



EASTCOASTER

The Newsletter of the East Coast Old Gaffers Association

August 2021 Issue 128

Forestay

What a relief to have sailing events to report! Between Tollesbury, the East Coast Race, Swallows & Amazons, and the Summer cruise the year has got off to a great start. Unfortunately my own boat *Robinetta* is awaiting a new engine, the old one having seized up during lockdown. Last year she needed a new rudder, this year a new engine.... I hope that all of you who have modern Gaffers remain sympathetic to the problems of maintaining old ones!

I must apologise for the late arrival of this issue. I have just moved over 400 miles away from the East Coast of England, up to the West Coast of Scotland, and have been a bit busy... However I did manage to get to all the events, if only for a day, and with the help of others have assembled a report on each.

Back in 2008 David Shandon wrote an article for the Amateur Yacht Research Society about a different type of sculling oar. I have reproduced it here as he believes to be highly suitable for a Gaffling 4.1. The Yulah is a chinese oar which he has experimented on in his Mirror dinghy. He is looking for a new custodian for this oar, and would gladly demonstrate its amazing effectiveness in sculling.

There are still a range of events to come, including the Slaughden Rally, the President's Race, and a new small boat venture up to the Norfolk Broads on 25/6 September. Feedback is urgently required to help shape this new event, so please contact Lorna Hill if you are interested in attending.

Alison Cable, editor



In this Issue

Forestay

Tollesbury

East Coast Race

Swallows & Amazons

Summer Cruise

A chinese sculling oar

Upcoming events

Backstay

A COVID safe Tollesbury Rally

The middle of May saw the first OGA sailing event of the season, when a select group of campers gathered in the Tollesbury Sailing Club boat park on Friday for a socially distanced weekend. Covid restrictions were lifted enough to let the club open its changing rooms, and the club house bar opened on Saturday to serve drinks outside.

Saturday morning threatened rain, but forecast light winds were light, and 8 boats went out to the start line. They were joined by a Tollesbury Firefly, who self penalised by starting the race 30 minutes late and still nearly beat the first boat over the line, the winkle brig *Fidget*, helmed by the daughter of the Tollesbury SC commodore who was thrilled with her result. The second place boat was also from the sailing club. Full results were:



Tollesbury SC hosts

Fidget. Winner overall

Laurie

Happy Days 1st Smack Boat

Sine Nomine winner of the Concourse d'Elegance

Carnelian

Felix

Pudding Faces (*Tiki*, rtd)



As well as the dinghies *East Breeze* and *My Quest* sailed south to join the event, and after the prize giving campers and sailors gathered for a joint meal, with takaway curry being delivered for those who were not barbecuing.

The rain held off until the last of the food was consumed, although a closer than officially approved huddle under a camper van awning became necessary when the heavens opened.

East Coast Race 2021

We had hoped that COVID restriction would be lifted by the time of the race, but unfortunately they were in place for a couple of weeks longer than expected. However Stone Sailing Club were up for the challenge and were excellent hosts with a large undercover area set aside for their OGA guests.

Only 20 boats came to the line, the smallest race for some years, but this was probably due to the uncertainty surrounding the race due to the COVID restrictions, and hopefully next year we will double the field back to its normal numbers. We have a lot of prizes to award!

The light winds saw a short course set, to Bench Head and back, and despite drizzle making the day a bit murky the wind picked up enough for an enjoyable race, with the boats finishing close enough to each other that the spotters in the tower were kept busy.

Full results overleaf.



Close racing

Photo © Sandy Miller

Boats listed by class

Boat name	Class	Modified THCF	Start h:m:s	Finish h:m:s	Elapsed Time h:m:s	Elapsed mins	Corrected mins
Boat name	Class	Modified THCF	Start h:m:s	Finish h:m:s	Elapsed Time h:m:s	Elapsed mins	Corrected mins
Maria	Class 1 Working Fast	1.212	10:45:00	14:37:11	03:52:11	232.2	281.4
My Alice	Class 1 Working Fast	1.188	10:45:00	14:49:15	04:04:15	244.3	290.2
Puritan	Class 1 Working Slow	1.030	10:45:00	14:48:15	04:03:15	243.3	250.5
Onward of Ito	Class 1 Working Slow	0.914	10:45:00	15:22:51	04:37:51	277.9	254.0
Transcur	Class 1 Working Slow	1.025	10:45:00	15:08:55	04:23:55	263.9	270.5
Gladys	Class 1 Working Slow	1.063	10:45:00	15:28:42	04:43:42	283.7	301.6
Fanny of Cowes	Class 1 Working Slow	1.034	10:45:00	DNS			
Rhumba	Class 2 Classic Bermudan	0.918	10:30:00	14:52:12	04:22:12	262.2	240.7
Gudrun	Class 2 Classic Bermudan	0.905	10:30:00	15:39:31	05:09:31	309.5	280.1
Hussar	Class 2 Classic Bermudan	0.914	10:30:00	DNS			
Cygnnet of London	Class 2 Classics Fast	1.015	10:30:00	15:11:54	04:41:54	281.9	286.1
Crescent Moon	Class 2 Classics Fast	0.960	10:30:00	15:30:04	05:00:04	300.1	288.1
My Quest	Class 2 Classics Slow	0.915	10:30:00	15:07:32	04:37:32	277.5	253.9
Stormy Cape	Class 3 Spirit of Tradition	0.832	10:30:00	15:17:10	04:47:10	287.2	238.9
Greensleeves	Class 3 Spirit of Tradition	0.898	10:30:00	15:13:35	04:43:35	283.6	254.7
Sepia	Class 3 Spirit of Tradition	0.898	10:30:00	15:22:30	04:52:30	292.5	262.7
Lahloo	Class 3 Spirit of Tradition	0.950	10:30:00	15:30:20	05:00:20	300.3	285.3
Kate the Kite	Class 4 Modern and Racers	0.940	10:30:00	14:48:13	04:18:13	258.2	242.7
Moonstone IX	Class 4 Modern and Racers	0.890	10:30:00	15:34:27	05:04:27	304.5	271.0
Hanser	Class 4 Modern and Racers	1.131	10:30:00	14:56:10	04:26:10	266.2	301.0

Swamazons – Walton Backwaters

Words by Joe Farrow, Pictures Alison Cable

2021's event fell just the right side of UK's 'freedom day' - which meant the Walton & Frinton yacht club could host a larger group more easily. This was welcome news for all of us, and bolstered entries to approximately 25/30 boats.

Friday's weather however wasn't promising, in fact it was anything but. Several entrants were travelling up through torrential rain, including some stalwarts driving up from Devon! Special mention to Sam Doman who'd sailed directly from Woodbridge in his 'longshore' dinghy, he managed to avoid the rain by simply sailing round the clouds, and arrived in the last of the gloaming, punting his way in on the first of the flood.

Thanks to Yvonne & Clare, who invented a new party-game... Fish & Chips group lottery. Genuinely though, thanks for your patience with everyone!

Saturday dawned with W&FYC supplying an excellent breakfast, ahead of the briefing. Our aim was to race as far as we could get, before returning at HW for the Gaffling launch. As the tide permitted, Foundry creek soon filled with scores of sails - a fine sight.



A complete & utter lack of wind wasn't going to deter PTK our OOD, this was simply an opportunity to make some 'dynamic' course decisions (!) I have to say, it was the most fun I've had ever had racing. Highlights included the outer buoy for the start line disappearing under water as high tide approached, top-quality heckling from various competitors when 5 minute interval wasn't quite five minutes, and being allowed to row to the 1st mark. Hilarity and smiles ensued - I don't think it's a

race we'll forget.

Certainly once the first mark was reached and competitors were in Foundry creek - the battle commenced - the fleet jostled for places right up until the last few yards, as we were finished outside the clubhouse.



The weekend was also an opportunity to launch the East Coast OGA Gaffling 4.1, which had been built with input from several local members. She looked fantastic, and as an added bonus it was a 'wet' launch - so there were some bubbles to enjoy for everyone.

With all boats recovered, we grouped for the East Coast Gaffling launch - she slipped into the water to applause from all - with an opportunity for members to take her out for a sail. Several OGA officers were there, Patrick our president, Colin Stroud our secretary & David Bewick, head of the OGA small boat fleet.



Hearing from Pete Thomas about the input of several area members during

her build during COVID (and the complications that multiple lockdowns presented) was fascinating, plus Andrew Wolstenholme her designer being the first to give her a try in the light airs, really marked it as a special occasion.

The currently un-named East Coast Gaffling looks fantastic and is a real credit to everyone involved in her build.

Saturday afternoon & evening was an opportunity for us to enjoy the hospitality W&FYC including a fantastic BBQ. Later, as PTK set fire to things (in the firepit!) several of us gathered in the paddock to chat & enjoy perfect surroundings, a fire, some good friends & swapping sailing stories.

Sunday's weather was favourable for getting around on Horsey Island - with the fleet setting out as soon as possible, maximising the water available when we reached the wade having come down Hamford Water. Spirit of 'secret water' was with us, consistently looking at the shoreline change & estimate which channel would be the 'right' one. Oh for a chart!! A highlight was approaching Stone Point in company with 'Nancy Blackett' who'd overnighted at Titchmarsh marine.

With fair tide, a gentle southerly & the sun on our backs - it was champagne sailing. Much to the chagrin of the fare-paying punters in the trip boat - the OGA fleet were comfortably the first to the seals at Honeypot island!

Safely back at W&FYC - the racing fleet & gaffers were able to assemble for the prize giving. Special mention to the trophy winners;

Claudia Wyatt (scows)
Pete Thomas (smack boats)
Sam Doman (spirit of tradition)
Andrew Miles (traditional boats)
Anna Brooke (lucky bastard trophy)
Colin Stroud (little gaffers)

Finally, huge thanks to the committee members, all the race volunteers and our hosts at Walton & Frinton yacht club for their amazing hospitality. It was a brilliant weekend.

The Summer Cruise



Fleet anchored at The Rocks

Photo © Marion Shirley

This year's summer cruise was always going to be different that previous years due to COVID. Staying at anchor and not booking meals that might need to be cancelled meant less work for the planning committee, although as rules were relaxed a final evening in a marina to have a pontoon party became possible, and was booked.

The plan of starting at anchor in Hamford Water, and going ashore for a barbecue at Stone Point went ahead, but a NE Force 6 meant that that not everyone got there.

Anchoring proved to be a bit rough for the smaller boats too, so on Sunday the fleet sailed to the Rocks on the Deben where it was a bit calmer. The end of the week was forecast to be very windy so we came back from the Deben quickly returning to the Walton Backwaters on Monday with a sail to Kirby Creek. The weather turned bad again on



Taking refuge in the Pond at Walton

Tuesday, so after a quick consultation with the WFYC everyone went into the Pond at Walton for two nights, with some finding the passage through the gates and over the cill an interesting experience.

On Thursday the winds had eased enough for a sail across Harwich Harbour and up the Orwell to Pin Mill /Woolverstone, where we stayed for two nights before heading into Ipswich.

These ones did the whole week were *Charm, Crescent Moon, East Breeze, Emanuel, Kestrel, Philomena, Plum, Rely, Witch, Tempus* and *Transcur*. Others who did part of the week were *Cygnnet, Onward of Ito, Mutual Friend, Fox, Kelpie, Cachalot, Clytie, My Quest*, and *Stormy Cape*. The crews of *William* and *Robinetta* made it to Ipswich for the Pontoon supper at the Yacht Haven, as well as many other local members who dropped in to eat. A forecast of rain made for a quick change of venue, with the marina letting us use the room next to the Last Anchor to set out the sumptuous meal.

The “what can I make of a metre of rope” competition created some great entries, and the artistic efforts to create a Mike Peyton type cartoon were many and varied. There was a photo competition (I am waiting for the winning picture to be sent), and a great number of limericks were composed. The judges of the limericks suggested that the winner could be an East Coast mission statement, as everyone could relate.

1st Place

the *Crescent Moon* crew

The thing to be said about Gaffers,
Is that they are quite mad as hatters.
They will sail in a gale,
or wee in a pail,
and act as if none of it matters

2nd Place

Jan from *Emmanuel*

There was an Old Gaffer from Kent
Who thought to himself as he went.
I feel a bit lonesome
out here on my ownsome
That sad old Gaffer from Kent

There was an Old Gaffer from Kent

Sometimes took his wife as he went.
No sailor was she
not liking rough seas
That poor old Gaffer from Kent.

There was an old Gaffer from Kent
With his wife on board as he went
His meals were provided
and so he decided
Lucky Old Gaffer from Kent.

There was an Old Gaffer from Kent
Who loved sailing where ever he went.
But sadly to sat,
he went the wrong way.
Muddled Old Gaffer from Kent.

There was an old Gaffer from Kent.
Who arrived where he shouldn't have went.
He called Clare on the ohone
and could tell by her tone
Silly old Gaffer from Kent.

There was an Old Gaffer from Kent
Enjoyed the East Coast were he went.
You can tell by his grin,
he just loves where he's bin
That grand Old Gaffer from Kent

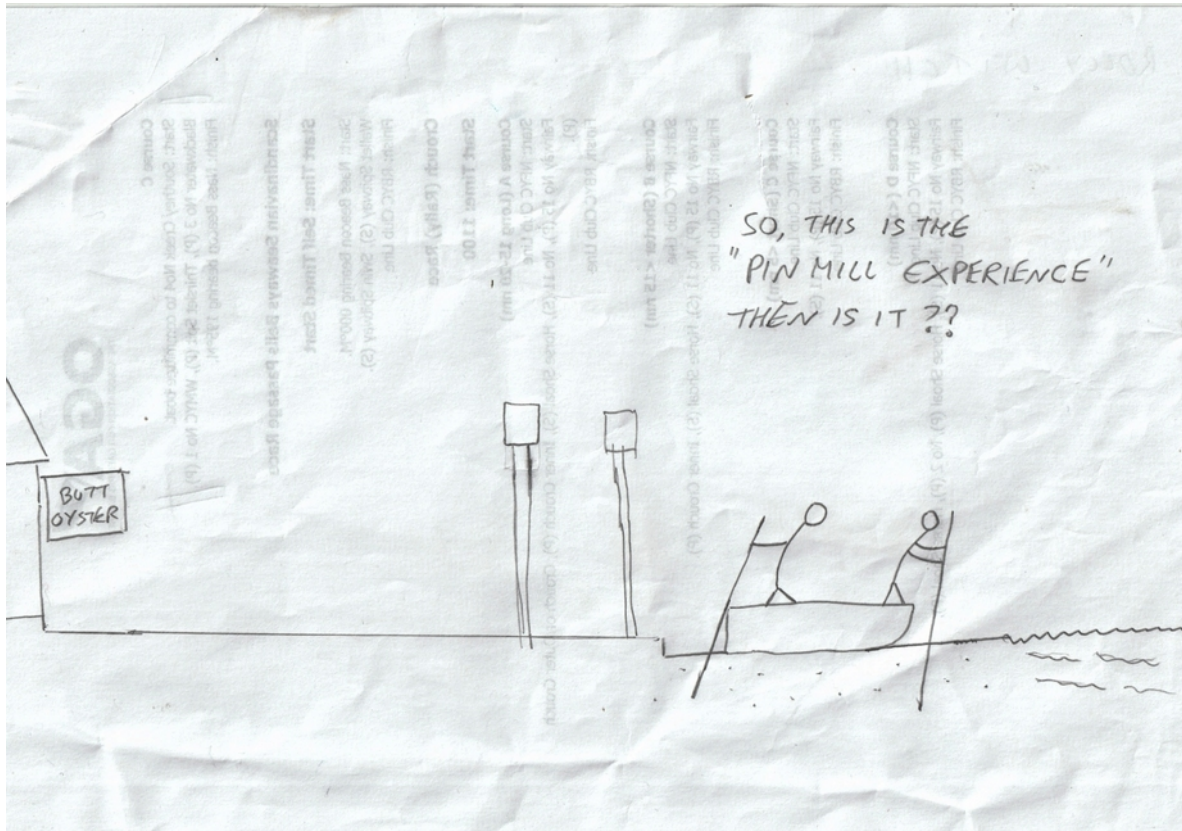
3rd Place

James from *Kestrel*

There once was a Gaffer quite fair,
who sadly lost most of his hair.
He gave up all hope,
till a friend with some rope
Made a toupee he would always then wear.

(James also won the rope category for his rather splendid creation of a wig for his crew mate.)

The rest of the limericks remain anonymous, and will appear on the website in due course, together with a selection of the cartoons. The winner of the best cartoon was Rolly from *Witch*, who seems to have captured the feel of the cruise rather well.



Apologies for the poor quality scan.

Hopefully next year the cruise will have better weather, as well as racing and more socialising ashore options. Meanwhile thanks go out to all the organisers who coped magnificently with the ever changing forecasts and created a memorable week for all those who took part.

A short yuloh

By David Shannon



Despite pleading for years with travellers to China to bring a yuloh back in their luggage I have yet to see one. So in 2008 I at last got round to commissioning and trying out one of my own design.

It was built by Classic Sheds at Burnham Market in Norfolk, the first oar they had ever made. The stern saddle fitting for my Mirror dinghy *Bod* was made by the Burnham Deepdale blacksmith James Sedding. The accompanying photograph shows the yuloh and the fittings.

Key dimensions are: blade length 180 cm, handle length a further 54 cm, maximum handle offset from upper face of blade 20.5 cm, widest width of blade at tip 15 cm, greatest thickness of blade at tip 2 cm, thickness of blade

at about water line 2.5 cm with the curved surface of the blade downwards of course, top surface of blade flat, fulcrum pin hole from blade tip 153 cm, lanyard line eye-bolt from end of handle 13 cm, handle section 4 x 4.5 cm. The saddle is of cast iron 15 cm long by 10 cm high and 3.5 cm outside dimension fore and aft, 2.7 cm internally. The angled offset pin is of 1 cm diameter rod tipped with a 2.5 cm ball. Overall height from top of saddle to top of ball is 7 cm. A hole has been drilled in the saddle to take a bolt through the transom.

A Mirror is 330 cm overall length, 140 cm beam and weighs about 62 kg.

I have carried out three trials, all at Burnham Overy Staithe. The first was without the transom saddle, the blade being simply lashed down on the transom. This clearly demonstrated the need for a pin and socket support and for weighing down of the blade.

The second trial used the new cast iron transom saddle with a ball and pin recessing into a simple 2.5 cm deep hole drilled into the underside of the blade. Neap tides meant very shallow water, between 18 inches and 3 feet. Consequently the centre board could not be used and the yuloh touched the bottom on nearly every stroke clearly affecting performance. Wind was force 1 to 2, the stream was about 1 knot and manoeuvring room restricted by moored boats. I had hoisted the gunter sail out of the way, but it still caught the wind.

The transom saddle had to be offset from Bod's centreline because of interference with the rudder fittings. Despite this and using minimal skill in terms of oar twist, stroke length and lanyard use the Mirror moved forward against the wind or the tide. On the few occasions when the blade could angle down at about 45 degrees acceleration to 2 or 3 knots was rapidly achieved. However, despite obtaining a clear forward force with little effort, steering was a major problem, requiring the use of paddles and oars.

At the third trial we had deeper water and the saddle had been modified to fit centrally. Again the furled and hoisted Mirror sail and spars caught the wind and there was a significant tidal flow. Forward speed to 3 knots was readily obtained, the deeper water allowing for more continuous periods of sculling with the yuloh at the seemingly more effective angle of about 45 degrees.

Again steering proved difficult, despite trying varying the strokes. The simplest technique was trailing the yuloh at an angle near the surface of the

water, this only working of course as long as one maintained one's way.

Lessons learned:

1. The blade and handle dimensions worked.
2. Weighing down the blade tip is essential.
3. The saddle needs to be fixed down to resist occasional upward forces from the yuloh.
4. The socket for the ball needs further refinement to reduce friction and to hold down the blade.
5. The handle section should be rounded for comfort.
6. The lanyard fixing to the handle seemed unnecessary.
7. The Mirror may prove too small and light a craft for a yuloh.
8. Windage on the boat can severely affect steering.
9. More practice required.

Overall this experiment was encouraging. The principle clearly works and little force was required. The blade proportions seemed about right, although I have since modified the section to increase the aerofoil effect further up the blade.

Possible further developments include lengthening and lightening the handle, modifying the dimensions so that the yuloh houses neatly on the deck of the Mirror inside the curved gunwales and improving the pin socket.

My experience does raise another issue. The blade clearly develops the intended water diverting effect. This requires an angled attack through the water, with the blade section encouraging linear flow. As speed increases so the angle of the blade relative to the boat surely needs to increase so as to maintain the required angle of attack through the water. This leads in turn to more demands on the sculler and on the fulcrum and to a greater difference between the angle of force from the blade and the direction of travel of the boat. Does this I wonder put an effective limit on the speed of yuloh sculling? What evidence is there of yulohs being adopted where tidal currents run at say over 3 knots?

If anyone else is interested in a refined version I could now supply one without the need to import from China.

Up coming events

Join us on the weekend of **21st / 22nd August** for our third open boats rally at **Slaughden**, with kind support from Slaughden Sailing Club and Demon Yachts (known as the Aldeburgh Boatyard). The broad outline plan is to launch dinghies on Saturday morning around 10am, and probably sail upriver towards Iken, stopping for a picnic lunch. We'll plan to get a takeaway from Aldeburgh for our evening meal. Sunday will follow a similar plan, depending on the weather.

There is space for campervans and some tents at Demon Yachts, but note that there are no overnight toilet facilities so please bring a portapotty if you can.

Note that this event is only suitable for dinghies which can be launched off a gentle ramp, there is no crane or winch.

The only planned race of the year is the **President's Race**, which will be held through the auspices of the Pin Mill Sailing Club at its annual regatta in the **first weekend of September**. Details are scanty, but please contact Simon E. sailing_secretary@pmsc.org.uk for information and to sign up for the race. There will be a barbecue in the evening.

More Small Boat sailing is planned for Norfolk to complement Sue Lewis' A-Z of the **Norfolk Broads**, with a proposed weekend for some small boat sailing based at Hickling Broad over the weekend of **25th / 26th September**. This event is in its early planning, but we'd like a show of hands so details can be confirmed for launching & camping arrangements. There are several options available to us in terms of sailing, and we hope you are able to join us. If you could please register an interest via the East Coast Secretary Lorna Hill. ecsec@oga.org.uk

Any one who is interested in the boats built by Crossfields of Arnside might find the second Arnside conference on the 16th October of interest. Boats familiar to East Coast members include *Bonita*, *Deva*, and *Maryll*, as well as *William* who is a GRP replica of one of their boats. Contact alasdairsimpson2@gmail.com for more details.

Don't forget that the AGM will be held on 6th November. Details will be in the next issue of Eastcoaster.

Backstay

You may have noticed that as well as being very late this newsletter is lacking in focus. I am still looking for someone to take over editing duties as it is very difficult to keep up the necessary local contacts from 400 miles away. I will continue to do the job as long as I can, as it seems a shame to let Eastcoaster lapse after so many issues, but I do need people present at East Coast events to write the articles.

I would like all submissions by Monday 11th October as I will be publishing the next newsletter in the last week of October.

My email address for correspondence remains the same at alison.margaret.cable@gmail.com, but all snail mail should be sent to

Kenmuir,
Rosneath,
G84 0PX.

Just in case you are wondering why I would leave the lovely East Coast I have added a picture of me standing in front of my new house!

Alison Cable. Eastcoaster editor

