

## **ROUND THE ISLAND TIME TRIAL & RALLY**

**Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> & Sunday, 23<sup>rd</sup> July**

Now an annual fixture in both the GCCC and YOSC (Yateley Offshore Sailing Club) summer programmes, this year's Round the Island Time Trial for the Wight Trophy took place on Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

Whilst officially a YOSC event that spans the weekend, GCCC have been invited to participate for the past 5 years and this year fielded 4 competing boats: Pagetal, Cadh' Ruadh, Lacewing and Tiddley Pom II. Having only collected the boat 2 weeks prior, Danu chose to use the opportunity to get better acquainted with the boat and went directly to Yarmouth.

The intention of the Time Trial as always is to follow a clockwise course around the Island starting at the depth gauge off St Helens Fort, via Bembridge Ledge Cardinal, St. Catherine's Point, Bridge Cardinal (off the Needles) finishing at the NE Shingles Cardinal, and to predict the time it will take for each leg taking into account all variables. Competing boats are required to radio-in their estimated time as they commence each leg and similarly their actual time as they complete each leg. Points are allocated for every minute early or late compared to predicted time and the winning boat is the yacht that has the least number of points. In the event of adverse weather conditions or a forecast wind speed of less than 10 knots, an alternative shorter course in the Solent is substituted. Ultimately, whichever course is adopted, all boats arrive in Yarmouth for a joint social, dinner and awards dinner at the Royal Solent Yacht Club.

This year, the long range forecast 2 weeks prior was indicating little or no wind for event day and the YOSC organisers were concerned that we might have to abandon the time trial for the second year running due to light winds. However, as we have all come to expect, there is nothing quite so fickle as the British weather and 48-hours prior the forecast was quite the opposite ... F4-5, possibly gusting F6, grey skies and maybe a heavy rain shower, or two (just to dampen the enthusiasm). Further, with a wind over tide situation off St Catherine's likely to make for an unpleasant ride, the call was made to switch to a course within the Solent. The start was also delayed slightly to allow for boats who had a distance to travel to leave their home ports on Saturday morning rather than Friday evening when the forecast was also pretty lousy.

Having battled through some heavy rain the 4 boats from GCCC were joined by 6 boats from YOSC for an 11:30 start just off West Ryde Middle Cardinal. From there the course headed west with the tide to the C J May yellow race mark west of Cowes, onwards to the Elephant Boat Yard yellow race mark east of Newtown, to the Caldwells race mark west of Newtown and finally to the finish within 1 cable south of the red port marker, just east of Yarmouth Harbour. A much shorter course this year meant that the fleet remained closer to each other and the predictions when called-in were also very close. By 15:30 all boats were moored on the Harold Hayles pontoon in Yarmouth providing an opportunity for a bit of well-earned R&R, before the evening event.

The evening began just after 19:00 when near on 50 persons in total converged on the Royal Solent Yacht Club. Pre-dinner drinks were had in the bar during which the noise level grew louder as crews

discussed and debated which boat they thought would be declared the winner. Drinks were followed by an excellent dinner served in a private room overlooking the Solent ... sadly the grey skies remained with no chance of a sunset from the first floor balcony! Tension continued to rise during dinner until the Commodore of YOSC rose to announce this year's winner of The Wight Trophy. As anticipated due to the shorter course, it had been extremely tight and it came down to two boats, Gilliatt (YOSC) and Pagetal (GCCC). To determine the outright winner, consistency between predicted and actual times recorded at each mark were also taken into account and to a round of applause Gilliatt was announced the winner. A vote of thanks to YOSC was made by Pagetal with a request for an invite to compete in next year's event so as to try and even the score!

Sunday dawned bright and sunny, but no wind to speak of! To get the full benefit of the east going tide, the first boats left Yarmouth around 08:30 with the rest of the fleet underway by 10:30 hrs. A little bit of wind with a reasonable tide meant some of us at least got as far as Newtown before resorting to the engine. However the wind did pick-up around lunchtime, but sadly the rain clouds gathered too culminating in a torrential downpour just as some of us were mooring back in our home ports!

Despite the weather, everyone enjoyed the chance to do something slightly out of the ordinary, to meet and make new friends, enjoy a good dinner and our thanks go to YOSC for making this possible.

***The Wight Trophy Dinner – Saturday, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2017***  
***Royal Solent Yacht Club***





