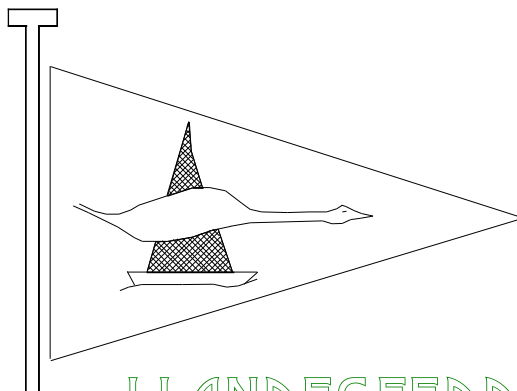


2003

News & Review

October
Number 50

www.llandegfedd.org.uk



October NEWS

LLANDEGFEDD SAILING CLUB

SOCIAL news

Commodore's Letter

Dinner Dance

Saturday 22nd Nov

Annual dinner and prize giving. No speeches; ceilidh band and hog roast at Usk Conservative Club. Tickets on sale from MANDY.

Its not expensive, so no excuses! Its been in the sailing programme since March, so no excuses!

Mandy

2002 prizewinners

If you were skilful and lucky enough to be one of last years' prize winners, you need to hand back the cup or trophy that you won ready for this year's winner.

Please return them to Lisa by the end of October.

Lisa

The water is getting lower, but there is still plenty of room for us to sail, and still time to get out on our boats. Attendance at club racing has dropped off a little lately, and it would be nice to see more people out on the water before the season ends. Remember that in **October, club racing starts at 1.00pm.**

Regrettably, there have been two occasions when there has been friction between fishermen and club sailors. There will unfortunately always be a minority who are intolerant of others and insensitive to their needs. In order to keep such situations to a minimum, there are some things that must be done

- Always try to ensure that there are flags on the buoys. The flags don't just help the sailors, they tell fishermen where we are racing.
- If possible, keep your distance from fishermen. If there is a way round them that doesn't slow you down, keep away from them.
- Be polite. Don't get drawn into a slanging match with them.

We've had a busy month at the club, with the President's day, Laser Open, Llangorse Challenge and Asymmetric Open as well as normal club racing. These events have raised the profile of the club. They've also shown that there is a good standard of sailing at Llandegfedd. Thank you to all the people who've given up their time to make these events a success.

I've been pleased to see that many different sailors have been placed in races this season. This shows that it is not always the same people who win races. Some of the cadets are winning regularly too, which is encouraging for the future.

Our boules evening was very enjoyable. Those who came learnt how to play properly, and had a good time.

Tickets for the Hog roast and prize giving are now on sale. The ticket says 7.30pm, but we'll start serving food about then, and the bar will be open from 7.00pm. There is dancing to a very good ceiligh band. Please buy your tickets early to avoid disappointment. We've priced the tickets so that it's as affordable as possible for families. I look forward to seeing you there.

Gareth Edwards

Tall Ships Voyages

You will see a pair of articles about the STA ships here. If you want to try a voyage or day trip yourself contact Mac Pearce on mail to: macpearce@tiscali.co.uk. Mac's pictures are on the club web site. Also see www.sta.org.uk

President's Optimist Results

NAME	R1	R2	R3	Points Total	Pos
Sara Jackson	1	1	3	5	1
Hannah Tilley	2	2	1	5	2
Myles Jackson	3	3	2	8	3
Rachel Tilley	4	DNS	4	14	4

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Richard Ash for being selected as first reserve for the GBR Topper squad. This squad is run by the RYA for elite and promising sailors, and the competition to get into it is fierce. This year, there were 86 applicants for 18 male and 6 female places, all of whom have had to compete in the National championships, and in 2 out of 3 'selection' events. Richard's first reaction is of disappointment, but we all know that he did really well to get chosen as first reserve.

If anyone doesn't take up his place, Richard will be in the squad. If anyone misses a squad weekend, Richard will be asked to go, possibly at very short notice. Richard is young enough to apply next year and the year after, as he was only 13 in June.

Joe and Dan Edwards have been selected for the ITCA (International Topper Class Association) youth squad, sponsored by Crewsaver.

We wish all those members of the Club who are trialling for positions in the Welsh squads the very best of luck.

Your Sailing Committee

Social Events

We're organising some social events for the winter months.

Saturday 22nd November

Annual dinner and prize giving. No speeches; ceilidh band and hog roast at Usk Conservative Club. Tickets on sale from MANDY.

A Friday in January

AGM and social evening (Date and venue to be fixed)

February

General knowledge quiz night, with one nautical round.

If anyone has further ideas or wants to help, please contact Mandy or Gareth.

LLANDEGFEDD TRIUMPH AGAIN

in Llangorse Challenge

Team effort secures the Challenge

The tenth Llandegfedd and Llangorse Youth Challenge was held at Llandegfedd on 27th September. Until last year, Llandegfedd had only won once (in 1995), but our club has now won for two consecutive years. The shield is decided in Toppers, but there is also an individual competition in Optimists.

There was a force 2 to 3 northerly wind, and the race officer set a trapezoid course. Optimists sailed a beat, two reaches and a run, but the Toppers sailed a sausage, and so had two beats and two runs.

There were four races. The starts were competitive, with nobody hanging back. In the Topper fleet the same 3 Llandegfedd boats were always ahead by the end of the first beat, and these three boats took the first three places in each race. Richard Ash and Nick Hamersley each won two races and came first and second overall. The other places were competed for fiercely, and places were swapped quite regularly. Among the notable results were Daniel Leeb du Toit, with a 4th and a 6th, Stephen LdT with a 7th, Amy Iliffe with a 6th and two 8ths, Jamie Wakefield with two 6ths and an 8th, and Steffan Hilder with a 5th. There were 22 Toppers racing, and Llandegfedd won by 66 points to 106.

The oppies were more even. Kate Stanley won overall, and scored two firsts. Hannah Tilley was second and Myles Jackson third. The first six places went to newer plastic optimists, and the other 8 competitors were in training boats. The first two training boats were Maddie Stanley and Emily Osborne.

It was really good to see people competing well who have only just been on the training course. It was noticeable that the standard improved throughout the day.

Thank-you to all the competitors for taking part. We also thank the sea cadets for lending us their boats. One of the sea cadets (Jamie Wakefield) competed for us and did really well.

***The team;** Toppers: Ben Scraggs, Steffan Hilder, Sophie Nolan, Jamie Wakefield, Amy Iliffe, Nicola Woolley, Danielle Woolley, Stephen Leeb du Toit, Daniel Leeb du Toit, Nick Hamersley, Richard Ash and Joe Edwards.*

Optimists: Hannah Jones, Kate Stanley, Myles Jackson, Sara Jackson, Hannah Tilley, Alex Woolley, Liam Nolan, Emily Osborne, Anna Clarke, Zoe Iliffe, Nia Jones and Maddie Stanley.

Gareth Edwards

Llandegfedd Club Championship results, 2003

We have had some good racing this year. Some notable podium positions have been obtained by Nick and Dave Hamersley, Joe and Dan Edwards, James Davy, as well as some of the non-junior members, such as Jack, and newcomers to their dinghy classes such as Phil and Lisa, Alan and Judith.

		Spring p/s	Spring h/c	Wed h/c	May Races	Wed p/s	Summer Stakes	Wed Hol	Happy Hol	Autumn p/s	Autumn h/c	
First		Andy	Andy	Andy	Andy	Bill	Nigel	Bill	Mark			
Second		John	Mark	Mark	Nigel	Mark	Mark	Andy	Alan			
Third		Nigel	John	Bill	Mike	Andy	Andy	Mark	Andy			
												Points
Andy + Ruth	RS400	20	20	20	20	10	10	15	10			125
Mark Williams	Laser		15	15		15	15	10	20			90
Bill J	RS400			10		20		20				50
Nigel T	Laser	10			15		20					45
John Daniels	Solo	15	10									25
Alan B	RS200								15			15
Mike F	Supernova				10							10

Youth Regional Training

Dates and venues for regional training are available on :- www.welshyachtingassociation.org.uk

26th October Cardiff Bay YC
 1-2 November Cardiff Bay YC
 16 November Llandegfedd
 13 December, 7 and 21 February BSSC Margam
 13 March to be confirmed
 27-28 March Mumbles SC

The total cost is £50. Last year, those who went enjoyed it, and didn't get too cold. The organisers take care not to keep you on the water too long. But they will teach you a lot.

Everyone who competed in the Llangorse Challenge is good enough to go on the training. If you want to go, and want to borrow a club boat, get in touch with Mervyn, Bill or Gareth.

Iwan told me that ALL instructors are invited to assist as well.

Bill, Phil and your race coaches

Llandegfedd Pin & President's Day

This was a cracking day's sailing, with September sun, wind and good courses. President Bill had three sets of races to run; laser Open, Optimists and Club racing for President's day. Results are tabulated elsewhere.

Our Youth sailors did especially well, with Dan Edwards winning the President's cup with a remarkably consistent day's sailing. Mark won the Laser open meeting, with the final race deciding between Paul, Mark and Nigel.

Andy and Ruth won the Llandegfedd Pin. The whole Howard family has now contributed to this win, with Alex in 1999, Sue in 2002 and Ruth this year.

Andy

Carpenters Arms

End of an Era

We presented one of our brushed aluminium boats that you might have seen as prizes to Reina and Alan on the last Wednesday of August when they retired. It looked very good sitting on the bar on the last Wednesday sailing night.

It will be interesting to see if the Carpenter's Arms stays as a pub with new Landlords, or whether it gets changed to a house.

Andy

Asymmetric Open Meeting

The re-launch of the Llandegfedd Asymmetric Open was held in disappointing light wind conditions but managed to attract three visitors in the RS700 class from Chew Valley and Corus Sailing Clubs and a good turnout from club boats with 4 RS400s and one RS200. The two International Canoe boys also joined us on this occasion and found the windward leeward courses from the committee boat set by OD David Downs to their liking. An incredibly shifty first beat in the first two races made for an interesting gamble trying to predict which side of the course the next wind blast was coming from and when it came the gust were surprisingly strong for a short period before shifting by 20 degrees.

With the RS700's struggling in the light conditions, the club boats and canoes showed the way home with Robin Wood in the International Canoe dominating all races in his favourite conditions and carried away the new Llandegfedd SC Open Cup. Gareth and Dan Edwards in the RS200 maintaining a consistent performance to finish 2nd overall. The RS400s swapped positions with Bill Jackson and Nick Hamersley finally getting the best combination of results.

The RS700s were shown the way home by the visitors and Chew Valley's David Aston demonstrated superior boat handling skills to dominate the fleet being in close contention with the canoes but with a lower PY being well down on handicap. Steve Marshall from Corus (Margam) was consistently second in the fleet with the Llandegfedd boys realizing that more boat handling practice is required.

Overall everyone enjoyed the events despite the light and shift winds and Kate Osborne and Christine Clarke performed magnificently in the galley to keep us all nicely fed and watered. Thanks to David Downs and his helpers, Elvin on rescue and the ladies of the galley.

Results are as follows:

1 st Robin Wood	IC284 Corus SC	2 nd Gareth and Dan Edwards,	RS200 231,
3 rd Bill Jackson and Nick Hamersley,	RS400 951	4 th Andy & Ruth Howard,	RS400 474,
5 th Steve Bowen	IC290 Aberaeron SC	<i>Steve Clarke</i>	

Sail Training Association



On Monday 8th September, several members of the sailing club embarked upon a day voyage in the Bristol Channel aboard the tall ship Stavros S Niarchos. It was an early start from Barry docks, (a bit too early for my liking), and there was a fair wind of a steady force 4 so we were lucky because the weather was forecast for a force 6 gale from the North and heavy rains.

The permanent crew of the Stavros took the ship out of the docks by engine and then continued towards Flat Holm. The day crew (us), were then given a demonstration on how to set the lower and upper topsails.

The ship was turned around, and the day crew in their watches e.g. Blue watch, practised pulling the yards around to port and starboard. On the whole we picked up the commands very quickly, even those without any sailing experience. The next job was to set the sails to starboard, as the ship was turned around. It was amazing how the watches pulled together as a team, despite us all being total strangers to each other.

Throughout the day we travelled from Barry Docks to Flat Holm, close to the Devon coastline and back to the docks by 6.00 pm. I was absolutely knackered by the end of the day but I had thoroughly enjoyed myself. I would definitely go on a longer voyage.

The best bit of the voyage for me was climbing up and out onto the yards and the bowsprit. Here, every movement of the ship was enhanced. Not really for those with a weak stomach or a fear of heights.

I recommend that everybody should try this. It is great fun for people of all ages and backgrounds.

Dave Hamersley

Editors comment: Sue points out that Flat Holm is an SSSI within her Newport and Cardiff patch



Laser Grand Prix results

Helm	Club	Boat	Race 1	Race 2	Race3	Points	Position	Radial
Mark Williams	Llandegfedd	Laser	2	2	2	6	1	
Nigel Tinkler	Llandegfedd	Laser	1	3	3	7	2	
Paul Hamer	Llandegfedd	Laser	6	1	1	8	3	
James Davy	Llandegfedd	Radial	3	6	4	13	4	1
J Probert	Corus	Laser	4	4	5	13	5	
Emily Cook	Neyland	Radial	5	7	6	18	6	2
Dave Hamersley	Llandegfedd	Radial	8	5	8	21	7	3
Sam Williams	Llandegfedd	Radial	9	8	9	26	8	
R Holmes	Neyland	Radial	7	10	10	27	9	
John Clarke	Colmere	Laser	9	9	11	29	10	
Richard Sykes	Llandegfedd	Radial	12	12	7	31	11	
Stephan Hilder	Llandegfedd	Radial	11	11	12	34	12	

Laser Grand Prix

The Laser Grand Prix covers South and West Wales. We hosted the event on 14 September in parallel with President's day. Results were run for the overall event and then the Radials were taken out after the handicap results had been calculated.

Bill ran Optimists, Lasers and Club racing all at once on a trapezoid course with an outer loop for most of us. It was a good demonstration of how to control a large number of boats in a smallish area of water. All sailing was at the top end between 4, D, 5 and 7. Committee boat starts used and extra pink buoys helped to control the race beats into the wind as it wandered around. Results scattered around the newsletter.

Andy

LSC Optimist News

Congratulations to the club Optimists who have all made excellent progress this season. There are too many successes to mention them all but of special recent note are Hannah Tilley, first Welsh boat in the WYA/PGL Regatta Silver fleet, Sara Jackson for winning the President's Day Optimist Regatta and Kate Stanley for winning the recent Llangorse Challenge Optimist fleet. Not only have all last year's trainees done really well but this year's have come on greatly and have done really well in the wooden training boats.

Come on parents it's time to invest in some overpriced fibreglass for next season!

As we approach the end of the season it would be nice to recognise progress and award further RYA certificates where appropriate. To this end Phil and I are holding a training session on Sunday 12th October. This year's trainees who have started to race will be assessed for their Stage 3 and the more advanced racers for the Racing Red badges. Please come down, whatever the weather or water level as there are lots of land based things we can cover. Iwan Basten from the WYA is hoping to come down and he will tell you all about the Regional squad training taking place over the winter.

Last of all don't forget that the club prize giving is a great social evening and one not to be missed. Make sure Mum and Dad are planning on bringing you!

Bill

Flying Fifteen World Championships Dublin August 03

5 or 6 years ago the International Flying Fifteen Class Association, decided to encourage the sailing of older boats, by arranging an Open Meeting circuit and including separate starts at both National and World Championships for "Classic" boats. These being defined as boats with a sail number less than 2700, which includes boats built from the inception of the class in the fifties up to the late seventies.

My involvement in Classic Flying Fifteens started in a pub in Bristol in December 2000. After months of negotiation, our company had just been awarded the Prime Contract for the design and build of the Type 45 Destroyers for the Royal Navy, and we had all retired to the pub to celebrate. Some time during the evening I was sat next to our Procurement Director, Peter Hogg, and it turned out we were both interested in sailing. By the end of the evening it was agreed that we would qualify for and compete in the World Championships in Peter's father in law's old boat.

Thus it was that through the spring and early summer of 2001 Peter completely refurbished Flame, sail number 759. This boat is a beautifully cold moulded wooden fifteen that his father in law bought at the boat show in 1964, and it has been in their family ever since. A lot of man-hours were spent in varnishing and polishing, and then equipped with a new keel and rudder, the rig from Peter's previous modern fifteen and the ubiquitous hundred weight of Harken gear (needed to make every boat go) Flame was ready to go sailing.

Our first outing was at Cardiff Bay in July 2001, we were there or thereabouts, and did enough to prove to ourselves that there was potential. We did a couple of other Open Meetings, including winning the Classic prize at Hayling Island.

As the 2002 season was needed to qualify for the Worlds, a new suit of sails was purchased and we were flying. Other pressures on our time limited the amount of sailing we could do. We competed at Hayling Island again and retained the Classic trophy on a ridiculously windy weekend. We shipped so much water up wind that we nearly sunk, but the offwind legs were awesome. While surfing down the run, with the kite up, I wondered if this was really the right way to treat a forty year old boat. Peter asked me to tie him to the boat, in case we did sink, he felt he couldn't face his family if he returned without the family heirloom. We followed that up with a win at Cardiff Bay and a fifth place at the Nationals at Largs, and thus qualification for the Worlds was assured.

By the end of 2002 poor old Flame was beginning to feel the pace, a crack had opened up in the bottom under the mast and forward of the keel. She was shipped up to Dave Naylor's in Lancashire, where the outer veneer was ground off and carbon fibre matting laid up to repair it. She then went to Paintcraft where the bottom was re-sprayed, and while they were about it the topsides were taken back to bare wood and re-varnished. After this work she looked absolutely immaculate, and far too good to take sailing!

Our first outing this year was at Llangorse, Peter could only manage the Saturday where we got two third places, so since the boat was there and we were entered he persuaded Ros and I to sail it on the Sunday. I was petrified about putting a scratch in the new varnish, but Ros was keen so we did it. I frequently steer on the way out to the start while Peter overdoses on nicotine ready for the race, but to steer in an actual race felt very odd. We got a fourth in the first race, while we got the hang of it, and then led from start to finish in the second race, including overtaking all but two of the "Open" fleet who had started five minutes before us. Thus in the overall weekend results I got a seventh place, sailing with Ros and an eight place crewing with Peter, not a bad weekends work. This has caused Peter to take a lot of ribbing, his mates asking who will be steering him or the "Wizard of Llangorse". It simply proves what I have been telling him for ages, "any old fool can waggle the stick and pull one string with 6 to 1 on it, it's the person in the front with two sails, loads of string and telling him where to go that counts!"

As our other excursions this year had not been so good, when we boarded the ferry for Ireland on the evening of the 1st August our expectations were not high. We arrived at the National Yacht Club at Dun Laoghaire on Sunday 3rd August, to join our place in the queue for scrutineering. There were one hundred boats there, 75 "Open" fleet boats and 25 "Classics" with competitors from the UK, Ireland, France, Spain, USA, Hong Kong and container loads of boats from Australia and New Zealand. After I had hack-sawed half an inch off the spinnaker pole we passed scrutineering and were ready to go. Unfortunately, our arrival in Ireland coincided with the arrival of the Azores' high in the middle of the Irish Sea, which was great for our families for playing on the beach, but not so good for sailing.

The first race was sailed on the Monday, after a short postponement for the wind to settle the Classic fleet started ten minutes after the open fleet, in a gentle breeze. We went right up the first beat, and were quite pleased to be fourth at the windward mark. We hung on down the reaches and picked up a place to third on the second beat. Meanwhile the leaders, an Aussie and a Brit sailing a boat very like

ours had established a good lead. As we went up the last beat, the two leaders engaged in a tacking duel, while bit by bit we caught up. With about a hundred yards to go we both realised that we could win this, the tension in the boat was incredible. As we came up to the line the Aussie belated realised we were there and came across to cover us, and did just enough to hold us off, the first three finished within seconds, but we were well pleased with third.

Tuesday dawned warm and windless, eventually we went out to sea in the early afternoon, as the start of a sea breeze appeared to be building, but it died when we got our there. We then spent the next several hours drifting about waiting for wind to come and settle. An attempt was made to start in the early evening, but a huge shift put paid to that and sailing was abandoned for the day. With one hundred boats to recover one by one up the slipway, a very serious race followed to get a good place in the queue. Typically a breeze did then pick up, and as we sailed through the harbour I got my feet under the toe straps for the first and only time that week.

Wednesday followed a similar pattern, but desperate to get a race in they waited for the evening breeze and started us at about 18:00. We went right again and popped out second at the windward mark, behind the Aussie. The two of us pulled out a bit of a lead down the reaches, and at the leeward mark, everything pointed to going right again. In a failing breeze the eventual winner down in about 10th place chose to go left, in a desperate attempt to get back into it. A third of the way up the beat, and with the race having been shortened to one round, we crossed the Aussie to take the lead, but as the wind dropped to a drifter we had to watch as those who had gone left slowly crept up to the line. We finished ahead of the Aussie, but in eight place.

Very similar weather conditions prevailed on Thursday, and we had another 6 hour drift round Dublin Bay waiting for the wind. With the races being shortened to 1 or 2 rounds, there was a premium on getting the first beat right, as there was little opportunity to recover afterwards. I was concerned that having got the first two beats right, but not having fully capitalised on it, we desperately needed to get this one right. The race started in the faintest of breezes, and my concerns were justified. We started going right, didn't like and went back towards the middle, then had a period of indecision and rounded the windward mark with just one boat behind us. After some brief recriminations we actually had a very enjoyable race, there was no tension, we were relaxed and we picked off half the fleet finishing 13th. We also taught a Frenchman some Anglo Saxon when he tacked onto Port in front of us on the finish line.

On Friday there was a reasonable sea breeze, but it brought sea mist in with it and as we could not see the far side of the harbour racing was abandoned. Half a mile in land, it was a scorching day with a cloudless sky, we

enjoyed a family day out, a game of pitch and putt and a few pints of Guinness.

As only three races had been completed, a race was held on Saturday, putting paid to a relaxed day to pack up. There was some wind, and still a lot of fog. The open fleet started and disappeared completely into the gloom. We followed, using the compass to pick the shifts and hoping to eventually come across a windward mark. This we did, in fifth place. We closed up on the second beat, and then took three places on the run to start the last beat in second place. We played the shifts up the last beat, but with the boats behind us going both left and right we couldn't cover them all and ended up picking up one boat and letting two through to finish third. This gave us a fifth place overall for the week.

We would have been well pleased with fifth before the week started, so we should be happy, but with having been placed 2nd, 3rd and 3rd at the start of the last beat in the three races that we counted, we felt that we had missed an opportunity.

On reflection, it was a four race series, without any proper wind and taking account of entry fee and ferry fares, I think it best we don't calculate the cost per race. This begs the question, "would we do it again?". Well the Kiwi's showed us video of sailing in big waves and wind, gave us samples of Kiwi beer, wine and beef, and they challenged us to attend with a Hakka, so.... Peter has a new boat on order (well we couldn't put Flame in a container to ship half way round the world) and we need to plan our qualification campaign for Auckland in March 2005.

Dave Downs

Llandegfedd sailing interests were also represented by Nick Jerwood representing Australia and Nick Robinson representing Ireland. Nick is an ex-member and pin winner, Nick is Derek's son.

OD Lights system

After much cursing, the system is back in place. It fought back, but as of last weekend, we have both horns, wind generator operational and the added back-up of some cheap solar cells. Thanks to Paul, and Phil especially for the help.

Andy

A day onboard.

4:59 reads the clock on the bedside table. Fantastic, awake before the alarm again! It's amazing what excitement can accomplish. Three hours and forty-five minutes before I'm due to arrive at work; a thought that usually rolls me over and sends me back to sleep until at least 7:30. But not this morning.

Up and washed and dressed by twenty past five, car's already set and packed and checked from the night before. One last look around the house to make sure nothing essential has been left behind and I step outside into the pre-dawn darkness. It's a short trip west on the M4 to my friend Ruth's house where she and the first cup of tea of the day are waiting. We throw her bag and jacket in the back of the car, check once more that we have everything, gulp down the last of our tea, wave farewell to a sleepy mother and then its back onto the M4.

We arrive at Barry a little before seven, the last vestiges of our tiredness ebbing away as we spy the twin masts of the ship we are about to set sail in. "Wow!" we both sigh simultaneously. Already my excitement is taking my imagination for a walk through a thousand wonderful stories of life on the open waves, pirates, swords, treasure, shipwrecks, survival and rescue; and all this before even setting foot on the ship! As we clamber out of the car and grab our bags David arrives, also a little bleary eyed (by now it's about seven o'clock). After saying our hellos and discussing the weather (fine and bright with a pleasant breeze) all three of us head towards the ship.

The ship is called Stavros S Niarchos. It's a twin masted brig built especially for the Sail Training Association. It has a permanent salaried crew of six comprising of Captain, Chief Officer, 2nd Officer, Bosun, Engineer and cook. In addition to this there is an unpaid volunteer crew of ten.

The gangplank is lowered and we board. On board we are met by Mac, another of our little crew from the Llandegfedd sailing club. He's a member of the Sail Training Association and so has spent the night on board, thus avoiding the early start subjected to the rest of us. Once all sixty members of what is to become the Stavros S Niarchos crew for the day are aboard, our first task is to be assigned to one of three watches, Red, Blue or white. This is to be our grouping for the voyage. At any time one watch is in charge of the running of the ship, one is on standby and the other is usually sleeping. As today is only a day sail however it's more a case of all hands on deck!

After breakfasting on bacon sandwiches we are given a short but informative lecture about the masts



and the yards and then immediately engaged in the task of altering the alignment of both. We take it in turns as watches to turn the yards hard to port, starboard and square on. I was in charge of the topmost yard, the royal. The next one down being the topgallant then the upper topsail, lower topsail and the course. Each of the members of the watch is responsible for making sure that all the yards are moved into position smoothly, quickly and simultaneously.

Once we've all got the hang of moving the masts it's onto another short lecture about the setting and use of the sails. As the winds are light today and we are only sailing around in the Bristol Channel, the only sails we are using are the lower and upper topsails on both masts. Lowering the sails is quite easy. The deckhands and watch leaders release them from their ties, then we as crew pull them down using first the clew lines and then the buntlines. Then comes the hard part. Now that the sails are fully free they have to be given tension. This is done by hoisting the yardarm that the sail hangs from. No mean feat considering the combined weight of both the yard and the sail! I would imagine that this is a task that gets easier the more it is undertaken. So this being our first time it was quite a heave but before long we had all the sails set and it was time for lunch.

After the appetites our labours had earned had been sated with soup, spaghetti Bolognese and fruit, we have some time to look over the ship, ask questions and enjoy the voyage. I found myself by chance at the front of the ship where one of the deck hands asked if I'd like to take a wander out on the bowsprit. Not being one to turn down an experience I jumped at the chance and was shown how to clip my harness on before clambering out to the foremost tip of the ship. Wow, nothing can really prepare you for the view. I was sat in the crook of the forestay and bowsprit with nothing below me but a 30ft drop into the sea, staring back at the beautiful sight of sails and deck, rigging and rope, all working together to power us through the ocean. As I sat there I was once again carried away with thoughts of high seas, desert islands, treasure and sword fights!

Having allowed myself ten minutes of fantasy I come back to reality and head on to the deck only to be offered the chance to go out on the yardarm. Once more



I am powerless to resist the chance to feel what it must be like to sail a vessel like this and follow David and Ruth up the rigging to the first yard. We climb from the rigging to the yard and head out along it. I have to add at this point the first yard is about 40ft from the deck, which is itself about 20ft up from sea level. All of a sudden being 60ft up in the air feels like the highest height I have ever looked down from. It's hard to imagine what it must have been like having to climb up here in rough seas. The subtle motions of the sea are emphasised tenfold even this short distance up the 120ft mast! Also the position we are forced into doesn't help matters. Standing on a rope suspended from the bottom of the yard puts the yard itself at about thigh height, and with the only handhold being on top of the yard it feels as if all of your grip is in the wrong place and that your weight is going to drag you downwards any second. Again I feel this is a task that becomes easier the more you attempt it!

It's strange how whilst on board time seems to relinquish its hold on the day, no sooner have we set our feet back on deck than it's time for afternoon tea, just to fill any gaps that might have been left from lunch, which I now realise had been some hours before. Whilst we are (well, *I am*) stuffing our (*my*) faces with cream and jam filled scones and guzzling tea, the captain explains to us some of the mission aspects of the STA. How troubled and troublesome teenagers have had their lives turned around by a week or two of crewing aboard either the Prince William or the Stavros

S Niarchos, and considering the day I've just had I can well believe it. Though I am neither troubled nor a teenager, and having only been on board for a few short hours, I can already feel a change in me. I have more knowledge of ships, the sea, and me, plus a healthy respect for those that live this life. I can begin to imagine the sense of self-respect that one could gain from living and working on board a vessel such as this for just a few weeks.

All of us congratulate the captain and crew on a wonderful ship, a memorable day and a beautiful idea and then it's time to stow the sails and head into port. Helping to stow the sails is optional as not everyone wants to go up the rigging, but realising that I was scared of it made me want to do it more. So five minutes later I found myself scurrying further up the rigging than before to help put the lower topsail away. This involves being out on the yardarm again, pulling the sail up and wrapping it into itself before tying it to the yard. Strangely my fear seemed to evaporate once I had a task to achieve, even at such a height and I once again volunteered to help stow the sails in the foremast too!

Pretty soon we had the Stavros S Niarchos ship shape and Bristol fashion and cruised gently into Barry harbour. I am informed that the time is six o' clock and we have been on board for eleven hours. It feels like about five minutes and I realise then that I really don't want to leave. The gangplank is clunked into place and people start to disembark and as I wait my turn to leave I can't help but think to myself how boring my car is without any ropes or sails, but as I walk down the gangplank I smile and sing softly to myself "*Yo Ho Ho, a pirate's life for me....*"

Mark Radford - Multimedia reporter

Thanks to Mac Pearce for all STA pictures. There are more on the web-site



President's day Overall Club results

Helm	Crew	Boat	Number	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Pts	Pos	Youth
Andy Howard	Ruth	RS400	474	1	1	6	8	2	
Gareth Edwards	Tash	RS200	231	3	4	5	12	4	
Steve Clarke		RS700	740	9	9	13	31	8	
Phil L-d-T		Vortex	1087	8	8	11	27	7	
Elfyn Morgan		Supernova	520	4	6	7	17	6	
Jack Taylor		Solo	1296	7	7	20 DNS	34	9	
Joe Edwards		Topper	44028	5	3	1	9	3	2
Dan Edwards		Topper	44526	2	2	2	6	1	1
Nick Hamersley		Topper	44426	6	5	4	15	5	
Jamie		Topper	44100	10	10	16	36	10	
Phil Tilley	Helen	RS 400	890	DNS	DNS	3	43	11	
Alan	Judith	RS 200	887	DNS	DNS	9	49	13	
Terry McCool		Contender		DNS	DNS	12	52	15	
Richard	Son	N12		DNS	DNS	8	48	12	
Mac Pearce		Solo		DNS	DNS	10	50	14	
Martin Phillips		Laser		DNS	DNS	15	55	17	
John Daniels		Solo	4040	DNS	DNS	14	54	16	

Llandegfedd Pin Results and gory details

Helm	Crew	Boat	corr time	Position	Youth Pos
Andy	Ruth	RS400	3150	1	
Gareth	Paul	RS200	3237	2	
John		Solo	3323	3	
Mark		Laser	3389	4	
Nigel		Laser	3410	5	
Alan	Judith	RS200	3486	6	
Dan		Topper	3501	7	1
Joe		Topper	3544	8	2
Elfyn		Supernova	3549	9	3
R Holmes		Laser	3549	9	
Paul Hamer		Laser	3565	11	
Dave		Laser	3566	12	
Emily		Laser	3573	13	
J Probert		Laser	3578	14	
James		Laser	3586	15	
J Clarke		Laser	3612	16	
Nick		Topper	3621	17	
Richard		Laser	3626	18	
Steve		RS700	3632	19	
Sam		Laser	3689	20	
Phil		Vortex	3754	21	
Stephan		Laser	3839	22	
Martin		Laser	4166	23	
Terry		Contender	4264	24	
Sarah	Dave	Pico	4621	25	