

CIRCUMNAVIGATION of IRELAND

Dragonfly 920 Racing “Rice Pudding IX”

We left Glasson Sailing Club on 27th May 2006 with the intention of sailing round Ireland in a clockwise direction, bound for the Isle of Man and then Howth, just North of Dublin.

The crew – myself, Norman Whewell (73), daughter Elizabeth (34), and David Holden (60), had allowed four weeks (five at a push) to complete the sailing trip.

We had a rough passage from Glasson to Ramsey, on the nose, 6's or 7's. The next day to Port St Mary, where we had arranged to meet Derek and Jill Jewell in their Dragonfly 920 Extreme “Aberzen” who had sailed from Helensborough on the Clyde in two days, via Port Patrick.

One day weather bound in Port Patrick then over to Howth in some very big seas, 20 miles from Chicken Rock.

From Howth we headed South. The plan was, if the weather was OK, we would keep going with day sailing. The weather was great, in the main light winds, no rain!! (so a fair amount of motoring) – so much so that we kept going for 10 days without a rest day, until we rounded Malin Head and made Culdaff.

The ports of call so far were Howth, Arklow, Kilmore Quay, Ballycotton, Baltimore, Dingle, Aran Islands (Kilronan), Clare Island, Broad Haven (Ballyglass), Aran Island, Culdaff.

Derek and Jill were getting short of time, so they left early from the Aran Islands and made home port, Helensborough, on Monday the 12th June.

The next ports of call Ballycotton (1 rest day), Bangor (1 rest day), Ardglass (2 rest days), then to our starting point Port Howth, having circumnavigated Ireland.

Howth to Howth, 4 rest days, 14 days sailing, total of 18 days, 803 nautical miles, average 57 nautical miles per day sailing. In the 14 days sailing, no or light winds (apart from Malin Head). We spent the overnights either in a marina or a fishing port. We never had to anchor, use a mooring or the rubber dinghy.

From Howth we sailed to Port St Mary, Isle of Man and then back to our home port of Glasson – 1107 nautical miles, 1 weatherbound day, 4 rest days, 19 days sailing, a total of 24 days. Average nautical miles per sailing days 58.

It was my daughter, Elizabeth's suggestion that we should use the opportunity to raise money for the charity CANCER RESEARCH UK. As a result of the generosity of the people we know and met on our travels, the final sum raised was £3,985 via “Rice Pudding Ireland”.

It was indeed a wonderful sailing trip. The people we met in Ireland very much made the journey so enjoyable, generous with their time and help, their great sense of humour (the Craic), plus the Guinness!

The Dragonfly 920 proved once again to be all we could wish for. Rice Pudding and the crew ensured a successful and enjoyable sailing experience, coming back to Glasson on Monday the 19th June.

