

## BOATS IN THE BAY 2011

### THE JUMBO RACE

Having gone to such lengths to arrange for a gun (a replica piece from the quarterdeck of a Nelson era frigate, no less! and supplied by new members, Colin and Sally of the Star Gun Company)) it was imperative to give racing a go.

With a steady SSW F5 gusting F7 we thought it prudent to use our double mizzen rig (as yet untried). This meant moving the mizzen to the foremast and bending on the leg o' mutton jiggers I had made up over the winter. We had no idea whether the rig would be effective on the wind and were divided as to which tack to set off on. Starboard would take us through the moorings and some large visiting fishing catamarans and the possibility of having to tack for Smeatons Pier whilst Port would take us into clearer water but also into the lee of W.Pier. We opted for starboard and I signaled to the gunner and waited...

A deep-throated roar filled the air with smoke and seagulls and left one in no doubt that something serious was going on! Warps cast aside, sheets in and we were away, *William Paynter* just leading. Ducking and diving through the moorings fending off steel topsides, we just got through unscathed whilst our mizzen boom danced along someone's rail looking for something to snag. Next the pier looms up and the jumbos pinch up. *WP* seems to have a freeing wind and pulls ahead whilst *Celeste* limps along and, thanks to the ebb tide, eventually clears the harbour and finds clean air.



We gradually clawed our way to weather of *WP*, the double mizzen rig gratifyingly balanced, and beat toward the first mark. From this direction the wind pours down the valleys and fans out as it hits the water. Thus we tacked far too soon for the mark for, on port tack, for we were headed almost back onto a reciprocal course!

We just made it on the next tack and were the first to round the mark and ran off towards the second. Bean was constantly playing the foresheet and Luke the mizzen. Colin adjusting the tension of the halyard and I had the crew shifting weight from side to side and fore and aft. We increased our lead. On rounding the third mark with *WP* was still on our heels I gave the helm to Luke advising him of all the mistakes I'd made first time round. Rapt concentration.

Just as we were making the last mark *WP* radioed to say they had conceded and the race was over! I was so hoping Luke would get the gun that I'd arranged with Colin on W. Pier. As he had no phone or radio there was no way of letting Colin know what was going on. Presently there was another explosion for no apparent reason. Perhaps our gunner was

getting bored.

Hanging on the the side of the lifeboat slip, we compared notes and changed crews and mizzen sails taking 6 new members out for their first sail including my cousins Toby and Christine. Christine's father, Robin Nance, was a founder member of St.Ives Sailing Club. Martin Roach tells me that, at their inaugural meeting, discussion turned to the type of beer for the clubhouse. Robin apparently tried calling the meeting to order and thumping the table cried "Boats in the Bay, Boats in the Bay!"

Which gave me an idea.....but that's another story!

JN. 12.09.11