

July/August

Sailing - the best and worst times

This month sailing has shown me the best, most exciting, most exhilarating, the happiest and most content time as well as being the most challenging, the hardest and hardest. Sailing wooden boats can sometimes be compared to Lord of the Flies, but without the underage violence.. well hopefully (some of the disadvantaged sail training youths find this tricky.. Or just youths really). Definitely in terms of isolation and the intensity of relationships formed the two aren't too dissimilar, well, at least that's how it feels if you've been sailing 4 weeks straight and there's a gale and you're mid channel and its the middle of the night. Either you pull together as a team, a united front, a slick oiled machine... or you fall apart, which isn't really an option. Having an understanding of your limits is very important.



Paimpol is a French sea shanty festival, full of wooden boats, traditional breton music and french cuisine. Basically a great festival and celebration of sailing traditions. The charter was extended to 2 weeks instead of a week so we were able to sail over to Brittany and spend a couple of days around the Hart de Bretat before heading for Paimpol on the Friday when the tide was high springs. Paimpol like Binic is locked in however Paimpol is a bigger festival with more wooden boats and more people and they like to announce the name of your boat right when you're doing a stressful maneuver. A bit distracting but very flattering. Once we were docked and locked in, I was free to look around all the different types of wooden boat the world could offer! While we were there, we also bent on a new main sail - I had become very fond of the old main sail having had lots of practice on my herringbone stitch on it. It was a great opportunity to meet boaty people, look at their boats and sail on their boats! Fantastic!

