

2021 Round The Island Race

From the perspective of It's Now or Never....

Thursday 1st July 2021

The weekend started for us on Thursday evening. The RMYC race out to Tony Brookes Mark in Studland went well resulting in line honours for us. Discussing the race and tactics for the coming weekend over a pint of beer we were delighted to see that the Swallows which had nested under the club balcony had fledged and were dipping and diving in their search for insects – this was a really good omen.

Friday Race.



Friday began with the usual loading of the boat but with a support boat, Pipaluk, to take the junk there were no debates about extra weight slowing us in the race. There were, however, many debates about the usual subject, the wind. Of primary concern was whether there would be any – at 9:15 the race officer, Peter Biggs, reported that there was no wind in the bay. By 9:30 we heard a slightly more fraught 'there is zero wind in the bay', but by 9:45 a slight breeze came up and the news on the radio was that the race would start on time – we required maximum throttle to get to the line in time.



Soon we were in deep discussion, inshore looking for favourable tide or offshore searching for wind, the tide planners won and inshore it was, but would we hold our nerve as the boats out to sea appeared to gain.



Things improved in Christchurch Bay and particularly as we were pushed by the tide towards Hurst, but the usual handicap debate rolled on, were we far enough ahead? QT looked far too close! Things relaxed during the run down the Solent with some crew members taking their afternoon nap.

This was, I think, our downfall as Binkie II found extra wind to the North and was suddenly right behind us! How did he do that!

Stewart had to make a confession, he put Elvis up inside out!



Friday results:

1st QT

2nd Tigerlily

3rd Energy

Saturday – the big day!



Saturday began with the traditional queue for the loo, but no queue for the showers, I will let you draw your own conclusions from these facts. Thoughts repeatedly turned to the wind, would there be enough, the speed of the tide was more important than the speed of the boat, judging the approach to the line was as difficult as ever. We had the usual beat down the Solent wondering where the strongest tide was, were the shifts big enough to tack on, where could we get clear air? But more importantly were we ahead of arch enemy “Star Born 4” the other Beneteau 260. Often swapping places with them helped concentrate the mind.

At the Needles key roles were assigned for dodging the wreck. Stephen on the helm, son Chris monitoring the GPS tracks from previous years, including the nudge we gave the wreck one year. All other crew monitoring the water surface for any sign of trouble. And then we were through.



The Needles to St Catherine's Point

I often think that this is the make-or-break leg of the race. Many of our fleet stayed in, hoping to make use of the tidal eddie, but others went out to catch the breeze. Binkie II used his spinnaker almost all the way and we found our code zero a great help in pulling away from Star Born 4. However, the wind was just too tight and both of us had to resort to white sails before St Catherine's lighthouse.

St Catherine's to Bembridge Ledge

Spinnakers all the way on this leg, sometimes so broad as to put us by the lee. We managed to keep pace with Binkie II and Tigerlily – this was proving to be quite a close race. The fleet took a hard left turn around Bembridge Ledge buoy to avoid the tide and we all romped up towards Ryde Sands on a close reach. The finish, complicated as ever, seemed to favour the Island side but much depended on individual gusts and headers. We finished just 16 seconds after Binkie II.

The Results (in corrected time order)

<i>Sail number</i>	<i>Boat name</i>	<i>Boat type</i>	<i>TCC</i>	<i>Division</i>	<i>Elapsed</i>	<i>Corrected</i>	<i>Overall</i>	<i>Group</i>	<i>Pos</i>
GBR4365T	HAVEN KJ ENIGMA	MG 346	0.948	IRC 3A	07:53:17	07:28:40	19	19	1
GBR6525T	ENERGY	Elan 333	0.952	IRC 3A	07:51:34	07:28:56	23	23	2
GBR9633R	RUTHLESS	Dehler 33 Cruising	0.963	IRC 3A	07:48:41	07:31:21	27	27	3
GBR1972	STONEWAYS QT	Ecume de Mer	0.837	IRC 3D	09:00:26	07:32:21	31	31	20
GBR1781T	MINSTRAL	MG C27	0.926	ISC 8A	08:18:00	07:41:09	13	12	5
GBR4429	ROGUE	X 102	0.957	IRC 3A	08:07:39	07:46:41	79	73	11
509X	IT'S NOW OR NEVER	Beneteau First 260	0.935	ISC 7D	08:20:02	07:47:32	17	2	1
GBR3703T	SEA JEM	Roscoe 32	0.971	ISC 7A	08:05:07	07:51:03	20	5	1
GBR3419	BINKIE II	Contessa 32	0.943	ISC 7D	08:19:46	07:51:17	22	7	2
GBR1148L	HARRIER	Elan 36	0.992	ISC 5C	08:06:52	08:02:58	50	6	2
GBR1236T	MOJITO	MG C27	0.952	ISC 7C	08:27:26	08:03:05	51	23	8
GBR1114T	TIGERLILY	MG C27	0.958	ISC 7C	08:24:25	08:03:14	52	24	9
GBR2943L	CARA	Elan 333	0.949	IRC 3A	08:36:16	08:09:56	146	105	20
982	SHEBEEN	Albin Ballad	0.938	ISC 7D	08:44:42	08:12:10	83	30	16
GBR5359L	MOMENT	Moody 36	0.922	ISC 8A	08:53:56	08:12:17	84	33	9
K3136T	BEAGLES RUN	Hustler SJ32	0.972	ISC 7A	08:31:01	08:16:42	103	37	5
156	OMEGA	Parker 27	0.918	ISC 8A	09:06:28	08:21:39	124	46	11
GBR8016T	CALABASH	Sweden Yachts 390	1.019	ISC 4C	08:39:14	08:49:06	246	24	7
GBR4053L	MANDALAY	Bavaria 33	0.973	ISC 7A	09:11:53	08:56:59	292	89	17
GBR5258L	YAPLUKA	RM 1070	1.019	IRC 2A	08:52:36	09:02:43	287	78	23
GBR9859T	ADDICTION	Beneteau First 40.7	1.047	IRC 1C	08:43:50	09:08:27	296	60	28
GBR5302L	SANSOVINO	Sun Odyssey 35	0.938	IRC 3B	10:02:17	09:24:57	308	133	35
GBR1317R	SASKA	Beneteau First 31.7	0.996	ISC 5B					

Sunday – the race home

I motored the mother ship Pipaluk home, leaving the crew to race back in the drizzle. Tired but elated we returned to PYC looking forward to a shower and a snooze.

Our Commodore, Gary Wakefield, reported:

Round the Island Race Results

I am delighted to announce Parkstone Yacht Club's various successes in the Round the Island Race this past weekend. Just under 1200 boats entered the race and enjoyed almost perfect conditions for this yacht racing classic, now back on the calendar following a break last year.

Ian Braham and crew (HKJ Enigma) won IRC division 3A, with Energy (Trevor Annels) in 2nd place and Ruthless skippered by Sam Pearson came 3rd. These three boats won the IRC team prize, the Methusalah Trophy, beating 12 other teams including 3 from the Royal Yacht Squadron, 2 from the Royal Southern YC and 1 from Poole YC.

Stephen Bailey and his crew (It's Now or Never) was first in ISC division 7D with Colin Wetherall (Binkie II) in 2nd place. Colin also won the prize for the first Contessa 32 home. It's Now or Never and Binkie II, together with Andre Kirby's Contessa Pentanemos (crewed by the crew of Piccolo and including our illustrious President) won the ISC team prize, the Arun YC Team Challenge Trophy, beating 8 other teams including 2 from Poole YC, 1 from the Royal Southern YC and 1 from the Island SC.

Simon Flack and his crew in Stralende won the Folkboat class.

This is a tremendous success for our Club sailors and testament to the pedigree and talent we have in the Club. Many other Parkstone boats and sailors, including myself, enjoyed a superb days racing, and for some there was a PYRA passage race there and back to enjoy too! Congratulations one and all!

Gary Wakefield
Commodore