



threat. There is a full account of the Edinburgh Cup series elsewhere in this magazine, so I need make no more comments about the racing.

One of the more memorable events was on day three of racing when a big black cloud appeared over Southampton Water. It was already blowing 20 plus knots, and we had just come to the end of a very exciting run, when the squall hit complete with huge hailstones! There are varying accounts of how strong the wind blew but all I know is that I was b****y terrified. Sadly both *Amok* and *Kraken* sank, although *Amok* was later recovered and is currently racing back in Burnham.

By contrast, during the following week, the Europeans were a very gentle affair, with bright blue skies and light winds almost every day. This was a great event, perfectly organised by the Royal Yacht Squadron. As we all know, Lars Hendriksen won the event, but special mention should go to local boat *Ecstatic* who was tenth.

No sooner had the Europeans finished, on the Friday, the Mid-Season points started with a Red Funnel weekend on the following Saturday. This series was a close tussle between *Caramba* and *Jerboa*, which *Caramba* managed to win by three points.

Mid-July saw the start of the Summer Series, which straddles Cowes Week. This series was again won by *Caramba*, who was starting to stamp some authority on the season's racing.

Cowes Week was a tough, but varied week. The wind blew again for the start of the week, which gave us some hard but great races. Ironically the last day's racing was lost due to lack of wind. Unfortunately we had another victim of a squall when *Luder* sank on the windiest day. *Luder* has been recovered, and has been purchased by John Mellows, who is in the process of restoring her to her former glory. The week was won convincingly by *Rumours*, with *Princess Jalina* and *Caramba* next on equal points, although *Caramba* lost out due to count-back.

The weekend after Cowes Week was the Jubilee Regatta, a windward-leeward mini series. This regatta was also a victim of strong winds, with only two races completed. It was decided to present the trophy anyway, and *Njord* was the winner with a first and second.

The Autumn Series started in September, and gave us some of the best sailing conditions of the year – the phrase 'Champagne Sailing' was on everybody's lips. The early part of the series was impacted by the absence of *Jerboa* and *Fuzzy Duck*, who had both gone to the Gold Cup (well done *Jerboa* on finishing in 16th place).

Eventually the close series was won, yet again, by *Caramba*.

2006 was definitely *Caramba*'s season, having won three of the four points series, they also won the overall points championship. They also won the Red Funnel Championship and the SCRA medal.

As a foot note: the October Cup was cancelled this year. Not because of the weather, but because Jeremy Field was getting married on the same day, and most of the participants were invited.

Owen Pay

Technical Tips

12 – Setting up the mast Part One

Setting up the Mast is extremely important.

So once you have checked the rake (with the standard Black Band method, 122cm) release runners and backstay and lift boom out of support.

Pull the mast ram all the way aft and secure in cleat.

Take pin (at the mast), out of mast ram turnbuckle.

Then give the mast a shake, so that it is positioned where it naturally wants to sit.

Offer the mast ram turnbuckle back to the mast to see if the hole aligns exactly? If it does, great!

If not, release the two small holding nuts and turn the centre thread until the pin can be returned with ease. Then secure the two nuts again and tape up to be sure they stay.

You now know that your mast is not being influenced by the ram when it is in the aft position (i.e. not inverting or pre-bending).

A STRAIGHT mast is a FAST mast.

It will also give you your maximum forward range when you are on the downwind leg.

Martin Stavros Payne

9. DOCUMENTATION. Most Dragon trailers are plated to carry 2500kg. Make sure your GTW (gross train weight), car and trailer weight combined is legal for the car pulling the trailer. Especially in Europe I would always recommend carrying not only the insurance certificate but also the car registration papers showing the GTW

10. WARNING TRIANGLE. The use of warning triangles and hazard warning lights is compulsory in an accident/breakdown situation. Warning triangles should always be carried as hazard-warning lights may become damaged in an accident or have no effect at bends or rises in the road.

If driving in Spain, one warning triangle is compulsory for non-Spanish registered vehicles; two for Spanish registered vehicles. Note: Drivers of non-Spanish registered vehicles should consider carrying two triangles as, regardless of regulations, local officials may impose on-the-spot fine if only one is available.

11. REFLECTIVE VESTS. European law now requires all vehicles to carry reflective vests, for drivers AND their passengers. Anybody providing roadside assistance, or leaving a stranded vehicle, should always wear a reflective vest to ensure their own safety. This is now a legal requirement in a number of European countries

12. DRIVING LICENCE. The minimum age for driving in Europe is 18, with the exception of Norway, Portugal, Denmark and Italy, where it is 17.

As the Dragon and towing vehicle exceeds 3500kg you will be required to hold a C1+E license. If you passed your driving test before 1st January 1997 your licence will automatically include C1 + E category. If you have passed after this date you will be required to take an extra test and be over 21.

All valid UK licences should be accepted. UK driving licences which do not incorporate a photograph are recognised, but drivers must be able to produce

photographic proof of identity (e.g. passport). If you do not have the photo card licence, it may be worth getting one.

13. GB STICKER. I have been stopped for not having one on the trailer! GB Stickers are compulsory within the EU unless your UK registration plates display the GB Euro-symbol (Europlates). The Euro plate is only legally recognised in the EU; it is still a requirement to display a GB sticker when travelling outside the EU.

14. KEYS. Do you have the keys for the hitch locks, trailer boxes and any lock on the spare wheel?

15. FIRE EXTINGUISHER and FIRST AID KIT. The European Good Samaritan Law requires every driver to stop and provide assistance when encountering an accident or incident, providing it is safe to do so. This may require a first aid kit and a fire extinguisher and it is therefore strongly advisable to carry these items when driving in Europe.

16. ON THE SPOT FINES. The moment these are demanded, they have to be paid in cash, in the local currency, to the arresting officer. Credit cards or travellers cheques are not accepted, and in some countries inability to pay, risks impounding the driver's vehicle until the fine is paid. Make sure you have sufficient local currency.

IT IS NOT EASY to find the latest rules but I have attempted to summarise what I have found.

For more information on legal requirements for trailers visit the Department for Transport website <http://www.dft.gov.uk>

Requirements regarding trailers used on the road are given in the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, as amended and the Road Vehicles Lighting Regulations 1989.

I am not an expert and this is only the understanding I have from the research I have carried out; I hope it helps.

Really the laws are designed to keep us and other drivers safe. It is well worth investing in safe towing practices.

Technical Tips

13- Settling up the mast Part Two

BEING ABLE TO flatten the mainsail with ease is essential and can easily be accomplished by use of the mast-ram. This can help to de-power in heavy winds and open the top of the mainsail in light winds to give better speed.

To be exact with the amount of mast-ram used on each occasion, follow these steps:

Starting with the mast in its furthest aft position, make a clear mark on the mast-ram rope. Then go to the mast with a marker pen and measure a 1cm, 1.5cm and 2cm forward, marking the rope carefully as you ease the mast ram to all three positions.

You are now able to adjust the mast while sailing upwind, and know exactly how much pre-bend you are using.

Different mainsails require different amounts of adjustment. Once you have found good speed and can manage the amount of weather helm and heel of the boat, make a mental note of the mast ram markings so that you can always reproduce.

Martin Stavros Payne

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