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# 2008 Round Britain Challenge

Thank you for finding time to read my sixth newsletter, keeping you up to date with the final preparations for my round Britain trip. My final GCSE exams are in full swing now, and we are now on the final countdown before I leave! I will be updating my website on the way around, and, if any one would like to donate towards Kendal Sea Cadets, my justgiving page is now active (link from my website) For further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.



**Launching Casulen II in Pwhelli harbour.**



**Testing out my GCSE project!**



**Trying out Kemp's sails for the first time.**

As the final few days draw ever closer, I would like to say huge thank you to all those who have enabled me to get this far. Recently, I have been tying up all of the "loose ends" and finalizing sponsorship deals and other important factors, such as securing a berth for when I set off.

Final sea trials have enabled me to test out my GCSE tech project (a self steering windvane), which has proven really successful and will be a great help this summer. Although it works well in practice, the theory is what I am being marked on, so I'll have to wait and see what mark I get for this! Simrad have provided me with an electronic tiller pilot, which is a great relief, for although my windvane works well, it will be of limited use in light airs and none at all when I am under power.

My waterproofs have been produced, thanks to Coating Applications for all the technical advice on fabrics, and also for the cloth they have provided to enable these to be made.

My new sails arrived from Kemp Sails, and I spent some time over the half term testing these out, albeit in very light airs! This did, however, prove the worth of the new cruising chute which was simply awesome and had us doing in excess of 2 knots where, before we would have been sitting dead in the water. I am waiting in anticipation for some stronger winds to really put these through their paces!

Once again, I have been fortunate enough to be able to spend some time on *Polar Bear*, this time in early April. Although the original plan had been to accompany the crew on the delivery trip to Tromso, due to a combination of weather and unforeseen circumstances, the trip had to be cancelled, so we just went out to do some sea trials and check out the huge swell left over in the North Sea from the storms!



**Sunrise in Bardsey Sound.**

**On Friday 13th June I dropped my mooring to set off on what was basically the start of my trip. Having sailed around to Aberdaron bay, I anchored and spent a few hours getting some sleep before getting up at 0300hrs to catch the tide through Bardsey sound. Although the winds were initially light and unpredictable, by 0800, it was possible to set a good course for Rhosneigr. However, I soon discovered that, if I headed for South stack on Holy Island instead, then *Casulen II* was actually much faster, and, as an added bonus, I calculated that I would get to South stack just on the turn of the tide! My calculations proved about correct, and I went around to Holyhead with between 0.5 and 1 knot of tide against me. Although this was not ideal, it had saved me a day so that I could return home and continue with the final preparations, some revision (and typing up newsletters!). *Casulen II* is now in Holyhead marina, ready for my official departure on the 20th. Many thanks to Holyhead marina for providing me with a berth.**

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**Taking a break on *Polar Bear*.**

Due to the publicity my trip raised in the local paper, I have been approached by the family of an ex-sea cadet and former member of the Royal and Merchant Navies. On his retirement, this gentleman had been saving up with the intention of buying a sailing boat. Unfortunately, he discovered that he had cancer, and within the year, he died. The family have kindly donated this money towards my fundraising for Kendal Sea Cadets, in the form of two brand new Laser



2000 dinghies. These are being presented to me shortly, and in turn, I will then give them to the cadets, so that even while I am away, Kendal SCC will be able to start using these fantastic new boats.

**Arrangements for my official send off!**

As planned I am setting off from Holyhead in North Wales on the 20th June. I will be leaving at 0900hrs from the marina, who have been kind enough to allocate me a berth for this purpose. If any of you would like to come and see me off, you are more than welcome. Apologies in advance for the early start, but "the tide waits for no man"!

Obviously, this is weather dependant, and this first passage, which will be across to the Isle of Man is one that I really need good weather for, as it is 46 miles of open water!