

APRIL/MAY 2020

OFFSHORE

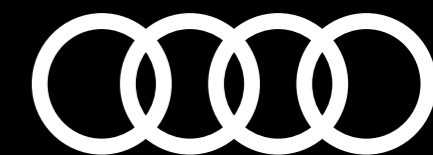
THE MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

A photograph of four young men standing on the deck of a boat. They are all wearing blue long-sleeved shirts and dark shorts. They are smiling and have their arms around each other's shoulders. The background shows the blue water of the sea and the white hull of the boat.

SUPERSTARS!

HOW OUR YOUTH SAILING ACADEMY
BECAME BACK-TO-BACK WORLD CHAMPIONS

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Thank you, Members.

The CYCA is incredibly proud to report it has been overwhelmed by Members recommitting to the Club in its yearly Membership drive, despite the influence of the coronavirus.

The Club is pleased to advise that as of 1 April almost two-thirds of the Membership had renewed for 2020/2021.

The strong showing through the large number of renewals, which provides vital support to the Club in a challenging period, is particularly appreciated at this time. Commodore Paul Billingham asked for Members to support the Club in his March Sked – and Members responded in huge numbers. Thank you.

A new incentive has been offered to Members this year, to both encourage Membership and acknowledge the change in value presented to Members with the Clubhouse currently closed.

If Members renew by 31 May 2020, from 1 April 2020 50 per cent of the monthly equivalent of fees will be credited to Membership account while the Clubhouse remains closed. This incentive will run for a maximum of six months but the credit can then be used any way a Member wishes before 31 March 2021.

Members may, of course, wish to waive this credit which will then flow back to the Club by default. If Members choose not to use their credit in this way, they will be further benefiting the Club.

More than 50 per cent of renewed Members, as of 1 April, had also contributed to the CYCA's Youth Sailing Academy through a voluntary donation – support once again greatly appreciated.

IN THIS EDITION

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CLUBHOUSE

The CYCA is temporarily closed per Government COVID-19 directions.

Phone: (02) 8292 7800
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COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

The CYCA's Youth Sailing Academy celebrate a huge win – being crowned World Champions! Credit - Andrew Delves

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COMMODORE PAUL BILLINGHAM

At the helm

When we came back from Hobart in January we had celebrated a wonderful 75th year and Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and I remember talking to Members about the Club finding its “new normal” under its new strategic plan.



Well since then of course it has been anything but normal, firstly with the bushfires now coronavirus and, as I write this forward, I have no idea what the world will be like by the time this issue of Offshore is finalised, printed and delivered to your door.

The Board has had to act quickly as the COVID-19 pandemic has unfolded, firstly adapting to the decision by Government to limit the number of people in the Club at any one time to 100 and then of course to the full shutdown of Clubhouse and competitive sailing activities. We have made such changes as we have in consultation with other similar clubs around the harbour, conscious of the need to be seen to be leading out on the issue and protecting our Members; but also the desire to keep sailing and run a club. The problem is of course that every decision we make has consequences, intended and unintended, not just on Members but on our people, contractors and other stakeholders. We have all seen other sports tussle with this one over recent weeks and I can assure you it is not easy.

Ultimately, we decided to move into “care and maintenance” mode, using Government to support retaining as many of our key people as possible and using the down time to refresh our thinking on the food and beverage offering, prepare for the summer sailing program, maintain our facilities and think of new ways to help keep Members engaged – such as our three virtual sailing regattas already up and running.

Operationally while the Club has been forced to cut back on its costs

significantly and let go a number of casual and seasonal people (which has been especially hard), with savings across the board our financial modelling suggests we can withstand the expected duration of these changes (at least six months) with Members’ support and understanding. That support has flowed freely with over 60 per cent of Members renewing their membership before 1 April – thank you!

“
**Rest assured
your Board and
management are 100
per cent focussed
on safeguarding the
future of the Club.**

”
Another, unrelated, change was the departure of CEO Eddie Moore who served the Club so well during its 75th year and we were pleased to invite Sailing Manager Justine Kirkjian to step up into the CEO role in an interim basis. Justine has hit the ground running - but talk about a baptism of fire!

In the sailing office Tara Blanc-Ramos has stepped up as Interim Sailing Manager and John Brennan our CFO becomes Justine’s 2IC and Company Secretary.

On the water we were unable to finish all of our series but the Sailing Office will be working out the placegetters and we will look to deliver their prizes

to them in due course – of course we are unable to hold prizegiving nights at present!

We also held a number of events before the changes came in – perhaps the highlight being the International Womens Day breakfast and the Making Waves Regatta which saw double the number of participants to 2019 – well done to David Pescud and the Making Waves Foundation (formerly Sailors with disABILITIES).

The shining highlight of the last two months however has to have been our back-to-back world titles with James Hodgson, Harry Hall, Louis Schofield and Nick Rozenauers being crowned Harken 2020 Youth Match Racing World Champions in Auckland. The team saw two crew members from last year’s winning team return with two new teammates and claim victory. This just goes to show how strong our Youth Sailing Academy is in bringing sailors through to the very highest of levels – well done Justine, Jordan and Pam and the army of coaches!

That’s all I can really write about now – it is such a fluid situation we are facing. I admit I was hoping for a quiet final six months of my Commodoreship but that has clearly gone out of the window! Rest assured your Board and management are 100 per cent focussed on safeguarding the future of the Club. I do not know when we will be able to get together again as Members (the General Meeting having to be cancelled) but we will find a way.

In the meantime, and I know this may sound ridiculous given the situation, please do support your Club as best you can during this period, look out for each other and stay safe. 🇺🇸

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Beat the bug!

Coronavirus is annoying – and affecting us all – but give yourself an escape with these tips

Coronavirus has kicked almost all of us – and our economy – to the curb, but the CYCA is keen to ensure our Members remain as active and engaged as possible throughout these uncertain times.

Whether it be through our digital channels, a range of online activities, or through some of our externally-sourced hints and tips, we are here – and keen – to help.

Coronavirus, through the resultant self-isolation, has immediate and potentially long-lasting effects on individuals and communities – and those who would otherwise be out sailing.

The following pointers and pieces of advice, we hope, will help stimulate your senses, engage your thinking (or allow you to drift off altogether!) and keep you connected not only to your fellow Club Members but to the community too!

Hit the water, digitally!

The CYCA has just launched an eSeries! Full details in the adjacent news pages, but essentially this provides you the opportunity to get on the water, jump on a boat and represent yourself and your Club... without getting sun burnt or breaking the law!

Stay active.

As Members of the CYCA, no doubt you enjoy the fresh air and the endorphins that come with exercise. Continue that as much as possible, whether that be with a YouTube exercise class, a walk to the shops or a jog with your household or family (wherever permitted by Government officials). Just because we are asked to remain inside as much as possible doesn't mean we need to let ourselves go. Also, it has been proven that physical fitness and mental health go hand-in-hand – look after both.

Relive history.

Did you know the line-honours and overall finishes of the 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart – the 75th Sydney Hobart – were broadcast across the country and around the world? This was a first for the Club

– and feedback was phenomenal. Catch both broadcasts on the CYCA's YouTube channel or rolexsydneyhobart.com. On the Club's YouTube channel, you can also watch extensive video highlights packages, historical films and interviews with stalwarts – it's a great way to stay engaged!

Get your news fix.

The CYCA produces its weekly e-newsletter Onshore – and it'll continue to do so during the pandemic. Not subscribed and missing out on your weekly dose of sailing goodness? Never fear! Simply visit cyca.com.au/onshore to sign up – and to read our full catalogue of newsletters. (You can read the news in more depth in Offshore online too – cyca.com.au/offshore.)

Keep the kids entertained!

It's always hard keeping children (young and old) entertained and engaged in times like these. Have no fear as we have found some exciting educational platforms that allow them to learn about the world, our impact on the environment and what we can do to help, all through examples in the sport of sailing. The Ocean Race's Champions for the Sea program

will help students (aged 6-12 years) discover the excitement of sailing, the importance of the ocean and how ocean health is threatened. Google 'Ocean Race Champions of the Sea' for more.

Similarly Oceans Initiative has set up a virtual Marine Biology Camp to allow people to hang out online and talk about whales, dolphins, other marine life as well as integrating activities for all ages. Find them at oceansinitiative.org.

Understand and accept we may all struggle... and get help where needed.

If you are struggling with this uncertain and ever-changing time there is help out there. If you or someone you know needs someone to talk to and don't know where to turn, there are many options including Lifeline (13 11 14) and Beyond Blue (1300 224 636).

The CYCA administration team are working through this challenging time, sometimes remotely, and are here to help.

Together, we can and will get through this. 🙌

While the Clubhouse is temporarily closed, there are still opportunities to engage with the CYCA

Hobart hits never-before-seen heights – and the numbers prove it!

The 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart reached a huge domestic and international audience

The historic 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race – the 75th running of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's 628-nautical-mile blue water classic – has been lauded as arguably the most successful in the history of the event, with metrics showing the event attracted more interest, viewers and engagement than ever before.

According to Meltwater, a total of almost four billion people – yes, four billion – across Australia and around the world were reached online via digital channels throughout the 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. This represents the largest-known figure for the event in its 75-year history, with an additional 124 million reached by Australian print audiences and millions more via domestic and international broadcasts.

The 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart, which featured the fourth-largest fleet in the history, smashed records across a number of areas, with the official race website attracting an additional two million page views across the monitored period compared with 2018, and the Channel 7 race-start broadcast reaching 2.08 million Australians on Boxing Day.

In 2019, for the first time ever the CYCA produced and managed race-end broadcasts, of both the line-honours finish and the overall handicap battle, thanks to support from Tourism Tasmania. These

broadcasts attracted huge audiences both on Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race digital platforms and via traditional broadcasters across Australia and around the world, who received the CYCA's feeds.

More than 388,000 viewers tuned in to RolexSydneyHobart.com, YouTube and the official race Facebook page to watch *Comanche's* line-honours triumph, consuming more than 1,008,000 minutes' of content. Never-before-seen broadcasts of the line-honours finish and the overall handicap battle were also syndicated more than 40 times across the country and around the world, via Fox Sports Asia, Fox Sports Australia and ABC Australia channels in addition to online streaming audiences on 7Plus and Kayo. Further to this, more than 110,000 viewers – consuming 298,500 minutes – watched the overall-honours video broadcast on RSHYR channels.

The official Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race page on Facebook reached 2,873,846 individuals during the period, almost double that of 2018, with the race's Instagram account attracting an increase of 9,837 followers – or 117 per cent – year on year.

CYCA Commodore Paul Billingham said the historic 75th Sydney Hobart Yacht Race would rightly go down in history.

"The 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart was a

huge success and an event of global significance that the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, Members of the Club, participants, management, staff and volunteers can be immensely proud of," Commodore Billingham said.

"The engagement figures across the race – from the Channel 7 broadcast on Boxing Day, the media interest, the race-end broadcasts syndicated across Australia and around the world – are immense. While the supermaxis make a fine sight, this year in particular Channel 7 worked hard to focus on the stories surrounding the fleet and listened to feedback from previous years – 64 per cent of the broadcast focused on the main fleet in 2019, up from 16 per cent in 2018.

"We couldn't be more proud of the event – and the audience it received in Sydney, in Hobart, across Australia and around the world. In this respect alone it goes down in history as the most successful Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race ever.

"Thank you to all involved, in particular the management, staff, volunteers and participants – and, of course, our incredible partners and specifically Rolex, whose longstanding support of the race has allowed the CYCA to continually raise the bar.

"We can't wait for the 2020 Rolex Sydney Hobart." 📌

PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race postponed

The CYCA's 1,064-nautical-mile PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race, planned to start on 6 June 2020, has been postponed due to the COVID-19 health crisis.

The postponement of the 2020 PONANT Sydney Noumea, the CYCA's longest ocean race, is disappointing but unavoidable in the current climate.

"We are incredibly saddened to postpone the 2020 PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race but the health and safety of our competitors, Members, staff and other stakeholders including our partners, is the CYCA's number-one priority," CYCA Commodore Paul Billingham said.

"The race will, however, go on – and we look forward to confirming a date for the 2021 PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race soon.

"We thank everyone, including entrants, yacht owners, CYCA Members and particularly our partners PONANT for their understanding.

"Our thoughts are, however, with everyone either directly or indirectly affected by the coronavirus at present – and we would like to take the opportunity to specifically thank the frontline workers, including the medical staff across NSW and around the country, for their tireless efforts in this unprecedented time."

The CYCA will look to stage the PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race, reintroduced in 2018 following a 20-year hiatus, in June 2021 – with many of the currently entered grand-prix yachts expected to return to take part.

In the 2018 PONANT Sydney Noumea Yacht Race, Sebastian Bohm's *Smuggler* took top honours – claiming the overall win on a corrected time of 5 days, 6 hours and 44 minutes. 📌



The PONANT Sydney Noumea will be back in 2021 following a successful return in 2018



Barry Cuneo (centre) alongside (left) Noakes' Sean Langman and CYCA Vice Commodore Noel Cornish, will need to wait a little longer to defend his 2019 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast crown

2020 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast postponed

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's 2020 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race has been postponed due to the current COVID-19 health crisis.

The challenging 384-nautical-mile coastal race has for many years brought together a strong fleet of yachts from across the country in one of the toughest annual tests prior to the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

The race marks the start of the Audi Centre Sydney Blue Water Pointscore and the first big offshore contest of

the year before crews head north to warmer waters.

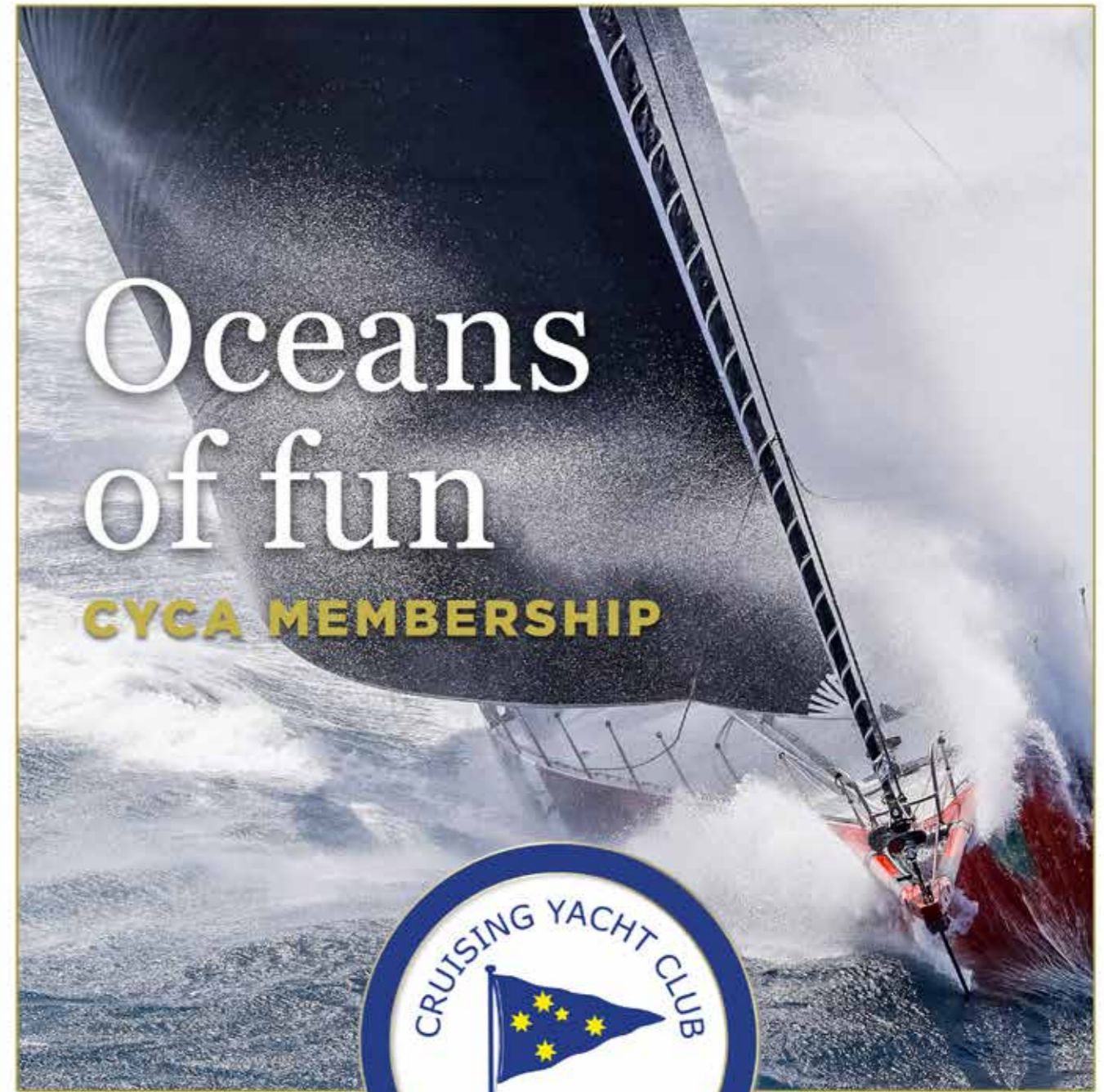
"It has been a hard decision for the Club to make to postpone this year's race. The Noakes Sydney Gold Coast is such a big part of our offshore calendar, however, it is a decision that was needed in this time with the health and safety of competitors and various other stakeholders the absolute priority," CYCA Commodore Paul Billingham said.

"We would like to thank the continuing support and understanding from our

race partner in Noakes Group and specifically Sean Langman, who has been a long-time supporter of both the Club and sailing community.

"It is our intention to reassess as the situation evolves and find a date which will allow us to undertake the race in a safe manner."

The CYCA will endeavour to reschedule this year's race as the COVID-19 situation evolves. Details will be released through the official website goldcoast.cyca.com.au when they become available [↕](#).



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HIT THE WATER – FROM HOME!

The coronavirus shall not keep us down - there's still a way to go out on the water!

The CYCA invites Members to participate in a range of new Virtual Regattas, to keep the competitive juices flowing even when social distancing!

The new eSeries will consist for three separate events to engage with our Members over the month of April, with more to come if the series is popular.

Youth Sailing Academy Members and Alumni are invited to participate in the Kellett eShield, in recognition of our annual Kellett Shield regatta, which unfortunately has been cancelled for 2020.

To claim the title as the 'best gamer of the CYCA', Members should look no further than the eChampion of Champions regatta. This event will replace last month's Champion of Champions (ex Top Jocks) which was also cancelled.

Finally, the Winter eSeries will complement our most popular on-water series which is currently postponed.

With 12 races contested across three weekends in April, Members may enter as a series entry or as a daily casual entrant.

Enter the series via mobile device or computer. For more information, visit cyca.com.au/eSeries... but hurry! [↕](#)

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Champions of the world!

Our Youth Sailing Academy are Harken Youth Match Racing World Champions once again - and this is how they took their title!



The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia has defended their World Championship crown when James Hodgson, Harry Hall, Louis Schofield and Nick Rozenauers won a resounding Finals series 3-0 against the United States of America at the 2020 Harken Youth Match Racing World Championship, hosted by the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron.

This is now the third World Championship title for the CYCA in four attempts. For Hodgson and crewmember Harry Hall, they became the first sailors to have won more than one Youth World Championship, having won the title when they crewed for Tom Grimes' 2019 winning team in Russia.

This year the CYCA was represented by two teams at the World Championship with Finn Tapper, Tom Grimes, George Richardson, Jake Liddell and Cole Tapper sailing on the second team alongside Hodgson's. A further 10 teams from nine nationals contested this year's Championship. Heading into the event, the CYCA team was hot favourite, with Hodgson taking out the RNZYS's Harken International Youth Match Cup the previous week in epic style. During the four-day competition, the team won an impressive 20 races from 23 starts.

The opening day of the Worlds however didn't quite go to plan for Hodgson. With a new Race Officer and a new racecourse east of the city, Hodgson and crew returned to RNZYS in seventh position. It wasn't all bad news though for the CYCA, with Finn Tapper remaining undefeated to lead the event after the opening day.

Day Two really showcased the incredible skill and depth currently being produced through the Youth Sailing Academy with our two teams finishing in the top two spots after the round robin qualifying stage, with Tapper remaining undefeated through his 11 races.



Heading into the knockout stages, Tapper continued his winning streak, knocking out Great Britain 3-0 to be the first team to advance to the semi-finals. For Hodgson, it was a repeat of the previous week's quarter final pairing, racing Denmark and once again coming away with the victory.

For the final day of competition, light wind conditions plagued the morning semi-finals. Tapper's undefeated run ended abruptly during this series, losing out to the United States of America 3-1 and then eventually losing the petit-final 2-0 to finish in 4th overall.

The second semi-final was much more exciting, with local New Zealand hero Nick Egnot-Johnson up against Hodgson and needed all five races to decide a finalist.

In the winner-takes-all final race of the series, there were plenty of lead changes throughout and it was the

New Zealander who rounded the final top mark in front. Hodgson didn't give up though and down the final run, sailed faster and lower to level with the kiwis. The race came right down to the finish, with Egnot-Johnson looking like he may just win it. Hodgson, however, was right there to dip over the line in front of the kiwi and secure a spot in the final.

“ We sailed super clean and absolutely stoked to get the win three zero ”

In the Finals, the CYCA was barely touchable. He was able to penalise the American team in two of the three races, lead at every mark and as the team crossed the finish line in Race 3, were crowned the new World Champions.

“[Before the Finals] we basically just said we need to keep it simple and do all the basic stuff right and we finally got our pre-starts together for the first time in this regatta. We sailed super clean and absolutely stoked to get the win three zero” commented the team after racing. ⚓

How we did it

The World Championships are the culmination of years of hard work, writes YSA Head Coach JORDAN REECE

A World Championship (WC) campaign has two main parts to it. Firstly, a team must qualify for the event. In Australia, we have a bit of a different selection process to the rest of the World, where the top ranked team via the World Sailing World Rankings is selected to represent the country.

This approach puts more emphasis on the holistic results of a team, rather than having a concentrated, one off event, such as a National Championship to determine the representative for the WC. For our teams, this means we have to look at the bigger picture, with teams committed to building a solid World Ranking for around a year before the WC application period is even open. This process relies on a great support system which obviously the YSA has through our sponsors and Members.

Once a team has qualified for the Australian spot at a WC, then begins the WC campaign itself. The strategy for setting up a WC campaign will vary from team to team, but, it is about building your skills so that you are peaking at the main event.

How to win a World Championship

Our strategy for winning a World Championship is first, setting up a team that can win. Whilst this seems like a very simple first step, it relies on knowing the venue well. What conditions to expect. What class of boat is being used, etc. and then selecting the right sailors for each position on board.

Secondly, it is then building up a program that will breed success. We firstly look for any warm-up events the team could participate in. When possible, at the venue and on the boats

being used. From these events, we will then set our event goals, whether this is to build knowledge/skill or if it is to test our ability to win, and so to speak, simulating the World Championship event.

Finally, it is then building a constructive training program around these events against multiple teams. The YSA has always had one of the strongest

to know some of your umpires too. For us, we have now done this three times (2017, 2019 and 2020). It proves to me that the structure and support we have in place at the CYCA is instrumental to a positive outcome to a campaign.

We are able to create these campaigns which really set out a time frame for us to be successful and this is due to the fact we are able to send our teams to multiple lead up events and create a training program thanks to the generous support from our Members as well as the many sponsors the YSA has.

Why is a World Championship important?

As a coach, firstly, it obviously proves that what you are doing is right. We have now had nine World Champions, two of which have done it twice. This proves that the way we conduct our training programs, how we coach our sailors and how we set up a campaign is correct. Its not just a one-off sailor or team getting these results. It's a combination of 30+ sailors who are all working together towards that one goal.

Secondly, strong results do lead to stronger in-house competition. We have seen our YSA numbers increase year on year as more sailors want to have that opportunity, want to have that strong competition to train against and have that strong support from a Club to back their dreams.

On behalf of all of our World Champions, and our YSA sailors and graduates, I would like to extend my greatest gratitude to the CYCA Board of Directors, our Members and our Sponsors for their continued support of youth sailing. This support has led to many successes that every Member at the CYCA should be proud of and is breeding the next generation of sailors in our community. ⚓





CYCA's future focus

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia is committed to the environment and providing Members and guests services with facilities that don't cost the earth.

The CYCA is proud to have introduced a number of measures to limit the Club's environmental footprint as part of an ongoing sustainability initiative. The Club and its Members, as sailors, enjoy a natural affinity with the ocean and as such it makes sense to commit to ensuring the protection of the natural environment.

Through a Board- and management-led commitment, the CYCA has introduced a range of measures that will ensure the Club limits its environmental footprint and moves towards best practice across a range of areas.

The Club is committed to influencing, educating and informing Members on the ways they can contribute to a sustainable future, while ensuring our Members can continue to do what they love doing in an environmentally friendly manner.

So the CYCA has made a range of commitments and changes that will complement six SeaBins, soon be installed around the Club's marina, that will collect debris and rubbish in the Rushcutters Bay area.

These commitments include:

- Installed more than 100 solar panels on the roof of the newly refurbished Clubhouse, both reducing the Club's energy bill and providing a renewable energy source that is used across food, beverage, operations and administration departments;
- Shifted to paperless communications across a range of areas of activity, with the Sailing Department recently committing to new technology from our partners at Sharp that will both reduce our long-term in-house printing volumes and minimise our impact on the environment;
- Implemented a range of motion-sensor lighting in bathrooms across the premises in addition to it being utilised in the John Messenger Building, improving efficiency and reducing the Club's carbon footprint;
- Removed plastic bags from the Clubhouse, with Members and guests encouraged to either go bagless or use provided paper bags; and
- Removed plastic straws from the Clubhouse, with Members and guests encouraged to go strawless.



“ The Club is proudly making a stand, ensuring we do all we can to limit our impact on the environment ”

These measures are hoped to be seen by the Membership as a positive – small steps that will ultimately make a big difference.

“The Club is proudly making a stand, ensuring we do all we can to limit our impact on the environment – whether we're on the water or off it,” CYCA Commodore Paul Billingham says.

“These measures are the first of many the Club and the Board are taking to ensure the CYCA continues to lead the way, and not just with our sailing program.

“We are satisfied that our initial steps are making a difference but we know there is plenty more work to be done. So we ask Club Members, guests, sailing fans and the general public to get behind us and help drive the conversation and steps around sustainable and environmentally friendly decision-making and practices.

“In particular we are keen to reduce single-use plastics in our sport – notably plastic water bottles that are used for

convenience on many boats - but need our sailing Members to think differently here to make a real difference”

Throughout the Club's Youth Sailing programs there is a real push to instill these environmental values to the younger generation and show how they can achieve these at the Club-hosted regattas.

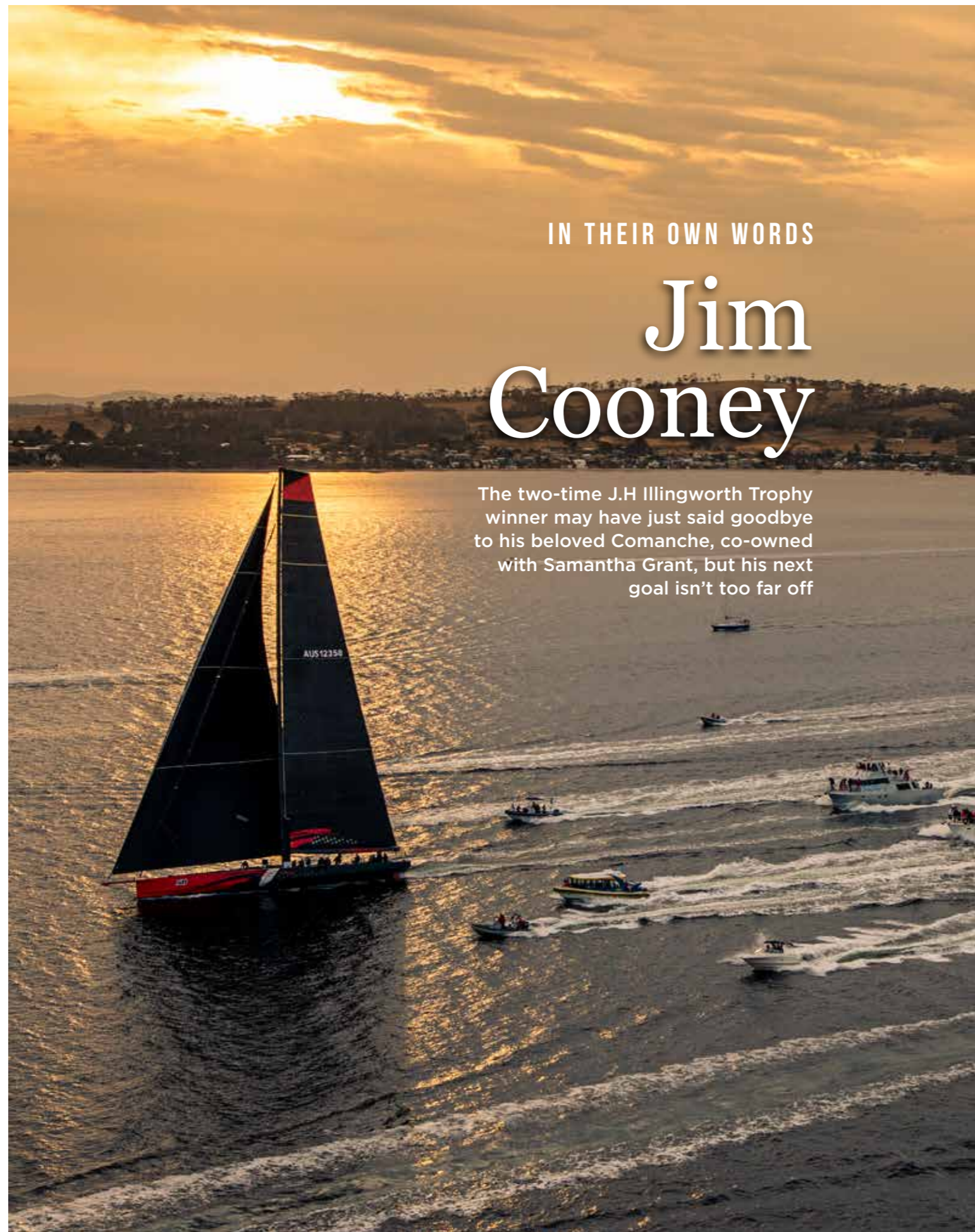
The CYCA is also looking to extend their commitment to sustainability through our on water events. The Sailing Department and Youth Sailing Academy are working towards Clean Regatta accreditation for events in the second half of the year with a number of initiatives already in place by the YSA. These include on-water bottle refill provisions, banning single-use bottles and going paperless.

The CYCA will be announcing more steps and improvements around sustainability in the future. ⚓

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Jim Cooney

The two-time J.H Illingworth Trophy winner may have just said goodbye to his beloved *Comanche*, co-owned with Samantha Grant, but his next goal isn't too far off



Jim Cooney, Samantha Grant and team onboard *Comanche* with the eyes of the world on them as they took on the Derwent in 2019



This coronavirus has thrown us all for a spin – it's a huge challenge for everyone. How have you been affected?

I'm fit and healthy as is my family. It is very strange, a lot of adjustments to be made. We've one boy doing his HSC this year and another in his final year of law at Sydney University – there are changing conditions for them at the moment with the potential of online exams and assessments which are going to be moderated across the state and indeed the country and whatnot... interesting.

Nothing significant is changing my work life [in renewable energy specifically wind farms] because the projects we work on are on a very slow trajectory, from the original concept to a spinning asset, typically from six to eight years from a feasibility study until when it's producing power. A six- or even 12-month blip is not so significant in that industry.

Your sailing would at the least have been heavily affected by this pandemic...

The middle of the year has definitely changed, not likely to be a Gold Coast race. I guess we're expecting that Hobart will be back on and the (Audi Centre Sydney) Blue Water Pointscore, minus the Gold Coast, will be a five-race series. The optimist in me hopes we'll be back on the water by September or thereabouts...

At this point, in the absence of *Comanche*, *Maserati* will be the weapon of choice for the Hobart.

***Comanche*, as you mention, has departed for foreign waters. Where is she off to and how satisfying was the time you spent with her, particularly following the 2019 Rolex Sydney Hobart line-honours title?**

She's going to Europe. We went into *Comanche* as nominally a three-year project, which it turned out to be almost exactly. We wanted to test ourselves with the supermaxi program not just the boat itself but the logistics, the management and running of the campaign – a big boat means a big campaign... it's a league again ahead of the likes of *Maserati*.

It's been enormously satisfying for us all – we've all been on the boat as much as possible and been involved in every race available to the family, age limit being the only deterrent, and we've had an absolute ball. We went into it wanting to see what it's like... and being successful.

It's an extraordinary boat – when you get her going she's impossible to catch. Races aren't however all sailed in straight lines in reaching conditions... particularly on the east coast.

The challenge for us was taking a machine like *Comanche* that was designed and built to break records and adapting the way she operates and getting the best out of the boat to be successful on the east coast, which we feel that's where we got to the last Hobart race. It was a good note to go out on!

How did the sales campaign come about... and how was the final goodbye?

We didn't conduct a sale campaign. I probably received enquiries on that boat every two months, ever since I bought it. A lot of people have been interested in buying *Comanche* over the years, just because of what she is. I didn't put her on the market – it was

more like 'ok if we feel like this is getting towards the end of tenure, let's start thinking about where the boat might go next'.

There could be no more fitting farewell, from the sailing community and the family, than that Hobart race. The 2019 Hobart – the 75th passage of the race – will be one that'll be remembered. Five supermaxis on the start line and the finish

has never happened in the race before and it'll probably never happen again. To be a part of that, in such a hard-fought race – we scrapped with each other every mile, there were races within races – [was amazing]. That Hobart is a spectacle that won't be repeated.

The last time I was aboard was at her berth at Jones Bay, going through the final pieces and making sure our personal gear was off the boat. The parting thought, stepping off and looking back at the transom was 'Wow – that was, and remains, a hell of a machine.'

She's an extraordinary boat and it's been an absolute honour to own the boat and to have taken her to another level, a level she wasn't at when we took over. She's a faster boat, a more agile boat and the performance we can now get out of *Comanche* is better than three years ago when we inherited it – I'm very pleased to have done that and that was part of the challenge.

Saying goodbye at the wharf was a happy moment but we'll miss putting the bow outside the heads and turning south and popping a big spinnaker and

The parting thought, stepping off and looking back at the transom was 'Wow – that was, and remains, a hell of a machine.'



Comanche claimed the 2017 Rolex Sydney Hobart line-honours title following a protest with Wild Oats XI



A family affair - Jim and son James at the press conference following Comanche's 2019 line-honours triumph



That sweet taste of victory as Jim shares the joy with his triumphant crew in 2019.

feeling the extraordinary surge of power you can only get from a big wide boat like that.

We had a great time, two Hobarts, the race record, the Transpac and a host of east coast races - we're very happy with what we did with the boat but as a family too, in terms of the enjoyment we had together and all being heavily involved in the project and the campaigns.

Does the focus of your next project now turn to winning the Tattersall Cup, as overall winner of the Rolex Sydney Hobart?

It's a reasonable question - three years ago in *Maserati* we were leading overall for a short period of time as we all surged down the coast. In the end it was *Giacomo*, the other Volvo 70, who took out the honours on that occasion. It was an exciting prospect... it's in our minds and a lofty goal worth chasing and we're going to think about chasing that in future in some form of vessel.

Maserati's not quite a Tattersall Cup competitor apart from rare conditions - it can happen, like *Giacomo* did in 2016 [but it's unlikely]... it's a possibility but it'd need to be Volvo conditions for that to happen.

How are you keeping busy in these weird times of social isolation - and getting your sailing fix?

There's always work to do on a boat! We've got a couple of boats to maintain so will spend some time upgrading some of the systems on *Maserati* and putting some on that boat.

We have the family boat at home - the Brenta 42 - that we won't be using at the moment but if anyone needs an outlet they can always tinker.

There'll be enough to keep us busy but with university and high school we're still fairly busy as a family.

There's a real family connection with your sailing, but you didn't grow up on the water...

I'm the first sailor in my family, I was brought up in the Central West of NSW in Condobolin, way out in the geographical centre of NSW - a long way away from yacht clubs!

I started sailing in my mid 20s on an S&S 34 in Price Alfred offshore group, then spent time on the Harbour in the J24s after that then back into offshore boats, progressing into bigger boats on other people's boats then *Brindabella* was our first boat. I don't come from a long line of sailors but I appear to be creating one - all the kids are very keen!

Absolutely it makes me feel proud to have my kids sail with me. We wouldn't have any of the boats if we couldn't do it as a family. I've been sailing with the kids since they were tiny, barely able to climb onto the boat... and they've grown up with boats all the way through. It's very satisfying for us as a family, particularly races like the Transpac. Had

it not been a family activity we wouldn't have been able to do it - devoting four or five weeks' time - if you're not doing it with family you're missing out on great opportunities. Winning that last Hobart too - a race of the century in my opinion, hard fought and fought in wonderful spirit... Everybody really embraced the race - was a wonderful experience alongside the family.

Your crew has been phenomenal too...

There have been quite a few changes with crew along the journey but the crew we finished with last year, for the Transpac and the Hobart, I think you'll see is arguably the finest maxi crew you'll see in the world ever.

It's led by people like Stan Honey - an absolute legend. You can't fault his dedication, judgement and the wonderful calmness he brings right throughout the boat.

The crew has become younger with the years. Jimmy Spithill unfortunately was injured last year and couldn't make it but a wonderful guy to stand beside and to learn with... Kyle Langford, Tom Johnson, Ted Hackney, Pablo

She's an extraordinary boat and it's been an absolute honour to own the boat and to have taken her to another level, a level she wasn't at when we took over.

Arrate, Louis Sinclair one of the best bowmen in the world, I suggest he probably is the best bowman in the world., then Julian Cressant, Andrew Henderson.

These guys are absolutely rock solid... a group of guys you'd just really enjoy sailing with because they are genuine people, professional in every sense and incredibly humble. I'm the only one in the crew who hasn't won a Volvo or America's Cup really but you wouldn't know it - fantastic guys to be with and it made all the difference having personalities and people who really meshed together so well.

You've experienced great success already and if you do nothing more will always remain in the record books. How would you like to be remembered?

I guess I'm somewhat flattered by descriptions from some people that I'm the calmest skipper they've sailed with - I'm not a shouter or a yell... I expect the people around me know their jobs and don't need to be yelled at.

It's great to have been successful but to get the most out of every team you have to manage the personalities as much as you'd manage the boat and I think that comes from years of managing teams and people and situations...

I've enjoyed the thrill of sailing but also the management aspect of a big team, because if you have 16 or 18 people on board running around, sometimes more than that, there's a lot of strings to pull. If someone said I did a good job of that I'd be very happy! ⚓



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International Women's Day

It was an inspirational morning celebrating International Women's Day at the Club in early March! A great turnout of almost 100 crowded into the Club to hear from a range of great speakers... and enjoy each other's company on a day of celebration, thanks and appreciation.

Thank you to amazing guest speakers including Dr. Christine Evans, Julie Hodder and Sarah Kenny for sharing their insight, stories, and thoughts... and our own Rear Commodore Janey Treleven for hosting the event.

A heartfelt thank you to all who attended the 2020 International Women's Day function at the CYCA. We look forward to more successful and engaging events in the future...whenever coronavirus allows! 🚢



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From the Archives

Courtesy of the CYCA History and Archives collection, comes this beauty.
Can anyone lay claim to owning this many yachts?

John Gilliam buys his 27th yacht beat that!

— TONY CABLE

John recently purchased the celebrated Mercedes III from Melbourne and while he has difficulty in recalling the details of all his yachts, he believes that his latest, is number 27 — some record? Mercedes, being one of Australia's great yachts, is by no means the only well known vessel in his long string.

The total number of yachts does not include various Cadet Dinghies and suchlike that he owned and sailed on the Yarra before the War.

He joined the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria around 1939 and remained a member for about 25 years. Not all these years were spent on his own boats, for he sailed "quite a bit" with the former Commodore Ernie Digby on "Independence" (later owners were the Messengers and Roger Grimes) "Defiance" (sailed by Nelson Rundle on Lake Macquarie) and "Francis" — all designed and built by their owner. Around 1958 the Gilliams emigrated to Sydney.

Running down the list of some of these yachts, Mercedes III needs no introduction, being possibly the best yacht in the world in 1967 (top scorer in the Admiral's Cup Series that year). Plans are to cruise her, but family pressures are there agitating to go on the 1974 Hobart.

Previous to this was "Koomooloo" winner of the '68 Hobart and '71 Admiral's Cup Representative. John had a 6th in her in the '72 Hobart. (Mrs. Gilliam hasn't yet forgiven him for the sale of this one).

Next down the sequence was the powerful (and heavy) steel "Freya", "Weatherly" which was sailed in four Hobarts, giving son Greg his formative ocean racing experience.

At one stage "Koomooloo" and "Weatherly" were held at the same time, but to quote "no man should own two boats, it's like having 2 women in the one street. Quite upsetting, you don't know which one to go and see".

Down the line again to the three quarter rig double ender, "Zephyr" acquired from Harvey Drew when John in turn sold him "Siandra" — this Lion Class is in the annals as the winner of the '58 and '60 Hobarts under Graham Newland.

"Saracen II" was acquired from Sir Robert Crichton-Brown around 1965. This 36' Camper and Nicholson was only the 2nd fibreglass yacht to compete in the Hobart (how times have changed).

The next 2 in the fleet were interesting in that they were both held twice. The first was "Nautilus" (still lying in Elizabeth Bay). She was originally bought in South Australia for £1750 for a Melbourne buyer Fred Werner and renamed "Tarni". She was a beautiful boat with laid decks a 56' ketch originally designed by Alden as a schooner. After doing war service she was taken over by the Livingstone brothers and renamed "Kurrewa". John later bought her from the next owner Sir Claude Plowman and took it to Melbourne (first ownership period) and renamed her "Tarni".

After selling "Nautilus" John moved to Sydney with "Wild Wave" (encountering a 90 knot gale on the way), that very powerful Jock Muir vessel that would have taken line and handicap honours in the 1953 Hobart had she not been



John Gilliam and son Greg

disqualified for a foul-up at the start. John held her again after "Nautilus" (for the second time) and did quite a deal of cruising with her.

Back earlier to Melbourne and "Sirocco", the 45 footer that lost her mast returning from Hobart this year. This Sparkman and Stephens was launched in 1939 in Hobart and had a much taller yawl rig when John owned her.

Another "Waipru" was purchased and sailed up from Hobart. She was a New Zealander after the style of, but bigger than a Tahitian ketch and tremendously strong.

Two others were "Betsy", a 32' sailed with the R.Y.C.V. and "Warana" a Bailey design built in Hobart for Hickman. In between these two was another well known yacht "Ingrid", which he had built to go around the world. Unfortunately, war intervened and she was sold to a South Australian and subsequently went on to win the '52 Hobart for J.S. Taylor.

During the war the R.Y.C.V. asked John to look after a 21' yacht which was unused at the Club and falling apart; he cared for her for about three years.

Included among the early yachts was "Fegmhar"; a peculiar name made up of two christian names. She was about 35' with a canoe stern and amateur built. "She was a bit lopsided with one side about 10½" longer than the other. We used to wonder why she sailed better on one tack than the other — they got out of plumb somewhere with her".

One of the earliest and biggest yachts recalled was "The Arsenal", which derived her name from her previous occupation as a sort of explosives barge. The intention was to cruise her through the Islands but again the war upset these dreams. A 46', she had a giant 4 cylinder 60 h.p. engine which started on petrol and then ran on kero.

One could no doubt go on and on relating all the interesting aspects of the various yachts and his experiences with them — space is a limitation. John, best wishes for fair and enjoyable sailing with your latest, "Mercedes".

OFFSHORE, April 1974. 15

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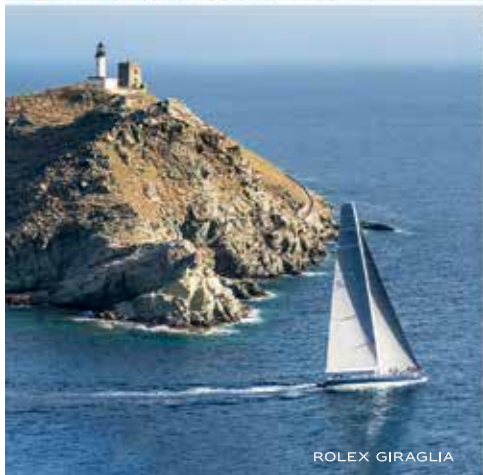
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