is intense and there are several boats chasing Tim and his crew.

*Alastair Soane*



## WINTER CRUISING



## (OR FREEZING YOUR BITS OFF)

Well, someone who shall remain nameless (Neil Thomas), a great reader of ENID

BLYTON and the FAMOUS FIVE, said let's go to Menai at Christmas for a winter cruise—it will be good fun—take warm clothes and a dickie bow.

A DICKIE BOW ! YES we will eat out every night and drink fine wines:- this sounds good I thought so boat packed, crew assembled, off we jolly well went.

It was a beautiful sunny Tuesday morning, wind cold and brisk and the crew of *April* firing on all cylinders, out of the Rock Channel into a very rolling sea, but nothing would stop us and so with bacon baps under our belts we set the auto pilot for Menai.

This is fun, we said, as a tsunami built up in our pan of spaghetti. As we looked at *Gullmaren* we hoped they were not cooking spaghetti as they were rolling like a barrel.

On our arrival at Menai we moored at Menai bridge for the night and went ashore for, YES good food and fine wines,

without the DICKIE BOW and very well wrapped up.

On returning to the boats we settled down to a good nights sleep in the warmth of our sleeping bags and quilts. Oh no, condensation!! Neil never told us about this. Cold feet, wet heads, damp everywhere, temperature dropping...DOOM, DOOM BUT wait..... what about *Gullmaren*? No heating, no cooker, no fridge for the wine, no hot water, no shower but not to worry they do have a microwave for the sausages.... UGH! Four grown men on a wooden boat—was it painted pea green?

On Wednesday we decided to return to Liverpool, the weather forecast not being good for the weekend. So we set sail for home in a flat calm sea and beautiful sunshine.

Breakfast off the Great Orme in December, eggy bread, smoked bacon, tomatos with balsamic vinegar and pure fresh coffee...*Gullmaren*..... microwaved sausages. As the day progressed we planed lunch, chicken curry and rice,

popadoms, naan bread and grapes for afters with fresh ground coffee... mmmm. (*Gullmaren* microwave sausages)!!!.

Ah! the sight of our home port of Liverpool basking in the setting sun and a trip down the rock channel in the dark. Lap top on and Sewer bouy not there but what an experience - give me night sailing every time. Oh the English Channel at two in the morning!

Then as we berthed safely in our beloved marina we realised just how cold we were and how wet our boat was. Our clothes and all the sleeping bags were damp but we were not put off at least we did not have to suffer MICROWAVE SAUSAGES! sorry Neil.

Now all stories have a happy ending, the crew of *April* went off down to the Greek for a good spread with a litre of good wine (*Gullmaren* MICROWAVE SAUSAGES).

The moral of this story is BE PREPARED (think boy scout). I have ordered the Eberspacher heater and now know you cannot... MICROWAVE SAUSAGES!!! (SORRYJIM).

My thanks to Neil Thomas and his crew for a lovely couple of days and let's do it again next year.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR TO YOU ALL.  
*Yacht April and her crew Vinny Reynolds, Dave Unthank and Sue Clements.*

## **Five go to Puffin Island (and meet the terrible three)**

"I'm not sure I really like adventures any more," said Sue, picking the remains of a splinter out of her leg. "First it's ice on the pontoons at seven in the morning; now it's even slippier at Menai!" Jim did not like to mention that the bruise appeared to be spreading to the back of her knee as well, so woke up the barmaid and got in another round.

The door banged open, its loose, dirty cracked pane rattling, and the creak of the peeling inn sign grew eerily louder. The sullen turf fire flared for a second with the wind, the sparks faintly illuminating the mangle on the moggy sprawled out in front of its meagre warmth. "Gosh, this IS jolly cosy," said Vinny brushing the ice from his coat, and scattering the crystals amongst the sawdust on the floor, the draught piling them up against the

once shiny brass of the spittoon. Vinny, for our new readers, is that Raconteur of the Wirral... Rock Star, Motor Engineer, and all round Good Egg. He is also keen to prove that *April* can cruise in cold weather as well as hot.

He has succeeded. We are in the land of the long, cold dead..... and it's all my fault!

I drag my fascinated gaze from the encrusted patina surrounding the rim of the spittoon; I do NOT want to go any closer, and let my cold numbed mind drift back to Liverpool Yacht Club.

It had seemed like a good idea at the beginning of December to arrange a cruise to Straits between Christmas & New Year, and there was considerable interest shown from both racing and cruising boats alike

"What we need is an Adventure!" enthused your scribe the following Wednesday.

"Life's too short" agreed Vinny

"We could camp on Puffin... ", said Jim "Could your twitcher friend get the permission?"

"Can I bring my Fiddle?" said Ken (Him of Liverpool

Philharmonic fame, and cruising man extraordinaire).

All this keenness seemed to wane as the temperature plummeted, and the first snow appeared, but good news... There was a 'Weather Window' appearing and so two boats finally made the lock at 08.00 on the Tuesday after Christmas. Vinny's *April*, and the Clubs *Gullmaren*. The ice lay thick on the timber walkways, the metal at the bridge base a death trap (Memo to Jack... Need more salt) I fell, Jim fell, John fell, Sue fell... Only Dave escaped... He watched the pile up. *Gullmaren's* cabin however was a delight... The pretty coloured Christmas lights had been left on all night, as had the heater, and that first cup of tea was wonderful, the kettle filled with fresh water gushing from the new tap.

At that point the new electric water pump installed the day before started to:

a. Smell b. Give off smoke c. Cease operation.

Choose all of the above, in that order.

We carried the old 5 gallon water container we had so happily removed yesterday back

aboard.... "Minor problem!" said Jim cheerily. "Running water would have spoiled rough tough people like us!"

"Yeah, just teething troubles," chortled Alex happily..."Who did the plumbing?" The rest thought that was terribly original and fell about. I went to start the engine with a hurt sniff. "You can take friendship too far, you know." Pity they were all laughing too hard to hear. Hope they choke on their tea.

All 10 litres of diesel engine, 150 Horse Power, came to life. Fuel tanks full, oil checked, coolant OK, red warning lights all off. Instruments OK. Let's go.

"Have a good trip!" from the Lock keeper. "Cheers," called Ken from the after deck, coiling the warps. "See you Friday."

Jim boosted the power to the huge bronze propeller and *Gullmaren* surged gamely forward, her first long trip under the banner of LYC, the frost crystals blowing in a bright stream from the stem head, shining first red, then green, then red again in the reflected nav lights. 40 miles lay ahead.

The dawn came up astern, and we left our muddy commercial

river by the much prettier Rock Channel, the boat corkscrewing gently as we met the swell, a small spatter of spray sweeping the deck, and the delicious aroma of cooking bacon wafting up from below. The way points clicked steadily by, and the depth increased. The bay opened up...The water a deep viridian now, shining a paler green as the low sunlight passed through the backs of the waves. It was just like that part of "A Perfect Storm"; the beginning when they set off past the lighthouse... Same feeling. Just great.

"This is bloody marvellous!" said Ken, his first trick on the wheel finished, he handed it to John Bird... Guinness Man, and stainless steel fabricator of some note (He made the Chimney) as the whirling windmills off Rhyl were steadily passed.

*April* finally caught us up, her sails pulling well in the freshening North Easterly. "Give 'em a wave..." Vinny looked as pleased as punch, as they overtook us, all wrapped up on the wheel.. The other two were out of sight, wisely below in the warmth.

The two boats met up again at Puffin Island, April handed all her sails and continued up the Straits under power, we chugged merrily along, revs at the top of the green, having exchanged cameras. The photographs turned out quite well with the setting sun over Bangor, and some have been reproduced here (see covers). You would not think the temperature was now about minus 3 Centigrade, and dropping fast!

We moored up at Menai Bridge alongside the Universities new ship Prinz Madog. You may have spotted the old one in Liverpool Docks, renamed just Madog, under private ownership. The old gnarled deck hands who took our lines obviously appreciated old gnarled wooden boats. They recognised Gullmaren as circa 1940, and Scandinavian, and were very kind about her!

Where to go for Dinner was the burning question... A quick scout around town indicated it was completely deserted... Ken stood in the middle of the High Street, gunfighter stance, and challenged all comers... A cat screeched and fled. Tumbleweed blew; a hidden door banged monotonously. Eventually we found a pub... and Vinny joined us, having

checked his warps three times.

The cold was desperate.

The restaurant, however was bloody great. Top of the hill, on the roundabout, under new ownership, and they crammed us in. (We had sent Jim in first as the tallest and best dressed in his Red, we are seriously jealous, Clipper Coat).

Really warm. Toasty, even! Great!

Steaks all round, some nicely different starters, good company, good conversation, dreadful jokes, and an excellent red booze finished us off...Well almost; 'cos we went to the Vic on the way back...(Ken shot the tumbleweed). Then we went to the Liverpool Arms, then possibly the Mostyn Arms, then to bed.

Alex, of course fell on the ice on the pier, was a tiny touch sick, but otherwise we all made it.

Then the drunken louts had the cheek to make fun of my hot water bottle as I was putting it in my sleeping bag... Ha! I had the last laugh at 3am however. By then there was ice forming in the deckhead condensation. By 7am it was solid, and the deck itself a complete rink.

The shipping forecast hadn't been a bundle of laughs either, even deep under the sleeping bag there was no mistaking our weather window was getting slowly closed. Today, Wednesday was going to be calm again, but tomorrow the wind was picking up from the East and South, blowing full gale by Friday... Again from that unusual SE quarter. Damn!

A quick chat with Vinny decided the issue... Home today after a leisurely breakfast, back to Liverpool in time for a late tea.

The Sun shone, the sea was completely calm, a superb bluey-white haze hung over the Snowdownia massif as we trundled home. The windmills were motionless, and gave some cracking photo opportunities, and eventually, and uneventfully we entered the Mersey via the Rock Channel in the dark at half tide... Easy! Four Metres of water under the keel minimum. Good, those waypoints. We were full of tea, coffee, and Auntie Bessie's Cottage Pie.

By the time we called the lock there was just enough water over the sill, and we were congratulating ourselves when the engine just stopped.

Dead.

Hit the starter... Turned over fine... No go. Try again... Nothing.

Fuel Leak? Blocked filter? Water in the fuel? Blocked line? Air in the system?

Adrenalin in the system? Mine? Yes.

We were about 100 metres off the lock by now, drifting fast towards Runcorn.. Other boats? Inshore, and clear, thank God.

Anchor. Quickly.

Were we pleased the new windlass was so good. Release the brake, disconnect the clutch, and down went the anchor and about 20 metres of chain.

It brought us up with a bump, we spun round, and there we were happily riding to the tide. Phew!

We can stay here all night if necessary!

Ken is down in the engine room... Did you know our fiddle player was an engineer originally?

"It's the fuel cut off," came the muffled voice. "Try it now!"

I hit the button and the engine roared back into life, up came the anchor, and Gullmaren surged into the lock... We only lost 5 minutes, but it seemed like an hour! Well done Ken.

I had caught the pull string to the fuel cut off with my boot when we had changed helmsmen... In the dark it was that simple... Needless to say that has been changed already!

April arrived about 10 minutes later, and the club bar was filling up for the Liverpool Everton match..... We didn't know...Didn't even care....

We'd had a real adventure.

*Neil Thomas*



## **Your Club Needs You**

**The AGM will be held on 26 April when there will be elections for Committee members. If you want to help with sailing, training, social events, general management, or anything else, then get nominated.**

**See John Gillick the Hon Sec for details**

**In particular, the following posts require to be filled: -**

**Membership Secretary  
Honorary Secretary**

## ***Members Discounts***

We have attracted several major companies to place advertisements in our yearbook and most have also offered discounts to L.Y.C. members e.g. for new sails, boat insurance and yacht charter. Hopefully this can be a win – win –win situation for members, L.Y.C. and the companies advertising with us. To help you make use of these discounts Paul Fairfield has collected the web links for these sites on our website, [www.lyc.org.uk](http://www.lyc.org.uk) and to access them click on the Discounts for LYC members. Below is a summary of the benefits available.

**Smart Yachts** will offer a 10% discount on yacht charter tel. 01425 614804. They also organise a flotilla charter for Hoylake S.C. Perhaps L.Y.C. members might be interested in doing this?

**Alphanave** are offering a 5% discount for yacht charters for May/ June and September. Tel +30 210 8983 758

**Hood sails** are offering a discount of 20% on new sails. Until the end of January they are offering a buy one get one free offer. Tel 01590 675011.

**Fareastsails.com** are offering a discount off their normal retail price for new sails of 25 – 30%. Internet contact only.

**Goacher Sails** have placed an advert in our yearbook and although they are not offering a discount they believe that their price will be competitive. Tel 015394 88686

**Cheers Insurance** is offering a 5% introductory discount. Their web link is not yet available. Tel 020 8943 5333

Please try these links and let them know that you are an LYC member. This will increase their willingness to continue to advertise with us and give our members discounts etc. I would be interested to hear from anyone who uses these links.

Richard Baldwin Publicity Officer.  
Email [richard.baldwin10@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.baldwin10@btinternet.com)

## ***For sale***

Hunter Ranger 265 NO 82 Launched 2000 Epoxied new.  
Twin keel. 8m26.5ft, 6,83mLWL, 9ft 2.74m beam

Draft 3.1ft 1.1m

Weight 2.54tn

Berths 6

Yanmar gm10 diesel eng approx 10HP.

Sails

Main 2 slab reefs, self tacking roller furling jib

290sqft storm jib, lihgt wind scooper. Sail controls to cockpit.

Sprayhood dodgers. Heating, shore power. 88ampHr  
+70ampHr battery.

Vav equipment.

MLR FX412 GPS with deck repeater, Simrad DSC VHF.

RD 68. Nasa Clipper depth, speed, wind.

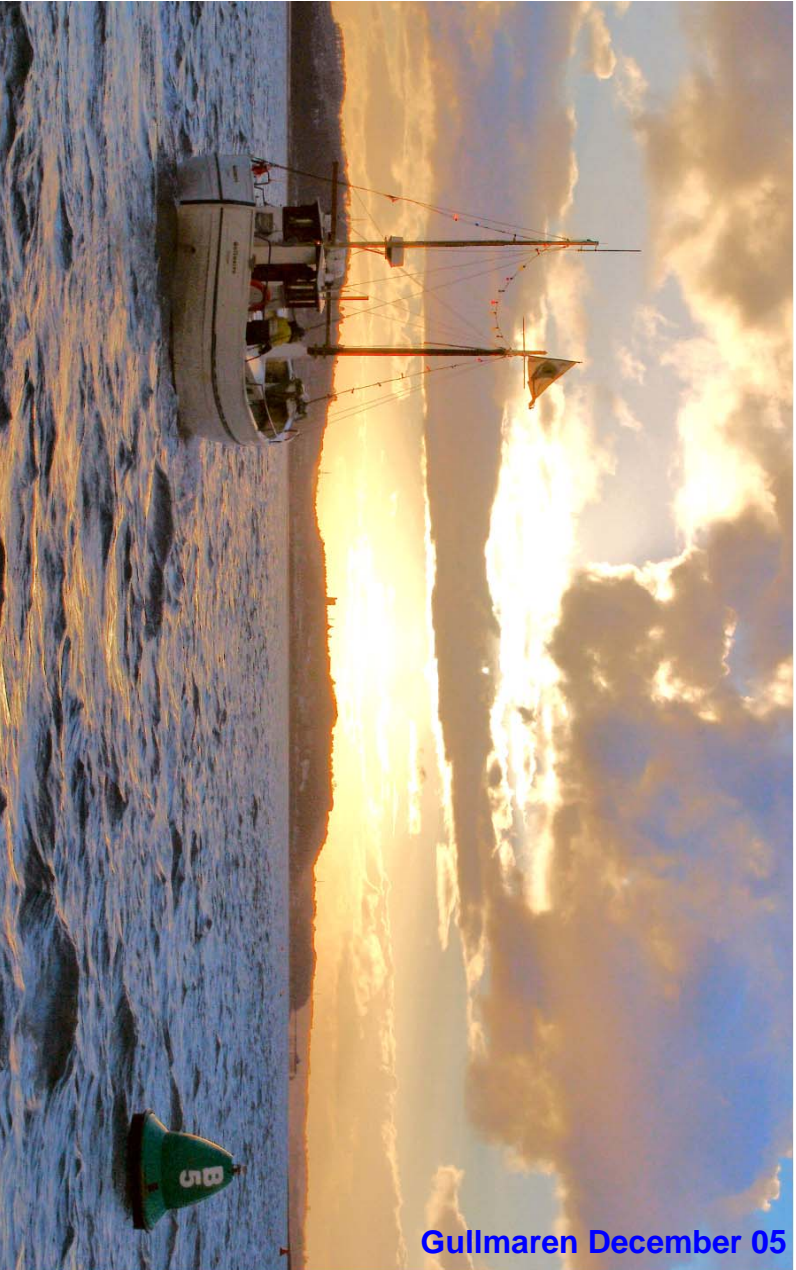
Simrad Tiller pilot TP2000 CX Wpts + manual.

Nav lights, deck + anchor lights.

Delta Anchor chain and warp 45m.

## LYC RACE OFFICER CALENDAR 2005

DATE	RACE	OFFICER	START
29 Jan	B.M.3	SKUKUSA	10.00 GMT
12 Feb	B.M.4	AMEERA	10.00 GMT
19 Feb	B.M.5	PACIFIST	13.30 GMT
26 Feb	B.M.6	QUATTRO	09.00 GMT
05 Mar	B.M.7	XTREME	13.45 GMT
12 Mar	B.M.8	QUILLA	09.00 GMT
19 Mar	S.P.1	TANGO	12.15 GMT
02 Apr	SP. 2	SPRING ON- ION	13 45 BST
09 Apr	SP. 3	SEAKER	09.00 BST
15 Apr	E.B 1	CATCH 32	11.30 BST
16 Apr	E.B 2	SONNET	12.30 BST
17 Apr	E.B 3	CLAREVOUY- ANT	13.00 BST



Gullmaren December 05