

So this was a workshop that aimed to bring Members along to "bare their soul" with stories of mishaps, and "things that go bump" in the night ... in fact all the things that can go possibly wrong when sailing and which you prefer hadn't! We had 18 members turn up, mostly skippers, with 2 or 3 crew.

There could have been an awkward 90 minutes of silence. However Paul started it off with a brief "hands-up" survey, that quickly confirmed that everybody in the room, bar two, had had a mishap, either as a skipper or as crew with someone else.

With the ice broken (that's not a story!), and with a common bonding beginning to happen. Paul kicked off with the theme of Anchoring, Berthing and Mooring, and the first couple of his "issues". Encouraged by his mistakes in Newtown, and Cowes Roads, others soon pitched in ... with stories of dragging anchors, dragging buoys, catapulting pontoons, falling off the back of transoms, hitting pontoons, you name it, they did it!!

We then mentioned the word Groundings. OM Gosh, what stories. Paul's Ardglass rope that required a whole boat load of divers to cut, Paul's Itchen shore where the RNLI attended and took the female crew off to go shopping, Leon's ropes on the Summer cruise, and Simon's "rescue" of him.



Man Overboard, Dinghies and Outboards, and Petrol and Diesel, also proved to be a worthwhile source of "adventures", as did Electricity. Strangely, not much was volunteered regarding Masts and Rigging work – does nobody go up their mast?? Surely Bosun's chairs would be a rich source of opportunity for things to go wrong?



Towards the end, only one skipper attendee has not spoken, who had claimed not to have had a mishap ever. When challenged he suddenly remembered two! And then, the other skipper not to have put his hand up at the beginning, when ribbed, told one of the best stories of the evening about a cabin cruiser, a Canal, and the River Thames. How we laughed. And interestingly, a number of the stories told also carried a tip or improvement that might have been of value to other skippers in the room.

The 10pm curfew came up surprisingly quickly. The overall verdict It was a success! It was also deemed too dangerous to sail with Paul, who seems to have had more mishaps than anybody. But, as I said, "if you haven't done anything wrong or stupid, you haven't been trying hard enough".

In terms of any prizes well I was going to say, that despite such a wide range of mishaps, nobody got hurt or injured, or died. However that is not strictly true, because the Commodore owned up to inflicting severe rope burns to his son because of a mooring rope incident, caused by an engine issue coming in to his home berth. To the extent his son could not drive home, or go to work for over a week. And he had to cancel an exam, which cost the Commodore.