

## Travelling to a regatta in Europe - Top 10 things to remember by Paul Manning

Many sailors may be attending this Championship as their first major international event, so I thought it might be of assistance to note down a few points of things easily forgotten or overlooked.

1. This really only applies to UK sailors, but please don't forget to bring your boats insurance details. UK events typically don't require inspection of insurance policies as proof of insurance. The UK is unusual in this respect (I believe it is a legal matter to do with onus of proof ) Please bring your policy, otherwise you may spend the first day you arrive trying to e-mail Richard Langford at Noble Marine requesting a copy certificate. For those who don't know, Richard is also the chairman of RYA, and I'm sure has other things to do with his time.

2. Check your boat over for anything that may not last the event. It's the worst thing for me to see the look of desperation on sailors faces when their trapeze line has snapped in the second race of the event, especially when they knew it did not look good, but hadn't got round to changing it because they wanted to go sailing as soon as they arrived!

3. Driving in Switzerland requires that you purchase a vignette at the border. Some people may have told you these are £100's or something like this. They actually cost around CHF40 (£19). But please remember you need one for your car, and one for your trailer! Again, this is something that might seem strange to UK sailors, but in fact we are the odd ones out, as the rest of Europe registers trailer as if they were any other road going vehicle.

The vignette is simply bought at the border control office, but in your eagerness to get to Silvaplana, you may not realise. Please don't forget to do this the Swiss are very good at picking cars out, and you don't want a fine. I usually use it as an excuse to get out and take a walk around.

4. UK, French or Swiss border check. It is possible, but rare, that any EU or Swiss border control ask if your boat is EU homologated. The class website has a form that can be printed off, and your boats details entered <http://www.mustoskiff.com/downloads/CE-MPS-User-manual.pdf>. As you are all aware, all products used in Europe require that they pass specific tests for safety, and our class is no exception. On the transom of your boat there will be a series of characters starting GB-OVBMS. This is the individual boat's chassis number, also known as a HIN number (hull identification number) it is proof that the design has undergone the necessary test (which it passed) and can be entered in the boxes on page two of the form.

I have been stopped for this twice, so it's pretty unlikely, but it's good to know, and shows you know what you are talking about if border control asks.

5. Don't forget your passport.

6. Don't forget your wives and girlfriends. WAGS are very welcome and as well as enjoying the stunning scenery may be persuaded to join the shore crew for a gin and tonic as well as the odd bit of trolley dollying.

7. If you are driving, check you have European wide breakdown cover. If you have not, I believe you can get it for short periods.



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8. Again, if you are driving, make sure you have a European recognised breakdown kit. A lot of European manufactured cars come with this, but you'll need a reflective triangle, hi-vis waste coats etc. You can buy these on the ferry, but I reckon you can get them cheaper elsewhere if you plan ahead...

9. Trailer service (also known as it's really nice in Metz, but I don't want to stay here!) Some of you might not know this story, and those who do are probably already laughing having just remembered. But, to cut a long story short, one year one group of sailors wheel bearing went in Metz, and it required Tony Ainsworth and myself, having just arrived in Malcesine to unload the 9 boat trailer, turn around and drive back to Metz in North France. Please check your brakes, towing hitch and bearings before you leave, and take a spare wheel. Try not to drive too fast, and stop regularly and feel the wheel hubs. As everyone knows, I'd do the trip again if I had to, but the price goes up every time!

10. Spares, as with many other venues, may not be easy to come by, so please make sure you take some tools and basic spares. Ovington Boats will, as ever, have a limited number of specific parts, but it's good to be self sufficient.