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THE SAILBOAT

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## EDITORIAL

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Happy New Year

A special thank you to all those who very kindly returned the questionnaire forms to us. We received 20, so hopefully in the next magazine we will be in a position to portray your views.

Thank you also for the magazine copy - **keep it coming please!** We have been extremely impressed with the articles sent. Sailing in Africa where the temperature is above 25°C in December, makes us truly envious. Thank Kevin for your article. Typing up members copy has certainly been extremely interesting and we hope you all, enjoy your quarterly reading.

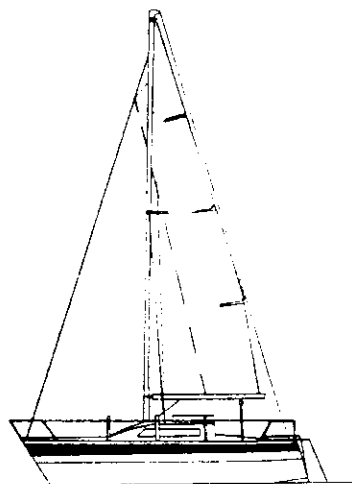
In respect of the future programme, the new season of sailing will soon be upon us. If any one along side the area representative would be interested in running a Swift Rally, please let us know, so that it can be published in the April issue. This provides an ideal opportunity for members to meet and also encourages people to trail their boats. All it needs is a date and a name to contact.

If our members do not make the effort, the Association will die along with boat values and publicity. Its over to you.

It is sad that our Secretary (John Palmer) and our South Area Representative (Alison Palmer) are moving on and up. If anyone would like to volunteer, please telephone John or us for a chat.

This cover photograph is from an early sales brochure. The jib and its sheeting arrangement interests me, does anyone have any comments upon this?

DENISE AND IVAN KIRK



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## SECRETARY'S LOG

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Hello everyone

I trust that by the time you read this, Father Christmas will have been and brought you all lots of new sailing goodies - lets hope so.

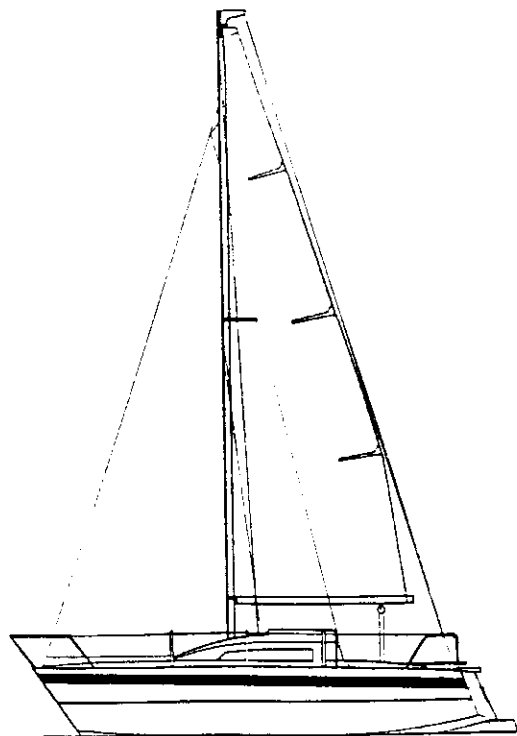
Now we are in 1996, it is good to look forward to the sailing season - hopefully one of good weather, fine sailing and good rallies. Our first date in this years calendar is the AGM which takes place on Sunday 25 February. This will be my first AGM as Secretary and unfortunately my last.

Alison and I have now decided that it is time to move on and sell our beloved "Windsong". I'm sure it will be quite a wrench - Windsong has been a big part of our lives for 6 years and is all that Jonathan knows. But we all must move on. With that in mind the positions of Secretary and Solent - South Coast Representative are now vacant.

Please let me know if you are interested in a rewarding and, not too time consuming position.

I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

JOHN PALMER



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## A CORNISH CRUISE

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As "travelling" Swift owners will well know, more time is spent working on the trailer than on the boat and there was no exception during the week preceding our planned trip to Cornwall.

At the civilised hour of 0900 on a Sunday in late August, our Swift 18 "Short n' Snappy" left its home "mooring" in the front garden of our house in York behind our Subaru Estate baring four crew and headed South.

A trouble-free journey of approximately 8 hours saw us in Falmouth in time to launch from the Grove Place slip in the town centre. This is an excellent though fairly shallow slip with a pontoon alongside and a good though not particularly cheap trailer park (£27 per fortnight in 1993). One problem we find with a shallow slip is in persuading a well laden boat to float off the trailer and once again the spare length of heavy rope came in useful.

We spent the first night on the cosmopolitan visitors pontoon in Falmouth and the following day visiting chandlers and finding a place to park the car. There is plenty of free on street parking in Falmouth itself, although we left our car opposite the police station in Penrhyn.

On Tuesday with the sun shining and the wind from the North East 3-4 we had a beautiful but swelly sail down to the Helford River where we anchored on the Bar and dried out whilst we enjoyed a barbecue on the beach. A dusk approached we picked up a visitors buoy for the night. Both the Helford and Porthnavas yacht clubs welcome visiting yachtspeople.

Wednesday morning saw us motoring slowly up river on the rising tide to visit Gweek Quay. This was our first serious attempt at creek crawling and we managed to run aground despite having the keel, rudder and engine all raised. We had not realised just how close to the withies we need to pass! Our intrepid skipper however managed to tow us off with the dinghy, encouraged with a verbal battering from the crew. Gweek is an interesting spot, a working boatyard with a chandlers, water and toilet facilities and a Spar and pub nearby. There are some amazingly large boats dried out there which can only get out on spring tides combined with low pressure weather systems.

After a peaceful night dried out against the quay we motored down river against the wind and tide, exploring the beautiful Frenchmans and Porthnavas creeks on the way, and made our way round into Gillan Cove. We took the advice of a local sailor and anchored successfully for the night

behind Dennis Head. The only problem was that it was a long way to row ashore, and this was when we decided we needed a small outboard for our dinghy, something we spent the rest of the holiday looking for, without success.



"Short n' Snappy" dried out alongside along side Gweek Quay

The following morning was us motor-sailing in quite a heavy swell back to Falmouth (the wind was still from the North East) and up river to Falmouth Marina. Expensive place but it did have a launderette. We spent the next day washing, shopping, checking the car was still where we left it, finding cash machines etc, all the boring things we still have to do on holiday.

On Sunday morning we motored down through Falmouth harbour and set sail as we turned into the Carrick Roads for Truro. MOB drill was performed with a successful retrieval when the deck brush got tangled in the jib sheet. We sailed up the Fal as far as Channals Creek and motored from there onwards as there was quite a lot of traffic and we weren't sure of the channel. Our little Swift was dwarfed by the huge cargo vessels on the deep water moorings in mid-river. We were amazed at how many of them there were.

We anchored for lunch near Maggoty Bank and waited for the tide and then motored up into Truro. You can moor up in the city centre and we had intended spending the night there. Truro is a lovely city as we discovered but it was also CLOSED, (apart from Tesco's where we discovered the entire population of Truro). There wasn't even a coffee shop open, hence the visit to Tesco for cakes! CLOSED also applied to the harbourmasters office and the toilets and shower we had been told were available. So we followed the ebb down to Malpas and found a drying pontoon berth at Malpas Marine (£6.00 per night with shower and toilets).

We returned from the pub to find we had dried out with a 45 degree list to starboard and Neil had to be packed in his berth with towels. At least we hadn't dried out stern-down as had the Jaguar 22 whose crew we had met in the pub; they woke up with headaches the next morning (not from the beer though, you understand!) Malpas is a lovely peaceful place and we spent the next day walking and exploring and the evening watching the moonrise and listening to the night birds and of course the herons.

On Tuesday we took the ebb motoring down to Low Veon and then sailed down the Carrick Roads to St Mawes where we picked up a buoy with a welcome note from St Mawes Sailing Club and the sun came out! We spent the afternoon exploring St Mawes, particularly the Rising Sun's beer garden. The sailing club is very hospitable, the mooring was £5 per night with use of the club facilities (beautiful ladies loo) and is also patronised by Roger Marsh's uncle!



St Mawes Anchorage. Just like the 'Med'!

The weather by Wednesday was beautiful and after having spent the morning fruitlessly searching the boatyards of Porthcueil Creek for an outboard, the crew decided on pasties and the pub for lunch and then the beach. There are some lovely beaches to the East of St Anthony's Head to the lee of the Head where there are some small but very pleasant coves and spent the afternoon swimming.

At high water it is possible to moor up against the quayside at St Mawes where there is a tap and supermarket opposite (NB the harbour master goes home at 6 pm and the Spar is open til 8!)

Thursday morning was spent on the beach again while we waited for the tide to sail up to Restronguet. There was very little wind in the morning but in the afternoon it freshened to 3-4 from the North East (again!) and we tacked up the Carrick Roads and into Restronguet and moored against the pier by the Pandora Inn and had a cream tea. It is possible to moor up here overnight and the pub has showers, toilets etc. for visiting yachts who use its facilities. We decided to return to St Mawes and had a brilliant run surfing back down the Carrick Roads with the wind and the tide. The sailing club were racing in the evening and had a very tasty supper laid on at a very reasonable price.

Friday unfortunately saw us retuning to Falmouth and the visitors pontoon (£2 per day) for shopping, bank etc and to pick up the car (parking cost - a contribution to the Police Benevolent Fund).

We recovered the boat at High Water and spent the night on the dinghy park. We're not sure whether this was legal but nobody bothered us apart from the noise from closing time revellers and the wind rattling the washboards.

Most of Saturday was spent on the M5 which was extremely busy and gave us time to reflect on our holiday. Our cruise couldn't compare with the epics of 'Owaar of Mercia' , but we all agreed that this is an ideal area for a family cruise in a Swift and we determined to return one day (after we've 'done' the Morbihan, the Costa Brava, the Netherlands, the East Coast rivers, the Charentee Maritime, the West Coast of Scotland etc, etc, etc)

PHIL, LIND, ANNETTE AND NEIL SMITH

Editors' Note:

We spent the Summer of '95 in the Carrick Roads basing ourselves at Mylor with a good slop, trailer and carparking (Charge) will full facilities. An excellent area to sail in.

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## LAUNCHING AND RECOVERY

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At the beginning and end of the season and sometimes in between, the adrenalin starts to flow more freely and certainly with more vigour as we put CIR MHOR either into or take her out of the water. We have envolved our own system but I am unsure if it is the best method. In both cases of launching and recovery we completely submerge the trailer and float CIR MHOR off or on. Very safe and very sound but we have to check the wheel bearings to ensure there is no water damage.

Nairn Harbour has a good ramp and allows us sufficient depth of water about two hours either side of High Water. We like to catch it as it is rising.

Arriving by road it will take us about threequarters of an hour to get the boat ready with the mast up. I leave off the rudder and keep the outboard ashore until the boat is afloat and alongside. We back the boat on its trailer down the slip attached to the car and only do the last section free of the car and controlled on the trailer brake. I loosen the trailer guides but do not take them out. Wearing shorts I can guide CIR MHOR off the trailer around the guides, and by standing on the trailer do not get my shorts wet. A long painter ensure the boat can be pulled alongside once clear of the trailer.

Does anyone launch and recover, using the power of the winch to control the boat on the trailer, and be able to keep the bearings out of the water tilting the trailer up? For launching this is feasible and we have done it, but at the critical moment on one occasion forgot to hold the winch handle!! We had our fastest launch. I am unsure whether the boat would be so easily recovered, as the keel and skeg stick on the rollers.

We would value the experience of others. The first photo shows CIR MHOR being prepared for launching at Nairn Harbour on the Moray Firth. The slip is just visable between the hull and the petrol tank on the harbour wall. The second photo is a recovery after a very successful cruise on the West coast of Scotland where we launched and recovered at Craobh Haven Marina.

Our trailer, after eleven years is still in good condition. You will notice the carpet covers over the rollers on the guide arms to prevent marking the hull. The mast support is an extension put temporarily onto the boat hook.

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## "FILIA" THE FIRST SEASON

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Up to 1994 our sailing had progressed from a Pacer to a Laser 13, and on to a Cornish Coble. Progression which went from relatively short hairy sails to longer but slightly more sedate passages - more in keeping with a mariner of my age (and, perhaps, courage!). However, I needed to satisfy that urge to cruise and fond memories of dinghy sailing attracted me towards a Swift.

Initially my enthusiasm to make yet another change was tempered by my wife's more realistic approach, and I agreed to see the season out before seriously looking around. However, the inevitable happened, and when Swift number 97 was advertised in PBO, laid up not many miles away, not even Anthea could stop me having a look. "Just having a look, of course, I am not going to buy. Assessing the market ..." and similar phases that our wives know to mean that if he falls in love with it nothing in the world will stop him buying it. Thus it happened that we became the proud owners of both a Swift and a Cornish Coble!

The boat had been bought from new by an RAF officer who, shortly afterwards, had been posted to Cyprus. Consequently she had only been sailed two seasons and spent much of her time laid up in a hanger. Anthea and I could feel her previous owner's sadness as we towed her away and we felt our decision to own a Swift had been right.

So, what of our first season with "Filia", as we renamed her? The journey to Wolverstone on the River Orwell was eventful, to say the least. The words of the song "One wheel on my wagon" come to mind but, fortunately, the lost wheel was recovered and, after acquiring new studs, we were on our way with no damage to boat or trailer. Check wheel studs is now at the top of the checklist before trailing.

The maiden passage proved her a joy and, with plenty to tweak and trim to get the best out of her, all our dinghy memories were revived. Indeed, dinghy memories were further revived when the outboard shear pin did just that, shearing just as we were returning to the marina, which meant berthing under sail! I had not envisaged that the learning curve would develop in this way on the first trip out.

Last season was blessed with fabulous sailing weather, with hot sun and good breezes. Although our cruises were limited whilst we got to know the boat, we are looking forward to more extended journeys this year when we plan to trailer her to Scotland to cruise the Caledonian Canal. The most exhilarating sail last year was undoubtedly in July. A steady F5-F6 coupled with gusty squalls gave rise to exciting sailing, which concentrated the mind and gave plenty to talk about over a pint afterwards - excellent

therapy! It was on the same day that we saw a Swift sailing in the opposite direction but, although we exchanged acknowledgements, we were unable to identify her. If her owner is based on the Orwell and wants to make contact, perhaps we can arrange to sail together - but in the same direction.

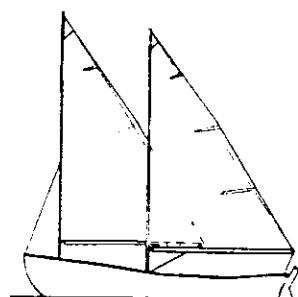
Although still our first season I have already felt the urge to modify. I am currently experimenting with lazy jacks, but will save the detail for a later issue. Suffice to say they worked extremely well when reefed, keeping the sails neatly contained, even with both reefs set. We have also treated ourselves, courtesy of K and H Fabrics (see advertisement), to a boom tent. I was surprised to learn from them that this was the first one they have been asked to make. The end result has been a great success, it is quickly erected in 4 to 5 minutes, with shock cord and hooks that secure to the holes in the toe rail. The aft end closes around the back stay with a heavy duty zip fastener to provide access. Access via the transome can be a little precarious but, if you do take a tumble (we never have) there is the facility of protection and privacy to shed wet clothing and get dried in the standing position. We have found the increased protected area a great advantage at night for storage and, in the hot weather, we left the wash boards out and the hatch open without fear of rain.

All in all, Anthea and I enjoyed our first season with Filia and, without wishing time away, we shall look forward to wider cruising this summer.

CLIVE BAREHAM

#### Editors' Note

We can certainly recomend sailing the Caledonian Canal, although we have not sailed from end to end in a Swift. Good luck!



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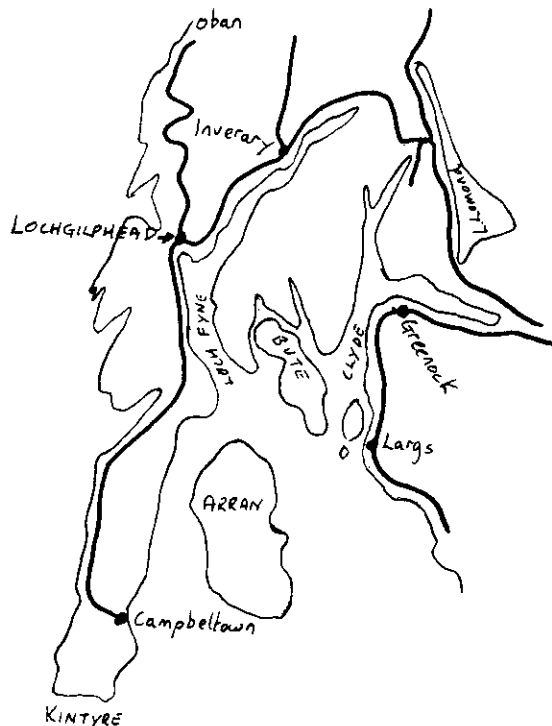
## LAUNCHING SITE GUIDE

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The following has been supplied by Phil and Linda Smith

### **Craobh Marina, by Lochgilphead, Argyll**

Shallow concrete slip into marina, fairly sheltered from wind and tide. Available 2 hours either side of HW. The slip is very shallow and we find we need to let the trailer down on a length of strong rope to get enough depth for the boat to float off. Parking in compound for trailers and ample car parking. Full marina facilities. Excellent access to large area of sheltered sailing. Contact Craobh Haven, Tel. 01852 500222



### **Grove Place Slip, Falmouth, Cornwall**

Large concrete fairly shallow slip available most states of tide. A rope could be useful here although we managed without. Pontoon at side of slip good for tying on to. Busy slip but plenty of room for everyone. Close to Falmouth visitors pontoon with toilets, showers etc. Excellent access to sheltered waters of Fal. Parking for trailers. Plenty of free on-street parking for cars. Contact Falmouth Harbour Commissioners, Tel. 01326 312285/314379

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## OWAAR

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Kieth Jacques our northern waters solo skipper has been at it again! Following his previous years adventures around Mull, and circumnavigation of Skye he has been cruising the Hebridean waters again this season. This is the first part of his account of 12 days and 232 miles of sailing.

"Wind N-NE 4-5, backing NW6 later."

From June 4th to 15th, the predominant forecasts for Malin and Hebrides sea areas had a decidedly sharp tang to them. Perhaps too much for a Swift 18 and solo skipper? There was to be only one way of finding out each day: Put up a small headsail, reef the main - twice if in doubt - zip up the 'Atlantic' water-proofs, and GET OUT THERE AND TRY IT !!

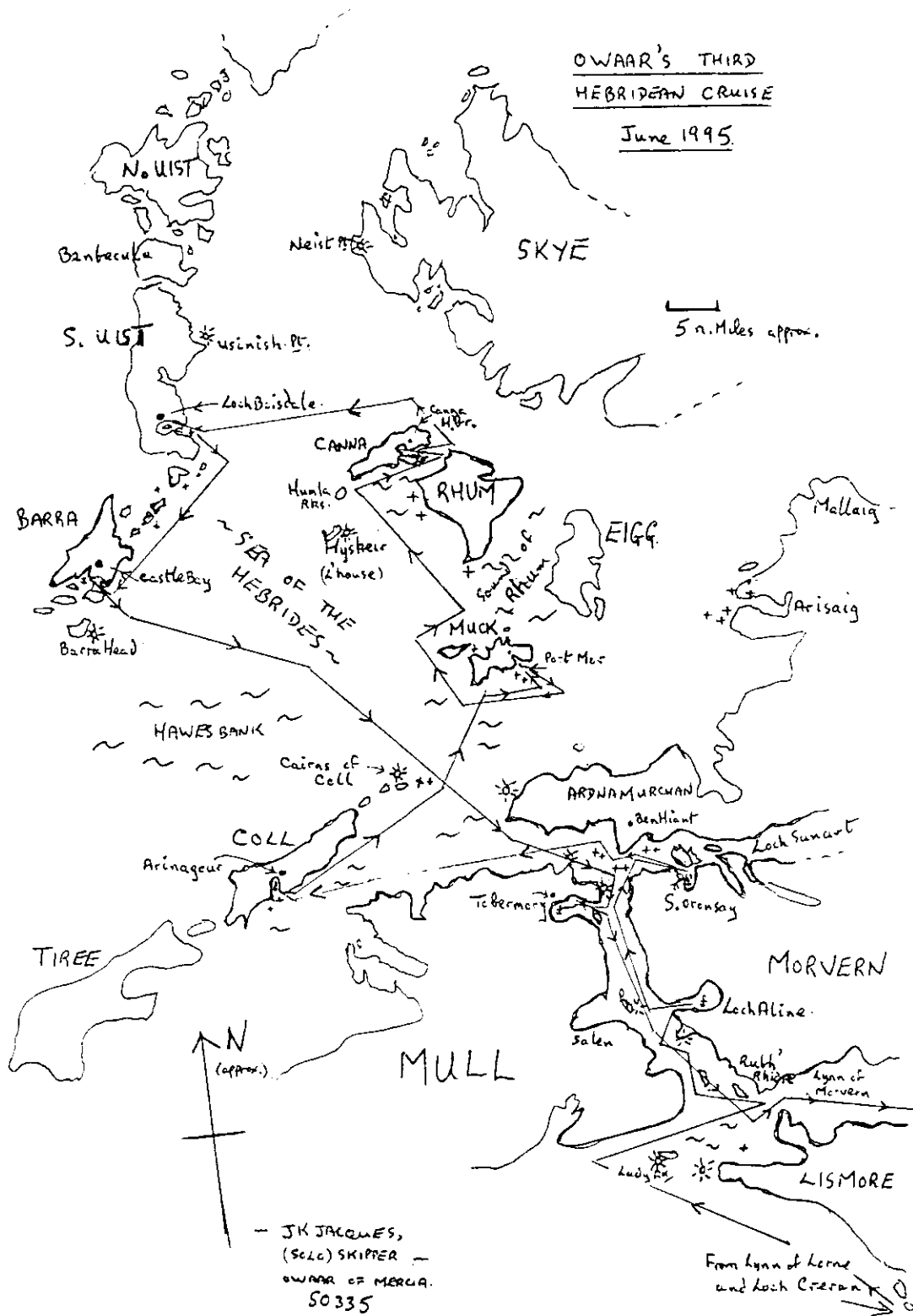
Even after four years with 'Owaar', I remain astonished at the way she will ride to F6 wind against tide with 4-6ft whitecaps all around; and not only "ride", but thrust forward at 3-5 knots with minimal sail area. My 'big cruise' this year was only nine sailing days and three 'in harbour', but was curtailed by an imminent house-move not the weather. Having cracked the weather code, and escaped to South Uist and Barra, I would have loved to run up to Harris, Benbecula and the rest, but time was the enemy, and I had to take the first weather 'window' available to run back to the mainland. Who knows? Next year?

The accompanying rough chart (more "elastic" than Mercators projection, I fear) and summary log give the statistics of the run, and I will do no more than highlight the more exciting events of the trip, and the treasurable memories.

After an excellent first day from Loch Creran to loch Aline, the weather turned damp and gloomy for a couple of days, so I 'sulked' into South Oronsay (Drom a Bhudie) on the 6th in a rather low mood. There followed two days of F6-8 gales which even made my safe haven anchorage a place of some concern. A number of other yachts had minor mishaps during the 7th and 8th - two went out against my personal warnings, only to return within the hour with haggard faces... Lorne leader the famous two master also sought shelter...

The 9th was better, with a promise of F4-5 N/NW and indications that the Atlantic high was building; so I tackled the near beam reach out to Arinagour on Coll. (Things still looked a bit too vibrant to the north, around the Ardnamurchan point itself.) Owaar moved beautifully through the lumpy

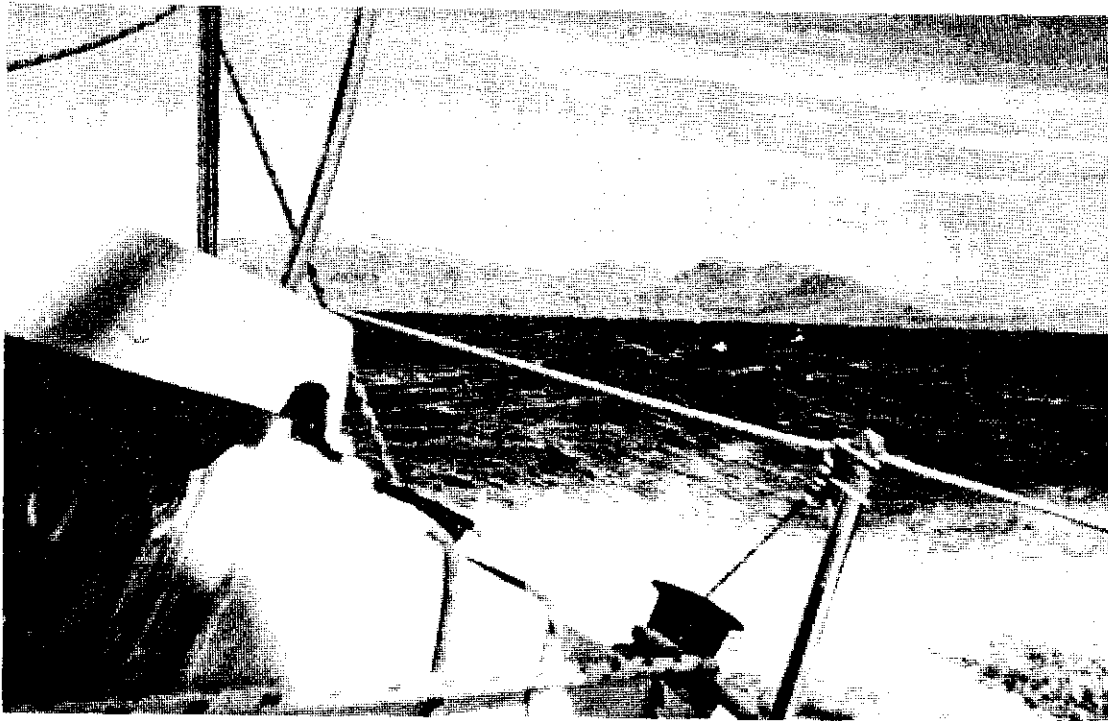
seas with a full main and the 75% genoa. (One of the best sail purchases I've made - much more drive than a working jib, but just clear of 'seas' and not at all overbearing in gusts.)



Arinagour on Coll is somewhat typical of all the inhabited island ports - a touch of the wild west, unkept, dominated by ferry terminal facilities, a (one) hotel which undoubtedly is equipped as a 'Last Chance Saloon', and a grotesque abeyance of planning permission for public and private housing ('built on any convenient rock 20ft above HW...') The Gannets and cormorants have better of it. However the Highlands Board do maintain some very user-friendly moorings in these places, which give more peace of mind on a wild night than the uncertainties of 5:1 chain and warp to anchor.

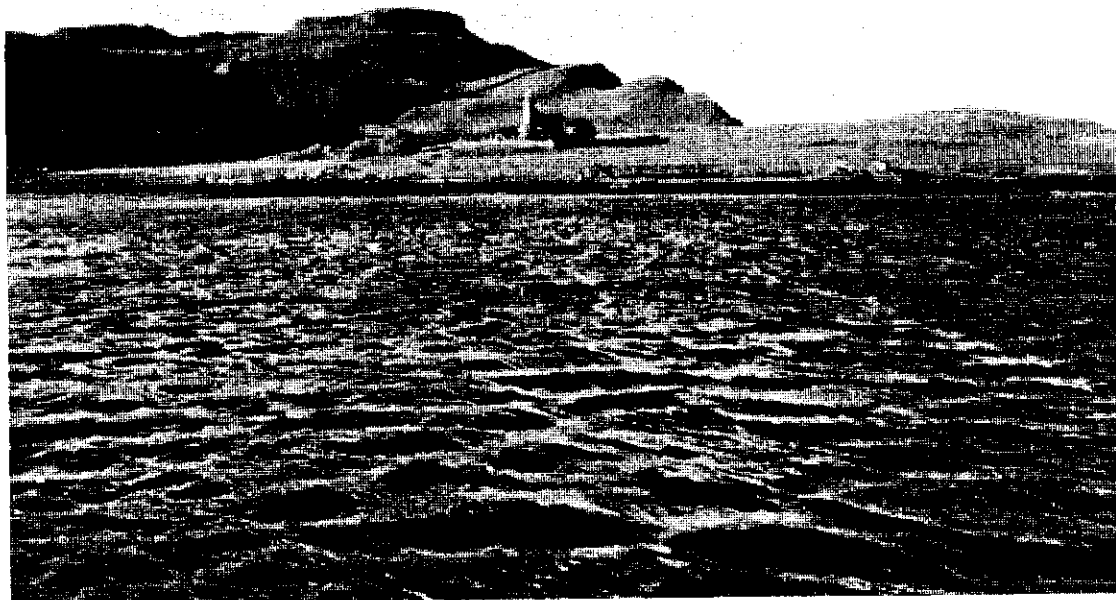
On the 10th, I set 'Northwards' again, past the Cairns of Coll, towards Port Mor on Muck. Sea fog clamped down, as from nowhere, leaving me drifting along in the equally sudden wind lull, in the middle of a well used ferry channel, with only the double beat moan of the Ardnamurchan Lighthouse for comfort; keep the compass bearing true and listen, listen... Only once did I detect the pounding of a big diesel but mercifully it faded very quickly... And then as suddenly as it had come, the fog was dispersed by a keen Northerly breeze which strengthened very rapidly. Off with the genoa! Storm jib on, and a reef! (later, two reefs).

I arrived off Port Mor in a flurry of spray and a staccato pounding northerly. The Isle of Muck anchorage is very safe in Northerlies however, and it is a beautiful 'minature' inlet in which to rest under these conditions; there is even a convenient telephone in a field near to the shore (but no supplies). (Neither VHF, nor portable telephones are much use in this 'shadow Area', Magnetic anomalies are another fact of life.)



Close reaching into the Canna Strait. North of Rhum  
Wind NNE F6

Looking back, Sunday 11th was probably the most thrilling day of the trip. Double reef, storm jib, UV24 in the nose (brilliant blue skies) and dachsteins on the hands. What a day of contrasts! Photographs simply cannot express the elation of the white knuckle sailing, screwing through the waves and the considerable cross-chop created by the tidal currents in the sound of Rhum. Later with only one reef in the relative shadow of Rhum, to watch the Hyskeir lighthouse rising from the horizon and the spume from waves crashing on the Humla rocks off the Western end of Canna. I maintained a 330 Mag course for nearly four hours in the face of an almost true



In Canna Harbour 11th June 1995

Northerly, before turning onto port tack down the Canna straight. By now, the tide was turning back but not too strongly. Despite having this against her, Owaar started to experience somewhat smoother water and to 'sing' along on the final leg into Canna Harbour. I was greeted there in some disbelief by the 32 footer 'Heather Moth of Skye', who had stayed at anchor all day. I was glad of her captain's long range 'Marine Weathercall' forecast for the next two or three days - all the augurs for a safe passage to and from S Üist and Barra were in place, with NW3-4 predominating and the barometer rock-steady at 30.18.

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## TECHNICAL TOPICS

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### An idea to help improve performance of an outboard motor.

I discovered a very useful improvement for the performance and overall running of my outboard motor last season. It is called ECOFLOW and is a tiny device which fits onto the fuel pipe. I read that this sort of 'gadget' couldn't possibly work - but believe me, this one certainly does!

My old Mariner 4 had become difficult to start and very reluctant to idle for more than a few seconds. It frequently cut out just when I needed it and oiled up the plug. Within half an hour's running time after fitting the Ecoflow, the motor was running noticeably more smoothly and producing much less smoke. I found that it would idle indefinitely and start first pull of the string! There is definitely more power too. It cost £27.98. If anyone wants more information, they can call me on 01603 279053 and I will provide details of the supplier etc.

BOB GOODARD

### Leaving the Cockpit

A shock cord on the tiller lets me leave the cockpit for brief spells but an additional aid which I find helpful is a continuous line running from the tiller through small (spinnaker sheet) blocks, then forward, outside the safety line stanchions, to blocks which lead the line across the foredeck. All the blocks have swivel shackles to minimise friction; the line/shock cord on the tiller is adjusted to give the required tension needed.

If single handed it does help when dropping and recovering the anchor. The boat can easily be steered from the foredeck. I am sure many owners will have been using this idea for years, I certainly have in various other boats and find it works well on the Swift 18.

JOHN BOWCOTT DUIKER SWIFT NUMBER 29

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## A SWIFT TRIP TO NORTH AFRICA

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My local marina in Gibraltar had advertised a regatta race to Morocco. This was the reason I found myself heading out into the bay of Gibraltar. Huge 'willawaw' winds swept down from the Rock of Gibraltar knocking 'Amadeus' over until her gunwales nearly touched the water. And I hadn't even set the sails yet! These conditions were the result of the very strong easterly wind known as the levanter (the wind from the Levant). However I knew conditions in the straits of Gibraltar would be much more constant.

Looking around I was disappointed to find that several competitors were not leaving the marina due to this wind. Without local knowledge, it would put many people off making the trip across the straits and down the Mediterranean coast of Morocco. It would also make the Moroccan coast a lee shore.

The plan for the regatta was to cross the start line at 12.00 or thereabouts and record elapsed time. The Portsmouth yardstick handicap system was being used. Many of the competitors in this very informal regatta were Trade Wind rally people. There were about 15 boats taking part varying in size from my 18 ft to 60 footers plus. Amadeus was the minnow of the fleet by quite a margin with Macwester 27 being my nearest rival size. Well at least my handicap should prove useful, I thought to myself.

I approached the start line and duly switched off my Yamaha 4hp outboard and hauled out about quarter of the genoa. Some of the more eager competitors hoisted full sail and found themselves broaching or luffing in a mad panic as the powerful willawa's swept down from the rock. The trip for me was mainly a shakedown trip after doing a minor refit to Amadeus so my priority was getting to Morocco for the evening (in order to, among other things, study the curves of the belly dancer the regatta organiser had booked!) Having my genoa blown out was not in my plans. I therefore looked on unperurbed as the rest of the fleet powered away into the heavy mist that was enveloping the straits.

The Walker log was streamed. My first waypoint would be the north corner of Morocco which was 14 miles away. But to get there you have to cross one of the world's main shipping lanes. In any weather a matter not to be taken lightly but in limited visibility of around 3 miles, extreme caution had to be exercised. I looked up and saw my little radar reflector rocking against the port shroud - a temporary fixing I would have to rectify later - and rather a token gesture considering the size of Amadeus. Having only recently acquired her, a lot of jobs remained outstanding. I remembered

the old cliché which said that if you wait until everything's finished you will never put to sea.

Once clear of the Rock the wind settled to a light easterly breeze, I put all plain sail up and shaped a course for Ceuta point. At present, on a four hour crossing of the strait, 8 miles of tide/current would be pushing me east. My plan was to arrive up tide of the point and slip round very close to the headland to avoid the dangerous overfalls which would be accentuated with a wind against tide situation.

As I moved into the strait to approach the west going shipping lane I became enveloped in the mist. Apart from the main shipping lane the other danger was the ferry route between Ceuta and Algeciras in Spain. High speed jet propelled ferries ply this route and there would be no time for power giving way to sail. The outboard would be used in an emergency to take avoiding action. I did not fully trust the ten year old Yamaha despite having given it a rebuild; replacing all gaskets and oilseals. A few hours running would be needed since it had been used little by the previous owner. Despite the mist the sun still beat down strongly with temperature around 30 degrees. In these waters putting to sea with plenty of high-factor water resistant sun cream is very important. A high peaked baseball cap (with lanyard) and good sunglasses are the other necessary items.

I saw and heard very little traffic. After an uneventful three hours I popped out of the mist outside Ceuta harbour. To celebrate I poured myself a strong coffee from the flask and had a sandwich. The wind had strengthened and I was becoming more and more impressed with 'Amadeus' sailing qualities. All my offshore sailing had been done in much larger boats yet 'Amadeus' had a big boat feel about her and in the current F4 her sea kindness was becoming very evident.

I was approaching Ceuta point with around 4 knots of tide/current with me. However the wind began to die quickly and I could see the approaching stopper waves which were breaking haphazardly 5 cables off the point. I rolled up the genoa, sheeted in the main and motored through the calmest patch. Amadeus was thrown on her beam ends. I was glad I had my Harness on. The roller coaster ride did not last long and I shot into the eddy behind the overfalls.

Once round the point the wind died completely and the iron topsail was called into action for the 9 mile trip along the coast. Keeping well out from the coast meant I avoided the tuna nets that were set from the shore to around 2 miles out. Some of the other regatta competitors didn't realise this and found themselves having to make a 90 degree detour for two miles. I motored past a competitor who insisted on maintaining sail power in the marginal conditions. Getting to the marina before nightfall was my personal goal due to Amadeus having no navigation lights. In the light airs

the power of the sun was really felt and I found myself at one stage down below, steering with the tiller extension while looking at my compass course from inside the bulkhead. Try finding that manoeuvre in any Eric Hiscock book!) The mist had persisted all day and it was with satisfaction that I broke out of the mist to see the break water of Smir marina in the distance.



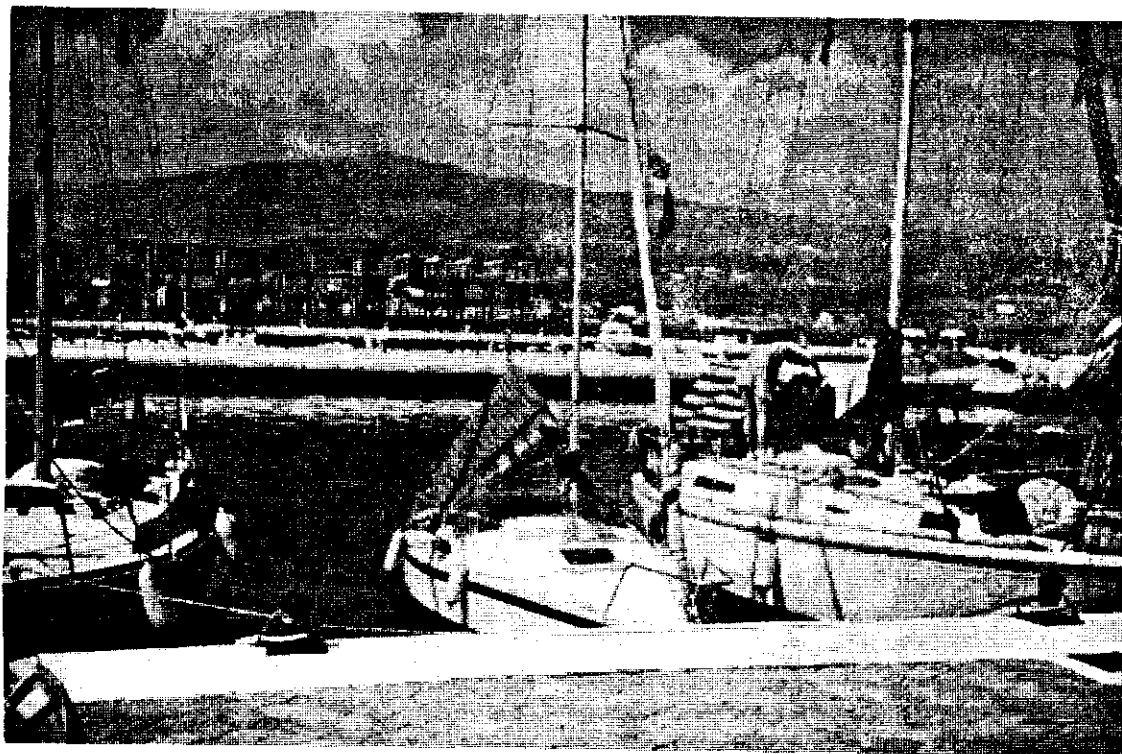
Amadeus well reefed in Gibraltar

Smir is one of the few marinas in Morocco and the newest. It has all the facilities of a western style marina. The only difference is the fact that a well patrolled security fence surrounds the whole place keeping undesirables out which means the real Morocco warts and all.

After arrival and customs formalities I found myself berthed amongst some of the 'smaller' regatta participants. Everyone swapped notes about the trip. Some of the larger entrants treated me with arms length suspicion ('why did he sail across the straits alone in *that* little boat?') However being the minnow of the fleet meant that I dined out all the time (breakfast on my friends Westerly Ocean Lord, lunch on another friends Sadler 29). Why bother to dirty your pans just for one. I quite agreed. Why bother!

The evening began with a few sundowners then progressed to the restaurant where we all enjoyed a Moroccan tajine followed by a scintillating Moroccan belly dancer (I declared the need of a crew member urgently at the sight of such a well built girl.) Her dancing was superb and thankfully the mint tea served afterwards brought us all back to our senses. A quick reconnoitre around the flesh pots of the marina followed and then to bed.

The next day I awoke with a very sore head. This was mainly attributed to the many glasses of Moroccan Cabernet Sauvignon consumed the previous night. The day looked as if it would be completely windless. My friend Ron who was a weather forecaster concurred. We agreed a cunning plan whereby we would spend the day visiting the local town of Tetuan. I had been wanting to visit Tetuan on a previous visit so was quite excited at the prospect. Ron, family and myself took off to Tetuan in a Mercedes taxi. As is the way in Morocco the ride was hair raising but thankfully so was the scenery. The foot hills of the Atlas mountains could be seen in the distance. Two camel trains were passed on the roadside. Ron's kids were keen on a ride (as was I secretly!) but the goal was Tetuan.



Smir Marina Morocco note the sunshades

On arrival our guide proved well above average by Moroccan standards (not too many carpet shops) and he proved very informative. Tetuan is quite uncomercialised and the souk (old town area) was beautiful with the usual high density of mosque's. The Berber women looked magnificent in their floral caftans and knitted headgear. I asked and was allowed to try on one of their hats, to the amusement of everyone around. Ron and family bought various fruits including dates and figs. I bought mint for making Moroccan tea. On the return journey to the marina we stopped to look at some pottery. This proved a mistake because not only did we spend too much but also the Mercedes taxi did not want to start again. A bang on the starter with a blunt instrument proved our salvation.

We arrived back at the marina laden and very hot after our journey. After stowing away my tajine pot (earthenware covered cooking pot) I considered the best way to cool down. This involved putting on my trunks and stepping over the stern. The crew from the other yachts were non-plused, at first, by this action. Marinas usually being the last place for a swim and it is usually forbidden anyway. However the water at Smir looked very clean. The crew from the other two yachts soon joined me and we cavorted for quite a while before retiring for lunch. That evening Andy from the yacht Rosie invited me over for a 'beer'. This quick beer turned out to be a bit of a session especially with his interesting reminiscences on cruising and meetings with such sailing celebrities as the Pardey's and Smeeton's.

Monday dawned and I awoke slightly worse for wear yet again. I had to be at Punta Almina for around 12.30 to catch the favourable west going tide in the straits. I motored off in a dead calm ahead of the other two yachts. I reached the point in good time. I expected a reasonable breeze by mid-day in the straits but was disappointed to find nothing. I did not want to cross the straits by relying on the outboard so I called Tariffa traffic for a weather report. They reported 'light variable winds'. However almost immediately the wind began freshening. Force one, two, three from the west in around 15 minutes. Motor off and Amadeus going well. I was a bit suspicious about this sudden change. My fears were confirmed as the wind increased steadily until it was blowing around force 6-7 within an hour. The wind was right on the nose and a steep sea with 5 foot waves materialised. I shortened sail to no avail. The choice was either bearing away for a marina up the Costa del Sol or turning back.

Ceuta was only two miles down wind and I had recently heard that the part completed marina allowed unofficial berthing. My mind was made up. The down wind ride proved hairy but I was really impressed with the way Amadeus took the waves without being pooped. A hanky sized piece of genoa was all that was required. I radioed my friends on the other two yachts to warn them of the conditions in the straits. I shot through Ceuta harbour entrance into relative calm and proceeded to motor to the new marina. Once moored yacht Rosie called me up and Andy decided to follow my example. I conned them into the marina on the hand-held VHF and we had a mini reunion which continued on till the evening. Ron on the Sadler 29 decided to motor sail against the conditions. I must say I felt sorry for his family because even in a thirty foot boat it couldn't have been pleasant.

I awoke early to find little wind. Both yachts set out at the same time. However my tidal calculations and those on yacht Rosie obviously differed because our courses proved quite different. The slight easterly breeze filled in until it became a steady force 3. Conditions were hazy with visibility around 4 miles. I was enjoying the sail with the bungee cord doing most of the steering. Not much shipping around except for a car-carrier in the east going lane. It seemed to be stationary. Strange I thought. No it was growing larger. What was actually happening was that the ship was going west down (or very, very near) the east going shipping lane. I still cannot quite believe it but thats how it was.

The wind increased near the middle of the straits to around force 4. Nothing alarming except for the fact that it was a wind against tide situation. I could see through the mist some way ahead a line of breakers going down the strait. The waves were around 10 foot and breaking haphazardly. I shut the main hatch and double checked my safety harness. The ride proved exhilarating and again Amadeus took the broad side breaking waves well. Out of this mini-maelstrom jumped a porpoise, then another and another. Until there was a whole school of around twenty or thirty surfing down the breaking waves. The scene was amazing. Porpoises were jumping right out from the tops of waves. They jumped out then skimmed along on their tails as if being orchestrated by a ringmaster. One broke clear and nearly jumped into the cockpit. I cursed my luck for being singlehanded because I would need a photo to prove my statements. Conditions were too rough to allow me to leave the helm so I sat back, wedged in the cockpit, and enjoyed the show.

I popped out of the mist to see Gibraltar off the bow. A very pleasant long weekend!

KEVIN GREEN (SO 63)



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## HAPPIDOG (SWIFT 164) - FITTING OUT

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I was looking for a faster boat than my Itchen Ferry and I found here at Nationwide in Chesterfield. A specially built Swift 18 she had a beautiful deep fin keel with lead ballast bulb. The hull had been modified to take the heavy keel which was secured by stainless bolts. The layup of the hull and deck was much thicker than standard. The engine well had been glassed and had two 1.5" cockpit drains. The rudder was one thick solid blade. The pintles were huge and stainless as was the tabernacle. The Holt mast itself was a thicker spar with Rotostay mast head roller furling genoa and 1/4" stays and shrouds and two halyard winches at the foot of the mast. The boom is rigged for slab reefing. The main has a rope luff and three very deep reefs. The standing rigging terminated at large stainless chain plates. The capshroud plates were attached to tie two sets of sails, one Holt and the other newer Cranfields. A lightweight genoa with wire luff completed the sail wardrobe. I subsequently bought a second hand spinnaker, pole and gear and a new storm jib.

The cabin was virtually bare with no lining or foam. Three thick ply bulkheads had been glassed in, one well back from the bow, one below the mast and the third at the companionway. The anchor well had been removed and its door sealed so that there were no openings on deck or in the hull. The boat, called Happidog, has obviously been out of commission for some time. Bits were missing. She was on an old trailer.

It was obvious that she had been built for serious cruising. It appears the boat had been built in 1984 by Swifts and sponsored by Happidog Petfoods for a circumnavigation via Cape Horn and that the skipper Robert Powditch was going to survive on their products during the voyage! Unfortunately he had fallen ill before leaving and the voyage was cancelled. Eventually she ended up on Rutland Water and used for sail training for a couple of seasons and laid up ever since. At two thousand pounds she looks like just what I wanted. She passed survey with flying colours and was brought down to my home in London for fitting out over the winter.

There was little to do to the hull, an outboard bracket, deck gland for the cables from the mast and new Swift 18 logos. The huge "HAPPIDOG" and was repainted and the bottom anti-fouled. I was able to get Holts to make a masthead fitting. The mast had been filled with foam at some stage and so I had to run a conduit down the front of the mast for masthead tricolour, a new VHF antenna, wind indicator and steaming light cables. Eight rigging screws, some line, blocks for the lazy jack and a fitting for an inner forestay completed the rig. I bought a new 4 HP Mariner Sailmate and fuel tank and line. Because battery charging was going to be a problem I also fitted a 10 watt Solarex panel on the stern. I have two "Leisure" batteries which fit into a locker under the cockpit step. I put in a cabin light with

red and white bulbs. The five year old Navico autopilot came from my other boat along with the Dingy Decca, Husun VHF (new call sign), Autohelm handbearing compass and Autonnac towing log. I bought a NASA depth sounder in Hull which completed the electronics.

Because weight was going to be a problem I bought a Fortress anchor at a jumble with chain and anchorplait from my other boat. There is also a small Bruce kedge with polypropylene line and a few feet chain. To maintain the watertight integrity of the hull and deck I fitted a fuel cap on the foredeck rather than a chain pipe. Not quite as convenient but at least the chain does not have to rattle around the foredeck.

Inside the accommodation is limited by the large forepeak locker formed by the forward circular bulkhead. I filled the lower part of the circle with solid ply glassed in to form a half bulkhead providing protection in the event of holing in the bow. The space above the gap is still big enough to pass the small Compass inflatable into the forepeak. From the forepeak bulkhead to the stern there are lockers, mostly sealed on either side of the two foot passage. Inside simplicity is all. A one burner camping Gaz stove for the odd brew in port. As for heads, bucket and chukit, a boat of this size is just for camping. The saloon has two quarter births with inflatable materesses tucked in tight under the cockpit seats.

The main pump a Whale Gusher Titan lives in one of the saloon lockers and exits via a non return valve above the waterline. A circuit panel is fitted just inside the port companionway. The VHF bracket has been exoxied to the deckhead near the decca display.

The cockpit is quite crowded with halyard bags, compass, depth and log displays near the companionway, on the pushpit a pipe for the danbuoy, frame for the lifebuoy, decca antenna, frame for the solar panel, outboard stowage board when underway, automatic pilot arm and tiller lines. The three gallon external tank lies in the former engine well. Weathercloths have been fitted. A sprayhood may be required as she should be rather wet as she lies some six inches below her marks without stores.

At the end of March she was towed down to Ramsgate on her own trailer after changing one of the bearings and fitting new mudguards. Getting the boat into the water and mast up proved to be something of a saga. A failure in the tricolour lights meant the installation of pulput and pushpit lights. She has jackstays running up both sides of the deck. A six foot acrylic sheet with brass eyelets can be wound round the furled main as a sailcover or double as an awning. The twin backstays are tensioned with a tackle from one to the other. I have spent about two thousand five hundred pounds on fitting her out.

A report on her first seasons performance will follow in the next issue of the newsletter.

GEORGE MALYNICZ

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## SPONTANEOUS RALLY

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Lesley and I did not start sailing till rather later in the summer of 1995. Almost our first outing was an 8 day cruise at the end of July, around our familiar Solent Waters. We had a pleasant time although the sailing was limited due to the inconsistencies of the wind. We were not able to get out again till the middle of August. Our plan was to arrive at Bucklers Hard on the Friday evening, launch the boat so as to be ready for an early start Saturday morning. We were to sail up to Lymington have lunch and then take the coastal walk towards Hurst.

We arrived at Bucklers Hard at about 8.30 pm to find 3 Swifts already tied up to the Swiftsure pontoon. (For those of you not familiar with Bucklers Hard, the Swiftsure is a pleasure craft which takes visitors on river trips)

There was John and Alison Palmer and their son Jonathan on Windsong, Ivan and Denise Kirk and their daughter Rosemary, and of course their dog Tarim on 'Tarim', (the dog and boat have the same name) and lastly Mike and Jeannette Edwards and children on Lauvic. Mike and Jeannette had been out all week and were recovering the next morning. (the boat that is!)

John and Alison had been in contact with Ivan and Denise and planned to sail over to Newtown Creek with a barbecue in mind for the evening.

My plans to launch Friday evening soon faded as the bars on Windsong and Tarim opened and I was plied with drink. We were asked if we would like to join them at the barbecue, and as all good skippers know you have to be able to adapt your passage plan, as conditions change, so we agreed. We were up early to launch and also to get some sausages and wine, for the barbecue. We said our farewells to Mike and Jeannette and set off down river. The weather was beautiful with a very light breeze. Once out of the river, Windsong proceeded to hoist their cruising shute. All three boats sat there seemingly frozen in time as the breeze died completely. After 20 minutes I decided it was time for the iron topsail and others followed and we had a very hot trip over to Newton. I managed to pick up a visitors buoy and Windsong and Tarim came alongside.

Once safely secured the skippers lost no time in going over over the side to cool down! It was wonderful. After some lunch the afternoon was spent either sunbathing or swimming. John executing the highest dive from the top of the pushpit! I believe that the National Trust are, as I write pursuing John in connection with damage to the riverbank! As the evening approached we started ferrying food, drink, barbecue, and of course people, to the beach just inside the river entrance. A lovely evening was had by all as we ate, drank and watched the sun go down!

Sunday morning dawned as hot as ever. More swimming took place and with a sea breeze setting in, with the hope of an afternoon sail back to Bucklers Hard. Ivan going below for something slipped off the keel box onto a wine glass. Having nothing on his feet he cut his big toe quite badly! Denise managed to staunch the bleeding while we spoke to the Harbourmaster as to the nearest hospital. It became quite clear that it would be difficult to get anywhere from our position in Newtown river! Could this be the moment for me to do my first PAN PAN MEDICO. No Ivan seemed to be coping quite well and as long as Denise could helm back to Bucklers Hard there would not be a problem. We motored back across. The wind had died away, without bother. John and I recovered Tarim and got it ready for the journey home, while Denise drove Ivan to the hospital at Lymington. Later they returned having had the toe butterfly clipped together. John and I very hot after recovering three boats and proceeded to dive off the pontoon and into the water for our last swim of the weekend.

As a postscript to this tale Ivan and Denise invited John, Alison, Jonathan, Lesley and I to dinner to say thank you. Denise did us proud. I have never seen so much food, but we did our best to do it justice.

Needless to say Tarim has only plastic glasses on board now!

ALAN PROBYN

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