

Jester Azores Challenge 2016

SITREP No. TWENTY THREE 231930AJUN

With the safe arrival in Spain of Peter Orban in *Tisza* this will be the final Sitrep and so over the weekend I will haul down the Jester burgee from *Black Velvet's* starboard yard arm and not hoist it again until next year's Jester Baltimore Challenge.

ARRIVALS - 10

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 301030AMAY
Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 311005AMAY
Claude van Martyn in *Oui Oui* at 211220AMAY
Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G* at 011300AJUN.
Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 031130AJUN.
Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 042230AJUN
Basil Penakis in *Jaba* at 090825JUN
Olivier Delebecque in *Godot*
Tim Luke in *Medusa*
Trevor Leek in *Jester*

RETIREMENTS - 13

Bill Churchouse in *Belgean*: returned to Plymouth, reason not known
Ertan Beskardes in *Lokum* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Colin Reid in *Tui* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Guy Willing in *Blue Grass* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Tony Head in *Triple Venture* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Duncan Sclare in *Freebird*: returned in good order to Baltimore.
Thom d'Arcy in *Fathom* returned in good order to Ria de Caedeira.
Jonathan Hopper in *Francesca* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Graham Humphreys in *Tenacious* returned in good order to 'Blighty'.
Steve Hickey in *Newlyn Maid* returned in good order to Hayle.
Roy Tall in *Spirit of Venus* in Southampton.

Peter Orban in *Tisza* arrived safe in Cangas, Spain: Hello Ewen, I arrived to Cangas in Spain yesterday afternoon (Tuesday 21st June) we are both OK and safe. I have got some problem with my spot connect lots of email didn't get through so my family and friends and You did not get my messages but my device showed me all fine. Sorry about this and I will contact with the company to find out what happened. I started from Plymouth 22th of May and I sailed 29 days and 1957 nm before I reached Spain. We got two Force 8 and four Force 7 all together more than one week in heavy weather conditions and eighty days continual head wind in a huge depression before I turned down to Spain. I tried everything what I could but I couldn't reach Azores this year the nearest point was 330 nm away from Terceira. Anyway I am happy and satisfied I learned a lot and got lots of experience for the future. I hope all the other skippers and boats are fine and safe. See you on the next Jester Challenge start line. All the best, Peter

Basil also sent this report:

Hello Ewen

Thank you very much about all the preps and support to us the Challengers, and indeed it was a challenge for me well before the start.

As you know it was Wednesday before I sorted the problems with my engine. Left Southampton on Thursday afternoon hoping to make it for the BBQ but this time the electrics let me down. Ended up in Cowes for the night and after the electrician declaring my alternator 100% OK left Friday afternoon. Within an hour the problem occurred again but as I had wind I carried on. Had a lovely sail while the wind helped. Total blackout by Plymouth, all electrics and engine in denial, no wind and tide against me, towed in by RNLI, problem so called fixed by Kevin in QAB on Monday morning. Hence my presence in the spectator boat on Sunday.

About 3 nights out, the engine started by itself I managed to stop it. Then half an hour later the same. This time though all the electrics packed up, I was on survival mode from then on. During the first of the bad weather I fell in the cockpit bent the doodag on the tiller and I thought I cracked my ribs. Well there is nothing they can do about cracked ribs, and with no lights and no engine it would have been suicidal to have returned back in the channel in that state. So the best choice at the time for me was to hide in the atlantic and sort out matters as I went along. I had a third battery, spare nav lights and rigged these in time. Initially strapped a torch on the main and hung another one from the back stay.

Also found my anchor light and I had that for few nights hanging from the backstay. Eventually the spare nav lights and the anchor light gave up the ghost after repeated gales. So instead I rigged the AIS transponder and the RTE. I had a few battery operated chartplotters (3) so I could get my Lat Longs. The spot at least worked independently.

Highlights were the gale whereby the rollers were so high that you could put 50 houses in the trough. I was going NW at the time and I needed to tack the boat but after a number of failed attempts, I went down below thought it out that if I did not tack I'll end up in Iceland...eventually took the headsail off and gybed, for the next 26 hours I was going south, no matter where!

The other highlight was ETA midnight or 0200 hours in rough seas and strong winds with no lights and no engine, I thought this not a good idea and instead headed north of Terceira and employed my sea anchor, a first for me. I thought this will be only for overnight but the strong winds persisted during the day too. I lost 17 miles in as many hours, pulled the sea anchor, to my surprise, quite easily in, and the rest is history as they say.

I was becalmed at 6 miles from the finish line and in the morning as I was approaching lost the wind again. Eventually after crossing the line Roger gave me a tow to the marina.

Kind regards, Basil

SUMMARY

Peter's and Basil's signals (and all the others that appeared in earlier Sitreps) sum up much that is superb about the Jester Challenge and why it makes it all so worth while (at least for me!). Whether the Azores were reached or not lessons were learned and, in a way, that it was it is all about.

By any yardstick it was a 'bad weather' Jester Challenge which makes it even more impressive that all 24 starters arrived at the destination of their choice safely – and, as all know by now from ten years of skipper's briefings, I don't mind where anyone ends up providing they end up safely.

This year, to have ten finishers out of 24 starters is quite an achievement for single-handed vessels under 30 feet in length facing such genuinely appalling conditions. So – a collective BRAVO ZULU.

Decisions to turn back are, as we also know, often more difficult to make than the decision to continue. My mantra ‘Seamanship Not Showmanship’ is so often followed by JC skippers that I feel, now, rather humble even mentioning it! Of course it helps that we are not sponsored and so have no responsibilities other than to ourselves and our vessels.

I have no doubt that lessons learned through individual stories will begin to appear on the various JC forums/websites and long may that continue for the benefit of present – **and future** – Jester Challengers.

I hope to see as many JCs as possible entering for next year’s JBC but in the meantime I hope everyone has moon’s weather for the rest of the 2016 season – you have deserved it!

Ewen

SITREP No. TWENTY TWO and a half 211030AJUN

An interim Sitrep as Peter has still to reach a safe haven but below is encouraging news that he is safe.

News of Peter Orban in *Tisza* has been received:

Dear Ewen, I am currently in Cangas in Spain and have just received an email from Peter Orban to say he will arrive here tomorrow. Small update I have from him is that he got to within 330 miles of Praia da Vitoria but had some difficulties. I will suggest he gets in touch with you with an official update if he hasn't already. I look forward to catching up with him over a beer tomorrow. Best wishes, Thom on *Fathom*

... and the following signal trail explains why Peter has been incommunicado:

On 20 Jun 2016 23:18 Sandra signalled: If anyone has contact with Peter can they pass on Trevor's mobile phone number 07880 825296 or +447880825296 as he is in Praia da Vitoria and looking out for Tisza. Best wishes. Sandra Leek.

Peter replied: Hello Sandra, I am 20 miles away from the Spanish coast. We are OK but tired. I have sent position report everyday to Ewen but I have got some problems with my spot connect lots of my friends did not get my messages. I will contact with you when I drop my anchor in Sanxenxo Spain. I hope all the others are safe. Best regards, Peter

SITREP No. TWENTY TWO 201400AJUN

ARRIVALS - 10

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 301030AMAY

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 311005AMAY

Claude van Martyn in *Oui Oui* at 211220AMAY

Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G* at 011300AJUN.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 031130AJUN.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 042230AJUN

Basil Penakis in *Jaba* at 090825JUN

Olivier Delebecque in *Godot*
Tim Luke in *Medusa*

Trevor Leek in *Jester*: Hello Ewen Just wanted to let you know that Trevor and *Jester* arrived this evening (Sunday 19 June) and are safely tied up in the marina at Praia da Vitoria. I will be flying out to join him on Tuesday, returning on the 9th July. I'm not sure if there is anyone left out there still sailing? Lots of love, Sandra

BRAVO ZULU Trevor - a cunningly thought-out sailing plan, finely executed.

SITREP No. SEVENTEEN 031915AJune

One new arrival to report.

ARRIVALS

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 031130AJun. **BRAVO ZULU**, Doug. A cracking performance under some trying circumstances, superbly overcome.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS from those at sea - 3

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 0630A. 39° 20'N; 26° 1'W co 240°.
I estimate this evening that Glen has less than 30 nm to go at his average speed.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* at 1300A. 39° 38'N; 23° 44'W co 230°.

Trevor Leek in *Jester* at 1300A. 50° 31'N; 22° 31'W co 240°.

There has been an interesting exchange of signals today based around Trevor's northerly position and track:

Hello Eric, This is different.....secret Jester. Keep me in the loop so I can ice down the "Sam". Best to all who are sailing to the Azores. Kind regards, Norm. Newport

Bonjour Sandra, Norm and Ewen, Relax man, Trevor is a bit east of the Azores longitude but at 50° north. He is far from reaching any destination. It's not yet time to ice down the "Sam" or it might be emptied before he arrives. At present status, just some curious followers questioning. Amicalement. Eric

Hello all. Good to hear from you. Tony persuaded Trevor to take his sat phone with him otherwise the prepaid minutes would be wasted. He has been sending weather info and I believe that Trevor is skirting round a low and will soon be heading south. Don't worry, he knows where he is! You are doing a great job with ocean race track Eric. I have been adding Trevor's positions as it seemed quicker than sending to you. Love to all. Sandra

PERSONAL REPORT

The following report was received from Roger this morning:

The Run into Praia

The final run into Terceira, Praia de Vitoria lived up to all the foregoing bad weather. All day I had been sailing into the next deep depression with the winds getting stronger. As they strengthened they were forecast to swing further south, my present best course was due west and Terceira was to the south west so I hoped the forecasters were right. As predicted they went south and increased to 25 knots but I could just lay Praia de Vitoria. At 20.00 Monday evening I had 34 miles to go and hoping the wind would hold it's direction. As it got dark I could see the glow of the island and the next time I came on deck the bright lights of the American airbase made it look like a Christmas decoration sat on the sea.

Terceira is elliptical in shape and Praia de Vitoria is in the middle of the eastern side and by 03.00 hours, Tuesday, I was 13 miles off and desperate for sleep. Unfortunately the wind had got stronger, now over 30 kts, forcing me north of my course which would mean if I kept straight on I would hit the middle of the north side of the Island. When I reached the north side of the island, however, it would give me shelter from the southerly gale and then hopefully I could work my way along the north coast back to the eastern side. At my present rate of progress I would reach the coast in about 3 hours. My choice was turn south east away from the island while I slept or carry on and rely on the alarm to wake me in time. I had slept through the alarm a couple of times before but having fought my way west for so long I was very reluctant to turn away so I set the ships alarm and my phone alarm to wake me in an hour and a half and got into my pit. Even though *Ella Trout* was crashing and banging along I was asleep almost immediately. It's amazing how the heightened tension of the situation is in your mind even though you are sound asleep because suddenly, after only an hour, I was wide awake; something had changed! Everything was quiet, we were not crashing along but just rising and falling with the waves. There had been a lull in the storm, consequently *ET* had wandered off course and she was now drifting north. It took me a while to work out what was going on before I realized I could alter course and sail directly back towards Praia and get to the east of the island. I tentatively raised more sail, this change had not been forecast and I expected the wind to come slamming back at any moment, and I set off back in 15 kts of wind. The lull lasted about two hours before the strong winds returned to 25 to 30 kts from the south but by then I was 5 miles east of Praia de Vitoria and could easily lay the harbour. Somebody was smiling on me that day because without that totally unforeseen lull in the storm it would have had at least another day's hard sailing, as it was I entered the harbour at 09.05 Tuesday morning. Phew!!!!

It's a big harbour and even inside it was quite rough and it took me an hour to get the sails down and drop the anchor at the south end under the harbour wall. Having got safely anchored and sorted out I thought I was there for at least the next 24 hours before the wind died down and it was safe to enter the marina in the north western corner of the harbour. But no! At midday *Oui Oui* arrived and made immediate radio contact and Julien (*Bula*) told him to come straight in and they would catch him and help him moor safely. So I called up and was told the same, come in, we have a berth for you and will help you. So by 13.00 I was safely moored alongside with a very excited and happy bunch of sailors. These are really joyous times because only those who have been out there really know what they have come through and it all overflows.

Roger

Ps I do not know when you will receive this as I cannot get an internet connection, the marina wifi is hopeless and the satellite phone cannot see the satellites from under the hill where the marina is so I may have to go into town and find a cafe to send it when I'm sorted out. I will try to summarise the whole trip but I'm not sure if circumstances will allow to quietly sit and rationalise but I'll send a message whenever there is something that may be of interest and of course I will blog on the way home.

SITREP No. SIXTEEN 021828AJune

No new arrivals and one new retirement to report.

The following exchange of signals has taken place:

From Duncan to Ewen this morning: Yesterday....As we know from Ewen's last report Denis and *Lizzy G* rolled into town in morning sunshine. Two weeks without contact "nay bother", well even the tough as nails Denis didn't like being constantly wet and privately admitted it was not an easy voyage. Nancy came down from her mountain hide out to the marina to give congratulations. Mrs Pipat and Julian's two young girls flew in and the moon himself wained from his hi-wire. A quiet and enjoyable pint was taken by others. My plane is going now so signing off .D

From Ewen to Duncan: Thank you so much Duncan. It has been a pleasure having you as our 'Foreign Correspondent'! Best wishes for a moon's-l-weather season and trust we shall meet again for a future JC. Ewen

RETIREMENTS

Steve Hickey in *Newlyn Maid* returned in good order to Hayle.

SITREP No. FIFTEEN 011750AJune

And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more,
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore. [For a cold beer and a warm shower?]

(I've kept this poem for one more day so that I can explain that I did not write it! It is from *The Walrus and the Carpenter* by Lewis Carroll in his book *Through the Looking-Glass*, published in December 1871.)

From Duncan in Praia: Depending on which time zone you are using BST, (most) UTF/French, Azores, anyway about lunchtime *Oui Oui* and *Ella Trout 3* bounded into the marina with 30K [?] on their transoms. After much hauling of lines between firm hand shakes and congratulation the two new arrivals were secured and for some the party well and truly kicked off. After dark the writer and wife Maura joined for dinner with the expanding Jester family now including Julian in *Bula* still with high voltage running through his 'wire to the moon', Roger, Master Mariner of *Ella Trout 3*, Claude the charismatic raconteur of *Oui Oui* and a slightly bemused Nancy Maxwell wife of Glen. (See below). All our thought are with those still out there and it is good to see the wind here down to a respectable F4 this morning. If there was a general theme that came out of the rather raucous evening it was "NEVER AGAIN" so I will be the only entrant to Jester next time it seems????!!

New arrivals? There was much talk of Denis in *Lizzy G* joining us to make an even wider eclectic mix of characters at the table. (See below under Arrivals.) Let's hope he is here soon as we need his writing skills as your present correspondent departs for the real world tomorrow. Congrats and fair winds to all still going. Duncan.

Pedro of the marina sent this message via Eric: Hi Len, I've just arrived to the marina. *Ella Trout* and *Oui Oui* are securely sheltered in pontoon D. *Ella Trout* is by the bow of my boat. Knocked there but didn't get any reply. Now I must go to the clinic, later will try again. Duncan may be the guy that was yesterday on Julien's boat but I was rude and didn't introduce myself to him. Will apologize next time I see him. Is there anyone else out there? Best regards, Pedro

Bonsoir, Sometime the arrival have something like crisis management; not idealic!
Eric

ARRIVALS - 4

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 301030AMay

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 311005AMay

Claude van Martyn in *Oui Oui* at 211220AMay

Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G* at 011300AJune. Message received from Julien via Andy at 011530AJune. "Lizzie G has arrived." Great to hear that, and well done Denis. The party is getting bigger. Andy.

Gentlemen, I've just had a phone call from the 'Jolly Jesters'. Denis arrived at 1300 BST today. They all seem to be having a good time; Sarah Carton

Another great and welcome surprise as we had not heard from Denis since he was south of Lands End shortly after the start. **BRAVO ZULU DENIS** - another chapter for THE BOOK!?

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS from those at sea - 4

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou*. Nancy reported Glen has lost self steering and the top two panels of his junk sail. He is however still battling on and expected at the end of the week. 1330A today, 40° 19'N; 24° 42'W co 240°.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* at 011212AJune. 40°.52454N; 22°.14557W. Routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda*. Stop press from Duncan in Praia this morning, 'Got *Jekeeda* on AIS NW of Punta Delgada. East of Terceira. (Maybe looking for shelter to repair his genoa?). 1200A today, 38° 22'N; 24° 59'W co 260°.

Trevor Leek in *Jester* at 1200A today 50° 3'N; 20° 59'W co 230°.

SITREP No. FOURTEEN 311933AMay

And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more,
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore. [For a cold beer and a warm shower?]

ARRIVALS - 3

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 301030AMay

My wife Maura and I met Julian yesterday afternoon and shared his joy, relief, hatred, highs, and lows of his voyage, over a good meal. To say he was 'wired to the moon' would be an understatement! He had little weather info and sailed zigzag down the rhumb line. He also had no email so knew little of other Jesters movements. He has great concern for all still out there as we await Roger's arrival this morning? I will leave the whole story for him to tell later. There are many reasons we take the Jester Challenge but many of you may not have

made the link (as I didn't) that Julian's interest was prompted by Blondie Hasler's 'Cockleshell Heroes' in his home port of Bordeaux. He has given a fitting tribute ...Congratulations. Duncan.

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 311005AMay. The first of today's arrivals and superbly deserving of a mammoth BRAVO ZULU – (how old are you Roger?!)

Dear Eric, You were right. After a pretty gruelling night *Ella Trout* has finally made safe harbour. It was 1005 BST this morning. The weather is too rough to get into the marina so Dad can catch up with sleep but will have to wait for the shower!! He's hoping to get in tomorrow. Thanks to all his supporters and well wishers. He will update his blog later today. Best wishes, Sarah. Shoreside team.

Bonjour Sarah

From our local contact a boat just entered in Praia and get sheltered in the south. Probably too much wind to enter the marina single handed. It might be *ET* ! Amicalement Eric

From Duncan Sclare, Stop press Yacht just entered harbour. 99% ET. Going to South end for shelter. 0815 local.

Claude van Martyn in *Oui Oui* at 1220 BST. The surprise finisher; not that I am surprised that Claude finished, you understand, but we had heard nothing of him since just south of Land's End. A really hefty **BRAVO ZULU** and I am sorry not to have been there to return the water-pistol salute you gave *Black Velvet* at the start. Bravo, Claude.

Message from Julien via Andy Lane, 'Claude is in sight aboard *Oui Oui*.' Received at 311300A. Roger is still at his anchorage.'

From Duncan: *Oui Oui* just entered Praia harbour 11.20 h GMT

BRAVO ZOULOU Claude, Eric

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS from those at sea - 5

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 1030A, 40° 56'N; 23° 19'W co 240

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* at 1243A 40°.92083N; 20°.68521W. Routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* via Eric and Len: Doug rang a few minutes ago to say "he is in a pickle with a torn genoa" and may need to retire away 'temporarily'. He will try to ring later. Position at noon today is 38° 45'N; 23° 27'W co 260°. Amicalement, Meg

Tim Luke in *Medusa* at 0500A today, 48° 59'8" 38'W co 167° at 5.4 knots.

Trevor Leek in *Jester* at 1300A today 50° 12' 17" 55'W co 230°.

SITREP No. THIRTEEN 301845AMay

ARRIVALS - 1

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 301030AMay. BRAVO ZULU or should it be BRAVO BULA?

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Julien Pipat in *Bula*: Translation of text message received by Andy Lane from Julien aboard *Bula* at 300800A. "Land in sight!! AT LAST. After 15 days at sea, I look forward to returning to life ashore. But if these last two weeks have subjected me to all the emotions, the wind on the nose most of the time, I can't wait to open my two bottles of wine, well earned!!! I have tears in my eyes. *Bula* and Julien." Andy: Naturally I have sent the necessary BRAVO ZULU and also I have tears in my eyes for him.

Later from Andy: I am happy to tell you all that Julien safely bought *Bula* alongside at Praia da Vitoria at 301030A this morning, being the first Jester to arrive. I have just spoken with him and he is over the moon. Since wife and daughters won't arrive until Wednesday he will have a couple of days to chill out and find his land feet again. Both he and I have thoughts for the other Jester skippers who will have to affront the next heavy winds tomorrow. Sorry Roger, we got there first ! For the late arrivals, don't forget the wonderful carnival de sanjoaninas at Angra do Heroismo between the 21 and 30 June. Being used to the greys and greens of the sea, the colours are breath-taking. A "must" if you are there. Finally, a huge thank you to Julien for modifying my old boat *Bula* so that she was capable of affronting the gales and getting there first. Julien, WELL DONE. Andy Lane

Then from Len Hiley in Praia: He has arrived! Those hot showers and fluffy towels will be amazing. Photo attached, (of *Bula* not the towels). Congratulations Julien. Len

From Eric: Bravo Zoulou !! Eric

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 1726: Very Close 62 miles to go. Not far now. And the wind is piping up to give a lively reception. ETA is breakfast time tomorrow providing I can handle the strong winds over Terceira when I arrive and don't have to stand off and wait for it to ease. This is just a position report as conditions are not good for typing. I will post a finishing time when I arrive and then, once I've slept and showered I will try to write a summary of the trip and answer some of the questions I've been asked.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou*: Nancy Maxwell reported this morning: I have been patiently waiting for everyone and this morning Julien arrived. He is very happy to be here. Glen is about 300 miles northeast and facing several days of strong south, then southwest winds. Psn at 1030A: 41° 28'N; 21° 50'W co 230.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* at 1154A: 41° 47' 18" 55'W co 250. Routine position report. JABA and skipper are fine.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 1300A, 39° 24'N; 21° 20'W co 230

DELAYED START - 1

Tim Luke in *Medusa*

TODAY'S NIL REPORTS - 7

Trevor Leek in *Jester*

Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G*

Claude van Martyn in *Oui Oui*

Olivier Delebecque in *Godot*
Peter Orban in *Tisza*
Steve Hickey in *Newlyn Maid*
Guy Waites in *Betsy*

PAUSED - 2

Peter Crawley in *Sheldro* in Torquay.
Roy Tall in *Spirit of Venus* in Southampton

RETIREMENTS - 10

Bill Churchouse in *Belgean*: returned to Plymouth, reason not known
Ertan Beskardes in *Lokum* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Colin Reid in *Tui* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Guy Willing in *Blue Grass* returned in good order to Falmouth.
Tony Head in *Triple Venture* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Duncan Sclare in *Freebird*: returned in good order to Baltimore.
Thom d'Arcy in *Fathom* returned in good order to Ria de Caedeira.
Jonathan Hopper in *Francesca* returned in good order to Plymouth.
Graham Humphreys in *Tenacious* returned in good order to 'Blighty'.

SITREP No. THIRTEEN 30?????AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Trevor Leek in *Jester*: from Sandra. Hello Ewen, Just to let you know that I have just heard from Trevor and have updated his position on ocean racetrack (ORT) ...all positions are around noon. Trevor had company for the night....a storm petrel joined him for the night and flew off this morning. I will update ocean racetrack as and when I hear from him! Looks as if there will soon be some arrivals.

ORT current psn given at 1300A today: 50° 3' 14° 9'W co 230

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 291530AMay: Just Over the Horizon. The weather persists in resisting my efforts to get west, I suspect the wind gods are making me pay for going round their storm. It has certainly been up hill this last 24 hours, and the last 600 miles! There has been some sun but there has also been lots of squalls and heavy rain. It's pouring down at the moment. This has meant, day and night, lots taking reefs and then, a few hours later, shaking them out again, always with the wind ahead. On one occasion I thought I saw something fall on the deck when taking the second reef. I did; when hoisting the mainsail later the second reef didn't come out, the shackle must have come undone and fallen overboard. That wasted me an hour, fortunately it was during the day so we're now working fine. The next storm is due over the Azores on Tuesday and with still 160 miles to go it looks like it is setting out the welcome mat because that's about the time I should arrive. Hopefully it will be daylight and I can get safely into the marina. I have just heard a ship talking to a yacht on the radio checking that they will pass safely. I couldn't hear the yacht but ship was quite clear which suggests there maybe a Jester some 30 to 50 miles away. Nothing else to report just wish we could get some decent Azorian weather which is what I came for!

Latest ORT psn at 1400A today. 39° 30'23° 35' co 250

Julien Pipat in *Bula*: From Andy Lane: Julien's Birthday today! Psn at 290730AMay, 40° 07'N; 26° 04'W. co 180, sp 3kt. So close to arriving but wind dying today, may not arrive for his birthday but in time to welcome his wife and daughters who arrive Terçera tomorrow.

Duncan Sclare in *Freebird*: Ewen, *Freebird* made rapid progress up the west coast of Ireland after 2 days rest in Baltimore and is now home on her mooring in Westport. Skipper was exhausted but got up the following morning at 2am to catch a flight to Terceira booked for my return crew (now not needed) Now sitting in Praia beautiful sunshine relaxing, awaiting arrivals will post as soon as get any sightings. Sorry to hear of Graham Humphries retirement and find it more than a little interesting that he drilled holes through his Jester sticker as I also did!!! We are both Achillies yachts. (Don't worry about the fuel Graham, give it to me in Plymouth next year for "Jester Baltimore") Good luck to all still out there. Duncan.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda*: '360 n. miles from target'. ORT psn at 1300A today, 39° 36'N; 19° 43'W.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba*: 41°.49676N; 17°.89740 at 1300A. Routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou*: 41° 50'N; 20° 48'W at 0830A today.

PAUSED

Peter Crawley in *Sheldro*: Hello Ewen, Not sure if you received my email on 20 May (I didn't receive it) saying that I smacked one side of my rib cage and returned back to Torquay. It is my intention to complete the Challenge when I can move better, subject to family influence and dog sitters. Regards Peter.

Roy Tall in *Spirit of Venus* returned to Falmouth and is now safely in Southampton but...(following received 29th May)...Hi Ewen, I do hope you are enjoying the Royal Marines Programme today at Horse Guards, whilst sipping your Pimms etc and meeting old friends. This really is a email to ask you not tear up my blood sheet just yet as I intend to have another go at the Azores. I will probably take a collar with me, not dogs! As my neck is still a bit sore. I have to do it this year, as my wife's 70th and our golden wedding is next year, So" channel hops only" I have to be around for the get together and parties. My intention is to sail from Southampton to Cawsand/Jenny Cliff. Anchor overnight set off in the morning and go though the start line again and get on my way, I hope to meet up with the others somewhere in the islands, if they haven't started they trip back. I will let you know when I reach Praia de Vitoria, or otherwise, my spot will still be working everything else stays the same. I wont give you a precise date as it will depend on the weather. Whilst at home had another funeral to attend they seem to come to frequent for my liking. All the very best, Roy Tall.

SITREP No. ELEVEN 281910AMay

By my calculation we now have twelve Jesters at sea *en route* for Praia: *Jester*, *Lizzie-G*, *Jekeeda 2*, *Tao Zou*, *Sheldro*, *Godot*, *Tisza*, *Medusa*, *Bula*, *Jaba*, *Oui Oui* and *Ella Trout III*.

Of these I have been a little puzzled by the movement - or lack of it - of *Qui Qui* and *Lizzie-G*. Nor do I have any sightings - visual or electronic - of *Godot* and *Tisza* since leaving; nor do I necessarily expect any so I remain unconcerned.

The following individual reports may be a touch higgledy-piggledy (*en français - pêle-mêle*) as I try to catch up from having been incommunicado for 56 hours. Most reports, by the time they reach me, have lost their DTG (date/time group).

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout*: The Storm passes. Nothing special to report today. Last night was pretty lively as we ran out of the eye and into the back/western side of what was left of the storm. We had 30 knots over the deck for 3 hours and then it slowly eased down to the lower twenties at which level it stayed all morning. Unfortunately our heading declined in sympathy going from west to southwest with only 16 knots by 3 o'clock this afternoon. Mind you it is all very pleasant, the sky is blue and the sea is quite gentle, if we could only sail directly to Terceira instead of zigzagging all the time it would be perfect!

The 'Jester Storm', that's how I like to think of it, has certainly impacted the 24 starters in this years Jester Challenge. I do wonder if knowing what others are doing influences your decisions. How many retirees were influenced by others? I am sure I took a more cautious approach, attempting to sail round it, than I might otherwise have done left to my own devices. I suspect my shore based team were also influenced. It will be interesting to talk to Dennis Gorman when he arrives as, I believe, he has no shore base communications to know what others are doing.

The 700 miles from the Portuguese coast against the wind with any free sailing spells being few and far between, and short lived, has not been entirely unpleasant. There has been lots of sun, strong wind does not necessarily mean cloud and rain, although I've had my fair share of rain squalls. With just 250 miles to go my cautious approach, which saw us avoid all the major winds in the storm, was probably in the true Jester tradition.

Roger

Ps. It's just occurred to me I have seen very little wild life this time. I wonder if the route has any bearing on this.

Disorganised sea: Telephone report from Dad at 8pm GMT today (I think this was the day before yesterday). The sea is still very rough and it is exhausting sailing. Also very difficult to get the computer out, get it connected to phone and then write something legible! Hence the update by phone. A few things to report. Firstly Dad had a very bad headache on Monday morning so tried to rest in the afternoon. Unfortunately, he didn't manage to sleep which is usually a good cure. Consequently he had a bad night on Monday and was feeling worse Tuesday morning. It suddenly occurred to him that he might be dehydrated, so he drank plenty of water and was back on top form by lunchtime! The miracles of Adam's ale! Secondly, the sea is very "rough and disorganised" and poor Ella Trout is bouncing around all over the place! So much so that the kettle, cup and whole of the top of the cooker came flying across the galley and landed on the floor on the other side! Thirdly, some progress is being made, as by noon today, he could stop "zig zagging about" and can lay a course directly west. Still beating but no need to keep tacking. A few situation details. 20/25 knots across the deck, 3 reefs in the main and the genoa is well rolled. The waves are huge rollers heading one way with huge rollers heading across them in a different direction (highly disorganised!) But Dad is well and sounds in great spirits, spending most of his time below decks.....very wise??

A Swallow Came to call - Thursday PM - I was sitting in the conn (my seat on the top step of the companionway) and because it was so beautiful after what we had had over the last three days I thought I'll just record how different it is tonight for tomorrow's blog it will only take a minute. Well it was beautiful; I was eating a well earned Ella Trout hash after a major clean

up, we were 'sailing by', the sun was sinking into the sea and the sky was blue with a few white clouds. All very pleasant and so different to the previous days and that was to be it. I finished the first half of my hash, they last two days if I'm lucky, climbed below and started to wash up. When I turned round there was a swallow sat on the back rail, went for my camera but when I got back he had gone. The wind shifted and I had to tack. Going back up I disturbed the swallow who was sitting under the spray hood, again I thought he'd gone. Completed the tack came below and there he was swinging precariously on a coat hanger.

The wind is all over the place and I had to tack again; it is now dark and when I came back into the cabin he was asleep on the back of the saloon settee. As I type he is right by my shoulder and above where I sleep. I'll try and share my bed with him and hope he's rested and ready to go in the morning. I presume he got caught up in the storm flying north and got swept west, then south to end up in the middle of the Atlantic between Europe and the Azores. It's a mixture of desperation and trust on his part but I must say it's all pleasure on mine.

Friday AM, Overnight the wind had stayed steady allowing me to sail a bit north of west, the swallow had disappeared and I got good sleep. The wind came up with the sun and we are back to the old routine - strong head winds, bouncy bouncy - and that is how it looks all the way to the Azores. It is depressingly slow progress. I went to write up my log and there were swallow droppings on the log and charts. The little devil left his calling card I thought; not so! I keep a sponge on the floor for mopping up and there he was sat on the sponge, I could so easily have stood on him. I lifted the sponge with him on it and he obviously wasn't so good. He scrambled on to my bed, left another parcel on my pillow, then nestled into my bedding and quietly died. We had a burial at sea with full honours. Very sad after coming all that way. The wind has now gone!!!!!!!!!!!!!! still bouncy bouncy though.

1230A (date?): 40° 38'NW; 19° 24'W, co 270.

Graham Humphreys in *Tenacious* reports: We had taken quite a battering when we decided to fight again another day. She was taking on a lot of water through the deck anchor well and that was finding it's way into the forepeak - all my books are now so much mush. The bilge was full. I bailed out the well as best I could, and drilled two three-quarter inch holes from the inside near the bottom. Through the Jester stickers!! It solved that problem but gave me terrible mal de mer and I felt that we had both had enough. Although disappointed, it has been a privilege to meet such a great bunch of guys, Glen, Duncan (I owe you a can and fuel), Roger, and Bill of course. Everyone can be proud they tried it, and look forward to next time, Thankyou, one and all, Graham Humphreys and *Tenacious*. PS - DON'T FORGET DENNIS' BLOODY BOOK!%#*+!?

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 270830A: 41°56'N; 22°43'W, co 230°, sp 8kts: "Ça sent la morue!"

From Andy Lane: Julien has northerlies today, north westerlies tomorrow and south westerlies on Sunday, so maybe arrival on Sunday. "Bon vent et ne casse rien"... and again 280830A: 40°44' N 24°46 W, co 240°, sp 4 kts, "Max speed! Wild surf. 11.4kts. 150 nm to Praia da Vitoria."

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda*: 1300 (date?) 40° 10'N; 18° 42'W co 230.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou*: 1830A (date?) 42° 43'N; 20° 4'W co 230.

Trevor Leek in *Jester*: 1300A (date?) 49° 57'N; 12° 19'W co 270.

RETIREMENTS

Guy Willing in *Blue Grass* returned in good order to Falmouth. He signalled today: I arrived back at Cowes this morning all well rigging was repaired in Falmouth but unfortunately ran out of time for another attempt. Thank you again for organising an amazing event. Even though I didn't get that far I learnt a lot and had an amazing time.

SITREP No. TEN 251730AMay

The two vessels of whom I have heard nothing since the 'official' start are *Tenacious* with Graham Humphries and *Sheldro* with Peter Crawley - or have I missed something? I am not worried, just curious. By my calculation we now have twelve Jesters at sea *en route* for Praia: *Jester*, *Lizzie-G*, *Jekeeda 2*, *Tao Zou*, *Sheldro*, *Godot*, *Tenacious*, *Tisza*, *Medusa*, *Bula*, *Jaba* and *Ella Trout III*.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Trevor Leek in *Jester* sailed this morning from Mayflower Marina and crossed the start-line at 1021A. Currently he faces four or five days of easterlies (and then northerlies?) and so could catch up some time on those who sailed nine days ago. Tony Head who helped him get away signalled: "Just to confirm, Trevor set off at 0940 this morning 25th May. He sailed out of the marina in quite a strong tidal stream and brisk breeze with great aplomb. The ability to control sail power by quickly and easily hoisting and lowering panels in the junk sail was most impressive. Incidentally I have lent Trevor my Iridium satellite phone so we should get occasional position reports. I reckoned there was no point to my phone languishing in a drawer here at home with airtime otherwise forfeited, when it could be put to good use by Trevor.

Tim Luke in *Medusa* signalled: A hardened gear box seal that objects to the correct / full oil level but works well with a little less. I'm heading out again tomorrow afternoon so hopefully won't be in touch for a couple of weeks.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* signalled at 1200A today: 44° 56'178N; 12° 79'813W; routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

Julien Pipat in *Bula* signalled at 1400A today: C'est un régale. 6.5kts sur la route direct!" Earlier today Andy Lane signalled: Bula at 250700A 44° 10'N; 19° 10'W, Cap 280° Sp 3kts and quoted Julien: "Bad day yesterday. Where is Ella Trout?" Julien has the competition in the blood and whether he or Roger will get to the Azores first will be exciting. They each have very different problems to face. Andy Lane

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 2024 yesterday: 39° 43'N; 14° 29'W co 280°.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 1300A: 42° 18'N; 12° 2'W co 180°.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 1430A yesterday: 46° 20'N; 12° 6'W co 200°.

Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G* at 0930A: 48° 29'N; 7° 25'W co 260°.

SITREP No. NINE 241730AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Basil Panakis in *Jaba* at 1300A: 44° 25'N; 11°32'W, co 180°. Routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

Julien Pipat in *Bula* at 240900A: 45° 25'N, 18° 36'W, co 270° at 4 kts. "Sea calm (relative)." An earlier message received last night at 232300A said, "Mer déchaînée. Très grosse. Me suis préparé au pire au cas ou! Et allume AIS pour tracking. Last pos 45° 20'N 17° 59'W. Vivement demain."

So a big sigh of relief as he is delivered into the southern edge of the storm. Andy

Tim Luke in *Medusa* signalled: Something of a false start due to Raymarine autopilot problems. We thought we had solved the problem back in February but it returned in a worse form shortly after departing yesterday. Telephone coaching didn't work so I headed for our nearest anchorage at Barrow. Now back in Glasson and after an afternoon with the engineer we anticipate ordering new parts. Hopefully I'll be heading out again on Thursday. Will let you know as soon as the problem is resolved. Good to flush out the problems while I can resolve them and thank goodness for the Aries!

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout* at 1745A yesterday: 39° 19'N; 12° 29'W, co 240°.

Doug Pingel in *Jekeeda* at 1300A: 42° 18'N; 12° 2'W, co 180°.

Glen Maxwell in *Tao Zou* at 1420A: 46° 20'N; 12° 6'W co 200°.

Denis Gorman in *Lizzie-G* at 0930A: 48° 29'N; 7° 25' co 260°.

SITREP No. EIGHT 231910AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Peter Orban in *Tisza* sailed from the TRSC last Thursday

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout*: What is this storm going to do?

Saturday night was a beautiful moonlit seascape giving me a fast down hill ride After my first hours sleep this had turned into a roller coaster while I was asleep and ET was struggling to cope with all the sail we were carrying, she was doing a sustained 9 knots at times, but didn't broach, she's pretty good! I reefed down to make it more manageable and went for another hours sleep while ET roared on. Dawn came beautiful and clear and the wind gradually died leaving me flopping about and going nowhere. Looking back it was a good day, the sky was blue the sea was blue and it was WARM. I shed my waterproof trousers and seaboots for the first time! It was a lovely, my sailing appetite would have been replete had it not been for the threatening storm out to the west.

Yes the storm - Well it seems to have stalled between me and the Azores allowing me to slip further south. It started as a nice tidy round depression racing west across the Atlantic. It is now anticipated the back end will stop over the Azores while the leading edge continues on and swings NE. I am now hoping I have got sufficiently south to miss the worst of the first half of the storm. The problem is where do I go next with the back end of the now elliptical storm stuck over the Azores dishing out 65Km/Hr winds (40 mph or 35Kts)? At the moment I am heading south west and about 130 miles west of Lisbon. Not really the best route to the

Azores!!!
We wait and we watch?

...and today this!
Ewen,

You won't get time to read all the blogs but I thought you might appreciate this one. I hope it is an adequate description of 'Moons'Is!' sailing?

A big red moon rose up out of the sea and I thought another beautiful night! - Well not as good as Saturday night but as it turned out it was still 'Moons'Is!' sailing as Ewen likes to put it. The full moon kept me company drifting in and out from behind hazy clouds while I sailed along in a light south-easterly breeze; difficult to believe when I know there is a storm raging over my destination out to the west.

This morning the three day forecast showed the low reforming itself into the usual round shape and heading SE towards me and as it does so it loses its intensity. The north and west sides still strong but south and east sides, which affect me first, much quieter. I hope the forecasters have got it right because I am now heading directly west to meet it. If it continues southeast and passes over me I shall have to deal with the stronger winds on the other side. This storm has been imposing its menace on my mind and actions for the last six days, it would be nice to get it behind me. Still we do these things and venture onto the oceans, who am I to complain?

As I write the sun is shining out of a blue sky with fluffy white clouds and there is a warm wind bowling us along, it's difficult to believe the forecasters.

Steve Hickey in Newlyn /Maid

I put a new sail on Newlyn Maid in Hayle and swapped the battens for fibreglass poles. Everything seemed OK. It had successfully overcome some issues with the original sail (battens falling out and old stitches failing).

On my way to Plymouth, there was an issue of being almost blown into the traffic separation zone rounding Lands End and not being able to tack away (~180 degree tacking angle). I assumed the tidal currents were the issue. This slowed progress for several hours. The boat then tacked round Land End to Newlyn against the wind without giving me particular concern about tacking angles. However, thinking about it in retrospect, I used a long southward tack to give me distance from the land before switching back North (with a large tacking angle).

Sailing to the Fal did not expose any tacking issues, but the wind was slight and progress slow. Starting out from the Fal for the Jester, the boat would tack out of the river only with difficulty. Port tack seemed excessively wide. A frustrated Bermudan rigged skipper shouted over that he could not tack out and had given up. So, I was reassured.

Then I had the same tacking issue in the Channel. Starboard tack OK. Port tack horrible. I could sail South and a little East (towards France) or North and a little West (towards Mounts Bay). That is the tacking angle was about 180 degrees, and this was not a result of the conditions. I started adjusting the length of the sheetlets to compensate. (Sail geometry seemed a likely cause of the tacking asymmetry.) The yard hauling parrel snapped and the boom hit me in the gob.

Crisscrossing shipping lanes in the channel and sleeping in 5 minute increments while making no forward progress seemed dangerous and silly. I decided to sail back to Penzance or the Fal

to make adjustments and sort the thing out. The Fal was the easier destination. So, I ended back where I started but traveling rather more quickly than before.

I hope to sail around the Lizard on Saturday after making adjustments. I could turn left to the Azores or right to return to Hayle.

Julien Pipet in *Bula* reported today Bonjour, A 230800A, 45.37N 16.26W, cse 245°, Spd. 4kts, 628 nm to the Azores. Going well in heavy seas. Bravo Julien from Andy Lane

Basil Panakis in *Jaba*: 45°.32071N; 9°.79160W today 1158A. Routine position report. *Jaba* and skipper are fine.

RETIREMENTS

Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper*: has arrived safely at Plymouth. Best wishes and fair winds to all Jester Challengers, wherever you now are. Howard

Duncan Sclare in *Freebird*: Sunday night: Resting in Baltimore sunshine my sincere thanks to the many who made JAC possible esp. TRSC . Will thank in more detail when i don't have to type on tiny little phone. My own anchor locker and battery probs all down to my own poor preparation. I learnt more in a couple of weeks Jesting than the last 50yrs sailing. I am not in the least unhappy with my retirement and feel it fits well with the jester ideal of seamanship. Thinking of those still out there and hope they all stay safe. Keep the reports coming and thanks again, yours, Duncan

SITREP No. SEVEN 221930AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Julien Pipet in *Bula* reported today: *Fais la moitie ca va bien* - Half way, all well

RETIREMENTS

Roy Tall in *Spirit of Venus* is now safely in Southampton.

Tony Head in *Triple Venture* has returned safely to Plymouth.

SITREP No. SIX 2015000AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper*: I am sorry to announce my retirement from JAC 2016. Early gribs suggested that if I worked N of W for a few days the big depression currently building would be mostly to my south. It is now forecast to move more to the north, closing that option. I am heading back for shelter; I hope to be in Plymouth Monday morning, but may turn into Falmouth if necessary. Position at 1800 on 20 May is 48:36.8N 9:41.8W I have SW 25kt, making around 6kt at present and steering 80.

Tim Luke in *Medusa*: Dear Ewen, It looks like you had a good conditions for the start and a bit of rough stuff to follow. Medusa and I will be departing Glasson tomorrow morning. Rather later than expected but my daughter's wedding required significantly more time and energy than I'd anticipated! I've no crew and will obviously stop motoring from Fishguard. Thanks again for organising so many adventures. Can't wait to be underway.

Thom d'Arcy in *Fathom*: 20.00 on 21/05/16 Just anchored in Ria de Caedeira after crossing Biscay. Ready for a beer. After seeing the way the Atlantic was looking a few days ago and especially the depression forming near the Azores I decided to head south rather than head back to the UK. I had always aimed to continue cruising after the JAC. I'm disappointed to have to retire but for me was the sensible thing to do given the conditions. It was great to be part of the Jester family in Plymouth thanks to you all for your friendliness and assistance given. I wish all the competitors a safe passage to their next port.

Olivier Delebecque in *Godot*: Dear Ewen, I will be leaving the TRSC tomorrow morning. The burger was paid to Barley, I keep You updated. ETA estimated few days after the new moon.

Jonathan Hopper in *Francesca*: Jonathan in Francesca has decided to turn back. He's had enough of beating and storm forecasts!

Tony Head in *Triple Venture*: Posn 2900A 20 May 48N02 8W16 Co 050 Spd 5. 212 miles to Plymouth Wind SW F5/6. Rolly progress under No 2 genoa only.

Generally horrible weather all day - rain, drizzle, poor visibility. Although roly, going downwind in the right direction is a relief after the relentless beating to windward with 110 dgerees tacking angle of the last week. No shipping seen on AIS or SeaMe RTE. I intend keeping well to the west of the Ushant Traffic Separation System with its concentration of Europe's shipping taffic.

Weatherfaxes suggest the depression due to form at the Azores will be as low as 984mb and extend over most of central north Atlantic. Althouth still very disappointed at withdrawing I know it was the right seamanship for my cicumstances.

ETA Plymouth may be Sunday evening or Monday morning. Will refine ETA by mobile phone when in range at the Lizard. I propose berthing at the TRSC to unload the ton of Jester gear (food, wind vane steering gear, storm gear, spares for just about everything etc) before returning Cargreen. Should have a boot-top line again.

Did a spag bol this evening, washed down with a small glass of Californian red (hope Charles Evans approves of the colour this time!)with Steve Reich's "Different Trains" on the IPOD gramaphone.

As I type this the wind has eased slightly to 18kts and vis improved which will make overnight more comfortable and lead to a better look-out.

Best wishes to everyone from Tony in TRIPLE VENTURE
Latest psn: 0-7385568 Latitude:50.10625 Longitude:-4.59174 GPS location
Date/Time:05/22/2016 11:33:06 GMT

Roger Fitzgerald in *Ella Trout*: There is a **storm** coming! A deep depression heading for the Bay of Biscay with forecast winds of 30 to 40Kts. Sarah and Niall had been telling me they could see this storm over the last few days. Well it finally took shape yesterday, now I was connected, and I

extended my weather forecast further west and saw the size of the thing coming. I also got reports of other Jesters retiring and heading back to Blighty for shelter.

I then had a very uncomfortable few hours going over my options, I couldn't see any way it could miss me. Carrying on to the Azores and it would pass right over me and I would have to take what came. Not a happy thought having been in one before. I started to look at my options:

- I was within 100 miles of the north west Spanish coast; I have no Spanish area charts, there are basic features on the chart plotter but no detail. It did not look inviting, although I did look at getting behind Cape Finistere which looks good for protection from the East, North and West but is open to the south and therefore dangerous for the first half of the storm.
- Go back into the Bay of Biscay and look for shelter there. I do have detailed French charts but I couldn't get away from the idea of approaching a strange place at night with a storm behind me and a lee shore.
- Stay out and head for Terceira and baton down the hatches as it arrived, laying on my drogue, if necessary, until it passes.
- Run south or north to try to avoid it. Although north was with the wind it was a lot further. The southern edge was definitely nearer but a slow beat to windward.

In the meantime Sarah sent a text to say she had looked at every weather site she could find and the consensus was head south to avoid the worst, at the time I was heading west to get maximum sea room to lay on my sea anchor. The current wind would allow me to set a course east of south, give up some sea room and maybe miss it, especially if it turned north a little into the Bay of Biscay. So that is what I decided.

I had a good run overnight averaging 4 to 5 knots, and achieving a heading of 150 degrees. Unfortunately this afternoon the wind has gone light and only now managing 2 to 3kts. My latest estimate suggests I have a chance of missing the front of the storm, i.e. the southerly and westerly winds, but not sure about the northerly winds at the back as the low seems to be changing shape. I can get a fresh forecast tonight which will let me look another 12 hours ahead. I feel far more comfortable at sea with plenty of sea room than close to land. Currently 100 miles of the Spanish coast.

Fingers crossed

Basil Panarkis in *Jaba*: JABA Latitude:45.90674 Longitude:-9.14819 GPS location
Date/Time:05/22/2016 14:57:21 BST

Duncan Sclare in *Freebird*: At 0800 May 19th pos. 47.20N 09.55W I gave up the battle with head winds and on going water entering via anchor locker and more battery problems. I ran North and am now entering Baltimore Ireland. More details to follow

ARRIVALS

Not yet!

RETIREMENTS

Bill Churchouse in *Belgean*: retired into Plymouth, reason not known

Roy Tall in *Spirit of Venus* retired to Falmouth with an unexplained and incapacitating injury to his neck and back. Although recovered with the help of drugs he felt it was irresponsible to set off again and have the same thing happen 'off soundings'. He is now *en route* for Southampton with a crew (Len Hiley?).

Ertan Beskardes in *Lokum* has retired to Falmouth.

Colin Reid in *Tui* has retired to Falmouth.

Guy Willing in *Blue Grass* has retired safe to Falmouth Yacht Haven with a broken masthead bracket supporting his forestay. He returned using storm jib set on inner forestay, now awaits a rigger, and will return home to Cowes 'as and when'...

Tony Head in *Triple Venture* is returning to Plymouth.

Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper* is returning to Plymouth.

SITREP No. FOUR 171740AMay

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Tony Head in *Triple Venture*: Posn AT 2000A 17 May 48N45 8W18 Co 270 Spd 4.7 Wind SW 20-25kts

Short SITREP tonight as quite rough and use of laptop difficult! Slow progress beating into strong SW. Expecting wind to veer to W then I can make better progress, Spoke with FREEBIRD (Duncan Scalre) on VHF. His posn at 0730A 48N40 6W55. He reported all well.

Thom D'Arc in *Fathom*: I'm currently at 48 29 .7N 7 36.4W

Gusting up to 30 knots with biggish seas. Only a couple of miles NW of *Lokum*. Last night we were chatting on vhf and he reported he had electrical problems and was debating whether to retire. Also that he had heard a loud bang and now he cant move his hatch (but can crawl underneath it). Understand he is now aiming to continue and *Lokum* and *Lizzie G* are hove to waiting for this to pass.

Fathom is going quite nicely with 3 reefs and the staysail set making a cog of around 230deg at 3 knots. All is well onboard. May not send a sitrep every day just as and when. Hope everyone else ok.

Basil Panakis in *Jaba*: Latitude:48.99792, Longitude:-5.91782, GPS location Date/Time:05/18/2016 12:51:40 BST

Steve Hickey in *Newlyn Maid*: Rigging fault unable to sail into wind trying fix anchored. (Carrick Roads)

Colin Reid in *Tui*: Ewen, this [weather forecast, copied below]doesn't look good. I'm heading back to Falmouth. Spent last night Hove to. Currently W F6-7.

From: Simon Keeling <simon@weatherweb.net>

Sent: 18 May 2016 08:46:59 BST

To: Colin Reid <colinreid@myiridium.net>

Cc: "forecasters@weatherweb.net" <forecasters@weatherweb.net>

Subject: Re: Bespoke forecast

Good morning Colin, sounds horrible.

I think your current winds will be continuing through this morning and this afternoon, although they should ease this evening to F5, although probably increasing F6 again tomorrow. Swell will continue to be fairly high.

I should warn you that there is the threat of some SW F8-F9 winds Friday ahead of a frontal system moving east, these winds expected to arriving in the western Channel Friday evening and early Saturday morning.

Also, signs of a deep area of low pressure developing between the Azores and Uk next week which has stronger winds surrounding it, perhaps widely F7-F8 and may be difficult to traverse through. Confidence in the forecast detail for then is low. However, I do not like the look of that system, especially considering where you will be, things could change and if the low were not so deep it may nicely srop of into the Azores as it moves east.

Please ask any questions you need and keep me informed of your intentions.

Best wishes,
Simon

SITREP No. THREE 171740AMay

THANK YOU

A signal of thanks was sent to the Commodore of the TRSC that included everyone from Wil and his masterful handing of our mooring needs to those who manned the galley and bar and the members themselves for giving up their pontoon and in some cases their moorings. The Commodore replied saying the JC is the second most important date in their calendar (after their annual regatta) and is looking forward to welcoming us back next year for the JBC.

FIRSTS

There are number of firsts to be recorded:

Glen Maxwell is the first American to become a Jester Challenger, Peter Orban the first Hungarian and Ertan Beskardes the first Turk.

Paul Mead is the second Jester Skipper to fire the starting cannon (see attachment) in honour of his Jester Challenge achievements. He joins a distinguished list of Mike Richey, Norman Bailey and Eric Andlauer.

PRESS

The French 'yachting' magazine *Voile* covered the start on their website, see mon voile mag blog.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper*: noon position on 17 May: 49:15.5N 006:2.7W. Yesterday was spent attempting to tack West into a light and variable Westerly wind; despite a good start we made little

progress until the wind backed overnight. It was mitigated by sunshine and some lovely night skies, so not all bad. The working chart is now Atlantic rather than western approaches, so a small milestone. It was my turn to play dodge fishermen overnight, and burnt much time and quite a few battery hours in the process. We are now heading due west under one reef.

Colin Reid in *Tui*: at 1512A was reported at 48° 43'.66N; 6° 38'.15W and beating into SW F5 doing 4.5 knots, 270 degrees. A bit of a slog but *Tui* going like a train. Area west of Ushant TSS busy with shipping last night so didn't get much sleep. Caught up this morning. *Lokum* and *Lizzie-G* not far,

Basil Panakis in *Jaba*: reported at 1305A to be at 49.52105N; 4.61804W.

Tony Head in *Triple Venture*: spot position at 1106A was 48° 68'88N; 7° 50'479W. All reported to be well.

Guy Willing in *Blue Grass*: reported at 1800A at 49°35'N; 5° 38'W heading 204° at 3.9 knots.

Thom d'Arcy in *Fathom* reported at 1800A at 49° 25'N; 5° 35'W heading 226° at 4.6 knots.

Doug Pingel in *Jakeeda*: reported at 1800A at 49° 29'N; 5° 42'W heading 193° at 4.3 knots.

Len Hiley who has been keeping me in touch with positions has had to 'close down' for a few days.

SITREP No. TWO 161740AMay

STARTERS

The 24 confirmed starters (and late starters) are:

Trevor Leek	JESTER	27
Delayed till mid week		
Guy Willing	BLUEGRASS	
Thom D'Arcy	FATHOM	
Bill Churchouse	BELGEAN	141
Denis Gorman	LIZZIE-G	
Colin Reid	TUI	
Ertan Beskardes	LOKUM	
Tony Head	TRIPLE VENTURE	6565Y
Doug Pingel	JEKEEDA 2	191
Glen Maxwell	TAO ZOU	61
Jonathan Hopper	FRANCESCA	
Howard Chivers	SANDPIPER	
Peter Crawley	SHELDRO	826C
Olivier Delebecque	GODOT	☉
Delayed till mid week due to late arrival from Amsterdam		
Duncan Sclare	FREEBIRD	IR 1011
Graham Humphreys	TENACIOUS	306
Peter Orban	TISZA	259
Returned for minor repairs following a pre-start collision		
Julien Pipat	BULA	
Roger Fitzgerald	ELLA TROUT	GBR 1270L
Roy Tall	SPIRIT OF VENUS	371
Claude Van Martyn	OUI! OUI!	

Basil Panakis	JABA
Started just after noon today (see below)	
Steve Hickey	NEWLYN MAID
Started from Mylor (see below)	
Tim Luke	MEDUSA
Starting from Fishguard	

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Tony Head in *Triple Venture*: Posn 16 May 1100A 49N45 6W00 (18 miles SE of Bishop Lt) Co 230 Spd 4.5 Wind NW 8-10kts. Slow progress from Plymouth into SW winds then veered NW in evening. Passed Lizard at 0200 in v light NW. Boat going well. Intentions: keep hard on NW winds making to west of rhumb line.

Peter Orban: In the Jester spirit he is *'a little bit worrying about* (the yacht with whom he collided before the start) *so he must check his boat as well. I will repair my boat tomorrow and I hope will continue the challenge Tuesday evening or Wednesday morning.*

Steve Hickey: Sent a message from *Newlyn Maid* stating that he was setting off at 1330 BST.

Howard Chivers in *Sandpiper*: noon position on 16 May is about 12 nautical mile south of Lizard in light W wind and smooth sea. At 11:30 radio squawk has a number of Jesters all roughly due south of Lizard: *Locum, Lizzie G., Tui, Oui!Oui!, Fathom, Blue Grass*, and I think an *Achillies* (not copied). *Lizzie G.* spent the night dodging fishing boats, I was a little luckier being slightly to her west.

Basil Panakis: At 1500 BST *Jaba* just south of Plymouth breakwater.

SITREP No. ONE

PRE START

In its inimitable style the Tamar River Sailing Club hosted the eighth *Jester Challenge* in the 10th year of it being sailed. A BBQ on Friday night was followed by the Skippers' Briefing and Dinner on Saturday night...followed by the Skipper's Breakfast this morning (in the fog!) between 0830 and 1000.

BRAVO to Clive the Commodore and his indomitable team who fed and 'watered' us handsomely. Special praise to Wil for his tireless handling of our ever-changing mooring requirements...despite being run down in his borrowed wooden dinghy and having to pull the plug on his lifejacket. Bravo to him too...

THE START

The start at 1300 was in near perfect conditions....sparkling sea, a steady F3 (albeit from the wrong direction) and a warm (sort of) sun. Even the Brittany Ferry failed to turn up - or I had read the timetable wrongly which is more likely.

The ten minute baby-powder-gun was fired by Jacob S-T (aged 10) the five minute gun by Heather S-T (aged 8) and the start gun by Paul Mead (of an indeterminate vintage) in honour of his earlier JC achievements.