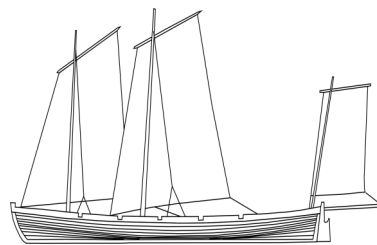


ACGB NEWS

Newsletter of Atlantic Challenge GB Maritime Training Trust

Issue 13: August 2018



Editorial

What a wonderful event hosted by AC Northern Ireland! Great venue (no tides), good weather (only 2 spells of rain), excellent food, great entertainment—our thanks go the Charlie and Marion McAllister, and their committee for organising such a great Contest.

Team GB performed amazingly well, winning 6 individual events, including the prestigious Rowing Race, which we have never won before. Only a few minor mishaps in other events meant they moved into 2nd place overall. They all worked so hard and with such joy and enthusiasm; I was so proud and could have asked no more of them.

They must have enjoyed it too, as they all seem to want to come back for the next Contest!

It was good to see so many parents of our crew travelling to Antrim to support us. Our thanks to them for the cheering, flag waving, providing cakes, and even doing the crew's washing!

Finally, thanks to our loyal supporters who travel to most Contests - Mike and Penny, Sarah, Judith, Sandy and Rob, 1996 crew-member Alan Underwood, and John's cousin, Stewart.

Take a look at the video on this link:
https://youtu.be/tmuRycQXu_E

Jane Kerr

Report on the Training Camp and Contest by Gavin Sim, ACGB Trustee and Team Coach

The crew mustered on a hot sunny day at the start of training in Portland. They were greeted with a knot exam to test their skills and it was pleasing to see that all the crew had done their homework by learning their ropework allowing more time to be spent on the water.

Teaching the crew to row was probably the easiest part of training as almost everyone rowed regularly. Our new set of oars, sponsored by Rob Denton of PrintMedia, were much easier to handle compared to the old heavy set allowing the crew to quickly gain confidence in their rowing.

Although there were few regular sailors on the crew, they picked it up quickly and their knowledge of how the whole rig worked - rather than just the rope they pulled on - impressed me. ➤

TEAM GB INDIVIDUAL RESULTS:

Ropework	6th
Oars & Sail (1)	1st
Sailing (1)	1st
Man Overboard	5th
Sailing (2)	1st
Jackstay Transfer (1)	7th
Jackstay Transfer (2)	6th
Slalom (1)	8th
Slalom (2)	5th
Navigation	6th
Oars & Sail (2)	1st
Sailing (3)	2nd
Oars & Sail (3)	1st
Rowing	1st

CONTEST OVERALL RESULTS:

1st	Northern Ireland
2nd	Great Britain
3rd	Russia (1)
4th	Ireland
5th	Russia (2)
6th	Belgium (1)
7th	USA
8th	France
9th	Quebec
10th	Denmark/Canada
11th	Belgium (2)

The leadership shown by the mast captains, both on and off the water, was very impressive and their drive to teach and improve the crew was a massive help during the training period.

In general the training had been slow paced focusing on keeping it safe and understanding what was going on rather than going for speed. This had its benefits reducing the risk of injury but heading to Antrim for the Contest week I was a wee bit apprehensive on how the crew would perform knowing that we had not had a chance to practice everything at “race pace”.

Overall the training had its highs and lows but altogether the crew had all the skills required to compete but maybe lacked a little bit of experiences. Undeterred, we arrived at Antrim Boat Club where we settled into our new home. We arrived a day before the Opening Ceremony so there was very little chance to practice in the contest area so instead we started making friends with the other crews who were also just arriving.

The first day of the Contest started with a new Ropework competition where every crew member had to tie a knot, whipping, splice or racking seizing.



The Captain's Gig was next where Jade expertly coxed the gig around the course without any drama. The scores were very close and I don't think the 8th position reflected the high quality of her coxing but overall the standard of coxswains at the Contest this year was very good. I don't think I have been to a Contest where there has been such close competition throughout the fleet in all of the events.

In the afternoon the L'Esprit was held giving the crew the opportunity to mix and make friends with other crews before the real Contest events.

Oars & Sails followed by a Sailing Race in the afternoon and any worries I had about our performance quite quickly disappeared. The Oars & Sails was flawless apart from one broken oar but the lead was big enough that even our closest rival had no chance of catching up. There was an incident at the start of the Sailing Race where Russia 1 snapped their bumpkin on the bow of *Intégrité* resulting in us taking a penalty. This was a minor setback and we quickly managed to bounce back and take the win.



On Day 3 it was another win in the Sailing where Reuben's tactical decisions allowed us to get ahead of the fleet and collect our third win in a row. In the afternoon came the first of the “inshore” events with Crew Overboard. After a poor start the crew's strength and determination really showed as they made up a massive amounts of distance on the other crews but unfortunately the course was too short and we had to settle for 5th place.

Day 4 did not go as planned. There were four events on this day: two Jackstay Transfers in the morning and 2 Slaloms in the afternoon and although the crew were very competent and safe in the gig, the lack of experience started to show. The rowing starts were much better than the previous day but a couple of penalties in both Jackstay event 1 and 2 meant that we ended up in 7th and 6th place, respectively. ➤

It must be noted that in general the crew performed to a high standard in the Jackstay, we paid a high price for small avoidable mistakes. For the Slalom, although *Intégrité* was very fast in a straight line, she did not turn well which caught me off guard whilst coxing the first Slalom and we were blown onto a flag resulting in a penalty. During our second run, we avoided hitting any mark so came in mid-fleet. We know what we have to improve for 2020!



Day 5 was a relaxed day with only Navigation in the morning. This seemed to go fairly well but, as with the rest of the events, standards were high and our combined error of 0.257 nautical miles (475 m) we were placed 6th—0.05 nautical miles (90 m) separated us with 3rd place. After Navigation we had the afternoon off so the crew used this opportunity to take their family and our supporters out for a sail and a row to show them what AC is all about.

Day 6 was a breezy day so we were double reefed during the morning's Sailing Race. We finished this race second behind the Belgians and on the way home the mizzen yard snapped. Once we reached the pontoon a quick repair was initiated by Harry and Reuben who produced a new yard over lunch to enable us to compete in the afternoon's Oars and Sails. The new yard performed well and with all three sails working again there was another win for the crew who gave another flawless Oars and Sails performance.

On Day 7, the penultimate day of the Contest, the Passage Race was substituted for an Oars and Sails race. We had a poor start and crossed the start line with the majority of the fleet in front of us. This meant we had a lot of time to make up on the leaders, Russia 1, who were already a number of boat lengths in front of us. After the first lap we had managed to get into 3rd position transitioning back to sailing behind the Irish who we had caught on the rowing leg. After passing the Irish at the gybe

mark, our focus turned to Russia 1 who were still a good distance in front. We arrived at the transition zone 30 seconds behind the Russians who were over two boat lengths in front of us by the time we started rowing. Nerves led to a scrappy transition with an oar being dropped in the water but it was soon recovered and we were off. Encouraged by Reuben, who never doubted our ability to pull it back, we immediately started gaining on the Russians who we passed with 100 m to spare, crossing the finish line 15 seconds before them. In six Atlantic Challenges I have never witnessed anything like this and the discipline, skill and self-belief required to win a race under those circumstances really reflected on the quality of the GB team.

The afternoon race on Day 7 was cancelled due to the weather conditions so, as with tradition, the final race on Day 8 was the 2 mile Rowing Race. We entered this race as favourites and I think it was the first ACI Rowing Race I have started that I truly believed we could win. We quickly pulled away from the rest of the fleet and kept putting distance between them all the way to the finishing line, crossing it with over 1 minute between us and second place.

Over the whole week the crew performed to a high standard and conducted themselves professionally both on and off the water. It was a pleasure to be part of this team and I hope that we will see them all again in 2020!



Our Crew Celebrates!





Intégrité looks splendid following her refit, and will continue to do so thanks to the Maintenance Manual written for her by Colin Henwood, Boatbuilder.

But now we need to raise funds to take her, and a crew, to the next Contest of Seamanship in St. Petersburg, Russia in the summer of 2020.

If you have any suggestions of where we can look for funding—please let me know.

Looking for Crew for ACI St. Petersburg 2020 !

We will start crew recruitment this Autumn. If you know of any young people with the spirit of adventure please ask them to look at our website—www.atlanticchallengegb.org

Photographs by Terry Girling and Jane Kerr

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