



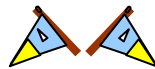
# Solent Soundings



Issue No. 22 - July 2007

Why not join our dinghysolent forum on <https://uk.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/dinghysolent/info> so you can share South Coast rally photos and general discussion?

## Editorial



As I was passing Langstone harbour on my way to Eling Creek rally on 29 April, I was hailed by someone on a yacht called *Duet*, "**HELLO LIZ!**". They obviously knew **me!** I waved back, but I haven't a clue who it was. If it was you, could you please identify yourself and help me solve the mystery. It wasn't necessarily a DCA boat at all; it could have been someone from Cobnor who knows my boat better than I do theirs.

Thanks to David Cullingford, who suggested it would help newer members and those unfamiliar with the Solent to include small chartlets showing the location of the rallies. I had probably thought of this myself at some point but rather gibbed at the time they would take to produce. However, a wet Sunday got me started and, hey presto! They can be kept for re-use, so the time only needs to be expended once for any particular venue.

## Sailing in very light winds

by Cliff Martin

The fickle dying breeze is one of the most annoying aspects of sailing. Continual stops to hoist and drop sails and get oars out and then put them away again are always frustrating. Of course as soon as the sails come down, the wind will return. Hoisting the sails normally

kills it off. Immediately the oars go into place an armada of boats descends upon me, brandishing coils of rope, desperate to tow me to wherever they were going. Most of the time my *Mirror* is a delight but its rig is far too small for light winds.

### Problem encountered

Lots of hoists and drops  
Very poor progress under sail  
Lots of leeway at low speeds  
Difficulty in rowing against wind  
3<sup>rd</sup> party arrives to take control

### Possible solution

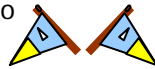
Don't do it  
Go faster  
Go faster  
Use Sails  
Suggest alternate uses for their tow line

It was when I sailed around Hayling Island in company with Alistair Law in his *Paradox* that I was really put to shame. Every time the wind went light, he started sculling with his yuloh. This combination of sail **with** oar made my erratic progress and clumsy sail handling rather embarrassing.

Since this trip, I have been playing around with the idea. At our Christmas day-sail, my new technique really paid off. So long as there was enough wind to indicate its general direction then the sails stayed up. This meant the boat was trying to go in the direction it was pointing. As a supplement I could row with one oar to help it along. It was best to sit on the windward side of the thwart and use



the leeward oar so my weight was balanced by the weight of the oar and rig to keep the boat level. Any forward motion of the boat was generating a knot or two of apparent wind which was helping to fill the sails. I could still steer as normal, using my free hand on the tiller extension with both sheets cleated. The dagger board could still be raised for sailing off the wind or for shallow water. Each oar stroke produced quite a lot of weather helm that had to be compensated for with the rudder. I fitted a couple of loops of string so the self-centring bungee on my tiller could be set off-centre, meaning less effort was needed to steer. I sheeted the sails in a bit tighter than normal when beating; I was still getting useful drive off them. Leeway was not noticeable. It was found that if I sailed a bit too close to the wind so the jib began to flap, the weather helm increased unacceptably. Visibility under the jib was adequate. I was expecting the change in apparent wind to make beating difficult but it still seemed to



David Sumner says Ashlett Creek SC have invited DCA members to their Festival of Sail on 13 to 15 July 2008, which is the same week as the Folly Inn rally, so members could perhaps combine the two. This year the Drascombe Assoc. will not be there. The theme is home-built/refurbished boats, but I don't think you must have one of these in order to attend.

Their website is on [www.ashlettsc.com](http://www.ashlettsc.com) Please see poster on p3 for details.

make very worthwhile progress, even against a tide. Tacking was quite an involved process. The oar had to change sides and the bungee needed to be reset. In practice this did not really matter. The boat was still creeping along in the right direction. Once I had tacked I could start rowing again and when the wind returned, all I had to do was put the oar away, reset the bungee and pour another coffee.

When the wind was very light, the boom wanted to swing-in and brain me. I tied it back to the shroud. Sailing a dead run was less successful; any apparent wind I was generating was acting against the real wind and the fairly low boom restricted visibility. Sailing downwind in a series of gybes may be a solution.

Overall, a revelation. Can't wait to try again.

Cliff



Enter for  
The Maywood Challenge Trophies  
For  
The Best Renovated Boat  
&  
The Best Home Built Boat



**13th - 15th July 2007**

Renovation projects, Home built boats  
Any kind of sailing vessel, New & traditional  
Up to a max length of 22ft

All welcome

For more info go to  
[www.ashlettsc.com](http://www.ashlettsc.com) or call 02380 899437



*Why not join us for a weekend of fun  
There will be many water-based activities  
A Fete & craft fair on Saturday  
Art Exhibition  
Evening Entertainment  
& lots more*



Between the New Forest & the Solent  
Leave the M27 at Junction 2, follow the A326 to  
Fawley

Take 2<sup>nd</sup> left into Fawley village  
1<sup>st</sup> right down to Ashlett Creek  
turn right onto gravel track into Sailing Club



## RALLEY REPORTS



**Eling Creek** – 28/29 April 2007 – Cliff Martin

Saturday HW 09.54, Forecast NE 4-5 occ6



Dave Cullingford	West Wight Potter	<i>Beatswork</i>
Mark Tinker	Hobie 15	
Alistair Law	Paradox	<i>Little Jim</i>
Len Wingfield	Woodnut 14	<i>Bluey</i>
Liz Baker	Cormorant	<i>Tessa</i>
Cliff Martin	Mirror	<i>Daydream</i>
Steve Bradwell	Enterprise	

All members were sail and oar except Dave and Steve.

Firstly I think I should write a little about Eling Sailing Club. Based in a drying harbour at the very top of Southampton Water it has a clubhouse, a slipway, free parking and a very welcoming membership who not only gave us space on their pontoons, but fed us as well. Top marks Eling SC! Access to the car park is via a toll bridge (£1 each way) with a width restriction.

As I had to work Sunday evening from 5pm I was faced with the fact that Sunday sailing was going to be limited. I launched at Eling at 10 am on Friday and took the ebb down Southampton Water. It was a pleasant reach and at 12.30 I anchored at Calshot for lunch. At 1 pm I left Calshot and entered the Solent, sailing on a close reach as far as Gilkicker Point. From there it was upwind, the breeze very light and shifty. At times it seemed I hardly had steerage-way but with a little tide on my side I was getting there, the GPS showing 2.5 - 4 knots; good enough. I wanted to get to Chichester Harbour to meet Liz but it seemed an awful long way and at 6pm I entered Langstone Harbour instead. I had to wait a while for the water to cover The Kench so I could anchor in the shelter of a shingle bank and get ashore. I went for a walk and at 8pm watched the ferry cross the harbour entrance crabwise, the tide was still making fast. I settled down for the night and although I woke a couple of

times I slept pretty much solidly for 10 hours.

The next day I left at high water and pointed West. Big yachts were doing the same. It was a dead run and with the jib poled out one side, and the main the other, judging wind direction was a bit of a guess. I remember being reefed at this stage, maybe we did get some decent winds for a while. Presently I received a call from new member Dave Cullingford who, with years of sailing a Drascombe behind him has finally bought a Potter and joined the DCA. He had launched at Warsash and was sailing upwind looking for me. We later met and sailed in company for quite a while, looking at Hill Head Harbour entrance, then entering Southampton Water.

I wanted to stop at Calshot if I could cross in the ebb. I sailed most of the way up to the Hamble entrance and then went for it, pointing high. The wind held and I made Calshot easily. I saw Len had anchored around the corner away from the waves so I joined him and we went for a drink, and then another drink. Len very kindly paid for both rounds as my boat ended up dried-out beyond a gut and I couldn't reach my money. We did scan the water looking for a little yacht with a fractional rig but decided Dave wasn't joining us.

After we floated we set-off up Southampton Water and by chance Alistair, who had launched in the Beaulieu River, appeared beside us. The wind had



turned Southerly and it was a dead run. We passed a big, heavily laden ship producing a lot of wash. We all coped with it but I made the mistake of sailing through one of the waves instead of going over the top. My gaff jaws were shaken off the mast and by the time I had sorted this out my view of Len and Alistair were two small sails, well ahead and slowly getting smaller. The water in the boat was unnerving, especially as it had started leaking about two hours earlier, but I got rid of most of it and kept pointing up-river. The wind went light and I decided to row, overtaking Len and Alistair to get to Eling on time.

I found Dave and Mark on the beach. Mark had launched at Calshot. We could have stopped there, but at high water wouldn't be able to get to the pub because of a fence. Dave and I went for a walk looking for another spot. It didn't look good so I went into the sailing club who were having a barbeque to ask if we could use their pontoon, please.

We were welcomed! Alistair, Dave and Mark rafted-up on one pontoon and Len and I on the other. Climbing over Len's boat from mine with tents up was challenging, especially with club members looking on. They were actually rather surprised when we started pitching tents on our boats but invited us to share their

barbequed food and make use of club facilities. Whilst one of their more junior members found our boats amusing, an older member told him, "That's proper sailing".

All this time Liz had been making her way from Cobnor. She lost the tide in the Solent but got the flood up Southampton Water and arrived a little late having had to row her boat after the wind died. We had used up all the pontoon space but the club members very kindly rafted her up onto a big tender so she could get ashore. I think they even re-heated some food so she wouldn't have to cook that night.

It got cold after dark but the hot water bottle worked wonders and I got a good night's sleep again.

A leisurely start on Sunday; we chatted while waiting for the tide and I decided to go for a short sail as everyone else was leaving. As I left the harbour entrance I saw Steve who had scraped-in during the small hours to find Eling dried out. Steve, who normally goes sail-and-oar, had brought his Seagull to beat the tide, having had to launch from Warsash after dark.

Wary of the ebb I sailed only as far as the Itchen entrance before turning back for the Eling slipway.

A magnificent turn-out for a rally at an obscure location in April. Many thanks to all who came.

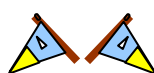
*Cliff Martin*



Len enjoying his morning tea



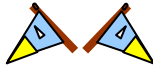
DCA boats at Eling Creek





### **Bembridge** – 12/13 May 2007 – David Jones

Rally cancelled due to bad weather.



### **Ashlett Creek** - 26/27 May 2007 – David Sumner

The forecast was for good conditions on the Saturday but the arrival of a small depression would bring gales and rain on Sunday.

Only one boat made the journey, Cliff Martin in his Mirror. He launched at Warsash and with a gentle Easterly wind visited Beaulieu River and Cowes Town Quay. He then crossed to Calshot for a lunch stop and arrived at Ashlett at about 7pm. A good day's sailing.

In view of the bad forecast, I decided to travel by car to Ashlett and was there to take Cliff's lines on arrival. In the evening we had an enjoyable dinner with Ashlett Creek Sailing Club, whose pontoon and facilities were made available to the DCA at much below the expected price.

Cliff remained at Ashlett in bad conditions until Monday morning, but in the end had to use a taxi to collect his car and trailer. This happens to all of us once in a blue moon. Cliff says that in very heavy rain, the over-boom tent was allowing drips to enter via the boom, whereas an under-boom tent would not have done this.

#### **PS:**

This weather brings to mind a rough passage made by Robert C Leslie in about 1880, from Owers Leak, near Calshot, to

West Quay, Southampton, in his 19 ft Itchen Ferry boat *Lily*. Robert's son had gone off into the creeks in a dinghy whilst *Lily* remained at anchor at the mouth of the creek. The wind gradually increased and, by the time his son returned, the boat was tugging at its anchor and wanting to be away. He set an old storm jib on the bowsprit and a close reefed mainsail. The flooding tide against the strong North wind soon kicked up a rough sea, and as they had only one set of oilskins, the son sheltered under the fore-peak. Soon the son shouted that "the water's washing-up in her to leeward", so they had to "ease the sheets and jill her along easy a bit" whilst they pumped out. Then the bowsprit threatened to break, so they had to hand the jib and use a close reefed foresail. Finally, the mainsail started to split. It took three hours to reach West Quay, blinded by spray, and it was only by extreme skill and good fortune that they picked up the mooring first time and avoided being set down on to Southampton pier. Robert C. Leslie describes ordinary sailing adventures in a sparkling, modern way that DCA members would understand well from first-hand experience, and I would recommend his book "A Water Biography", republished by Ashford Press Publishing 1985, ISBN. 0-907069-37-1.

*David Sumner*

Editor's note - this was the last newsletter I produced, and due to pressures at the time it never got published, but I have just found it on my computer in a partially edited state, and decided to tidy it up and add it to the Solent Soundings website. Times have moved-on, most members now have computers and we have a very lively Dinghy Cruising Solent internet forum where we can discuss future and past rallies, share our photos, and keep in touch with each other, so this newsletter is no longer needed.

<https://uk.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/dinghysolent/info>

March 2016

*Liz Baker, Editor*

