

Quantum Network–Newsletter Winter 2012

Welcome to the winter edition of the Quantum Newsletter. In this edition we have:

Quantum Sailing update – Some 2012 dates for the diary.

Sailing adventure: The Fastnet race – Plans for a 2013 Quantum Sailing entry announced.

Featured location: St Peter Port – A favourite destination for any cross channel trip.

Quantum Sailing Update

It's winter and *Quantum Leap* is out of the water currently for her annual maintenance, so she will be in great shape for the start of the new sailing season. This will soon be upon us and, if the spring sailing this year is anywhere near as good as it was last year, then it will be well worth booking up some early season outings.

All of our open events are on the Quantum Sailing web site but here are a few reminders about key dates:

- First **Sailing Experience day** of the season: 19th May - see www.quantumsailing.co.uk/avail-experience.html
- First **Adventure Sailing Cruise**: 5th-9th April - Easter w/e – www.quantumsailing.co.uk/avail-adventure.html
- The **Round the Island race** weekend: 29th June – 1st July - www.quantumsailing.co.uk/roundislandrace.html
- New 9 day **West Country cruise**: 24th Aug – 2nd Sept – www.quantumsailing.co.uk/itin-westcountry.html

If you don't see what you are looking for on our open programme, please talk to us, we will always try to respond with additional events where we can. Call Glenn on 07919 017835 or email info@quantumsailing.co.uk.

Sailing Adventures – Fastnet Race

We love getting input from Quantum Sailing Network members, either feedback on these newsletters or ideas and request for sailing events. It is as a result of such input, that we are now planning to join the next Fastnet race:

The Fastnet race, organised by the Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC), starts at the end of the Cowes week regatta. As it's run every two years, the next event will start on 11th August 2013. Along with the Sydney – Hobart, this iconic race is recognised as one of the most challenging on the offshore racing calendar.

From the Royal Yacht Squadron start line at West Cowes the fleet sails out of the Solent and past the Needles before heading west along the South Coast. With prevailing south westerly winds, this leg is often a long hard beat. After rounding Lands End, the fleet heads off across the Celtic sea towards the Fastnet rock, just a few tantalising miles off the coast of South West Ireland. On this stretch everyone is exposed to the full force of the Atlantic, with no land between them and America to limit the build up of the waves! Here the call of the Guinness is at its most tempting, nevertheless the fleet rounds the rock and start heading south again. Next, it's down to the Scilly Isles to pass another famous landmark: Bishop rock, the most south westerly spot in the UK. From there it's often a downwind run to the finish line at Plymouth.



This year saw the course record smashed by the massive 140-foot long trimaran *Maxi Banque Populaire*, led by the renowned French skipper Loick Peyron. This professional racing machine completed the 608 nautical mile course in less than 33 hours, averaging over 18 knots and reaching speeds of over 36 knots during the race.



The monohull record was also broken by *Abu Dhabi*, a Volvo Open 70, skippered by Ian Walker. This completed the course in a little less than 43 hours, using the event as a warm up for the Volvo Ocean race. The majority of the fleet though, complete the course in 3 to 5 days, and some will take longer than that.

The Fastnet race is a challenging, sometimes gruelling, event and not to be taken lightly. Even non-sailors are aware of the tragic outcome of the infamous Fastnet Race of 1979. You can't just turn up and go anymore; much has changed in the regulation of offshore racing since 1979 and both crews and yachts now have to be better prepared.

Boats must meet stringent safety standards laid down by ISAF (International Sailing Federation - the world governing body for sailing). Crews must demonstrate their experience too. In the year leading up to the main race, they must complete at least

300 nautical miles of qualifying offshore races together, on the boat that they are planning to enter.

It is a remarkable event, which really seems to capture people's imagination and I am not sure there's anything else like it in any other sport anywhere in the world. Where would you get the chance to line up in your own car and compete on the same circuit against some of the top professional formula 1 racing teams, and with a handicap system to give you all a chance of winning?

We are really looking forward to the Quantum Sailing entry in 2013. To ensure that we are properly prepared, we have put together a package that includes a training weekend and 4 preliminary RORC offshore races, prior to the main event. Details of what's on offer can be found on our web site www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnet.html. We will also be maintaining a diary throughout the campaign; so do follow our exploits at www.quantumsailing.co.uk/fastnetracediary.html

If you want to try racing but on a smaller scale, we do still have spaces on our 2012 **Round the Island Race** weekend. See www.quantumsailing.co.uk/roundislandrace.html for details.

Featured Location – St Peter Port

Lying on the east coast of the island of Guernsey, looking out towards Herm and Sark, St Peter Port provides a warm welcome for visiting yachtsmen. The harbour is at the heart of the steep sided town. Here you will find excellent marina facilities, as well as plenty of shops and the usual array of hostelrys. Less than 30 miles from the French coast, with its mild climate and more sunshine than we have in the UK, there is a distinctly continental feel to the island's capital.

St Peter Port lies some 45 nautical miles from Cherbourg but, by catching the tide, the Alderney Races will sweep you there at an amazing rate. Coming straight from the Solent, if you time your channel crossing well, arriving off Cap de le Hague just as the tide turns west, with a good breeze, the 100 miles or so distance from Gosport can be covered in under 18 hours. Hence St Peter Port often makes a good first port of call on a cross channel trip.



The tides and the approaches make any visit to St Peter Port interesting for navigator and crew alike. With a choice of the Little Russell Channel, which runs between Guernsey and Herm, or the Big Russell, between Herm and Sark, the approaches are well marked, with good lights for a night entry.

St Peter Port has been a trade centre since Roman times. Over the years it has been the base for a wealth of ship builders, privateers and merchant adventurers. The island formed part of Normandy, France from 933AD and is now part of a Bailiwick with Herm, Sark and Alderney. The Castle Cornet, Guernsey's ancient royal fortress, has stood watch over the town and harbour for nearly eight hundred years. It now houses a number of museums and, when the castle is illuminated at night, it makes a picturesque backdrop as you enjoy a balmy evening in the harbour.



In the Second World War, Guernsey was occupied by German forces but not before the island's children and a number of adults had been evacuated to the UK. This had a huge impact on the island. The evacuees were away for over five years and, following liberation, not all returned. The evacuation is also, in part, responsible for the decline of the local language, D'gernesiais. There has been a recent campaign to save the language and children are once again learning it at school. The book *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* by Mary Ann Shaffer is an entertaining read about life on Guernsey during the occupation.

If you have time to explore ashore, there is plenty to see and do on Guernsey. In the 19th century the French poet Victor Hugo spent 15 years of his exile on the island, writing some of his most famous works there, and his home is now a popular tourist spot. The German Military Underground Hospital, hewn out of solid rock by slave workers, is another. With regular buses all round the island for just £1 per trip, it is easy to get around and about.

One word of warning though, whilst Sterling is accepted on the island, the Guernsey pounds that you may get in your change are not legal tender in the UK. There are plenty of opportunities to re-investment in the local economy though, by spending them in Guernsey's VAT free shops before leaving the island.

Watch out for our cross channel long weekend and week long trips, as many of these take in St Peter Port. If you would like more information on Guernsey itself, you can find this on their Tourist office web site: www.visitguernsey.com. (Images courtesy of VisitGuernsey).