

Hayling Challenge 2024

Note: This entry is eligible for the Hayling Challenge Trophy and also the Allan Earl Trophy

Skipper name:	Mark Tinkler
Boat name:	Rhubarbie
Crew name(s):	Mary Dooley
Type of boat and description:	SCAMP
Rig:	Lug
Date of challenge:	August 26 2024
Time of HW Chi BST:	17.23 4.18m
LW Chi BST:	10.16 1.06m
Start time:	8.34 launch
	10.15 the tower
	12.30 passing the Yacht
	13.30 Langstone bridge
	14.00 Emsworth Channel rigged, anchored and heading towards pub
Finish time:	4.45
Did you go Clockwise or ACW?	Clockwise
Wind strengths and directions:	F3-4 WSW
How did you pass Hayling Bridge?	
Was the current under Hayling Bridge with you or against?	

Mark's Report: A Hayling Challenge with man overboard recovery!

With only three days at Cobnor the chances of completing a Hayling challenge looked slim. Saturday the rain lashed down and the Scamp was still on the trailer. Sunday putting on waterproofs in the strong winds was a challenge. So, Monday it had to be. The passage plan dictated an 8.16 departure. At 8.34 we set sail. As we rounded Cobnor Point we were glad to have had reefed. At this point Mary made an error: she handed me the tiller as she set up the Navionics. I did offer her the helm back a few times during the trip but she thankfully refused.

With two hours ebb left, Rubarbie accepted the challenge and surged forward long tack, short tack at four knots while the crew had a hearty breakfast of nut bars and slightly dubious water.

Long distance yacht races are said to be won by frequent sail changes. Obviously we aren't racing but due to the simplicity of Rhubarbie's set up we easily shook out the reef as the wind softened further down the harbour.

I have not sailed with Navionics before and Mary and I chatted we compared the Chart with the view out the window, adding an extra dimension to the trip. Past East Head we could clearly see what looked like the swashway. I was not going to make the same mistake as last year or even attempt it and go aground and risk becoming separated from the boat. We carried on to the main channel.

As we headed out on a starboard tack it was becoming fruity and the reef was put back in, again with ease, as we neared the Bar Beacon. It took me a few attempts to master steering the Scamp through the waves and Mary was grateful for wearing her oilies.

Passing the Bar Beacon at exactly low water we tacked half way between the West Pole and the Bar Beacon. A couple minutes later there were breakers ahead so we headed out again. Crossing Hayling Bay was a nice but uneventful sail. Nearing West Winner we were entertained by a skilled foiling kite board altering course to see how much fun a Scamp is. Then a less skilled one being pulled through the water out of control with lines close to Rhubarbie's mast head, Mary looking concerned.



1 Back at Cobnor Mary and Mark at the end of their Challenge (pic Paul Pearson)

A handful of tacks allowed us to pass the spit and ease off to a broad reach. Mary hinted we should reef. I was having none of it with the tide flooding and a stiff breeze abaft the beam I wanted to see what the Scamp could do. Occasionally faster but at a steady five knots we passed the Ketch at 12.30.

It was now a relaxing sail through Langstone Harbour and nearing the bridge we planned the hardest part of the trip. The wind was now at its strongest and wanted us on a starboard but this would require a gybe between the old bridge and road bridge. I chose to keep on the the boom to starboard and let the boom out and well forward. This is a rather unusual technique but an option I have used on a unstayed balanced lug before. I think Mary was now seriously concerned about the the helm as we rocketed through the tiny gap in the old bridge. Being on the right tack we rounded up and landed without incident on the piled concrete quay just before the bridge at 1.30. Half an hour later Rhubarbie was the other side of the bridge bobbing at anchor, all rigged and ready to sail again. Her crew decided it was time for lunch and headed to the Pub. Mindful of our passage plan being in conflict with the one-hour food wait, we opted for a starter of crisps, two halves and an espresso.

As we sailed again Mary said more than once to beware of the shallows as she made lunch. As the rudder touched I put in crash gybe and found deeper water to the cries of 'My Hat !' one of Mary's signature hats bobbed behind us. The manoeuvrability of the Scamp had us performing a text book man overboard recovery before the hat was hardly damp.

A long starboard tack and a short port got us through the Emsworth channel before freeing off at Marker Point. A seal popped it's head up and watched us go by with an expression of approval for the Scamp. With the Navionics on we could accurately pass the spit at Stockers Sands, I usually end up going too close to Pilsey and regretting in. Freeing off we sped back to Cobnor without incident, OK I did do one rather alarming gybe. We landed at 16.53, which equals 8 hours 19 minutes elapsed time. The sat nav says we averaged 3.4 knots when moving for the 23.7 NM, with a max speed of 6.5 knots.

Personally, it was a fantastic day; a great sail in wonderful company in conditions that I wouldn't have enjoyed in any other sub twelve foot boat, including my Gull.