

# Quantum Network–Newsletter Summer 2013

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

**Dates for the diary:** Summer sailing opportunities with cruises to France and the Channel Islands.

**Fastnet Race:** Counting down to the start, we feature Quantum Sailing's team as they prepare for the big event.

**Round the Island Race:** Ben Ainslie smashes the course record at this year's exhilarating race.

## Dates for the diary

**Adventure Cruise** – We have some great opportunities for you to get out on the water with Quantum Sailing this summer. In particular, we have places available still on the following Adventure Cruises:

**26<sup>th</sup> July – 2<sup>nd</sup> August** – 7-day cruise to France and the Channel Island

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**29<sup>th</sup> August – 2<sup>nd</sup> September** – Mid week 5-day cruise to France and the Channel Island

No previous experience is necessary to join us in exploring these wonderful cruising grounds and visit some great locations. These cruises provide a very easy and cost effective way to get sailing, with prices including yacht, skipper, safety equipment, food, fuel and moorings. Special prices available for Quantum Network members.

If you are interested please contact Glenn on 07919 017835 or [glenn@quantumsailing.co.uk](mailto:glenn@quantumsailing.co.uk). For details of all of cruises and sample itineraries, see our web site - <http://www.quantumsailing.co.uk/adventurecruise.html>.

## Sailing Adventure: Fastnet race

If you have read previous editions of our newsletter, you will be aware that we are entering *Quantum Leap* in this year's Fastnet Race. In this edition we are featuring our preparations, as the start of this iconic 608 nautical mile race, on the 11<sup>th</sup> August, is getting ever closer. There is even competition just to enter this biannual event. When entries opened in January, all places were filled within 24 hours! The organisers have since increased the limit on the number of entrants, but it is still restricted, with some 380 boats expected on the start line.

Recognised as one of the toughest offshore races in the world, I am sure that it will test our enthusiastic crew. Like some well know Formula 1 teams, this crew is very much an Oxfordshire-based racing outfit. The whole team live within a radius of less than 10 miles of one another. Apart from the skipper, none are professional sailors but all are keen to get out on the water whenever possible.

The crew is mixed in terms of age, experience and profession. All have sailed with us a number of times, and could be considered as founding members of the Quantum Sailing Network:

**Andy** - also known as 'Tom the Cabin Boy', is a software developer by trade. He gained his nickname on *Quantum Leap*'s last trip past the Fastnet rock, where he was the youngest onboard by some distance.

**Dave** – is a keen dingy racer and can regularly be found out on the water at Farmour reservoir near Oxford. His day job is working as a quality manager at a paper manufacturing plant and in his spare time he trains his dogs for agility competitions.



**Howard** - works for Oxfam in their head office, helping to run & manage their websites. He started sailing by chance in 2000, when offered the opportunity to do two days racing in the Solent, and got bitten by the bug.

**Paul** – also know as 'Tomo' or 'the Silver Fox', has been sailing with us for 6 years. When asked why he wanted to do the Fastnet race he said 'It represents a huge extreme sport challenge and is one of my 'bucket list' events'. It certainly will be a challenge.

**Steve** – started sailing at school in Plymouth Sound but gave up when at University. He started again three years ago, buying and racing his own Laser. By day, Steve is a pathologist, a job that he describes as 'all consuming'.

**Hazel** – Dave's daughter is our youngest crew member. As a professional, globe trotting, outdoor pursuits instructor, she brings a wealth of dinghy racing experience to the team.

Before we can participate in the Fastnet race, the crew must demonstrate their readiness and competency by completing a programme of training and preparatory races. Even non-sailors are aware of the tragic outcome of the infamous Fastnet Race of 1979. Much has changed in the regulation of offshore racing since then and both crews and yachts have to be better prepared now. Over the winter, all of the crew underwent ISAF Sea survival training. More recently, we achieved the required 300 miles of RORC Offshore racing, when we complete the 3<sup>rd</sup> of our prep races. With 1 still to go, they have all been very different experiences. More on that below.



The boat must also meet the stringent safety standards laid down by ISAF (International Sailing Federation - the world governing body for sailing). For *Quantum Leap* this meant a lot of work and upgrades over the winter. This included additional electronics, such as an AIS Transponder (Automatic Identification System – compulsory on ships over 300 tons) and an EPIRB (Electronic Position Indicating Radio Beacon – a satellite distress system that operates anywhere in the world). It also meant an upgrade for the sail wardrobe, with the Storm Jib being complemented by a new Trysail - a storm sail replacement for the mainsail, which can be used even if the boom is broken.

Our first qualifying race was in May, with the **Cervantes Trophy** race to Le Havre. For this 100 mile race we had a stiff breeze all day. On a close reach, with 25 knots wind, we had a cracking sail. Despite the wind dying off on the final approach to Le Havre, we averaged around 6-7 knots, completing the course in under 14 hours. After a short stop in Le Havre, not one of the most picturesque of French ports, we headed home.

The second race we entered was the **De Guingand Bowl** race to Guernsey (round the west of the island, coming back to finish in St Peter Port). Despite starting late afternoon in gentle winds and sunshine, we knew that we were going to be in for some hard work. As night came the wind increased and we beat into 25-30 knots of wind, with growing seas, all of the way to Hanois lighthouse on the SW tip of Guernsey. Of the 20 hours it took us to complete the race I think that 19 were right into the wind. This also took its toll on the crew, with seasick prevalent. Still, they kept going, and we completed the 120nm course in a respectable time.



We have just completed our third race, the **Morgan Cup** to Dieppe. This race was different again. With a 122nm course, it took us to just off Selsey Bill, back to Nab Tower by the entrance to the Solent and then SE to Dieppe. This meant that we had both down wind and upwind legs, frustratingly often against the tide, with the Spinnaker being employed for the majority of the race. In the middle of the channel, the initial decent breeze died out until at times we were almost drifting along, doing less than 2 knots even with the spinnaker up. Still we completed the course in 28 hours. Arriving at 11pm there didn't really seem to be a lot of point in docking, so we turned straight round and headed back towards Gosport.

The races have all been useful in teaching us lessons that we have applied to later races. Our final prep race, starting on 12<sup>th</sup> July, is the 175nm **Cowes-Dinard-St Malo** race. This is our longest to date and should help us to hone our skills ready for the main event in just a few weeks time.

You can follow a more detailed account of our campaign, as we maintain a diary on our website. See [www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnetracediary.html](http://www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnetracediary.html). You can also track us during the race, either via one of the many AIS tracking sites or via the RORC Fastnet web site, see <http://fastnet.rorc.org/>.

## Report roundup: Round the Island race

Taking place a few weeks earlier than usual, on 1<sup>st</sup> June, the annual Round the Island race still attracted some 1459 entries. Whilst this was down on previous years, it was still plenty enough to make a great spectacle and a challenge for everyone participating.

This year's headline was Ben Ainslie with his America's cup 45' fixed-wing catamaran, breaking the course record. Not only did he beat it, he took an astounding 16 minutes off the record, setting a new best time of 2 hours 52 minutes. The monohull record was also broken by the 100' ICAP Leopard.

But this is not just a race for professionals. Like hundreds of boats in the race, onboard *Quantum Leap* we had a scratch crew who, after a day's training, threw themselves into the race with huge enthusiasm. A great time was had by all in excellent sailing conditions. We were joined onboard by Rick Thomas, who reckoned it was 'best Round-the-Island for years!'. See his write-up on the Sailers web site - <http://www.sailers.co.uk/>