

## **It's not a race, it's an adventure**

So said the Chief Umpire at the pre-race briefing on a bright, breezy Oban morning as 40 yachts and their crews, complete with runners, were about to depart for a long weekend of not much less than torture. These words of wisdom were repeated by the crew of Tussler on several occasions, mainly after a complaint either about the boat movement, torrential rain, sore legs, adverse tides or lack of wind. However the spectacular scenery, the moonlight run followed by a glorious sunrise on the Paps, the tacking duels fought at Corryvreckan and a swift rush past the Mull of Kintyre in perfect conditions all served to lessen the impact of the pain.

For yacht Tussler and her crew of runners and sailors the race was all new territory. Reading the blogs from previous entrants and listening to other crews describe sleep deprivation and hours of rowing painted a blacker picture than reality.

In the end, our supervet runners ran well, our father and son sailors sailed the yacht well, our heavy yacht Tussler of mature years, long keel design and well used sails did the best she could in the light airs and we finished uninjured and undamaged. Great teamwork and good preparation served us well. Ready for next year everyone?

The skippers memories from the race -  
a magnificent May morning in a splendid sailing setting,  
a medley of last minute minutiae  
a talking of tactics for dinghy/yacht contact at the correct co-ordinates  
a grunt of a gun - they're off! Cheering crowds!  
a swirling of sea vessels like circling sharks  
a radio report - the runners have returned!  
a tactile tension as Tussler motored the mayhem of moorings to a reliable rendezvous with the rubber receptacle, rower and runners  
a busy bundling of elated athletes below and grinding the Genoa  
a jostling of yachts  
a heeled hiatus heading out to Lismore and beyond, sparkling seas and sun, straining sheets and bulging biceps  
a waning wind wanting slow speeds to Salen  
a repetitive rowing machine racing the runners to the shore start scrutineers  
a successful Mull, moans about mist and a missed checkpoint  
a piping pot of porridge  
a salivatingly good sail down the Sound of Mull and short tacking against a terrible tide  
an uncomfortable passage for runners - could we have a catamaran next year?  
a steady shower of persistent precipitation, wishful of wind with some saloon snoring slumbers  
an anxious age - would we make the Sound of Luing tidal gate? A speedy

an anxious eye - would we make the sound of Luing tidal gate: A speedy  
sail down the Sound  
a battle against tide at Corryvreckan with tactical tacking  
a flooded heads, buckets bailing  
a smokey saloon from a horrible heater, a retching runner  
a dawdling drift into Craighouse  
a jubilant Jura, magical moonlight meanders and superb sunrise sights  
another piping pot of porridge  
another sunny slight wind sailing session then an exhilarating epic  
episode past the Mull of Kintyre to Arran  
another dreary drift, into a daylight deprived Lamlash  
a long, long, long row to the landing light  
a short sleep for sailors then a rude raucous reveille from returning  
runners  
another piping pot of porridge  
another serving of slow sunny sailing, then some brisk breeze bashing  
with buoyant spirits rising eagerly expecting an exiting exit  
a pontoon pounding parade to the race reception, photos for the proud  
finish  
and then it was all over, time to go home