



SFCC Whitsun Cruise 2008 - Channel Islands



14 SFCC boats gathered in Dartmouth on Friday 23 May, most having enjoyed a relaxed sail from the Exe which was all according to plan. With "boating", though, the best laid plans are regularly thwarted and the threat of deteriorating conditions was confirmed when the 05:25 shipping forecast next morning talked of winds of 6-7 rising 8! Departure was postponed and the pontoon resounded to snores again by 05:45! With weather from the north east conditions in the river seemed not too bad but

there was a depressingly familiar tone to bulletins for 3 days which benefited few other than the local hostelrys and restaurants. For 3 nights we remained in the Dart though *Yedan* moved to Parson's Mud and *ZigZag* to Blackness Point.

Between them the weather and French fishermen blockading ports scuppered the original plan of visiting Guernsey, Diélette and Alderney. Tuesday's forecast promised less wind and no rain and a cracking sail was had by all round Start Point and across Wembury Bay to reach the Yealm in record time, followed that evening by a dinghy trip to the pub in Newton Ferrers. Wednesday saw a return to persistent rain and blustery conditions and recognising that further westward progress was unlikely the Cruise began to splinter. Several boats returned as far as Salcombe on Wednesday while *Stress Relief* sailed on to Plymouth. On Thursday *ZigZag* left for a night at anchor on the Lynher River while the remaining boats headed for Salcombe, meeting up with the returning *Stress Relief* as they cleared the Mewstone.



While it was disappointing not to be able to follow the original itinerary, the good company ensured an enjoyable social time for all. Besides many group meals there were two memorable parties on *Seabird* and *Celtic Maid* and much inter-boat visiting (just how many bodies can be squeezed into the cockpit of a 30' Tempest?)



For the final 2 nights cruise boats were spread between Salcombe, Dartmouth, Brixham and Anstey's Cove only to converge again on the Exe on the flood tide on Sunday - - - by which time the weather was at last warm and sunny if now somewhat windless.

Boats taking part were: *Seabird* (cruise leader), *Aeolus*, *Aquila*, *Ashanta*, *Brandybottle*, *Celtic Maid*, *Kalulu*, *Maid of Honour*, *Stress Relief*, *Strider*, *Termaric*, *Yedan* and *ZigZag*.