

2010 Season log for Sir Faffalot

Having really enjoyed our sailing experience at the beginner's class at TSC during the 2009 season we thought we would like a boat of our own. We spent a happy winter looking at small yachts and plaguing brokers until, at last, we found a Galion 22 at a price we could afford. She became ours on 24 April 2010. We then had a crash course in boat ownership thanks to the ever helpful TSC members there was antifouling and servicing and rigging and 101 other things to do before we could even think about sailing!

On 15 May the big day came, she was put in the water and we were off! Rhu to Toward in a day; easy right?



Wrong! With a head wind all the way we reverted to the engine, up and down, up and down the skipper felt seasick so did the mate! We ran out of fuel and the engine stopped, never mind, put up the mainsail and tack all the way. Oh, but it would not go up, the boom collapsed and the sail stuck half way – what now? Throw up and think!

Suddenly realised we were drifting towards the Sugar Boat wreck! No sails, no engine; with the prospect of being wrecked on the maiden voyage! And the crew wants to die due to sea sickness! Only one thing for it call Clyde Sea Recovery – that we had been meaning to join but had not yet go round to it!

After a short tow into the Holy Loch and coughing up £250 we were very pleased to be on dry land! The maiden voyage was not quite the triumph we had planned but we had learnt some valuable lessons. Preparation is everything – make sure you have enough fuel, make sure you take your kwells and make sure you know how the mainsail goes up!



Back down to holy Loch the next morning with lots and lots of fuel! Sailed without a hitch to TSC mooring.

The following Monday evening we received a crash course in how to put up the sail and how to stop the boom falling down from Alasdair Finlay – Very helpful and very necessary!

22 May 2010 we are keen to put our sailing skills into practise and decide to sail round Bute over the weekend. First things first fettle the ship – off to Rothesay for supplies. A quick sail to the pontoon over to Co-op and Bob's your uncle. Got to the pontoon no problem – however getting back off it was not so easy! Why does the wind always blow the wrong way?! Skipper at the helm, crew feeling nervous and five spectators all shouting different advice! How can such a small boat get so stuck at Rothesay harbour! We eventually prise ourselves off the harbour wall and head out to the Kyles!



A lovely sail despite our faffing around! Anchored for the first time at Scalpsie Bay – we had forgotten to ask our TSC instructors exactly how much chain you are suppose to let out! Hay ho! We let it out and let it out – got to the rope bit and thought we better put some back! Mental note to self ask about chain on Monday night!

Woke to a beautiful Sunday morning – no wind but it was beautiful in the Bay. This is great! Motored back to TSC. Enjoyed Monday lessons on our own boat and had evening and weekend sails as the weather and time permitted. As our confidence grew so did our desire to sail further. We decided to take a week's holiday and sail round Arran.

17 June 2010 sailed to Millport and spent the night on a mooring.



18 June 2010; having never been to Cumbrae we hired a tandem and cycled round the isle – what fun! Rowed back to our boat and set sail for Glencallum Bay. Now that we knew that you let out four times the depth of chain we anchored securely and enjoyed a peaceful night!



19 June – another fabulous mooring. Sailed down to Lamlash Bay and again anchored successfully. We spent the next couple of days on Arran. Enjoyed a church service on the beach and a bus trip round the island, a beach bar-b-q and a shower in a local cafe!



22 June – we set off for the South of Arran and arrive at Saddell Bay at 17.42, the weather has deteriorated and we are thrown around in heavy seas. We start to let out the anchor chain but then disaster strikes! As the boat is still moving forward the anchor starts to go under the boat, with the choppy seas the chain jumps off its runner and flies sideways shearing the front mast stay. The mast collapses and falls fully rigged into the water. The chain is running off its own accord and the sail is filling with water tipping the entire yacht on its side. As we are frantically pulling in the main sail we can hear the radio - somebody has spotted us and called it in to the coastguard! So here we are trying to pull in a runaway anchor. Pull in a sail that filling with water and operate a radio we have never used before!

The sail is in and the mast has been secured across the top of the boat. The anchor chain has been laid and secured and we can speak rationally to the coastguard. We are safe and our vessel is secure. Clyde Sea Recovery is called again and we are towed to Campbeltown. Thankfully we are now members and it did not cost us! We arrived in Campbeltown under cover of darkness at 22.30!

23 June surveyed the damage from the night before. One broken forestay and we'd lost the flag and flagpole during the tow. Not too bad.



We were just wondering how to put the mast back up when a charter yacht arrived with a crew of young German guys on a whiskey tour. They quickly jumped aboard and manhandled the mast back into position –hoorah for Germans, charter boats and whiskey tours!

24 June undeterred we set off at 9am round the West coast of Arran, anchoring somewhat nervously at Caladh harbour at 19.30.

25 June set off back to TSC and arrived in time of lunch! – wow what an adventure!

Spent the rest of the season learning about our boat and each other with evening and weekend sails. We had a great first season and learned so much! Special thanks go to Alasdair Finlay and Carol Gilles for their help and encouragement throughout the season – roll on 2011!!!