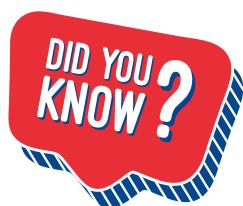


# TELLTALES

The Journal Of Priory Sailing Club



## COMMODORE'S COLUMN



This month, I've got some numbers for you!

- This summer your club's volunteer RYA Instructors will deliver over **one hundred and fifty free coaching sessions** for members.
- with the recent addition of another Laser Vago (generously gifted to us by a retiring member) the club now has **eighty club craft** for members to sail.
- the club has **eight SUPs, six canoes and four KataKanus** for members to paddle.
- so far this year we have recruited **forty new members**.
- our **membership fees were increased by £0** this year!
- our **club facilities are used by schools and youth groups** to provide young people with opportunities to get on the water. There are too many visits to count but the total will be in the hundreds!
- the club will run over **one hundred and fifty races** this year.

### IN THIS EDITION:

DAY SKIPPER EXPERIENCE  
GINNY SPITTLES  
Page 6

PSC FLOTILLA REPORT  
ALASTAIR CHARATAN  
Page 11

A GREEK TRAGEDY?  
LIZ AIKMAN  
Page 17

FAMILIAR FACES  
DICK KNOWLES  
Page 20

WINDSURFING UPDATE  
TOM OTLEY  
Page 23



But it's not all about the numbers! We should take pride in the fact that:

- visitors to our club regularly report how welcome our members make them feel.
- our racing fleet is supportive to those taking up club racing, and whilst competitive, it is inclusive.
- aside from our volunteer instructors, we also have a team of volunteers who provide Safety Boat cover for our activities, another team who keep the clubhouse clean, yet another team who regularly provide great food at our club events and others who maintain our many club craft.

**A huge thank you to everyone who helps make Priory Sailing Club such a great place to sail, to race, to develop sailing skills and to simply recreate.**

See you on the water soon.

*Tim*



**FROM THE EDITORS: WE'RE NOT ENTIRELY SURE THEY KNOW WE'VE GOT THIS PHOTO, BUT HERE ARE TIM AND JEREMY (PSC COMMITTEE MEMBER) ENJOYING THEMSELVES IN CROATIA THIS MONTH!**



## **A BAD SPELL OF 'WHETHER'!**

**From time to time we are contacted to ask 'is the session on?' This is normally prompted by a unfavourable weather forecast. The answer is always yes!**

We work on the premise that it's a forecast, and even if no wind is forecast, or perhaps strong winds are predicted, what actually materialises at our lake may differ from the forecast.

For our many coaching sessions our volunteer instructors always adapt their teaching plans to suit the prevailing conditions, only going afloat if conditions are suitable. They have lots of options to continue to promote learning.

If any session had to be cancelled the club would make every effort to let everyone know!





# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE CLUB?

With summer now in full swing, the club has been a hive of activity. Here are some snapshots from the lake...

OUR BUCCANEERS AND PIRATES COURSES HAVE BEEN IN FULL SWING...



One of PSC's youngest members in her Oppie



LOTS OF MEMBERS HAVE BEEN OUT SAILING IN THEIR BOATS ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS...



The double hander series started







## WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE CLUB?



**THIS YEAR'S RNLI REGATTA WAS A GREAT SUCCESS, WITH PSC'S JUNIOR MEMBERS TAKING PART**



**LOTS OF ADULTS HAVE BEEN COMPLETING THEIR LEVEL 1 SAILING COURSES (ONE OF WHOM IS A YOUTHFUL 82 YEARS OLD!)**

Some have been taking it easy on the lake!



Many certificates have been awarded







# WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING AT THE CLUB?

Milosz became the proud owner of his first boat



A FAMILIAR WEDNESDAY EVENING SCENE OF PETER AND HIS FRIENDS SAILING IN THEIR WAYFARER



The Commodore got stuck in his wellington boots

... AND THERE'S BEEN LOTS OF WINDSURFING AND WING ACTION TOO!



Some impressive capsizes practice

# MY DAY SKIPPER EXPERIENCE

BY GINETTE SPITTLES  
PSC MEMBER

For those who may not know, the RYA Day Skipper qualification is an entry-level certification for recreational sailors, enabling them to skipper a yacht in familiar waters during daylight hours. It's a practical course focused on developing boat handling, navigation, and seamanship skills.

In this article, Ginny tells us all about her experience. PSC has over 20 Day Skippers - will you be next?!

**Back in 2020, I completed my RYA Competent Crew course – five days of hands-on sailing in the Solent that gave me my first ever taste of life on a cruising yacht. It was a great introduction to the basics of crewing, sail handling and working as part of a team on board.**

Since then, most of my yacht sailing experience has come through club trips in Croatia with other PSC members. The trips gave me the chance learn from more experienced skippers and crew mates and start to understand how everything fits together on a yacht. After a few seasons of sun, sea, and shared learning, my interest was piqued and combined with a bit of peer pressure, I felt motivated to take the next step: RYA Day Skipper.

For anyone considering the same, I'm sharing a bit about the process. It's a combination of theory and practical training which has taken time and commitment. I'm proud to have done it and it's been a rewarding milestone in my sailing so far.

I started with the theory course which I did online with Ardent Training. The syllabus is wide ranging and it's fair to say that some chapters were easier to get through than others! The flexibility of online learning with Ardent was great – and with other PSC members doing the same course there was always support and encouragement.

The crew. I did the practical in March – sunny but chilly



## THE DAY SKIPPER THEORY SYLLABUS:

- NAUTICAL TERMS
- NAVIGATION AND INSTRUMENTS
- POSITION FIXING
- ROPEWORK
- TIDAL HEIGHTS
- ANCHORWORK
- TIDAL STREAMS
- IRPCS
- METEOROLOGY
- SAFETY
- PILOTAGE AND PASSAGE PLANNING
- MARINE ENVIRONMENT





With the theory complete, the next step is the five-day practical course which I did with Solent Boat Training (SBT). Emma Stopford and Dan Perry were doing their Day Skipper practical with SBT the same month – we had hoped to do it together but due to the volume of learning only two Day Skipper students are allowed per boat.

My employment status (retired!) and the number of courses offered by SBT meant I was able to reschedule. It is also worth knowing that SBT offer the theory course as a 5 day face to face course if that style of learning suits better.

“  
It's been a rewarding  
milestone in my sailing...  
”

The RYA also recommends the Level 2 Dinghy course to make sure your sailing skills are up to speed before doing the day skipper course. I pushed myself to do as many Sunday morning dinghy races as possible. I found it challenging to be consistent in January and February but was glad I had made the effort and it helped my confidence a lot ahead of the day.



### REQUIRED EXPERIENCE

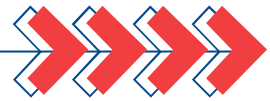
**Basic sailing ability. 5 days, 100 miles and 4 night hours onboard a sailing yacht. Navigation and theory to Dayskipper Shorebased level.**

**Minimum duration: 5 days**

**Content: Preparation for sea, deck work, navigation, pilotage, meteorology, rules of the road, maintenance and repair work, engines, victualing, emergency situations, yacht handling under power and sail, passage making and night cruising.**

The practical course brought the learning to life. There were five of us on the boat – our trainer, another day skipper and two competent crew. The yacht, Hope, was a Bavaria 37. We took turns skippering passages, practiced mooring and anchoring, sail trim, man overboard, pilotage into unfamiliar harbours and night sailing and worked through the extensive syllabus.

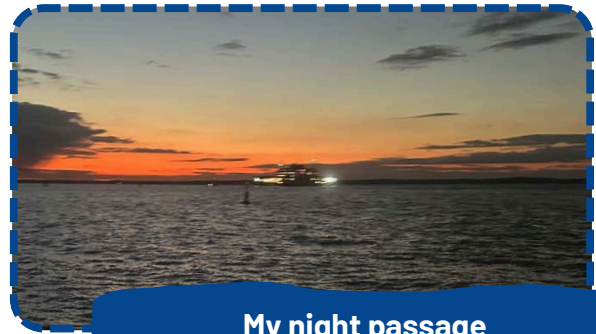
**Being handed responsibility as skipper – having to plan a passage, brief the crew clearly, and take charge of the boat – was a real learning experience. For me, it was a bit nerve wracking, but our trainer was great and emphasised that the objective was to learn how to do things not to demonstrate we could already do them. All the same, there was a huge sense of relief along with achievement when he confirmed I'd passed and wrote out my license.**



Since qualifying, I've chartered a yacht in Croatia, skippering for the first time with a crew of experienced PSC friends – all Day Skippers with far more sea miles and experience than me. Their support, encouragement and feedback was very much appreciated.

I'd absolutely recommend the Day Skipper course. It has improved my skills and understanding of what's happening on board and increased my confidence no end! It has also given me the bug to go on to the next level of theory and I've not ruled out further practical courses either. (I've done a marina skills / boat handling day since.) As I'm writing this I'm also reminded that I had a thoroughly enjoyable week of sailing and got loads of knowledge from our trainer, other crew members and the trainer and crew aboard Ecos who were doing the day skipper / competent crew course alongside us.

If you're thinking about it and want to know more, feel free to grab me – or Emma or Dan – for a chat next time you see us at the club.



**My night passage**



**Last night drinks – we passed!**

### USEFUL TIP!

**An International Certificate of Competence (ICC), issued by the RYA based on your Day Skipper qualification is needed to charter abroad – no further exams required. Just remember it can take some time to arrive.**



**My licence!**





We saw Maiden motoring into Hamble – winning boat of Ocean Globe Race 2025, skippered by Heather Thomas, daughter of Matt, our trainer.



Shamrock Quay, Southampton



We spent a night at Haslar Marina. View to Spinnaker Tower, Portsmouth



## CONGRATULATIONS!

A massive congratulations to Ginny for completing her RYA Day Skipper qualification. It's a difficult qualification to achieve and requires considerable hard work and determination.

Our thanks to Ginny for writing this article and we look forward to hearing about her adventures in future editions of Telltales!



End of day at Yarmouth, Isle of Wight

**SAVE THE DATE**



## **AN EVENING AT THE BEDFORD OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM**

**That's right, Bedford has it's own observatory and  
planetarium!**

**We've organised a night of stargazing for Priory Sailing Club  
members, hosted by volunteers from the  
Bedford Astronomical Society.**

**✓ The evening will include a planetarium show and a  
demonstration of the society's high power telescopes and  
instruments.**

**There's no charge to attend, but places are limited so you  
will need to book. Tickets will be available on Eventbrite  
shortly.**

**Please note there is minimum age of 8 years for this event.**

**FRIDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2025**

**7.30 PM**

**PEMBERLEY AVENUE, BEDFORD**





# PSC INFORMAL FLOTILLA IN CROATIA

JUNE 2025

ALASTAIR CHARATAN



What has become an annual trip to Croatia took place during the first two weeks of June this year. I had the fun and responsibility of skippering one of the three boats in the second week of the informal flotilla, with Vicky in charge of another and Admiral Tim on the Flagship for two weeks. (A promotion from Commodore, reflecting a fleet of yachts on the high seas!).

The first challenge was preparing the provisioning list to cater for all diets, tastes, and appropriate quantities. Amazingly, when the many crews arrived from several airports in the UK and Europe, and Dave and Ginny by camper-van, everyone arrived on schedule, shopping was completed and the three boats were able to leave the hot marina by Saturday evening to find a cooler and sheltered anchorage across the main channel.



The weather was kind all week, with pleasant breezes almost the entire time with one stormy afternoon and brisker winds on some days. We could therefore put our sailing skills to good use, with some particularly determined crews - Admiral Tim urged his crew into racing position...



“

**THIS WAS ALSO THE SITE OF A NUDIST COLONY - IMAGES OF NAKED PADDLEBOARDERS ARE NOT INCLUDED!**

”

There was great coordination between the three boats and so on the afternoon when storms were predicted, we were all safely attached to mooring buoys in a calm bay by lunchtime as the weather broke. However, this was also the site of a nudist colony on the shore, and images of naked paddleboarders and swimmers are not included in this article!

Once the storm had passed, we were able to find a delightful hillside bar a pleasant 20 minutes' walk away.





Sailing is of course not without its challenges, and the first major incident occurred at the lovely town of Primosten. There was excellent log keeping by the crew of Minion, who dutifully recorded their difficulties in anchoring that afternoon. Their concerns were unfortunately verified sometime later when the yacht came loose and drifted across the bay.

“

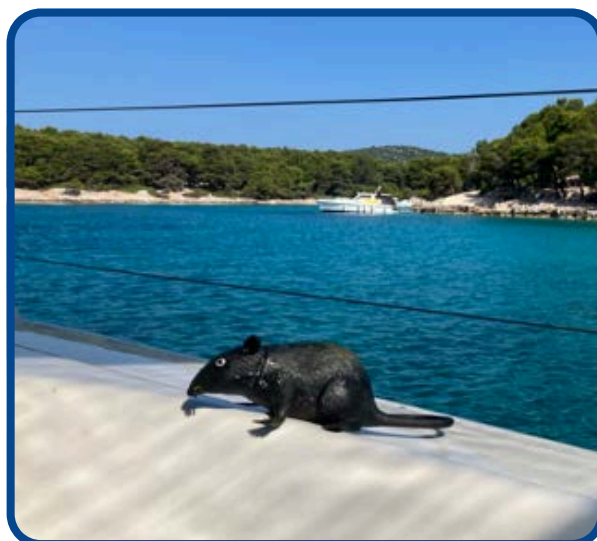
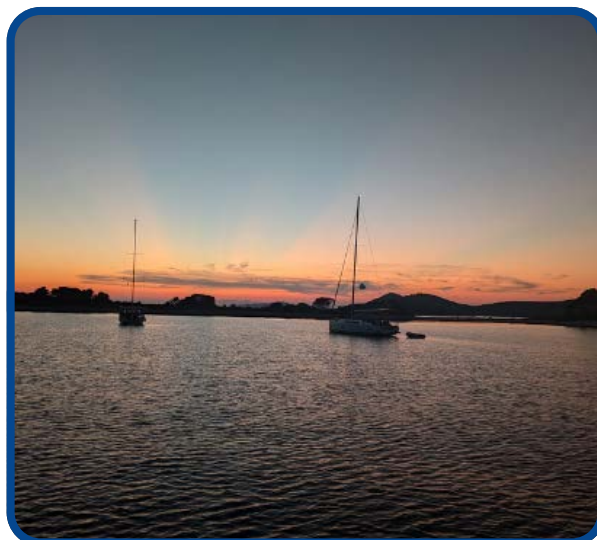
***EVENINGS FREQUENTLY GAVE US WONDERFUL SUNSETS, FOLLOWED BY BEAUTIFUL STARRY SKIES.***

”

There was a near miss as the yacht passed the flagship, but fortunately quick action from a boarding party brought the situation under control, though when Minion's crew rejoined their boat, it took them until past midnight to be satisfied with their anchoring.



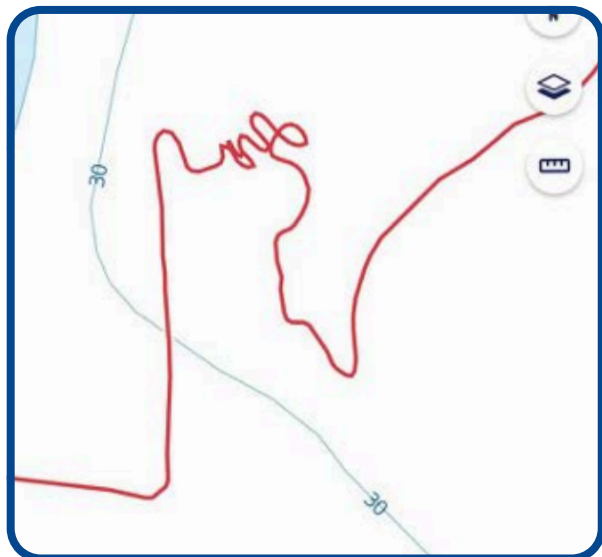
Meanwhile, a visitor placed on our yacht was happy to stay for a few days, which we took as a good sign given the reputation of rats and sinking ships...



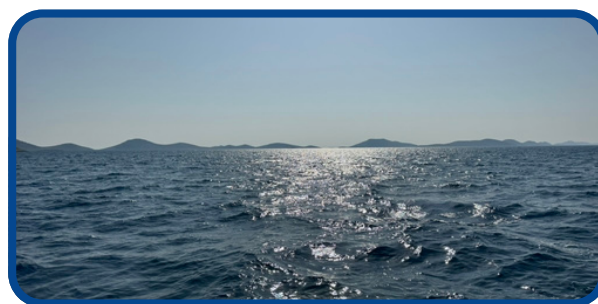




**On Friday, Admiral Tim's big birthday dawned, with a good breeze for our last day of sailing. But what happened to the flagship here – a celebratory dance?**



This is the track of a yacht where the steering has broken! So Tim's exciting birthday experience was to dig out the emergency tiller, attach it and develop Popeye shoulders for the rest of the day...



We all returned safely to the marina on Friday evening, in time to have a celebratory dinner at a nearby restaurant. There we reflected on a week of great sailing amidst beautiful scenery and fun socialising. The trip was a great way to enjoy yacht sailing with the expert oversight and advice of our Commodore.

*Our thanks to **Alistair** for telling the story of Croatia 2025!*

# FROM OPPIE PIRATES TO DINGHY INSTRUCTOR:

## OWEN SMITH'S TIME AT PSC



OLD-TIDE OWEN

I JOINED PRIORY IN 2015 WHEN I WAS 8. MY BROTHER AND I WENT OUT IN A BOAT AT THE OPEN DAY AND OUR PARENTS GOT US ON THE NEXT PIRATES COURSE AVAILABLE. I STARTED IN THE OPPIES BUT SOON ESCAPED THE BATHTUBS TO SAIL A TOPPER INSTEAD. ONCE I HAD MY STAGE 2, I WAS REGULARLY ATTENDING BUCCANEERS AND GOT MY STAGE 3, START RACING AND STAGE 4 DURING THREE CONSECUTIVE DINGHY WEEKS. JUNIOR DINGHY WEEK WAS THE HIGHLIGHT OF SAILING FOR ME AT THIS TIME, AS NEW EXPERIENCES LIKE SAILING THE HARTLEYS AND TRAPEZING ON THE OMEGAS GREW MY CONFIDENCE ON THE WATER. IT'S ALSO WHAT DREW ME IN TO SUNDAY MORNING RACING, FIRST IN A TOPPER, THEN IN A CLUB LASER.



SAILING IN STORM BERT



ATTENDING SUNDAY MORNING RACING

I STARTED TO RACE MORE AND MORE AS COVID RESTRICTIONS EASED, AND SOON LEARNT TO RELISH THE WINTER STORMS. PLANING ALONG IN FORCE 6-7 IS SO MUCH FUN AND THE BEATS ARE ALWAYS A GOOD CHALLENGE.

HAVING ASSESSED THAT JUST SITTING AND WATCHING WOULD BE FOOLISH, MY MUM COMPLETED HER LEVEL 1 COURSE IN SEPTEMBER 2019. OF COURSE, COVID THEN NECESSITATED THE "ONE CLUB BOAT PER BUBBLE SYSTEM", SO I WAS STUCK IN A HARTLEY WITH MY MUM FOR A WHOLE YEAR. THAT BEING SAID, IT WAS MY FIRST EXPERIENCE OF HELPING SOMEONE LEARN TO SAIL AND IT WAS GOOD FUN.



INSTRUCTOR TRAINING - BLINDFOLDED!



YOU'LL FIND OWEN'S NAMES ON LOTS OF CLUB TROPHIES - HE'S USUALLY GIVING THE ADULTS A RUN FOR THEIR MONEY!



I GOT A GREATER TASTE OF SPEED DOWN AT THE ANDREW SIMPSON CENTRE, PORTLAND. AMONGST OTHER THINGS, I GOT TO SAIL A 29ER AND A DART 16. THE EASE AT WHICH THE DART GOT UP TO 10-15 KNOTS IN MODERATE BREEZE WAS INCREDIBLE AND I DEFINITELY RECOMMEND CATAMARANS TO ANYONE. I ALSO GAINED A NEW RESPECT FOR SKIFF SAILORS, AS I PROBABLY SPENT MORE TIME IN THE WATER THAN ON THE TRAPEZE DURING MY FIRST OUTING IN THE 29ER.



**MORE SUNDAY MORNING RACING!**

**SAILING A RS ZEST IN PORTLAND HARBOUR**



**OVERSEEING THE PSC JUNIOR REGATTA**

WITH REGARDS TO INSTRUCTING, I STARTED HELPING OUT WITH PIRATES AND BUCCANEERS DURING 2023. IN APRIL 2024, I COMPLETED MY DINGHY INSTRUCTOR COURSE AND HAVE DONE 1 AND A HALF SEASONS TEACHING SINCE. DURING THAT TIME, I'VE TAUGHT ON ADULT LEVEL 1 COURSES, PIRATES, BUCCANEERS, MENTORING, THE JUNIOR REGATTAS AND DINGHY WEEK.

HIGHLIGHTS FOR ME SO FAR ARE THE EVER-CHAOTIC RELAY RACES DURING THE REGATTA, AND OF COURSE DINGHY WEEK. INSTRUCTING HAS BEEN A BLAST AND I HOPE TO KEEP IT IN MY LIFE FOR MANY YEARS TO COME. I'M OFF TO UNI IN THE AUTUMN BUT I'LL STILL BE TEACHING AND RACING AT PRIORY IN THE HOLIDAYS.



## OWEN WILL SOON BE SETTING SAIL...

OWEN HEADS OF TO START HIS DEGREE IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY IN OCTOBER. WE WISH HIM THE VERY BEST OF LUCK WITH HIS STUDIES AND LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING HIM BACK AT PRIORY IN THE HOLIDAYS. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOUR HARD WORK AT THE CLUB OWEN, WE'LL MISS YOU AT SUNDAY MORNING RACING (PERHAPS)!

WE HOPE THAT OWEN'S STORY HAS INSPIRED OUR JUNIOR MEMBERS TO ACHIEVE THEIR OWN SAILING AMBITIONS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING THE NEXT GENERATION OUT ON THE LAKE SOON!



# EVENT REPORT: SAIL GP



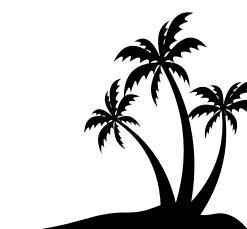
In this month's edition, PSC junior member and Buccaneer Emilia Fazakerley tells us all about her recent trip to watch the Sail GP racing in Portsmouth with her family.

Thanks for another great article Emilia!

**On the 19th of June me and my family went to Portsmouth to watch sail GP. When we arrived there was a massive queue. We all got given wrist bands and went inside. Finally once we got inside there was lots of stalls you could buy food and drink. Me and Oscar got an ice cream each with sprinkles.**

There were over 10,000 people watching and cheering on all the different teams. When it started I was surprised how fast all the boats went. Team GB won the first race and the whole stadium went wild. Team GB did really well across the races the got 1st, 2nd and twice came 3rd. Unfortunately for France before any of races started their mast had snapped and were unable to take part. France were devastated.

Tom Grennan sang all of his songs for an hour performance. He was really good. I really enjoyed his songs. We had a great day out and would recommend going down to see the racing.





# GREEK TRAGEDY? NOT THIS YEAR!

JULY 2025

LIZ AIKEN



Having enjoyed two fantastic sailing holidays in Croatia I decided that I would like to do a Yacht Charter in different waters this year. So with Steve Dyson to skipper Kevin Guard myself and two sailing friends Ivi and Besa flew to the beautiful island of Kefalonia to collect Eleni (recent PSC member, sailing instructor and Sunday racer who now lives back in Argostoli) and set sail for a week on board the yacht Planis.

We were able to sail every day with very little motoring and on the quiet times when the wind dropped we swam or were pulled gently along in the truly blue clear water. Marina fees were cheap averaging 16 euros and the food was delicious (we did a mixture of eating on board and eating out). Day one we sailed from Port Sami around the headland to overnight at anchor in Antisamos Bay. From there we sailed to Vathy Port on one of my favourite Greek Islands Ithaca. Ithaca is said to be home to the mythological King Odysseus and in Vathy there is a famous and beautiful statue so of course we had to take photos.



The next day as luck would have it I found myself moored up in the harbour at Vaseliki the windsurfers paradise on the island of Lefkada. Even better, the whole crew were happy to hang around while Eleni and I hired kit and had a go ourselves. From Vaseliki we headed to the other side of Lefkada island and inadvertently moored up on a private marina in Drepano Bay (we thought the other boats looked large and posh) but as none of the owners were expected to return we got away with it.

“

**...WE SAILED TO VATHY PORT ON ONE OF MY FAVOURITE GREEK ISLANDS ITHACA...**

”

The following day we had to meet a deadline to be in time to queue to go through the swingbridge at Lefkada Town. Leaving Lefkada Bay and crossing the Ionian Sea we did our only mainland stay on the harbour front at Preveza. This is where I had some delicious roasted by the harbour corn on the cob and where Ivi who had ice cream in every port seemed to have ice cream for breakfast and lunch and dinner.







As happens on every trip it was time to start heading for home... via Fiskardo where Eleni did the most complicated mooring of the whole trip. Having circumnavigated the whole harbour twice unable to find water shallow enough for our anchor chain we had to reverse in between rocks a Sunsail catamaran and another smaller yacht charter. But the girl did great and we went on to have a beautiful dinner swim walks and more ice cream in this former fishing harbour.



Then our final sail back into Port Sami to return our yacht. Of course the inevitable discussions about fuel used and fuel charged for. Of course they tried to overcharge us. With Eleni on board this made all these discussions easier to resolve but we were a truly multinational team British Bulgarian Greek Irish and Kosovan.

On Saturday with flights out at around 9 pm Eleni treated us to a visit to the Melissani Cave with a deep blue clear lake and acoustics and then an afternoon on the beach at Argostoli where we could see the view from the ground where we had first seen beaches swimmers and bathers as we had flown in the week before.



***Thank you Liz for telling us about another fantastic PSC adventure!***



# THE PRO-AM CHALLENGE

**\*\*\*SATURDAY 30<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2025\*\*\***

**WE HAVE A NEW EVENT IN THE CALENDAR THIS SEASON, THE PRO-AM CHALLENGE!**

**JUST LIKE IN GOLF, WE WILL PAIR UP A PROFESSIONAL (AN INSTRUCTOR OR EXPERIENCED RACER) WITH AN AMATEUR (A NEW TO RACING SAILOR).**

**A SERIES OF RACES IN DOUBLE HANDER WILL TAKE PLACE OVER THE AFTERNOON WITH BOTH THE PRO'S AND THE AM'S TAKING IT IN TURNS TO HELM!**

**YOU DON'T NEED TO FIND YOUR OWN PARTNER AS WE WILL DRAW NAMES OUT OF A HAT TO DETERMINE WHO IS SAILING WITH WHO, ON THE AFTERNOON.**

**SIGN UP DETAILS WILL BE EMAILED OUT SHORTLY!**



# Familiar Faces

## DICK KNOWLES

Dick is one of the longest standing members at Priory and is certainly a familiar face at the club. He's a former Commodore, committee member and was the editor of Telltales for over 5 years!

Now you'll often find him racing on a Sunday morning and coaching our Junior members in the afternoon.



Our thanks to Dick for taking part in this feature.

**How long have you been a member of Priory Sailing Club and why did you decide to join?**

"I think I joined in around 1998. We moved to Bedfordshire in 1995, from Kent, as my job moved when Glaxo took over Wellcome"

**When are we most likely to see you at the club?**

"Sundays, racing in the morning and coaching kids in the afternoon."



Dick coaching at Junior Dinghy Week in 2017



# Familiar Faces

## Did you sail before joining the club, and if so, where?

"Yes, Stewartby SC. I sailed and raced there in a GP14 with my son Ben for some time before he defected to rowing. I moved to PSC because I found it to be a very friendly and happy club."

## Do you sail beyond Priory?

"I have sailed at Grafham and Rutland in open races. A couple of times I took my Vago down to Cornwall to sail on the sea in St Austell Bay. We've also been on family sailing holidays at Fornelles with Minorca Sailing. They were great as you get to try lots of different boats and get coached in sailing them."

## Do you have any sailing aspirations?

"To keep doing it as long as I'm able."

## What's your number one tip for people who have just started sailing?

"Ask for help... PSC members are very generous in giving expert advice based on their experience."



Dick sailing his Laser in 2018

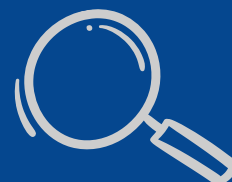
## What's your favourite boat and why?

"Lasers as I've done most of my sailing in them"

## What's the highlight of your sailing career so far?

"Winning race series in the Vago when I was younger and fitter. Nowadays I get most satisfaction from bringing on the junior sailors, in Buccaneers and junior dinghy weeks."

# SPOTLIGHT ON: PRIORY WATER QUALITY



The quality of the water in the River Great Ouse is tested regularly by a small group of volunteer Citizen Scientists called Bedfordshire Great Ouse Valley Environmental Trust. Interestingly, there are no 'designated bathing spaces' anywhere on the entire length of the Great Ouse and so the Environment Agency do not test the water hence why volunteer organisations pick up this task.

The Trust has found that although the phosphate levels in most the of the river have been within an acceptable tolerance, the nitrates and the e-coli levels in the water have been far higher than then levels set for safe bathing.

**For the last half year, we have been testing the water quality in Priory Lake and, most encouragingly, have found that the Priory water has very low levels of phosphates and nitrates and the e-coli levels are less than half that set for the level that is safe to capsize and fall into! This is fantastic news for the club.**

The results are thought to be attributable to the fact that low volumes of river water feed our lake, combined with very high levels of UV light and shallow water. Rest assured that testing will continue.



**GOOD  
NEWS!**

**TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE  
BEDFORDSHIRE GREAT OUSE VALLEY  
ENVIRONMENTAL TRUST'S WORK, VISIT:**

**[HTTPS://BEDSGOVET.ORG/](https://bedsgovet.org/)**







# WINDSURFING MENTORING SUMMER UPDATE

**TOM OTLEY**  
**PSC WINDSURFING INSTRUCTOR**



**For several years, we've offered windsurfing mentoring sessions during the summer months, and this year has seen a noticeable increase in participation. Each Saturday morning, more than ten members regularly join us for the three-hour sessions, making it one of our most vibrant activities.**

As one of the member instructors, I've found these sessions incredibly rewarding. It's been a joy to watch participants improve week by week. Rain or shine, our regulars show up whenever their weekend schedules allow, bringing with them a contagious enthusiasm that makes it a pleasure to spend Saturday mornings supporting their progress.

“  
*It's been a joy to watch  
participants improve*  
”

Our dedicated team of instructors includes Liz Aikens, Trevor Buck, Jeanette and Steve Pocock, Tim and Pas Hewett, and new this year, **Vadim**, who has been our most consistent presence, attending nearly every Saturday.

Sessions run from 10am to 1pm. We make sure that anyone who needs or requests instruction receives guidance onshore using the trainer before heading out onto the water. Beginners often start tethered to a buoy to build confidence and balance.



**We also ensure everyone knows how to rig their sail and board properly, and how to carry it safely to and from the water. It's heartening to see members helping each other with this process.** Some of our younger sailors return each year, and as they grow older, they're eager to support and encourage others.

Before anyone begins windsurfing, we check their sailing experience and understanding of wind direction and balance. That said, windsurfing is quite different from traditional sailing. The basics may seem simple—approach the board, place both hands on it, push up from the water, get your knees on the board, and stand. Then you reach for the uphaul to lift the rig (mast, sail, and boom) from the water. And just as you do, you lose balance and fall back in! Eventually, you manage to stand long enough to grasp the boom, and when the first breeze catches the sail, you're off—often gliding straight into the bank by the café or under the trees where ducks and geese gather.

**Windsurfing—perhaps more than sailing—demands a healthy attitude toward failure. Even the quickest learners find themselves falling in again and again.** It takes real determination to keep climbing back onto the board after each spill. But gradually, the time between falls increases, and so does the time spent actually sailing. Before long, you're not just staying upright—you're steering, turning, and even making it back to the sailing area (most of the time!).

**And as for getting wet? That's a given. This isn't like sailing. As we always say at the start: "It's a watersport. You are going to get wet!"**





## RACE OFFICERS: DOES THE RACING IPAD GIVE YOU NIGHTMARES?

# HELP!

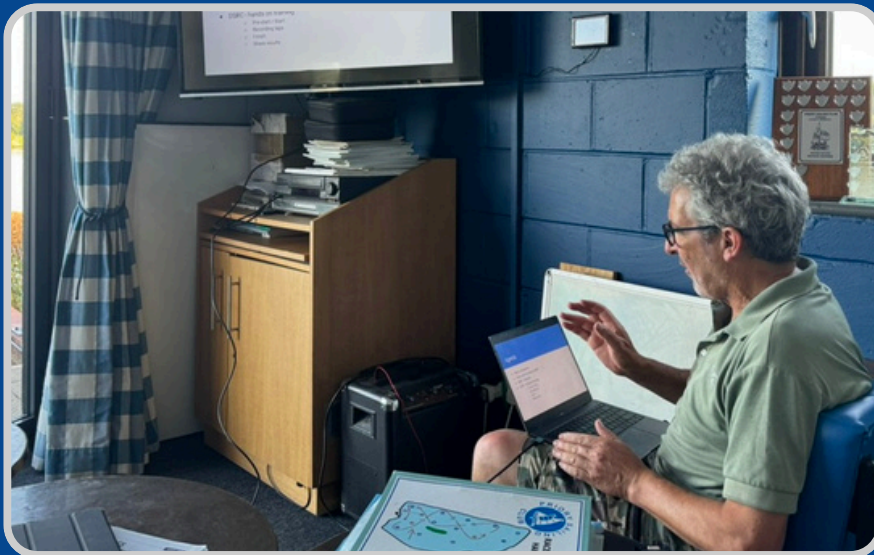
**If the answer is 'yes', then don't worry, help is at hand!**

Paul Williams, PSC's racing iPad expert, has developed a brilliant training session aimed at helping race officers get to grips with the iPad.

The training is run in small group sessions and everyone gets to use a device throughout the session for maximum experience.

Using his computer development skills, Paul has built a real race simulation so that you can use the device as if you were running a real race - it's a fantastic way to learn 'hands on'.

If you would like to take part in the next training session, please email Paul at: [paulmw27@gmail.com](mailto:paulmw27@gmail.com)



*The training session run by Paul was really helpful. I used to dread using the iPad and thought it would just be easier using paper, but actually I think the iPad is easier! I feel much more confident now.*

# NEW CANOES FOR PSC MEMBERS!

As the club continues to develop its paddlesport provision, we're pleased to say that we now have 6 canoes for members to use, in addition to 8 stand up paddle boards and 4 Katanus! All of the club's paddlesport equipment is available to book on Eventbrite. If you have any questions, please do contact one of the Committee members for more information.

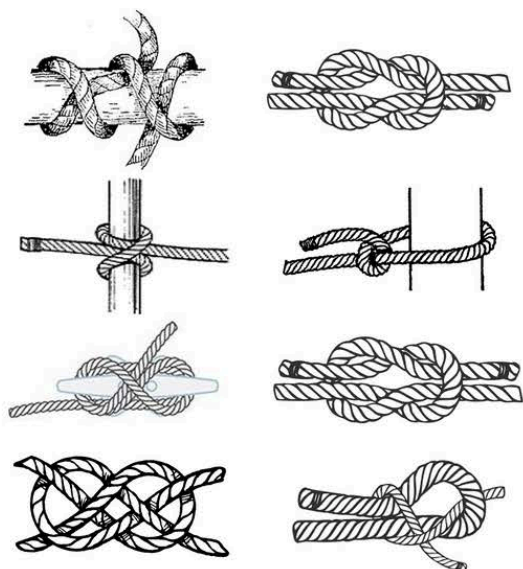
Here are the Women on the Water group testing out the new kit.



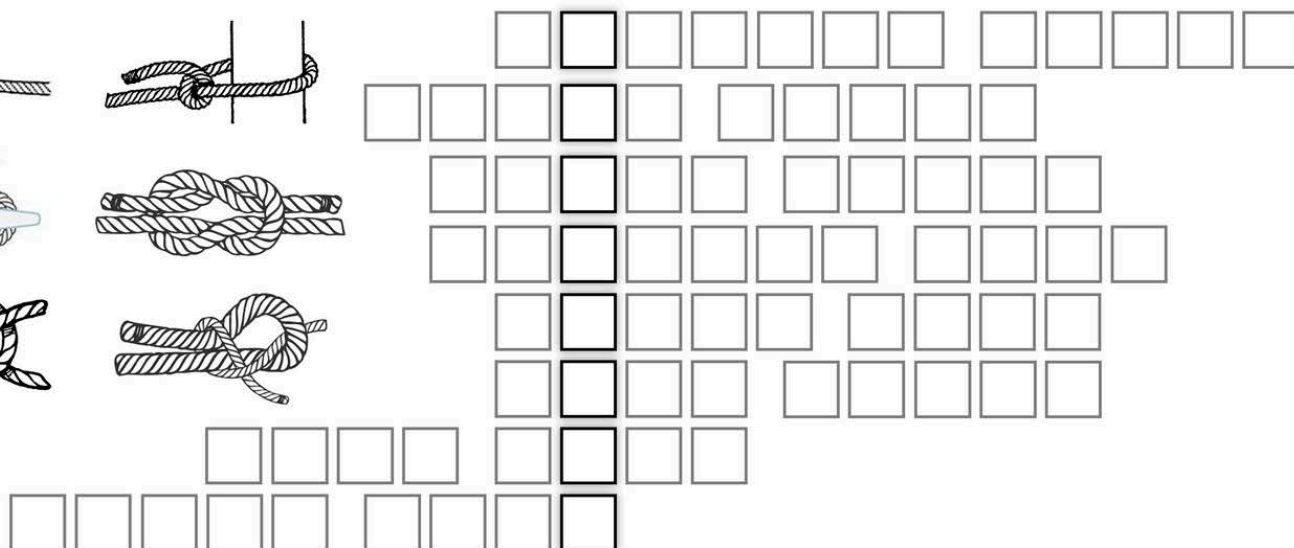


# **PRINCIPAL'S PUZZLE**

Here's this month's tricky puzzle from PSC's Principal, Neal Fazakerley...



Know your bends and hitches, which knots are not  
Identify the bends and hitches to spot the only knot



Email your answers to this month's puzzle to us at [priorytelltales@gmail.com](mailto:priorytelltales@gmail.com) - if you get them all right, we'll give you a limited edition PSC car sticker (whilst stocks last!).



## **ADVERTISE WITH US!**

Whether its a boat for sale, free equipment to give away, or a service you can offer to members, you can advertise in Telltales, absolutely free of charge!

The next edition of Telltales will be sent out in mid November, so all you need to do is to send us your advertisement text and any photos by 7<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

[PRIORITYELTALAS@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PRIORITYELTALAS@GMAIL.COM)



## SPOTTED AT THE CLUB...



**30 Priory geese gave the dinghy sailors a run for their money when it comes to 'follow my leader' recently. They put on a very impressive display of sailing in a straight line!**

If you spot anything interesting at the club, please do send us a note or a photo so we can share it with members!

## A STORY FOR TELLTALES?

**Thank you again to all of the members who have contributed to this edition of Telltales.**

If you've enjoyed reading, perhaps you'd consider writing a piece for the next edition? Whether it's a story from Priory, or an adventure from further afield, we'd be very pleased to hear from you!

**Please send your article, along with any photos to:**

**[PRIORITYELLTALES@GMAIL.COM](mailto:PRIORITYELLTALES@GMAIL.COM)**

**Our next copy deadline is:**

**7TH NOVEMBER 2025**

**THANK YOU!**





## WHAT'S ON AT THE CLUB?

- **Friday Evenings 4.30 pm – Friday Afloat.** The club will be open on Friday evenings (with a Safety Boat on duty). The club will be running several Friday evening events throughout the summer, further details will be sent out shortly.
- **Saturday Mornings 10.00 am to 1.00 pm – Dinghy Mentoring and Windsurfing Workshops.** Improve your Dinghy Sailing or Windsurfing skills with the mentoring sessions run by our own experienced Instructors. Every Saturday morning until the end of October. Book online via Eventbrite.
- **Sunday Afternoons 2.00 pm to 4pm – Buccaneers.** A coached session for children who have completed have completed Advanced Topper or Elite Oppies courses. Every Sunday afternoon until the end of October. Book online via Eventbrite.
- **Wednesday Evenings 4.30 pm – Wednesday on the Water.** The Club will be open on Wednesday evenings with a Safety Boat on duty. After a sail, why not use the club barbecue and use the balcony with the best view in Bedford.
- **Last Sunday of the month – Lazy Sunday Afternoon Racing.** Sailors new to racing may wish to sail in these races on Sunday afternoons where extra advice and detailed briefings before each race will be available. There are ten races in the Series. Two races on one Sunday afternoon in each of five consecutive months starting in April. Five races to count for a placing in the Series. First race briefing is at 2.00pm and then racing as appropriate for participants and weather conditions. Fun prizes on the day.
- **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August – Bank Holiday – Club Open.** The club will be open from 10.00 am with a Safety Boat on duty. Club boats will be available to book on Eventbrite.
- **\*NEW DATE\* Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August – The Pro-am Challenge.** A new racing event for novice and experienced sailors. Further details to follow.
- **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August – Beginner Oppie Pirates Course.** The starting point for younger sailors (from age seven) is the Beginner Oppie Pirates course. This four week course introduces the young sailors to the sport, using small boats (Oppies) designed for this age group, where they will learn how to rig their craft, steer their own boat to sail a simple course and return to shore safely. Taught in small groups this is the ideal way start sailing.
- **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> August – Beginner Topper Pirates Course.** The starting point for novice sailors is the Beginner Pirates course. This four week course introduces the young sailors to the sport where they will learn how to rig their craft, steer their own boat to sail a simple course and return to shore safely. Taught in small groups this is the ideal way start sailing.

## WHAT'S ON AT THE CLUB?

- **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> August – Advanced Oppie Pirates.** Using small Oppie boats designed for younger sailors (from age seven) this four week course will develop skills and confidence, learning new techniques to enable them to sail more complex courses and making them more independent as sailors. They will learn about many aspects of the sport with safety and decision making key to their sailing development.
- **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> September 2.00 pm – Junior Regatta.** An opportunity for PSC juniors to take part in this exciting event. Everyone is welcome, whatever your experience or confidence, and there will be plenty of instructors to guide you.
- **Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September – 2.00 pm – Double Hander racing.** For helm and crew, two races of 40-minutes. First race starting at 2:00pm. Use your own boat or book a club double-hander on EventBrite
- **\*SUNDAY 14<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER – BART'S BASH\*** A chance to take part in the world's largest sailing event and enjoy a PSC party! Bart's Bash is a worldwide sailing event aimed at getting the global sailing community to come together and race against each other in aid of the Andrew Simpson Foundation. This is one of our club's biggest events of the year. Apart from the race itself we have music and a free BBQ, so it's an opportunity to get the whole family at the club for a party. The race itself will be run along the lines of our Lazy Sunday events, so anyone who can sail can join in. Book a club boat and your Barbecue on EventBrite - **all welcome!**
- **Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September 7.30 pm – An evening of stargazing at the Bedford Observatory.** Tickets available to book via Eventbrite.
- **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November – Winter Restrictions.** Winter restrictions come into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> November. Lake use is limited to Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. Only the northern half of the lake can be used during the winter period.
- **Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> November – Winter Lay-up Barbecue and Sailing in the Dark.** Marking the end of our summer sailing season at PSC we will hold our annual Winter Lay Up BBQ starting around 6.00 pm. We will also be running a 'sailing in the dark session' ahead of the BBQ. It may be a race or perhaps just sailing together around a course in the dark; we will decide on the format on the day to suit the conditions and participants.

A full list of our events can be found on the website [here](#).





**TELLTALES**

**PRIORYTELLTALES@GMAIL.COM**

---