



Scilly Cruise Summer 2006

A sudden change to windier conditions following the heat wave of July affected this cruise with several boats not getting past Falmouth. ZigZag, leaving 10 days earlier, had a full 2 weeks in the islands exploring this paradise of half-tide anchorages. A day was spent observing grey seals in the Eastern Isles; another surrounded by more than 20 dolphins close to the south western edge of the Western Rocks where the British fleet foundered in 1707. Moving on every couple of days, ZigZag anchored off, and walked and explored, all but St Mary's of the inhabited islands, plus a couple of uninhabited ones, and followed a number of interesting transits not previously investigated.

Two blows had winds rising to F7 and were weathered, lying to two anchors, at East Porth (Teon) and Green Bay (Bryher). Otherwise the weather was hot and sunny and the winds ideal for gentle sails through the turquoise and blue seas. The clarity of the water has to be seen to be believed, drifting over shallow sandy flats and jagged, seaweed-covered rocks, rimmed by granite outcrops and dramatic (and largely deserted) white sand beaches. Several new anchorages were tried with Par Beach, St Martins, set to become a firm favourite. Fishing was great (for a non-fisherman who doesn't know what he's doing) with good sized Pollock jumping onto the trace as readily as mackerel off Start Point and indeed fish was on the menu two out of three days accompanied by new potatoes and vegetables bought from the wayside stalls.

Stalled off Marazion by another blow, ZigZag met up for just one night with Maid of Honour, Second Ace and Bliss in the St Mawes anchorage as everyone started to head homewards. The latter three departed at 0700 next morning for a blistering sail in a F6 via the Eddystone to Salcombe where they arrived at 1645 which must have polished the antifouling a bit! Pieta had also been in Falmouth. A quick hello the same day with Eise and Azzura who had been up the Fal and were headed to round St Anthony light for Fowey. ZigZag, Eise and Azzura met up again briefly in Cawsand Bay where Eise and Azzura were headed for a crew change and finally Eise and Zigzag crept up Bow Creek on the Dart on a rising tide for an excellent meal at the Watermen's Arms and a very tranquil night despite the half gale blowing outside.

ZigZag completed 25 consecutive nights under anchor, often leaving and arriving under sail, which is always satisfying even if it meant there was insufficient in the batteries to run the cool box so the milk soured! Coupled with a diet rich in fresh fish it also made for an economical and hugely enjoyable cruise.

Tony Leigh