

Adventures Offshore Logbook May 2006

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Word from the Helm

Here we are again at the end of April with the winter refit behind us. Both ketches are now back at Ipswich Yacht Haven and the new season is already underway. Before going any further, I must thank all of you who have worked so hard over the winter to refit both the ketches and prepare them for the season ahead and especially Pete, who has project managed the whole activity. It always seems such a daunting task in October, but once again we're ready in time.

Looking ahead to next year, we've decided to celebrate the end of the next winter refit with a Fitting Out dinner. This is already booked for **Saturday 31st March 2007** at Fox's Yacht Club, so please put this date in your diary now and keep it free.

The two afterguard training weekends were unanimously agreed to have been very worthwhile and will become a regular feature in the calendar. We are extremely grateful to the Ipswich Sea Cadets for allowing us to use their base at Ipswich Haven for this training.

We have continued with our Trainee Mates scheme to develop more afterguard members and I'm very pleased to see that three more of our trainees successfully completed their Day Skipper practical course over Easter. I'm confident that they will progress before long to obtain their Coastal Skipper qualification and become fully qualified mates. We are also running another Day Skipper course in the Solent in September.

Looking ahead to the summer, the Tall Ships races this year go south to Lisbon and Cadiz. This inevitably means that the individual legs are relatively expensive, particularly when travel costs are included. We have reviewed possible programme options and after careful consideration we have decided to enter only Ocean Scout in the races this year. This will allow Offshore Scout to

carry out five and seven day cruises starting and finishing at East Coast ports during July and August. We hope that the lower voyage and travel costs associated with these will give more young people the opportunity to sail with us during the summer holidays. Bookings are coming in steadily, so if you want to take part please give us a call or email us.

I wish you all fair winds and an enjoyable sailing season.

Bob Atkins



Winter 2005/2006 Refit report by Pete Camper

Both boats are now back on the water and fully recommissioned, after a lot of hard work by afterguard and friends of the scheme. As usual there was a flurry of last minute activity to complete the refit. As Bob says in his notes on page 1, **many thanks to all who have been involved in this winter refit.**

A lot of refit work has been aimed at areas that have been giving problems last season, in particular the heads! These are now back to as new condition.

What's been done

- The heads on both boats have been completely replumbed, and new pumps & sea-cock fitted. All the 2 inch diameter hoses have been replaced.
- Ocean Scout's forward heads now has a new sink surround and worktop - thanks to **David Faulkner** for doing this job.
- Leaking chain plates on both boats have been removed, cleaned and refitted, see picture below.
- New domestic batteries on Ocean Scout
- Engines on both boats have been serviced and overhauled injectors fitted.
- New spray hoods fitted on both boats
- All winches - routine winter service
- Several new headsails have been purchased
- Both boats now have a third reef in the mainsail
- Deck repairs to guardrail stanchions area
- New propeller on Offshore Scout
- New lower rudder bearing on Ocean Scout
- Several new items of running rigging
- New exhaust on Ocean Scout
- New stainless steel fittings added to the masts designed to protect the mast light fittings
- Bilges and lockers cleaned throughout
- Both boats re-antifouled
- All tools and spares checked & restocked



Safety equipment

In addition to the above work, all the onboard safety equipment has been checked or overhauled. This includes: EPIRBs, life jackets (& safety lines), jackstays, oilskins, first aid kits, torches, dan-bouys, fire extinguishers & life rafts. This is essential to keep the boats conforming to the MCA code we operate under, and is done **every year**.

Berths still available for the 2006 Tall Ships Races...Delivery to St Malo...Race 1 St Malo to Lisbon.....Cruise Lisbon to Cadiz....Cruise Cadiz to La Coruna...Race 2 La Coruna to Antwerp.....return to Ipswich.....all details and prices can be found on the website

First time skipper by Ruth Shaylor

After 5 years of “messing about with boats” I finally did the Day Skipper course last summer. Afterwards I decided to charter Bambi hoping that the Solent might be a bit quieter at the end of the season. My first problem was getting a crew. First I emailed all the trainee mates but there was no response, then I asked all my friends who had some sailing experience but they were either busy or sufficiently scared by my driving that they weren't quite ready to get on a boat with me. Finally Adrian and Roger put me in touch with crew that they had had during the summer and I managed to find 4 people to go with me .



They say when you first take a boat out on your own do it with a familiar boat, crew and water. – oops. To be fair Bambi is similar to Mersea Adventure, which I have sailed on before, except smaller, with the throttle in a different place, no fridge, and less creature comforts. Still after a quick look around the boat, it was time to get a chart out and see where I was. I decided I was going to take things easy, so on the Saturday morning we set off with the intention of anchoring at Newtown Creek for lunch. We made such good progress that I decided to pick up a mooring buoy off Yarmouth instead. No sooner had we moored, a dolphin started swimming between our boat and the one behind! After an hour and with the Harbour Master wanting payment we decided to head for Cowes. We got to Folly Point early and rafted up. We then watched people who had chartered 50-60ft yachts for the weekend attempt trying to turn round and come along side.

On Sunday I decided to explore some of the quieter areas of Southampton and the Itchen. The forecast was Force 2-3 but even from the relative shelter of Folly point I was dubious and as we got to Cowes with white horses everywhere I decided the forecast was inaccurate. We got across to Southampton without a problem although I learned that at high water the ferries don't always stay in the deep channel! At about 2.30pm we started heading back and at about this point the wind started to pick up. Again the Coast Guard said “the weather conditions are force 3, sea state slight” at about the same time all the boats around us were putting their nav lights on and dropping their sails or putting in an extra reef (I later learned that it had picked up to F7).

Once back in the Hamble, came the fun of finding the mooring. In the end I turned round to ask the skipper of Discovery for directions. What no one had told me however, was that the mooring had silted up over the summer and was inaccessible at low water. Unfortunately I found this out the hard way by doing an emergency stop much to the amusement of the locals. I put the kettle on and waited for the tide to turn (at least it had stopped raining). 1.5 hours later we managed to get off the bottom and move the 100m to the mooring. Next came even more fun!

Anyone who has moored at West Mersea will know about trying to get from boat to shore in a dinghy, and whilst it wasn't quite as bad as that, at 6pm when it's dark and your not quite sure where you're going it was still an entertaining experience. Despite the little blip at the end I had a fantastic weekend and gained a lot of confidence. As the guy from Discovery said, the whole purpose of training boats like Bambi is that you can touch the bottom and scrape the sides, as that's what they're there for. (He also apologised for not telling me about the mooring). I'm now planning on taking Bambi out again this summer and will be after crew if anyone is interested – I promise not to pick the mooring up at low water!

Bambi is a 26ft Westerly Centaur, owned by our fellow scout sail training organisation - Discovery Sailing Project, and based on the River Hamble.