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## Rapness Pursuit Race

Westray Regatta has been an established date in the Orkney calendar now for many years it occurs on the last Saturday of July, and recently has been the biggest sailing day event in the Orkney calendar. The first record of the Westray Sailing Club racing boats is in 1925, there were two stoppages including the war years but organized racing began again in 1961. The success of the one day event is reliant on the dedication and volunteer effort of the local Club, the flexibility of the ferry company, but most of all the ability to attract sailors and spectators from the other Orkney Clubs and further afield.



Westray Sailing Club recognise, and fully appreciate, the commitment of sailors making the effort to travel out to Westray and has always been proactive in attracting sailors and their families for an enjoyable day out. The entry fees and the collection on Regatta day do not cover the costs associated with the event but the dance in the evening along with other organized events throughout the year helps to ensure an overall financial balance for the Club.

It has been evident recently across Orkney that there is a decline in dinghy sailors but a significant increase in yachts, particularly from Kirkwall but from all over Orkney and much further afield as the Orkney Marinas become widely known. The trend appears to be that sailors step up into yachts for more comfort as they get older, which can now be accommodated and safely moored in marinas for an extended period over the summer months.

WSC is looking to accommodate this trend and offer an additional race on the Sunday following the Regatta, as yachts make their way back past Rapness, south to Kirkwall. The proposal

is to work with the time keepers and officials from Orkney Sailing Club and offer a “Pursuit Race” from Pierowall to Rapness based on a 90min course, the boats setting off on a staggered start and finishing at Rapness.

Wind & tide permitting the finish after 90 minutes will be off the Rapness Pier where there is easy access and ample parking for spectators and would be of great interest to locals and visitors. To encourage integration and participation it would be a race rule that each yacht participating would include at least one Westray resident.

Yachts would then come alongside at Rapness Pier for a well earned rest where WSC would offer a unique prize for the winner and refreshments before the yachts make their way back to Kirkwall on a suitable tide.

At the 2009 Regatta in Westray the 40ft native style Canadian canoe “Spirit Dancer” was a great attraction with over 60 locals going out for a trip and it is hoped they will be back next year. As a gesture of good will the native Canadians presented WSC, on behalf of the Westray Community, with a full sized carved ceremonial redwood paddle which now hangs in the new Heritage Centre. To maintain the Canadian link WSC has commission a scale model paddle to be made and mounted as a prize for the Rapness Pursuit Yacht Race.



“Spirit Dancer” at Westray Regatta 2009



Commodore accepts the paddle and the story from expedition leader Chris Cooper

If weather allows, it is hoped the race from Pierowall to Rapness will be joined by the “Spirit Dancer” and Westray Skiffs.

In true Westray style, WSC would like to work with the young people and all other interested community groups in the island to ensure the day is a success.

# Rapness Pursuit Race - 2010

## ***Race Rules***

- All entrants must be familiar with, and agree to comply with, the Westray Sailing Club “Rules”.
- All entrants must register boat and crew detail with WSC officials before the race.
- Each crew **MUST** include at least one Westray resident.
- Entrants must register official handicap detail with race officials well in advance of the race.
- All vessels entering must provide evidence of seaworthiness and appropriate insurance with minimum third party cover of £1M.
- The route will be discussed at a briefing on the day of the race and will include.
  - Starting procedure
  - Route including any additional buoyage
  - Course navigation with regard to weather, tide and hazards
  - Any potential variations from normal navigation.
  - Clear and agreed identification of the finish.

