



EASTCOASTER

No 28 EVEN MORE RUSHED EDITION NOVEMBER 1997



1997 Fox's East Coast Old Gaffers Race broke much new ground, with staggered starts, new course and two stage finishing for the open boats.

EXPERIMENTAL APPROACH

It was an experimental approach, using many past ideas suggested by the membership. As is often the case with experiments, the changes were not completely successful. Despite the best efforts of the committee with advance notice in Eastcoaster, colour co-ordinated ribbons etc., many boats started in the wrong groups. Some had difficulty with the course marks. Line honour type prizes went to not just the fastest

boats. It was sheer hell working out the corrected time order.

SPECTATOR & SAFETY BENEFITS

However, there was good news as well. With a brisk reaching breeze on a port tack bias start, the staggering of starts into 3 groups did at least help minimise to the chances of collision that would have inevitably happened with nearly 80 boats going at hull speed for the same spot at the same time. The staggered starts also helped the slower boats avoid problems with tidal gates, and most were able to finish within the time limit. From a sailing spectacle point of view it was the best yet, ashore or afloat. There were many vantage points ashore to watch the racing. Afloat, everyone could see all the other boats, on the rectangular course using the Colne and Blackwater estuaries.

INTERESTING NEW ENTRIES

Whilst a few boats were prevented from turning up by the promise of a Force six, the entry level was well up again. As well as the regulars, we had some interesting new entries. The Whitstable Yawl *This-tle* made up for Stormy Petrel's absence, whilst the erstwhile wreck *Daisy Belle* has been rebuilt into a magnificent smack. On the hot shot side we had a new bermuda conversion, the *Sunshine*, an ex Saro Scimitar, whilst two new smack yachts were the 1890 *Arabel* and the 1977 Dutch owned *Kittiwake*.

PERTWEE PERKS UP!

Leading off from the start was the ferro-smack *Pertwee*, showing an incredible turn of speed, even

DON'T FORGET THE AGM AT MALDON LITTLE SHIP CLUB 1600 HRS 6 DECEMBER!

**1997 EAST COAST RACE VIDEOS FROM R&D DAVIS, 4 CHAMBERLAINS GARDENS,
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beating racehorses like the *Sunbeam*. The world's oldest active boat, the smack *Boadicea* was going well too in the first group, and it was also nice to see the Thomas family with two young children aboard sailing the Solent smack *Margaret Catchpole* in prize winning form.

CRACKING START FOR B GROUP

The second group had the best start of the day, with shrinker *Cotehele* on the line at the gun with *Deva*, *Celtic Witch*, *Miranda* and *Good Intent* coming through very close behind on timed reaches at full speed. The hotshots group start was very packed, if generally a little line shy, *Spellbound* appearing to lead with *Peace* to leeward.

HOTSHOTS PLOUGH THROUGH!

The fleet thundered up to Mersea No 6 over the flood before running down to Bench Head. *Rainbow's* spinnaker was fastest out of the bag ahead of *Pelican's*, but like many she did not use the flood wisely beating up to Inner Bench. More places changed on the run to Colne Bar as the hotshots rounded up for the reach and run up river to Thirstlet. *Laura's* bow wave was almost over her stern post as she chased *Spellbound* and *Good Intent*, with Six metre Asti not far behind. Sean had ECOD *Nancy* going her best ever, keeping ahead of classmate *Chittabob IV*. The mighty *Noorderzon* ploughed along in the wake of the Lizzie Annie.

PERTWEE SOLVES BRADWELL TRIANGLE TO WIN

Beating back from Thirstlet many suffered the meteorological freakishness of the "Bradwell Triangle", where winds blew, died, backed and veered to confuse the most able tacticians. The Sharpie Schooner *Dirty Girty* demonstrated the use of a trapeze. It was an agonisingly slow run back from Mersea no 1 to the finish. The first "legitimate" boat across the line appears to have been *Pertwee*, a magnificent result for the record. She may not look a thoroughbred racer with her heavy concrete hull and deckhouse, but she certainly proved herself on this occasion. *Good Intent* led *Spellbound* and *Laura*, who in turn led *Asti*, *Nancy* and *Lizzie Annie*.

OPEN BOATS- SUPER DAY -NO PROBLEMS

The Open Boats race was well supported, especially by the local winkle brigs. The 20ft Oyster Bumkin *Vendetta* was very impressive with her massive racing rig, powering through the fleet. The start was now a port tack beat, again with everyone trying to shave past the Nass beacon to get out of the flood tide. The reach back was a magnificent sight with many boats in a near plane condition. All the favourites were there, such as *Flying Cloud*, the little *Jaid*, *Hush*, *Joanne*, *Genesta* etc., but we also had some heavier craft like the *Anna Louise*, an ex Mersey Ferry lifeboat. Smallest entry and last in was the little lugs'l dinghy *Ailsa*. The course had a two stage finish, the first stage finish which every one completed for the overall corrected time order. The second stage involved an additional circuit for the faster craft. The 12 sq metre Sharpie *Ula* just beat *Flying Cloud* for line honours, who in turn lead *Vendetta*, *Joanne* and *Wanderer*.

THANKS FOR THE BEER, FOX'S!

The Prize Giving was held at West Mersea Yacht Club, where every skipper was awarded four pints and a picture of his boat by our Sponsors, Fox's. Two formal protests were not able to be resolved, but prizes were awarded as best we could in the circumstances. There were problems of identification again, and some boats were missed off the provisional corrected time order list as well. The final list can now be produced for classes 1 & 2, and will be posted to the relevant skippers, with a letter from the vice president. Boats which started in the wrong group will be reinstated for record purposes. The Open Boats did not have the same problem with their experimental instructions! Our thanks go to all who helped. West Mersea Yacht Club our hosts, Fox's our sponsors, Dabchicks SC, Brian & Matt as Ood's, Sue our local rep & Open Boat Controller, the committee, Melvin Fox for the film boat *Paternoster* and any one else I have forgotten!

EAST COAST THE VIDEO!

There is a super video of the event, which will be previewed at the AGM in Maldon on December 6. Next year's race is on 18 July, again at West Mersea Yacht Club.

FOX'S EAST COAST OLD GAFFERS RACE PRIZEWINNERS

EAST COAST OLD GAFFERS TROPHY

BRITANNIA TROPHY

TOM BOLTON MEMORIAL CUP

SHEAVE TROPHY

DULCIBELLA TROPHY

STONE TROPHY

DAVEY TROPHY

BOAT WORLD ROSE BOWL

PUSSERS RUM TROPHY

CORNISH SHRIMPERS CUP

CRUISER TROPHY

AUSTIN EDGE TROPHY

TITHERIDGE TROPHY

TARKAS PIN

OLD HARRY

FIRST CLASS ONE

SECOND CLASS ONE

THIRD CLASS ONE

FIRST CLASS TWO

SECOND CLASS TWO

THIRD CLASS TWO

ZETLAND TROPHY

COCKLESHELL TROPHY

ALPHA PITT TROPHY

LITTLE GAFF TROPHY

CUP FOR TRYING

ASTLV

SPELLBOUND

GOOD INTENT

KITTIWAKE

STADATS

SPELLBOUND

LIZZIE ANNIE

MARGARET

CATCHPOLE

NANCY

COTEHELE

FIREFLY

ARABELLA

ROSE

BOLD HAMSTER

SOEVEREIN

STADATS

NOORDERZON

BONA

MERMAID

DIRTY GIRTY

ATAHUALPA

CAPPRICIO

FLYING CLOUD

ULA

SWIFT

JAID

ALBERT HARRY

DECOMMISSIONED FISHING VESSELS

After worrying headlines about the cutting up of decommissioned fishing vessels, it is pleasing to report substantial progress from the Heritage Afloat AGM. From now on, when a fisherman receives consent from MAFF to decommission his vessel (in order to obtain grant), he can offer her to the National Fishing Heritage Centre in Grimsby. The Museum, if it accepts the vessel, can then take a view on restoration from within its own resources or leasing on to a private individual for restoration or conversion. The principal issue is that the vessel belongs to the museum who will give guarantees that she will never return to commercial fishing.

It is a pilot scheme at this stage, but it has been accepted by MAFF. It is also proposed to be self financing. Some vessels e.g. Scottish MFV type might not be particularly rare, but a sound specimen sold on leasehold for conversion to a yacht, survey vessel etc. would bring in money which might assist museum restoration work, or pay for administration of the scheme. The museum does have the use of a large dock basin for mooring purposes. There is still much work to be done on the fine print of leasehold agreements, and the scheme as a whole will have to be ratified by Grimsby Borough Council at a meeting which is being held at the time of writing. However, it is understood some vessels have already been put forward, and there are people who are interested in leasing vessels.

There has been a lot work behind the scenes, particularly with regard to discussions with civil servants at the ministry. There has also been a general election to contend with. Our thanks go particularly to George Jago for using his skills and expertise to gain the confidence of MAFF, following an approach by the SSA last November.

**FOR SALE : PETTER MINI 6 MARINE
DIESEL ENGINE £500 o.n.o. Shallow sump type,
ideal for ex Stuart Turner engine beds/ boats
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AGM 6 DECEMBER

I suppose many of the membership view AGM's as a bit of a bore, a foregone conclusion or a chance to raise questions in public forum. For certain committee members they can be something of an ordeal, when actions taken over the year have to be accounted for.



However, perhaps we've all been taking ourselves too seriously. Having had a chat with the Solent area, we find that they get their business side over and done with in the afternoon, then have supper and a social afterwards. This sounds much more friendly than going on till 2300hrs, so we're going to try the same thing.



The Annual General Meeting, as notified in the previous Eastcoaster, will be held at Maldon Little Ship Club at 1600 hours on Saturday 6 December. Following the meeting we will have a fish and chip supper and a social. The bar will be open, the latest 1997 blockbuster video of the East Coast Race will be shown. Video copies will be on sale at the special price of £13.50. There will also be other items on sale such as cards, calendars and books.



Even if the idea of sitting through an AGM depresses you, do come along and have a chat at the social in the evening. Can I take this opportunity to thank my fellow committee members for all their work, and wish all the membership a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.



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PS Does Anyone know of a
clean joke for the Vice
President's address?

1998 looks like being another very active year for Eastcoasters, whether they want to stay on the East Coast or range far south and west. Our *social / annual dinner at the RBYC on 7 February* kicks off the year, and the rally at the same place *23/24 May* starts the sailing events. *The Crouch Rally* is likely to end up at North Fambridge, where we might be guests of the local yacht club. For June it is suggested members charter additional boats, for there is so much to do. A new festival at *Southwold* is planned *17-19 June*. This will feature a passage race to get there, and a parade/ passage race to take the fleet to Lowestoft. Adnams are sponsoring the event, no doubt they giving their dray horses extra oats for the beer they must bring to the Harbour Inn from The local yacht club are also involved, and there will be sampling sessions at the Brewery. (ECOGA HQ staff have conducted rigorous testing on the product, in the interests of the membership). *Lowestoft Festival of the Sea is on 20th June*. Details are awaited, but it is known that there will be a race for fishing and ex fishing boats, watch out for a great homecoming of the big trawling ketches from as far away as Sweden or Shetland.

Meanwhile back at Ipswich on the same weekend, there will be a gathering of vessels in the *Ipswich Wet Dock*, hopefully with some tall ships too. Ipswich Borough Council and ABP are said to be supporting the event. *Shotley Classic Boat Festival runs from June 27- July 5*. This is the 10th festival, with sailing events during the day, Shitley Spot in the evening and entertainment at night. The marina may lay on some fireworks to celebrate the anniversary, let us hope it is not the last Shotley.

West Mersea will again host the East Coast Old Gaffers Race on 18 July. With morning and evening tides, we will no doubt be visiting the Wallet Spitway again. The following Saturday, there is *Harwich Sea Festival*, which includes a smack AND GAFFERS race. Alternatively the *Stour Sailing Club* at the top end of the estuary will be staging their very well supported regatta with a full range of water sports, including the unique punt racing. Traditional craft are welcome to take part in the races on *25/26 July*.



We are being encouraged to tour the English Channel, possibly after taking part in the *Swale Match on 1st of August*. There's a rally at Etaples on August 7/9, then *Douarnenez* on 13/16 August. There's another Charles Peyton Bristol type Festival being staged at *Portsmouth*. The Solent OGA are linking in their annual race, with a passage race from Cowes, at the *August Bank Holiday weekend*. Apparently the OGA are involved in part of the organization, and would like to make it a national event for the association. For those unable to get away, *West Mersea are staging Mersea Week 23/8 August, with the Town Regatta on 29 August*. No Stour Rally has been planned as at present, members views are invited.



After the Colne Match on 10 September, we have the *Maldon Town Regatta & OGA Anniversary Rally on 25 September*. Ideas for the racing theme are requested. The *Open Boats Rally* has not been finalised, but it is possible that it could be combined with the ex-Osea Race, now being run at West Mersea YC as a "Laying Up Race."

