



Castle Tioram, Loch Moidart

Dates for your diary

Returning to sailing If you haven't sailed for a few years, and would like some help returning to the water, contact Malcolm Lord (Tel 896885) or vicecommodore@pfyc.org.uk to register interest for a returners session.

Saturday 17 April – First Aid course

9 am – 5 pm in the clubhouse. If you have not already been contacted, but would be interested in a place, please contact Malcolm Lord (Tel 896885) or vicecommodore@pfyc.org.uk

Sunday 18 April – First races

Detailed programme to follow, but this is when we plan to start the season. As last year, two races back-to-back, with the first starting at 2 pm.

Saturday/Sunday 24/25 April – Safety Boat course

Developing on the foundation skills gained from the Level 2 National Powerboat certificate, this course concentrates on rescue techniques and safety boat cover. Limited number of places. If interested please contact Andrew Grant (01847 895906) or sailing@pfyc.org.uk

Saturday 8 May – Provisional – Craning in for cruisers

Thanks once again to Alan Doull for organising this.

Sunday 30 May - Welcome lunch for new members

We tried this last year after the assessment on Sunday morning at the end of the dinghy course, before racing in the afternoon. It was successful, so we plan to do it again. All members welcome – in the clubhouse.

Thursday 3 June – Coastguard race (provisional date)

Coastguards racing Mirrors, with PFYC sailors as crew. We held this last year after an absence of several years, and all participants had a lot of fun. We'll be looking for people to crew for the Coastguards.

Saturday 5 June – Raft race and Mission Fayre

This year it has been decided to hold these 2 annual events on the same day. The Coastguard raft race will start at 1300 – we will be looking for volunteers to man the guard boat to provide safety cover, and serve hot drinks in the clubhouse afterwards. The raft race is the main fundraising event for the Coastguard Association, with all money going to good causes very locally – between about Bettyhill and Wick! The Mission Fayre is 2 – 4 pm in the Fishmarket. We will aim to provide our normal baking/raffle stall and a dinghy display. Any volunteers welcome to man stall or provide baking or prizes to support this worthy cause. Please contact Kath Lewis 01847 841353.

Saturday/Sunday 19/20 June - Midsummer regatta.

As well as our normal racing, we also hope to be joined by RS300 and Fireball traveller events. It is planned to have 3 races back to back each day, as at last year's End of Season Regatta. Normal social event on the Saturday evening.

Saturday 10 July – RNLI Summer Fayre

2 - 4 pm, Scrabster fishmarket. Anyone involved in our sport may need the RNLI some day. Please help to support this very worthy cause. Last year we only had one volunteer, but ran the second hand bookstall (books provided by RNLI). Any

volunteers to assist this year, please contact Mark Raffle (01847 894132) or commodore@pfyc.org.uk

Saturday 17 July - Town Improvements Gala event

Along with other watersports organisations, we have been asked to participate in an event at Thurso Harbour on this evening. Further details to follow. However, given the state of the tide it may well be Thurso beach rather than the harbour.

Saturday 4 September – Paintball near Dingwall

Provisional date. Following a successful and enjoyable trip to try this – see article in September 2003 newsletter – we are already planning a repeat trip. So, if you like crawling around on the ground, and don't mind a bit of pain and a few bruises, this could be for you. Minimum age is 14 years.

Saturday/Sunday 25/26 September – End of Season Regatta

Other social events – Please let us know if there is anything else you would like to see organised as social events.

Contacts

E-mail addresses – To receive rapid communications, please send yours to commodore@pfyc.org.uk

Newsletter contributions – Send to Mark Raffle by the means of your choice, but preferably by e-mail to commodore@pfyc.org.uk.

I'd be pleased to receive comments on anything else you'd like to see in the newsletter. Contributions always welcome.

Treasurer

Please note that any items for the Treasurer should be sent to Nicky Pearson at Heatherlea, Fairview, Halkirk. KW12 6XF.

Grants

Training? Traveller? If it's anything to do with promoting our sport, we may be able to get a grant to assist with costs. Please speak to Jim Kelly in good time – we must apply in advance.

Boats for sale

Hunter Europa - good performer when handled properly LOA 5.79m, LWL 5.26m, Beam 1.87m, Draught 0.91m, Displacement 681 kg, 4 berths, Chemical toilet, Volvo Penta outboard 4HP air cooled long shaft, Nos 1,2 & 3 Genoa's, Spinnaker (with pole - used last season), Mainsail, Anchor, chain, warp, Full ropes, rigging, 2 life preservers, Boat hook, Paddle, Set inshore flares (2 red smoke, 2 red flame), Life buoy, Box small spares, Fenders, Stand. Price £1000. Insurance (just paid approx £150 may be transferable). Sailed last season. Can be seen ashore at Scrabster. Sailed last season, nothing to do for coming season except for anti-fouling. Reason for sale - learned the ropes and now moved up to 23' Seamaster bought end of last season. More information from **Alan Doull**. Contact 01847 802319 daytime, 01847 893688 evening & weekends.

Laser (sail no. 150649) Standard and radial rigs. Launching/road trailer combination (with lights, and cables etc.) Existing covers and self bailer (to be attached) £1700 ono.
Pico Plus (with jib) £900 ono. Both in compound and available for inspection. Contact **Pen Lewis** 01847 841353 evenings.

SUMMER CRUISE 2003

Ishbel, Mark & James Raffle & Inga Taylor

“Sailing north of Ardnamurchan – Except for the Sound of Sleat and the Inner Sound and within most lochs, the waters north of Ardnamurchan are very exposed, with strong tides and overfalls off most headlands. Many of the lochs are subject to severe squalls, and in the narrow passages between Skye and the mainland tidal streams run very strongly . . . Ardnamurchan is the most westerly point of the mainland and very exposed. The grey granite lighthouse, 36m in height, stands on a low rocky point at the end of a mountainous peninsula.” (Clyde Cruising Club Sailing Directions.)

Of my four previous passages round Ardnamurchan, the first three were all rough, so it was with some trepidation that we approached it for the first time in our own boat. How did we fare? This second instalment of our account begins at Corpach, having just returned to salt water after transiting the Caledonian Canal . . .

Thursday 31 July. We woke at Corpach to find it still as windy as the night before. After some other boats went into the canal, we moved round to the pontoon for a little more shelter. Mark slipped on the pontoon and nearly fell in while tying the boat up again, but was saved by the warps from going any further than the knee on one leg. We topped up with diesel and then set off at 1120 down Loch Linnhe. The wind was southwesterly 4-5, with enough mist and drizzle that we put the navigation lights on. With the wind from dead ahead, under engine, we passed Corran Narrows at 1300. Then, after passing the east side of Lismore, we reached

Dunstaffnage Yacht Haven at 1800. After mooring in the berth allocated, we went for dinner at the Wide Mouthed Frog – the marina’s bar & restaurant. Particularly

memorable here was the enormous piece of tiramisu that

Ishbel and Mark were served for pudding. After dinner we walked round the pontoons looking at the boats, including the Lord of the Isles Galley “Aileach” – a 40’ replica of a 15th century Highland Chieftan’s Galley.

Friday 1 August. Apart from James, we needed no breakfast after last night’s pudding. We filled the diesel and water tanks before leaving Dunstaffnage at 1215. We motored across to Lismore, and put the sails up after passing between Lady Rock and the south end of Lismore. The wind was southwesterly 4-5, occasionally 6, giving us a beam reach. We had a really enjoyable sail all the way up the Sound of Mull to Tobermory (otherwise known as Balamory, if you keep up with children’s TV programmes). All the moorings were full, so we anchored in Aros Bay to the south of Tobermory. It was cold, wet and windy, so we didn’t row ashore, but we were snug in the cabin with the paraffin lamps providing some heat.

Saturday 2 August. The aim for the day was to get to Arisaig by the evening, to meet Inga from the train. We left Tobermory at 0610, while James was still asleep in his bunk. After raising the anchor, we found the chain locker not draining very well, so spent some time trying to clear the drain tube in the forward cabin – not the most comfortable place to be in the choppy sea outside Tobermory. Good job I took the Stugerol! By 0800 Ardnamurchan light was abeam, with the wind S-SSW 5-6. The sea by now was rough, and James was sick as soon as he woke. Ishbel was doing a great job steering in the conditions. By 0830 we had rounded Ardnamurchan, which was now starting to provide some shelter – as it was a weather shore we stayed



Lismore

close in to make the most of this. By 1115 we were anchored to the east of Riasga in Loch Moidart after negotiating the rocky entrance not long after high tide – just in time for lunch. After relaxing for much of the day we left again at 1745, not long after low tide, and all the rocks we had to miss were much more visible. We then sailed another 10 miles up the coast to Arisaig. This is another rocky entrance, with the channel marked with red and green perches. After finding the first of the red perches, which was only just visible above the water, the channel is quite easy to follow by day. By 2130 we were tied to a mooring buoy in Arisaig, and then rowed ashore in the dinghy to collect Inga from the train. We got back to the boat in time for supper at 0100.

Sunday 3 August. We rowed ashore again for shopping and to pay for the mooring. We left at 1100 and motored back out through the entrance before raising the sails. The wind was SW 3-4, but dropped as we sailed north, across to the south east coast of Skye. There were some misty spells and eventually the wind died altogether, so we had to motor the last few miles to reach Isle Ornsay on Skye, where we anchored. We went ashore, where we had to carry the dinghy a long way over seaweed to reach the little harbour. We went for a walk until it was time for the pub to open, where we had dinner. We were pleased to find the dinghy floating by the time we were finished, so we didn’t have to carry it again.

Monday 4 August. We woke to find drizzle and serious mist – we couldn’t even see the far end of the bay. We wondered why a boat was circling us at anchor, until we looked and saw it was another of our class – a Holman Northney. Once the mist started to clear, the wind was force 0-1.



The mist lifts at Isle Ornsay

We left Isle Ornsay at 0920 and motored with a favourable tide through Kyle Rhea – the narrowest part of the channel between Skye and the mainland. We tied to a mooring buoy just west of Kyleakin harbour, which was full. After a while, a couple of boats had come out of the harbour, and we were able to tie to a pontoon in time for lunch. By now it was hot and sunny enough to require sun cream and ice cream. We spent the afternoon in Kyleakin, including a walk up to the centre of the Skye Bridge.



Skye Bridge – Is Skye still an island?

Tuesday 5 August. Our wedding anniversary, and the day Inga had to go home. We dropped her off at the west side of the Railway Pier at Kyle of Lochalsh in time to catch the train home. James steered the boat under the Skye Bridge. The wind started ENE 2, but was dropping. We tacked past the Crowlin Islands to the Inner Sound, but then the wind died completely. We motored the rest of way to Loch Torridon, where we anchored off the hamlet of Kenmore in Loch a’ Chracaich. It was at this point we noticed one side of one of the links of the anchor chain appeared to be cut, as if by a bolt cutter. For the rest of the holiday this link was bypassed by shackles (which would not pass into the chain locker) and about 15m of chain kept lashed on deck. There were no other yachts in the anchorage, and with no wind or waves it was an idyllic spot – well worth the 292 miles we had sailed to get there.



Kenmore

(To be continued.)