

NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2011



UK BALLAD ASSOCIATION **NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2011**

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Welcome to the Autumn 2011 Newsletter.

First of all an apology for the lack of a Spring Newsletter. I had some good copy but ran out of time before the deadline to announce the 2011 National Championships, not helped by the fact that about the same time I had an operation on a shoulder that stopped me from going to St Mawes for the 2011 National Ballad Championship. But you didn't really want to know my problems.

Maybe a second apology ought to be offered for those with long memories. The cover picture has appeared before in these pages, but I thought I'd reprint it, as it is Ballad number 6 – Sixpence, being sailed by its previous owner Norman Douglas who sadly passed away last year. It is also the Ballad now owned by Chris Jackson who gave it a face-lift and change of colour (See below) before attempting an Atlantic crossing. Chris gave a lecture last winter in the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club where he was persuaded to write up the text and photographs that are contained in this Newsletter



NOTICES

The 2011 AGM will take place at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club at 19:30 on Friday 25th November. We all look forward to seeing you. For those who wish to come but unsure where this delightful sailing club is, put PL1 2NY into your Satnav or <u>http://www.streetmap.co.uk/</u>

We also now have a web site. http://www.ukballadassociation.org/

SUBSCRIPTIONS.

As a request for subscriptions didn't go out in a Spring Newsletter, I understand our hard worked honourable Secretary has been receiving them. However if by chance you, like the Newsletter editor *(tut, tut. Ed)*, have not paid then you will find at the end of this Newsletter a subscription form. Please fill it in and send to our worthy and honourable Secretary. Thank you in advance.

THIS YEAR'S CHAMPIONSHIPS

The results of this year's races along with a light hearted write up by Graham Carter of the proceedings are in this Newsletter. Also a list of Trophy winners. Our esteemed Chairman's address in this issue contains the successful 2011 Championships, delights of B&B and tributes to the Albion Ballard – sorry, I mean our beautiful Albin Ballads. *(The Newsletter editor may be forced to resign after this newsletter – don't know what has gotten into me, I feel very mischievous!)*

NEXT YEAR'S CHAMPIONSHIPS

Historically the Ballad National Championships have always been held at the end of May to coincide with the Bank Holiday. This is news to me and maybe to yourselves but there will be no late May Bank Holiday in 2012, it being postponed a week until the first weekend in June for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. So the committee needed to look at the best date for the majority. It has been agreed that it would suit people better to keep to the traditional last weekend in May without a Bank Holiday Monday. So the 2012 National Ballad Championships will be held in the Plymouth area and the Saltash Sailing Club has kindly offered to be the host.



In the last Newsletter I included a photograph from the 2009 Nationals of our esteemed Chairman with the caption that "*Our Chairman's crew not really taking this racing thing seriously are they?*"

Have things changed judging by the above photograph of Matui? I conclude that maybe one can enjoy yourselves and still put in very creditable performances because in the 2011 Nationals it should be noted that this boat and helm was 3rd overall winning a trophy to boot. Congratulations Chairman. *(Mike, I've done the plug that you requested. Ed)* And now a word from Chairman Mike overleaf

UK Ballad Association Newsletter – Chairman's Address.

Greetings to all you nice Ballad people. We don't all get together very often but when you spot or meet up with a Ballad or Ballad person (known or unknown) there seems to be an immediate camaraderie. I think this is because those of us in the know, know what a fantastic sailing boat the Ballad is.

The Ballad is very distinctive and can be spotted from miles away (kilometres in European waters) with the rig, the coach roof and the hull-shape being unmistakeable. The logo on the mainsail is a bit of a giveaway but not all Ballads display this.

It never ceases to amaze me that on any cruising trip we are always mentally racing and that an Albin Ballad can knock spots off many a modern boat especially going to windward in stiff weather. This is where we stick two fingers up to the likes of Beneteau, Jeanneau, Bavaria and Hanse not to mention plod boats like Vancouver and HR (posh though they might be). Who designed these boats anyway? (Designers who have to work to briefs set by those who think boats should now live in marinas all the time. Ed).

Having got that off my chest I can say that it was brilliant that so many Ballads turned up for the UK National Champs at St Mawes considering that the weather was rather poo. Indeed the weather was not kind, the trip westward was quick and wet, sensible people having at least one reef in. The moorings supplied by St Mawes S.C. were very good and cheap but I for one was glad that we stayed in a B&B albeit at the top of the hill (Gasping for breath). Given the choice between a really bouncy night on a mooring or a peaceful, warm static bed in a B&B it was a no brainer. The B&B won hands down. (*Dare I say it but perhaps our colourful Chairman would get a better night's sleep in a Vancouver or Hallberg Rassy!! Ed*).

Those who ventured back out to the moored Ballads in the a.m. really had to wear weatherproof bottoms otherwise it would have been "wet arse syndrome" all day which is not pleasant. (thought that was what sailing was all about. Ed).

There is a good report of the National Champs in this newsletter. The sailing was wild but the social calendar provided by St Mawes S.C. was excellent. I don't think any one could have complained. Very well done St Mawes, I would certainly like to go back there again although a B&B at lower level would be quite nice.

The racing courses set by Neil Andrew were totally appropriate for the conditions (wild and windy) and the on water support by S.M.S.C. was first class.

Now that we are approaching the end of the season I wish all Ballad owners and crews well. I shall be heading back up the River Lynher to St Germans where many Ballads gather for the winter. Matui, Harlequin, Noontide and Leveche. Nettie is gone and Marcus J is also gone, there are only 4 left. Never mind it's still all good fun.

As a final remark I will show great displeasure towards the next person who describes our boats as an "Albion Ballard."

Best Regards Mike L Chairman UKBA

BALLAD CHAMPIOINSHIPS 2011

St. Mawes it was. After memorably visits in 2001 and 2004 the fleet was looking forward to contesting the 23rd Championships under the burgee of St. Mawes S. C. Entries were two from Fowey, seven from Plymouth, plus Poppin with Tim Burne understaffed so electing to crew on another boat for the racing. For the ride down on Friday the club had laid on a good testing NW breeze and sunshine. Just the thing for the crews to work up a good thirst in the very smartly turned out club bar, followed by some excellent food. The new owner, George Whetman, of Happy Hour (ex Nettie) which is now based in the Falmouth area, joined the Skipper's Briefing in order to meet other Ballad owners.

There was a warm welcome at the briefing, with a long discussion on appropriate VHF working channel; the race officer Neil Andrew had to compromise on what was available to the various antique ballad wireless sets. Contest was to be the usual format of a.m. and p.m. races Saturday and Sunday; three out of four scores to count.

Falmouth Bay was busy all weekend with ship movements to stock up with EU regulation fuel to go up Channel. A wonderful fleet of Bristol Pilot Cutters was also at play based at St. Mawes. But our race officer, plus one hard working RIB, found space in the left hand corner to lay a suitable triangle for an "Olympic" style course. Wind was W 5ish? (sorry about the vagueness; your reporters ship doesn't run to anemometer thingies). The sailing was brisk, with reaches to the wing mark and back too shy for spinnakers. The fleet was saddened to witness a coming together on the beat of Capella and Summertime, with the latter losing her mast. Capella also retired for the day to have her own rig properly checked. Shara won, Duchess second and Matui third – busy rolling her No.2 in and out to suit the demands.

A retreat was made to the lee of Pendennis for a picnic lunch before a repeat performance in the afternoon. With an opposing flood tide coming up around the Bay most elected to keep to the right of the beats. Some tried a different sail plan to the morning, but the whole fleet positions were just the same by the finish.

Our hosts had arranged for us to join in the evening party at the village Social Club. There was plenty of fooding, drinking and Barn-dancing to boot. It is said that the Shara crew lay claim to the knees-up trophy as well, but there was a possible protest meeting about that.

Sunday's weather started much the same – W 4/5, not a lot of sunshine. Race 3 on a similar course welcomed back Capella to the fray. After the first beat Sixpence was well placed when some malady struck whilst shaking out her reef for the reach, demoting her to 8th instead of day one's good 4th places. It was left to Kotuku in 3rd to make some sort of a challenge to the dominance of Shara and Duchess. The wind had dropped a little (? WSW 4) for the final race in the afternoon. The overall first two places were already decided so they, sportingly, were over the line at the start giving Windwhistle a moment of glory to lead the fleet for two laps. But it was too good to last and normal service was resumed by the finish. Matui had done enough on the day to hold on to overall third, with Kotuku 4th.

The Rising Sun was the venue for the prize-giving dinner; and a very good finale it was too. Appropriate good humour was dispensed with the silverware by Nigel Sharp of St. Mawes S.C. Peter Noakes and family and crew with Shara were deservedly 2011 champions, he spoke for us all in complimenting our hosts on a well run and enjoyable event. We are also indebted to the Royal Fowey Y.C. for the majority of the trophies that will adorn many a mantelpiece for the coming year. Toasts were drunk, rivalries were shelved – at least until the morrow and the Pursuit Race !

The crew of Windwhistle.

The Pursuit Race. Leslie Gentry and crew sailed Sool-ai-Mon across from Helford River in order to start the race first and show everyone the way. A lovely breeze on a fine reach showed the usual 'follow-my leader' except for Peter Noakes with crew of Annelise and boyfriend, who raised a spinnaker and bore away slightly! However, it was all to no avail as the only boat to actually locate the finishing buoy and go around it was Kotuku, who very proudly took away the trophy.

Janie Smallridge.

BALLAD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2011 RESULTS

ST MAWES - MAY 2011

There were 9 entries. 4 races sailed: 4. Rules allow a result to be discarded so following overall results from 3 race results The discarded points are those with double strike through.

Boat	Sail No	Club	Helm Name	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Total	Nett	Rank
Shara of York	3331	Plymouth	Peter Noakes	1	1	1	1	4	3	1st
Duchess	3322	Plymouth	Janie Smallridge	2	2	2	2	8	6	2nd
Matui	5037	Plymouth	Mike Luker	3	3	5	5	16	11	3rd
Kotuku	1478	Fowey	Paul Dixon	5	5	3	4	17	12	4th
Windwhistle	5554	Plymouth	Martin Jones	6	6	4	3	19	13	5th
Sixpence	6	Plymouth	Chris Jackson	4	4	8	7	23	15	6th
Balu	651	Plymouth	Dick Brown	7	7	7	8	29	21	7th
Capella	987	Fowey	Brian Runnalls	10 DNF	10 DNC	6	6	32	22	8th
Summertime	996	Plymouth	Chris Tyrell	10 DNF	10 DNC	10 DNC	10 DNC	40	30	9th

Race 1								
Boat	Sail No	Club	Helm Name	Place	Points	Rank		
Shara of York	3331	Plymouth	Peter Noakes	1	1	1		
Duchess	3322	Plymouth	Janie Smallridge	2	2	2		
Matui	5037	Plymouth	Mike Luker	3	3	3		
Sixpence	6	Plymouth	Plymouth Chris Jackson		4	4		
Kotuku	1478	Fowey	Fowey Paul Dixon		5	5		
Windwhistle	5554	Plymouth	Martin Jones	6	6	6		
Balu	651	Plymouth	Dick Brown	7	7	7		
Capella	987	Fowey	Brian Runnalls	DNF	10	8		
Summertime	996	Plymouth	Chris Tyrell	DNF	10	8		

Race 2								
Boat	Boat Sail No Club Helm Name Place Points							
Shara of York	3331	Plymouth	Peter Noakes	1	1	1		
Duchess	3322	Plymouth	Janie Smallridge	2	2	2		
Matui	5037	Plymouth	Mike Luker	3	3	3		
Sixpence	6	Plymouth	Chris Jackson	4	4	4		
Kotuku	1478	Fowey	Paul Dixon	5	5	5		
Windwhistle	5554	Plymouth	Martin Jones	6	6	6		
Balu	651	Plymouth	Dick Brown	7	7	7		
Capella	987	Fowey	Brian Runnalls	DNC	10	8		
Summertime	996	Plymouth	Chris Tyrell	DNC	10	8		

Race 3								
Boat	Boat Sail No Club Helm Name Place							
Shara of York	3331	Plymouth	Peter Noakes	1	1	1		
Duchess	3322	Plymouth	Janie Smallridge	2	2	2		
Kotuku	1478	Fowey	Paul Dixon	3	3	3		
Windwhistle	5554	Plymouth	Martin Jones	4	4	4		
Matui	5037	Plymouth	Mike Luker	5	5	5		
Capella	987	Fowey	Brian Runnalls	6	6	6		
Balu	651	Plymouth	Dick Brown	7	7	7		
Sixpence	6	Plymouth	Chris Jackson	8	8	8		
Summertime	996	Plymouth	Chris Tyrell	DNC	10	9		

Race 4								
Boat	Boat Sail No Club Helm Name Place Poir							
Shara of York	3331	Plymouth	Peter Noakes	1	1	1		
Duchess	3322	Plymouth	Janie Smallridge	2	2	2		
Windwhistle	5554	Plymouth	Martin Jones	3	3	3		
Kotuku	1478	Fowey	Paul Dixon	4	4	4		
Matui	5037	Plymouth	Mike Luker	5	5	5		
Capella	987	Fowey	Brian Runnalls	6	6	6		
Sixpence	6	Plymouth	Chris Jackson	7	7	7		
Balu	651	Plymouth	Dick Brown	8	8	8		
Summertime	996	Plymouth	Chris Tyrell	DNC	10	9		

Scoring codes used

Code

DNCDid not come to the starting area10 pointsDNFStarted but did not finish10 points



The winning team *(again!)*. Well done Peter – he's the one with a false grey beard to hide his youthfulness.

And now for something different.

Last March the Ballad Association held a dinner at the Royal Plymouth Corinthian Yacht Club. 2 reasons really, to meet and chat over some lovely food and drink and secondly, the real reason really, was to hear Chris Jackson give a talk and slide show of his experience of crossing the Atlantic last year so here is his account of the:-

The Jester Challenge 2010

Last year I wrote an account of my solo three legged warm up trip from Plymouth to La Coruna up to Crosshaven and back to Plymouth. This year was to be the real deal and something for which I had made preparations over three years (and in my head for most of my lifetime). The six months leading up to May 23rd 2010 were crowded with anxiety with preparations on Sixpence clashing with pressures of a challenging new job and the self imposed pressure of fund-raising for the Alzheimer's Society (my "SixpenceforAlzheimer's" campaign).



But the weekend arrived and so did my great crowd of supporters who Katie entertained royally, taking the strain off me so I could simply relax and enjoy my last night on dry land for some time to come. The following morning was relatively relaxed, the forecast benign but I was slightly bugged by the fact I had forgotten to get a courtesy flag for the States. But my ever resourceful friend and sometime crew Sean, stopped off at the American diner at Trerulefoot roundabout and charmed them into parting with one of their stars and stripes! So all complete and after a tearful farewell with Katie I cast off and left Saltash on the tide, to join the supporter's boat at the Barbican landing stage at midday. Irritated by the fact that the Yanmar - despite an upgrade of the battery over the winter, was still taking some cranking over from cold, I nevertheless thought no more about it. Arriving at QAB, a contingent of Jester Challengers were making their way out - several of those without engine and being towed by launch or fellow competitors. There was virtually no wind. Alongside Drake's Island I hoisted the main and the new No1 and began the long drift towards the start line - others perhaps more wisely had got themselves closer, to be there for the start gun (12 bore! courtesy of Ewan Tailyour Jones whose brainchild (amongst others) the Jester Challenge is). Those Balladeers who accompanied me - Janie, Mike, Mike, Tim (thank you) will testify to the wildly different array of little boats gathered for the start of this great event from the tiny little cutter "Just right" to... well the comparative hugeness of Sixpence - and frankly I knew which boat I would rather be on!



way past the breakwater and we were making 5.5 - 6 knots when we rounded Penlee Point and set a course for the Lizard. My supporters turned back at that point but "Nova Scotia" (Sixpence's former owners Norman and David) accompanied me to Rame Head where I decided to get my new cruising chute out of the bag and picked my speed up to 6.5 knots leaving them well behind, and to enjoy a sparkling sail in full sunshine perfect!! There were 24 starters and being a late arrival at the line I found the fleet split up remarkably quickly, in part I think reflecting the different routes that the challengers decided to take. However with chute up I did catch up several competitors and with the breeze dropping in the early evening overtook "Cooking Fat" a 21 foot Wharram catamaran who achieved a remarkable 32 day crossing and then turned around and came back in 23 days. I'll now let the log takeover.

Hoisted the spinnaker and drifted slowly around the Lizard and by 1200 on the 24th was insight of and due South of the Scillies. A persistent swallow found its way into the cabin and vanished; but must have found its way out again while I was napping - I was starting to get into a 15 minute cat nap routine, aided by Katie's kitchen timer. At 1330 plugged in the lat and long for the Grand Banks bearing 284° True - I think the first time I've followed a Great Circle route. By midnight the log reading was 149nm.



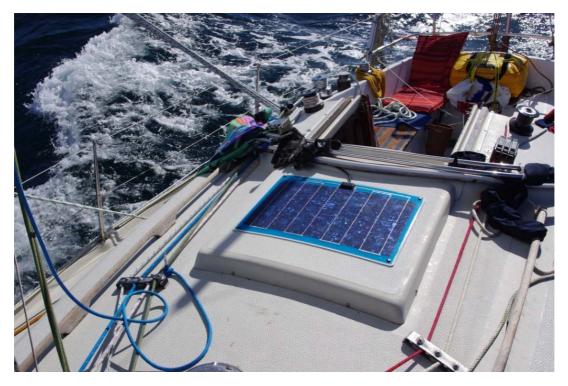
The following day brought a strong breeze from the NNE, fine weather and a cracking sail with a days run of 132NM. The 26th brought one of my best days run of 148NM and contact with several ships on the same track. Disturbingly the MV Montreal reported that I was not showing up on the radar and so I moved the two tubular reflectors to the back stay and out (I hoped) from the shadow of the mast. I was concerned about the engine cranking over and the knocking out of the electronics temporarily. The 27th brought light winds and for 8 hours no wind at all and the sky signalled an approaching change in the weather. By now I was seriously worried about the engine and knew something was amiss; it started but only just and I ensured every ancillary piece of equipment was charged (handheld VHF, Iridium phone). Position now was N50° 23.1' and W15° 50.4'. The weather front arrived in the early hours of the 28th and the wind backed to SSW and I hoisted the No2 and reefed the main. This was my final go with the engine before it packed up for good.



During the morning the wind rose sharply and I spent several hours up and down changing sails until I was down to storm jib and 3 reefs and finally storm jib alone. Sixpence very comfortably rode this period of heavy weather and the surprisingly short steep seas it kicked up. Later that day I phoned Katie and told her my decision to retire as I knew that it would be a matter of hours before the electronics wound down, and I wasn't prepared to arrive at the other side of the Atlantic in severely challenging and unfamiliar waters without them. Seasickness had dogged me on and off and returned with the foredeck work; and that combined with tiredness meant I slept for several hours without break. So I turned back at 1745 position 50° 15.7'N 17° 24.5'W with 585NM covered going West - and the optimist in me says that would have made for a 30 day crossing! On the 29th the weather improved and wind dropped enough to set the spinnaker in the late afternoon and I called Katie again who relayed some advice from our engineer Nick. But I had tried all his options in trying to start the engine. On the 30th another front came through in the early hours bringing a strong Westerly and poor visibility. By now shipping was increasing and so too were close encounters with fishing vessels who were clearly alarmed at my lack of navigation lights and me at their apparent lack of look out. I decided to call Falmouth CG on the sat phone to let them know my position and predicament, but they were relaxed and friendly and didn't feel the need to put out a call to shipping. My first 24 hours without sleep passed into 31 May and the wind backed and dropped but visibility remained poor and from time to time a container vessel would loom out of the mist.



Fortunately I was still getting data from both the GPS and AIS although flickering in and out, and so large vessels were much less of a problem than those fishing. By now I was on the edge of the Western approaches with a final night before entering the channel South of the Scillies.



By 0900 on 1st of June the breeze had picked up to a force 6 and veered to the NW and with the No2 and full main charged towards the Lizard in

glorious sunshine, wet gear spread around the cockpit and feeling altogether more relaxed but dog tired and starting to hear voices as if a radio had come on by accident. Well I had two radios and neither were! Eventually I worked out that it was the sound of the water passing the hull, but in the voice of Evan Davies on the Today programme (well not quite but not far off!). Rounding the Lizard at 1800 I hardened up and set a course for Fowey so that I could get Nick to look at the engine the following morning. My rapid progress slowed as the breeze veered to the North and then North East and pretty well died away off Cannis Rock; and at this point one would have dropped the sails and motored in but... I had one of the most satisfying sails tacking into Fowey against the ebb with misty puffs of breeze coming down the valley. And to my delight, the solar panel had put a bit of juice back in the battery and the echo-sounder came to life. Such was the silence hanging over the harbour I abandoned the winches to guietly haul the sheets by hand, a ghostly moving presence in the harbour weaving amongst the sleeping crews - except for an alert dog on a motorboat who heard us and let his owners know (very loudly!).



Finally we glided onto the pontoon at 0245, and having made fast I had the best 4 hours sleep ever. Ten days and 1200 miles later I was back home but now dreading the prognosis from Nick, who came on board and told me of the couple in a Moody who had called him out at great expense and when he got on board pushed the stop button and started it up! Thanks Nick...just the sort of breezy banter I can do without! Well after much harrumphing and whacking the hell out of his battery set, the head came off and there was the problem: cooling water had tracked across the block

to one of the cylinders of the Yanmar. Hydraulicing apparently - I wasn't bothered what it was called I was simply relieved that my decision to turn back seemed justified. And then there was the sharp intake of breath at the cost of a new engine, now a 20 horse Beta which we're very pleased, with a good deal more oomph for no more weight.

So that was that - a sad end to years of dreaming, planning and hard work, and will I go again? Yes I hope so, but without the same pressures of work etc... Will I go in Sixpence? But of course! Would I change the preparations and set up on Sixpence - probably and along these lines:

- A warm up cruise to shake out the seasickness
- Roller furling (probably) + removable inner forestay; (sail changes with an IOR rig are pretty exhausting)
- More solar, wind or trailing capacity for charging
- Emergency nav lights
- More reliable means of weather downloads

But physical modifications to the Ballad were generally small in scale - let's face it they are designed and built to handle pretty much anything (and do)!

Chris Jackson. Sixpence



Sixpence in the 2011 Nationals.

Some of the entrants in the 2011 Nationals in no particular order.



For an "Off shore" yacht Capella looks horribly "In shore".

So who is going to join in the fun next year? Look out for the Spring issue or our new web site for further information. It appears that the greatest grouping of Ballads is in the far South West but please join us. You will get a warm welcome in one of the best cruising areas around the UK. Please send us information of your activities for inclusion. So come on share with us your love and experiences of these fabulous boats.

And now for the Cruising types?



Many Ballads are now well over 30 years old. Many Ballads have had a face lift or extensive modifications to its interior. See above.

Why not share your ideas and workmanship with other Ballad owners via these Newsletters? Please contact the Newsletter editor with your ideas.

Another Appeal.

Your editor is always looking for information, suggestions and experiences of fellow Ballad owners. Anything no matter how small, please send to the editor below, you must all be fed up reading about the National Championships as interesting as these may be to the die hard racer. Suggestions as to how the Newsletter can be improved also welcome

Barry Quest,

Brackenhaze, Old Station Road, Horrabridge, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 7RA. e-mail: <u>bquest@btinternet.com</u> or Tel: 01822 855 362.

Hope you all had a Happy Sailing season for 2011.

Time to lay up your boat and maybe do some updates/modification. Please share them with us.

I'm going to fit a Lewmar opening glazed vent in the cabin. Who else has done that? Advice welcome. Look out for my write up in the next Newsletter if I complete, but there I've said that now so had better get on with it!

And not forgetting the subscription form is over leaf.

UK Ballad Association 2010/11 Subscription request

If you have already paid your 2010/11 subscription, thank you.

If not it would be greatly appreciated if it could be paid immediately. The unchanged rates (agreed at the AGM) are £5 per boat plus £1 per owner. For most this means either £6 (one owner) or £7 (two owners). There is also a new category for past owners of Ballads who wish to remain in touch with the group, at £5.

If you no longer own a Ballad or do not wish to continue to receive these mailings please could you also advise Janie either by email (<u>ianiesmallridge@tiscali.co.uk</u>) or by posting this form. If you have the details of the new owners of your Ballad, it would be appreciated if these could be made known.

Please make cheques out to the UK Ballad Association and send (with this form) to Janie Smallridge at the address below:

	The Will							
	Ludwell	Lane						
	Exeter							
	Devon	`						
	EX2 5A0	لم ل						
Name.						• • • • • • • • • •		
Addres	S							
Tel. No								
Ballad	Name							
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Please	note	the	following	change	in	my	Ballad	ownership
details.								

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Duchess with our Hon Secretary at the helm with an apprehensive crew member – what has he seen that we haven't? It didn't stop them crossing the finish line 2nd in each race



And finally - Shara of York, winner of all 4 races with its helm appearing to be making a call to his stock broker or asking the Falmouth Coast Guards to ensure a clear run to the finishing line!