

Offshore

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

OCT/NOV 1999

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Credits



The newly launched Farr 40 OD *Leroy Brown* surfs northwards soon after the start of the Sydney – Gold Coast Race. The spectacular spinnaker proved bullet proof and *Leroy Brown* went on to impressively win IR 2000 at her first start offshore. Ian Mainsbridge took the picture from a helicopter.

America's Cup countdown

Young Aussies for Auckland

AMERICA'S CUP
2000 NEW ZEALAND

America's Cup 2000 gets underway off Auckland at the end of October with the opening round robin of the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger elimination series. Australia will be there with a crew for the future, writes Peter Campbell

America's Cup history will be made off Auckland on October 18, 1999 when the youngest skipper and crew ever to challenge for the "Auld Mug" sails *Young Australia 2000* in the opening round-robin of the Louis Vuitton Cup.

Twenty-year-old James Spithill, the junior world match-racing champion, will lead a squad of 16 talented young sailors from all Australian States who were chosen after a month of trials on Sydney Harbour.

For syndicate chairman Syd Fischer, this will be his fifth tilt at the America's Cup; for his crew of 16 athletic young sailors aged between 18-25, this will be their first but not their last.

Fischer does not expect to win the Cup in 2000, but he does see his concept of the *Young Australia 2000* campaign, using his 1995 International America's Cup Class yacht, *Sydney 95*, as

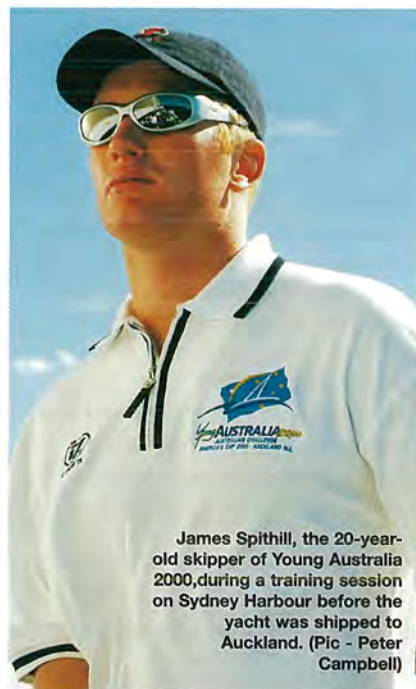
the nucleus of a full-on Australian challenge three or four years down the track.

It is certainly an innovative and patriotic move by the veteran ocean racing and America's Cup yachtsman to ensure that Australia is at least represented at America's Cup 2000 at a time when the Olympic Games have virtually drained every sponsorship dollar from the Australian corporate purse.

"This is the first time a team like this has put been together," Fischer said at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia through which he has challenged this time. "We are aiming to not only launch a challenge this year, but to create a pool of talent from which Australian sailing can draw for future challenges.

"The enthusiasm and skills of these young sailors gives me every confidence in the future of yacht racing in Australia, and our chances of one day regaining the Cup.

"They will do great credit to Australia at the America's Cup - just look what a 16-year-old did yesterday - they can do the same thing in sailing," Fischer added, referring to swimmer Ian Thorpe's world record.



James Spithill, the 20-year-old skipper of *Young Australia 2000*, during a training session on Sydney Harbour before the yacht was shipped to Auckland. (Pic - Peter Campbell)

After sailing with the crew aboard *Young Australia 2000* during a training session on Sydney Harbour, OFFSHORE Yachting's publisher, international yachtsman Larry Jamieson had nothing but praise for the young sailors.

"James Spithill and many of the others have already had international experience and all have extensive sailing background on big boats. They have the physique and the skills to get the best out of the yacht. We will certainly see them mixing it with great skill and determination against many of the best professional big boat sailors in the world.



Boat for boat racing will be the highlight of the Louis Vuitton Cup as the 13 syndicates battle for the right to challenger New Zealand in America's Cup 2000.



"The opportunity that Syd Fischer is providing for them is a great tribute to the foresight of a legendary Australian yachtsman and they will reward him well."

In addition to Spithill, who hails from Newport on Sydney's Northern Beaches, the young crew comprises:

- Nick Bice, North Haven, SA.
- Chris Carroll, Como, WA.
- Ben Durham, Claremont, WA.
- Andy Fethers, Claremont, WA.
- Phil Harmer, Mosman, NSW.
- Adam Hawkins, Williamstown, Vic.
- Brad Kellett, Terrey Hills, NSW.
- Paul Montague, Mosman, NSW.
- Wade Morgan, Jewells, NSW.
- David Morris, Airlie Beach, Qld.
- Ben Morrison-Jack, Melbourne, Vic.
- Joe Newton, Manly, Qld.
- Mal Parker, Bellerive, Tas.
- Nick Partridge, Black Rock, Vic.
- Paul Spencer, Mt Lawley, WA.
- Josh Whittaker, Mona Vale, NSW.

Four experienced mentors will guide and support the young crew - Andrew Crowe, Mosman, NSW; Greg Kay, Dolls Point, NSW; Campbell Knox, Mona Vale, NSW; and Greg Johnstone,

North Bondi, NSW.

Coach, and certain to be one of the afterguard, is Sydney sailor Rob Brown, who was part of the winning Australia II crew in 1983.

"I am very impressed at the level of experience and the high learning curve of these young sailors," Brown told OFFSHORE. "We are going to win lots of races in the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger series."

After a refurbishing and hull painting, Young Australia 2000 was due to be shipped to Auckland in mid September, with the crew then starting in a near month-long preparation to the opening round robin of the Louis Vuitton Cup.

Young Australia 2000 is one of 11 challengers for America's Cup 2000 expected to compete in the Louis Vuitton Cup series of round-robin match races, followed by semi-finals and finals through to January 2000. The finals will choose the challenger to meet Team New Zealand in the 30th Match for the America's Cup starting February 19, 2000.

The Australian boat will be up

Young Australia 2000 sailing on Sydney Harbour before being shipped to New Zealand for the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger eliminations. (Pic - Peter Campbell)



Below: Young Australia 2000 and her youthful crew training on Sydney Harbour. (Pic - Peter Campbell)



Traveland to the America's Cup

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's preferred travel agency group, Traveland, has announced exclusive America's Cup packages so you can experience the excitement of the 1999/2000 Louis Vuitton Cup and America's Cup in New Zealand.

Traveland is the only travel agency group offering packages for the official America's Cup program to give you the ultimate America's Cup experience. Their Cup packages offer exclusive hospitality at the American Express New Zealand Cup Village and exclusive, on-water race viewing.

Their range of three night packages include flights from Australian capital cities direct to Auckland flying Air New Zealand, and a range of accommodation from 3 star apartments to 5 star hotels, all within walking distance to the American Express Cup Village.

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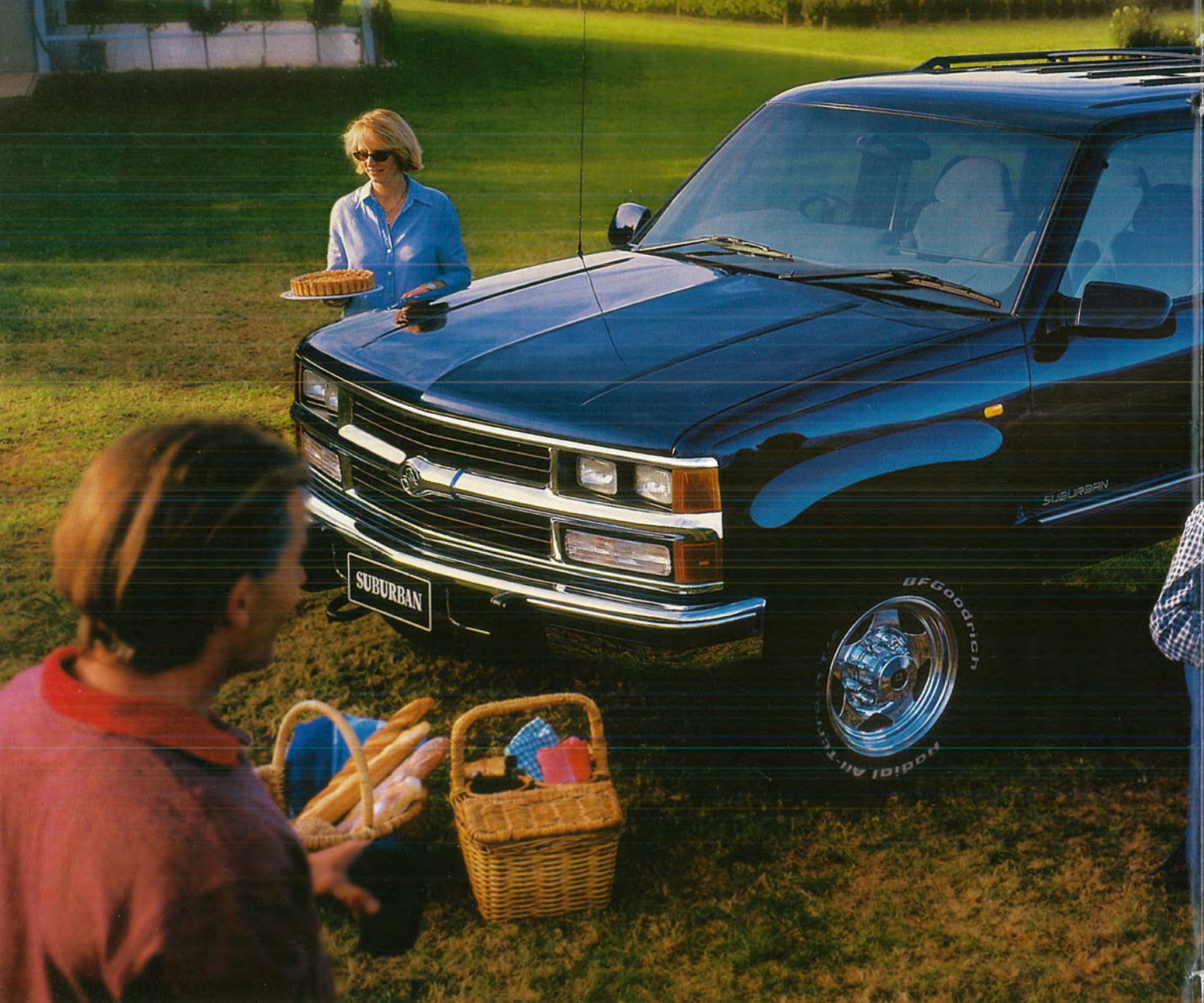


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against a new generation of International America's Cup Class yachts being launched at syndicate bases around the world. and as predicted are being described as "long, lean fighting machines."

First to hit the water in Auckland was America True's Phil Kaiki-designed boat with striking yellow and blue top-side graphics. Also in Auckland, the first of the Team New Zealand's two defender boats has been delivered to the syndicate base for fitting out while a second boat is under construction.

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It is with great pleasure that I can confirm that Telstra, after three years of generous and positive sponsorship of the Sydney to Hobart Race, have extended their contract for a further two years.

Telstra have been an excellent sponsor for the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and the sport, particularly in promotion, marketing and communications, and we look forward to increased technology support for the 1999 race.

At the same time, the Club and competitors have a duty to ensure that the rights of the sponsor are protected. Boat owners must be careful that they do not obtain individual yacht sponsors from companies that may be "Telstra competitors." (See NoR App A4).

Telstra have advised that they will seek strict control of this clause by the CYCA.

Amazingly, this year's Sydney to Hobart is almost upon us. It seems like only yesterday that the enormity of the last year's race and its consequences started to unfold.

The past nine months have been a blur of activity for everyone at the CYCA involved in the organisation and running of our premier ocean racing event. Members should reflect on the huge range of issues that our club staff, committees and other volunteers have addressed during this time.

Intensive media and public scrutiny was focused on the CYCA and the Sydney to Hobart in those early days, as we took stock of all aspects of the disaster and the issues that needed addressing immediately.

As the organising Club, our first duty was to express and provide sympathy, compassion and support for rela-

tives of those who lost their lives; and to provide for the emotional needs of many of those involved in support functions during the tragic race. As the race ended, and with it the massive search and rescue operation, we had to express our gratitude to the brave rescue teams and the community of Eden, and respond to the many hundreds of letters received from the community at large.

Our next major task, and one that we quickly announced, was to initiate the Review Committee, invite members and prominent yachtsmen to take on the onerous task of serving on the Committee, and to establish its terms of reference. As time went, our focus continued on the Review Committee, and the establishment of a working

"So far, the response from competitors to the changes has been extremely positive."

relationship with the Coroner and his investigating officers. At the same time we set up the Safety of Life at Sea Trust, to which the CYCA and its members, the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania and its members, and many others have contributed with great generosity.

The finalisation and publication of the Review Committee's findings in June unleashed the current phase of activity as the Club moved to implement all the recommended changes into the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart and future races.

For example, there has been a complete and comprehensive rewrite of the Notice of Race, the establishment of a formal crisis management plan, the organisation of safety seminars, practical safety and rescue equipment demonstrations, upgrading of radio communications on the radio relay vessel and in Hobart. We also have had briefings with rescue authorities and units, police, medical and volunteer rescue groups on the NSW South Coast. As well, the Club has had to deal with countless questions and suggestions from competitors regarding the changes being implemented.

On top of that, there are still all of

the organisational issues normally associated with the planning and running of the Sydney to Hobart Race.

So it seems to me that the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia will get to the starting line in pretty good shape. If there are a few glitches on the way, please be tolerant – the whole team has been doing it tough these last nine months.

So far, the response from competitors to the changes has been extremely positive.

However, there is one area in which the Sailing Office reports it is not receiving an enthusiastic response from all competitors – meeting strict new deadlines for submission of all necessary race documentation.

These strict deadlines were applied to the recent Sydney – Gold Coast Race and it seems that a few boat owner's feathers were ruffled when the Sailing Office billed them for late entry fees because of tardy submission of race documentation.

The Club introduced these strict requirements because of some serious gaps and discrepancies identified in our own administrative processes, which saw a number of boats participate in the 1998 Sydney to Hobart with not everything in order. While it is clearly the owner's responsibility to ensure that all necessary documentation is provided, and that the yacht and crew comply in all respects, the Club as the organising authority must be able to demonstrate that is adequately and properly administering the event.

Given the scrutiny that this year's race will undoubtedly receive, we cannot afford to slip up, even in the smallest matter. The CYCA's staff does not have the time to endlessly chase missing bits of information from individual owners, nor to deal with the piecemeal submission of documents.

After a later start because of the 1999 Sydney Harbour Regatta Olympic test event in September, we can look forward to a highly competitive, enjoyable season of summer racing.

Hugo van Kretschmar

Commodore

Cruising Yacht Club of Australia

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PHS: 1st, 2nd, 3rd
IRC: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th
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Top Scoring Farr 40

1999 Hamilton Is. Race Week

IMS: 1st, 2nd, 3rd
IR 2000: 1st, 3rd, 4th, 5th
Big Boat Class: 1st
Top Scoring Beneteau 40.7
Top Scoring Farr 40
Top Scoring Sydney 40

1999 Sydney-Gold Coast Yacht Race

IMS Overall: 1st
IMS Division A: 1st
IRC Overall: 1st
IRC Division A: 1st
IRC Division B: 1st

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Sail

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and Telstra will launch the Telstra 55th Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race on a positive note at the Club's Rushcutters Bay headquarters on Wednesday, October 6. Peter Campbell reports.

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia is confident that the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Race will attract a strong and highly competitive fleet to mark the Club's 55th annual race to Tasmania. It is already being dubbed as the "Sail of the Century" – the final ocean race in the world for the 20th Century.

The 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart will be officially launched at the CYCA in Rushcutters Bay on Wednesday, October 6, with a Tasmanian Launch at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania Hobart in November.

With entries already flowing in, Race Director Phil Thompson is predicting that at least 100 yachts will line up on Sydney Harbour for another spectacular start on Boxing Day, December 26. In fact, he believes the fleet could be much the same as last year when 115 boats started.

"Indications are that most yachts that finished the race last year are fronting up again, while those who were forced to retire have 'unfinished business' in Bass Strait," Thompson said.

"We have seen near record fleets in major offshore races and regattas throughout 1999, with new boats on the scene and we expect many of these will also race to Hobart."

Thompson does not expect many overseas entrants this year, although interest has been shown by the owners of a former round the world maxi yacht now based in Seattle on the US West Coast. He has also made allowance for a special class for Whitbread 60s which completed their round the world race last year. "We could get several of these boats," he told OFFSHORE.

New Farr 40 One Designs and Farr-designed Beneteau 40.7s, along with well tuned Sydney 40s and Sydney 41s,



This is the sort of fleet, plus more, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia is confident will line up on Boxing Day for the Telstra 55th Sydney to Hobart Race. This was the start of the Sydney to Gold Coast Race, with 82 starters, but the CYCA is looking at 100 plus for Hobart.
(Pic - Ian Mainsbridge)

of the Century



have figured prominently in recent offshore races and regattas and many of these are expected to race to Hobart.

Two new state-of-the-art grand prix racing boats are being built in New South Wales for CYCA members and specifically for the Telstra 55th Sydney to Hobart.

Geoffrey Ross is having a new *Yendys* built by Boatspeed at West Gosford – a state-of-the-art Farr 49 IMS racer, due to be launched in late October.

Former maxi yacht owner John Kahlbetzer is making a comeback to ocean racing and has commissioned Murray, Burns and Dovell (MBD) to design him a 62-footer which is currently being built by Bashford International at West Gosford. Iain Murray will sail on the boat, along with North Sails' Michael Coxon and CYCA Commodore Hugo van Kretschmar.

Kahlbetzer is best known for his yachts named *Bumblebee* which contested the Admiral's Cup in 1975 and several Sydney to Hobarts, including the 23m *Bumblebee IV* which took line honours in the 1979 Hobart.

Perhaps the strongest indicator to the fleet size is the number of sailors actively participating in special safety training exercises and seminars being held by the CYCA and other yacht clubs in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. More than 300 attended the CYCA's first safety day which included a simulated helicopter rescue and a liferaft exercise. All coming safety days are heavily

booked in all States.

The CYCA has a safety procedures program through September, October, November and December, including helicopter and rescue and life raft exercises on October 24 and December 17, another flare day on November 28, and man overboard, weather and heavy weather sailing seminars at the Millennium Hotel, Kings Cross, on October 26 and December 17. Speakers will include Ed Psaltis, skipper of *AFR Midnight Rambler*, the overall IMS winner of the 1998 Telstra Sydney to Hobart.

Another pointer to a strong entry for the 1999 Race is the interest being shown by yacht owners in competing in the mandatory qualifying races which

include the Cabbage Tree Island Race (NSW), Maria Island Race (Tasmania), Haystack Island Race (South Australia) and the Melbourne to Stanley Race (Victoria).

In other Sydney to Hobart Race news:

- There will be significant improvements in race communications, including a new Hobart Radio antenna farm for the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, with a \$10,000 sponsorship from Tattersall's, supporters of the Sydney to Hobart since its inception.
- The Sail Training Ship *Young Endeavour* will again be the Radio Relay Vessel.
- The Tasmanian Government plans to recognise yachtsmen who have sailed in 25 or more Sydney to Hobart Races with a special medallion and is also strongly promoting the Race, along with other special events in Tasmania at that time.
- The Inquiry by the New South Wales Coroner into the 1998 Sydney to Hobart will now not proceed until April 2000.

CYCA Letter to Competitors

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia has sent the following letter from Hans Sommer, Vice Commodore and Chairman of the Sailing Committee to all prospective competitors in the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

Dear Competitor

As organisers of the Telstra Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, we want to run this year's race in the most professional manner possible in order to provide the greatest level of safety and enjoyment for all participants. The Club will provide every assistance to you to help achieve this, but we also need you full co-operation.

If you intend to take part in this year's race I urge you to start preparing now. Study the Notice of Race thoroughly as there are a number of additional safety requirements not previously needed. All those requirements were identified by the Sydney-Hobart Review Committee and incorporated in this year's Notice of Race to achieve the highest level of personal safety for all participants.

Please pay particular attention to the cut-off dates for lodgment of documentation. This will avoid frustration on the part of the sailing office

staff as well as the possibility of you having to pay a late entry fee or, worse still, to have the entry rejected. Please note also the requirement for four crew members from each participating yacht to attend the race briefing on December 24.

If you foresee any problem with any requirements, please contact us early, preferably in writing, so we can assist you as much as possible.

I would like to make one more important point to any owner of a yacht that intends to carry advertising. In our agreement with Telstra they reserve the right to reject the participation of any yacht in the race that carries advertising in products or services by a competitor of Telstra as well as advertising considered to be "in bad taste." If you have any doubt of your yacht's advertising, please contact us so we can assist you in getting clearance from Telstra.

In closing, I wish you good luck in this year's race and the winds favour you.

Yours sincerely

Hans Sommer

Vice Commodore - Cruising Yacht Club of Australia
13 September 1999



Sydney – Gold Coast Race

Three maxi yachts broke the race record in a fast and, at times dramatic, winter dash north in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's 14th annual Sydney – Gold Coast Race. Di Pearson reports.

This was a race to remember – George Snow's maxi *Brindabella* breaking the race record, with the other maxis *Wild Thing* (Grant Wharington) and *Marchioness* (The Marchioness Syndicate) also finishing inside *Amazon's* 1997 record time of 31 hours 12 minutes and 18 seconds.

Brindabella, the Jutson 76 from the CYCA, slashed more than three hours off the record, finishing the 386 nautical mile race in 27 hours 35 minutes 03 seconds, for her third line honours win in this race, the others being in 1995 and 1996.

Gallop to the Gold Coast

It was the CYCA's first major long ocean race since the tragic 1998 Sydney to Hobart, with the Club placing great emphasis on safety and race preparations. Sailed in strong southerly winds, ranging between 30 and 40 knots for most of the course, this race was not without its dramas as boats broached and chinese gybed. Several sailors went overboard, one at three in the morning, but all were quickly recovered by alert fellow crewmen.

To cap off a remarkable race for most competitors, *Wild Thing* went on to win IMS overall. Wharington, from Mornington Yacht Club in Victoria, reflected afterwards whether he had done the right thing in changing classes from PHS to IMS. "Things could

have been different if we'd carried bigger kites, but *Brindabella* did a better job and deserved line honours" he said on arrival at the dock.

Wharington was, obviously, ecstatic with his overall win. "This has made it worthwhile for us" he said when IMS results were finalised.

Four of the five class size yacht's race records went as well. Victorian based *Cadibarra 7* (Nigel Jones) taking more than three hours from *Ragamuffin's* (Syd Fischer) record for yachts of 15.5 metre LOA or less, the newly launched Farr 40 *Leroy Brown* (Warren Wiekmann) slicing over six hours from *Christine Jay II* (Ron Jones) for yachts 12.5 metre or less. The Queensland Mumm 30, *Addiction* (Stewart Lewis) snagged two records, that of *Bashfull* for boats of 11 metres or less, and *Razor's Edge* for yachts of 9.5 metres or less, taking nearly four and five hours respectively from each.

However, the race belonged to *Brindabella*, and as Southport Commodore Michael Callanan so succinctly put it, "George, you nearly beat Ansett here and got home before I did!" It was a quadruple celebration for Snow who had his 21 year old son, Robert, and 19 year old daughter, Marisa, aboard with him in "a real family affair - it was great" he said on arrival at Southport Yacht Club.

During the surfing ride north *Brindabella* covered an incredible 342 nautical miles over the first 24 hour period – probably an Australian record. The Scott Jutson designed 76-footer then



Drama on Sydney Harbour soon after the start of the 1999 Sydney – Gold Coast Race as the fleet charges towards the Heads under spinnaker in a 30 knot southerly. Dreamtime (3875) appears about to hit the transom of Forzado while to leeward, Classic Blue struggles to avoid a broach. To weather, Maximum Nuisance is having her own problems with a twist in the spinnaker. (Pic – Ian Mainsbridge)

Grand Soleil conquers Europe.



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June 1999 - Just launched, hull number 2, Grand Soleil 34.1 "NUMERO UNO" was among the fastest boats at Kiel Week, one of Europe's most important regattas, with FIRSTS in 9 out of 10 races. In the Offshore Race the new 34.1 was FIRST in Class 3 and FIRST overall. What is the story behind this new yacht's stunning success straight out of the bag.

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went on to finish third overall under IMS handicaps.

"It was the most exciting race I've ever done – a fantastic ride" Snow said of the 386 nautical mile race that started in a strong 30 knot south-westerly with an 82 boat spinnaker run out of Sydney Harbour that continued all the way to Southport. "I kind of knew from the weather reports that the record might go, but it was when we hit Coffs Harbour that it really hit home" he said. "We had *Wild Thing* right on us the whole time until the last 50 or 60 miles; it was touch and go and a good boat for boat race" he added.

Another CYCA yacht, Rob Kothe's Sydney 40, *Sword of Orion*, finished second overall under IMS. This was the first time Kothe had been to sea since losing his previous *Sword of Orion* and a crewman in the 1998 Telstra Sydney-Hobart Race.

Weather conditions, as predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology's Kenn Batt, were spot on, south-wester's, south-easter's and southerly's all the way, with strengths varying between 10-35 knots over the course, sometimes gusting over 40 knots.

It was the ride of a lifetime for most, but not without problems and disastrous consequences for some.

When the start gun went at 1300 hours on July 31, the fleet set spin-



Victorian yacht Cadibarra 7, designed by Don Jones and skippered by Nigel Jones, finished second overall to Leroy Brown in the new IRC division of the Sydney – Gold Coast Race, which attracted a strong entry. (Pic – Ian Mainsbridge)

ners to run for Sydney Heads and the dramas began soon afterwards. *ABN AMRO* (Ray Roberts), and *Ragamuffin* (Syd Fischer), at opposing ends of the line got the best of the starts, but it was only a matter of minutes before a number of yachts had chinese-gybed.

Zurich (Nigel Holman) was one of the first to go – in quite spectacular fashion. The yacht laid over and skidded sideways, with a number of yachts close abeam and astern just managing

to avoid a prang. There were several collisions as the big fleet hurtled towards the Heads, but none serious.

At least ten out of control gybes followed in the gusting harbour winds before crews dropped spinnakers, but others shredded their kites, including former Sydney to Hobart winner *Terra Firma* (Stewart Niemann and Peter Bartels) and *Never A Dull Moment* (Colin Wilson).

As the fleet turned north, *Brindabella* was out in front, taking just 11 minutes to clear the Harbour. Astern, prudent crews had poled out headsails, but others continued with spinnakers. Disaster struck again in the wild conditions, many lost kites, watching their money go up in smoke. In the melee, *Fruit Machine* (Neill Whiston) lost two crew overboard in separate incidences, retrieving both quickly. *Innkeeper* (Peter Schultes) lost three, also retrieving them without too much fuss. Then the damage and retirements started.

A potentially more serious man overboard situation happened at 3am on Sunday when the highly experienced bowman Sven Runow was washed overboard from *Fruit Machine* – not from the bow but as he was moving forward from the cockpit to help untangle a spinnaker wrap. "Fortunately, we didn't have the spinnaker



Rob Kothe, who lost his boat and a crew member in the 1998 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Race, returned to ocean racing with his new *Sword of Orion*, placing second overall in the IMS division of the Sydney – Gold Coast Race. (Pic – Ian Mainsbridge)



The little sloop *Bin Rouge*, skippered by Chris Bowling, struggles with her spinnaker as a strong gust hits her as she runs north in the Sydney – Gold Coast Race. (Pic – Ian Mainsbridge)

up at the time and they spun the boat around and had me back aboard quickly,” Runow said later.

First out was *Forzado* (Geoff Phillips) losing the mast not 10 minutes after a collision with *Dreamtime* (John Woodruff). Then came race favourites *Vanguard* (John Messenger) and *Ragamuffin* (Syd Fischer), although Fischer was not aboard.

Perhaps the most disappointing was *Future Shock* (Ron Ellis) with well known 18 foot skiff champion, David Witt, at the helm.

Brindabella may have led going out the Heads, but it was only a matter of minutes before *Future Shock* overtook her, underlining her reputation as probably the fastest 55-footer in the world in downwind conditions. Her glory at leading the maxis ended at three o'clock Sunday morning, still in the lead and under spinnaker, when the rig went over the side, as she was perhaps pushed too hard in the confused seas and winds veering from south-west to south east.

By Sunday evening, 12 other yachts had retired, with *Indian Pacific* (Richard Hudson), *Mirrabooka* (Mark Elkington) and *Wide Load* (Warren Anderson) also dismasted.

George Snow's maxi *Brindabella* surfing north on her way to a record-breaking line honours win in the CYCA's Sydney – Gold Coast Race. She sliced more than three hours from Amazon's record set in 1997. (Pic – Ian Mainsbridge)

Newly introduced to this race to replace the Channel Handicap System (CHS) the IRC 2000 (International Rule Club) class proved popular. Sailing in her first ocean race, Warren Wiekmann skippered his new Farr 40 One Design, *Leroy Brown*, to an overall IRC victory. Wiekmann has been a great campaigner for yachting, but out of the ocean racing scene for a number of years. *Leroy Brown* was only launched four weeks prior to the race and he sailed with half his former crew - “the other half were on *Emotional Hooligan*” (one of three Farr 40 ODs in the race).

Queensland Mumm 30, *Addiction* (Stewart Lewis), sailed an outstanding race, outclassing her rivals to break two race records, finish third overall in IRC and also winning the JOG trophy. *Cadibarra 7* (Nigel Jones) from Victoria, with the yacht designed by his father Don, broke a size record and finished second overall in IRC.

In PHS the well-sailed *Innkeeper* placed first, winning from *Marchioness* and *Mad Max* (James Murchison).



HONOUR ROLL

Line Honours:

1. *Brindabella*, Jutson 76 (George Snow, NSW) – 27 hours 35 minutes 03 seconds.
2. *Wild Thing*, MBD 70 (Grant Wharington, Vic).
3. *Marchioness*, Lavronos 80 (The Marchioness Syndicate, NSW).

IMS Overall:

1. *Wild Thing*, MBD 70- (Grant Wharington, Vic) – Peter Rysdyk Memorial Trophy.
2. *Sword of Orion*, Sydney 40 (Rob Kothe, NSW).
3. *Brindabella*, Jutson 76 (George Snow, NSW).

IMS Division A:

1. *Wild Thing*.
2. *Sword of Orion*.
3. *Brindabella* (George Snow).

IMS Division B:

1. *Chutzpah*, Dovell 35 (Bruce Taylor, Vic).
2. *Kingtide*, Sydney 36 (Colin Boyle, NSW).
3. *Fruit Machine*, Beneteau 40.7 (Neill Whiston, NSW).

IMS Division C:

1. *Veninde III*, Dubois 34 (Chris Browne & Andrew Whelan, NSW).
2. *Pendragon*, Stewart 34 (Andrew Cochrane, NSW).
3. *Elusive*, Jarkan 12.5 (Geoff Lavis, NSW).

PHS Division A:

1. *Innkeeper*, Steinmann 66 (Peter Schultes, NSW).
2. *Marchioness*, Lavronos 80 (The Marchioness Syndicate, NSW).
3. *Mad Max*, Elliott 12 (James Murchison, NSW).

PHS Division B:

1. *Polar Bear*, Oceanis 42 (Malcolm Levy, NSW).
2. *Caliban*, Beneteau 12 (Ian Creak, NSW).
3. *Flying Turtle*, Farr 1220 (Phillip Wait, NSW).

PHS Division Overall:

1. *Innkeeper*.
2. *Marchioness*.
3. *Polar Bear*.

IRC Division Overall and Division A:

1. *Leroy Brown*, Farr 40 OD (Warren Wiekmann, NSW).
2. *Cadibarra 7*, Jones 43 (Nigel Jones, Vic).
3. *Addiction*, Mumm 30 (Stewart Lewis, Qld)

IRC Division B:

1. *Dictator*, Lyons 38 (Bruce Mead, NSW).
2. *Braveheart*, Jutson 50 (Bill Meiklejohn, NSW).
2. *Sydney*, Sydney 60 (Charles Curran – NSW).

“Beach ball”

boat bounces over IMS fleet

The invitation-only Joico Big Boat Series saw 22 boats duel among the Whitsunday Islands and enjoy the hospitality at the 5-star Hayman Island Resort.

A boat that was dubbed a “beach ball”, and a Greek yacht that survived the last Telstra Sydney to Hobart race, emerged as the overall champions at the Joico Big Boat Series at Hayman Island.

The full-bodied shape and high topsides of Simon Whiston’s Beneteau 40.7, *Smile*, led to it being referred to as a “beach ball”. But when it came to being counted against some of the better IMS yachts in Australia then this perfectly optimised beach ball bounced its way to the top very nicely.

The Greek yacht, *Aera*, is a comfortable Swan 46 design sailed by English resident Nick “call me Nick the Greek” Lykiardopulo. It took top honours in the IRC division.

At the same time Lykiardopulo and his experienced crew, which included the well travelled Hugh Agnew, agreed they had the additional reward of finding a great new international regatta.

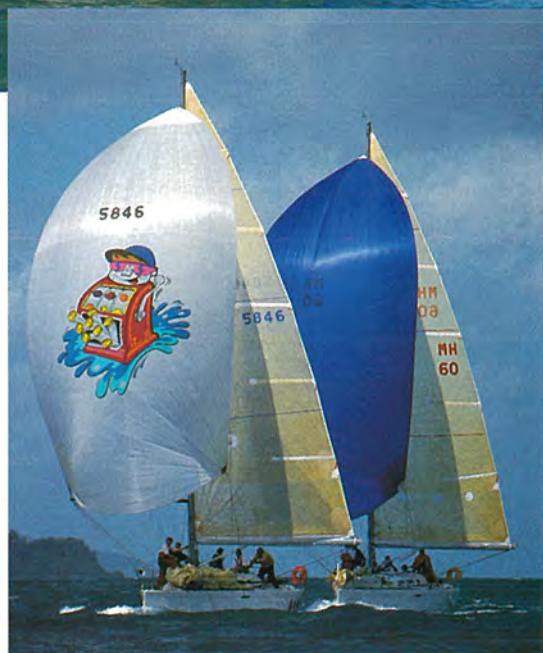
“This is just the best,” said Agnew. “It has the intimacy of Nioulargue, the scenery of Sardinia, the winds of Antigua and the tidal currents of Cowes - and the resort is fabulous.”

In winning their respective divisions *Smile* and *Aera* were declared joint champions at the seven-race Big Boat Series that was staged out of the Five Star Hayman Island Resort.

Sisterships sailed by brothers: the Beneteau 40.7, *Fruit Machine*, skippered by Neill Whiston, holds a narrow lead over *Smile*, owned by brother Simon during the Joico Big Boat Series at Hayman Island. In the end, overall IMS victory went to *Smile*. (Pic - Ian Mainsbridge)



Above: Big Bob's back, yachting in Australia with *Another Duchess*.



Coming into the final race over a 30 mile course to the east of Hayman Whiston and his brother Neill, who was sailing his identical Beneteau, *Fruit Machine*, shared the lead in the IMS division on 492 points. Breathing down their necks was Rob Kothe's Sydney 40 One Design, *Sword of Orion*, which was just two points in arrears.

Ultimately it was Simon, sailing *Smile*, who coped best with the pressure.

Fruit Machine's race all but ended near the seaward mark after a fast spinnaker run past the western shoreline of Hayman Island. Despite the wind blowing at more than 20 knots the yacht fell into a near windless hole close to the land while *Smile* stayed wide and sailed away. *Fruit Machine* had IACC skipper Michael Coxon and Olympic aspirant Michael Mottl in the crew.

For the Whiston brothers the Big Boat Series was their first taste of top-level regatta competition. They migrated to Australia from England last year.

After purchasing their Beneteaus and deciding to campaign in the top events this year the brothers set about assembling the best possible crew for the Big Boat Series. Neill had sailmaker and America's Cup helmsman Michael Coxon, join him along with Olympic class sailor, Michael Mottl. Simon secured the services of British Admiral's Cup team helmsman, Tim Powell, after his professional sailing trainer, Irish Admiral's Cup and Whitbread racer Gordon Maguire (who is now resident in Australia) stood by a commitment to Roger Hickman's Lyon's 40, *Atara*.

With all yachts having the option of racing under both IMS and IRC handicaps *Smile* also finished second on IRC, one point behind *Aera* and seven clear of Warren Wieckmann's new Farr 40, *Leroy Brown*.

Concentrated fleet racing was a highlight of the 1999 Joico Big Boat Series at Hayman Island.
(Pic - Ian Mainsbridge)





One Step Ahead rounds ahead of the Greek yacht *Aera*, a Swan 46 during the 1999 XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week. *Aera* won the IR2000 division, winning six races straight on corrected time in an impressive performance. (Pic - Richard Bennett).

The 1999 XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week attracted a record fleet, with the Whitsundays resort packed to capacity by sailors, their families and friends. Report by David Lockwood, pics by Richard Bennett.

From the top of One Tree Hill, the highest point on Hamilton Island that you can reach by motorised buggy, the distant yacht race looks like a well-orchestrated ballet. A hundred white triangles jostle for position as though doing a line dance, a starter's gun cracks and suddenly they fall out by

numbers.

Flying ever closer to the breeze, in a series of fantastic tacking duels, the yachts pass islands of craggy cliffs, verdant valleys and lusty white beaches. The passage shimmers silver and brilliant turquoise, and fluffy clouds and white horses scud past in the brisk wind.

Within 30 minutes the boats have disappeared behind a far-away island, yet only a few minutes later they return. This time it's as a congo-line of bright billowing spinnakers and foaming bows, as each yacht surfs home in the 25-knot winds, most of the crew reclining in the tropical sun.

This is the champagne sailing that has made Hamilton Island's XXXX Ansett Race Week a must-do for more



**XXXX ANSETT AUSTRALIA
RACE WEEK 99
HAMILTON ISLAND**

than 16 years. Contrary to what some club sailors may think, the season doesn't begin with a dusting-off of yachts on some glorious Spring weekend at home.

As regular offshore sailors know only too well, the new season starts with a series of northern regattas beginning with the Sydney-Gold Coast race and culminating with the big soiree in late August called Race Week.

By the time Race Week comes along the stage is set for hot racing and some long-overdue letting down of the locks. Incredibly, a record 162 yachts carrying 1,300 sailors, and 700 partners and children, filled all 750 rooms on the island during the regatta this year.

Unofficially, the restaurants were overflowing, the jumbos were touching down daily with more supplies, and the queues were growing ever more lengthy at the breakfast sizzles and bars. There were palm-tree gardens built on marinas, beers being swilled for breakfast, hangovers being nursed from one end of the island to the other (or at least being delayed by those hairs of the dog), and quality family time being spent around the pool and at Catseye Beach.



HAMILTON ISLAND
Great Barrier Reef Australia

The sweeping Whitehaven Beach, once again the venue for the fabulous beach party during the XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week. (Pic ‐ Richard Bennett)



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Officially, a yacht sank for the first time in the history of Race Week, a mast broke, a keel clipped a reef, there were several minor injuries, and virtually every sailor sported a sunburnt pecker and raccoon tan from those wrap-around sunnies shading the eyes.

At night, street parties, mardi gras, Moet and wine dinners, concerts and fireworks dashed any hopes that somehow you could escape the endless party. Peter Sorenson, who was helming *Foxtel 2UE Titon Ford*, reckoned "the pace was almost too much."

But the beauty about sailing Race Week is that there are no pretensions. Big business executives sporting three-day growths are lost in the crowd, strangely free from inhibitions, and the stars which draw attention back home don't so much raise an eyebrow as a "howyagown maaate?" at Hamilton.

There was Lachlan Murdoch helming his 51ft Swan, *Karakoram*, Doug Murray grinding on George Snow's



Sword of Orion, the Sydney 40 skippered by Rob Kothe, had a great start to the season, culminating at Hamilton Island Race Week. (Pic - Richard Bennett)

Brindabella, Stan Zemanek sailing *Foxtel 2UE Titon Ford*, Marcus Blackmore in his slippery new Farr 40, and Iain Murray calling the shots on the Sydney 46, *ABN Amro*.

Meanwhile, Lachlan Daddo and the Getaway crew tried to capture the goings-on on film, while Wilbur Wilde and Daddy Cool were jamming for the crowd. And what a field day the soapy mags could have had as Frankie J Holden and his new wife smooched under every tropical palm tree.

Nearby, Graeme Lambert, Richard Small and Bruce Sutton, all members of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron at Kirribilli, had chartered master seaman High Treharne and

his comfortable Peterson 50, *Bright Morning Star*. They raced in the Cruising division in both comfort and style.

But for all the onshore antics which make this the biggest social event on the yachting calendar, a sense of sobriety and seriousness is needed when the starter's guns cracks overhead and the massive fleets jostles for position at the line in those gusty winds.

Amid the melee one morning, Airlie Beach-based *Sterling Silver*, a lovely 12.5-metre Elliott, ended up going down, quite literally in history, as the first boat to sink during the 16 years of Race Week.

Racing in the Performance Handicap Division, *Sterling Silver* collided with *Sports Car* at the start and came off second best. A hole the size of bucket was punched in the bow, water poured in, and within an hour the yacht was gone.

"The sound of fibreglass crunching was just terrible," said Mal Richardson, the skipper of *Sports Car*. While the crew of *Sterling Silver* was rescued, those on *Sports Car* managed to somehow limp back to port for urgent repairs.

Sydney Farr 47, *Ninety Seven*, also had its share of bad luck. The sloop which was line honours winner in the stormy '93 Sydney to Hobart, lost the bulb section of its keel on the bottom of Frith Rock.

And according to Robert Clifford, who'd come all the way from Tasmania



Leroy Brown, the newest Farr 40 OD has already made its mark on the racing scene with Warren Weickman making an impressive return to ocean racing. (Pic - Richard Bennett)



HAMILTON ISLAND
Great Barrier Reef Australia



There was plenty of action at mark roundings as the record fleet contested the 1999 XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week. (Pic - Richard Bennett)

to charter a Sunsail yacht, "winning's not the main reason you come to Race Week, it's the only reason."

Well known for building very fast ferries, Clifford proved true to his word by taking out the Cruising Division in *Fools Rush In*, a Jeanneau 45.2 chartered from Sunsail. Among his crew were Whitsunday's tourism industry identity and one of the founders of Race Week, David Hutchen, who no doubt offered some local advice.

It was also encouraging to see Rob Kothe from *Sword of Orion*, the defending XXXX-Ansett Race Week winner, back on track in his new namesake Sydney 40. After the tragedy which befell him and his crew during the last Sydney-to-Hobart Race, Kothe sailed a good series to come home fourth in the IMS Division.

In third place in IMS was fellow CYCA member and Sydney 40 owner, David Coe on *Loco*. And another new yacht, a Sydney 41 designed for comfort racing called *One Step Ahead*, which is owned by long-time CYCA member Dennis McDonald, did well to finish eight in the IR 2000 Division. Yet it was an English-born duo who came first and second in the IMS Division. Sailing matching Farr-designed Beneteau 40.7s - there were eight at Race Week and virtually all of them faired well - Neil Whiston in *Fruit Machine* won the IMS trophy from his brother, Simon, in *Smile*.

In the Performance Handicap Division, an Auckland crew



made amends for their subsequent rugby loss by coming in one and two. The Davidson 42 *Outlaw*, skippered by Bruce Monkton, won by a point over a Davidson 15.6, *Whichway*, helmed by compatriot John Hall.

The Sports Yachts roughed it out in the constant tradewinds and presented some spectacular racing. Proving his devotion to Race Week, the owner of a little Egan design called *Shorty* had towed his boat 1,500 kilometres from Ballina behind a four-cylinder car. The Sports Division was won by Noel Leigh-Smith, a former JOG champion from the Gold Coast, on a Thompson 8 called *Desperado*.

Reinforcing the international appeal of the event, the IR2000 Division was won by the Swan 46 *Aera* skippered by Nick Lykiardopulo, who was sailing for England. Lou Abrahams from Melbourne came in second on *Challenge Again*, a BH41, while Steven Ainsworth on the Swan 44 *Loki* from Sydney ran third.

A Sydney crew led by winemaker Bob Oatley took out the new Big Boat Class on *Another Duchess*, which is a slippery Davidson 59, while the local boys on the maxi *Marchioness* helmed by Michael Cranitech, came in second. *Team Jaguar*, skippered by Martin James and helmed by Olympian Matt Hayes, was third.

And the races within races were almost as exciting to watch. On the Grand Prix front, the hot new fleet of 40-footers drew the most attention. The new Farr 40 One-Design, which has strict controls on crew weights and equipment, offers true level-playing field racing and the four Farris claimed they were competing with one another.

The Farr 40 people expect 15 boats to contest next year's

Race Week.

This year, the inaugural Farr 40 OD Championships was won by the fighting fit Marcus Blackmore in *Emotional Hooligan*, whose boat was launched only the previous month.

Sydney Yachts also used the occasion to announce an exciting new One Design 38-footer. The company has pledged to have five of the new 38s at Hamilton Island, and the local yacht



club will sponsor a number of challenges between Australian and overseas clubs.

With a bigger fleet expected next year, the starts are going to be even trickier. But that's always been a big part of the fun at Race Week, a diversion every sailor and his family should take a week off work to do ... and another week off to recover.

DETAILS: For a full list of race results, notice of race postings, and general information on the XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week, contact the Hamilton Island Yacht Club, PO BOX 616, Airlee Beach, Queensland, 4802. Phone: (07) 4946 4211/Fax (07) 4946 7278. Or visit the detailed website www.hiyc.org.au



TOP: Are there alcoholic birds on Hamilton Island? A currawong sips its gin & tonic. (Pic - Richard Bennett)

RIGHT: Well equipped for the night ahead - a participant in the spectacular Mardi Gras during the XXXX Ansett Hamilton Island Race Week. (Pic - Richard Bennett).



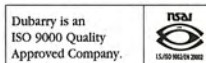
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 - 2 mainsheet winches
 - Aluminium door to saloon
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- Platform moulded in transom
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 - Built in fibreglass steps to cockpit
- Stainless steel swim ladder
 - Freshwater transom shower
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 - Two 12 volt banks of batteries for general use
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 - 240 volt shore power inlet
 - 4 x 240 volts outlets
 - 1 x 12 volts outlet
 - 26 x 12 volts lights (interior)
 - Navigation lights
 - Anchor light
 - Combination steaming/deck light
 - Cockpit light
 - 12 volt panel with breakers
 - 240 volt panel with breakers
 - Battery isolation switch
 - Battery link switches
 - 3 x bilge pumps
 - 1 x deck wash pump (salt)
 - 1 x hydraulic pump
 - 2 x engine room lights
 - 2 x shower sump pump
 - 1 x fresh water pump
- Mast & Rigging:**
- Keel stepped alloy mast
 - Double spreader rig
 - Alloy boom with hydraulic furling system
 - Stainless steel standing rigging with swaged terminals
 - Stainless steel fixed boom vang
 - Roller headsail furling system
- Engine Compartment:**
- Foam sound proofing
 - 2 x engine room lights
 - 920 ltr stainless steel fuel tanks
 - 900 ltr stainless steel water tanks
 - 40 ltr hot water unit
 - Freshwater pressure pump
 - Ball valves on all skin fittings
 - 38mm stainless steel propeller shaft
 - Feathering (3) bladed propeller
 - 3 x electric bilge pump (fwd, engine & aft compartments)
 - 1 x manual bilge pump
 - Compressor (utec)
- Generator:**
- 6.5 k.v.a. diesel freshwater cooled
- Engine:**
- 4 cylinder 100 h.p. volvo with marine gears
 - Freshwater cooling
 - Alternator
 - Voltmeter
 - Tachometer
 - Oil pressure gauge
 - Water temperature gauge
 - Audible alarm
 - Warning lights
 - Raw water strainer
 - Fuel filter
- Head:**
- 2 x shower, toilet and vanity unit
 - One piece fibreglass moulding
 - Toilets are lectrasan system
 - Hot and cold pressurised water
 - Vanity basins
 - 2 x 12 volt overhead lights
 - 1 x 240 volt outlet
 - Automatic discharging shower sump
 - Hand held shower
 - Mirror
 - Towel rail
 - Solar vents
 - Opening port holes
 - Overhead locker
 - Teak shower grates
 - Teak access doors
- Galley:**
- Teak floor cupboards with plenty of storage and splash backs
 - Laminated bench tops and splash backs
 - Teak top cupboards with storage for plates, cups etc.
 - Teak pantry
 - Teak faced bulkheads
 - Teak "v" jointed boarded headliner
 - Teak and holly floor
 - Gimballled gas stove and oven
 - Microwave
 - Stainless steel sink
 - Hot and cold pressurised water
 - 240v and engine driven eutectic refrigerator
 - 240v and engine driven eutectic freezer
 - 2 x over bench light
 - 1 x overhead lights
 - 1 x 240 volt double outlet
 - 1 x large deck hatch
- Starboard Aft Cabin:**
- Soft fabric headliner
 - Teak faced bulkheads and bunk sides
 - Single bunk
 - Storage under bunk
 - 125mm mattress
 - Teak navigators chart table
 - Wet locker
 - 1 x overhead light
 - 1 x chart light
- Port Aft Cabin:**
- Soft fabric headliner
 - Teak faced bulkheads and bunk sides
 - Double bunk
 - 125mm mattress
 - Teak hanging locker
 - Teak dresser
 - Storage under bunk
 - 1 x overhead light
 - 1 x reading light
 - 2 x opening portholes
 - Carpet on floor
 - Teak cabin door
- Forward Cabin:**
- Soft fabric headliner
 - Teak "v" jointed boarding to cabin sides
 - Teak faced bulkheads
 - Double berth
 - 125mm mattress
 - Teak hanging locker
 - Teak storage locker,
 - Storage under bunk
 - 1 x large deck hatch
 - 1 x overhead light
 - 2 x reading light
 - 2 x fixed portholes
 - Carpet on floor
 - Teak cabin door
- Guest Cabin:**
- Soft fabric headliner
 - Teak faced bulkheads
 - Upper and lower single bunks
 - 125mm mattresses
 - Teak hanging locker
 - Teak storage locker,
 - Storage under bunk
 - Access to mast
 - 2 x reading lights
 - 1 x under deck light
 - Carpet on floor
 - Deck hatch
 - Opening port hole
 - Fixed port hole
 - Teak cabin door
- Saloon:**
- Laminated 13 mm tinted safety glass windows
 - Soft fabric headliner
 - "I" shape settee covered in leather
 - Double settee covered in leather with storage drawers underneath
 - Helm seat covered in leather
 - Teak dinette table (extendable)
 - Teak cocktail cabinet on starboard side
 - Teak handrails
 - Teak steps down to galley
 - Teak and holly floor
 - Engine access hatches
- 2 x deck hatches
 - 6 x 12 volt overhead lights
 - 1 x 12 volt power outlet
 - 1 x 240 volt power outlet
 - 1 x window wiper
 - 10 x verosol blinds
- Inside Steering:**
- Teak dashboard complete with engine controls, warning lights, audible alarm, oil pressure gauge, water temperature gauge, tachometer, voltmeters
 - Wind instrument multifunction repeater unit
 - Vhf radio
 - Complete 12 volt d.c. panel with breakers
 - Complete 240 volt a.c. panel with breakers
 - Hydraulic steering
- Overall:**
- Around 3,000 kilos of resin
 - 500 linear metres of electrical cable
 - 6,000 screws and bolts
 - 90 litres of paint
 - 3,400 telephone calls and faxes
 - 1875 cups of coffee and tea
 - Umpteen late nights and early mornings
 - lashings of elbow grease.

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Lift a lift to safety



By Kevan Wolfe, courtesy Club Marine

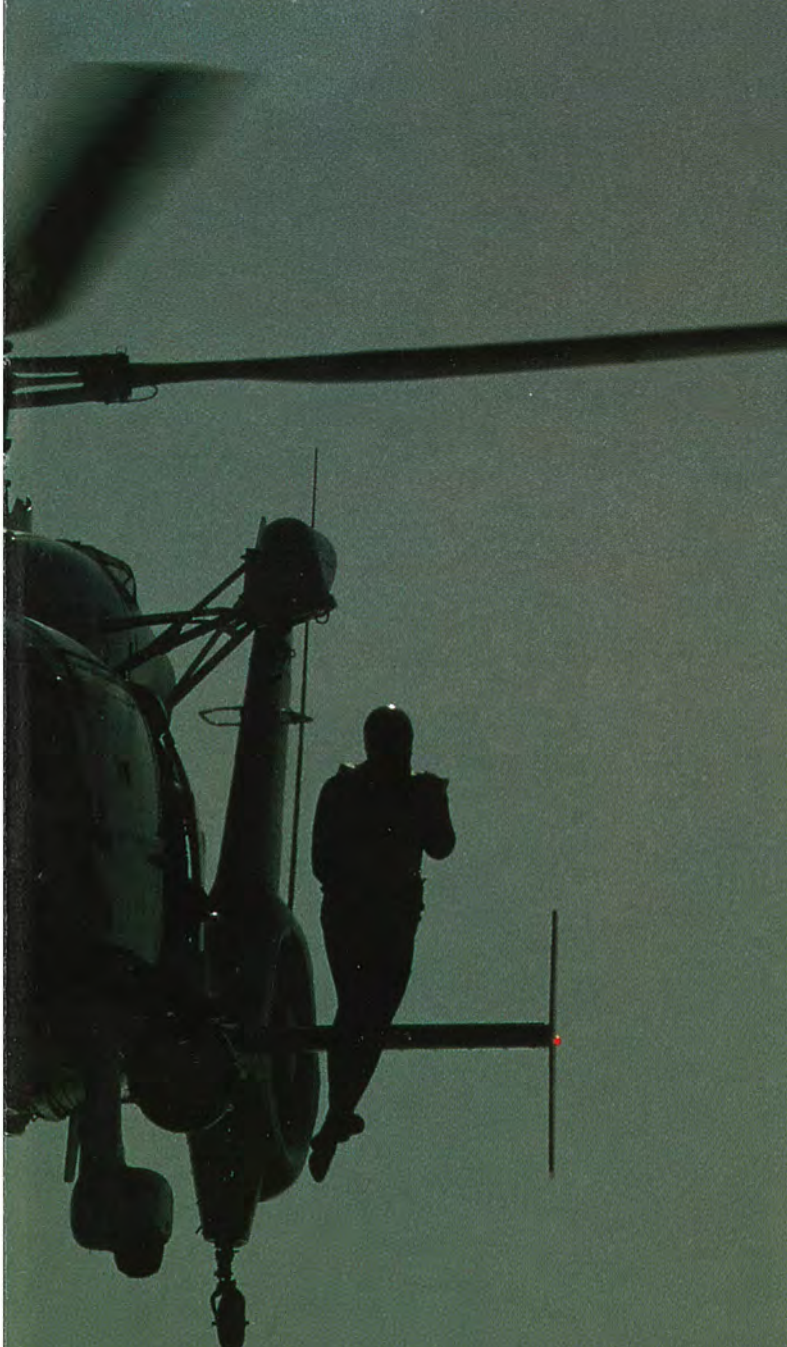
Get into trouble off the Australian coast and chances are your call for help will be answered by a helicopter operated by the police a private rescue organisation or a Defence Force helicopter from the Navy or Army.

During the storm-ravaged Sydney to Hobart yacht race last year, AusSAR, a division of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, coordinated the rescue of 50 crewmen off stricken yachts by helicopter. It was one of the largest rescue operations in Australia's history.

For anyone in trouble on the sea, the distinctive 'wokka wokka' of a helicopter's rotor blades, as it hovers overhead, is a very comforting sound. But as the slogan on the wall of the Royal Australian Navy's Survival at Sea School says "Remember you are not a survivor until you are rescued and back on dry land".

Significantly, the Report of the 1998 Sydney Hobart Race Review Committee released in May, found that, although highly experienced, many crew were poorly informed on aspects of the use of safety equipment and search and rescue techniques.

According to the report, crews from all yachts involved in helicopter rescues reported that their knowledge about search



cloud and poor visibility.

According to Senior Constable David Key of the Victoria Police Air Wing (POLAIR), which played a big part in the Sydney to Hobart race rescues, trying to find a white yacht in a white-capped ocean is like looking for a needle in a hay stack. He said that, during the rescue operations, the helicopter crew had difficulty sighting white-hulled yachts, they had difficulty in indentifying yachts and it was extremely difficult to sight people in the water at night and, to a lesser extent, during the day.

More often than not the crew of a stricken vessel will sight the aircraft before it sights them. Nearly all SAR aircraft can communicate on VHF Ch16 and it is important to be able to communicate directly with the aircraft so that it can be directed to your position. This is where a handheld VHF radio in a waterproof bag and stowed in a grab bag is a must. A handheld VHF radio was used very effectively by one yacht to talk to the aircraft as the entire crew was winched to safety.

If you are well to sea it is wise to save your flares until you can see an aircraft looking for you, otherwise they could be wasted and not available when you need them most.

In high winds and low visibility, parachute flares are almost useless. They climb too high into the sky and are lost in the cloud above the aircraft. If the conditions are such that a parachute flare can be used, don't fire directly at the aircraft. It would not be too smart to shoot down your rescuer. Orange smoke is also not effective in high winds, however, one yacht used a red night flare during the day and the aircraft was able to pick it up immediately.

An important point to remember when directing an aircraft to your position. As you look at the aircraft the pilot is looking back at you from the other direction, so if you tell him

and rescue (SAR) techniques ranged from ignorance to some uncertainty in what procedures should be followed to facilitate rescue. This was compounded by the lack of ability to communicate (in some cases) because the yacht's VHF set was inoperable from dismasting or water damage.

The crew of one yacht was winched to safety by a private rescue helicopter and a police aircraft, different methods of retrieval were employed. And this caused confusion. Generally, most rescue aircraft crews employed similar techniques.

Subsequently, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, organisers of the Sydney to Hobart race, arranged a demonstration of rescue and safety equipment for crews competing in the annual Sydney to Gold Coast race. The day was conducted by the Royal Australian Navy and the hardstand crane was used to simulate helicopter winch techniques.

Most times, when a rescue aircraft is called out it is invariably in bad weather conditions, with big seas, high winds, low



to turn right, he will turn to your left. Use of the military clockray method is recommended when directing an aircraft. Picture the nose of the aircraft as the face of a clock with 12 o'clock in the middle, one o'clock on the starboard side of the aircraft and 11 o'clock on the port side. By using this method there is no confusion and it is easy to direct the aircraft to the right spot.

Winching a person off a yacht is difficult and this is where good radio commu-



nication is important. If you have radio communications with the aircraft the aircrew will advise you of their requirements and the recovery method they plan to use. In rescue operations no two situations are the same and therefore there are no hard and fast rules on what method of recovery is to be used.

The aircrew will assess the wind strength and sea conditions at the scene as well as the condition of the vessel from which the recovery is to be made, before determining the most suitable type of recovery. Via the radio, the aircrew will explain the procedure to ensure the crew on the boat know what to expect and how to assist. Listen carefully to the instructions and if you are uncertain of the procedure, clarify the procedure before you continue.

If radio communications are not available the aircraft may lower a message bag containing instructions. Read these instructions carefully and if possible adhere to all of the requirements so that you can assist with the rescue.

To assist the helicopter crew to conduct a safe recovery, there are a few things that need to be done. Try to ensure that all loose articles on the deck are securely stowed. For yachts, lower all sails. If possible place any sails not in use below deck and secure the mainsail to the boom as tightly as possible. Articles such as deck cushions and hatch covers can easily become air-

borne as a result of the wind created by the helicopter downwash. If possible, stow these items below decks. Helicopters produce a downwash, which in the case of a Navy Seahawk or Seaking, can be up to 70kts in strength. This downwash could cause loose articles on the boat to be blown into the air and cause injury to the crew waiting to be winched or even possibly be ingested into the aircraft engines, causing major

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damage.

If a member of the aircraft crew is lowered to the boat he could become entangled in any loose lines, which could cause injury or hamper the recovery procedure. So ensure that no lines are streaming from the stern or the sides of the vessel and that all sheets and braces are stowed. For motor launches and fishing boats remove or lay down, any whip aerials, fishing rods and outriggers. These can entangle the winch wire when it is being lowered as well as restricting the height the aircraft is able to descend to.

There is another difficulty in winching someone straight off a boat, the pilot needs a reference point to keep the aircraft steady as he hovers on station. At sea there are very few reference points, so if the pilot is forced to use the vessel as a reference there is a tendency to pull back so he can keep it in view.

But if the person or persons to be rescued are placed in a liferaft, tethered about 50 metres behind the boat, the pilot is able to position the aircraft and keep it on station by using the vessel as a reference as the winchman is

lowered to the liferaft. Crew can also work their way along the tether from the vessel to the liferaft.

Another technique that is used with a power boat, or if no liferaft is available, is to lower the winchman to the water and drag him to the back of the craft. The person to be lifted off is directed to get into the water close to the boat, where the winchman hooks the harness up, the pair are then moved clear of the craft and

winched up.

The most important thing is not to panic, listen to the rescuer, he is trained and has done this many times before. After the winchman places the strop over your arms keep them straight down by your side. There is also a safety strap on the strop, but in some cases, particularly if the person being rescued is wearing a standard lifejacket, it can't be done up. In this case, the rescuer will hook his hands through the jacket and make sure you don't slip out.

If a single strop is sent down to you, place it over your head and under your armpits. When you are ready to be lifted give the crewman above the thumbs up sign and, as you are lifted off, fold your arms across your chest, try to relax and let the winch operator do all the work.

During the winching operation never attach the winch hook to the vessel. An unexpected pitch or roll could cause the cable to be pulled tight and



the hook to be torn from the winch wire, which would end any further possibility of using the winch.

There will be an initial surge as you are lifted out of the water, there could be a pause as the winchman checks that the strop is secure, and then the lift will steady as you are winched up to the aircraft. Once reaching the aircraft don't grab for anything, one of the crewmen will take over and make sure you are taken onboard safely.

A helicopter rescue is noisy and can be frightening, especially with the downwash whipping up the sea around you and blowing spray into your eyes. But, remember you are in the hands of professional, well-trained people, who practise their techniques regularly.

Methods of Recovery

The helicopter rescue methods used by most rescue agencies are generic and as such, although the equipment may differ in appearance, the procedures are generally similar.

Single Lift using the Nowra Strip

The most common method used by the Navy for winching a person into a helicopter is the single lift rescue strop. The strop in service with the Navy is known as the Nowra Strop. It is constructed of an inner band of nylon webbing encased in a high density foam rubber. The foam rubber provides comfort for the wearer as well as buoyancy for the strop when used to rescue persons from the water. Two metal D-rings are sewn into one end and a spring-loaded hook is sewn into the other. The outside covering is a bright orange nylon material.

If the Nowra Rescue Strop is lowered from the aircraft place it over the head and under the arms. When the strop is in the correct position indicate a thumbs up to the winch operator to indicate you are ready to be winched. Whilst being winched to the aircraft keep your arms folded across your chest. When you reach the aircraft the winch operator will pull you inside and direct you to a seat.

Double Lift Harness and Nowra Strop Combination

The Double Lift Harness is worn by the crewman lowered on the winch wire. It is used in conjunction with the Single Lift Strop and allows the crewman the free use of his hands to assist the survivor in donning the rescue strop. The crewman will place the strop around the person being winched and will signal to the aircraft to start the recovery. During the winching the crewman will ensure the security of the person being winched and will assist the winch operator in boarding that person into the aircraft and into a seat.

Hi Line Transfer

In situations where the sea state is causing excessive movement of the boat the aircrew may opt to carry out the recovery using a high line transfer. This is conducted in conjunction with the single or double lift method. The aircraft will lower a rope, with a weighted end, to the boat. The other

“get some water on your walls”



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end of the rope is attached to the winch hook with a weak link loop. After passing the weighted end of the rope to the boat, the aircraft then pays the rope out as the crew on the boat retrieves it hand-over-hand. When all the rope is paid out the winch operator lowers the winch and the boat crew continue to haul in the rope until the winch hook reaches the boat.

As the winch is recovered the crew on the boat pay out the rope and the process is continued until the winching is complete. The advantage of using the high line procedure is that it provides the aircrew with the ability to remain connected to the boat during the winch. In poor conditions this will also reduce the time taken to conduct the winch.

Billy Pugh Rescue Net

The Billy Pugh Rescue Net can be used by Navy aircrew to recover a person from the sea. The net is lowered on the winch and is designed with a small

drogue, which ensures that the open front will present itself to allow the person to swim in. When a swimmer is seated inside the net and the winch recovery is begun the floor is angled so that all weight is forced to the rear. This provides security for the person in the net during the winch. When the net reaches the aircraft the winch operator pulls the open side of the net to the inside of the aircraft and assists the person into a seat.

Although the Australian Defence Force (ADF) often has a role in rescue operations, it should be noted that the ADF and, in particular, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) is not a dedicated search and rescue agency. Whenever there is a requirement for any form of assistance for civilian search and rescue, certain protocols have to be met before the ADF can release assets to attend. This process is known as Defence Aid to the Civil Community and covers a broad spectrum of circumstances for which the Defence



Force may be called upon to provide assistance.

However, most of the helicopters in service with the RAN and the Army have the capability to provide an exceptional search and rescue platform and all aircrew are trained in search and rescue procedures in the aircraft type in which they fly.

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday!

Brian Hill of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority outlines the correct procedures for sending distress signals from a boat at sea.

"Mayday, mayday, mayday. We have a man overboard and we'd like a helicopter ..."

- *Fatal Storm* by Rob Mundle (HarperCollins, 1999, page 171)

"Minutes later (he) popped his head up the hatch from the cabin and announced there was a ship being redirected and a chopper was on its way ..."

- *ibid*

It was, of course, one of the 55 successful rescues coordinated by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority at the height of last year's Sydney to Hobart carnage.

Mundle, in his definitive work *Fatal Storm*, paints an accurate and succinct picture of what it was like in AMSA's Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra during the worst hours of the race.

Send the right message

But with summer and the Hobart race almost upon us again, it's probably a good time to review what's involved when a vessel transmits a distress, urgency or safety message, and to emphasise the effort, logistics and assets that are required when AMSA responds to, and coordinates, an air-sea rescue operation.

But first, the ground rules:

The Australian Communications Authority's Marine Radio Operators Handbook, which is the standard reference work for sailors studying for the ACA's various marine radio operators' licences, makes it clear that:

- a MAYDAY, the formal distress call, must be transmitted **ONLY** when your vessel or a person using it is threatened by grave and imminent danger, and requires immediate assistance — for example, if your boat is

sinking. It has absolute priority over all other transmissions and must not be used in any other circumstances.

- a PAN PAN, the urgency call, is the correct transmission when an individual on board is in immediate danger — for example, a medical emergency — or if your vessel needs assistance but is **NOT** in grave and imminent danger.
- a SECURITE (pronounced "say-cure-e-tay") message, the safety call, is transmitted to warn other vessels of possible danger — for example, an important weather or navigation warning.
- All transmissions should be made on VHF channels 16 or 67, channels 88 or 86 on the 27 MHz band, or 2182, 4125, 6215, 8291, 12,290 or 16,420 kHz on the MF/HF

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AMSA operates a 24-hour Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra that swings into action immediately a distress call (or a signal from a radio distress beacon, or EPIRB — but more of this later) is detected.

However, as one of AMSA's senior search and rescue officers, Paul Threlfall, explains, transmitting a MAYDAY in the heat of the moment instead of a PAN PAN or a SECURITE can dangerously divert AMSA's attention away from other more life-threatening situations, such as another crew abandoning ship. And the costs involved, and the risk to the lives of the rescuers, can be horrendous.

Threlfall said: "At the height of the Sydney to Hobart rescues we had up to 16 EPIRBs going off in the same general area all at once, blipping and merging on the computer screens, as well as a series of Maydays, Pan Pans and flare sightings.

"Each of these had to be investigated, and it certainly stretched our resources."

Indeed it did. As a previous issue of *Offshore Yachting* (June-July 1999) records: "Instead of the usual six or eight officers on duty, there must have been 20 or more ... some called in from leave, other summoned in on their rostered day off, others working back-to-back shifts ... people were working shoulder to shoulder at chart tables, hunched over computer screens, locating available aircraft and surface vessels, liaising by phone with the police, the SES, the Defence forces, coastal fishing trawlers, fuel suppliers ..."

(When the cost of all this was subsequently added up, it emerged that the cost of the civil resources employed was about \$650,000, not including the assistance provided by RAAF and RAN aircraft and the Navy frigate HMAS Newcastle. About 45 civil and Defence aircraft and three surface vessels assisted AMSA in the rescue operations.)

All of AMSA's search and rescue (SAR) specialists have extensive navy, merchant marine, air force or civil aviation experience.

On receiving a distress signal, or being notified of a missing civil aircraft

or sea-going vessel, the RCC will immediately liaise with State or Territory police, who are generally responsible for the initial investigation.

Of course, if the Mayday or distress signal emanates from a long way off shore, and the rescue is beyond the resources of the police, AMSA's national search and rescue organisation, AusSAR, assumes coordination of the rescue operation, often with the assistance of other bodies such as the Defence



AMSA senior search and rescue officer Paul Threlfall... "Yachties should be aware that help can come in many forms."

forces, aviation authorities, airlines, Customs, State emergency services, volunteer marine rescue authorities (such as the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard) or perhaps fishing cooperatives.

AMSA has no search vessels or aircraft of its own. Its role is to plan and coordinate the rescue operation by drawing on the many years of practical experience of its search and rescue officers, its proven operational procedures and the extensive data base and range of contacts held in the Rescue Coordination Centre in Canberra.

Mr Threlfall, a former RAN patrol boat commander, takes up the story: "If the Mayday involves an incident relatively close to shore — say, within 20 nautical miles — AMSA will immediately notify the local police, liaise with volunteer rescue organisations and organise a general broadcast to shipping.

"If the Mayday was further out to

sea, our first response would be to organise an aircraft to investigate the situation, and we would also request fishing vessels in the area to respond to the emergency.

"We would begin plotting search areas, winds and tidal drifts, identify suitable aircraft for an extended search, and request commercial vessels such as tankers and bulk carriers to divert to the area and keep a good lookout.

"We can do this by drawing on data available from AMSA's 24-hour "AUSREP" service, which tells us which commercial ships might be in the general area.

"At this point we might also decide to call on the resources of the Royal Australian Navy or the RAAF, as we did during the Sydney to Hobart rescues.

"Yachties should be aware that help can come in many forms — for example, warships, helicopters, fishing trawlers, tankers, State emergency service vessels, other recreational boats — but there are always practical problems that have to be overcome.

"For example, aircraft and pilots — or even fuel — are not always readily available. The aircraft might have to be physically modified by taking the doors off to enable the rescue to take place.

"We try to circumvent these problems by training and equipping an Australia-wide network of civil search and rescue units, which are located all around the coast and inland at places such as Broken Hill, Alice Springs and Mount Isa (see map).

"The pilots are trained in all aspects of search and rescue work, including the delivery of airborne relief supplies such as rafts, first aid kits, water, blankets and pumps.

"Also, some civil helicopter operators are trained to perform marine supply drops at strategic locations around the coastline.

"The point to remember, however, is that all responses to a Mayday call involve an enormous coordination and logistical effort by search authorities. It's not a transmission to be misused."

By activating a radio distress beacon you are also, in effect, transmitting a Mayday.



AMSA search and rescue officers Ray Cully (left), and Dave Cole (right) discuss a search operation in the Gulf of Carpentaria at AMSA's centre in Canberra.

This said, it cannot be emphasised too strongly that AMSA unreservedly encourages the carriage and use of radio distress beacons when appropriate. These can include Personal Locator Beacons that are compact and designed to be carried on your person (perhaps around your neck or in a pocket of your wet weather gear).

The most common distress beacon (121.5 MHz) costs less than \$250. Its signal can be pinpointed to within about 20 km. The more advanced 406 MHz beacon (less than \$2000, and compulsory for future Sydney to Hobart races) can indicate your position to within about 5 km. The 406 MHz beacon is vastly superior and can be programmed to tell the RCC the registration of your vessel, which in turn can indicate the type of craft, survival gear carried, possible number of people aboard and so on.

Before activating your distress beacon, however, always first try to make contact by radio with one of Telstra's coastal radio stations at Sydney, Brisbane, Townsville or Perth, or with your local coast guard or other service.

Once you turn your beacon on, leave it on (unless instructed otherwise by search and rescue authorities). A fully-charged radio distress beacon should transmit a continuous signal for at least 48 hours.

It is not the purpose of this article to describe actual rescue procedures, or the necessary preparations for abandoning a sinking vessel. There is an abundance of good advice in publications such as *Survival at Sea* and *Go Boating Safely* (available from Commonwealth Government Infoshops in the capital cities), *Teki Dalton's Sea Safety for Small Craft* (out of print, but sometimes found in public libraries) and other books available from commercial outlets (eg Boat Books in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth). I particularly like the voluminous (572 pages) *Australian Boating Manual* by Captain Dick Gandy (Sydney Maritime Group Pty Ltd, 1999).

But a word to the wise: a very experienced Sydney-to-Hobart sailor once told me, "If you really have to abandon ship, never, ever step DOWN into a life raft. Always step UP."

Pretty good advice, really, when you think about it.

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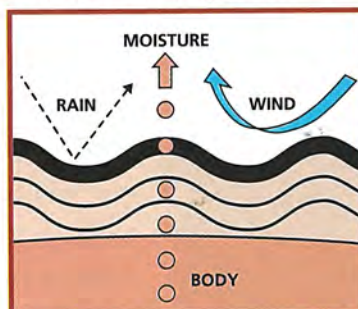
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THE MARINER BOATING HOLIDAY PLANNER

The allure of sailing the world's top cruising destinations is constant for those of us whose heaven is a yacht leaning into a breeze, or moored to a quay with a nearby restaurant beckoning.

The cruising world offers short breaks, long breaks, winter breaks, summer breaks, small yachts and big yachts. Some cruising grounds are quite challenging while others offer short passages across protected waters and are therefore suited to the less experienced.

Some people spend their life savings and battle the oceans to get to their "heaven". Others catch the big silver bird and charter a yacht when they get there. This planner attempts to provide a quick guide to what might be possible

for you, given the usual constraints of vacation season, available time and of course, available money.

In order to have a basis for cost comparison in per person terms I have used a three-cabin Beneteau Oceanis 400, or similar, as the common denominator. This yacht has three separate cabins plus the saloon and two heads with showers. I have selected the shoulder season charter rate because in most destinations I recommend that you avoid peak season if you can. In fact peak season pricing does not always reflect the best time to be in a certain area. It usually tells you when most people take their holidays.

Similarly the airfare selected is generally the shoulder season level and is not necessarily the cheapest, because I have selected mainstream carriers, e.g. Singapore Airlines to the Mediterranean, Air New Zealand to the South Pacific and Caribbean, (together with American Airlines). If there are local

flights involved in getting to the charter base the fare is included in the price indicated.

The prices are intended only as a guide and there will be seasonal differences in charter rates and airfares, various additional costs like airport taxes, cruising taxes, insurance, fuel, cleaning etc.

My company, Mariner Boating, represents French worldwide charter operator Stardust Marine, who have fleets in most of the areas discussed. Where this does not apply the best available operator has been selected, e.g. Sunsail in The Whitsundays, New Zealand and Tonga.

If I've succeeded only in confusing you please give me a call, Trevor Joyce at Mariner Boating on Sydney 99669014, Fax 99665888, or call in at 6/33 Chandos Street, St Leonards.

The World Wide Boating Holiday Plan

Where to go, when to go, what to expect and how much

Destination	Cruising Areas	Suggested Itinerary	Best Time to Go
Australia	Whitsundays	Hamilton, Cid, Nara, Hayman, Butterfly Bay, Border, Whitehaven	Mar, Sep
	Pittwater/Broken Bay	Newport, Americas Bay, Smiths Creek, Jerusalem Bay, The Hawkesbury River	Year
Pacific	Bay of Islands & Hauraki Gulf	The Bay is a small protected area with many anchorages. The Hauraki Gulf is similar but sailing between the two can be a challenge	Nov
	Tonga - Vava'u	Small cruising area protected by a barrier reef. Many anchorages	Mar, Sep
	Tahiti Leeward Islands	20 mile passages between islands Raiatea - Huahine - Tahaa - Bora Bora	Mar, Sep
Caribbean	British Virgin Islands	Short passages between islands Norman, Cooper, Virgin Gorda, Jost Van Dyke, Tortola, Sopers Hole, Marina Cay, Tortola	Nov to Feb
	Leeward Islands	Up to 40 mile passages between islands Guadeloupe - Illes des Saintes - Antigua - Nevis - St.Kitts - St.Barts - St.Martin	Nov to Feb
	Windward Islands	Up to 20 mile passages between islands Martinique - St.Lucia - St.Vincent-Bequia - Mustique - Canouan - Tobago Cays - Mayereau - Union	Nov to Feb
	Cuba	Cayo Largo, Playa Sirena, Cayo Rosario, Cayo Campas, Cayo Cantiles Cayo Rico, Cay Largo	Nov
	Puerto Rico	Puerto Del Ray, Culebra, Ensanada Honda, Bahia de Almodovar, Culebra, Vieques, Pineros, Puerto Rico	Nov to Feb
Western Mediterranean	Balaeric Islands of Spain	Palma, Puerto Andratx, Puerto Soller Porto Cristo, Cala d'Or, Isla de Cabrera Palma.	Mar
	The French Riviera	Hyeres, Porquerolles, Le Lavandou St. Tropez, Cavalaire, Port Cros, Hyeres, Porquerolles, Le Lavandou	Mar
	Corsica	Macinaggio, St. Florent, Ile Rousse, Capraia, Elba, Bastia, Macinaggio	Mar
	Sicily	Palermo, Cafalu, Salina, Lipari, Vulcano Cefalu, Palermo	Mar
Eastern Mediterranean	Greek Islands Ionian Sea	Corfu, Paxos, Anti Paxos, Levkas, Ithaka, Cephalonia, Levkas	Mar
	Saronic Gulf	Athens, Aegina, Epidavros, Poros, Hydra, Spetses, Leonidion, Gerakas, Monemvassia	Lat, Ma
	Sporades	Short passages between islands Skiathos, Skopelos, Allonisos, Peristera, Skiros	Mar
	Cyclades	Passages up to 20 miles between islands. Athens, Sounion, Kea, Syros Mykonos, Paros, Serifos, Kythnos, Athens	Mar
	Dodecanese	Passages up to 15 miles between islands. Samos, Agathonissi, Lipsos Patmos, Arki, Samos. Continue from Patmos to Leros, Kalimnos, Kos, Tilos, Symi, Khalkis, Rhodes	Mar
	Turkey Bodrum to Marmaris	Coastal Sailing. Bodrum, Cokertme, English Harbour, Knidos, Datca, Keci Buku, Bozburun, Serce, Marmaris	Mar, Sep
	Marmaris to Antalya	Coastal sailing. Marmaris, Ekencik, Kapi Creek, Tomb Bay, Gocek, Fetihye, Gemiler, Kalkan, Kas, Kastellorenzo, (Greek), Kekova, Ginivez, Tekirova, Antalya	Mar, Sep
Indian Ocean	Seychelles	Praslin, La Digue, Fregata, Mahe, Anse de la Mouche, Silhouette, Curieuse Felicete, Praslin	Apr

it will cost...

Time	Ideal Duration	Typical Weather	Typical Sea Conditions	Flights+Yacht AS Per Person
June, Nov	1 week	SE winds up to 20 knots Moderate humidity	Up to 3m tides, rough water in the passages	\$1,115
bound	2 days	Hot humid summer with north winds. Cool, dry in winter with variable W – S winds	Flat water up to 2M tides	\$250 NB yacht only
April	1 week	Prevailing wind is N between the S fronts	Calm in the bays but can be to 3m in open water	\$1,275
June, Dec	1 week	SE Trade winds stronger in winter	Protected water, mainly flat water	\$2,140
June Dec	10 days	SE Trade winds stronger in winter	Ocean crossings between the islands but calm within the lagoons around the islands	\$2,140
Feb – May	1 week	SE – NE Trade Winds stronger and more N in Dec – Jan	Protected so wind waves only	\$3,335
Feb May	2 weeks	SE – NE Trade Winds stronger and more N in Dec – Jan	Open water between islands. Up to 2 knots ENE current	\$3,950
Feb May	2 weeks	SE Trade Winds	Open water between islands but protected in the Grenadines up to 2 knots ENE current	\$3,950
May	1 week	SE Trade Winds	Flat water in the lee of Cuba itself and the islands	\$3,295
Feb May	1 week	SE Trade Winds	Waters protected by barrier reef	\$3,295
June & Sep	1 week	N up to 25 knots, stronger in Jul – Aug	Protected in the lee of Palma but exposed on N coast.	\$2,965
June & Sep	1 week	N up to 30 knots in Jul – Aug	Coastal sailing on basically flat water	\$2,875
Jun & Sep	1 week	N up to 30 knots in Jul – Aug	Fairly exposed to prevailing N winds	\$2,995
Jun & Sep	1 week	N – NE up to 20 knots	Open water between the islands	\$3,365
June & Sep	2 weeks	N up to 20 knots	Open water to the NW of Levkas but calm to the SE. No tides	\$3, 725
April, Jun & Sep	2 weeks	N up to 25 knots near Jul & Aug	Basically protected from prevailing northerly	\$3, 625
June & Sep	1 week	Prevailing northerly weaker than in the southern Aegean	Protected water	\$2, 810
June & Sep	2 weeks	NE up to 30 knots near Jul & Aug.	Open water with up to 2m wind waves in passages between islands	\$3, 455
June & Sep	2 weeks	NE up to 30 knots near Jul & Aug.	Water protected from prevailing northerly in the lee of the islands. Waves up to 2m in exposed stretches	\$3, 553
June, Oct	2 weeks	NNW up to 30 knots near Jul & Aug	Basically protected water	\$3, 265
June Oct	2 weeks plus	Westerly and weaker as you go East.	Basically protected water	\$3, 265
- Oct	10 days	Easterly trade winds up to 20 knots	Ocean crossings between the main islands but otherwise protected.	\$3, 500

WHY SHOULD YOU BOOK YOUR NEXT SAILING HOLIDAY WITH ME?



- I have 15 years experience in worldwide yacht chartering
- I have detailed knowledge of all the major cruising grounds in the world; South Pacific, Caribbean, Mediterranean, Indian Ocean.
- I will spend the planning time with you to ensure the success of your holiday.
- I am free to select the operator and the yacht that suits you best, bareboat or crewed charter.
- I have the buying power to negotiate the best deal for your charter.
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Liferaft Drill

"Be prepared" the motto for sailors, too



"Your best liferaft, unless there is no alternative, is your yacht"
"Don't cut any other part of the liferaft"

Helping "survivors" aboard a liferaft at HMAS Cerberus. (Pic - courtesy Club Marine magazine)

"The first, but not the foremost, item for Hobart victory is the vehicle. You can't possibly win the race with a boat that can't get there, and it cannot possibly get there without a mast, a rudder, and a keel. If you want to be on the winning boat it is important that these items are securely attached so that they arrive in Hobart at the same time as the hull. Some designers of late seem to have a tendency to disregard this obvious fact."

- Peter Kurts, a two-times winner of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, in an article published in Offshore's official race program in 1979.

"No amount of regulation or organisation can make up for experience. In ocean racing the safety of the yacht and crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the owner/skipper. He is the one that has to know how to use the equipment he has on board, to make sure that his crew know where the safety gear is, and how to use it. And as a team, they and the yacht are fit to face whatever the sea throws up against them."

- John Connolly, yachting journalist and offshore sailor, in an article also published in the 1979 Sydney to Hobart Race Program.

Offshore Yachting

John Ferris, managing director of RFD, the prominent sea safety equipment distributor, quoted these two comments on safety at sea in an address to more than 300 sailors at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's first Safety at Sea Seminar held at the Club's Rushcutters Bay marina in late July. Held on the eve of the CYCA's Sydney - Gold Coast Race, several owners brought along their entire crews to hear Ferris give a practical explanation of liferafts, their maintenance and their use, along with a simulated RAN helicopter rescue in the Pond in front of the clubhouse. These are main points of John Ferris' address:

What was true then is equally true today when you go ocean racing or cruising. The obvious point is that the objective in all ocean races is to plan towards and then sail towards arriving at the end destination, be it Hobart, Lord Howe Island or the Gold Coast.

However, in the event of having to abandon your yacht and take to a liferaft, every member of the crew should be fully aware of the details of the yacht's liferaft(s), how they should be launched, and then how to survive safely at sea in such conditions.

1. If your liferaft is stowed on deck in a rigid container make sure it is securely lashed in place with a quick release mechanism and/or sharp knife nearby. Check your lashings as the years go by for UV degradation, chaffing, general wear and tear.
2. Ensure the liferaft's painter line is attached to a strong point on the boat. This is equally true for a soft pack (valise) type liferaft as for the rigid container style. You must realise that about 10 metres of this operating line is flaked up and down inside the valise or container and it all has to be pulled out before inflation takes place. When stowed down below you can add a tail to the short, exposed length so it can be tied off to a strong point near the companionway.
3. Ship's liferafts have to have hydrostatic releases in their system as part of their survey requirements. Hydrostatic releases incorporate a "weak link". Very few racing yachts use hydrostatic releases so "yachtie" liferafts have other means of providing a "weak link". Often, but not always, this is the breaking strain of the painter line itself.
4. Only ever inflate a liferaft if you intend getting into it. Have it ready in the cockpit or on deck by all means, but don't inflate it until you have decided to abandon ship. The last Hobart race saw an example of weak links parting when liferafts were inflated and left in the water, attached to the yacht, "just in case". In those terrible conditions the liferafts probably filled with water from waves crashing into or over them and that weight, added to the weight of water in the ballast pockets beneath the rafts, was then more than the designed strength of the weak links.
5. Boarding a liferaft from the water is not easy. They have high freeboards and various types of boarding ladders or inflatable boarding steps or ramps. Once inside the first occupant can assist others to get in. I personally find it best to ignore the ladder. I place my hands on the top buoyancy tube then bob up and down a few times to build up some,

momentum then haul myself aboard.

6. Most racing yachts will have the Australian Yachting Federation emergency pack inside their liferafts. (Category 2 events can use the Marine Coastal pack which is required for vessels under USL Code survey such as charter yachts, fishing vessels, etc). The contents of the emergency pack are contained in one or more draw-string bags which are tied to the liferaft. When you open a bag make sure you re-close it and keep it tied to the liferaft so that if you invert you won't lose everything.
7. The standard pack does not include an EPIRB. The CYCA's 1998 Sydney Hobart Race Report suggests this will be a requirement in the future. EPIRBs are just so good now with satellite compatibility that for a couple of hundred dollars it is crazy not to have one in your liferaft anyway.
8. Expectations! Liferafts are the last resort. Your best liferaft, unless there is no alternative, is your yacht. But when or if the yacht has failed to meet the conditions it is mighty comforting to know you have another chance for survival. Depending on the conditions your time in a liferaft might not be too comfortable, but what more should you expect from a couple of little inflatable rings! First, unlike the yacht you have just lost, they won't sink. But, like the yacht, they can capsize. They can be easily righted though, but there is a technique to follow. And they can save your life!
9. To re-right a capsized liferaft it is best, unfortunately, for all occupants to get out first. It is possible in certain conditions to turn a liferaft over with a couple of people inside - but it is not the recommended method. The best way is to exit the raft, then turn or rotate the liferaft so that the CO2 cylinder is to the bottom; that is, closest to the water. Grab on to the righting strap (handles on some models) on the underside of the floor, lean or kneel on the cylinder and haul back. Using the wind can help, but it is really not that difficult to do.

10. Liferafts have internal and external "hand lines" all around their perimeter. In adverse conditions you can clip yourself on to these, but only if you have abandoned ship with your harness and tether. This is a very sensible idea and one which might have helped save more lives in the last Hobart race.
11. There is a sharp knife (no point for obvious reasons) just inside the canopy entrance. This can be used to finally cut the painter line. If you do cut the line we suggest you pull the raft back to the boat and cut the line as close to the boat as possible. Salvaging this 10 metres or so of rope could be handy to attach survivors to the liferaft especially if they don't have their harnesses. (Obviously don't go back alongside your vessel if you have abandoned her because of fire!)
12. Don't cut any other part of the liferaft. They are made from very, very strong materials but even a small cut can soon become a major tear and could easily result in the

inflated arch tube and collapse the canopy instead. Then, by sitting on it, there will be no obstruction for the rescuer on the helicopter wire.

14. Stream the sea anchor. All liferafts have them. This will slow down your rate of drift and help markedly to stabilise the liferaft. The exception would be if you could see land or an island in which case you'd paddle like hell to get there, I guess!
15. Understandably, we tend to think liferafts are used only in extreme conditions like the last Hobart race. But statistics we have collected over many years show that they are just as frequently required for other reasons, often in calm weather, because yachts (or other boats) have ploughed into a partially submerged container, another vessel, a reef, a whale, or they have caught fire.
16. One of the most telling paragraphs, to me, in the CYCA's Hobart Race Report mentioned the fact that none of the survivors who were



CYCA members get the experience of being in a life raft. (Pic - Peter Campbell)

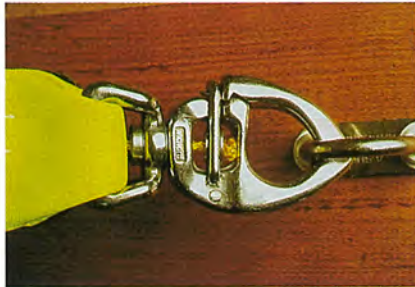
loss of structural integrity of the whole liferaft.

13. We know of one incident where survivors cut the floor of their liferaft - with dire consequences. Another incident occurred when survivors cut the canopy off their liferaft to make it easier for a helicopter winchman to harness-up to them. It is quite easy to pull down on the

dependent on liferafts for their survival had had any previous exposure to liferafts, their deployment or the equipment they contained. Having safety equipment on board is just one part of the equation; knowing how to use it and what to expect of its capabilities is the equally important other part.

Personal safety offshore

Remote release for safety lines



A sharp tug on the lanyard built into the safety line will release the snap shackle on one end of the line without the need to return to the strong point on the boat.

Detaching safety lanyards to facilitate movement onboard is unfortunately a common practice, and one that has resulted in many man overboard incidents in Australian waters.

Innovative inflatable safety clothing manufacturer, Stormy Seas Australia, has developed and released a practical

and safe solution to this serious problem - the RRemote-RRelease(safety lanyard that provides both the securing and release flexibility that is needed to ensure safety at sea.

The RRemote-RRelease addresses the short-comings of conventional safety harnesses allowing crew to remain secured to the yacht while moving around the deck.

Another significant feature is the ability to detach it without having to return to the original point of attachment. As a result, in the event of a capsize where crew are caught under the yacht they can release themselves quickly and easily.

Importantly, the design of the release mechanism ensures that the release catch will not snag under loaded release conditions, as can dou-

ble action devices - a serious safety problem encountered by crews in the 1998 Sydney to Hobart.

There are four different ways to release the RRemote-RRelease: the snap shackle itself (one handed), a mid-line release option, a harness end release lanyard and the harness attachment hook.

This ensures that under any conditions it is possible to achieve release of the lanyard.

The RRemote-RRelease is stand alone and can be partnered with the majority of yacht harnesses. It comes as an option with the Stormy Seas Offshore Jacket or Vest which both incorporate safety features such as an inbuilt harness and inflatable lifejacket.

Features of the Stormy Seas RRemote-RRelease:

- It offers a freedom of movement onboard that is not possible with fixed point lanyards that require hand release at the point of attachment.
- It will not roll-off if pulled or looped

Continued next page...

GME

Electrophone

TOP CREW

TECHNOLOGY FOR YACHTIES AT THE RIGHT PRICE

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Ultimate safety package for offshore sailors

The design of foul weather gear for offshore sailors has made many significant advances in recent year's. It is now easier and more comfortable to wear and many garments have vital built-in safety features.

One of the outstanding garments is the Stormy Seas Offshore Sailing Range, designed for the blue water sailor seeking the ultimate personal safety package - high performance wet weather gear that is stylish and comfortable incorporating safety features such as a harness and inflatable life-jacket.

The Tasmanian-designed and made range includes an Offshore Jacket, Offshore Vest and Offshore Pants.

The beauty of the range is that it can be worn as general protection against wind and waves, but as conditions become more severe the in-built safety features are there for you to rely on.

The jacket and the vest are approved by Australian Standards as a Type 1 PFD and can be orally inflated as a precaution or instantly (and fully) inflated with a CO2 cylinder. The CO2 cylinder is fitted in a specially designed inflation pocket, located on the left side of the chest, and is activated by pulling down on the pocket.

An automatic inflation system, activated by immersion in water, is also available.

The jacket and vest also include an approved safety harness (AS 2227 - Yachting Harness) and signal whistle. Options include a personal EPIRB, emergency strobe light or water activated light, crutch strap and lifting becket.



Stormy Seas, an ultimate package for offshore sailors.



The harness has been purpose-designed and rigorously tested to eliminate slippage, deformity or failure. A single webbing strap fitted to the lining of the garment, the harness sits at chest level eliminating any potential for slipping and causing discomfort. When not in use, the harness hardware is protected by a Velcro secured cover.

The uncompromising performance and quality of the jacket and vest are matched by the all-new bib and brace style light weight but heavy duty Offshore Pants.

For more information or a copy of the Stormy Seas catalogue contact Stormy Seas, phone: (03) 6245 0443 or visit their website:

www.stormyseas.com.au

...from previous page

- incorrectly.
- It will release when required even under heavy load such as in a capsized or tow-down (where a vessel rolls or founders and the safety line cannot be released due to load) situation.
- It will always come away cleanly when the release line is pulled, and will not

snag.

- It offers four points for detachment - the snap shackle itself (one handed), a mid-line release option, a harness end release lanyard and the harness attachment hook.
- It will still activate even when the lanyard is considerably fouled.
- It is designed to be a 'safe failure'

device in that any failure of the remote actuation system will not reduce the securing integrity of the lanyard.

For more information or a copy of the Stormy Seas catalogue contact Stormy Seas phone: (03) 6245 0443 or visit their website:

www.stormyseas.com.au

Key role for crews in race safety

Crews of yachts competing in the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race will have a much closer personal part to play in safety preparations for the 630 nautical mile ocean classic.

New rules for crew experience and training, along with additional mandatory personal safety equipment, are highlighted in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Notice of Race for the 55th Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. The Notice of Race contains most of the significant safety recommendations made in the Club's 1998 Sydney Hobart Race

Review Committee's Report, covering yacht and personal safety equipment, yacht and crew eligibility, and other safety factors. In fact, hundreds of ocean racing sailors around Australia are already acknowledging the Report's recommendations by attending safety at sea seminars organised by the CYCA and other clubs in most States. "There has been a most positive response by both yacht owners and their crews to the 1998 Sydney Hobart Review Committee's Report," Commodore Hugo van Kretschmar told OFFSHORE. "They have fully accepted the benefits of upgrading the already stringent safety rules and, in particular, to update their personal knowledge in preparing to meet all contingencies at

sea." The vast majority of our most experienced sailors realise there is always something to learn when it comes to meeting the challenge of the ocean," he added. Specific rules involving the crews of competing yachts this year include:

- At least 50% of the crew on each yacht must have long race offshore experience, with details submitted on a crew declaration form. The minimum age of all crew will be 18 years.
- At least 30% of the crew of each yacht must have completed a CYCA Safety Seminar, an AYF Yacht Safety and Survival Course or a CYCA approved equivalent.
- At least one crew member must have a senior first aid certificate or higher qualification.
- At least one crew member must have an HF radio operator's certificate of proficiency.
- At least four crew members must attend the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Race briefing in Sydney on December 24. To facilitate interstate crews, the Race Briefing will be relayed through a teleconference to

SEND THE RIGHT MESSAGE!

A **MAYDAY** must be transmitted only when the vessel or person using it is threatened by grave and imminent danger, and requests immediate assistance - eg when it is sinking.

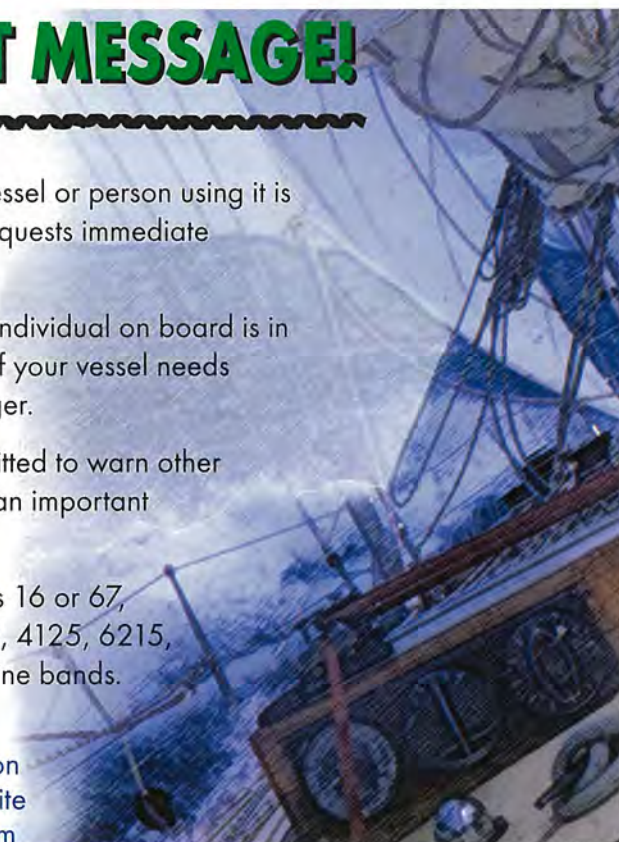
A **PAN PAN** is the correct transmission when an individual on board is in immediate danger - eg a medical emergency - or if your vessel needs assistance but is NOT in grave and imminent danger.

A **SECURITE** ("say-cure-e-tay") message is transmitted to warn other vessels of possible danger - eg floating debris, or an important weather or navigation warning.

All transmissions should be made on VHF channels 16 or 67, channels 88 or 86 on the 27 MHz band, or 2182, 4125, 6215, 8291, 12,290 or 16,420 kHz on the MF/HF marine bands.



For more information contact the
Australian Maritime Safety Authority on
Tel: 1800 641 792 or visit our website
at www.amsa.gov.au/amsa/sar.htm



specified yacht clubs in other States.

- Mandatory personal safety equipment for each crew member must now include personal high intensity lights or strobes, personal dye markers, safety harnesses that are not more than seven years old, additional harness strops for at least 30% of the crew.
- Each yacht must substantially complete a qualifying race of not less than 150 nautical miles not more than six months before the start of the Race. Qualifying races will include the Sydney-Gold Coast Race and Cabbage Tree Island Race (NSW), Maria Island Race (Tasmania) and Melbourne to Stanley (Victoria). Yachts may seek dispensation from a qualifying race by completing a non-stop passage of not less than 200 nautical miles.

Additional safety equipment that owners must provide on their yacht for this year's race include:

- The number of EPIRBs carried on board must be not less than the number of liferafts carried on board. At least one EPIRB is to be a 406 MHz

EPIRB and not packed in the liferaft. Remaining EPIRBs may be 406 MHz or 121 MHz and may be carried on board or packed in the liferafts.

- The new dedicated race frequency of 4603 kHz in addition to all frequencies previously required for the Sydney to Hobart Race.
- A waterproof, handheld VHF marine radio in addition to VHF and HF/SSB permanently installed marine radios.

The Notice of Race is now available from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia or may be downloaded from the Club's website: <http://www.cyca.com.au> The Notice of Race sets out strict time deadlines for the lodgement of entries and other mandatory documentation, with no Applications to Enter being accepted after November 1 and no documentation being accepted after December 21. This is to enable the CYCA to meet

its own race management rules to ensure that each yacht heading to sea on Boxing Day is fully equipped, has achieved stability requirements, and that its crew have met the new standards of experience and pre-racing training. The Notice of Race also reiterates the International Racing Rules of Sailing. Fundamental rule 4 Decision to Race: "A boat is solely responsible for deciding whether or not to start or to continue racing."



The crew of Quest were well equipped to meet the rigours of the Channel during the recent Admiral's Cup in England - (Pic - Thierry Martinez.



Are you coming?

In the year 2000, Sydney will welcome visitors from all over the world as we play host to the first Olympic Games of the new Millennium. Most Games' events will be held on or near Sydney Harbour – and a series of cultural, festival and maritime events will be staged leading up to the Games.

The New South Wales Waterways Authority manages the recreational and commercial vessels in Sydney Harbour. Visit our website on www.waterways.nsw.gov.au/olympics for more information if you're planning to visit Sydney during the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games.

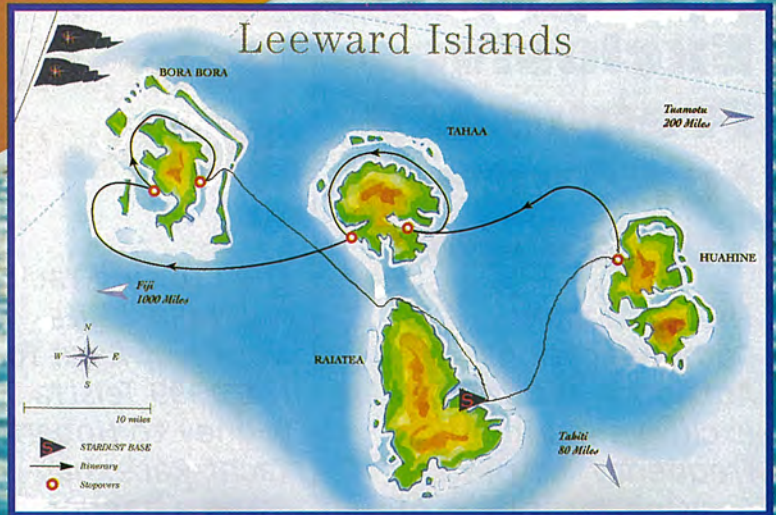
Please note: anchoring will not be permitted anywhere in Sydney Harbour during the Olympic Games' period, and therefore berthing and mooring should be prearranged.

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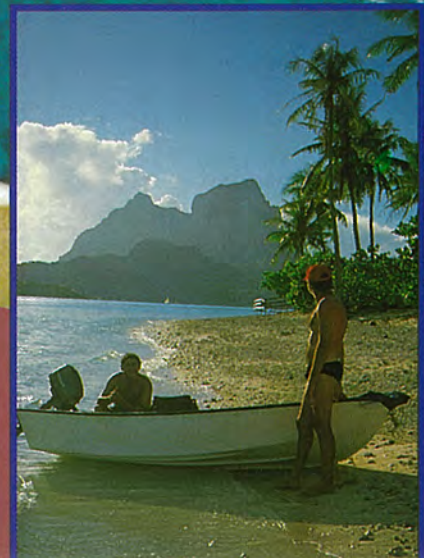
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Exclusive Frequency for Sydney to Hobart

The Australian Communications Authority has granted an exclusive marine radio frequency to the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia to use in this year's Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race.

The new race frequency will be 4603 KHz, for position reports and race traffic schedules, replacing 4483 KHz, with 6227 KHz continuing as the secondary frequency.

This is the first new frequency allocated to yacht clubs since 4483 KHz was set aside for ocean races back in 1981, following pressure on authorities by Penta Comstat, the CYCA and other yacht clubs, and the yachting media.

The decision to provide the CYCA with a special frequency for the Sydney to Hobart will avoid difficulties experienced with heavy traffic during the Christmas - New Year period each year, with the Melbourne to Hobart, Melbourne to Devonport and Pittwater to Coffs Harbour races also using 4483 for their "skeds." This was exacerbated during the high drama of last year's Sydney to Hobart.

The exclusive race frequency is among many changes to improve race communications during the 1999 and subsequent Sydney to Hobart races. The Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania is upgrading its radio system to improve reception and transmission for the Race Centre.

Aboard Young Endeavour, again the radio relay vessel for this year's race, there will be two CYCA radio teams manning Telstra Control to ease the workload. In last year's race, the team of Lew Carter and Michael and Audrey Brown, worked around the clock at the height of the search and rescue operations.

Waterproof, handheld Marine VHF "must" for Sydney to Hobart

The Cruising Yacht of Australia, in its Notice of Race for the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, has listed a handheld, waterproof marine VHF radio as part of the mandatory radio equipment to be carried by each competing yacht.

Each yacht must normally carry permanently installed VHF and HF/SSB radios and the additional handheld waterproof VHF was one of the compulsory recommendations of the CYCA's Sydney Hobart Review Committee Report. The report also suggested that the yacht's "grab bag" should contain an additional waterproof VHF radio.

CYCA Rear Commodore Roger Hickman also already purchased a ICOM IC-M15 handheld, waterproof VHF marine radio, carrying it aboard his 43-footer *Atara* in the Brisbane to Gladstone and Sydney to Gold Coast races this year. He also took the unit with him aboard the *Mumm 36, Atara*, during the recent Admiral's Cup in England.



"Performance with the IC-M15 has been outstanding, often beating the transmission and reception performance of our built-in VHF," Hickman said. "Compact, rugged and watertight, the unit out-performed our expectations."

The IC-M15 is rated as a waterproof marine radio with the ability for private channels. The chassis being designed to withstand battering in extreme weather conditions. It has all marine and weather channels programmed in.

Icom's IC-GM1500 has all these features, plus official approval as a GMDSS handheld for survival craft. Its yellow housing has been purposely designed to locate easily in the dark. An non-rechargeable lithium cell with a shelf life of three years is optional.

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CYCA race director Phil Thompson said he saw no major problems for yachts in setting up to use the new 4603 KHz frequency. "Many yachts already have variable crystal radios while for others it should be a simple task in

adding a frequency," he said.

Among the new communication equipment that will be compulsory for all yachts in the Sydney to Hobart will be a 406 Mhz EPIRB and a waterproof handheld VHF radio.

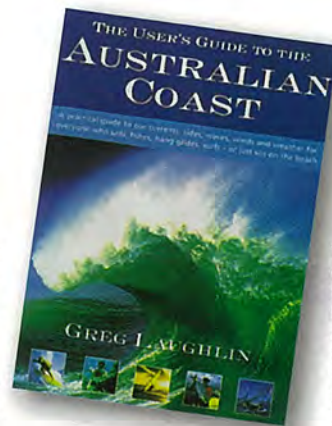
What to read and watch on safe boating

Here are some of the publications worth reading or viewing in the lead-up to the 1999 Telstra Sydney to Hobart and other long offshore races during the coming summer:

- "Survival at Sea" is intended to be a useful and effective aid aboard ship and ashore in training seafarers in shipboard life-saving techniques. Whilst intended primarily for those aboard trading vessels, very much of the information will be of use to persons on fishing vessels or recreational craft. It is a handy reference to many techniques relevant to survival at sea.
- "Australian Boating Manual" by Captain Dick Gandy is probably the most comprehensive book on boating in Australia, covering virtually every aspect you need to know when owning or crewing aboard a boat that goes offshore or in exposed waters. It is important that technical manuals are kept up to date and Dick Gandy is certainly on the ball with the second edition of this all-encompassing tome of almost 600 pages. Its full range of topics include chart and electronic navigation, seamanship, first aid, meteorology, engineering, sailing, radio operation and local and international rules and regulation. Of particular note in this second edition are sections covering Digital Selective Calling ((DSC) procedures forming a part of radio examinations with effect from February 1999, fire extinguisher updates, Internet web sites and e-

mail addresses of marine and boating authorities, updated boating regulations and updated Australian search and rescue information.

- "The User's Guide to the Australian Coast". Author Dr Greg Laughlin, a Principal Investigator at the Climate and Risk Analysis Centre at the Bureau of Rural Sciences, has compiled a hard cover, 213 page book as a practical guide to our currents, tides, waves, winds and weather for anyone who sails, fishes, hang-glides, surfs - or just sits on the beach. It is packed with outstanding illustrations to complement the vast information he provides, including a chapter on Severe Weather which every sailor must read.



The distinctive cover of Capt Dick Gandy's latest edition of his massive tome, "Australian Boating Manual".

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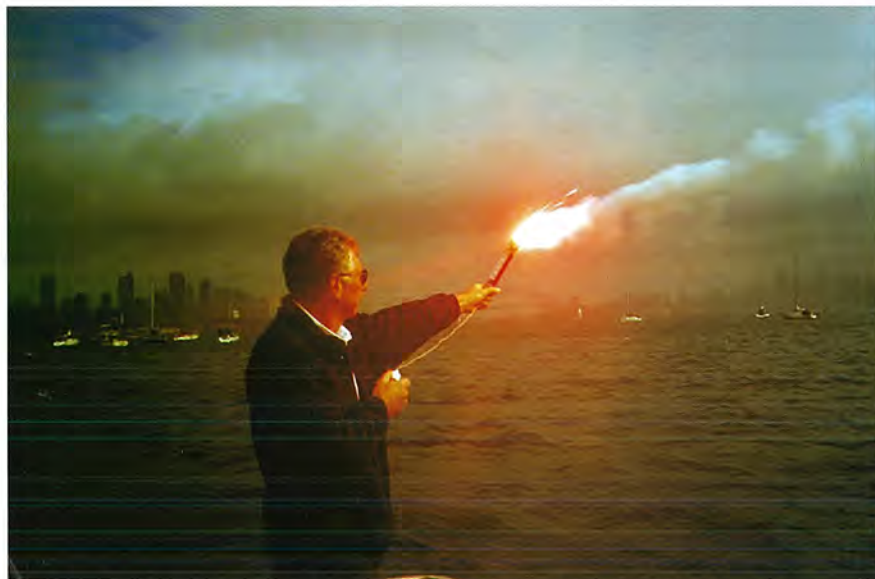
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safety tips

1. Before firing any flare, ensure you read the instructions printed on the tube on how to ignite it. Note: some imported brands have different firing systems for Red Hand Flares and Orange Hand Smokes. Preferably participate in a "Flare Day" and practice with your old flares and learn how to use them.
2. Learn how to identify the Red Hand Flare (for use at night) and Orange Hand Smoke (for day use). Pains Wessex Red Hand Flares have a raised "+" on their cap, whilst their Orange Hand Smokes have a raised "O" on the cap.
3. Insist that your liferaft service company pack a set of user instructions for the flares stowed in the raft, as they may be a different brand to those on your boat. Pains Wessex provide these instruction sheets free of charge.
4. Parachute Rocket Flares climb to an altitude of 300m (1000') so if a search helicopter or aircraft (which can fly as low as 50 m or 150') is in your area, never fire off a rocket,



Red flares, like this being fired at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's recent Safety Day, are for night use.

- otherwise you might just "shoot the messenger". Use your hand flares instead to indicate your position.
5. Orange Hand Smoke Signals provide valuable information on wind speed and direction for rescue aircraft. So even if
 - you know you've been seen, fire off another Orange Smoke.
 6. Store your flares in a waterproof container or in a Grab Bag, which is kept within easy reach of the companion way. Make sure everybody on board



Commonly available flares, left to right: Comet, Pains Wessex and Hanson models display their user instruction panels.



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Read the "user steps" printed on the tube. Different brands employ different firing and handling procedures.



Orange handsmokes are for day use.

knows where they are stowed. Additional good condition-time expired flares should be stowed in a separate container in a different location.

7. Hand flares should be used to help rescue aircraft pin-point your position. A white yacht or small life raft

on a wave swept sea, can be a near impossible target to spot.

8. Wait until a rescuer is in your line of sight before firing your flares. Flares are visual and only work if a rescuer has a reasonable chance of spotting your signal.

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Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup Dutch treat!

Australia had a dismal time at Cowes, finishing seventh out of eight teams in the 1999 Admiral's Cup, with a firstever win going to the Netherlands. Story by Bob Fisher, pics by Thierry Martinez.

The Netherlands team produced a stirring performance in the long offshore race to snatch the Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup from Europe and Great Britain. The strength of their performance was mirrored by the placing of all of their boats in their respective classes - in each one the Dutch were second, while their close rivals each had one bad boat.

Their victory came as the result of eight months of hard work following more than a year's planning, according to Dee Smith, the American mercenary sailor who had helped to coordinate the program and was sailing master aboard *Innovision*, the Judel/Vrolijk 50 which Roy Heiner had steered for all except the last race.

"It was all about boat speed," said Smith, "we worked very hard on that and while it was sometimes boring, it proved very rewarding. I believe we sailed very well." Smith went on, "I feel so good for these guys," he said indicating the team, "half of them are amateurs."

The winning team selected Contender nylons for 100% of their downwind inventories. *Innovision* used fabrics ranging from Ultralite, the lightest nylon in the world, up to the new 1.3 Maxicote, a performance coated heavy air cloth. The Sydney 40, *Trust*, used a custom woven Superline materials for her masthead chute along with Superkote 5 for the heavier spinnaker.

From the outset, it had looked as though the Cup would go to Great Britain; the team had all the essential ingredients, from the latest Farr 50 in carbon fibre with Lawrie Smith behind the wheel, through a Sydney 40 campaign for the team captain, Stephen Bailey, presided over and coached by Chris Law, and the exciting combination of Adrian Stead and a well honed young crew in the Mumm 36 which had finished second in the world championship.

The pedigree was there and the team led from the opening

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race, finally sharing the lead with the Dutch going into the long offshore race which culminated the series.

And that is where it all went wrong, according to team manager, Harold Cudmore. "I find losing 46 minutes difficult to explain," he said of the Sydney 40, Nautica's performance on the long upwind leg to the Eddystone Lighthouse.

The Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup this year was different in being held before Cowes Week and eliminating the Fastnet from the series. It meant a clear Solent for the inshore races, which were essentially windward/leewards using fixed and moveable marks, plus added flexibility for the offshore races, including finishes at Hurst Castle, eliminating the "lottery"



Australian Admiral's Cup team captain Bob Steel and his crew enjoy a glass of Champagne Mumm on the lawns of the Royal Yacht Squadron at Cowes during a welcome cocktail party. (Pic - Thierry Martinez)



Australian Sydney 40, Sledgehammer, skippered by Ron Jones, charges downwind on the Solent during the Champagne Mumm Admiral's Cup. (Pic - Thierry Martinez).

of a run up the Solent against the tide in light winds. The RORC is to be praised both for the changes it made and the way in which the racing was conducted.

A seventh place for the P&O Nedlloyd Australian team was the result of many shortcomings. To be honest, it never looked like a team, not the type of team that Australia has sent to Cowes for the Admiral's Cup in the past.

It was as though, having gained selection for the Sydney 40 class in the event, a team of sorts was put in place knowing that it hadn't really an earthly

in the competition.

Bob Steel's 46 footer Quest was undoubtedly the Cinderella of the IMS class, her two good results coming in the short offshore, when the tidal gates of the South Coast all went her way, and in the penultimate inshore when 'going the wrong way' paid dividends.

In Quest's defence, it has to be admitted that she is not in the first flush of youth and recent changes to the IMS have not favoured her. She was seventh of eight.

Ron Jones' Sledgehammer was also seventh in her class, and after a great

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first day, when she posted finishes of 2-3, she fell from grace and appeared in the back group apart from a fourth in the short offshore race.

It was a seventh too for the Atara syndicate's Mumm 36, Atara, most likely because there was too little time spent in the boat prior to the event. This was not an Australian performance of which its sailors can be proud. The series will be remembered for the withdrawal of the French big boat the day before the series began. The ORC withdrew its certificate and issued another to cope, it believed, with the unstayed wing mast which Crazy K-Yote 2 sported. The owner, Ortwen Kandler, after examining the new certificate, refused to sign it as the measurements of the mast were incorrect - a fudge factor employed by the ORC to increase the rating - saying that to do so could incur a long ban from sailing. It was a pity, as Crazy K-Yote 2 displayed considerable innovation by her designer, Juan Kouyoumdjian.

Final points:

1. The Netherlands 124.
2. Europe 133.5.
3. Great Britain 141.5.
4. Germany 147.
5. USA 163.
6. Italy.
7. Australia 213.5.
8. Commonwealth 258.5.



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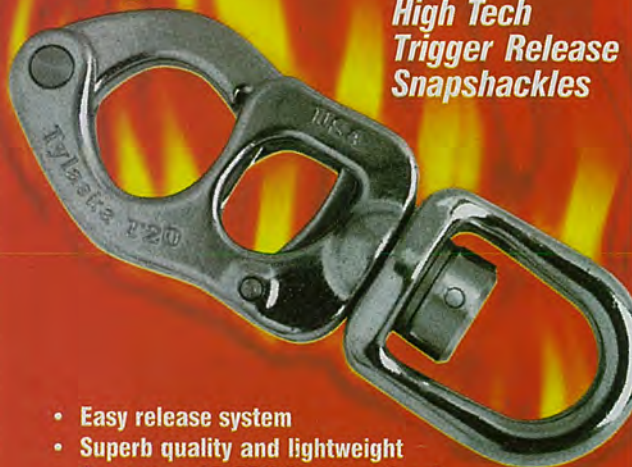
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BMW Sydney Winter Series

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other Sydney clubs, establishing itself as not only Australia's biggest winter series but also a lifestyle event with the Sunday morning ritual of breakfast on The Deck and champagne celebrations (and commiserations) back there after racing.

Despite generally light winds throughout the series, competition has been intense for the pursuit-style handicap racing, with race officials frequently having to cope with a dozen boats crossing the finish line within seconds.

Perhaps the closest series-long duel for top honours came in Division A comprising mostly prominent ocean racing yachts, with the pointscore lead changing several times between *Vanguard*, the new IMS 46-footer designed by owner Dick Cawse and naval architect David Lyons, and the fast English-designed 50-footer *Wild Thing*, owned and skippered by Ron Ellis.

Vanguard went into the final race with a handy points lead but, giving *Wild Thing* a two minute start, she was unable to

catch her and finished ninth while *Wild Thing* crossed the finish line in fifth place. However, the end result, after three discards, saw *Vanguard* win the Winter Series by just two points with a total of 562 points from *Wild Thing* on 560, third overall going to the Sydney 40, *Sword of Orion*, skippered by Rob Kothe, on 558 points.



Racing in the CYCA's BMW Winter Series saw close competition in all divisions.



The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's BMW Sydney Winter Series for 1999 has ended with the last race in the 14 race regatta deciding the overall winners and placegetters in most of the eight divisions.

In five of the divisions only two points separated first and second in the final pointscore after last Sunday's final race on Sydney Harbour.

The BMW Series attracted a record 206 block entries, including more than 1600 sailors from the CYCA and many



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Lessons from around the world

I just returned from Malaysia where I went to welcome in the first Malaysian solo circumnavigator, Azhar Mansor. Azhar was sailing on an updated endurance version of the True Blue design which was called Jalur Gemilang (JG). The project was an all Australian one headed by project manager Lee Condell with construction by McConaghy Boats.

Azhar's trip was a tough one since it involved a different route due to the start and finish being at Langkawi Island off the northwest coast of Malaysia. His route was ratified by the World Speed Sailing Council as a new Asian based circumnavigation route and it required a rounding of all three major capes as well as a trip across the Atlantic equator.

From our point of view as designers these solo attempts are incredibly important as they help us verify the systems and engineering that are part of all our performance designs whether for cruising or racing. What Azhar went through was extreme as he sailed through the world's toughest waters several months later in the year than is

considered ideal. The debrief we had in Langkawi was enlightening. The following is what we learned:

THE BASIC DESIGN: This design was developed from the True Blue model which was based on a global weather model that took us away from the wide reaching machines that are so popular in solo sailing. That True Blue and David Adams were able to break the Class II record in the 1994 BOC seemed vindication of this but the single handed world was not persuaded and, as a result, the 1998-99 Around Alone Race was dominated by the beamier designs. However, they could not touch True Blue's record despite the Class I record being shattered by Fila so our confidence in the design remains intact. There is a lot more to a fast round the World trip than blasting in the Southern Ocean.

That being said JG does vary in a few areas. First, as she is designed for a non-stop trip she has added hull volume to allow for the increased stores. Second, the beam aft is increased to improve reaching without adding

much in the way of additional upwind drag. Finally, a more basic rig was fitted - masthead with 2 inner forestays and twin furlers - to suit the different style of sailing and experience of the crew.

THE BASIC STRUCTURE: This boat was built on a low budget but in some ways this is not a handicap for this style of boat since the required toughness does not allow for the lightest structure anyway. JG had a Kevlar/Epoxy/cedar hull and a foam/E glass deck. The bulkheads were a mix of materials from carbon/PVC foam to plywood. On examination of the boat after the voyage I found no evidence of stress in any areas.

The keel was a steel fin that went through the hull to the deck with a 2000 kg lead bulb. This is a light albeit space consuming solution to an extreme keel structure and is very reliable. Steering was by a single carbon rudder which is not the fashion for this type of boat but was proven to us through tank testing to be the lowest drag option. I have also noted that the twin rudder system has higher vulnerability to debris in the vessel's quarter wave. It should be noted that in both JG and True Blue the rudders were spades without skegs and they were large and deep. No problems in either case. Autopilots were by Coursemaster - a proven Australian option - and their operation was flawless.

MAST AND SAILS : The spar was a masthead three spreader aluminum section with three forestays and a set of running backstays with two check stays opposing the forestays. Rigging was all Dyform wire. This direction was fully determined by cost constraints.

The mast failed in unusual circumstances as Azhar approached Cape Horn. He was sailing in 50 knots with a large following sea, no mainsail up, and a partially furled masthead jib.



Azhar Mansor - self portrait from the deep south

This was necessitated by the fact that his staysail hanks had shattered earlier in the week. Azhar was below deck and the boat went airborne for 4+ seconds then landed with a bang. The mast went without witness. Once on deck Azhar was able to clear away the wreckage fairly quickly and retained the standing section and a broken section from the break to just below the second spreader. He set up a jury rig with which he rounded the Horn and made it up to the Falklands. He was met there by his shore boss and a Malaysian Defence Force jet with a replacement rig from Allyacht Spars and, after a general tidy up he was back on his way. He had no problems with the new mast which was identical to the original mast.

The sails inventory was by Sydney based Sobstad/Anson and proved trouble free. The main did the entire trip without fault and the headsails lost in the dismasting were replaced but had not caused problems up till then. Minor issues were batten cars for the

main but these may have been due to excess batten tension and the staysail hanks which appeared, on examination, to have casting problems. Spinakers were all asymmetric and handled in snuffers. Still the best system.



Azhar Mansor, at the helm of his Jutson designed yacht during his circumnavigation.

COMMUNICATION: Azhar had the full range of telecommunication toys courtesy of Malaysian Telecom and Sapura. While everything worked as expected a series of savage knockdowns as he approached the Horn pretty well cleared the antennae off the deck. That reduced him to a Satcom C (data only) and a hand held Magnavox Iridium phone. The latter was handed to him on the day of departure and it was this that he used to call me when the mast failed. I was stunned at the clarity from 180 nm west of Cape Horn and, combined with the low power requirements and lack of heavy, vulnerable on deck antennas, this became his mainstay for the rest of the trip. On return to Malaysia it was the first thing he praised.

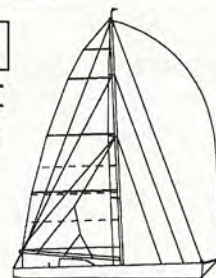
Aside from the above broad categories there were countless small things to do with storage systems, heaters, stanchions, and so on. There was also the hurdle of launching such an attempt from a country that has virtually no yachting infrastructure. Compound that with the geographical remoteness of Langkawi Island and your options for repair and modification became very limited. However, adversity was overcome and on his return to Langkawi Azhar Mansor and Jalur Gemilang were given an enormous hero's welcome. The Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir, welcomed the sailor home.

His success was embraced as a national achievement and I don't think he will have much to worry about for the foreseeable future. The role of the Australian industry in making it all happen is largely unrecognized (particularly here!) but everyone is to be



Yachting diplomacy - Jutson with Dr. Mahathir

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The Yeoman navigator is being introduced for use in Australia by the Coastal Patrol.

tom information is critical.

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The Phonesaver protects mobile phones from water, dust, dirt and sand.

Multi-purpose Autohelm autopilot from Ratheon

Ratheon, the leading supplier to the worldwide recreational electronics market, has launched its latest top of the range ST7000 Plus Autohelm Series autopilot. Combining together the key functions of autopilot display, information repeater and instrument

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Clear display from Ratheon's ST7000 Plus Autohelm Series autopilot.

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Typical Summer Weather Situations over Coastal New South Wales and Queensland

By Kenn Batt, Bureau of Meteorology, Sydney

With the sub-tropical ridge (STR), or the belt of high pressure, positioned on average around 40deg. south at this time of the year, sailing during the summer months is generally pleasant over much of the eastern coastline of Australia.

It pays to keep a close eye on the position of the STR on a daily basis as its position may be north or south of the average track. You will have to rely on the daily newspaper weather map or better still the Weather by Fax, an Info-fax product, to monitor this situation (latest surface weather map 1902 935210 and many, many others at 60 cents per minute). The Bureau's internet site (<http://www.bom.gov.au>) is another very popular method of obtaining weather information.

Remember that to the north of the STR there is general easterly windflow, to the south general westerly flow and in the middle basically very light winds. With light winds, local winds, such as the seabreeze and the landbreeze, will tend to dominate.

The typical weather patterns that affect the eastern Australian mainland coastline during the summer period are discussed in the following paragraphs for New South Wales.

NEW SOUTH WALES

During the warmer months the STR is generally to the south of NSW (on average around 40 deg. South) with high pressure centres in the Tasman Sea and the Great Australian Bight. Lower pressure is generally situated over the continent, especially over the tropical north in the form of heat lows/troughs.

The predominant winds are humid NE or SE, originating from the Coral Sea or the Tasman Sea. Cold fronts are typically less intense than their winter counterparts and hence often shallow, giving rise to what is commonly known

as the "summer-time cool change" over the east coastal fringe.

The "summertime cool change" usually develops when a high in the Tasman Sea weakens and is replaced by a high moving through Bass Strait. A shallow front separates the two highs. As this front moves up the NSW coast, warm northerlies back in direction to become cooler southerlies (sometimes a Southerly Buster) along the coast then back further to become SE and eventually around to the NE as the new high establishes itself in the Tasman Sea.

Because these fronts are usually shallow, they do not extend that high into the troposphere and are affected more by orography. This means that the front will generally move very quickly northwards along the coastal fringe and out to sea, but the mountain ranges are a barrier to its inland progress. This can lead to the situation where at a particular time the front can be through Sydney, but not through Canberra, for example.

Thunderstorms often occur with or ahead of the front and low cloud can develop in the southerly stream behind the front along the coast, leading to showers or drizzle if the stream is deep enough.

When the front is a deep change in the atmosphere, hot NW winds preceding the change, give the coastal strip higher than average temperatures.

Summers in the coastal fringe are cooler than average when the highs keep well to the south of the state, with predominantly SE winds providing a showery onshore influence along the coast and the adjacent inland. At times a trough of low pressure may be generated in coastal waters roughly parallel to the coast and this in turn enhances the shower activity as well as the wind speed. In fact, this trough can veer the wind direction more into the south over waters between the trough and the coast.

Warmer than average summers can result when the highs ridge into the north Tasman Sea, thus giving rise to relatively warmer, humid N to NE winds over the whole state. Thunderstorms, especially during the afternoon and evening, can occur along the coast

and ranges.

The seabreeze is a very regular occurrence at this time of the year and can be strong and gusty at times. It generally commences during the late morning/early afternoon following very light winds.

The most common seabreeze direction along the NSW coast is from the NE, but this can be modified by the orientation of the coastline. The breeze penetrates inland during the day and evening, reaching as far as Canberra and the Blue Mountains at times. Some of the strongest seabreezes along the NSW coast occur on the south coast and at times on the central coast, ahead of an advancing cold front or low pressure system.

Some problems at this time of the year could be:

- The East Coast Low can be a problem, especially a tropical cyclone that has moved south from Queensland waters. Pseudo-east coast lows can be a problem when a low pressure system "spins up" on a cold frontal surface as the front moves eastward through SE Australia. The 1993 and the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Races were examples of this particular situation.
- The Southerly Buster is a more frequent problem than the east coast low, but again the frequency of occurrence is fairly low. The most spectacular cases occur at the end of a hot summer day. The wind turns suddenly from north to south and blows with some force. Gusts to 50 knots and an average speed of around 30 knots persist for several hours, with a change in air temperature of 10 degrees or more. A horizontal roll cloud near the leading edge of the Buster is sometimes observed, otherwise there is not a great deal of cloud associated with the initial onset. Low cloud often develops in the southerly air behind the Buster, and may become extensive along the coast.
- Severe thunderstorms, with their attendant problems, are very common at this time of the year. The problems can be associated with damaging winds, damaging hail, very heavy rain and from time to time waterspouts over the water and torna-

does over the land. Keep your eyes open to the west for development along the mountain ranges as thunderstorms are steered by the winds at around a height of 4 to 5 kms above the ground, which on average over coastal NSW are from the west. This means that storms develop along the ranges and move toward the coast, killing the seabreeze that has been blowing for most of the afternoon. The seabreeze is replaced for a short period of time by wind gusts in excess of 48 kt and erratic winds from a directional point-of-view, which may cause a lot of damage to watercraft. Be aware that even a non-severe thunderstorm can create problems, especially from a wind point of view.

- The movement of cold fronts during the warmer months is often very fickle due to their shallow nature, particularly along the coast and over the ranges.
- With a fairly straight coastline and few offshore reporting points it is often assumed that coastal stations are representative of conditions at sea, which may be far from the case. Wind speeds at sea may be 25% to

50% stronger than over the land. The extent of seabreezes seaward is not well known. The strength of seabreezes, particularly on the South Coast when pressures are falling, often surprises everyone.

- The East Australian Current (EAC), which brings warm water from the Coral Sea into the cooler Tasman Sea, can run with speeds up to 4 knots around the continental shelf and can spawn a number of eddies adjacent to the main current, and is generally felt further southwards of Sydney at this time of the year. Further information on this current and others around the Australian coastline may be obtained from the CSIRO Division of Marine Research at <http://www.dmr.csiro.au>
- The NSW coast is largely exposed to deep ocean conditions, and swell waves can be a major hazard. Even when the local weather pattern is



Summer sailing on Sydney Harbour
(Pic - Peter Campbell)

unfavorable for swell generation, a tropical or extra-tropical system sometimes thousands of kilometres offshore has the potential to produce a moderate or heavy swell along the NSW coast with little warning. A deep low located in the Tasman Sea will usually generate a south to south-east swell (sometimes east) along the NSW coast). (The sea wave is produced by the local wind blowing at the time and so its height is a function of both wind speed and water depth).

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The X-332 is designed by Niels Jeppesen and built by X Yachts in Haderslev, Denmark. Niels Jeppesen first sprang to prominence in the early eighties as the designer of a string of world champion three quarter tonners. He eventually went on to become a founding director of X Yachts. All X Yachts are imported into Australia by their Australian agent, Ralph Hogg, of North South Yachting. Ralph is situated at Bayview on picturesque Pittwater just north of Sydney. He has sold quite a number of yachts to locals and the marina is becoming a sort of "X" city. When I ventured up there recently for this review it was a very cold, very rainy, winters weekday and I took my full wet weather gear.

Having spent quite a while sailing with the ultra competitive yachtsman Roger Hickman on both Wild Oats and then Atara, I gained a small reputation as the "human barometer". Roger is a stickler for having all available weight where it is best - on the rail. Therefore the deal was that if you brought your wet weather gear along you had to wear it - no matter what. By simply bringing my gear along I could always guarantee a warm, sunny, day and was often seen in soaring temperatures sweating over the primary winches. And so as I tramped down the Bayview marina in sea boots etc. the sun started to shine. We rigged the boat and set out onto beautiful Pittwater with the sun shining and the water almost entirely to ourselves.

On deck the X 332 is easily handled by two people. To demonstrate this, Ralph Hogg and one crew hoisted a spinnaker and took off with pace up Pittwater. The relatively large main and small headsails make light work of sail changes. Andrew "Half Ounce" Parkes of Fraser Sails has made a nice set of D4 sails to power the yacht. I was surprised how easily driven the X332 was even under main alone. It would not be a problem to quietly cruise around by yourself or with the girl under main alone. I am sure that club racing with a full crew would see this boat go around the track with a bevy of older 40 footers.

The features of the X 332 are the

X-332 Cruiser/Racer from X Yachts

boats form cored hull, steel bottom frame, tapered aluminium rudder stock with low friction needle bearings, excellent weight concentration around the middle low sections of the boat, discontinuous rod rigging and composite interior bulkheads. An added feature of the X Yachts operation in Australia since my last review is people. As the operation has sold more yachts they have grown and brought in more people with expertise such as the big Irishman Karl Garavan. Karl had recently come back from X Yachts in Denmark and was able to knowledgeable and enthusiastically walk me through their production process.

Gone are the days when you go down below on a high quality production yacht and, simply because one sees a lot of timber around, you can automatically conclude that it is a poor performing, heavy slug of a yacht. These days the hulls are foam cored - read lightweight, the interior bulkheads are composite - read very strong and lightweight, and the timber finish is a light veneer. The X yachts system seems to be a balance between full on production line and one-off production techniques aimed at turning out a well finished product. Like most things in life, it is the small things that point to quality. Timber joinery that actually joins flush. Interior or cupboard mouldings that are finished rather than left bare. I don't pretend to be a carpenter, but I don't think that high quality joinery work can be performed "en masse". The thing that really stopped me in my tracks was the head area. I don't think I've ever seen a full sit down toilet, shower and vanity unit of this caliber on a 33' yacht before. It's even got a



hanging area for wet weather gear with a specially designed drainage system. This will be a definite winner with the ladies.

DIMENSIONS:

L.O.A	10.310 m	33.8 ft
Hull Length	10.060 m	33.0 ft
LWL	8.800 m	28.9 ft
B Max	3.300 m	10.8 ft
Draft (Standard)	1.800 m	5.9 ft
Headroom	1.870 m	6.1 ft
Ballast	1,800 kgs	3,968 lbs
Displacement	4,350 kgs	9,590 lbs
Engine (Diesel)	13.2kW	18 HP

SAIL AREAS

Mainsail	35.54 sq. m	382.5 sq. ft
Furling Genoa	31.40 sq. m	338.0 sq. ft
150% Genoa 1	32.67 sq. m	351.6 sq. ft
137% Genoa 2	31.98 sq. m	344.2 sq. ft
100% Genoa 3	23.34 sq. m	251.2 sq. ft
80% Genoa 4	18.67 sq. m	200.9 sq. ft
Spinnaker	73.80 sq. m	794.4 sq. ft
Gennaker	71.50 sq. m	769.6 sq. ft

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Bravery awards to rescue crews

Nine crewmembers of Navy, Police and Civil helicopters have been awarded Australian Bravery Medals for their roles in rescuing and treating sailors from stricken yachts in last year's Telstra Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. The Award is for "acts of bravery in hazardous conditions."

In addition 11 helicopter crews and the crew of a Coastal Patrol rescue boat have received Group Citations for Bravery, for "a collective act of bravery, by a group of persons in extraordinary circumstances, that is worthy of recognition." The rescues took place at the height of the storm which battered the fleet on December 27 and 28, 1999.

The Australian Bravery Medals have been awarded to:

Mrs Michelle Maree Blewett, of Goulburn, NSW.

Mr Peter Gordon Davidson, of Traralgon, Victoria.

Mr David Shane Dutton, of Tuggeranong, ACT.

Senior Constable David Ernest Key, of Victoria Police Force.

Petty Officer Brian Joseph Lee, of HMAS Albatross, Nowra, NSW.

Miss Kristy Yolande McAlister, of Gowrie, ACT.

Mr Stephen Gerard Mitchell, of Pearce, ACT.

Petty Officer Brian Shane Pashley, of Berry, NSW.

Mr Cameron George Robertson, of Moe, Victoria.

Group Citation for Bravery awards have gone to:

Batemans Bay Coastal Patrol rescue vessel, Community Spirit – George Paul Mercieca, Peter John Paine, Gordon Colin Patterson, Peter Rosenkranz, Michael Trick.
SouthCare helicopter – Mrs Michelle Maree Blewett, Mark Anthony Delf, Miss Kristy Yolande McAlister, Captain Raymond Charles Stone.

Southcare helicopter – David Shane Dutton, Captain Simon Christopher Lovell, Stephen Gerard Mitchell, Matthew Denzil Smith.

South Eastern Victoria Ambulance Service, "Heli-Med 1" helicopter – Peter Gordon Davidson, Peter John Leigh, John Anthony Sloyan, David William Sullivan.

South Eastern Victoria Ambulance Service, "Heli-Med 1" helicopter – John Bayley, Captain Howard Edward Bosse, Cameron George Robertson, Stephen Gregory Simpson.

South Eastern Victoria Ambulance Service, "Heli-Med 1" helicopter – Steven William Collins, Cameron George Robertson, Stephen Gregory Simpson, Captain Stefan Paul Sincich.

NRMA CareFlight 1 helicopter – Graeme Noel Fromberg, Murray Anthony Traynor, Captain Daniel Elwain Tyler.

Victoria Police Air Wing helicopter – Senior Constable Barry Scott Barclay, Senior Constable Darryl Anthony Jones, Senior Constable David Ernest Key.

Royal Australian Navy Sea King 920 helicopter – Lieutenant David William Hutchinson, Lieutenant Commander Paul Rodney Lea, Petty Officer Brian Joseph Lee, Lieutenant Christopher Millar Money.

Royal Australian Navy Seahawk 870 helicopter – Lieutenant Michael Reginald Curtis, Lieutenant Commander Adrian Joseph Lister, Leading Seaman David Brian Oxley, Lieutenant Marc Louis Pavillard.

Royal Australian Navy Seahawk 875 helicopter – Lieutenant Aaron Seaton Abbott, Lieutenant Commander Richard Duncan Neville, Petty Officer Brian Shane Pashley, Lieutenant Nicholas Mark Trimmer.

Helicopter crews have been recognised for their bravery in rescuing the crew from stricken yachts in the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Race, including Stand Aside. (Pic – Peter Sinclair)

Records tumble in Fastnet Race

Records tumbled in the 1999 Fastnet Race until two and a half days after the start, when 18 of the 215 starters had finished in Plymouth. The best previous time for a single hulled boat was beaten 14 times before the breeze shut off and the opportunity evaporated.

It was an interesting nine hour period which began when the first of the Maxi-One-Design class arrived shortly after midnight and continued until mid-morning. Ross Field's Maxi One Design, *RF Yachting*, was first home and her elapsed time of 53 hours 8 minutes and 51 seconds was slightly more than seven and a half hours inside the time set in 1985 by Marvin Green's 80 foot *Nirvana*. "We had it all going for us," said Field, "once we had cleared the Needles."

Field had a weather report from France which indicated that there were stronger winds on the French side of the Channel. They came from the east and blew harder in the south. The wind came in very hard, blowing at 35-40 knots and the bigger boats skidded away on wild, wet rides. It was the sto-



ry for most of those who were home early and they were best able to enjoy the conditions.

The next fastest to finish was the Open 60, *Whirlpool-Europe 2*, skippered by Catherine Chabaud. Normally sailed as a single-hander, *Whirlpool-Europe 2* had five aboard for this race and in addition had been rated IRC to race in the handicap division along with the ultra-sophisticated ILC-Maxis, one of which, *Sayonara*, was skippered by Ted Turner.

The media mogul was trying to emulate his win 20 years earlier, but a decision not to stay with the other three ILC-Maxis at Portland put him out of contention. George Coumantaros' *Boomerang* was the first of them home, but the better handicapped *Alexia of Alberto Roemmers* had the best corrected time.

Turner's *Sayonara* was fourth. But Madame Chabaud had beaten them all on handicap as well and that didn't go down well with some of the owners and crews of the ILC-Maxis. *The Spirit of Alice Springs*, a Sydney 40 which had seen service in the Admiral's Cup as *Blue Yankee*, was chartered by Paul Herrick and members of the Alice Springs Yacht Club. She had a quiet Fastnet, after the rumbustious first day, and finished 173rd overall. – Bob Fisher.

BELOW: Media mogul and one-time Sydney to Hobart Race winner Ted Turner at the wheel of *Sayonara* for the start of the Fastnet Race in England. (Pic – Stephen Munday, AllSport)



Sailors with dis-ABILITY in line honours win

David Pescud and his Sailors with dis-ABILITY crew won their first major long distance race line honours with their sloop *Aspect Computing* in the annual Hog's Breath Cafe race from Mooloolaba to Airlie Beach in August.

The crew, who first qualified to race in the Sydney to Hobart by competing in this 520 nautical mile Queensland classic five years ago, sailed north under spinnaker before moderate to fresh tradewinds to become the first disabled crew to win line honours in a long offshore races in Australia.

Over the past year, the powerful Radford 56 and her crew have made a big impression in the sport. Their personal struggle against adversity was highlighted with their remarkable PHS Class 1 victory in the toughest Sydney to Hobart in history last December.

Skipper Pescud, supported by long-time crew mates Cathy Josling (navigator), Richard Bowler and Alan Grundy, were favourites to take line honours in the race to Airlie Beach after impressive lead-up races, but they almost "blew it" in the first 12 hours of the race when they selected to sail a "loop" into the rhumbline between between Point Cartwright at Mooloolaba and Indian Head on Fraser Island. *Aspect Computing* fought back from 16 miles astern of the leaders to regain the lead near High Peak, 160 miles from the fin-

ish, finally drawing away in the moderate sou'easterlies to complete the course in 58 hours 34 minutes 53 seconds. The John Sayer designed and built *Great Escape*, a comfortable cruising yacht under charter to David Leslie, finished an hour and a half astern, closely followed by the Iain Murray designed ILC 40, *Bit 'o Fluff*, skippered by Mackay yachtsman Warren Brooks.

On corrected time the Sunshine Coast Sailing School's Young 11, *NS Komatsu*, was sailed expertly by a crew that included sailing training students to take Performance Handicap honours. The Melbourne yacht *Reverie* (Alan Woodward) placed second, third to going to the Mooloolaba boat *Special Effect* (Ian Caroline). – Ian Grant.

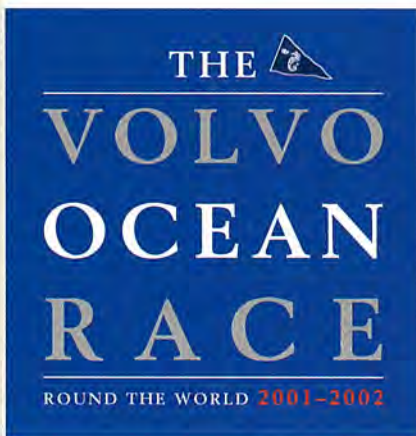


Richard Bowler, a long time crew member of *Aspect Computing*, line honours winner in the Hog's Breath Café Mooloolaba to Airlie Beach race.

Melbourne base for two boat Volvo campaign

The first Australian entry in the 25 year history of the round the world ocean race, previously the Whitbread Race and now the Volvo Ocean Race, has been officially registered for the 2001-2002 event.

Five wellknown Australian international sailors and one of Australia's most respected meteorologists, are



already involved in the Oceanic syndicate. The syndicate will be based in Melbourne and plans to undertake lead-up training in the formidable Southern Ocean before the start from Southampton, England, just under two years away.

Two state-of-the-art Farr VOR 60s will be built side by side, tested and fine-tuned together. Both yachts will compete in the round-the-world race.

Expatriate Australian Jim Close will head the Oceanic syndicate and skipper one yacht. Melbourne based sailmaker and adventurous sailor Nick Moloney has been nominated as skipper of the second yacht.

Close, aged 31, has logged some 160,00 nautical miles of international ocean racing, including three Whitbread round the world races (most recently as watch captain on Kvaerner in the 1997-98 race) and two America's Cup campaigns. He will lead a crew of up to 30 of the world's best professional sailors.

Moloney, 30, was a sailmaker and sailor with the one Australian team at the last America's Cup in San Diego and was aboard Toshiba in the 1997-98 Whitbread Race. The first and only person to cross Bass Strait non-stop on a windsurfer, he is currently preparing for the Mini Transat single-handed race across the Atlantic.

The team also includes expatriate Andrew Cape, one of the world's best navigators. He was the navigator on Toshiba in the last Whitbread, one Australia in the 1995 America's Cup, Tokio in the 1993-94 Whitbread and has navigated several Sydney to Hobart line and handicap winners, including Sayonara and Beau Geste. He also has

entered in the Mini Transat in a yacht of his own design.

Weather adviser will be Roger Badham, the world renowned Australian meteorologist for the previous round the world race winner. He has been weather advisor to teams in five America's Cup, three Whitbreads, eight Admiral's Cups and four Olympics.

The coaching team will be Colin Beashel and David Giles, 1998 World champions and 1996 Olympic bronze medal winners in the Star class (Colin was also mainsheet trimmer aboard the victorious Australia II in the 1983 America's Cup).

The syndicate will select a further 25 team members from a pool of young Olympic and America's Cup sailors over a six month period and 20,000 nautical miles, with headquarters in Melbourne and sailing in the Southern Ocean.

At this stage the builder has not been named but John McConaghy, the Sydney-based expert in state-of-the-art boat construction would be an obvious choice. He has already built a Whitbread 60 and is currently building Farr 40 One Designs.

The Oceanic syndicate ambitious plans include having a high-speed 300-foot catamaran passenger/car ferry as a support vessel for the entire race and the production of an IMAX film shot over three years. The film will cover the boat building, crew selection and the ultimate challenge of man against sea in the most grueling of team sport events.

Victorian Sailor of the Year awards

Melanie Dennison, one of Australia's leading women sailors and a strong contender for a place in the Australian sailing team for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, has been named Victorian Sailor of the Year for 1999. This is the second year running that Melanie has been Victorian Sailor of the Year and she was also named the 1998-99 Aus-

tralian Female of the Year by the Australian Yachting Federation.

Adecco Cup win to Ludde Ingvall



Start of the Adecco One Design Maxis in the 1999 Fastnet Race off Cowes on the Isle of Wight. (Pic - Stephen Munday, AllSport)

Ludde Ingvall's *Skandia* did what she had always threatened - she won the seven event, Adecco World Championship of the Maxi One Design class, finishing second in the double points counting Fastnet Race which culminated the series.

Skandia had won the first four events - the North Sea Regatta in Holland, Kieler Woche, Kiel-Stockholm and the Gotland Runt, and finished second in each of the others. With the victory went a cheque for 600,000 Swiss Francs, the lion's share of which Ingvall gave to his crew. - Bob Fisher.

"Exclusive" fleet for Lord Howe Race

Brindabella heads the "exclusive" fleet of 25 yachts for the 26th annual Leasecorp Australia Gosford to Lord Howe



Victorian Sailor of the Year Melanie Dennison with fellow Australian team members after being presented with the President of the IOC's Cup after the '99 Worlds in Melbourne last January. (Pic - Thierry Martinez)

Island Race, which starts from Broken Bay, north of Sydney on Saturday, October 23. The Jutson maxi has taken line honours twice in the 408 nautical mile race, been dismantled once and disqualified over a starting line incident in another Lord Howe Island Race. The fleet is limited to 25 boats because of the beautiful island's World Heritage listing and the delicate environment of its lagoon. Nine yacht clubs are represented with other entries including past overall handicap winners *Polaris* (John Quinn, RPAYC), *Margaret Rintoul II* (Richard Purcell, RSYS), *Morning Tide* (Alan Fenwick, GSC) and *Patsy* (Daniel Yaffe, MHYC).

CYCA member Ed Psaltis has entered his 1998 Telstra Sydney to Hobart winner *AFR Midnight Rambler* while veteran yachtsman Peter Kurts will be skippering his two-times Hobart Race winner, *Love & War*.

The Lord Howe Island Race, like the Sydney to Hobart, is a Category 1 Safety event and in the light of the tragic 1998 Hobart race, the Club is strictly monitoring all safety requirements and urging owners to follow the recommendations of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Review Committee Report.

However, because of time limitations on sending out the Notice of Race, 406 Mhz EPIRBs and other safety equipment requirements will not be mandatory this year.

However, the Club has followed by the CYCA's plans for the Sydney to Hobart with a ruling that all crew members shall be not less than 18 years of age and that at least half the crew, including the skipper and/or sailing master, shall have had offshore sailing experience, including the completion of one Category 1 race or an equivalent passage.

Kiwis launch first America's Cup yacht

The first of Team New Zealand's America's Cup 2000 generation yachts was officially christened in Auckland in early September by Lady Pippa Blake, wife of team leader Sir Peter Blake, after an



Veteran yachtsman Peter Kurts will be skippering his two-times Sydney to Hobart Race winner *Love & War* in the Leasecorp Australia Gosford to Lord Howe Island Race. (Pic - Peter Campbell)

impressive first sail in winds of up to 18 knots.

With 1995 winning skipper Russell Coutts on the helm, the crew "just sheeted on hard and away she went, powering to windward", according to OFFSHORE'S New Zealand correspondent, Ivor Wilkins.

"They are heading out for another sail today. Yesterday it was virtually straight from the shed, stepping the mast and into the water and sailing," Wilkins reported.

More than 900 people attended the christening ceremony (with a larger bottle of Steinlager) in the Zealand Cup Village, with the crew formally dressed in dark suits and ties, but wearing red sox. "Red sox are back," quipped Ivor, referring back to the huge sale of red socks to Kiwi supporters in 1995.

With six weeks to the start of the Louis Vuitton Cup challenger elimination series, new boats were arriving in Auckland for most of the challenger syndicates.

Dennis Conner had launched his new boat the previous weekend, an impressive navy blue hulled boat with his traditional Stars & Stripes emblem. *Young America* was there with the first of two IACC class yachts, the hull not painted but with clear coating over carbon fibre, while *America True* also had its new boat.

Italy's new *Prada* was due mid September along with the Swiss, French and Spanish boats and the colourful looking *Aloha* challenger from Hawaii.

There was still no sign of the Russian boat, and the second French syndicate had withdrawn, its boat reported to be for sale.

Syd Fischer's *Young Australia 2000* and its youthful crew were due in Auckland the last week in September while Paul Cayard's *AmericaOne* was likely to be the last new boat to arrive in Auckland.

If the Russians fail to materialise, there will be 11 yachts lining up for the first round robin series for the Louis Vuitton Cup starting on October 18.

Apology and Clarification

In the last issue of OFFSHORE Yachting an interview with Russell Coutts contained the following question and answer in relation to Syd Fischer and his CYCA America's Cup campaign:

RC: "So what's been happening with Syd? Is he really as much of an old bastard as he seems?"

OFFSHORE: "ducking the personality question). I must have been asked that question about 50 times and I've only been in Auckland three days. Nothing is happening really."

OFFSHORE, along with its editor and publisher, now realise that this wording was out of context and therefore open to misinterpretation on both subjects.

We therefore apologise to Syd Fischer and the *Young Australia 2000* America's Cup team for any harm it may have caused them.

Editor's note: OFFSHORE has always been supportive of Syd Fischer, a former Australian Yachtsman of the Year and Ocean Racer of the Year, in his many fine campaigns, for the America's Cup, the Admiral's Cup, Kenwood Cup, Sydney to Hobart and many other major yachting events. In particular, we support his decision to give young Australians the opportunity to participate in America's Cup 2000, with the ultimate goal of a major Cup campaign three to four years hence.- PC.



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AUSTRALIA

OCTOBER

- 1-4 Spring Offshore Regatta, Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.
- 4 Monica Geddes Memorial Trophy Sydney Harbour Island Race, CYCA.
- 9 Short Ocean Race, 32nd Rubber Kellaway Trophy, CYCA.
- 9 Opening pointscore races, RSYS, Sydney Harbour.
- 15 Bird Island Race, 43rd Janzoön Trophy, 24th George Barton Trophy, CYCA.
- 17 Parade of Sail, CYCA.
- 18 Gascoigne Cup, RSYS.
- 23 Short Haul to Pittwater, 44th Paul Royle Memorial Trophy, CYCA.
- 23 26TH Gosford to Lord Howe Island ocean race, 410 nm, Gosford Sailing Club.
- 29 Flinders Island Race, CYCA.
- 31 Balmain 150 Year Regatta, Balmain Sailing Club.

NOVEMBER

- 5 Sir James Hardy Sunshine Home Regatta, CYCA.
- 6 Short Ocean Race, MHYC.
- 12 Foxtel Youth Interclub Regatta, CYCA.
- 12 Cabbage Tree Island Race, 37th Halvorsen Bros Trophy, 27th Woollahra Cup, CYCA.
- 19 Fund-raising event for Childrens Hospital, Sydney Cove Rotary Club, CYCA.
- 20 Short Ocean Race, RSYS.
- 21 Commodore's BBQ, Quarantine Beach, CYCA.
- 26 Flinders Islet Race, 39th Ron Robertson Memorial Race, 51st King Birthday Cup, CYCA.
- 27 Port Hacking Race, Ocean Pointscore, CYCA.

DECEMBER

- 4-5 Ord Minnett Regatta, IMS, CHS, JOG short ocean racing series, Middle Harbour Yacht Club.
- 11 Southern Cross Cup invitation race, David Burke Memorial Race, CYCA.
- 15 Southern Cross Cup/Telstra Cup, Races 1 & 2, 2 x 10 nm short windward/leeward, CYCA.
- 16 Southern Cross Cup/Telstra Cup, Races 3 & 4, 2 x 10nm windward/leeward, CYCA.
- 17 Canon Big Boat Challenge, Sydney Harbour, CYCA.
- 18 Southern Cross Cup/Telstra Cup, Races 5 & 6, 2 x 10nm windward/leeward, CYCA.
- 19 Southern Cross Cup/Telstra Cup, Race 7, 30nm offshore triangle, CYCA.
- 20 Southern Cross Cup/Telstra Cup, Race 8 & 9, 2 x 10 nm windward/leeward, CYCA.
- 26 Telstra 55th Sydney to Hobart ocean race/Southern Cross Cup, Race 10, 630 nm, CYCA.
- 27 Melbourne-Hobart and Melbourne-Devonport races, ORCV.

JANUARY

- 2 Strathfield Pittwater-Coffs Harbour race, 350nm, RPAYC.
- 21-26 Festival of Sail, Royal Geelong Yacht Club.
- 26 164th Australia Day Regatta, Sydney Harbour, Lake Macquarie, Botany Bay and offshore for City of Sydney Cup (CYCA)

FEBRUARY

- 5 Milson Cup Short Ocean Race, RSYS.
- 12 Short Ocean race, CYCA.
- 18-20 Wollongong Weekend, 26th Trade Winds Trophy and 51st Flinders Trophy, CYCA.
- 26 Short ocean race, MHYC.
- 27 Sail for Cancer Research.

MARCH

- 4-5 Combined Clubs Regatta, off Pittwater, RPAYC.
- 10 Sailability Regatta.
- 11 Short Ocean Race, CYCA.
- 18 Short Ocean Race, RSYS.
- 24 50TH Adelaide to Port Lincoln Race, Port Lincoln Yacht Club.
- 25 Short Ocean Race, CYCA.

APRIL

- 1 Short Ocean Race, CYCA.
- 15 Sydney - Mooloolaba Race, MHYC.
- 21 Brisbane - Gladstone Race, QCYC.

JULY

- 29 15th Sydney - Gold Coast Race, CYCA.

INTERNATIONAL

DECEMBER

- 11-15 Sydney International Regatta (SIRS), Olympic classes.
- 15-20 Southern Cross Cup and Telstra Cup, CYCA.
- 17 Canon Big Boat Challenge, Sydney Harbour, CYCA.
- 26 Telstra 55th Sydney to Hobart, CYCA.

JANUARY

- 3-10 Tornado World Championship, MHYC.
- 3-22 Sail Melbourne International Regatta, Olympic classes, Port Phillip.

America's Cup

- Louis Vuitton Cup
- Round Robin 1 begins October 18, 1999
- Round Robin 2 begins November 6, 1999
- Round Robin 3 begins December 2, 1999
- Semi-finals begin January 2, 2000
- Finals begin January 25, 2000
- America's Cup
- Best-of-nine Match begins February 19, 2000.

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