

Strictly for the Hey Hey – a visit to Cork Clipper, by Conall - 8th September 2009

I decided to call in to visit the yacht as I had a week off from sailing on the Bristol Channel and a quick check on web train fares confirmed that a visit would be within budget. I met Richie as he was about to head to his hotel for some downtime, the crew had encountered a full force 8 gale gusting 9 on the final delivery from the Humber to Hull the previous evening.

Onboard I was greeted by Orla, ship's storekeeper and victualler - previously a banking professional, Sean "the Commodore" and Mike a very handy Engineer. They were off for lunch so I spent some time poking round, having a look at the galley and checking out some of the aerial photographs that were laminated and on show below.

Slowly the crew came back and I introduced myself and chatted about the race, a ten month seven leg adventure around the world, Starting in Hull and calling in at:

La Rochelle, France,
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Cape Town, South Africa,
Fremantle, Western Australia
Singapore, Qingdao, China
California,
Panama,
Port Antonio, Jamaica
New York,
Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, Canada
Cork/Kinsale, Ireland
Imuiden, Netherlands
The Humber

I met Caroline a GP, Tie-Terminator an IT professional, Alan an Air Traffic Controller, Marco, Noreen and PJ. Some crewmembers from Edinburgh, Hull and Humber, and Singapore also called in to have a chat, a look round and to borrow some bit of equipment or other. There was a real buzz about the place and a sporting camaraderie between boats. Although only about 7 or 8 of the crew will do the whole race, everyone seemed to want to do the whole thing, but of course there are only 18 spaces for each leg. I asked about the possibility of starting the race as a stowaway, but I was informed that there is a waiting list for this also... with Tie at the top!

Down to work - Whilst most were at work emptying and cleaning the spacious bow or G.I.M.P. locker, I helped Mike investigate the faulty Deck Speakers and after a bit of faffing, some voltmeter readings and the like, we found that both Deck Speakers were in need of replacement. Clipper Ventures claimed that this was low on their priority list as they were themselves investigating the over-sensitive fire alarms and issues with the 240V system onboard, but how can you expect to be surfing down waves the size of houses at 17knots plus without loud rock music? (We bought new ones).

I helped Tie and PJ make some Spectra donuts (not quite grommets) for use with the spinnaker gear, for holding guy blocks at deck level and the official new name for these donuts attached to

snaphackles on the spinnaker sheets are “lurch loops”. Tie, it seems, has fallen in love with sailing and “Cork”; although only signed up for leg four, Tie has spent every free minute since completing his training in Gosport onboard, doing all the delivery miles to Hull and working on the little bits of maintenance and preparations for the trip, he plans to visit many of the stopovers to keep up with “the hey-hey” and keep the boat ship-shape between legs.

As my couple of days aboard came close to an end I swapped contact details and wished everyone luck, I promised to visit in some 34,000 miles time as the boats are due in to Kinsale, July 2010. -Up cork!

<http://www.clipperroundtheworld.com/index.php/home>

<http://www.clipperroundtheworld.com/cork/index.php/Home>

<http://www.pbase.com/kbmphotography>