

# Quantum Network–Newsletter Autumn 2013

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

- **New directions:** Significant changes at Quantum Sailing for the 2014 season.
- **Quantum Sailing Network:** What is it and what does it offer?
- **Fastnet Race:** Months in the preparation, the race did not disappoint.

## New Directions - Developments at Quantum Sailing

This season has been an extremely good one at Quantum Sailing. Many of the Network members have been out cruising with us, we had a terrific Fastnet Race campaign (see final write up below) and we have welcomed more new customers onboard this year than in any previous season. So why, you might ask, are we making changes?

The reason is that you don't maintain excellent customer service if you just rest on your laurels. On our customer feedback forms, you have rated us better than 4.9 out of 5 overall, in addition everyone said that they would 'recommend us to their friends'. We understand that to continue to earn excellent feedback, we need to keep developing the service, ensuring that what we offer remains fresh and exciting.

Since Quantum Sailing was set up in 2008, much of what we have done has been based on our Sun Fast 37 yacht, *Quantum Leap*, sailing out of Haslar marina, Gosport. This has been good but we have identified a couple of issues that we want to address:

The first is the yacht - Although *Quantum Leap* is superbly equipped, maintained to a high standard and well suited to the sort of work we have been doing, she isn't getting any younger. Whilst we still receive lots of compliments about her condition, we have decided to be proactive and retire her at the end of this season.

The second reason is location – The Solent is a great place to be based but we feel that sailing from a single location has become too limiting. Over 60% of people on the Quantum Sailing Network have already sailed with us from Gosport, many of you on numerous occasions, so we need to be able offer new and exciting destinations.

We will therefore be selling *Quantum Leap* at the end of the season and going mobile. This means that we'll be using charter yachts from local companies in future, effectively giving us bases wherever there is demand. This also gives us the ability to cater more effectively for different sized groups, sourcing boats to best suit the group size.

So, whilst we will be very sad to say goodbye to a yacht that has served us so well, this does provide much more flexibility. We can be far more responsive to input from the Network and can organise sailing in locations such as the Isles of Scilly, SW Ireland, the Scottish Islands, the Spanish Rias or the Mediterranean. We can still provide sailing in the Solent and across to France and the Channel Island but we will no longer be solely focused there.

We intend to continue to offer both open Cruises, where Network members can book individual berths, and Skippered Charter, providing a dedicated yacht for small groups - a bespoke service taking the hassle out of organising your sailing holiday.

The other change that is happening in the coming months is a closer integration of **Quantum Sailing** and **YachtMovers** (see [www.yachtmovers.co.uk](http://www.yachtmovers.co.uk)). A number of you have already joined us on yacht deliveries and we hope to be able to offer more delivery opportunities in the coming year.

Further details of potential cruises will be sent to Network members shortly and information will be included in the next newsletter. We do hope that you will find some exciting sailing with us in 2014 but, to make this work well, we will need your input. We have already seen significant interest in the trip to the Isles of Scilly but where else would you like to go? If you have any suggestions please email [info@quantumsailing.co.uk](mailto:info@quantumsailing.co.uk)

## Quantum Sailing Network

If you are reading this Newsletter but haven't yet signed up to the Quantum Sailing Network, you might be wondering what it is. The Network is a community of people who enjoy sailing, who want to keep in touch and hear about our latest sailing opportunities and receive special offers as soon as they are available. These may be last-minute offers on our cruises and RYA courses or exclusive events only offered to Network members.



There is no obligation, joining the Network is free and you can leave at any time. We welcome requests and suggestions from members and we lay-on bespoke events where there is demand. If you would like to join, just complete the form on our website [www.quantumsailing.co.uk/network.html](http://www.quantumsailing.co.uk/network.html) or email [info@quantumsailing.co.uk](mailto:info@quantumsailing.co.uk)

## Sailing Adventure: Fastnet race

After 18 months of planning and preparation, the big day finally arrived for the start of the race on Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> August. The Fastnet had inevitably loomed large on the mental horizon, so there was a mixture of adrenaline and relief when we made our final preparations and departed Haslar marina for the start line at Cowes.

To be part of the melee of competitor and spectator boats was exhilarating in itself. Helicopters buzzed overhead filming as we weaved in and out of the fleet waiting for the start. There were all types of yacht, from performance cruisers like ours to multi million pound Formula 1 racing machines. Classic boats, like *Jolie Brise*, a Le Havre pilot cutter built in 1913 and crewed by students from Dauntsey's school, prepared to race against the huge *Maxi Banque Populaire*— a 130-foot Trimaran, with its fully professional racing crew.



It was great to finally hear the starting cannon and get going. The first couple of hours were spent, fighting against the tide and into a light headwind but we were happy to be focused on the racing. By the time we had reached the Hurst Narrows the tide was turning. We were then mixing it with the faster IRC class 1 boats, as they came screaming down the Solent. Shortly after that we were in open water, beating down the channel in the face of a modest Westerly. As night fell the wind veered sufficiently for us to make a good track westerly, which continued for the whole of the next day.

Dawn on Tuesday found us drifting in light airs just east of the Isles of Scilly but the wind soon picked up sufficiently to allow good progress over the Celtic sea during the day. The breeze increased during the evening though and we reefed in the middle of the night, in the face of 20 – 25 knot winds.

By the Wednesday morning, it had calmed down sufficiently to allow the reef to be shaken out and we maintained steady progress, rounding the Fastnet rock itself early on the Wednesday morning. At this point, the westerly airstream started really working for us and we shot back over the Celtic Sea towards the Isles of Scilly on a very favourable reach. The exhilarating run from the Fastnet to Bishop Rock took just 24 hours!

Thursday morning saw us running towards Plymouth, with spinnaker up, in a steady westerly wind, a sail plan that didn't change until we had crossed the finishing line at Plymouth breakwater. We did that just before midnight on Thursday, after completing the 608-mile course we finished in a group of 3 yachts only yards apart!



We arrived in Plymouth Yacht Haven, still pumped up with adrenaline, where we rafted up ready to go ashore for a well-earned drink at the 24 hour-a-day competitors bar. On the Friday we were joined by family and friends to celebrate and to savour the wonderful atmosphere in the race village.

The race had been a very special experience, the crew really worked well together and exceeded the skipper's expectations by finishing in under four and a half days. It is the sort of event that leaves you with a great sense of satisfaction, it is mentally and physically challenging and something that many think about but few actually do.

Here are some thoughts from the crew:

'The whole experience from practice days to the final race was fantastic, a superb life experience and one made all the better through doing it with a friendly crew who got on with each other very well.'

'Doing the Fastnet was a truly memorable experience - not just the race itself but the journey to get to the start line. The training and preparatory races presented significant challenges and opportunities for personal growth, but above all, helped shape us into a cohesive team built on trust.'

'Never having sailed at sea until after signing up for the Fastnet, this last 18 months has been a learning experience like no other. And now the Fastnet is over, it all feels a bit flat.'

I think the last comment sums it all up. It was an awesome experience, about which the crew can say 'been there, done that, got the tee-shirt' and they have really earned it! It is going to be a difficult one to top next year.

You can find our full race diary on our web site, see [www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnetracediary.html](http://www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnetracediary.html).