



The QLYC Channels Race – Dec 10, 2011

And here we are pre Xmas!!

If you thought that Julia and Wayne had a hard time at the ALP Conference....well they obviously never race with QLYC!!!

Today is The Channels Race, which many will remember finished at the West Channel Pile in no wind last year.

The weather for the race for 2011 is at best a tropical and turbulent looking piece of work....!! At Briefing it was building!!

Briefing to race time is only one hour and there is a little discussion between the Sailing Captain and the OOD regarding course and options that will cause most creative juices to flow!



A quick word from Commodore Jill and Club Captain Ian Curtis employs some civility to proceedings!

Club Captain's last word was "please use radios and call in as a safety measure"!!

Ok, Ok ...the OOD in Ian Lee (and Bev) (accompanied by David Millie and Jennifer Gilbert), has his way and the course is set ...Grass Beds to Tuckey 2, off to West Channel Pile, Over to St Leonards Pile and down the Coles past the White Lady, Swan Spit and home. Nice!!

Pre race a few pull the pin....Drizabone and Defiance ... NBG!! Better offers and money we suspect?
Starters line up in Rosie, Nellie, Tintagel, Chinon, Sundance, Tiercel and Zen.

As can be seen The OOD has written down the course and Ian McKenzie follows suit with cross reference to be sure!



Now out to the course....well if it couldn't have been easier...Div 1 starts with a bolter in Nellie...Russ is up to no good with a bit of breeze he leads the field closely followed by Rosie and Tintagel...but wait

Colin and Ian have opted for the hanky up front ...must know something we don't!! However in the short analysis ... they drop into last place.

But in Div 2 the Chinon boys dally on the line and with seconds to spare are out and running ahead of a very slow manoeuvring Tiercel as Zen takes a grip on Chinon down the straight to Tuckey 2.



Tiercel getting ready to start!



The fleet heads off in Div 1.



Zen taking off in Div2.

And of course there is Div3 with lonely Sundance taking up the rear of the field....Doug Curlewis had a better offer on the day and is still awaiting repairs from two weeks ago.

As Sundance takes aim at the line the heavens open and a hefty cloud dumps more rain than QMF had two weeks ago on a long suffering skipper John and crew.

Visibility is down to 100 metres....wot are we doing out here??



Wet weather gear does not make much difference to the situation....

Passing up the channel past Tuckey 2 and into the West Channel we see some of the fleet ahead and even as we watch... Zen makes a break and turns for home.....shortly thereafter we see Tiercel also turn and start back to the finish.



And then we note that the Couta fleet has also taken a short break under very dark and wet skies and headed back to the basin.

It now appears that Tintagel, Chinon and Sundance will fight out this trophy race as the only contenders left!!

By the first port mark up the Channel Sundance finds herself alongside Tintagel with Chinon a few hundred metres further up.

By the West Channel Pile Sundance takes aim at Chinon and on the line down to St Leonards Pile Sundance takes the lead with shifting winds and very overcast skies.

However Hughie shines on the two leaders and with only a shower between them Sundance leads the Coles Channel leg of the race.

The wind has changed and we now have a more easterly which suits the fleet as there is only one tack before making the White Lady.

From there it is a run to the finish with Sundance making the line near 1610hrs and Chinon some 17 minutes behind across the line. Unfortunately Tintagel has a larger gap to make up and they make the line some 50 minutes later... very wet but happy to be home! Only to be pelted by another shower at rest at QCYC's wharf.

Well ... congratulations to Chinon and crew, on a big and persistent Channels Trophy Race win.



P.S. And below from the pen of Tintagel's Colin Bishop on the events of the day!!!



"While drifting towards Tuckey after the first start in our conservative sail suit, we were stung by taunts from the nimble Chinon: we just had a larger jib set when that colossal gust went through. Ian thought it was the strongest gust he's experienced while sailing with me. At least the wind direction was more favourable than not, taking us into the West Channel. We saw the two cousta boats flailing around, then their sails coming down. Not long after that the wind dropped to zero, but seeing the storms all around, we didn't feel like making more sail. Between Tuckey and West Channel Pile we experienced wind from every direction.

Heavy rain appeared to drill holes in the sea. We put up the biggest jib coming back down the Coles Channel.

After we got back on the mooring we had to shelter in the cabin while another storm pelted us. Yet another memorable race!!