

A Sailing Story

I wondered whether you might enjoy the following story which provides an insight into the mind of a sailor!

I belong to a club of like-minded individuals – the Guildford Coastal Cruising Club – (we all think that you don't need to live near the sea to enjoy sailing!) – and through the summer weekends we sail to different locations around the Solent for a social rally – a great excuse to have a liquid get-together where a group of 30-40 grown men and women swap sea-faring yarns and sing hearty sea-shanties (not!).

Mostly it tends to be the same faces; with an occasional friend, or even more rarely, a family member allowed to accompany the "Skipper" and his "Trusty Crew" on their foray into uncharted territory. On the weekend in question even the solo skipper of a small boat moored nearby decided to join our merry band as a hanger-on, and believing that he might be persuaded to join our Club (he came from Derby I seem to recall, so very logical!), and new members always being sought, we made an instant welcome for him.

Although quiet at first, he magically changed as the effects of his third, or was it his fourth pint (sorry, pint) took hold, whereupon he started regaling those around him with stories. He was asked how he found the time to go sailing every weekend and replied

"I just love sailing. In fact my wife left me because I was always away in the boat"

One of our party sympathised ... "I'm sorry to hear that "

He continued "Yes, I was out one day when a Force 5 suddenly grew into a Force 9 with hardly any warning. By the time I managed to get the mainsail down I'd lost the jib and had been almost swamped. There was a fair amount of damage to the boat, but eventually, and very late, I managed to struggle back to the marina. I arrived home well after midnight to find a note from my wife saying that my dinner was in the dustbin, she'd taken the cat, and had run off with my best friend."

Shocked silence and one of our number said "That's terrible, what on earth did you do?"

"Oh, I bought some new sails, and fitted some extra equipment so that now I can take down the sails really quickly if I need to. It's ideal for singlehanded !!"