



January 2024

CIVIL SERVICE SAILING

The magazine for members of the Civil Service Sailing Association

www.cs-sailing.org.uk



CSORC News p 2

IDOR 2024 p 3

Booking now open!

CSSA 2024 AGM p 5



CSORC News

While we continue to look for a yacht to buy we are also thinking of this year's CSORC racing programme.

We will be choosing some combination of:

- *Sunsail weekends 16th/17th March or 13th/14th April or 4th/5th May*
- *IDOR (3rd - 7th June) (with two crews if necessary)*
- *Round the Island 15th July*
- *Taittinger Regatta (12th – 14th July) (they make champagne).*
- *Cowes Weekend 26th- 28th July*

There is also the possibility of a RORC race later in the year that would qualify for the 2025 Fastnet.
So a lot for us to choose from.

We'll be publishing a programme soon!

**If you are interested please contact Peter Denison at the Crew Bureau:
crewbureau@csorc.org.uk**

Keep an eye on the website
<http://www.csorc.org.uk/programme.htm>



CSSC Membership Numbers

Some time ago the CSSA was notified by the CSSC that quite a lot of CSSC memberships appeared to have been cancelled.

At that time as many people as possible were contacted by email to inform them of the issue. Many responded and each individual situation was resolved, but there are many people that still have CSSC accounts deemed cancelled.

Unfortunately, there were quite a few of those emails returned undelivered for various reasons but many were because people had left jobs and not updated their email addresses.

Quite a few people affected by the problem concerning cancelled memberships are receiving the printed version of the CS Sailing magazine by post. Sadly, if by the publication of the next issue of CS Sailing, their CSSC Membership is still deemed inactive then their names will be removed from the mailing list.

If you are unsure if your CSSC Membership has been affected please email:
membership@cs-sailing.org.uk



Booking now open!



Inter-Departmental Offshore Regatta 2024

The 2024 Inter-Departmental Offshore Regatta will take place from 3rd until 7th June 2024, offering a mix of inshore 'round the cans' and some longer day yacht racing between Civil Service departments and sailing clubs.

The regatta is hosted by the Island Sailing Club, who organise the world famous Round the Island Race.

14 Beneteau Oceanis 37's have been reserved with Fairview Sailing for the event.

We intend on repeating the success of last year's visit to Yarmouth and this year, because of the tides, sailing around the Isle of Wight the other way around!

Entries will open on 22nd January 2024, with the Notice of Race publicised to your Club and available on the IDOR Website around the same time.

To join in the fun book on the CSSC website: <https://events.cssc.co.uk/events/61909>

Look forward to seeing you there!

**For more information
contact the IDOR Committee at:
idor@cs-sailing.org.uk**



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Hello and a very Happy New Year!

*I hope this year brings you everything you wish for.
In this issue read about a new era for ECYD, 5KSC's
thoughts on a Mediterranean trip and CSD's plans for
2024.*

Here's looking forward to a great sailing season!

Thanks, as always, to our contributors.

Happy reading

Eileen

Cover photo: IDOR 2015 © Dave Purcell

2024 has brought with it a few changes.

Dave Grundy has stood down as CSSA Treasurer and Mark Goble has stood in until the AGM. Thanks for all your hard work, Dave and enjoy your sailing in the extra time you now have available.

Thank you to Mark for stepping up.

Bri Stevenson has declared his intent to stand down as General Secretary at the AGM and thanks to Stuart Dawes stepping up as assistant General Secretary until the AGM.

A volunteer to serve as Rear Commodore (Dinghies) would be very welcome.

You will see the calling notice for the AGM on the opposite page.

There has been little appetite amongst the CSSA membership to attend AGMs for many years – which we must take as tacit approval that all is satisfactory. Enthusiasm for an AGM in the margins of a sailing event has seen new faces but overall participant numbers have remained low.

This year's AGM will be held during May or early June 2024. We have provisional offers from several hosts to include the

AGM in the margins of regattas but the best fit of volunteers and calendars is yet to be agreed. Watch this space.

CSSA is in a strong financial position to support new sailing projects.

It's great to hear that like-minded volunteers, including large cores of blue water and Med cruisers, are working together to explore ways of providing sailing opportunities demanded by members that are not currently provided by CSSA Divisions.

Enjoy your sailing with CSSA in 2024



Commodore

2024 CSSA AGM

Call for nominations and motions for the 2024 CSSA AGM

The 66th Annual General Meeting of the CSSA is planned
as a hybrid face to face/virtual (Zoom) meeting

Date & venue are yet to be confirmed

Nominations for CSSA General Committee members
should be sent to arrive at csgensec@yahoo.co.uk by 14th February 2024
as set out in Rules 7 and 8 of the Constitution.

Motions should be sent to arrive at csgensec@yahoo.co.uk by 14th February 2024
as set out in Rule 9 of the Constitution.

The CSSA Constitution is posted under the CSSA Business tab at <http://cs-sailing.org.uk>



East Coast Yacht Division - A new era dawns ..

Six weeks ago it looked like ECYD would be dissolved and all its assets, a beautiful yacht in top condition and cash in the bank, passed on to the CSSC to distribute as it saw fit.

Why? Simply an inability to form from its membership a viable committee to manage the club. Over the years we have been blessed with a number of very active members who year after year have gone way beyond what could reasonably be expected of them.



But there comes a time when age and infirmity catches up with everyone.

We saw it coming, but I think everyone assumed that somebody else would step into the breach. Even I thought so not really appreciating that each and every one of us had a role to play in ensuring the continuing success of ECYD.

That goes also for all the clubs and divisions that make up CSSA. Almost all of them are also looking for active help and support.

Just forty years ago a group of nearly novice and some experienced dinghy sailors at the Building Research

Establishment thought it would be fun over summer to charter a yacht and spend time together learning to sail it and explore places further afield.

Bitten by the bug and the loan of a yacht, before they bought one, they became more skilled and even more adventurous; gathering in from the wider Civil Service those who would take time to charter, spreading the cost and opening up new destinations.

ECYD was born.



Those early years set the pattern for us. Those who sailed on our early yachts did as much of the maintenance as they could, learning new skills and what they could do if things went awry. They knew their yachts inside out, met new members and built positive relationships for future cruises. In time they took RYA courses and some became instructors and even examiners - happy to pass on skills and knowledge.

As time passed they sought to upgrade the yachts they sailed. Gone was the 'bucket and chuck' - proper heads at last; bigger, more spacious yachts with better creature comforts.

Then came Freyja. Never originally on the cards, but members were sold once even our level-headed treasurer said it could be done over 10 years, rather than the then club practice of 5 years.

Now a teenager, Freyja is nearly as good as the day she was launched thanks to the efforts of some members and a series of brilliant yacht husbands. Without them we would not have a club.

From the beginning ECYD went where members were happy to sail: the coasts of Britain, including twice round it; Holland, the Baltic, the French coasts - north and south - and northern Spain.

And now, what of the future?

The last-minute reprieve of ECYD with the formation of a new committee means that we are inevitably playing catch-up, but we are working on a full programme for 2024 that we hope will appeal to existing and also prospective members.

We recognise just how much support we have had from the wider CSSA membership. We have a debt to pay, especially in helping recruit new members not only to ECYD but also to CSSA as a whole. In particular, we will help find and support Approved Skippers. We need many more of them? None are getting younger.

The new committee have acknowledged that returning ECYD to a growing, stable membership will not happen overnight. Which is why we will need the help of as many as possible.

We look forward to hearing from you.



ECYD Captain
www.ecyd.org.uk



Jean Rehill (ECYD Club Captain) at the celebration of ECYD 25 years formation receiving from Hilary Tyrell (Yacht Secretary) a set of signal flags - ECYD25 - still used to locate Freyja in a crowded marina



Thoughts on a Mediterranean aspect ...

Tentative plans to sail from the UK to Barcelona for the 2024 America's Cup have now begun to take on a different shape, with consideration focused on the prospect of forming a Mediterranean division of CSSA.

Some 90 people from across the CSSA expressed interest in joining various legs of the provisional America's Cup programme (AC24), based on an initial proposal from Yachtmaster Instructor and 5KSC member John Hulme.

The AC24 organising group had initially hoped to use the ECYD yacht Freyja but she was not available. We have been canvassing views on whether 5KSC's boat Ynot should undertake the trip, or whether 5KSC's traditional Scottish cruising season could be combined with a visit to the Mediterranean.

Those consulted included 5KSC club members, CSSA Approved Skippers and all those interested in AC24, around 260 people in total. The feedback can be viewed via www.5ksc.org.uk.



Based on the responses, 5KSC is now drawing up a programme that will see Ynot heading to Scotland early in 2024, following winter maintenance in Liverpool, then down to Holyhead in Wales before departing for an ocean passage to northern Spain. After cruising along the Spanish coast, Ynot will return to Liverpool in Autumn 2024. This will provide opportunities for those who were seeking 600nm qualifying passages in order to take Yachtmaster Ocean exams.



Meanwhile, 5KSC will charter a yacht in or around the Balearic Islands during the summer, to enable club cruises or private charter.

The aim is to secure a four-cabin yacht, initially from September through to October, and test the appetite for a Mediterranean division.

The club will also open discussions across CSSA with a view to setting up a Mediterranean division, with a yacht permanently available in the Med. Any members interested are welcome to register their interest by emailing americascup@5ksc.org.uk and adding “Med Division” in the subject line.

5KSC club captain Alison Hutton said: “This is the first time we’ve asked so many people about Ynot’s programme, and we hope to satisfy as many aspirations as possible, in line with views expressed in the survey.

“We were quite excited to see the enthusiasm for a Med division, and although it will take a fair amount of organising, it would be fantastic to see something that spans all the CSSA clubs. This would enable sailing in a warm climate for much longer than is available in our home UK waters – chartering a yacht for the late summer is the first step.”

Bookings are likely to open on the 5KSC website early in 2024.



Channel Sailing Division News

Annual General Meeting

The Channel Sailing Division (CSD) held its 2023 AGM on Saturday 25th November at the Gaff Rigger, Mercury Yacht Harbour, Hamble. It was attended by 36 members in person (including the Committee) plus another 7 members via Zoom.

Highlights:

- CSD Captain Andy Smith was pleased to report another successful and well supported sailing programme during 2023
- Over a total of 197 days 22 different Skippers took out Sea Essay with a record 156 (CSSC/CSSA) crew members. Of those sailors 66 were first timers (with us) and a further 21 were returning after their first experience. At the end of its second season the Dufour 390 had logged over 7,000 miles and coming up to 1,000 engine hours
- The committee has been engaged with CSSA on a number initiatives, including work with CSSC to agree new charter agreements for Sea Essay which will lead to re-vamped bareboat and berth agreements and common Terms and Conditions and Crew's Articles for the offshore divisions
- After many years of improvised and failed attempts to run RYA practical courses we have just completed a Yachtmaster preparation and exam with our own instructor. We continued to pursue various avenues to delivering RYA training through partnerships with other organisations and this looks to be coming to fruition with the Army Sailing Association
- The intense use throughout 2024 has increased the wear and tear on the boat. Traditionally Sea Essay is replaced after 5-6 seasons (the Jeanneau went 7 years but reduced use during the CoVid years allowed that) but possible rising future maintenance costs may stimulate a review of the optimum timing for a replacement
- Andy went on to record our thanks to 3 committee members who have featured in the running of the club for many years but who are stepping down from their roles this year:
 - * Lindsay Cole our long-standing treasurer (20 years) has overseen an extended period of financial stability and leaves the club in a strong financial position for the incoming treasurer. This has certainly been a challenge over the recent Covid affected years;
 - * Jeff Llewellyn who is stepping down as yacht husband after many years in this role overseeing commissioning of 2 new yachts. Jeff has kindly agreed to stay on to support the new yacht husband; and
 - * Colin Smith who stepped in this year to again work as Club Secretary and has ensured the continued smooth running of the club. Despite stepping down from this role, Colin will be remaining in his role of day sails and continue to support the yacht husband team.
- We are always seeking fresh blood to help refresh the committee and bring new ideas and drive to the running of CSD.

CSD Committee for 2024

Position	Name	Contact
Captain	Andy Smith	csdcaptain@yahoo.co.uk
Treasurer	Carl Abrahams	csdtreasurer@pm.me
Secretary	Jim Houlihan	csddaysails@gmail.com
Yacht Secretary	Adrian Barnes	boscombe@lineone.net
Yacht Husband	Steve Strange	stevestrange61@gmail.com
Crew Bureau Secretary (& Sea Time)	Susie Welch	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
Committee Member (Training Organiser)	Guy Bennett	training@channelsailing.org
Committee Member(Charter Organiser)	Brian Skelley	charters@channelsailing.org
Committee Member (Day Sail Organiser)	Colin Smith	csddaysails@gmail.com
Co-opted Member (Skipper Representative)	David Price	df.price@btinternet.com
Co-opted Member (Emeritus Treasurer)	Lindsay Cole	
Co-opted Member (Emeritus Yacht Husband)	Jeff Llewellyn	
Co-opted Member	David Haward	

Sea Essay Sailing Opportunities in 2024

The proposed 2024 Programme can be viewed on the Sailing Opportunities page on: www.channelsailing.org

Crew Bureau

The Crew Bureau exists to bring prospective crew and skippers together for Charters as well as Sea Times. We encourage members looking for sailing opportunities and skippers looking for crew to make themselves known to Susie Welch (seatimebureau@channelsailing.org).

Sea Times

Sea Times are cruising events of varying lengths aimed at providing further experience for beginners, competent crew and aspiring skippers. Whilst the cruises are led by nominated CSSA Approved Skippers it is emphasised that they are meant to be for the benefit of the members and within the bounds of safety and seamanship their wishes, hopefully elicited well before the event commences, should be accommodated.

Next year there is an intention to make some Sea Times 'themed' by concentrating on RYA Yachtmaster pre-requisite such as mileage, navigation and night hours. Please let Susie know if you would like to take part in one of these.

2024 Sea Times (2, 3 & 4-Day events run from 18:00 Day 1 to 18:00 final day)

Date	Area	Berths	Contact
23rd – 25th Feb	Solent	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
20th -24th March	Solent and beyond	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
19th - 21st April (CSSC)	Solent	4+	events@cssc.co.uk
16th – 19th May	Solent +	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
7-Days Summer Cruise TBC	Cross Channel	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
11th – 15th Sept	Solent	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
20th – 22nd Sept (CSSC)	Solent +	4+	events@cssc.co.uk
3rd – 6th October	Solent +	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
23rd - 27th October	Solent and beyond	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org
15th -17th November	Solent	4+	seatimebureau@channelsailing.org

Channel Sailing Division News (cont'd)

Day Sails and Group Day Sails

Day Sails are intended as a fun day out from 09.00 hours to 18.00 hours to provide an introduction to sailing on a cruising yacht in the sheltered waters of the Solent and may include a stop for lunch at a suitable hostelry (often on the Isle of Wight). CSSC include Day Sails in their Taster Day programme and application for berths on one of the 12 TDs programmed should be made to CSSC (events@cssc.co.uk) in the first instance.

We can also organise similar days out for groups, say from the same organisation, or a party of friends or individual members. We provide a qualified and experienced skipper and mate. At this stage we have programmed 8 GDS in 2024 and more could be added if there is the demand. For more information and to apply please contact Colin Smith (csddaysails@gmail.com).

Training

We are programming at least 3 of our popular 3-day Boat Handling courses that are designed for anyone with some sailing experience who would like to update and develop their skills with an experienced skipper. The course

covers a range of activities especially close-quarter manoeuvres under engine plus sail setting and trimming resulting in a better understanding of the characteristics of boats (particularly our 12m sloop) and the effects of prop, tide and wind. Whilst a course's content will be governed by tide, weather, sea conditions, crew experience and time limitations the variable but protected waters of the Solent offer the best opportunities to find the right environment for demonstration and practice.

To conduct RYA sailing courses we need qualified instructors at the requisite level and for all but the Yachtmaster level an established RYA Recognised Training Centre (RTC) to cover the issue of certificates. CSD does have the required instructors as members and is pursuing a relationship with the Army Sailing Association (ASA) which is a RTC. Until we have the ASA 'umbrella' we are not programming a Competent Crew/Day Skipper course but will have a Yachtmaster Preparation and Exam in November.

For all training (and pre-requisite) opportunities please consult the table below and contact Guy Bennett (training@channelsailing.org)

2024 Training Courses (From 18:00 Day 1 to 18:00 final day)

Date	Course	Berths	Contact
3rd - 5th March	Boat Handling (Sail & Power) 1	4	training@channelsailing.org
25th – 28th March	Boat Handling (S&P) 2	4	training@channelsailing.org
26th -29th Sept	Boat Handling (S&P) 3	4	training@channelsailing.org
3rd – 10th Nov	RYAYM Prep + Exam	4	training@channelsailing.org

Charter

Between all these programmed opportunities there are ample periods where any member can charter Sea Essay the only proviso being a CSSA Approved Skipper familiarised on the boat must be in charge. To book contact Brian Skelley (charters@channelsailing.org).

2024 Summer Cruise

For the fifth year we carried out a survey on the CSD website to determine interest in and the course of the 2024 Summer Cruise and from those results next year's will be 12 weeks long based in the Channel Islands and Plymouth. For the first time in many, many years all 12 weeks had been bid for by the time of the AGM but with over six months to go there may be changes which will open up further opportunities. Sea Time berths will be available on the channel crossing to the Channel Islands and the return from Plymouth to the Hamble which will be excellent opportunities to gain some of those Yachtmaster pre-requisites.

Mentoring

For a few years now CSD have operated a successful, light-touch mentoring scheme (CSD1-2-1), which seeks to pair members who would like advice, guidance and practical help to develop their sailing experience, with a CSSA Approved Skipper who is keen to share the benefit of their established skills, knowledge and experience.

Whilst somewhat in the doldrums at the moment we do feel that the scheme is well worthwhile and would like to encourage more Approved Skippers to put themselves forward as Mentors thereby allowing us to continue promoting the scheme. If you think you would like to take part as a Mentor or Mentee then Colin Hurd (CSD121coord@outlook.com) is the person to contact.

Rates for 2024

At this time it is anticipated that the CSD charter and berth rates will remain unchanged for 2024.

For Latest News and Communication You will have noted that for much of 2023 the CSD Website had not been updated or functioning correctly. This was primarily due to Webmaster James Savage being taken seriously ill in February and not having sufficiently recovered until mid-summer whereupon the site was found to have been infected with malware. After some extensive and time consuming work are pleased to say that James sorted that and the website is back online (channelsailing.org).

One change on the site is the introduction of a password protected area where relevant boat and operating documentation including Skippers' News Letters (SNL) will be stored. That the website is public was brought home when we were selling the last boat and a prospective buyer noted the operating and training manual on there and asked for a copy which was good of him as he could have just taken it. The manual is required for our Small Commercial Vessel coding (MGN280) and does take quite a bit of effort to produce and update for each new boat and its equipment. The password was promulgated in a SNL and can be provided to prospective approved skippers.

CSD Facebook Page

The Channel Sailing Division Facebook page continues to be quite active with over 330 people signed up. However, comparing that figure with the number of members we have on our list should make us wary of what we post and what is posted, one or two advertising entries which weren't directly to do with CSD or sailing have been noted.

For latest CSD news and information follow us on Facebook

Trinity House Photo Competition

Every year Trinity House holds a photography competition. The winning 12 images appear in their annual calendar. This year is featuring not just lighthouses but now vessels, depots and buoys make an appearance too. You are invited to submit a photograph of one of Trinity House's lighthouses, vessels, depots or buoys to this competition.

The full list of Trinity House lighthouses can be found at: www.trinityhouse.co.uk/lighthouses-and-lightvessels.



Winning photographs will be published in the Trinity House Lighthouse Calendar 2025. From the 12 winning photographs an overall winner will be chosen by the public via Trinity House's website and the overall winning photographer will receive a selection of items from the Trinity House shop (excluding Quincentenary items up the value of £100).

Closing date 29 February 2024

For more details and to enter go to:

<https://www.trinityhouse.co.uk/photography-competition/enter-the-competition>

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*Trinity House is a charity dedicated to safeguarding shipping and seafarers, providing education, support and welfare to the seafaring community with a statutory duty as a General Lighthouse Authority to deliver a reliable, efficient and cost-effective aids to navigation service for the benefit and safety of all mariners.*

*The safety of shipping and the well-being of seafarers have been the prime concerns of Trinity House since being incorporated by Royal Charter in 1514*



## CSSA - ways to keep in touch



If you would like to find out more information about CSSA and its clubs in between receiving your quarterly magazine, there are several other ways to discover what's going on.

- **CS Sailing Website:** [www.cs-sailing.org.uk](http://www.cs-sailing.org.uk) is a central point for information about CSSA and has links to all its clubs.
- **Newsletter:** The monthly online CSSA newsletter, if you would like a copy emailed to you please contact [editor@cs-sailing.org.uk](mailto:editor@cs-sailing.org.uk).
- **LinkedIn:** There is a CSSA LinkedIn page
- **Facebook:** CSSA and most of its clubs have Facebook pages
- **Twitter:** @sailing\_cs
- **Instagram:** @sailing\_cs
- **email:** if you have any specific enquiries please get in touch at: [editor@cs-sailing.org.uk](mailto:editor@cs-sailing.org.uk)

**Commodore:** Paul Brereton

**General Secretary:** [csgensec@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:csgensec@yahoo.co.uk)

**Editor:** [editor@cs-sailing.org.uk](mailto:editor@cs-sailing.org.uk)

**Membership Secretary:** [membership@cs-sailing.org.uk](mailto:membership@cs-sailing.org.uk)



*Here's a few more tales of his sailing escapades kindly provided by Ken Pavitt*

## **Beware ferries**

We had engine trouble (again) in Wootton Creek so we anchored overnight in the main yacht channel to avoid drying out. I was woken by loud shouting as we had dragged right into the berth for the ferry which was just arriving to park for the night. We got the engine to start with just enough power to move back to the previous anchoring spot with more chain and turned in again.

As we approached St Peter Port entrance the red engine overheat light came on so we cut the engine and started to hoist sail as we drifted across the entrance. We then saw the high-speed cat approaching from Poole at 33 knots on autopilot (yes as they do). The harbourmaster was on the ball so he called us on VHF and sent the harbour launch out to tow us clear before the cat had to straddle us to get in.

We were cruising in Denmark navigating by echo sounder in fog and about to pass the entrance to the ferry port for the yacht harbour beyond. I looked seaward and said "Look a big barge coming in" at which point the huge words "Danish Ferries" appeared in the air above the black waterline. We went into reverse at the same time as he saw us and he went hard a port, doing a very tight circle just missing the concrete wall between the two harbours and giving us time to nip across in front. Nothing was said on VHF, I don't know any Danish swear words.

Coming out of Zeebrugge it is a winding narrow channel for ferries and yachts with sandbanks either side. On the bends the

ferry wash reflects off the sides and come to a focus with a sudden wave peak in the channel. We found this to our cost when we suddenly rolled to starboard about 40 degrees and everything on the port side, crew, food etc shot across to the starboard cabin wall.

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Bog off

In La Corunna the flushing system stopped working - despite poking from both ends, the main hull valve was stuck solid. An identical replacement was available in town cheaper than on the Hamble. However the yard boatlift was not designed for a Sigma 39 yacht, rather too big, and there would only be enough water to get there for about 3 hours. After discussion we removed the backstay and managed to reverse in as soon as possible. The workers were brilliant, changing the fitting, resealing and reconnecting everything just in time to get back on the same tide with minutes to spare.

On the Dutch inland waterways we found our holding tank was full on a bank holiday weekend. All the pump-out stations seemed to be closed or out of order, so we ended up leaving a brown trail across one of their lovely lakes.

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## **Who needs sails**

On the last day of a RYA Yachtmaster Instructor refresher course we were on a Sunsail hired yacht in Cowes when it was blowing SW Force 9/10. We rang Sunsail and said we were all YM Instructors or Examiners, so they said if we wanted and felt safe we could give it a go to return to Port Solent. All other Sunsail yachts were on lockdown in harbours. We motored out into the Medina and turned off the engine. We then sailed back to Portsmouth with no sails up, just windage. The mast vibrated horribly at some resonant frequency but the ride wasn't too bad.

# Sailing Taster Day on Sea Essay

On 3rd October 2023 a group of CSSC members – David, Gail, Graham, Karen and Richard – arrived at Hamble to join Skipper Jeff and Mate Adrian aboard the CSSA yacht Sea Essay.

Our crew had a range of previous sailing experience, from having only done a spot of dinghy sailing, to having undertaken RYA Competent Crew training, right up to boat ownership.



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However, we were given the instruction we needed, and although we were encouraged to participate actively in crewing and steering, nothing was obligatory – which was a very nice way to run the day.

The weather was bright and breezy, and after issue of lifejackets and harnesses, familiarisation with our vessel and the radio system, and a thorough safety briefing, we were underway!



We started off heading down the river using the engine while learning to recognise channel and cardinal markers, and getting a feel for the boat's handling. It took us a little while to appreciate where the name Sea Essay came from, but once we got it there were groans and grins galore – well done to whoever came up with that one!!

Once clear of the river channel we hoisted the sails, learning the ropes as we did so. We left the mainsail partly reefed as the wind was quite gusty at times. Our aim was to anchor off the Isle of Wight in sight of picturesque Osborne House for a lunch break, and then to head back.



On the way over we each took a turn steering and holding course for as long as we were comfortable doing so, under the watchful eye of our Skipper and Mate. The crew chatted happily and got to know each other, and a very pleasant morning it was too! We saw some interesting traffic, including a vast container ship, and learned how far away we needed to keep as well as how to do so.

Soon our lunch spot was in sight, and we got to anchoring depth and paid out the correct amount of chain to keep us in place without getting too close to other small boats who'd had the same idea.

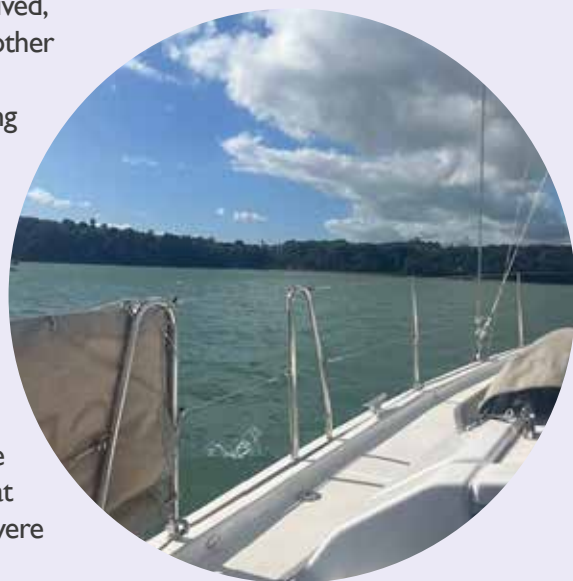




# Sailing Taster Day on Sea Essay (cont'd)



We tucked into our packed lunches, and while doing so we were able to listen in to a Mayday call relating to an emergency unfolding on a small boat a little way away, which was a positive learning experience for us; we were not near enough to be required in the rescue effort, but we heard the whole exchange right from the captain radioing in his predicament to the coastguard, to the advice he received, and other boats agreeing to go in and assist, culminating in their arrival and eventual rescue.



After lunch we set off on the return leg. The wind had got up and conditions were slightly more exciting than they had been on the outward journey; we were heeled over a lot more but learned how the keel is weighted and how that meant that an angle far greater than the one we were at would have been perfectly safe and normal.



We got up to a good speed, and once on the desired course had tea and cake, which is of course exactly as it should have been!



We passed near the area - completely underwater - used (when exposed!) as a cricket pitch for an annual match, and were soon approaching the river entrance again. We paused to lower the sails and then continued back up the channel towards Sea Essay's berth back in the marina.

Once alongside once again we made sure everything was shipshape and stowed away ready for the next group's use, and enjoyed a final cuppa with our new friends before making our way home. I couldn't wait to get out there again, and will most definitely be participating in CSSA's activities in the 2024 season!



Thanks to Colin for organising, our Skipper and Mate for looking after and instructing us, and to the rest of the group for being a great set of companions – I hope to see you and other members soon!





If undelivered, please return to:  
Membership Secretary  
24 Harrison Hey  
Liverpool  
L36 5YR



## Flags & Burgees

Rectangular CSSA House Flags & Triangular Burgees

Large (30cm x 45cm approx) £16.00

Small (20cm x 30cm approx) £13.00

CSSA ties (polyester) £10.00

P&P included



Please send your requests and cheques  
(payable to Civil Service Sailing Association) to:

Brian Grubb

64 St Cross Road, Winchester, SO23 9RJ

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# CIVIL SERVICE SAILING



**CSSC**  
SAILING

CSSA is affiliated to the  
Civil Service Sports Council (CSSC)  
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