

Quantum **Network**–Newsletter Autumn 2010

Welcome to the autumn edition of the Quantum Newsletter. In this edition we have –

- **Sailing adventure – Round the Island Race.** Read Dave's account of his first experience of participating in the biggest yacht race in the world.
- **Featured location – Isles of Scilly.** No tour of the West Country is complete without a visit to this fascinating but remote location.
- **Focus on sailing** – What was new at the 2010 Southampton boat show? Some of the gadgets on display.
- **Dates for the diary** – As the nights are drawing in, thoughts turn to next year's sailing programme.

Sailing Adventures – Round the Island Race.

On a bright sunny morning in June, five eager sailors appeared on the pontoon next to Quantum Leap. This was going to be a training day to prepare the crew for the annual Round the Island Race (Isle of Wight) – the largest regatta in the world with over 1700 yachts competing.

The wind was light as we motored out of Portsmouth harbour entrance, but the crew were soon given their allotted tasks. Practicing tacking and gybing, followed by spinnaker setting and man over board drill, were the order of the day. At one point we were joined by a large classic yacht in full sail, going through the same sail preparation as us. Before we knew it, it was time to moor up in Cowes and prepare for the race day. Early to bed, as we had to be on the start line at 6.10 am the following morning.

As the sun greeted us the next morning, the horizon was already a mass of yacht masts and colourful sails. Yachts were gathering in their holding areas ready for their start. The wind was going to be a force 5 from NE, meaning that the first leg west along the Solent was to be with spinnaker. At 5.30 am we joined the parade of yachts, large and small, leaving Cowes. Our holding area was already crowded with other yachts all eager to get to the start line first. A good lookout was needed from all to avoid a collision. Soon it was our start time. The start gun fired and the fleet was off. Up went the spinnaker and Quantum Leap accelerated down the Solent.

Suddenly, there was a 'bang' and out blew our spinnaker. One of snap shackles connecting the sheet to the spinnaker had come undone and the sail was now billowing on our port side and not driving us forward at all. Unphased, the crew leapt into action. All hands worked to get the sail down, then Chris and Hazel repacked the spinnaker and reset in the quickest time of the whole weekend, and it was ready to fly again. Up it went without a hitch, we were all glad to see that the training had been remembered and the practice paid dividends!



We accelerated again down the Western Solent and by the time the Needles Lighthouse came into sight, the westerly turning point, we had made up the lost time and overtaken many competitors. The spinnaker was taken down and off we set on a fine reach along the south side of the island. The wind was up at force 5 and we sped along through the waves with ease at 8 knots. Spray flying up into the air created rainbows in the sunlight. The crew dangled their feet over the windward rail to give the boat every last knot of speed. This was sailing at its best!



Everyone took a turn on the helm and great care was needed to keep clear of all the other yachts around us. Quantum Leap gradually working her way up through the fleet, overtaking many yachts. The next important decision was when we should tack to round Bembridge Ledge buoy - the easterly turning point of the race. Too early and we would have to tack again – too late and we would go too far out and lose valuable time. After some frantic chart work and studying, the command 'Ready about' rang out and our training took over as we tacked with ease.

The decision to tack had been made at the right time and, as we rounded the buoy we were able to look back at all the yachts we had passed. It was now a straight dash to the finishing gate off Cowes. The orange fluorescent marker posts grew closer and we charged over the line in a very commendable time of 8 hours 15 minutes for the 50-mile course. It was not until later that we found out that we had gained a creditable 8th place in our class out of 38 boats.

The celebrations soon started as we joined in with the crowds in Cowes. We returned to Gosport on Sunday, tired but very satisfied after a challenging but great fun weekend. Next year a top 3 in class finish? *Dave, Oxfordshire.*

Featured Location – Isles of Scilly

The West Country has many beautiful coastal locations - Dartmouth, Salcombe, Newton Ferrers, Fowey to name but a few. No sailing tour of the West Country however, is really complete without a visit to the Isles of Scilly. Lying some 60 nautical miles from Falmouth, with fair wind and a favourable tide around the Lizard, Scilly can be comfortably reached in a day's sail. Passing Wolf Rock lighthouse, you rightly feel that you are heading out into the Atlantic, but more than 20nm beyond Lands End, you will eventually reach Scilly.

Exposure to the full force of the Atlantic means that it is a rugged location but, warmed by the Gulf Stream, its unique and peaceful character means it is a haven for wildlife lovers. Scilly has been settled since Stone-Age times and there are now five inhabited islands - St Mary's, Treco, Bryher, St Martin's and St Agnes amongst many smaller uninhabited islands and rocky islets. Populated by just over 2,000 islanders, Scilly has a tranquility and a quality of life long lost to less isolated places.



Seventy five percent of the population lives on St Mary's, where the largest settlement, Hugh Town, is often the first port of call after leaving the mainland. You won't find any marinas here but there are a good number of visitor's moorings. Fuel and water can be taken on alongside the harbour wall, when the Scillionian, the principal ferry that brings both passenger and delivers supplies to the islands, is not docked there. Daily inter-island launches operate from the quay too. The town has ample shops, pubs and other facilities to meet visitors' needs.

The second largest island, Treco, is a single, private estate, which makes it unique amongst the Isles of Scilly. The landscape is fascinating with ruined castles and woodland, as well as quiet sandy beaches. St. Martin's is the third largest of the islands and is the first land you see as you leave the mainland and head out into the Atlantic. There is a choice of some of the finest sandy beaches in the islands and many interesting walks along the cliffs.



St Agnes is home to a small flower-farming community, whilst Bryher, the smallest of the inhabited islands boasts some of the finest views on Scilly. During some spring tides it is possible to walk from Bryher to Treco.

There are numerous anchorages around and between the islands, and the almanacs and pilot guides make interesting reading. No anchorage is protected from every direction, so you may find that you need to move or pick your location as the weather changes.

The Bishops Rock Lighthouse, the most South Westerly point, is famous for marking the eastern end of the North Atlantic shipping route, the route that ocean liners took when competing for the coveted "Blue Riband" Transatlantic speed record. It is also listed in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's smallest island with a building on it. Exposed to the full force of the Atlantic, the first attempt to build a lighthouse in this hostile environment was defeated when it was destroyed by a storm and the second was completed in 1858.

Focus on sailing – What was new at Southampton?

For those of you that didn't make it to the show, here are a couple of the more interesting gadgets on display:

Raymarine T-Series Infra Red Camera – Raymarine were showing their night vision cameras linked to their E-series displays. This product, whilst interesting, will probably be priced beyond the means of the average small boater (indicative prices appear to start at around £6.5k plus VAT!) For further info see <http://www.raymarine.co.uk>

Digital Yacht iAIS Wireless receiver – At the more affordable end of the market (around £350), this new product provides a wireless link to display AIS data on an Apple iPad or iPhone. Other PC and hand held devices are also supported. The same company is also supplying a new shore based AIS receiver for those wishing to contribute to the AIS data available via the Internet. See <http://www.digitalyacht.co.uk/> for more details.

Dates for the diary

Whilst there is still sailing time this year, the thoughts of many will be turning to the 2011 season. The Round the Island Race will take place on Saturday 25th June 2011 and we will be running our three-day weekend – 24th to 26th. Please contact us if you would like to join the crew – 07919 017835 or glenn@quantumsailing.co.uk

There is also a more extensive programme of open events to choose from in 2011. These Mileage Builders/Cruises range from a single day sailing experience in the Solent, to a week exploring France and the Channel Islands or the West Country (and Scilly – weather permitting). They are open to all levels of experience, whether you are looking to log miles towards an RYA qualification or just to have an adventurous holiday. For details of the FY11 programme, please checkout our web site – <http://www.quantumsailing.co.uk/cruises/cruises.html>