

The pleasures of owning a Winklebrig

The boat was designed and built by Eric Bergquist in Cheshire, of Memory 19 and Morecombe Bay Prawner fame. It's a simple gaff-rigged sloop, designed to be easily towed by a 1980s family car. Consequently it has a relatively low ballast ratio, but high form stability. It's been described as 'a good family day sailor offering excellent accommodation for one'. I can certainly vouch for the latter, and know it can take two for extended stays comfortably. I've even heard of families spending holidays on them, though not sure I'd do that, the boat's only 15' on the waterline. However, I did spend the OGA50 festival in Cowes on 'Puffin', and was disappointed when it had to come to an end.

122 are recorded as having been built, and the whereabouts of at least half are known. There's one in the States, Australia and New Caledonia. They're popular in Holland as they suit the canals well, and I'm thinking through the feasibility of trailing mine there.



Tollesbury Rally: Easter Saturday

We bring a short report from the East Coast Area's first event of the season, an Easter weekend rally at Tollesbury, famed for its maritime heritage. Eight East Coast OGA smack's boats formed the core of the fleet racing the course set by Tollesbury Sailing Club, represented by just one winklebrig, 'Fidget'.

Sailing single-handed, I was on the edge of needing to reef, having only one person's ballast, that being me. So one reef was set before the race start, then shaken out, then set again, and our one minute gun was fired.

Being the only single-handed boat, and therefore the only one with a reef in, I decided to start on a 'long' port tack, while everyone else crossed the flood stream on starboard. A risk strategy can pay off if you're the most disadvantaged. We were plugging against wind and tide.

I had no timer, so began counting from 60. When we started, it was immediately clear I should have gone for starboard. Three minutes later the wind dropped a little and I had to head up and shake out the reef, by this time the fleet was rounding the first mark, a quarter of a mile ahead, I had a lot of work to do, now being 12th.

Two and a half hours later, through a long complicated course, I had tried every trick in the book. The centreplate up downwind and minimal rudder to reduce drag, I put all the weight in the boat forward to reduce the transom drag, and stayed in as shallow water as possible against a strong flood tide, the deep water carrying me back. A final placing of 4th wasn't the result I was looking for, but good enough for the first race of the season.

Clive Robertson helming 'AWOL', East Coast Area

Visit the website for a full report, results and more about Tollesbury

www.oga.org.uk/news/easter-tollesbury-report-and-results

Top: 'Puffin' illustration: Claudia Myatt
Left: 'AWOL' at the Tollesbury Rally
Photo: Alison Cable



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There's a thriving website for Winklebrig owners and admirers at www.winklebrig.org

Winklebrigs are very pretty boats and head-turners everywhere. They do well in inland waters and are fine for modest coastal passages. I understand they have crossed the English Channel. There is a particularly well known one on the East Coast, 'Winkle', whose owner Martin Cartwright has modified her to sport six sails instead of two, and is found in Morbihan, Venice, SeaFair and Southwold.

Despite their sailing limitations, they engender huge loyalty. Every year I tell myself I must get something more seaworthy for my sailing ground, the Bristol Channel (p.36), and every year I tow her somewhere and say 'to hell with changing her'.

David Owens, Secretary BCA