

## Roach Sailing Association

[www.roachriver.org.uk/rsa/](http://www.roachriver.org.uk/rsa/)

### September 2021 Newsletter

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### Chairman's Report

*Richard Bessey*

After a very quiet start to the year, RSA racing was already getting back to normal at the start of the season. Thankfully we are now able to run a full cruising and social calendar as well. We enjoyed good company on the East Coast Cruise and Fambridge rally, and also had some family trips to the Essex and Suffolk rivers aboard AMBITION II.



*Up the Alde by dinghy*

Another change for us was our first ever dinghy outboard, an electric model from ePropulsion. Two other members also have them and we have been impressed by the long range and ease of use. As with cars, the future of electric boating may be nearer than we expected!

The RSA has welcomed several new members this year, and it's good to see so many new boats on the river. New members this year are:

Dave Schooling	ATHENA
Trevor Huson	DREAMCATCHER
Marcus Bond	SCARLET LAKE
Graham Smith	JOUETTE
Daniel Turner	Green Snapdragon
Dawn Billington	Crew on CIEL BLEU
Lee Jeffreys	COBRA
Matt Menhennet	SEA WORKER
John Walton	VIDA LOCA
Robert Ayre	
Lesley Edminds	Crew on QUINTILLA
Alan Cross	Crew on QUINTILLA

We also welcomed new committee members, Alice Byas, Brian Browne and Graham Pelling.

Laying-up time is not yet upon us and I hope we can all enjoy a few more days aboard before the weather closes in!

## Laying up Supper

This year's supper will be on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021 at the Garons Golf Complex, Garons Park, Eastern Avenue SS2 4FA. We suggest arrival at 19:00 for seating at 19:30.

The choice of menu will be as follows and please let us have your menu options when you make your booking. The proposed menu is as follows:

### *Starter*

- a. Leek and Potato Soup
- b. Prawn Cocktail of Greenland prawns on a bed of crisp salad leave, diced tomatoes and cucumber with a Marie Rose sauce.
- c. Melon Fan served with Champagne sorbet
- d. Smooth Duck Pate served with home-made pickle and French toast

### *Main*

- a. Roast Pork Tenderloin fillet stuffed with plums, rich red wine gravy and & gratin potatoes
- b. Roast Topside of British Beef & Yorkshire pudding with rich red wine gravy & roast potatoes
- c. Grilled Sea Bass – served with new potatoes and a creamy white wine & dill sauce
- d. Vegetable & Quorn cottage pie.

### *Dessert*

- a. Lemon Cheesecake
- b. Cheese and Biscuits
- c. Winter berry Eton Mess
- d. Apple crumble server with custard

The price will be £28 per person and please send your menu request and payment to Simon Joel our treasurer, who, along with Jonathan, has agreed to make the arrangements for us. The deadline for orders will be Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October.

Ideally please transfer your payment to the RSA account with an email ([simon.joel@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:simon.joel@hotmail.co.uk)), with your menu options:

Roach Sailing Association  
Sort Code 20-79-73  
Acc 80751138

Alternatively please send your cheque by post, again with your menu options to:-

Simon Joel, 28 Chapmans Walk,  
Leigh on Sea Essex SS9 2XA

## Racing Report

*Jon Walmsley*

This year the winner of the cruiser series is MARTINIQUE. Despite being a consistent cup winner, this is the first time that MARTINIQUE has won the cruiser series. Mark is a keen racer, and despite winning the Nore Race this year, his main focus has always been on the more prestigious Len Choppin Cup. Mark brings a level of competitiveness to the series that makes us all raise our game.



*MARTINIQUE*

A total of Fourteen boats contested the series.



*RODE GRUTT and IMOTHES*

MARTINIQUE	16.0
CIEL BLEU	13.5
QUINTILLA	11.5
IMOTHES	6.5
LUCY	5.0
PARADISE BAY	4.0
RODE GRUTT	3.5
LOTUS	3.0

LOTUS BAVARIA	2.0
MOMO 3	1.5
ULABELLA	1.0
PRESTO	0.5
EOLE	0.5
GINGER LEI	0.5

WALKER | 0.5

Will you please return racing trophies to myself or any committee members for engraving. Many thanks

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As usual, the dinghy series was hard fought with the top of the leader board changing hands race by race.



The two Tideways: APPLE and PATCH

Eleven different boats raced this year, sometimes in not very pleasant conditions. As usual I would like to thank all that manned the safety boat, without which these races could not take place.



EOLETTE

The two consistent contenders were MILLIE and APPLE, so it is appropriate that they ended up tied on points after the last race.

MILLIE	10
APPLE	10
EOLETTE	8
LITTLE LINDA	6
MERGANSER	6
TAZ	5
EXPRESS	5
PATCH	5
HERON	1.5
NANI DRAGON	1

## Bosun (and Editor's) Corner

*John Langrick*

Another relatively quiet year for most members, but opening up since last year with more venturing further.

Many thanks again for the articles and special thanks to Shaun Hetherington for giving us an almost live update of his travels in Briar Rose from the far corners of Greece, back to the UK and Paglesham.

*Sutton Wharf*

Currently the rates at Sutton Wharf for laying up and storage remain the same as in 2021 for 2022.

I have booked days for potential haul out, but of course you can make your own arrangements directly with the yard if you wish. I plan to have an insurance survey this year so if any others want to join me and would like me to book theirs too, please let me know.

Suggested hauling out days are:

October 20 – 22

Nov 3 – 5, Nov 8,9

I plan to lay up DALLY before end of November with just a couple of jobs to do this winter, the first is to recondition the water pump, (I have the parts) and also service the engine, all filters and oil.

Any volunteers for scrubbing and covering when laid up would be appreciated!

The RSA tea hut remains available, but suggest we continue the rule that only one person should use it at a time.

Please try and keep the hut and surrounding area clean and tidy and make sure you shut the door after use.

*Paglesham*

Unfortunately, we still do not have power in our shed, we will continue to try and get this connected, but providing power was never part of the agreement for

facilities at the yard so we should not assume it will ever be restored.

## Getting ashore – Dinghy Safety

*Richard Bessey*

It had been a long but enjoyable single-handed sail home, and the ebb had set in by the time the boat was on the mooring. With everything secured, it was time to get ashore before the twilight faded to darkness. As the skipper stepped down to the dinghy, a gust heeled the boat and a wave caught the dinghy. Suddenly he was in the water. By the time he came up, the tide had taken him away from the boat and swimming was too hard in waterproofs and boots. He made it to an empty mooring and clung on. He shouted for help, without much hope as the moorings seemed deserted. But as luck would have it someone ashore heard, and raised the alert. A successful rescue ensued.

This tale was told by the very experienced skipper in question. It wasn't on the Roach, but similar accidents have happened at Paglesham quite recently, any of which could have ended in tragedy. It seems that the most serious boating incidents involve dinghy trips to and from the mooring, usually when wind-against-tide has made conditions worse than we expect.



*Just don't go! Paglesham, October 2013*

The picture above was in extreme conditions, but even quite unexceptional weather can produce 2 foot waves on the Roach, and anyone can make a slip even in calm conditions. Note Paglesham reach (where we have our moorings) run NE/SW. Our main prevailing winds are from the SW and can affect this reach with great contrast depending on both wind and tide.

So what can we do to keep ourselves and our crew safe? Most of us already know about the tips below, but it can't do any harm to review and think about cutting the risk on our own boats!

### **Decision time**

*Roach Sailing Association Newsletter Sept 2021*

Each time we go out, it's time to decide – is this a good idea?

- Are the weather conditions safe for your dinghy trip, and is your dinghy up to the job today?
- Are your crew going to be OK?
- How will it be later when the tide turns or the wind picks up?

If we have concerns, we should always be prepared to choose a better day! If you are on the moored boat and conditions are poor, consider staying safe on board until things improve.

### **Choose the right dinghy**

The dinghy needs to be big enough for the number of people in it (and their gear).

Can everyone sit down with the boat well-balanced, including when someone is getting in or out?

It needs enough freeboard when fully loaded, for the conditions, and a strong transom if using an outboard.

Most importantly do not stand up in the dinghy, but always try and keep your (and your crews) centre of gravity as low as possible.

### **Outboard or oars**

If using an outboard, make sure it can be operated without unbalancing the boat. It makes sense to secure the outboard to the dinghy with a lanyard as well as with the clamps. Make sure there is enough fuel or battery power, and use that kill-cord!

We always need a good pair of oars. Someone must be able row without unbalancing the boat, which needs strong rowlocks fitted. It's a good idea to have a second pair of rowlocks forward, so the boat can be balanced with two people. Practice rowing occasionally to keep up your skills! It is always a good idea to make sure your rowlocks are also secure and not in a position to be flipped overboard. Perhaps simply tie them together with a lanyard long enough to span the floor of the dinghy.

### **Crew safety**

Lifejackets, obviously. Especially for children or guests but recommended for everyone in a dinghy. In some conditions just a buoyancy aid is inadequate and a serviceable self inflating jacked the best option.

Tiredness, illness and alcohol are all factors that make accidents more likely, and affect ability to survive in the water.

### ***Dinghy handling***

Getting away from the hard can be a bit fraught, rowing out, lowering the outboard leg and getting it started (mutter mutter). It's good to make sure everyone is prepared for this bit!

It is often better to keep inshore to keep out of the current, even if it's going your way. This keeps you in the calmest water for longer. If the wind is across the river, look for the calm water on the windward side.

In wind-over-tide conditions, avoid turning side-on to the waves. If you need to turn the dinghy, do it in calmer water near the shore or in the lee of a moored boat. Plan so that you approach your boat on the side that's most protected, facing the same way as the moored boat.

Have a Plan B. What to do if the outboard fails, or it just gets too scary!

### ***Dinghy alongside***

The dinghy painter needs to be long enough to secure it to the boat easily. Remember to keep it handy so it can be secured quickly on arrival (but also check it doesn't trail in the water and foul the propeller!).

It's useful to have a second line secured at the back of the dinghy, to keep it alongside whilst getting people and gear aboard.

People need something to hold when climbing aboard, for instance it may be best to come alongside the shrouds. It may help to have a fender-step rigged, and a knotted rope to grab when boarding.

If the boat is swinging about in wind-over-tide conditions, try lashing the rudder to one side to make it stable so the dinghy is protected.

### ***Help!***

If it all goes wrong, who do you call, and how? For most of us a mobile phone in a waterproof container is good. Alternatively a handheld VHF or PLB (Personal Locator Beacon).

If anyone is in danger, don't hesitate to call the emergency services. If you have a PLB (Personal Locator Beacon) then this could be a good time to use it.

If everyone is OK but you need help with the boat, perhaps contacting friend or family would help.

Thankfully there is a strong tradition of looking out for each other on the Roach and most other waters. It's

worth remembering that if we get into difficulties, we may be relying on others to help, which may put them at risk too!

With thanks to the RSA committee for tips. For more information check out <https://rnli.org/safety>.

## **Inspirational Navigators**

*Shaun Hetherington*

*We will all have read Shaun's blog re his return journey after a few years in the Med. Rather than repeat these exploits, Shaun has written this short account about one of his inspirations, Vasco De Gama.*

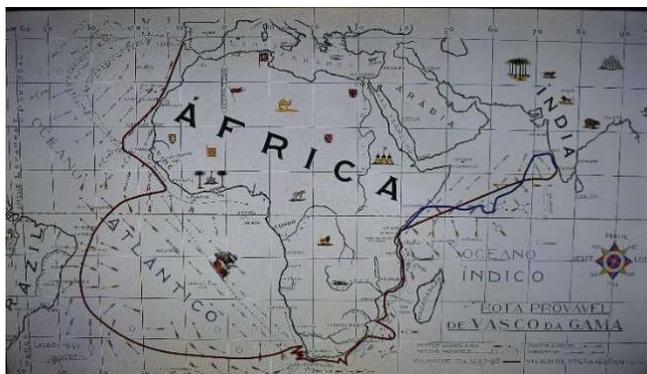
It may be a surprise to some that Portugal's (and Madeira) famous son is someone other than a footballer. Whilst on my travels in Portugal the name Vasco de Gama came up more than a few times. He was born around 1460 in Sines (pronounced Cinch) a port I stopped at on my way both South & North. At the time of his birth Portugal lead the way in exploring and was considerably ahead of what were to become the maritime powers in the centuries that followed. Aided by some significant advances in Navigation skills, Portugal had already established colonies along the African coast and was looking to add to these.



*Vasco De Gama*

In 1497 Vasco and this crew spent the night at prayer in the chapel of Jeronimos Monastery in Lisbon, before setting off on a voyage to India – the first of its kind and established an all-important spice route linking

India with Europe. The Voyage took them south around Cape of Good Hope, then north along the African coast, arriving in Calicut on 20<sup>th</sup> May 1498. Returning to Portugal in 1499 bring pepper, Cinnamon and other spices new to Europe with them.



*Route taken*

Two further fleets of ships were dispatched to Indian by the Portuguese Crown on an annual basis in what became known as the Indian Run - helping to establish colonies in Goa, Cochin & Damaon. Vasco went on to lead a fourth voyage to India, by far the largest undertaken.



*Jeronimos Monastery.*

For his significant roll in establishing this route, and the wealth that it brought to Portugal at this time, Vasco was appointed Viceroy of Portuguese India in 1524. Sadly he died later that same year in Cochin. His body was returned to Portugal and his tomb is in the chapel of *Jeronimos Monastery*.



*Vasco de Gama's tomb.*

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## The Big Tow Or Jester Azores Challenge 2021

*John Apps*

The Jester Azores Challenge this year was unique for three reasons.

Firstly it was supposed to be sailed last year but was postponed because of Covid until this year.

Secondly for the first time ever in a Jester Challenge or a Jester Azores Challenge the same number of boats (9) crossed the finish as crossed the start line. What was not so unusual was that it was a Frenchman who was first across the finish line **again**.



*Christian Gallot's Sea Breeze 31' 'KALEVALA, first across the finish line*

The third reason is even more interesting and quite extraordinary. Approximately 400 nautical miles from the finish line at Praia in the Azores the Varne (plastic) Folkboat MINKE lost her rudder. The Jester Helm ( the organisers) asked two boats to go to her assistance. ARELIA, my boat was one and the other was a 31' wooden boat GOOD REPORT. I went back 120 miles NE looking for MINKE but after 24 hours sailing couldn't find her in her reported position. I received a

message from Duncan, MINKE's skipper that by sailing at 40° to the wind he could sail the boat without a rudder and his new position put him 80 miles SW of me. I never saw MINKE before she arrived in Praia and must have passed her and GOOD REPORT at some stage after I was told to stand down by the Jester Helm.

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## Around Britain

*Graham Pelling*

In 2021 I joined a voyage around Britain in aid of Macmillan Cancer Relief. The trip was organised by Premier Sailing who are based in North Farnham.

This expedition was, for me, a personal challenge. As most of you know, I had a stroke in 2011 which left me with aphasia. This makes it very hard for me to communicate even with people I know who understand my difficulties. To spend time with a group of strangers in close quarters and in demanding situations is very taxing for me, and probably also for them!

We departed the Crouch on 17<sup>th</sup> May aboard FLORENCE AGNES II; a Sigma 38, in company with GALLIVER II and MONET. Turning left, our first leg took us to Shotley, Lowestoft, Whitby, Hartlepool and finishing in Newcastle on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May.



*MINKE sailing without a rudder, taken by GOOD REPORT when she caught up.*

Fortunately shortly after this GOOD REPORT who had been several miles behind MINKE, caught up and was able to stand by while Duncan continued his amazing sailing without a rudder.

However, sailing 40° to the wind wasn't going to get MINKE all the way to Praia. Fortunately GOOD REPORT was a big powerful boat and was able to tow MINKE under sail between bouts of MINKE sailing without a rudder. Altogether 3 tows were needed covering 232 miles and several broken tow ropes. In light winds GOOD REPORT even used her Asymmetric Spinnaker and main. In the third and longest tow of 144 miles a well reefed main and genoa was used by GOOD REPORT



*GOOD REPORT towing MINKE on a beam reach.*



*Graham and crewmates in Arbroath*

Dolphins shepherded us into Inverness at the end of Leg 2. We entered the Caledonian Canal and Loch Ness where the skipper Bev, crewmate Wendy and I went for a swim by Urquhart Castle. Brrrrr!

At each stop we would make a bucket collection.



*The bucket in Fort William raised £129, the total for the trip was £489.23!*



*Passing Land's End*

Our journey continued on Leg 4, (Leg 3 being the canal), to Rhu via Oban, Tobermorey; on the Isle of Mull where we saw a large pod of dolphins. Next was the excitement of going through the very narrow Crinan Canal and then on to Tarbert and Largs.

A change of skipper and crew, except for me, and we were on Leg 5 which was a night passage, (in strong winds where we reached 9.9 knots), across the Irish Sea to Bangor in Northern Ireland on one of the longest open water passages of the whole trip.

After a stop at Penzance we made to the iconic sailing destination that is Falmouth.



*Graham, in red, in Falmouth*



*Passing Ailsa Craig on the way to Bangor*

We then did it all again to get back to Cardiff on another overnight passage!

On the 20<sup>th</sup> June we left Cardiff on Leg 6 to Padstow, crossing the Bristol Channel. Next landmark Land's End!

After Fowey, it was time for me to leave the voyage in Plymouth on 26<sup>th</sup> June having logged 1,170 nautical miles.

In addition to the bucket collections, I personally raised over £2000 on my Justgiving page. The Sail4Macmillan Cruise raised over £23,000 in total. I would like to thank all that sponsored and supported me. I would particularly like to mention the Roach Sailing Association who continually offer me opportunities to spend time on the water.

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## 2021 East Cast Cruise

*John Langrick*

The RSA East Coast cruise is always a great event to sail in company with other members. We missed out in 2020, no need for me to explain why, so this was a

great opportunity to see if there are any changes to our usual East Coast haunts.

The 'trippers' this year were CORINNE with crew of Aleck's daughter Victoria and grandson Jetson, John Walter in his newly acquired Centaur TRITON, John's grandsons and new members Ben and Dan in their also newly acquired Leisure ROARING FORTY, Jonathan in CIEL BLEU, Richard Justine and brother David in AMBITION II, Barry Lewis with Graham as crew in MOMO 3, Dave and Alan in QUINTILLA and Simon and myself in IMOTHES.

We all set off on Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> July destination the Orwell and Wolverston. CORINNE, ROARING 40s and TRITON set off earlier as they had to leave Wakering with higher tide, but we all met up sailing down the Crouch on the ebb with an Easterly f3-4. As we reached the Spitway, we were able to turn more Northerly giving us a better speed up the wallet. The three Wakering boats followed in procession closer to the Gunfleet and were followed by AMBITION II. QUINTILLA, IMOTHES and MOMO 3 took the centre route and CIEL BLEU sailed closer to the Walton Shore, probably to show off his spinnaker to the rest of the fleet!



*AMBITION II at the Spitway*

I had a bit of a disaster when opening a full jar of Douwe Egberts Coffee with it falling out of my hands and emptying its contents in the open cutlery drawer and cabin sole. I tried to scoop up the top layer but ended up sweeping the rest into the waste bin.... And it was flat calm! The tide change to flood as we passed Walton and we could ease sheets to enter the Orwell.

I rang ahead and booked our favourite mustering point on pontoon 'G' at Woodbridge. This is a long pontoon at the far end of the marina, which lays across the tide, but long enough we know to accommodate us all. The only negative with regards this otherwise comfortable and easy berth is that at certain times of the year there is a large build up of weed that gathers on the upstream side of the pontoon when the tide is on the ebb. This can block sea cocks very effectively



*TRITON off the Gunfleet*

As we passed Pin Mill there were a fleet of Thames sailing barges arriving majestically to swing on their moorings, it seems there was a barge match this weekend. We were all safely tied up mid-afternoon to enjoy the usual libation and to try and book somewhere to eat that evening.

As a rule, we would walk the very well used and pretty riverside path to Pin Mill and the Butt and Oyster, but due to the visiting barges, they were fully booked. There was a private function in the marina restaurant, so I took a short walk to the Harwich yacht club where they were able to cater for us all for dinner. There was also a World cup match that evening and pleased some by reporting that there was a large screen set up so that those interested could watch the match. It was England V Belgium I believe and we won. All 16 of us sat down

at the large tables for a good meal washed down with copious ale, wine, spirits and soft drinks.



*Against pontoon 'G' at Wolverston*



*John and grandsons in TRITON and ROARING FORTY on the pontoon*



*CORINNE and MOMO3 on the pontoon.*



Checking the forecast, we had another fair day before the winds would turn SW and become f6 or more, with

torrential rain so clearly we would need to shelter somewhere where crews could have plenty of things to do ashore for potentially a couple of days. The choice was between Ipswich Dock or Woodbridge and the consensus was the pretty village of Woodbridge would be preferable so again rang ahead to make sure they could accommodate us all. AMBITION preferred to spend a couple of nights in the Walton Backwaters and MOMO 3 had to return to Pag as both Barry and Graham needed to be back for other commitments. We all set off on the ebb with the wind more or less on the nose.

TRITON had to stop her engine, weed in the water intake. The curse of pontoon 'G'. A bit of a struggle when you are single handed, but with ROARING FORTY standing by, was soon on the move again as we punched wind but with the last of the tide down the Orwell to the Languard buoy where the still Easterly gave us a good slant to the crossing point to the shipping lane. We still had three hours to make the Woodbridge Haven buoy where we would turn to cross the bar at 2 hours flood. I had downloaded the latest detail and it was interesting to note that the latest approach was along the beach with the main three marker buoys in line.

We just unfurled a small amount of jib after we passed the Languard cardinal buoy and we could see a very large green container ship leaving Felixtowe. She was one of the Evergreen fleet and sister of the EVER GIVEN, the famed Suez canal blocker, the EVER GLORY. I felt I had better give way and crossed the shipping lane in the required manner astern of her.



*IMOTHES vs EVER GLORY*

I stowed the jib more and more so as to reach the Deben at the required time and as I arrived, CORINNE overtook me and started to approach the Knoll offing buoy which is in fact the second. The West knoll being the first. This would put Corrine fair and square on the 'putty'. Luckily Aleck noticed his mistake as the depth

sounder indicated and made a smart turn to approach by the current recommended route.

My echo sounders told me that I was well aground as we passed the Knoll Spit buoy, but we kept moving. My belief is that the sea bed gets very confused in this area and the boiling gravel confuses the sender... well that's my excuse.

We all safely crossed and entered the calm of the Deben and IMOTHES and CIEL BLEU tied to buoys at Ramsholt to await enough water to enter the Tide mill. A late lunch and a beer were the order of the day. The rest of the fleet continued upriver for a similar wait at Waldringfield. High water was 20:30 and it was becoming dark as we approached the Tide mill. I could just make out the depth gauge knowing that I need 1.6m for IMOTHES to cross the sill into the marina. The rest of the fleet were well tucked up and away for last orders as we tied up in our berth. Simon and I ate aboard as would have been far too late for eating at the local pubs



*CORINNE in the Deben*

The next couple of days, the wind blew above us as we sat safely in our berth. We heard from AMBITION II that they had a blustery anchorage with too much wind to set off on the following day so stayed in the Backwaters an extra day. MOMO 3 had heavy weather as they sailed south and lost all instruments at the Spitway. Barry had a slight panic while he reloaded his Navionics plotter on his phone and resuming his route to arrive a bit battered and tired back at Paglesham. The following day we did a bit of shopping and mooched around a windswept Woodbridge. A hearty breakfast was enjoyed by the crews of IMOTHES,

CORINNE and CIEL BLEU at the first café we saw with a teapot on its sign.

On the Tuesday our highlight was a short taxi driver to Sutton Hoo to see the exhibition there. We had to queue in the wind and rain until eventually entered the shelter of the Museum. The copies of the relics and the story behind them was fascinating and we took a few hours wandering around the site before meeting our taxi to return to the marina. We all ate at the 'A Listers' restaurant, part of the cinema and very nice it was.

On the Wednesday, we again wandered around Woodbridge but that evening was another world cup match, Jonathan was to use his laptop to access the match and he cycled to the fish and chip shop to get food for the crown. All 8 of which ate on CIEL BLEU around her copious saloon table, while downing various delicious beverages. It must have been exciting as Jetson occasionally glanced up from his phone. Again, we won the match!

We planned to leave the following day about 10:00 with the destination for QUINTILLA and IMOTHES as Pyefleet. We sailed back down the Deben and across the bar, As the tide turned and we were able to make a reasonable slant against the tide and a SE wind, We had to tack at Walton to clear the pier and then down to the Colne in one long tack. The rest of the fleet sailed on back to the Roach.

Simon and I were pretty tired as we arrived in the 'fleet' which was unusually busy, we dropped anchor and Simon made a delicious pasta meal and we retired early without socialising with QUINTILLA as her crew were similarly tired.

In the morning and in very light winds we slowly made our way down the Ray channel, passing the ray buoy about 2.5 hours before high water and were safely back at Paglesham before the tide turned. The Wakering fleet did not make their destination but anchored the previous night in the Yolksfleet t arrive safely back the same time as ourselves.

Another excellent East Coast Cruise and thanks to all the participants for making it another fine and memorable trip.



*Dinner around the table in CIEL BLEU, watching the match*