

Summer Camp 2013 27th July – 3rd August

by Jackie Kinch

Saturday 27th July



After the usual breakfast at Tesco's, Chichester, everyone set up camp in the field at Cobnor under hot sun. The single main marquee was also erected with only one casualty – Roly banged his head on a protruding bolt and required the ministrations of one of the club's nurse members. Next, the boats were rigged and we were all on the water by 2pm.

The original plan was to sail to Itchenor to obtain the harbour licences and then head up to Fishbourne, as the high tide at 3.30 would allow us to get quite a way up there. But just as we took to the water the gathering clouds thickened, and a dark weather front came in from the direction of Hayling Island. It brought an interesting and challenging squall with wind seeming to come from all directions at once. Most made it safely to Itchenor with some minor exceptions – John Grey in his L2K was de-masted when a shroud broke so he returned to the beach. Gary and Jackie capsized when Jackie was too slow un-cleating the jib in a gust. Pat, Katie and James in Pat's Albacore decided to go back ashore to reef, so they had a very smooth sail over to Itchenor.

With the licences obtained, it was decided that it would be best if we sailed back under Jib, however leaving the shore proved hard, as it wasn't deep enough to have centreboards or dagger boards down and the tide and wind working together with the added hazard of a large barge beached at Itchenor giving a wind shadow both Derek and Lisa, and Gary and Jackie were pushed back round into the beach. Pauline was definite that they wouldn't put up the main, but 10 minutes later the weather had blown through; the sun came out and the wind died down so all were happy to hoist full sail again, and by the time we reached the Cobnor channel the wind had all but died away

The new showers were a hit – hot, clean and spacious. Supper arrangements were made either individually or in groups and thoughts were turning to the camp fire and wood collection, when it started to spit with rain. This turned to drizzle, which became heavy sustained rain with the odd rumble of thunder and flash of lightening, so all adjourned to the newly named communal tent, The Queen's Legs. Here we engaged in witty banter, and made plans for a pub sign. David Bracey had arranged the trophy for first or best capsized of the day – the Capsized Carrot T-shirt! This was duly awarded to Gary and Jackie for the only capsized of the afternoon. The chatter continued until one by one sleep called to everyone.

Sunday 28th July



Clear blue skies started the day. The tide was low around 9.30 so we all got ready and the boats were on the water by 10.30. It was a good sunny upwind sail to Hayling Island Sailing Club with Gary sporting the Capsize Carrot T-shirt over his sailing kit. There were no challengers for the shirt on the way, even though the wind strength was a good 4-5. Lunch was consumed on the patio at HISC and the decision was made to go for *The Circumnavigation of Hayling Island*. We all pushed out of the channel at Hayling. Out to sea dark clouds were visible and they covered the sun as we made our way along the front of Hayling Island to the Langstone Harbour entrance. The water outside the entrance was very choppy, and Gary had high hopes of being able to relinquish the T-shirt, but all made it safely through onto the beach just inside the harbour entrance. Tea and hot chocolate from the café went down well and we struck out for Langstone Bridge at around 4pm with the sun shining once again. This leg saw some contenders for the shirt: first to capsize were Matt and Katie in the Vision, virtually straight off the beach. Once they were safely upright again, and apparently almost simultaneously, Bill and Paddy in the Laser 2000 and David, Julie and Annie in the Vision capsized.



Roger and Pauline in Kellie went to David first. Julie had been well trained at PBSC sailing school and knew to keep a hand on the boat. Unfortunately, her hand was on the tiller, which was now disconnected from the boat and she was drifting happily into Langstone Harbour. David righted the boat, but without a tiller in the strong current and breeze it went over again. Finally righted and with all occupants and tiller present and correct, they sailed off. Roger and Pauline then turned their attentions to Bill and Paddy who had turtled and the centreboard had dropped into the boat. Bill had expertly managed to retrieve the centreboard and was about to scoop Paddy up when the harbour master intervened and lifted the mast. Now

with all the boats sorted out, we continued our sail and navigated through the 'old bridge' channel, landing on the western shore by the bridge and Langstone Sailing Club. Masts down and under the bridge for Gary and Jackie in Laser2, Roly and John in Miracle, Pat, Nick and Tim in the Albacore, but over the bridge on borrowed trolleys for Matt and Katie in the Vision, Greg and Ian in the Laser 2000, Bill and Paddy in L2K, and Lisa, Derek and James in the Vision.

With masts back up we headed on up the Emsworth Channel. But all was not plain sailing; with the tide dropping from full and with possible silting up in the channels, the channel makers could not be relied upon to show the safe depth of water and Matt and Katie got stuck in the mud, causing some minor damage to the rudder which meant that they needed to be towed home. Apart from that, all returned safely to Cobnor between 6.30-7pm, tired, but glad that we had achieved the task.



Nick lit the camp fire and after showers and food, most gathered for the usual evening activity of gently ribbing each other. When lightning was seen and thunder heard – we re-assured ourselves that it was nowhere near us, then the heavens opened and it poured with rain, extinguishing the fire. Some moved to the Pub tent where the assembled crowd voted David and crew the worthy winners of the Capsize T-shirt.

Monday 29th July

Very blustery overnight and overcast this morning with scattered showers. Tides dictated a late start, so the plan was to be at the boats at 12.30 for a sail to East Head. This gave plenty of time in the morning for boat maintenance – John managed to sort out the shroud on his L2K and a joint effort restored the Vision and rudder stock to full working order. Everyone was on the water by 1pm, bar Gary and Jackie who couldn't reef the laser 2 and with the forecast predicting gust to force 6 they decided to gather wood for the fire then eat ice cream at Bosham. There were small white horses in Cobnor channel and Paula (staying at Bough Beech but sailing with us for the day) was the first to capsize. Out in the main channel John and his brother on John's L2K tacked and were taken over by the wind. Then third to go was Matt in the Vision with Julie. It was a tough sail, but the sunny afternoon rewarded everyone for the efforts made to get there. Some walked over the sand to the Witterings to sample the refreshments at the café, before the much more relaxing cruise back on jib only. All were home by 5ish.



The communal barbecue went down well; Pat arranged a plentiful salad and a variety of barbecue grills were gathered. Richard's washing machine 'Ogee' made a perfect place to cook food in no time at all. Then Katie provided pancakes to everyone who wanted them, cooking them to order as the sun slowly sank behind the huge oak tree at the boundary of the field. We then sat around the fires, feeding them with the wood gathered earlier. Even though Matt was not helming at the time of his capsize today, and despite the protestations and robust defence of Matt by Julie, Matt was voted the winner of the T-shirt!

The weather forecast for tomorrow is awful with heavy rain and high winds – maybe they have got it wrong?

Tuesday 30th July

The weather forecast was right – strong winds and rain woke us all in the morning. Various plans were hatched for what was evidently a non-sailing day because the channel wind monitor Cambermet logged gusts of 30 knots and WindGuru forecast force 7. Some visited Petworth and had an enjoyable day, others ventured to the submarine museum in Portsmouth, sightseeing in Chichester or caught the train to Portsmouth.

One group decided to walk to Bosham for lunch. This group set off around 12 and took the footpath north by the estuary. The church steeple was in view ahead as we set off with the wind and rain at our backs. We decided to bird spot on the way; none of the group were experienced twitchers but that didn't deter us and we are sure we spotted a bald eagle (although Roger still maintains it was an egret), an Andean Condor, an African Macaw with surprisingly dull plumage and an Asian Vulture we think, although the latter might equally have been a moorhen.



We all followed Roger as he strode out on the path which ran round the entire Bosham bowl, still with the Church steeple in clear view, but not necessarily getting much closer. We arrived at Bosham as the rain stopped around 1.45. The Anchor Bleu was very busy so we walked up the road to the pub at the roundabout for lunch, which was lovely. We decided to see if we could get the water taxi back to Cobnor and obtained the phone number of the cabby from some helpful people at Bosham Sailing Club – we made contact with him and sucking through his teeth he said he wouldn't come down to Bosham at this time of day (much like other cabbies we know who won't venture south of the river at this time of night...). He did however agree to pick us up if we walked to the jetty "further down". This turned out to mean the jetty opposite Itchenor Harbour Office, so we had to walk down the other side of the estuary, past Cobnor beach on the opposite side of the water, down to the jetty at Itchenor, where he collected us and took us the very short distance back up to Cobnor! Even so it was a very enjoyable day



After tea and cake, we all swapped tales about our various days out, then cooked our suppers and gathered round the washing machine ogee where we continued the usual banter till bed.

Wednesday 31st July

No rain! Wind steady, overcast. The plan was outlined to sail to Hayling island for lunch, leave there about 3.30, sail down to Bosham bowl, and then down to Chichester Yacht Club for supper on their terrace at 6.30, then home again. Everyone was ready at the boats by 11am and on the water by 11.30. The sail up the Hayling island was exhilarating with good steady force 4 all the way. Matt was sporting the Capsize t-shirt and hoping that something would occur, but there were no capsize on the way there.



We arrived there just as several fleets were about to take to the water (Teras, Fevers, 29ers) so our arrival was not greeted as warmly as usual – we huddled our boats, including Kellie, into as small a space as we could, and then went up on the balcony to eat lunch and watch the boats.

We chewed the fat till about 3ish then launched our boats for a play with spinnakers off East Head. The wind was getting lighter as we entered Bosham channel, and we saw Rick, Ness and Rupert moored in the channel opposite the Cobnor slipway. The short sail down to Bosham was uneventful and it was looking like the capsize T-shirt would have to be awarded for non-sailing endeavours (such as Paddy reversing over his own campy stove) but Nick and James in the L2K came up trumps; in very light winds their mainsheet did what mainsheets do best and wrapped itself round the tiller and caused a very graceful capsize into the mud. They did manage to right the boat, but with no wind to sail in, they decided to do a passable replay of The African Queen, pulling their boat through the mud, until Pat in Kellie came to their rescue.

Rick offered a ride to anyone on his yacht down to Chichester and Gary and Jackie took him up on his offer. Rick plied us with Rhubarb Vodka whilst Ness navigated up the channel. We moored on the Jetty and all the dinghies pulled up onto the beach. We arranged the tables on the terrace and had a very sociable and pleasant meal.



At about 8pm we decided it was time to head home, so we launched the boats with no wind but drifting on the tide in the right direction. Kellie and Rick took turns towing the boats back up to the Cobnor channel and all boats were put away by 9.45. Kangaroo court was in session, and Nick was awarded the T-shirt as we put the world to rights round the Washing Machine till late into the night.

Thursday 1st August.

A blissfully sunny day with good south easterly winds force 3-4 as we all rigged our boats. The day hadn't started so auspiciously though – John had arrived to assist by driving Kellie today and had parked his magnificent motorbike very temporarily on some soft ground, whereupon it had keeled over, spreading oil into his carburettor. Not such a good start. Anyway, it didn't delay us setting off for East Head, accompanied for the first few leagues by Rick and Ness who were making their way home today. As we progressed up the main channel, David and Zoe managed a capsize, but did manage to right the boat without assistance. We all landed at East Head and gathered together for a group photo shoot. We launched again and headed round the Winner Sandbank and out of the harbour entrance on a tight reach, making easy headway against the tide with the strength of wind. We progressed along the front of Hayling Island until we spied the Coastguard lookout station, and landed just East of that.



We helped each other pull the boats up out of the tide and all settled down to either eat a packed lunch, or purchase food from the cafés and chip shops in the parade . The sea was quite calm as it started to come in, so there was no rush to get afloat again and we stayed there resting and chatting till around 3.15. The Kangaroo Court was called to session and the merits of the morning's Capsize were discussed; as Zoe was at the helm at the time of the incident, and she would be leaving camp tomorrow, Nick reluctantly gave up the shirt to Zoe. She graciously accepted the award and donned the shirt for the homeward leg. We launched the boats and headed back to Hayling. The wind was perfect for tight reaching along the front then spinnakers up through the entrance and down the main channel; most had a very enjoyable sail home. Unfortunately there was a problem with the centreboard on David and Zoe's boat and while Kellie was assisting, a problem with the engine mount left John supporting the outboard. He manfully re-located it, but not before the fuel lead was damaged leaving Kellie without power.

All the boats returned to Cobnor safely and a rescue party was dispatched in Greg's people carrier taxi to rescue John and Kellie who by this time had made it to the shore. Whilst waiting for the rescue party, John enlisted the help of a variety of people/ willing helpers he found on the beach to pull Kellie up the beach on troughs as the tide rose. He had informed the coastguard of his plight, but it appears that if this information was noted they didn't actually do anything.

The rescue party had obtained a replacement fuel line from the Young Christians activity centre which proved an adequate fix to allow Roger and Bill to motor Kellie home. They got back to camp by about 8.30 and things returned to normal, either in the Queen's Legs or round the washing machine. There may have been some creative use of eye liner on sleeping camper round the fire.... And when Roly and Pauline went to bed they treated the rest of the group to a shadow show similar to one in the Austin Powers film.....

Friday 2nd August

Showers overnight meant a damp start to the day. Kellie was inspected and a few improvements made to ensure her seaworthiness, including a new fuel line and cable ties, and we were ready for action once more. Due to a lack of other capsizes, and fact that Kellie had been a source of problems yesterday she was awarded the T shirt and wore it with pride as a flag.



We rigged the boats as the sun started to come out and all 6 boats sailed down to Chichester, then on as far as they could get towards Fishbourne. John Grey's daughter Josey and her boyfriend found the limit of the water when they nudged Johns L2K into the mud on the left bank; they managed to free themselves by walking the boat out and were soon under way again, a clear signal to all that it would be best to turn back. All sailed back to Itchenor and beached for ice creams from the Yellow Van and sat and watched the world go by on the grass. When everyone was ready, we sailed on up the Cobnor channel. The Queen's Legs became a restaurant for the evening when a number of campers joined together to eat an Indian takeaway, and then settled round the washing machine. We were just getting comfortable, when we noticed a silent firework display coming

from the Portsmouth sky. As it slowly dawned on us that we couldn't hear any bangs and the lights might be lightning, the skies opened and it poured with rain. The wind got up, and for a short while tents were at risk of being uprooted. Half an hour later calm returned, but because everything, including the camp fire, was saturated we all went to bed.

Saturday 3rd August

The plan was to be on the water by 10 and go to Bosham for coffee, then sail to Thorney channel, go down and up it, and land at East Head for a picnic lunch. We set off as planned for Bosham and found windsurfers scooting up and down in the bowl by the road. We quickly realised that when they fell off, they were standing in 2 feet of water, so with centreboards and rudders half raised we glided to the shore, made safe the boats and headed for the café. Kellie had to moor on the main quayside by the sailing club. 20 minutes later there was about 18 inches of water left in the bowl and the wind had blown up to force 5 with stronger gusts. We reefed the sails down to handkerchief size and walked our boats up to the mouth of the bowl, the deepest area of water. We planned to stay close to the quayside, tacking out to the main channel, but with little rudder and less board, tacking was almost impossible, so we blew across the bowl to the deeper channel of moored yachts on the opposite side then hiked as hard as we could and tacked back up to the Cobnor shore, where we congratulated each other on getting back without any capsizes. Instead of a sail to East Head, we picnicked on the grass by the Cobnor slipway, hoping that the wind would do as forecast and drop down to a pleasant force 4 so that we could all take to the water once more. This didn't happen, so by about 3.30 we decided to start loading Kellie onto John's trolley for Zero Sum, in preparation for leaving camp tomorrow. Now we were in packing up mood we demolished the Queen's Legs and demisted and cleaned all the boats so they were ready for the tow home. We rewarded ourselves with Fish and Chips eaten on the waterfront at Emsworth, while we watched the sun go down on another good day at Summer Camp

Next year's camp is already being planned, with the camping booked from Saturday 26th July till Sunday 3rd August. MANY Thanks to Roger, Bill, Matt, David, Pat, Greg, Nick and everyone who helped make this years camp a brilliant sailing experience and a lot of fun into the bargain.