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THE MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING  
YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2005

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ABOVE: Action aboard *Alfa Romeo* at Hamilton Island Hahn Premium Race Week

COVER: BMW Sydney Winter series action from the water  
PHOTO: Andrea Francolini

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## CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

New Beach Road, Darling Point, NSW 2027  
Tel: (02) 9363 9731 Fax: (02) 9363 9745  
email: cyca@cyca.com.au  
website: www.cyca.com.au  
CEO: Mark Woolf

### FLAG OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

COMMODORE: Geoff Lavis  
VICE COMMODORE: Matt Allen  
REAR COMMODORES: Alan Green & Roger Hickman  
TREASURER: Graham Swan  
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Vice Commodore Matt Allen  
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CRUISING COMMITTEE: Rear Commodore Alan Green

### EDITOR

Adrian Herbert  
Tel: (02) 9712 1350  
email: ahe62867@bigpond.com.au

### EDITOR AT LARGE

Peter Campbell  
Tel: (02) 9869 8197 Fax: (02) 9869 8082  
email: peter\_campbell@bigpond.com

### PUBLISHER

Clare Catt  
Tel: (02) 9353 6666

### ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER

Carol D'Costa  
Tel: (02) 9353 0077  
email: cdcosta@fpc.com.au

### EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

DESIGN: Anthony Vandenberg  
PRODUCTION MANAGER: Neridah Shrimpton  
ADVERTISING PRODUCTION COORDINATION:  
Chrissy Fragkakis

### PHOTOGRAPHERS

Andrea Francolini, Carlo Borlenghi,  
Daniel Forster, Ian Mainsbridge,  
Christophe Launay, Edward Rowe,  
Jas Hawkins, Barry Tranter

### NATIONAL SALES MANAGER

Warwick Heath  
Tel: 0427 272704  
email: wh3@bigpond.com

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FIRST THOUGHT



# FIRST THOUGHT

PHOTO: Andrea Francolini





The Sydney 38 *Shining Sea* viewed from inside a crystal tube during competition in the Hamilton Island Hahn Premium Race Week Regatta.



# AT THE HELM

Geoff Lavis, Commodore, Cruising Yacht Club of Australia

**T**he 20th Anniversary Sydney Gold Coast Race has come and gone. It was a memorable race for many reasons. Firstly, our official starters were The Honorable Rod Kemp, Federal Minister for Sport and the Arts, The Honorable Sandra Nori, State Minister for Sport, Tourism and Women's Affairs, and Jackie Clarke, daughter of the late Peter Rysdyk, who first organised this ocean race 20 years ago.

Secondly, we started with a fleet of 74 and all boats completed the race. Well done to all the competitors. Thirdly, the very light conditions forecast didn't prevail and the extra meals stowed weren't needed. Finally, this was the last Gold Coast Race to be run in July.

Next year, the Sydney Gold Coast Race will be held just before Easter and will be the final race in the Blue Water and Long Ocean Championships. Southport Yacht Club is supportive of this move and will hold the Commodore's Cup Regatta, a series of short ocean races, shortly after we arrive. It would be remiss not to mention the efforts of the Southport Yacht Club to welcome us and accommodate all our boats. To find berths for 74 boats is no easy task.

The Sydney Mooloolaba Race will now start in July and will be the first race in the Bluewater and Long Ocean pointscores. The driving force behind this change has been the river depth problems at Mooloolaba, which has seen a fall off in the number of deeper keel boats competing.

We are introducing the Sydney Mackay Race as part of the Mooloolaba Race. Boats competing in the Mackay Race will go through a 'gate' at the Mooloolaba finish line and have their finish time taken before continuing north to Mackay after a short logistical stop. Shallower draft yachts can proceed with the tide in to Mooloolaba Yacht Club.

The Sydney Mackay Race will be the longest regular bluewater race in Australia. The CYCA is very supportive of the development of this race and sees it as a great feeder race into the northern racing circuit of Hog's Breath and Hamilton Island race weeks.

While talking about racing, one should not forget the CYCA members who competed in the Rolex Fastnet Race – Grant Wharington in *Skandia Wild Thing*, Geoff Hill in *Strewth* and most significantly, Alex Whitworth in *Berrimilla*. After last year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, Alex and crew member Peter Crozier sailed the *Brolga 33* from Hobart around Cape Horn to England. They now intend to sail the

boat back to Sydney in time for the start of this year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race – a Herculean effort by any standards. I'm sure a hero's welcome awaits them when they return to Sydney, and then Hobart.

I would also like to congratulate CYCA Club member Richard Perini on receiving the Australian Male Sailor of the Year Award at the recent Yachting Australia Awards night. The award caps off a hugely successful year for Richard, including winning the hotly contested Rolex Farr 40 World's earlier this year and the Mumm 30 World Championship last year.

I was personally pleased to see Peter Campbell receive Yachting Australia's Media Award. Well done Peter, and again, fitting recognition for your long-term efforts and achievements in yachting journalism.

Our youth sailors have been active both here and overseas. Ewan McNicholl and Jacqui Bonnitcha walked away from the 29er Worlds as the champions. Also, Evan Walker and Kyle Langford won the Gold Medal at the ISAF Youth Worlds in Korea. Chosen to represent Australia, they were successful in the Hobie Class. A fantastic effort and achievement. The Club is eminently proud of all of you.

Not to be outdone, Vice Commodore Matt Allen and club member Michael Spies returned from Norway with yet another world championship in 11-metre One Designs. The Club is blessed to have so many current world champions in our midst.

The CYCA also sent a team of four young sailors to the Skandia Cowes Youth Week. Sailing in the under 25's event, Seve Jarvin, Rob Bell, Sam Newton and Mark Langford (all under 20) performed extremely well, finally finishing second behind the RSYS team. A real Antipodean assault on the Poms. Well done.

Another team, consisting of Tom Barker, Will Ryan and Ted Hackney represented the Club at the Governors Cup in Balboa, California. Finishing eighth, they missed out on the semis by one point. I am told they were excellent ambassadors for the Club.

Back at home, our team of Evan Walker, Luke McLean and Kyle Langford won the Club Marine NSW Youth Match Racing Championship.

Our Cruising Division has also been active, hosting the annual YNSW Combined Clubs Cruising get together at the Club in September. I'm sure it will have been a great success.

Late winter has been relatively quiet but I'll see you soon, back at the Club or on the water! ■



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# DOWN THE RHUMB LINE

Peter Campbell, editor at large, Offshore Yachting

Retiring Commodore Martin James made two announcements of great significance at the Cruising Yachting Club of Australia annual general meeting in July.

The first was that the Club's principal sponsor, Rolex SA, would extend its naming rights sponsorship of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and the Rolex Trophy Regatta up to, and including, the 2010 race.

The second is that the CYCA has entered into a multi-year arrangement with Channel 7 as the new host broadcaster of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

The successful conclusion of negotiations with Rolex and Channel 7 will be a lasting tribute to the remarkable contribution by immediate past Commodore James who surprised most members by not seeking a second term at the helm.

Martin James' work on the Rolex sponsorship and the Club's award-winning website and yacht tracking system began, of course, even before his two-year stint as Vice Commodore; the good news is that he will continue to make his time and skills available to the Club to assist with technical aspects of the website and the Club's legal and financial matters.

We are now in the fourth year since Rolex first entered into a partnership with the CYCA, built around the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. The international status of Rolex as a sponsor of yachting and other major sporting events has already done much to lift international interest in Australia's major ocean classic and the contract for a further five years, at least, underlines their satisfaction with the partnership.

Interestingly, Rolex's ongoing role comes just 30 years since the CYCA first signed a sponsorship agreement for the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. In 1975, the 31<sup>st</sup> Race received sponsorship from the airline TAA. Commenting in the official program, the then Commodore Joe Diamond said: "The effect of sponsorship can only mean an increased interest in the Race among the general public and ultimately must result in benefit to ocean racing as a whole."

Since 1975, the race has had several naming rights sponsors, including Hitachi, AWA, Nortel, Kodak and Telstra, all of whom enabled the CYCA to promote and expand the event, at the same providing modern facilities and expert race management for competitors.

Therefore, the 2005 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht

Race will be the 31<sup>st</sup> consecutive race with a naming rights sponsor – with one exception. In 2001, in the wake of huge commercial support for the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, the Club was unable to find a replacement sponsor for Telstra, whose six-year sponsorship had come to an end. In the following year, Rolex SA came aboard.

Rolex has been delighted with the success of the partnership and their renewed contract for a further five years is a wonderful boost for the race, the club and the sport. As Richard de Leyser, General Manager of Rolex Australia said: "The event is a perfect fit with the international portfolio of sailing regattas supported by Rolex. It is an established highlight in the Rolex sporting calendar alongside such events as Wimbledon, the British Open and the Rolex Daytona 24-hour [motor race], events which Rolex has long associations."

A live telecast of the start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race on Boxing Day has been part of the tradition of the race for some years now.

Under the agreement with Channel 7, the network will screen the live broadcast on Boxing Day (commencing 20 minutes before the start) and *Spirit of Yachting*, a review program produced by Rolex, late in January. In addition, Channel 7 has already indicated that it will include strong news coverage in its *Sunrise* program and *Seven News* over the five or six days of the race – with coverage of as much of the fleet as possible.

In recent years, although the channel was not the official broadcaster, Seven's news reporters have always been very active in the lead-up to the race and during the race. They have also picked up human interest stories as the boats finished in Hobart. They, along with the local television news teams, have been there to the very end of the race in most years.

Most encouraging have been the comments from Seven that they will try to provide the best and broadest coverage of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, with specific mention of the smaller boats and the battlers, who are the real backbone of this great event.

The CYCA, along with *Offshore Yachting* – as the Club's official publication – looks forward to the ongoing sponsorship by Rolex and welcomes aboard the Seven Network as official broadcaster. The 61<sup>st</sup> Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race promises to be yet another great race south! ■



The start of the 2005 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race PHOTOS: Andrea Francolini

# MAGIC DRAGON TAKES GOLD

When one of the smallest and oldest boats in a fleet outsails a state-of-the-art line-up, it looks like magic. But *Pendragon's* win in the Sydney Gold Coast Race was down to talented sailing, report Lisa Ratcliff and Peter Campbell

Small boats, well-sailed, can still win major ocean races against bigger state-of-the-art yachts with their professional crews, as Sydney yachtsman Andrew Cochrane and his crew proved with *Pendragon* in the 20th Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race.

*Pendragon* is a heavy 34ft, timber boat, designed and built in New Zealand in 1983. According to Cochrane it was “stocked heavy with heavies” and likes running and reaching, the conditions which prevailed in this event.

After numerous divisional wins and a second overall in last year’s race, Cochrane and his Stewart 34 *Pendragon* eventually clinched the major trophy in the final sailing of the 384 nautical mile event before the midwinter classic moves to a new April time slot next year.

Sailing in conditions that generally favoured boats in the 40–50ft LOA range, *Pendragon* stood out as a strong IRC handicap contender throughout the race. It was clear that her crewmembers were sailing the 34-footer to her optimum in the range of light to moderate breezes.

“We began competing in this event eight years ago, and I’ve still got many of the same crew on board, but we’ve developed a lot in that time,” said a delighted Andrew Cochrane after being declared overall winner at the Southport Yacht Club.

“Each year we’ve learned something and tried something different the following year and it’s finally paid off for us,” he said.



Searching for wind

While the boat may be 23 years old, it's regularly seen under new sails. And once again, *Pendragon* carried a crew of highly experienced sailors, among them bowman Chris Cook and navigator Nick Cleary, two of the winning Rolex Farr 40 World Championship crewmembers on Richard Perini's *Evolution*. Cook was also on board when Perini won the Mumm 30 Worlds in Canada last year.

Tactician Tom King, who won a gold medal in the 470 class at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, added his skill set to the *Pendragon* crew last year and again played an integral role in this year's race.

Luke Ratcliff, a crewmember on the 2003 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race overall winner *First National Real Estate* and a former 18ft skiff sailor, has competed in 11 Rolex Sydney Hobarts and at least the same number of Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Races, including the inaugural event in 1986. Skipper Andrew Cochrane and crewmember Bill Findlay have also contested numerous offshore races, including the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

"Everyone steers and everyone trims on this boat," said Cochrane. "We don't race with the sole purpose of winning, but of course we like it when it happens."

*Pendragon* sailed consistently throughout the race and was the only boat that kept its place near the top of the IRC rankings as the CYCA's yacht tracker system calculated progressive positions. The crew sailed exceptionally well during the two nights at sea, maintaining fast-reaching speeds in the overnight land breezes.

Coming home with a south-easterly on the third afternoon of the race enabled *Pendragon* to clinch an IRC overall victory from Andrew Short's Farr 40 *Club Marine (ASM)* by a mere 42 minutes 45 seconds. Third place went to David Mason's Beneteau 44.7 *Prime Time*, followed by Julian Farren-Price's Cookson 40 *About Time*, Anthony Paterson's fast Mumm 30 *Tow Truck*, and Leslie Green's Swan 45 *Ginger*, skippered by Gordon Maguire.

None of the Division A boats figured in the top IRC overall results, but South Australian Geoff Boettcher's new *Hardy's Secret Mens Business* sailed an excellent race amongst its peers, winning its division from two Victorian boats – Steve Troon's *XLR8* and the newly

launched *Living Doll*, skippered by Michael Hiatt. *Hardy's Secret Mens Business* is a Reichel/Pugh 46, as is *XLR8*, while the spectacular looking *Living Doll* is a Cookson 50.

Canberra-based Gunnar Tuisk sailed a brilliant race with *Cadenza* to win the strong PHS division, spending the majority of the race at the top of the leaderboard.

"It was an excellent race for us. The design of the boat and the sails really suited close reaching," said Tuisk. "Last year the crew were mostly novices and they've built on their experience to come up with a great result this year."

Paul Spira's *Dreamtime* took second overall on PHS results ahead of John Cameron's *More Witchcraft*.

Overall, 10 Sydney 38s contested the Sydney Gold Coast, as well as racing one-design as a class. Victory went to well-known Perth yachtsman Alan Brierty with the chartered Sydney 38 *Contentious Issue*, which finished 2 minutes and 22 seconds ahead of Sydney boat *Calibre*, skippered by Geoff Bonus. Melbourne's Bruce Taylor finished only 1 minute and 52 seconds further astern with *Chutzpah*.

Brierty, an experienced offshore sailor who recently returned to small boat sailing with Sharpies, drew his crew from Etchells, J24, Sharpie and offshore sailors. The crew extracted optimum performance out of the boat to give WA its first division win in the Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race.

#### Aces wild

The twentieth annual Sydney Gold Coast – and the last midwinter race to Southport before it moves to an autumn timeslot – attracted an outstanding fleet of 74 boats, headed by the Reichel/Pugh 66 *Wild Oats*. The yacht was commissioned by Bob Oatley to defend the Admiral's Cup in England this year, before the event was cancelled.

The start of the Sydney Gold Coast race has often seen a spectacular run down Sydney Harbour before a wild westerly, but this year's start was one of the most placid in the 20-year history of the event. *Wild Oats* cleared the Heads 54 minutes after the start with Sean Langman's *AAPT* nearly 10 minutes astern. The tail-enders took more than an hour-and-a-half to get to sea.

*Wild Oats'* man aloft spotted a breeze out to sea and helmsman Mark Richards immediately tacked (in the direction of New Zealand) and was first to enjoy a filling nor'easter, and then tacked again on the north-making leg.

On the first night at sea the entire fleet made good time up the coast, which Roger Hickman, skipper of *Wild Rose*, described as "a dream run in a beautiful westerly. We couldn't have asked for better".

The two big boats with canting keels, *Wild Oats* and the improving *Wild Joe* (Steven David), along with the Volvo 60, *Seriously TEN* opened up a big lead from *AAPT* and George Snow's *Brindabella*.



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## Antipodes' journey north

The Beneteau 44.7 *Antipodes* gave her crew a gentleman's sail in the 20th Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race and a very happy final voyage for me.

Deciding to compete in the race was easy. With the sale of *Antipodes* pending and a new Beneteau 523 on the way, what better way to celebrate the thousands of miles of ocean pleasure *Antipodes* has given us than a journey north?

Within a matter of hours we were up on the CYCA website as the first entry in the 2005 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race – and the pressure was on. You know the story – insurance, boat preparation, arranging to get all manner of things serviced and re-gassed, Cat 2 inspection, race entries, accommodation, crew uniforms and catering.

Before I knew it, a dozen or more prospective crew – with a beer and burger in hand – were huddled around a table at the Hunter's Hill Hotel planning the 2005 sailing saga – Sydney to Gold Coast, Gold Coast to Mackay, Hamilton Island Race Week and then the glorious delivery home.

*Antipodes* had done it all before, but this year was to be something special.

Firstly, Netfront Solutions developed a great website ([www.teamantipodes.com.au](http://www.teamantipodes.com.au)), to act as a communication vehicle for crew and prospective sponsors.

The working bees soon took their toll as the list of things to do seemed to get longer in direct proportion to the energy exerted. Moisture turned to leaks, leaks to broken fittings, sail clean-ups to re-cuts, orange patches to 20% coverage compliance ... and on it went.

The task of finding a sponsor for our journey fell to the Vinnicombe brothers. Young Kyle came up with the goods, bringing City Pacific Limited onboard after brother Simon's choice almost went belly up on the stock market in the middle of negotiations.

As all boat owners know, a good sponsor enables you to do many of the things otherwise only dreamt of – quality crew uniforms, full comprehensive insurance, race entries and fees, crew dinner and more.

The race briefing didn't give us any great expectations of a fast passage north, but as Inner Circle Rum had come good with their promise of a case of rum to accompany the three planned meals of chilli con carne, beef rogan josh and tuna pasta, then all promised to be well on the good ship *Antipodes*.

We awoke on the morning of the race to a prediction of light winds and blue skies. The gun sounded and the fleet split as we decided to crawl up the eastern channel away from the flood tide. As the afternoon progressed the wind built and, with the breeze moving abeam, we switched down from the number one light to our 'assy' and tracked up the coast in good company.

What a magic sight it was as the sun set. The night shifts went as planned as we followed the usual rigorous shipboard routine:

5pm – Happy Hour. Rum, red and white wine, cheese, smoked oysters and bikkies.

6.30pm – Dinner. A beautiful tuna pasta accompanied by a cheeky sauvignon blanc.

Then we were down for a nap.

Hugging the coast throughout the night, surrounded by masses of red and green navigation lights, made for magic sailing, even if it turned a little cold as the evening progressed.

Early next morning we experienced a dull thud on the keel, which we put down to a sun fish, though it was never seen.

Sunday saw us wake to a beautiful crisp morning. The 30 boats in sight boasted an array of brightly coloured spinnakers. The shift change settled down, then it was time for brekkie – cereal, followed by toasted egg and bacon sandwiches, orange juice and coffee. The day didn't get much harder as a bit of kite trimming merged with a slash out lunch, a couple of sail changes and increasing breeze.

Jostling for position was minimal as we progressed north in a gentlemanly fashion, each boat keeping a respectful distance. Evening came and we set to the arduous task of consuming all manner of pâté, cheese and olives before settling down to a great rogan josh.

Monday dawned, cold with crystal clear skies and the promise of continuing following winds. Unfortunately, only 10 boats are in sight as we passed Coffs Harbour at dawn, but many silhouettes are familiar, including *Cyrene*, *Sextant*, *Mr Beaks* and *Game Set* with *Kioni* and *Wild Rose* following closely. The morning brought home the uncertainties of the sked, with *Cyrene* trying to relay after *Wild Oats* and *Antipodes* had carried the banner on previous days.

As the day progressed the familiar south-westerly at 10–15 knots made way for a moderate south-easter and magnificent – if a tad slow – sailing.

We came on for the midnight shift with only 30 nautical miles to go, easing south-westerly winds and the challenge ahead to keep near the front of our familiar pack.

We went in to shore; they stayed out. We dropped back as the breeze lightened but then it progressively built and with no tide to speak of we progressively edged ahead. Around 1am *Sextant* and *Wild Rose* came down on us from the east and for the next two hours it was a fabulous tussle to the end. Up went the o.g, down it came. Up went the 'asy'. It ended at 3.33am. We'd held out *Sextant* but suffered defeat at the hands of *Wild Rose*, which powered in under a tight reach to finish two minutes ahead.

What a great race – even if it was our worst result, finishing ninth on PHS. No-one could complain. Fabulous weather, top food, good company and a tussle all the way.

– Greg Newton



Sunrise saw the leaders approaching Tacking Point, south of Port Macquarie. At that stage, the constant conditions favoured the smaller boats on corrected time with *Pendragon* at the top of the leaderboard for the first time.

By the Sunday evening *Wild Oats* was north of South Solitary Island, six nautical miles ahead of *Wild Joe*. *Vanguard*, *Brindabella*, *AAPT*, *Hardy's Secret Mens Business* were ten nautical miles further astern, abeam of Coffs Harbour, followed closely by the Victorian boats *XLR8* and *Living Doll* and then Geoff Ross' *Yendys*.

After a relatively slow night at sea with lots of sail changes, *Wild Oats* was only 20 nautical miles from the finish at sunrise on the Monday morning. The Reichel/Pugh 66 had sailed most of the night in a light land breeze, but it was enough for her to maintain a 10 nautical mile advantage over nearest rival *Wild Joe*.

Corrected time positions at that stage saw *Pendragon* back in first place in the IRC category ahead of Andrew Short's Farr 40, *Club Marine (ASM)*.

### Crossing the line

*Wild Oats* finally took line honours at 9.46am on the Monday morning after a painful three nautical mile drift along the Gold Coast beaches to the finish at Main Beach, Southport. With less than half a mile to go, a light sou'easter began to stir and *Wild Oats* was able to pop a spinnaker.

*Wild Oats'* elapsed time of 1 day 20 hours 56 minutes and 51 seconds was well outside *Brindabella's* race record of 27 hours 35 minutes set in 1999. Helmsman, Mark Richards said: "We didn't get a drop of water on the deck the entire race."

Only seven minutes separated the next three boats to finish, with *AAPT* sneaking through close to the beach while *Brindabella* and *Vanguard* tried to pass each other further out to sea. In the end *AAPT* beat *Vanguard* by just two minutes.

As the leading boats crossed the line, the rest of the fleet was enjoying a spinnaker run up the NSW North Coast before a 12-15 knot sou'easter, bringing the smaller boats into contention to dominate handicap results. *Pendragon* was still at the top of the IRC list, but Anthony Paterson's Mumm 30 *Tow Truck* had made massive gains.

Apart from the well-sailed *Pendragon* and *Tow Truck*, the hardest sailed boats in the 40-50ft LOA range dominated overall IRC results. Significantly, there had not been one retirement from the fleet of 74 boats representing NSW, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, the ACT and Western Australia.

The 2006 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race, which will start on 1st April, will be the final race of the CYCA's Blue Water Series.

Southport Yacht Club has used the changes to the CYCA's offshore calendar to organise the Commodore's Cup, a new three or four day regatta, to immediately follow next year's Sydney Gold Coast Race. ■

## 2005 Sydney Gold Coast Race Results

### Sydney 38 Division

- 1 *Contentious Issue* (Alan Brierty, WA) elapsed time: 2:10:25:34
- 2 *Calibre* (Geoff Bonus, NSW) 2:10:37:56
- 3 *Chutzpah* (Bruce Taylor, Victoria) 2:10:39:48

### PHS Division

- 1 in division and 1st PHS overall: *Cadenza*, Farr 50 (Gunnar Tuisk, ACT) corrected time: 2:15:38:32
- 2 *Dreamtime*, Holland 44 (Paul Spira, NSW) 2:16:17:59
- 3 *More Witchcraft*, Dibley 40 (John Cameron, NSW) 2:17:36:48

### IRC Division D

- 1 in division and 1 IRC overall: *Pendragon*, Stewart 34 (Andrew Cochrane, NSW) corrected time: 2:14:58:09
- 2 *Tow Truck*, Mumm 30 (Anthony Paterson, NSW) 2:16:45:13
- 3 *Veloce*, Elliott 11 (Phil Simpendorfer, Vic) 2:17:35:36

### IRC Division C

- 1 *Contentious Issue*, Sydney 38 (Alan Brierty, WA) corrected time: 2:16:58:11
- 2 *Calibre*, Sydney 38 (Geoff Bonus, NSW) 2:17:11:57
- 3 *Chutzpah*, Sydney 38 (Bruce Taylor, Vic) 2:17:14:01

### IRC Division B

- 1 *Club Marine (ASM)*, Farr 40 (Andrew Short, NSW) corrected time: 2:15:40:50
- 2 *Prime Time*, Beneteau 44.7 (David Mason, NSW) 2:16:05:19
- 3 *About Time*, Cookson 12 (Julian Farren-Price, NSW) 2:16:12:44

### IRC Division A

- 1 *Hardy's Secret Mens Business*, Reichel/Pugh 46 (Geoff Boettcher, SA) corrected time: 2:17:01:28
- 2 *XLR8*, Reichel/Pugh 46 (Graeme Troon, Vic) 2:17:28:26
- 3 *Living Doll*, Cookson 50 (Michael Hiatt, Vic) 2:18:04:18

### IRC Overall:

- 1 *Pendragon*
- 2 *Club Marine (ASM)*
- 3 *Prime Time*
- 4 *About Time*
- 5 *Tow Truck*

### Line Honours:

*Wild Oats*, (Bob Oatley, NSW)  
elapsed time: 1 day 20 hours 56 minutes 51 seconds

### Fleet:

74 starters, all finished

# ALFA ROMEO IN OVERDRIVE

*Alfa Romeo*, the world's newest and fastest super maxi, made a stunning debut at the Hamilton Island Hahn Premium Race Week, writes Peter Campbell

“Without question, *Alfa Romeo* is the fastest racing yacht in the world today,” says Bob Oatley, international yachtsman, owner of Hamilton Island Resort in the Whitsunday Islands and host again to this year's Hamilton Island Hahn Premium Race Week.

Oatley's tribute followed the stunning debut of New Zealander Neville Crichton's Reichel/Pugh designed 98ft, carbon-fibre super maxi, which uses canting ballast twin foil concept as well as hydraulic winches and other advanced features.

*Alfa Romeo* took Line Honours in eight of the nine races for the IRC class and also won five races on corrected time – only three weeks after launching.

Of course, Oatley had a vested interest in appreciating the brilliant performance of *Alfa Romeo*; he is also building a Reichel/Pugh 98-footer due for launching in late November. The boats will clash in the Rolex Trophy regatta and Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. “But our new *Wild Oats* will be faster,” he added with a grin.

Oatley raced and won the IRC class overall at Race Week with his current *Wild Oats*, the canting keel Reichel/Pugh 66-footer he commissioned for this year's Admiral's Cup (before it was cancelled). Helmed by Mark Richards and sailed by an experienced crew, *Wild Oats* won with three corrected time wins and a Line Honours in one race that *Alfa Romeo* retired from with broken mainsail battens.

While *Alfa Romeo* grabbed attention, Race Week 2005 was judged a success by the 2,000 sailors crewing a record 207 boats, and their 1,500 family and friends. The weather was pleasant with the temperatures in the mid-20s, sunny on most days, with a wide wind range.

Conditions early in the week were a 15-knot, south-east trade wind, air and water at a pleasant 22 degrees, and sun sparkling on a choppy Whitsunday Passage. The idyllic weather didn't last, with tropical rain showers and fresh to strong winds and choppy seas for the final three days. Boats and sails were damaged, along with a



few crewmembers, in out of control spinnaker broaches and 'Chinese' gybes.

This was the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual Race Week conducted by the Hamilton Island Yacht Club and the Hamilton Island Resort, now owned by Bob Oatley and his son Sandy. Bob raced *Wild Oats* in the IRC class, Sandy sailed against him aboard *Another Duchess* and another son, Ian, was at the helm of *Inner Circle Rum*. Also racing in the Sydney 38 class was resort general manager Wayne Kirkpatrick, at the helm of *Asylum*.

The Oatley's are already planning for next year's event, dredging the harbour (required by Bob Oatley's new super maxi) and adding an extra marina arm to cope with the growing fleet. They also plan to build a striking new yacht club and hope to attract an international fleet of maxi and super maxis to a special event in November 2006. An inter-nations event for the Sydney 38 One Design class is also listed for 2006 and onwards.

## IRC class

The silver-hulled 98-footer *Alfa Romeo* dominated Line Honours, except for the second last race when two broken mainsail battens forced her retirement. This probably cost *Alfa Romeo* IRC overall handicap honours, although she did win five races to finish third overall.

The 28-boat IRC line-up was world-class, with nine boats built this year and 16 within the last three years. Unfortunately, despite some modifications, the IRC handicap system still did not appear to be able to deal



### Alfa Romeo powers to windward PHOTOS: Andrea Francolini

"We have had little time to optimise the boat to its rating, so it was quite a surprise to hear that we had also won on handicap," said Crichton ominously.

Crichton steered *Alfa Romeo* around the 22 nautical mile course in just under two hours and won on corrected time convincingly from three other Reichel/Pugh designs – Stephen Ainsworth's 66ft *Loki*, Steven David's 60ft *Wild Joe* and Bob Oatley's 66ft *Wild Oats*.

"Upwind we logged up to 11.7 knots – in 10–13 knot breeze and flat water, and reached 15.5 knots off the breeze," said Crichton.

Patches of light winds – 0–9 knots and two 'parking lots' for the super maxi – favoured the smaller boats in the 60 nautical mile Edward Island Race, with first place going to Swan 45 *Ginger* (Leslie Green and CYCA Vice Commodore Matt Allen), from the DK46 *Dekadence*, skippered by Sandringham Yacht Club Commodore Philip Coombs. Third was Andrew Short's Farr 40 *Club Marine*.

The round-the-buoys race three near Pentacost Island saw *Alfa Romeo* revelling in a 13–14 knot south-easterly. She

increased her lead over the 11.5 nautical mile windward/leeward course and also won IRC on corrected time for the second time, beating two other Reichel/Pugh canting keel boats, *Wild Oats* and *Wild Joe*.

with the speed difference between the very latest state-of-the-art canting keel big boats and even the newest conventionally ballasted smaller boats.

*Alfa Romeo* and *Wild Oats* cleared out from the fleet in every race and between them, won every race except one on corrected time. There was, however, great boat-for-boat racing between two new Cookson 50s, Irishman Gerard O'Rourke's *Chieftain* and Graeme Troon's *XLR8* from Geelong, the two Reichel/Pugh 46s, Geoff Boettcher's *Hardy's Secret Mens Business* from Adelaide and Michael Hiatt's *Living Doll* from Melbourne, and three DK46s, Ray Roberts' *Hollywood Boulevard* from Sydney and the two Melbourne boats *Dekadence* (Philip Coombs) and *Shogun* (Robert Hanna).

CYCA members Stephen Ainsworth and Dick Cawse sailed some great races with their 60-footers. Ainsworth's new *Loki*, a Reichel/Pugh 60 impressed following her overall IRC win at the previous week's Hog's Breath Race Week, but a broken mainsail halyard on *Vanguard*, designed by David Lyons and Cawse, forced her to miss two races.

Competition had never been better at Hamilton Island right across the board. Race Week began with the Lindeman Island Race and *Alfa Romeo* making a stunning race debut in challenging conditions in the Whitsunday Passage, sailing the 30 nautical mile course in record time and also placing first on corrected time. The crew included Jim Pugh of the design team, sailing on the McConaghy Boats built craft for the first time.

increased her lead over the 11.5 nautical mile windward/leeward course and also won IRC on corrected time for the second time, beating two other Reichel/Pugh canting keel boats, *Wild Oats* and *Wild Joe*.

### Order reversed

In the back-to-back race four, sailed over a slightly shorter windward-leeward course, the super maxi had to be content with a second on corrected time, the first two placings being reversed in favour of *Wild Oats*, with *Wild Joe* again third.

After four races of the nine race series, the consistent *Loki* headed the IRC leader board with a score of 2-4-4-4. *Wild Joe* was second, while Oatley's *Wild Oats* was third in the standings. *Alfa Romeo*, with a score of 1-24-1-2 was fifth.

With the south-easterly tradewinds continuing to freshen, the two biggest boats dominated the two short 12 nautical mile races on the fourth day. *Wild Oats* won the morning race from *Wild Joe* and *Alfa Romeo*. A good start and more confident tacking and gybing of the lighter spinnaker in the 15 knot breeze afternoon race, however, saw *Alfa Romeo* win comfortably on corrected time from *Wild Oats* and *Wild Joe*.

The winds were even stronger for the 15 nautical mile Whitehaven Beach race, with *Alfa Romeo* hitting her highest speed since being launched.

"We clocked 28 knots two-sail reaching in a gusty 25 knot breeze," said sailing master, Michael Coxon.



**Brindabella**  
spectacularly  
overpowered in  
a strong gust

Winds were 32 knots at the start of the race and gusted to 38 knots on the spinnaker run but eased to average 25 knots as *Alfa Romeo* scored her seventh successive Line Honours victory and her fourth corrected time win in the IRC class. She beat *Wild Oats* by just over 11 minutes around the course and by 1 minute and 5 seconds on corrected time. Third place went to the newly launched Cookson 50 *Chieftain*.

A decision not to fly a spinnaker in fresh winds within the narrow Dent Passage proved costly for *Alfa Romeo* in the 30 nautical mile Baynham Island Race. Caught on port tack by two smaller boats under spinnaker and on right-of-way starboard gybe, Crichton was forced to crash gybe and two battens were broken as the huge mainsail swung into the runners. "We would have destroyed the mainsail had we continued racing," said Crichton after retiring.

The 25 knot south-easter provided spectacular sailing under spinnaker, with 'Chinese' gybes, broaches and boat-breaking collisions. At least one boat retired with injured crew and the maxi *Brindabella* lost sailing master Andrew 'Jack' Jackson overboard in a heavy wind gust – he was picked by the Camera Cat media boat and returned to *Brindabella*.

With *Alfa Romeo* out of the race, Line Honours went to *Wild Oats*, with helmsman Mark Richards getting a perfect downwind start under spinnaker and clearing out from the fleet. Packed with a crew of 20 for this fresh weather race, *Wild Oats* also won her third race on corrected time to take a commanding overall lead.

*Alfa Romeo* ended the series as she began it, with a stunning Line Honours and handicap victory in the 23 nautical mile South Molle Daydream Island Race sailed in 25–30 knot winds with short, steep seas running through the Whitsunday Passage. The super maxi sailed the course in a remarkable 1 hour 51 minutes and 1 second, hitting 29.6 knots downwind under a code three headsail and averaging 11.7 knots to windward. The big boat carried full mainsail throughout the race and a number four headsail powering to windward.

On corrected time, *Alfa Romeo* won from *Chieftain*, with third place going to *Vanguard*, but *Wild Oats* won the series despite finishing tenth after a dramatic race in which bowman Tim Wiseman was washed off the 'prod'

(bowsprit). The halyard had broken and Wiseman was releasing the tack of the spinnaker to dump the kite in the water. Fellow crewmembers quickly had him back aboard, using the canting keel to tilt the boat gunwale down so that he could climb aboard easily.

With the 25–30 knot south-easterly trade wind kicking up a short steep sea in the Whitsunday Passage there were many spectacular broaches and 'Chinese' gybes on the long spinnaker run to Daydream Island. Several spinnakers expensively exploded in the gusts. One Sydney 38 class yacht broke its steering, another yacht ran aground on a coral outcrop before the start of the IRC class, while a crewmember of a yacht in the Cruising class had to be taken to hospital by helicopter after being put ashore at Daydream Island, apparently after being hit on the head by a boom.

*Wild Oats* won the series comfortably from *Wild Joe* with *Loki* provisionally placed third overall and *Alfa Romeo* fourth. *Alfa Romeo*, however, moved up to third place overall after the International Jury reduced the time allowance given to *Loki* as redress for assisting in a man overboard incident in race eight. This put *Alfa Romeo* and *Loki* on equal points, third place overall going to *Alfa Romeo* on a countback.

#### PHS – Down to the wire

A late change of divisions proved a good move for Ken Hart and his Jeanneau 40 *Night Owl* from Rockhampton, who won a hard fought PHS class. After competing in the Cruising division for three years, they decided – the day before the regatta – to move up to PHS. They won their class in the opening Lindeman Island race and three of the next four races but were unsure of victory until the final race.

Despite those early wins they were in a tough pointscore battle going into the final 23 nautical mile South Molle Daydream Island race, just two points clear of Jeff Mitchell's *Cavalier Express*, a Cavalier 395 from Sydney. *Cavalier Express* broke a halyard in this heavy weather race, forcing her to retire, but she still took second overall. Third place overall went to Dan Nolan's *My Girl*, another Cavalier 395 from Sydney, just ahead of the Volvo 60, *Seriously Ten–Getaway* (Douglas McCarthy).

Of the 13 boats in the PHS division, 11 collected trophies through the nine races with race winners being *Night Owl* (4), *Cavalier Express*, *Seriously Ten–Getaway* and *Surefoot*, Rod Sawyer's Norlin 11.5 from Airlie Beach.

#### Sydney 38s

Racing was close in the Sydney 38 class over 10 of the 11 races.

Sailing in his first regatta Guido Belgiorno-Nettis steered *Transfusion* to an overall victory without having to sail in the final race. A close-fought battle with former world 18-footer skiff champion Stephen Kulmar, skipping *Shining Sea*, came to an end on the

second last day of the series when a wild 'Chinese gybe' put *Shining Sea* out of race 10 with a broken mainsheet block. *Tranfusion* is the former *Cydon*, the current Australian national champion Sydney 38 and sailed with many of the former *Cydon* crew.

They sailed well in the stronger breezes to take the series with five wins, four seconds and a fifth. The same applied to the other overall placegetters, *Shining Sea* and Geoff Bonus' *Calibre*, also from Sydney.

#### Cruising with a racing edge

While the IRC grand prix division attracted its classiest fleet in years, by far the bulk of the record 207 entries sailed in the IRC Cruising, Premier Cruising, Performance and Cruising classes. Competition was just as keen in these categories, even in the strictly cruising yachts class, in which 97 boats competed.

Michael Spies was among the top yachtsmen who chose to sail in the cruising classes. He picked up a first race win in the IRC Cruising class in the Lindeman Island Race with his Beneteau 44.7 *Dimension Polyant* and followed this by taking out the 56 nautical mile Edward Island Race. His successes continued until the second last race, when a second virtually assured him of overall victory.

In the 10-13 knot Lindeman Island race, *Dimension Polyant* beat Middle Harbour Yacht Club Commodore Ian Box's X442 *Toby Box* and Warwick Sherman's *Occasional Coarse Language*.

#### IRC RESULTS

- 1 *Wild Oats*, Reichel/Pugh 66, CBTF (Bob Oatley, AUS)  
4-11-2-1-1-2-2-1-10, 21 points.
- 2 *Wild Joe*, Reichel/Pugh 60, CBTF (Steven David, AUS)  
3-6-3-3-2-3-4-4-5, 27 points.
- 3 *Alfa Romeo*, Reichel/Pugh 98, CBTF (Neville Crichton, NZL)  
1-24-1-2-3-1-1-DNF-1, 34 points.
- 4 *Loki*, Reichel/Pugh 60 (Stephen Ainsworth, AUS)  
2-4-4-4-5-4-6-5-7, 34 points.
- 5 *Chieftain*, Cookson 50 (Gerard O'Rourke, IRE)  
7-12-5-6-10-8-3-2-2, 43 points.
- 6 *Hollywood Boulevard*, DK46 (Ray Roberts, AUS)  
8-7-7-5-9-7-5-9-11, 57 points.

The Edward Island long race was set over a shorter distance than previous years, but with the wind ranging 0-9 knots and some strong adverse tide, it still proved a marathon event for the smaller boats.

Once again Spies' experience paid off and *Dimension Polyant* took first place in IRC Cruising class from Melbourne based Bavaria Match 42 *Savage Wharf* (Bond, Savage and Robertson). Third place went to *Cabernet Sauvignon*, a French-built Archambault 40 skippered by Stephen Mackay from Newcastle.

*Dimension Polyant* made it three wins in a row in the medium distance race around Pentecost Island – sailed in a 15 knot sou'easter – comfortably leading the fleet around the course and winning on corrected time from *Cabernet Sauvignon* and *Occasional Coarse Language*.

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Competition was just as intense in the cruising classes

Race four was a superb 20 nautical mile course in 15–20 knot around several islands before finishing off at the Hamilton Island marina entrance. Once again *Dimension Polyant* had proved unbeatable, winning from *Occasional Coarse Language* and *Cabernet Sauvignon*.

In the 20 nautical mile Whitsundays Challenge Race, sailed in demanding 20–25 knot winds and short seas, *Cabernet Sauvignon*, with Glenn Coulton at the helm, managed to beat *Dimension Polyant* for first spot. But with three wins and a second placing, Spies looked set to comfortably take out the title.

The final race was a wild one, with 25–30 knot winds against the tide creating a short, steep quartering seaway in the Whitsunday Passage for the long spinnaker run to Daydream and South Molle Islands. The conditions saw many broaches, 'Chinese gybes' and shredded spinnakers. *Dimension Polyant* sailed a conservative race to place sixth and take the IRC Cruising title, second overall going to race winner *Cabernet Sauvignon* and third to *Occasional Coarse Language*, just ahead of *Toby Box*.

In the Premier Cruising class, John Balderstone's newly launched Sydney 47CR *Jem* took the series in

convincing style. With Ron Jacobs as tactician, she won the Lindeman Island race from two Beneteau 47s, Bob Southerton's *Bullrush* and *You're Hired* (Geoff Morgan and Andrew Banks). In the Edwards Island race, *Jem* won from the Beneteau 47 *Gomez* (Steve and Mary Chiodo), which recovered from running aground in the Dent Passage soon after the start. Third place went to *Espirit*, Garry Anderson's Beneteau 47.7.

The Pentacost Island Race saw *Jem* place fifth on corrected time. *You're Hired* took the handicap honours from Ross Wilson's *Eagle Rock* and *Expresso Forte* (Laurence Freedman).

Sailing the same long course as the IRC Cruising class, the Premier Cruising class ended with just eight seconds between *Jem* and *You're Hired* on corrected time, third place going to *Eagle Rock* after Trevor Neate's *Eureka II* had led around Pentacost Island, Pine Island and Dent Island back to the finish in Dent Passage.

*Eagle Rock* notched up her first win in the Whitsunday Challenge Race, scoring a close 30 second corrected time victory from *Expresso Forte* and Charles Curran's 60-footer, *Sydney*. In the final South Molle Daydream Island race, *Expresso Forte* revelled in the strong wind and rough seas to win from *Sydney* and *Jem*, but the overall results saw *Jem* win the series from *Eagle Rock* and *Gomez* just one point ahead of *You're Hired*.

In the huge Cruising Yachts class, Robert Maidment's aptly named Jeanneau S/O 40 *Le Bateau* sailed a consistent series, never worse than third except in the rather flukey long race. The Sydney-based *Le Bateau* stamped her class in the opening Lindeman Island race, with Greg Maguire's Jeanneau 54 DS *Rex* in second place and Paul Ryan's Bavaria 42 *Just One More* third.

For race two, the cruising yachts sailed the 25 nautical mile Long Island course, the winner being *True Love*, Roger Down's Farr 11.6 from Airlie Beach, closely followed by *Marisa*, Reaburn Reynolds' little Morgan 780 from the Gold Coast and *Still Dangerous*, a Beneteau 42.3 skippered by Ivor Burgess from Sydney.

Race three for the Cruising Yachts, a windward-leeward course around Pentacost Island, saw *Le Bateau* scoring her second win with placings to *Chamaeleon* (Brett Cooper) and *Four Bells* (David Bell).

The consistent *Jamata*, Michael Milne's Jeanneau S/O 52.2 from Sydney, won race four to take a narrow overall pointscore lead with 24 points. Second place went to *Just One More*, third to *Le Bateau*, taking her to second on the pointscore on 28 points.

A second in the Whitsunday Challenge Race by *Le Bateau* compared with a twelfth by *Jamata* gave *Le Bateau* a firm grip on the pointscore, with the winner on the day being *Fiona* (Edward Earl), third place going to *Chamaeleon*.

Another second in the final South Molle Daydream Island race assured *Le Bateau* of the Cruising yachts major trophy, second overall going to last race winner *Jamata* and third to *Rex*. ■

#### HAMILTON ISLAND HAHN PREMIUM RACE WEEK 2005

##### OVERALL RESULTS

##### PHS Class (9 races)

- 1 *Night Owl*, Jeanneau 40 (Ken Hart, Qld) 1-dnf-1-1-1-5-9-4-4, 26 points
- 2 *Cavalier Express*, Cavalier 395 (Jeff Mitchell, NSW) 7-10-2-2-2-1-2-8-dnf, 34 points
- 3 *My Girl*, Cavalier 395 (Dan Nolan, NSW) 2-9-3-3-7-7-6-2-9, 39 points

##### Cruising Yachts class (6 races)

- 1 *Le Bateau*, Jeanneau S/O 45.2 (Robert Maidment, NSW) 1-23-1-3-2-2, 9 points
- 2 *Jamata*, Jeanneau S/O 52.2 (Michael Milne, NSW) 6-5-12-1-12-1, 25 points
- 3 *Rex*, Jeanneau 54DS (Greg Maguire, Qld) 2-19-4-4-19-6.5, 35.5 points.

##### Sydney 38 OD class (11 races)

- 1 *Transfusion* (Guido Belgiorno-Nettis, NSW) 1-2-2-1-1-1-2-5-1-2-dnc, 18 points

- 2 *Shining Sea* (Stephen Kulmar, NSW) 3-1-3-6-2-2-1-2-ret-1-dnc, 31 points
- 3 *Calibre* (Geoff Bonus, NSW) 4-5-1-7-4-7-3-1-3-7-dnc, 42 points

##### Premier Cruising class (6 races)

- 1 *Jem*, Sydney 49 CR (John and Deb Balderstone, NSW) 1-1-5-1-6-3, 11 points
- 2 *Eagle Rock*, Beneteau 47.7 (Ross Wilson, Vic) 6-6-2-3-1-4, 16 points
- 3 *Gomez* (Steve and Mary Chiodo, Vic) 5-2-4-4-4-5, 19 points

##### IRC Cruising class (6 races)

- 1 *Dimension Polyant*, Beneteau 44.7 (Michael Spies, NSW) 1-1-1-1-2-6, 6 points
- 2 *Cabernet Sauvignon*, Archambault 40 (Stephen Mackay, NSW) 25-3-2-3-1-1, 10 points
- 3 *Occasional Coarse Language*, Cookson 39 (Warwick Sherman, NSW) 3-5-3-2-7-8, 20 points



# AWESOME ALFA ROMEO

Editor-at-large, Peter Campbell, takes an in-depth look at Neville Crichton's new super maxi *Alfa Romeo*

**T**he new *Alfa Romeo* is the 30-metre (98ft) successor to the 27.5-metre (90ft) yacht of the same name that took Line Honours in about 65 races in the southern and northern hemispheres, including the 2002 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

A magnificent example of the latest yachting design, engineering, construction, rigging and sail design ideas, *Alfa Romeo* is the most technically advanced ocean racing yacht in the world today.

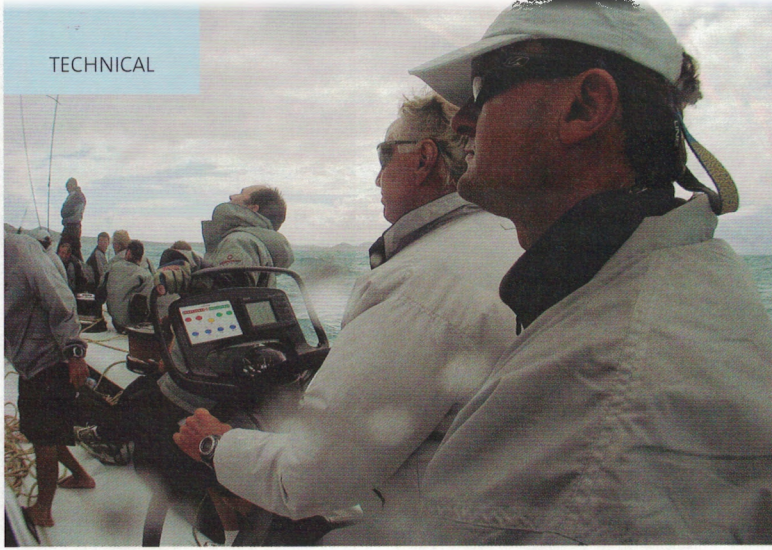
The yacht was designed by the US firm of Reichel/Pugh – as was her predecessor – and built of carbon fibre composite by McConaghy Boats in Sydney. She carries a towering 44-metre, keel stepped, carbon fibre mast built by Southern Spars in New Zealand and is powered by the latest concept in 3DL and Mylar sails provided by the Sydney loft of North Sails.

Each company has contributed to a racing yacht that can only be described as awesome in concept – a massive leap in the already advanced technology of modern yacht design, engineering and construction. McConaghy Boats has now built 10 maxi yachts in carbon fibre but the builders describe *Alfa Romeo* as the biggest and most complex project yet. Race performances are expected to be suitably awesome with race record predictions no idle threat.

The new *Alfa Romeo* will be an outstanding example of Australian and New Zealand boat-building techniques and workmanship in international competition in 2006. Like her predecessor, she is registered with the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron in Auckland and carries the sail number NZL 80.

*Alfa Romeo* began her racing campaign at the Hahn

**Owner, Neville Crichton throws a tack in *Alfa Romeo*'s first regatta outing at Hamilton Island PHOTO: Christophe Launay**



## “McConaghy Boats has now built 10 maxi yachts in carbon fibre, but the builders describe *Alfa Romeo* as the biggest and most complex project yet”

With his attention on the course and the opposition, sailing master and tactician Michael Coxon stands ready to advise helmsman Crichton PHOTO: Christophe Launay

Premium Race Week at Hamilton Island in late August (see page 18). She was then to be sailed to New Zealand in October to begin an intensive lead-up campaign for the 2005 Rolex Challenge and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

In January she will be shipped to Europe to contest major offshore events in the Mediterranean and other northern hemisphere waters.

Crichton, a world-class helmsman, commissioned Reichel-Pugh to design the new boat to the maximum 30-metre length overall (LOA) set for two of the world's classic races, the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and the Rolex Fastnet.

“I would have liked to have stayed with a 90-footer, but when the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA) and the Royal Ocean Racing Club set their maximum LOA at 30-metres for the Hobart and the Fastnet Races we had to go up to the 30-metres to be competitive,” Crichton explained.

### Big change

As it is, the new *Alfa Romeo* will face strong competition in the 2005 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race with four other maximum LOA boats expected to compete – the new *Maximus*, the rebuilt *Skandia*, the yet-to-be-launched new *Wild Oats*, and *Konica Minolta*.

When he commissioned the new boat, Crichton committed himself to a big change. Not only would the new *Alfa Romeo* be the biggest racing yacht he had ever owned, it would be his first with a canting keel.

Crichton says there is not a lot more that can be done in developing super maxis sailed by small crews but he believes some significant technical advances have been achieved with this box. ■

## Alfa Romeo's tech specs

**CONSTRUCTION:** The hull, keel and rudders were built by McConaghy Boats with carbon fibre reinforced composites using the latest prepreg systems developed by Structural Polymer Systems. Extensive use was made of high modulus carbon fibre over Nomex honeycomb, with Corecell foam used in high load areas. Because the hull is so narrow, many longitudinal stiffening stringers were used for added strength.

Having the canting keel operated by a single hydraulic ram added to the complexities of the engineering, as did the extensive electronic control systems required for the canting keel, two rudders and hydraulic winches. Precision alignment of bulkheads and canting keel structure was critical so all of the construction jigs were computer milled. Highly specialised steels were also used for the components of the hydraulic ram, which was built by Central Coast Hydraulics.

**HULL CONFIGURATION:** The metallic silver-painted hull is long and lean, with a relatively short bowsprit. The coachhouse is low and encases the hydraulic systems that control the jib cars and Cunningham controls. The open cockpit runs from aft of the coachhouse and main companionway through to the transom, clear except for the twin steering wheels set on stylish individual consoles with instruments in front. Remarkably, the new bigger boat still weighs only about a tonne more than the previous *Alfa Romeo*.

**BELOW DECKS:** The interior is white with highlights of black carbon fibre and red upholstery for the bunks/seats. Even the loo is carbon fibre. A large part of the accommodation is taken up with the encased engine, the twin hydraulic systems for keel and winches and electronic systems, with the navigation station set just below the twin helmsman's positions. Apart from the main companionway, light comes into the interior through a series of small ports set in the deck. White finishes makes the interior quiet bright and airy. A carbon fibre table in the shape of a water drop hangs just aft of the galley, but the focal point is the canting keel system which can be viewed through a clear polycarbonate cover. You can even see the water below.

**RUDDERS:** The two rudders are solid, high modulus carbon fibre laminate, as are the rudder stocks. The rudder bearings are 400mm high tensile metal, custom made by Private Parts, in Berry, NSW.

The forward rudder, controlled by a massive hydraulic arm, can be used three ways in conjunction with the main steering rudder – offset at an angle of up to two degrees to give the boat extra lift when sailing to windward, fixed to work in tandem with the main rudder or floating, when running downwind. The main rudder blade incorporates a string pot-positive sensing device, which instantly detects any change in the angle. This is fed into



# Tough to beat



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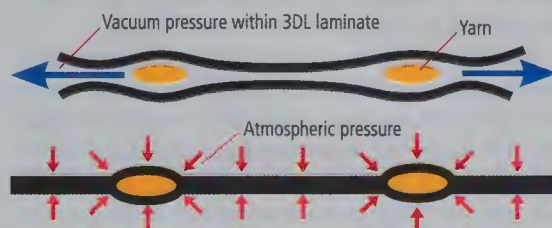
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The transparent cover reveals the workings of the hydraulic ram that moves the canting keel PHOTO: Edward Rowe

the boat's computer system which then tells the hydraulic ram the exact angle at which to set the forward rudder.

**CANTING KEEL:** The canting keel is high-tensile steel with a special calcium lead bulb and is controlled by a single hydraulic ram which can swing the keel 45 degrees either way from the vertical. "We felt that it was better to have one over-built ram than two rams," said Crichton. "In fact, the whole boat is probably over-built."

The canting keel system meets the new international rules setting recovery angles and requirements for back-up systems, both mechanical and hydraulic. For the 2005 Rolex Sydney Hobart Race, *Alfa Romeo* will have a canting keel technician on board who will operate a specially built console on deck aft of the twin steering wheels.

**WATER BALLAST:** In addition to the canting keel, *Alfa Romeo* has a moveable water ballast system which exerts leverage at least the equivalent of having the entire crew standing on the transom.

**ENGINE POWER:** Power to drive the boat at up to 13 knots, plus the two hydraulic systems for the canting keel ram and the deck winches, comes from a Yanmar 250-horsepower engine. McConaghy Boats designed a special propeller retraction unit which lifts the five-blade fixed-prop back into the hull, leaving a flush surface when the boat is under sail.

## ALFA ROMEO SPECIFICATIONS

Owner/skipper:	Neville Crichton
Club:	Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron
Sail No:	NZL 80
Designers:	Reichel/Pugh, US
Builders:	McConaghy Boats, Sydney, Australia
Construction:	Carbon fibre composite. Keel – steel Rudders and mast – carbon fibre Sails – 3DL carbon/mylar
Mast:	Southern Spars, Auckland, New Zealand
Winches, deck gear:	Harken Winches
Sails:	North Sails, Sydney, Australia
LOA:	30 metres
Beam:	5.2 metres
Draft:	5.2 metres
Mast:	44 metres (42.2 metres above deck)
Sail area:	Mainsail: 314 square metres #1 genoa: 208 square metres #1 asymmetric spinnaker: 805 square metres
Weight:	25.5 tonnes

**MAST AND RIG:** Towering just over 42-metres above the deck, the Southern Spars carbon-fibre mast is superbly finished and shaped, with a five-spreader, in-line rig. Standing rigging is no longer metallic. It is PBO rope – a composite that is not only stronger but 30 per cent lighter than the once conventional stainless steel rigging and even lighter than carbon fibre rigging. Running backstays and two sets of check stays and an inner forestay control the mast shape.

**SAILS:** A major factor in deciding the sail inventory for the new boat was the CYCA's decision to drop the previous upper-speed limit, a computer handicap figure, for the 2005 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Thus, the sails are bigger, and the huge reaching spinnakers lighter. The new boat carries 35 per cent more sail area than its predecessor.

North Sails in Sydney once again designed all the 3DL working sails and spinnakers – the spinnakers were cut in the Sydney loft and the working sails were made in the US. For the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the working sails will comprise an offshore mainsail, four genoa/jibs, a jib topsail, genoa staysail and a drifter windseeker, plus mandatory storm trysail and storm jib. The reaching and running sails will comprise a Code 0 and six asymmetric reaching and running spinnakers. The number one light/medium genoa is 208sqm in size and the biggest spinnaker is 805sqm.

**WINCHES:** All winches are the very latest from Harken. The four primary winches – three-speed hydraulically powered and push-button operated with carbon-fibre tops are new generation 1130s. They are capable of 90-metres a minute in first speed and have a safety rating of 9 tonnes. The runner and mainsheet traveller winches (AC65.2) are also hydraulically operated but the four AC990 pit winches are manually operated.

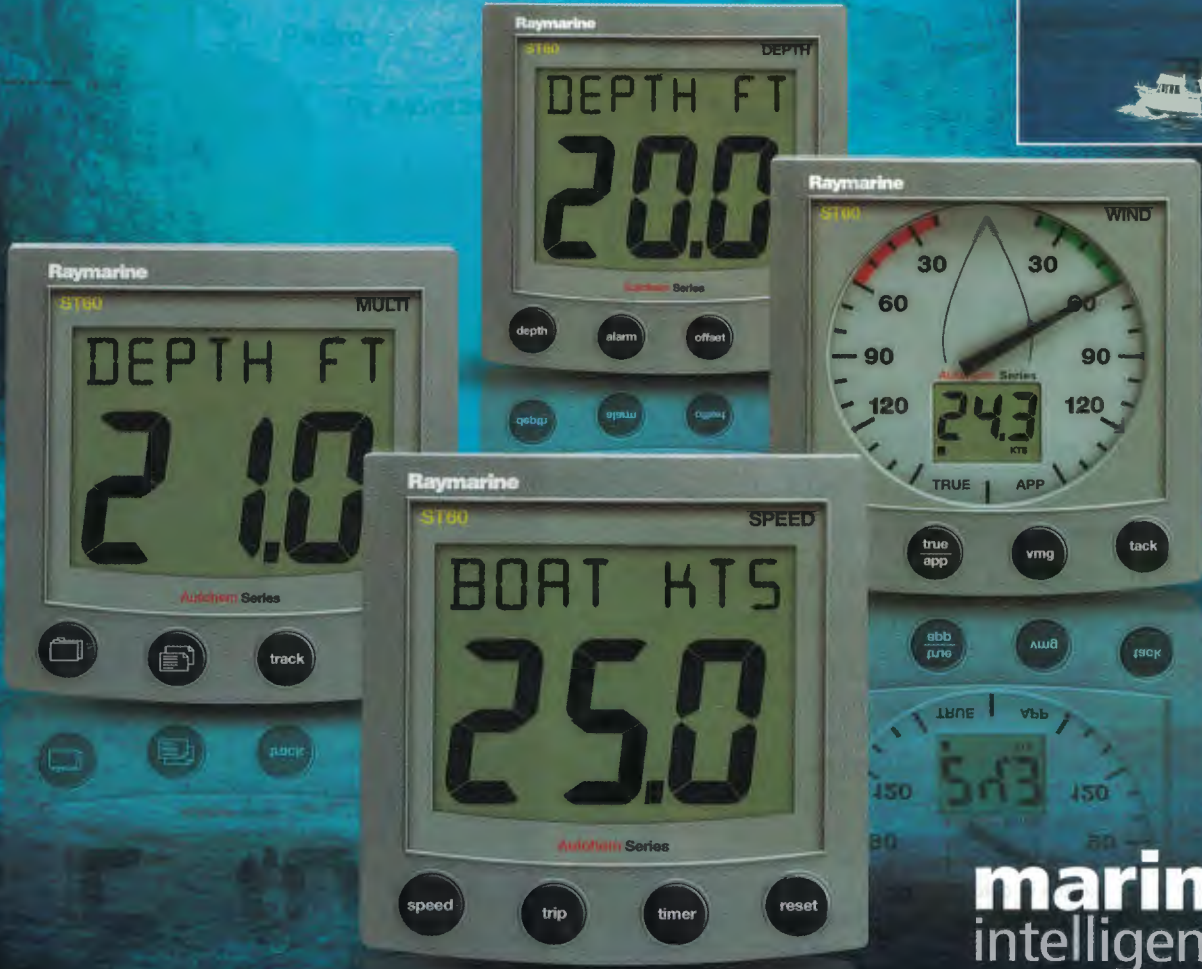
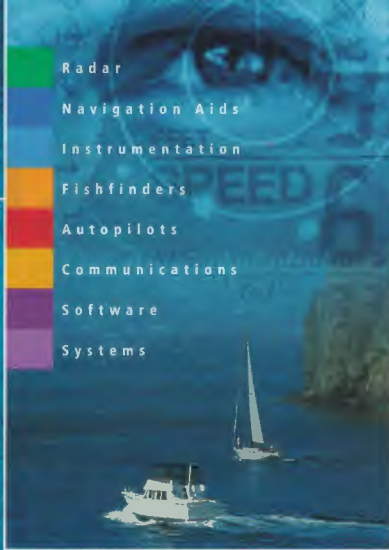
**THE CREW:** *Alfa Romeo* will be sailed to Hobart by a crew of 20, including the canting keel technician and a dedicated navigator. (The previous 90-foot *Alfa Romeo* raced to Hobart with a crew of 24). There will be five designated helmsmen, including Crichton and sailing master Michael Coxon of North Sails Australia.

The new *Alfa Romeo* has been designed as an all-round boat for offshore racing, not a boat for square running but one with a strong upwind performance and capable of fast reaching. "In the Mediterranean, most of the courses are upwind with some reaching legs; these days we gybe downwind to achieve the optimum angles and that is what we will be doing to Hobart," said Crichton.

As the Kiwi-born yachtsman says, the competition for Line Honours in this year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race will be the toughest ever but he is confident that the new *Alfa Romeo* will repeat the remarkable racing record of the 90-footer he sailed to a Line Honours win in 2002 and then over the next two years went on to conquer the world's best maxis in the northern hemisphere. ■

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# SHIVERS FOR TROPICAL SHIRT BRIGADE

The winter chill that swept across Australia in mid-August even reached the Whitsundays, in tropical Far North Queensland, report Ian Grant and Rob Kothe

**T**he tropical shirts seemed out of place as the rain pelted down and the temperature plummeted to a record low on the opening day of the sixteenth Hog's Breath Week regatta sailed off Airlie Beach.

The start of the regatta normally sees the sundowner deck at the Whitsunday Sailing Club looking like a flashback to the surfing music era of the sixties, with sailors in colourful tropical shirts enjoying the warm air, hospitality and music of John Clinton's *Wolverines*.

Mother Nature changed all that on 12 August when the temperature plunged, making it the coldest day in the Whitsundays since 1926. Suddenly the tropical shirt brigade looked more like the sou'wester sailing set with everyone trying to escape the chill winds.

A squally, 30-knot front with bullets up to 35 knots brought torrential rain and seemed like a southern states southerly buster. It had the crews shivering with cold and trepidation. Those who were convinced nothing sinister could happen north of the Tropic of Capricorn quickly changed their minds when the conditions spun several of the record 129-yacht fleet into spectacular broaches.

Sails were blown out and masts were twisted into unusual shapes while a number of flighty lightweight sports boats executed wild nose-standing pirouettes as they were flung into the ditch.

**John Clinton and the crew of *Holy Cowl* reconsider the virtues of a reef in the main as a coastal bullet seeks them out. PHOTOS: Andrea Francolini**



“Sails were blown out and  
masts were twisted into  
unusual shapes”





The new *Loki* virtually match raced the series with *Wild Joe*

Despite hull, mast and sail damage, there were also some impressive fresh wind sailing performances.

But Hog's Breath Race Week 2005 will not only be remembered for the opening day's demolition derby but also for the coming-of-age party that celebrated the acceptance of Hog's Breath Race Week as a premier event.

Led by match racing 60-footers, *Wild Joe* (Steven David) and her newly launched Reichel/Pugh sister design *Loki* (Stephen Ainsworth), plus the equally persistent Lyons/Cawse-designed *Vanguard* (Dick Cawse), the fleet was stacked with talent and there was strong competition in all classes.

The short-course tactical racing program, formulated around Whitsunday Sailing Club courses, produced close sailing. The series opener, in which the new conventional-keel Reichel/Pugh-designed 60-footer *Loki* went head-to-head for the first time against the similar sized canting keel Reichel/Pugh 2003 Admiral's Cup champion *Wild Joe* (formerly *Wild Oats*), was particularly exciting.

Steven David had some top sailors in his *Wild Joe* crew, just as when he skippered the Swan 45 *Joe* to win the Boss Hog boat-of-the-series trophy in 2003. Stephen Ainsworth and his crew matched the challenge aboard *Loki*.

#### First blood

With Cameron Miles, Chris Links, Iain Smith and Darren 'Twirler' Jones in the crew, *Wild Joe* claimed Line Honours in the 23 nautical mile Double Cone Armit Island race.

But Ainsworth and the *Loki* crew drew first blood when they outsailed their 1.398 IRC rating to register a commanding 5 minute 34 seconds win over *Vanguard* (1.398) with the Victorian Cookson 50 *Living Doll* (1.313), skippered by Michael Hiatt, another 1 minute 5 seconds behind in third place.

Day two was not so successful for *Loki*. She was hot on the stern of *Wild Joe* at the weather mark when her keel snagged the ground tackle and she carried the mark some distance with *Vanguard* in hot pursuit.

Later the *Loki* crew tested the tape strength on their spinnaker when it became a sea anchor, leaving *Wild Joe*

to take Line Honours with the time advantage to claim a 55 second IRC class win over *Vanguard*.

*Wild Joe* was the star performer winning seven from eight Line Honours and four races on corrected time to virtually win the IRC class title with a race to spare.

*Wild Joe* recorded an impressive 4-1-4-1-2-10-1 series of results and was in strong contention to make a clean sweep of the Line Honours until her boom vang failed during the fresh wind final race, which was won in convincing style by Dick Cawse and his *Vanguard* crew.

*Wild Joe* won the Boss Hog trophy for the series with 23 penalty points lost while *Loki* (24 points) and *Vanguard* (28 points) filled the minor places ahead of the Alan Whiteley skippered Victorian Beneteau 44.7 *Cougar* (32 points).

A time factor of 22 seconds proved invaluable when Whitsunday skipper George Challoner steered his ageing Ben Lexcen-designed *Silent Night* to a tight but deserved overall win in the Performance Handicap class.

*Silent Night*, won the final race by 22 seconds on corrected time over *Ocean Skins*, Tony Fowler's Inglis 47 from Geelong, and claimed the title on countback from Whitsunday Sailing Club rivals Greg Tobin and Charlie Preen in the Dehler 39 *Dehler Magic*. Chris Nicoll steered his race weary Swarbrick-designed *Sandpiper* into third place.

Former World 18-footer skiff champion Stephen Kulmar showed his skill in fighting out of tight corners when he steered *Shining Sea* to an eight point win in the Sydney 38 OD class. Race tuned in close competition in Sydney, *Shining Sea* held a slight speed sailing edge over Hamilton Island's Wayne Kirkpatrick skippered *Asylum* which finished every race in the top three.

There were some impressive performances in all classes with the Dean Coates skippered *Magic Carpet* winning the Premier Cruising class from *Esprit* (Garry Anderson) and Dr Ian Nicholson's Hong Kong registered, Ed Dubois-designed Global 80 *Intrigue*.

Hog's Breath Race Week is an event for all comers. Until coming north, 68-year-old Dan Nolan of Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club had probably never won more than the odd twilight race on Pittwater, but he cleaned up the Cruising Division with his Cavalier 395 *My Girl*.

For Nolan and his mates, this was a 14-week cruising trip – four weeks up the coast from Sydney, two weeks of regattas, then cruising around the Whitsundays until late September. Before sailing over to Hamilton Island, Nolan said: "We were here in 2002 and we loved it, but we certainly didn't expect to win. The weather suited the old girl. She is definitely set up for cruising, not racing."

John and Kim Clinton sailed their brand new Beneteau Oceanis 523 *Holy Cow!* into second place. Clinton said the first day was the toughest. "After 30 plus knots and all the cold and rain, we were just freezing. Like everyone, my hands were so wrinkled I couldn't feel the drum sticks when we played the first set on Friday night." ■

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# TAHITI PEARL REGATTA



There's plenty of good reasons to fly across the Pacific to Tahiti – sailing in the 2006 Tahiti Pearl Regatta in the beautiful Leeward Islands is one of them

**T**here are many reasons to visit Tahiti – the magnificent scenery, the culture, shopping, eating, diving, fishing, hiking, horse riding or, as a marriage destination. (Although the spoiler is that you have to be resident for at least 30 days before the ceremony. But then again, that may be no hardship.)

But the big attraction for Australian yachties is the Tahiti Pearl Regatta, an annual event that has proved a big drawcard for the past two years. And now, it's almost time for the 2006 event.

Apart from the racing, taking part in the regatta provides an opportunity for some extended cruising in the Leeward Islands of French Polynesia, an option that Lachlan Murdoch and his family took aboard Murdoch's own yacht in August this year.

Organised by sailing enthusiasts and the Raiatea Yacht Club, the Tahiti Pearl Regatta is scheduled for 9–12 March 2006. The regatta will provide a competitive highlight to a sailing visit to this beautiful area and an opportunity to meet sailors from Tahiti, other islands in French Polynesia and other parts of the world.

The Tahiti Pearl Regatta comprises three days of racing on the turquoise water of lagoons that are bordered by the islands' barrier reef and the deep, blue Pacific Ocean.

The fleet will race around the spectacular islands of Raiatea, Bora Bora, Tahaa, and Huahine, sailing in the shadows of volcanic peaks just as the ancient Polynesians did in their outrigger canoes.

Each year, crews from yacht clubs in Australia, New Zealand, the US and Europe are attracted to the warm tropical water and trade wind conditions of the Leeward Islands. Incorporating the Tahiti Pearl Regatta into your plans adds competitive spice to an idyllic sailing holiday.

There's a wide choice of modern monohull and multihull yachts to charter and each boat comes fully equipped for competitive racing as well as offering luxurious comfort for the crew.

The Moorings has a wide range of suitable craft for bareboat or crewed charter, including the *Moorings 525 Signature*, a 15-metre sloop which is luxuriously appointed with five cabins, five heads and six showers.

For the 2006 Tahiti Pearl Regatta, boats and crews will meet in Uturoa Harbour in Raiatea on Thursday, 9 March. Following a race briefing, the prologue race will be sailed on the lagoon, with a welcome party and general regatta briefing later in the evening.

The regatta will get into full swing the following day with the 30 nautical mile Raiatea Bora Bora race,





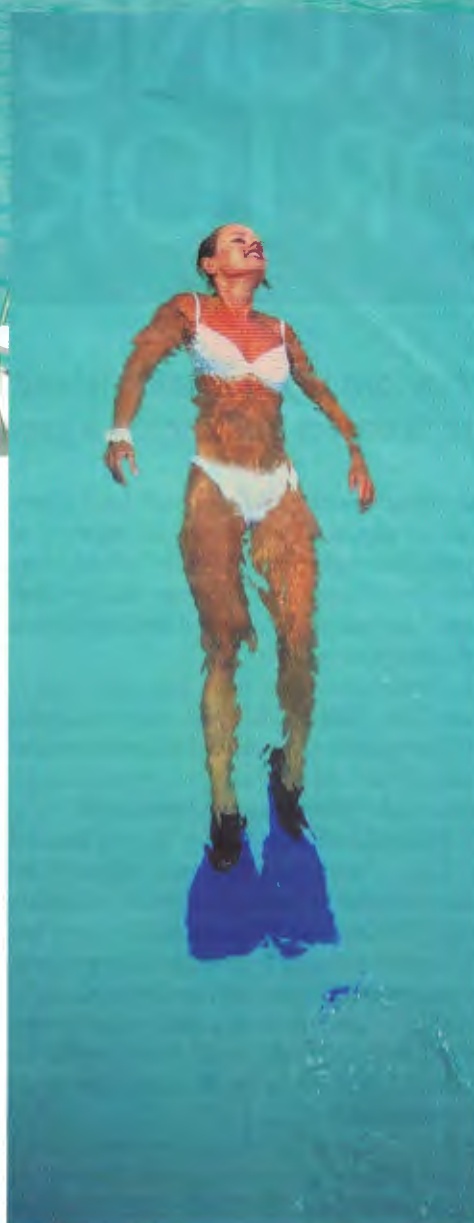
which sails from the Uturoa main dock at 9.30am. The finish line will be at the Bora Bora passage, with the fleet anchoring to the west of motu Topua, a vegetated islet on a reef within a placid lagoon. That evening the crews will enjoy Tahitian food and cocktails with music and dancing on motu Topua,

The 25 nautical mile Bora Bora Tahaa race is set for 9.30am on Saturday, 11 March. It will be followed by a barbeque with music and dancing at the motu Ceran.

The final race of the regatta, a 25 nautical mile course through the Leeward Islands from Tahaa to Huahine, is scheduled to be sailed the following day. It will be an early 8.30am start. After the race, the boats will anchor in the turquoise waters off the village of Fare and the awards ceremony and cocktail party will be held on the Fare dock.

Polynesian tradition is all part of the regatta – the beat of the *toere* drum at the start line, the *tamures* of the local bands during the race-stop nights, the sacred Tahitian blessing of the crews and invocation of the clemency of *moana*, the sea, and the floral garlands and fresh coconuts that refresh race weary crews.

Most of all, those who take part in the regatta will always remember the Polynesian hospitality. ■



## FACT FILE

### Tahiti Pearl Regatta:

Website: [www.tahitipearlregatta.org.pf](http://www.tahitipearlregatta.org.pf)

**Where:** Raiatea, the sacred island, in the centre of the Leeward Islands, in the Society Archipelago, then to Bora Bora, Tahaa and Huahine

**When:** 9–12 March 2006

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Tahiti Yacht Charter ([www.tahitiyachtcharter.com](http://www.tahitiyachtcharter.com)).  
Special conditions apply for Tahiti Pearl Regatta participants

**How to get there:**  
Fly Air Tahiti Nui ([www.airtahitinui.com](http://www.airtahitinui.com)) to Papeete, the capital of Tahiti, then a 45-minute inter-island flight to Raiatea.

**Conditions:** Warm and sunny with 15–20 knots tradewinds

**The Tahiti Pearl Regatta could add a little competitive spice to a charter cruise of the tropical Leeward Islands**  
**PHOTOS:** Courtesy Regatta organisers



# STRONG FLEET FOR LORD HOWE

*Impeccable*  
at the start of  
last year's race  
PHOTO: Ian  
Mainsbridge

The Gosford to Lord Howe Island Race fleet will soon be under starter's orders and there's a great line-up, writes David Salter

**T**he invitation-only 2005 Gosford Lord Howe Island yacht race had received 22 entries – of which four yachts could only be offered starts on a 'turnaround' basis and only two shallow draft moorings (2.2m maximum) remained available – when *Offshore Yachting* went to press.

Both divisional winners from last year's race – *Impeccable* (John Walker, IRC) and *Azzurro* (Trevor Cosh PHS) – are returning to defend their titles over the demanding 414 nautical mile passage across the northern Tasman Sea to the World Heritage-listed island.

Lord Howe Island race director for the Gosford Sailing Club, David Slingsby, was delighted to announce a near-full fleet after the official closing date for entries. "The support from the smaller boats has been tremendous this year," he said. "It will be terrific to see every mooring in the lagoon taken by a finisher."

The battle for Line Honours is likely to be between *Kaz* (David Pescud), *Yendys* (Geoff Ross) and *Merlin* (David Forbes). This will be the first race to the island for all three yachts.

The IRC division is shaping up as another three-way contest, featuring skippers who have competed in the event many times – Ed Psaltis of *AFR Midnight*

*Rambler* is a previous winner, Nigel Holman of *Cuckoo's Nest* is a regular Lord Howe Island race entrant and John Walker's veteran Petersen 34 *Impeccable* has been cleverly optimised for IRC.

*Yendys* would also be a handicap threat in consistent reaching breezes.

In PHS, *Azzurro* will again be hard to beat if last year's tough windward conditions return. Jointly owned and campaigned by a syndicate of four Sydney Amateur Sailing Club members, this Clark 46 keeps proving that the best IOR designs, if well sailed, are still capable of winning major distance races.

The race starts in Broken Bay at 1pm on Saturday, 29 October. The traditional Islanders vs. Yachties cricket match has been scheduled for the following Wednesday afternoon, providing an opportunity for crews to work up a good thirst before the presentation ceremony and fish-fry that night.

Central Coast community groups are planning a range of public activities on The Skillion, at Terrigal, to coincide with the race start. The new rounding mark off Terrigal Beach, introduced last year, will again provide spectators with a unique close-up view of the racing yachts before they head off across the Tasman. ■

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# SPONSOR IN FOR THE LONG HAUL

The future of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race has received several significant boosts in the lead-up to the 2005 event, reports Peter Campbell

**W**ith Rolex SA signing on as major sponsors until 2010 and the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia reaching a long-term agreement with the Seven Network as new television broadcaster, the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is right on course to further lift its international status in ocean yacht racing.

Owners of yachts, large and small, new and old are reacting positively to the news, with the first applications for entry reaching the CYCA Sailing Office within hours of the Notice of Race being posted on the official website ([www.rolexsydney.com](http://www.rolexsydney.com)).

First applicants were two New Zealand registered but vastly different boats – *Nevenka*, a 10.7-metre wooden cruiser/racer built 26 years ago to be skippered by 23-year-old Phil Chisholm, followed by *Alfa Romeo*, Neville Crichton's new 30-metre carbon fibre super maxi.

Applications to enter have been coming in steadily since, with the CYCA expecting a high quality international fleet of up to 80 boats, including five super maxis built to the maximum overall length of 30 metres. Three of them will have been launched only this year – the already internationally successful *ICAP Maximus* from New Zealand, which had just lost her rig off Sardinia as *Offshore Yachting* went to press, *Alfa Romeo* which made her racing debut at Hamilton Island Race Week, and the yet-to-be launched *Wild Oats*. They will be joined by two 30-metre boats that raced last year – Australia's *Skandia*, now rebuilt with a taller rig, and New Zealand's *Konica Minolta*.

With the CYCA upper limit now removed, allowing super maxis to carry more sail area and with no set limit on the degree of swing for canting keels, owners such as Neville Crichton are predicting that *Nokia's* 1999 race

record of 1 day 19 hours 48 minutes 02 seconds could be smashed if conditions are favourable.

While the battle for Line Honours between these professionally crewed big boats will certainly capture public and media attention, the CYCA has also been encouraged by the ongoing support from club racing amateur crews sailing boats in the 35–50 foot range. There will be many new boats in this size range, too, with an increasing number of production cruiser/racer yachts taking part as owners gain more experience in ocean racing.

Another early entry was from Australia's southernmost club – Ian Hall's aptly named *Farr South* from the Port Esperence Sailing Club based at Dover in far southern Tasmania.

## Top level

The big fillip for ocean racing came at the CYCA annual general meeting when retiring Commodore Martin James announced that the club's principal sponsor, Rolex SA, would extend its naming rights sponsorship of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and its associated regatta, the Rolex Challenge, up to and including the 2010 race. "The ongoing significant level of commitment by Rolex to our key events will assist the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia to keep the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race at the top level of blue water offshore classics, a must-do for offshore sailors world-wide," Commodore James said before handing over the helm to incoming Commodore Geoff Lavis.

Rolex has been the naming rights sponsor of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Race since 2002 and last year celebrated with the CYCA the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the race which attracted a fleet of 116.

In an associated statement, Richard de Leyser, general manager, Rolex Australia, said: "The event is a perfect fit with the international portfolio of sailing regattas supported by Rolex. Furthermore, it has become an established highlight in the Rolex sporting calendar alongside such events as Wimbledon, the British Open and the Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona, with which Rolex has enjoyed long associations."

Commodore James also told members that the CYCA had entered into a multi-year arrangement with

**"The CYCA has also been encouraged by ongoing support from amateur crews sailing boats in the 35–50 foot range"**



**Above: ICAP Maximus competing in the Rolex Fastnet Race PHOTO: Carlo Borlenghi/ Rolex Right: Farr South racing in Tasmania PHOTO: Courtesy of Ian Hall**

Channel 7 as the new host broadcaster for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Race. Under the agreement, Seven will screen a one-hour live broadcast of the start on 26 December, beginning at 1pm, with the race starting this year at 1.20pm. The network will continue to cover the progress of the race in its news programs and will screen a review program produced by Rolex, 'Spirit of Yachting', in January.

Channel 7 has indicated that it is planning a new look to the television coverage, at the start and during the race, with Head of Sport, Saul Shtein, quoted as saying lead-up and race reports in the *Sunrise* morning program and possibly in the *Today Tonight* program were being considered as well as in news bulletins. Seven has also assured the CYCA that its coverage will extend right across the fleet following potential handicap winners as well as the glamour super maxis at the head of the fleet.

Seven has had a long association with yachting – including its coverage of the America's Cup and, for many years, the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Seven last year moved back into yachting with the sponsorship of *Nicorette*, the Line Honours winner of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, and this year has taken one step further by committing to the role of the CYCA's broadcast partner.

The ABC has also indicated its ongoing news and sports coverage of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, including its outstanding race coverage by helicopter, following the fleet all the way to Hobart. ■



# AND THE LAST SHALL BE FIRST

John Roberson interviews Perth yachtsman Gil Waller after his Cruising Division win in the 60th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race

Being last boat out through the Heads in last year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race didn't worry Perth skipper Gil Waller and his crew on *Salter Boats Natsumi*. It was only the third yacht race they had ever sailed, but their track record was good – they'd won their division in 50 per cent of their previous two races. They would go on to win the Cruising Division of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, to make it two wins out of three starts.

Gil was sailing with his sons, Matthew, 29, and Simon, 27, and a bunch of friends he had sailed with before. Among the crew was Norma House, who had her 78th birthday the day after the start, and is the oldest woman ever to have done a Sydney Hobart Race.

Gil sailed a seamanlike race and despite being the last boat out of the Harbour, was not the last to finish.

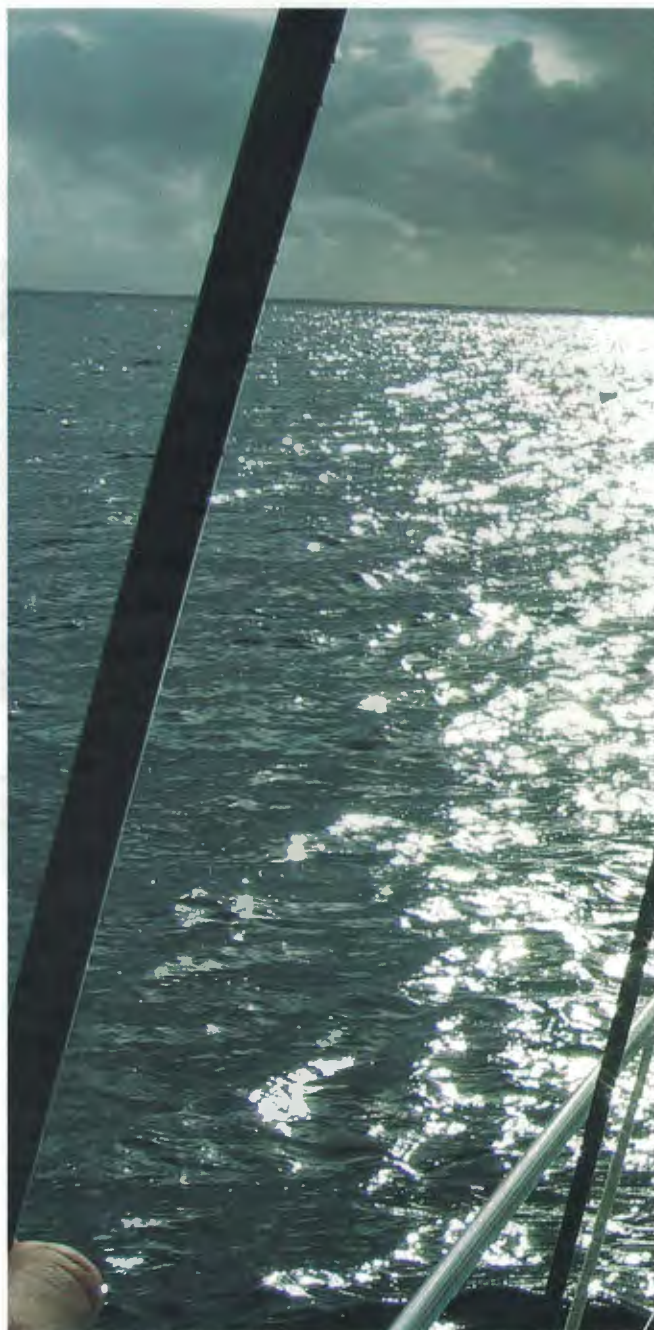
"We'd only done a couple of races before," said Gil. "We did the Fremantle to Lombok back in '97. Simon sailed with us on that and we had a great time. We really enjoyed it because the weather improved as we got further north. We also managed to get Line Honours and win our division, which was due to the enthusiasm of a bunch of fishermen-turned-sailors. I took a book on how to set sails with me, so that was how much I knew.

"We did a Geraldton race the same year, in recognition of my wife's father, who sailed in the inaugural Fremantle to Geraldton many years ago."

In spite of their limited racing experience Gil and his crew are not inexperienced sailors. They have cruised many thousands of miles together and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race was just one leg of an extended Australian and Pacific islands cruise.

## Fishy history

Gil's knowledge of, and respect for, the sea is immense. Having been a commercial fisherman all his working life, Gil knows what he's dealing with and doesn't treat it lightly. He was very impressed with the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's safety regulations.

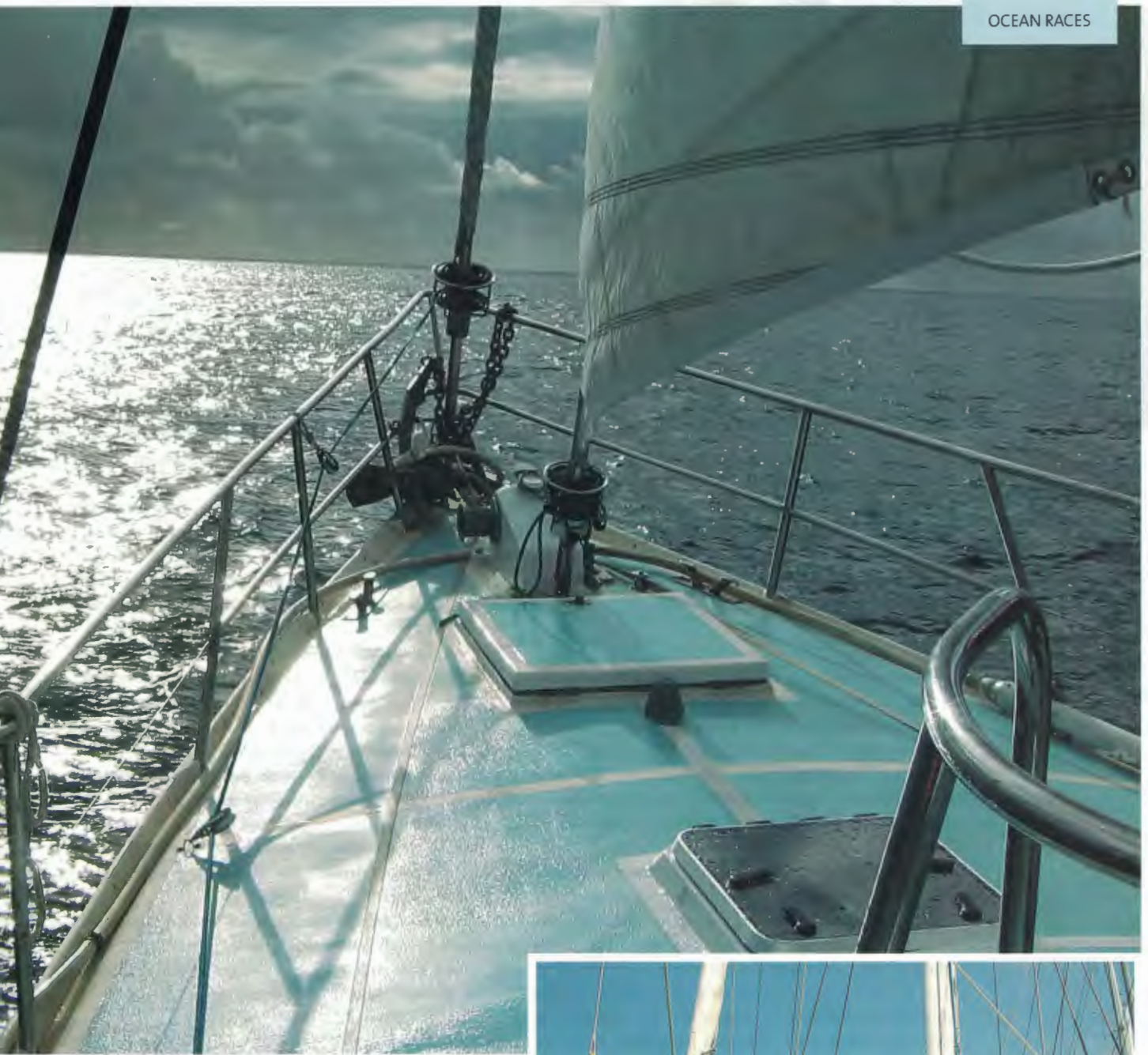


"I have commercial boats, so surveys and things like that are not something I normally find to be a problem because I always keep my boats to a good standard. The scrutiny of safety equipment before the start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race was absolutely, superbly fussy. I can only agree with them," he said.

Though he doesn't plan to repeat the experience, Gil would "certainly encourage" other cruising boats to do it.

"My advice is not to underestimate what it's going to cost. The safety requirements are as demanding for cruising boats as for racing boats, and it's pretty massive. It was an eye-opener, but I appreciated having my boat brought up to that standard.

"The training we all had to go through – first aid, jumping into the water, rescue drills, fire-fighting drills – was good thorough stuff. It's knowledge that everyone going out there should have."



**Above: On the way south. Right: Cruising's take on the crew uniform PHOTOS: Courtesy of Simon Waller**

The idea of doing the race originally came from older son Matt, who had watched the start of the 2003 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and was taken in by the spectacle. Gil's first reaction to the suggestion was: "You'd have to be crazy ... stupid. No way, we're not a race boat."

But things developed from there.

"The CYCA were opening the Race up to the cruising division and it tied in with our trip back from Tonga and with a plan to take the boat to Port Lincoln, where Matt's living now. I figured that since it was on the way, if we could get in, we'd join in.

"Given that we'd done one Cat 1 race before, the boat was part way there. We just considered it an extension of our Pacific cruise and dressed accordingly.





**Salter Boats Natsumi on the home stretch. They're just off the Organ Pipes heading into Storm Bay**

We wore floral shirts as part of the start and Father Christmas came on board.

"Outwardly we took it in a spirit of fun, but inwardly went to a lot of trouble to make sure that we got it right, on all the safety gear and everything else. Forty-odd years of fishing have given me a great respect for the sea – we went on that basis."

#### In the family

As well as being a big family occasion the race was also a reunion of the Lombok race crew – Simon, Norma and two others had sailed the winning Lombok race. "It was very much a family event," said Gil, proudly.

"It was a big thing having our eldest son, Matt, who has moved away from home and is living in Port Lincoln join in. It was probably one of the few opportunities for the whole family to get together at Christmas.

"We rented a house in Sydney and had a wonderful Christmas there – those moments are getting more and more rare. Then sailing with my sons on the boat again – having both of them available at the same time. It was the first time we've been able to arrange it," Gil said.

Out among the fleet on Boxing Day, the Western Australian team weren't looking for the cracking 'pin-end' start. They were happy to hang back from the pressure in the front rank.

"We got some great footage at the start, because we were right there, and we just let them fight their way through in front of us. We couldn't believe these boats crashing into each other, they've got 600 nautical miles to go and they're trying to damage themselves before they even start," said Gil.

Things improved for the *Salter Boats Natsumi* team once they got out into the ocean.

"They all started about 40 metres in front of us. We were over the line reasonably quickly but we really struggled to get out of Sydney Harbour. Once we got our spinnaker up, we started overtaking a few – I think we managed to overtake about 10 boats before the southerly came in 24 hours later."

Old fishermen's habits die hard – the crew put a line over the stern and managed to catch a tuna before the southerly hit.

Experience gained from Gil's fishing days then helped them through the bad weather.

"Once the southerly hit, we sat right in on the beach, a quarter of a mile off, inside nearly everyone else," he says. "I used my fishing experience to judge the depth and the contours. We could see people walking on the beaches – we weren't going back out in that rough stuff. We managed to keep to a wave height of two, three or four feet, instead of the 15–20 foot stuff that was rolling through further out."

They decided to ride out the worst of the bad weather in Eden.

"It was raining, blowing and hailing as we were coming into Eden. We were actually having a little sashimi, some hot rice and a little drink. Nobody was sitting out on the deck on our boat – we weren't about to go out there and get wet," said Gil.

After 36 hours anchored in the bay, they resumed their path south and had a benign crossing of Bass Strait, catching another couple of yellow fin tuna on the way. They picked up a northerly breeze as they closed with the coast of Tasmania and put up their spinnaker again.

"We got a bit of a lousy patch as we rounded Tasman Island to go in," Gil says. "Although we were allowed to use the motors it was a matter of pride that we didn't. We managed to sail the whole of the Derwent under sail and crossed the line without using the motor. We thought we would have to use the motor in the Derwent, but we managed to get through without.

"So we completed the Race and sailed across the line – I think we made it just before one o'clock on New Year's Day, which wasn't bad considering we'd had a 36-hour layover in Eden," he said.

*Salter Boats Natsumi* finished 55th out of 59 finishers, and was the only boat in the Cruising Division to make it. "It was a bit emotional when we got there and a great sense of relief," admits the skipper.

#### Drink or two

Unlike all the 'dry' racing division boats, Gil and his crew enjoyed good food and a drink or two along the way, so they weren't hanging out for a beer when they finally made it to Constitution Dock.

"We had a good load of food and no shortage of beer and wine on board. We kept it to sensible levels, even in calm weather we just had a glass or two of wine," says Gil of the catering – supplemented with a few meals of the yellow fin tuna that was caught along the way.

Gil Waller is thrilled to have done the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and to have done it in relative comfort – not only with his sons, but also with a bunch of friends who have cruised many miles with him over the years. They can all now tick that achievement off their list of 'must-dos' and the experience is sure to fuel many conversations in the years to come. ■

*Salter Boats Natsumi is a 16m cruising yacht designed by American Bruce Roberts and built in 1985.*



# MANAGE A YACHT ONLINE

A yacht website makes it easier for owners to manage their racing and crew requirements



Offshore racing yachtsman Greg Newton, the owner of *Antipodes*, a well-known Beneteau 47.7, is typical of the modern breed of yachties who combine busy business schedules with extensive sailing commitments and also have their boats available for charter.

Newton had already developed a website for his business so knew how useful a website would be in assisting him in the management of his sailing interests.

He approached Netfront Solutions, the Sydney-based web-design business owned by Greg Stephenson and who had developed Newton's business site, with an idea for a site that would manage the diverse needs of his crew, race officials, sponsors and potential charterers.

The result is an interactive website that is used to:

- Inform the crew of upcoming races and provide direct links to race websites
- Maintain required crew details with 'online updateable' crew experience forms
- Promote sponsors with links to their websites
- Provide comprehensive details on the boat's specifications and fit-out
- Outline the boat's history and list major offshore race results
- Promote boat charter opportunities
- Broadcast any news about the boat – crew meetings, working bees, or other matters of interest.

Visit the website at [www.teamantipodes.com.au](http://www.teamantipodes.com.au)

## Current Information

Greg Stephenson says the web design he created for *Antipodes* is especially useful to the racing fraternity in the management of race crew in that it provides the boat's crew and owner with personalised crew pages that can be updated on an ongoing basis.

This information is then also available to the boat's race coordinator, providing detailed up-to-date experience declarations that can be printed directly from the site. The benefit is that the website dispenses with the chore of chasing up the crewmember's current details and qualifications and the experience declarations are then available to print with a few clicks of a mouse.

As a crewmember logs on to the *Antipodes* website, he or she is presented with a form displaying their current experience. They then have the ability to change the existing details, including their address and phone number, or add a race to their tally.

The *Antipodes* website interface provides a simple yet effective system to record this information. Authorised users such as the boat's owner or race coordinator have the ability to scroll through and view or print all crewmembers' details.

The 'latest news' section also includes some unique features. It can be updated dynamically as the user wishes so instead of having an ongoing web production cost, the latest results and races can be posted to the site by the authorised user. All of these functions grouped together in a single application make the website a very effective time saver.

A website also provides the potential to display advertising for boat sponsors and – for those owners who charter their boats – to provide information and a booking facility for potential charterers.

All in all, websites like this have the potential to relieve a yacht owner or manager of some onerous administrative duties that can be fiddly and time-consuming and eat into precious sailing time, which is after all, what it's all about. ■

*For more information about setting up an interactive website at a very reasonable cost, contact Greg Stephenson of Netfront Solutions on (02) 9817 7201.*

A yacht's website can cut down on onerous paperwork and also be a valuable marketing tool

# AUSSIES IMPRESS IN TRANSPAC

Rich Roberts reports on a notable Australian performance in the Centennial Transpac race

Australia's *The Cone of Silence*, the smallest of 75 boats in the 2005 Centennial Transpacific Yacht Race (Transpac), reeled off some of the largest daily mileage numbers over the final week of the race. Twenty-four-hour tallies of 223, 210, 255, 246, 263 and 216 nautical miles ensured the 30-footer finished well ahead of everyone else in Division III.

That, however, wasn't quite enough to eclipse *Reinrag2* on handicap time. The Garnier family's J/125 from Portland, Oregon, crossed the finishing line off Diamond Head about two-and-a-half hours later to easily save the six hours owed by Jamie Neill's

Downunder flyer. Consequently *The Cone of Silence* wound up second in class. This was the third division win in four years for *Reinrag2*.

Unfortunately for Neill's Reichel/Pugh designed 30-footer, which is a noted downwind flyer, the crew did not find the trade winds they were looking for, at least not until the final 24 hours when they were able to surf down the Molokai Channel all the way to the finish off Oahu's Diamond Head.

Although it wasn't a particularly windy Transpac, the maxZ86s proved their slippery power with Hasso Plattner's *Morning Glory* smashing the record held by his near rival in this race, Roy Disney's new *Pyewacket*, to win the Barn Door Trophy.

The German boat's time for the 2,225 nautical miles was 6 days, 16 hours, 04 minutes and 11 seconds, lopping almost a day off the record of 7:11:41:27 set by Disney's previous *Pyewacket* in 1999.

The new *Pyewacket* crossed the Diamond Head finish line almost

exactly two-and-a-half hours later in what was Disney's fifteenth, and final, Transpac.

Overall Handicap Honours for the coveted King Kalakaua Trophy was fought out between two Transpac 52s. Philippe Kahn's new *Pegasus* crossed the Diamond Head finish line far ahead – but not quite far enough ahead – of Roger Sturgeon's three-year-old *Rosebud* in the final battle between the Transpac 52s for the coveted King Kalakaua Trophy.

This meant that the Transpac's big winners duplicated last year's Newport Bermuda Race when Hasso Plattner's *Morning Glory* was first to finish in record time and *Rosebud* won overall. A rare double in America's premier ocean races, believed to have been last achieved by the Olin Stephens-designed *Dorada* in the 1930s.

After the race, fellow competitors listened in awe as Peter Pendleton, skipper of Hasso Plattner's record-busting maxZ86 *Morning Glory*, told how, despite light winds, "we never had single digits ... always 10 knots [of speed] or better".

"Coming into Molokai," he continued, "Hasso said to Russell Coutts, 'OK, you've got 10 minutes on the helm but if you get the record speed you're through.' About three minutes later we hit 29 knots and Hasso said, 'OK, that's it', and took the wheel back."

Pendleton was representing the *Morning Glory* crew at a press conference in which the eight class winners told of their experiences. Also fronting were former-record holder Roy Disney; Urban Miyares, co-founder of Challenged America and crewmember on their Tripp 40, *B'Quest* – which completed the second successful Transpac by sailors with disabilities – and Lloyd Sellinger, skipper of the oldest crew in the history of the event, the Cal 40, *Bubala*.

Sellinger, 72, teased Disney, 75, about sailing his last Transpac as he was sailing his first, although he was only three years younger.

Roger Sturgeon, who sailed *Rosebud* to first place overall and first in Division II, reported that, unlike many sailors, he had no difficult sleeping on the voyage.

"I got so much sleep on the way that I'm afraid I'm going to wake up," he said. But that didn't mean it was a slow trip. "The top speed I saw was 23 [knots] plus and



**“Unfortunately, *The Cone’s* crew did not find the tradewinds they were looking for, until the final 24 hours”**



on this boat it was very stable, not scary at all.”

Sturgeon also had a few wise words for future race competitors: “You don’t necessarily win if you prepare, but you lose if you don’t prepare,” he said.

Scott Self, skipper of the Hobie 33 *Soap Opera*, was first to finish and Overall Winner in Division V and also winner of the doublehanded sub-class.

“We’re just Texas lake sailors. Our whole program budget was US\$20,000, less than most of you spend for a new spinnaker,” he told the assembled crews.

Bruce Burgess of the 1D35 *Two Guys On the Edge*, which finished second in the doublehanded class, lamented gear failures. “The adjustable headstay failed, and during the four or five hours we spent fixing that we were heading for Mexico because we couldn’t go toward Hawaii,” he said.

Then late in their 12-day odyssey, their steering cable broke and they had to jury rig it with a cut-off section of spinnaker line.

But their most frustrating gear failure was that of their new US\$4,000 radio because it could have cost them 30 minutes in handicap time every time they failed to broadcast daily position reports.

They disassembled the radio four times and each time they did so the second crewman missed out on his chance to sleep because he had to steer.

But that was nothing compared to the efforts of blind Bowman, Urban Miyares, and the rest of the *B’Quest* handicapped crew.

Miyares said of his crew’s campaign: “By all accounts, it looked like an impossibility. Just getting to the starting line has been our success.”

Despite this, *B’Quest* was holding first place in Division V three days into the race and finished the event fourth out of eight boats in their division.

Disney farewelled the race, which for years had been his favourite event saying: “We had some great races and some not-so-great races, but you always end up in Hawaii with the wonderful weather and hospitality.”

A total of 75 boats started the race, the second highest number in 43 races over 100 years. Two boats retired early in the race. ■



Top: *Scout Spirit* off Waikiki after finishing.

Centre and above: *Far Far*, one of the large contingent of Cal 40s in the race, after finishing.

Previous page: *The Cone of Silence* and the vast North Pacific Ocean PHOTOS: Jas Hawkins

# AUSSIES TAKE ON UNIQUE EVENT

For the first time, the Volvo Ocean Race, which starts from the Spanish port of Vigo on 12 November, will include an Australian yacht and will also feature a stop-over in Melbourne. Peter Campbell previews the event

**G**rant Wharington is not one to let the adversity of seeing his supermaxi yacht capsized in the Tasman Sea get in the way of his international sailing ambitions.

The 40-year-old yachtsman from Mornington Yacht Club in Victoria is taking on the world. He has already taken on the Rolex Fastnet Race in England (see story, page 58) and the around-the-world Volvo Ocean Race comes next. He intends to squeeze in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race in a break in his schedule.

The Rolex Fastnet and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race rank as two of the world's three major traditional ocean races. The Volvo Ocean Race – 31,250 nautical miles of rugged racing in the roughest oceans of the world – is now accepted as the premier circumnavigation race for fully crewed monohulls.

Wharington has already achieved much as a sailor, taking Line Honours in every major ocean race along the Australian east and south-east coastline with a string of big, fast and innovative boats, culminating with the canting keel, 30-metre *Skandia* (*Skandia Wild Thing*) with which he took Line Honours in the 2003 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

A second successive Line Honours win in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race went awry when *Skandia* capsized 100 nautical miles off the east coast of Tasmania. The result of the failure of the hydraulic ram system that controlled the canting keel. The 14-tonne appendage crashed through to leeward and held *Skandia* at a dangerous angle of keel. The crew eventually took



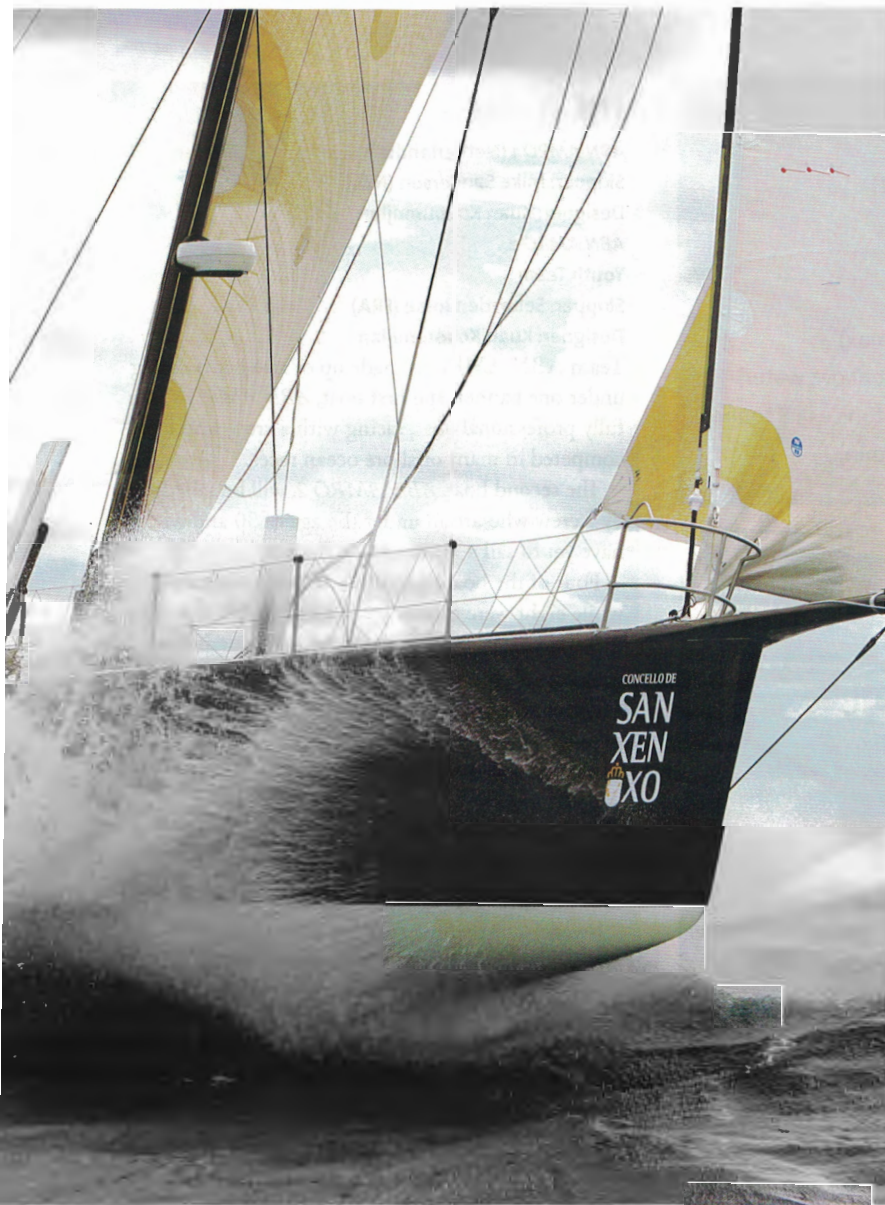
to their liferafts, the keel broke away and *Skandia* rolled over, losing her rig and most of her sails.

The tenacious Wharington salvaged the hull and had it towed back to Mornington. Less than five months later *Skandia* was ready to sail again and was shipped to England to meet a commitment to sail in the Skandia Cowes Week and the Rolex Fastnet Race.

Wharington now has another major commitment; to campaign the first all-Australian challenger for the Volvo Ocean Race.

At the same time that Mornington boat-builder Mal Hart was repairing *Skandia*, he was building a Volvo 70 for Wharington's Premier Challenge syndicate, again to the design of Melbourne engineer and yacht designer Don Jones. As Wharington and his crew flew to England for Skandia Cowes Week and the Rolex Fastnet Race, the Volvo 70 was being rigged for sea trials before being shipped to Europe to join the six other brand new boats that have been built to the new Volvo 70 rule.

It was no easy task, says builder Mal Hart. "The Volvo rule stipulates specific weight and strength ratios,



**MoviStar sailing in the Rolex Fastnet Race**

**PHOTO: Carlo Borlenghi/Rolex**

“There’s no way Wharo is going to miss sailing his own boat into Melbourne on this leg of the Volvo Race,” says one crewmember.

Melbourne engineer and innovative yacht designer Don Jones has done a meticulous job in designing the Volvo 70, as has Mal Hart in the building of the huge carbon fibre hull. This is the first time either has been involved with designing and building a boat for the Volvo Ocean Race but they had gained valuable experience designing and constructing the 30m super maxi *Skandia*, including the canting keel.

The Volvo 70 is a brand new boat for the 2005–2006 Volvo Ocean Race, replacing the proven Volvo 60. Why did the race organisers go for a new boat?

Since its inception in 1993, the boats that have been built under the Volvo 60 rule had been developed and refined to their limits. With each event the boats evolved and became faster. The sailors and designers agreed that after several design cycles and three events spanning nine years, technology had progressed to such a degree that faster boats would be possible if the rules were relaxed.

Innovation has always been a signature of this demanding and highly competitive race and all agreed that it was time to introduce a new type of boat for the 2005–2006 event. Thus, the brand new state-of-the-art 70-foot monohull race boat was conceived.

The new boats are an easier boat to sail, with fewer sails to handle and better living conditions for the crew. The race rule favours imagination, creativity and sailing skills, and not an environment where the biggest purse necessarily provides the biggest edge.

Each boat has certain common features – carbon-fibre hull, canting keel and bulb, standardised carbon-fibre mast and a reduction in the number of sails from 38 to 24 overall (with 11 sails measured in per leg, not including mandatory storm sails). The designers have a choice of one or two centreboards (or canards) and the choice of one or two rudders.

Crew numbers have been reduced from previous races. All-male crews are limited to nine. There are no all-female or mixed crews, but there is an Australian woman, navigator Adrienne Cahalan, who is sailing aboard the Brazilian entry, *Brasil 1*, participating.

In broad terms, the new boats, at 21.5 metres long, are two metres longer than the Volvo 60 but as much as 1,000kg lighter. The Volvo Open 70 will carry up to 60 per cent more sail area downwind under the spinnaker alone (maximum of 500 sqm). The mast is 4m taller, the boom a metre longer and the mainsail, at 172 sqm, is 28 per cent bigger.

Apart from the increase in length and sail area, other factors contributing to a significant increase in performance include the fact that the Volvo 70 is proportionately lighter. Non-metallic rigging is now allowed for standing rigging which can save as much

and so it has been both exciting and challenging.”

Following the completion of its European sailing season commitments, *Skandia* was to be shipped back to Australia in time for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Despite a tight time schedule, at the time of writing, Wharington’s preparations for the start of the Volvo Ocean Race were going well.

Wharington and his Australian crew will sail the Premier Challenge boat on the first Atlantic leg from the Spanish port of Vigo to Cape Town, a distance of 6,400 nautical miles. After arriving in Cape Town, about 4 December, Wharington plans to fly back to Australia to prepare *Skandia* and a different crew for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, starting on 26 December. Given a reasonably fast race over the 628 nautical mile course, *Skandia* should reach Hobart by 29 December.

Wharington will then fly back to Melbourne to catch an international flight to Cape Town in time to take command of the Volvo 70 for the second leg of the Volvo Ocean Race, 6,100 nautical miles from Cape Town to Melbourne, starting on 2 January.

“There’s no way Wharo is going to miss sailing his boat into Melbourne”

## Volvo 70 specifications

Length overall	21.5m (70.5ft)
Beam	4.7m – 5.7m (15.4ft – 18.7ft)
Draft	4.5m (14.8ft)
Mainsail area	172 sqm (1883 sqft)
Headsail area	140 sqm (1506 sqft)
Spinnaker area	500 sqm max (5382 sqft max)
Mast height	31.5m above water (103.3ft above water)
Weight	12,500kg – 14,000kg (12.3 tons – 13.8 tonnes)
Keel bulb	4,500kg min (4.4 tonnes min)



Testing the righting moment of the Premier Challenge boat  
PHOTO: Courtesy of Premier Challenge

as 100kg in weight aloft. Canting keels also provide a more efficient means of reducing heeling, compared with the water ballast of the Volvo 60s. The angle that the keels can be swung to one side is limited for safety reasons to 40 degrees either side of the centre line and there are strict rules to enable the keel to be locked in a vertical position if needed.

Expert predictions suggest that the new boats will be 21 days quicker around the world than the Volvo 60s if they were to sail the same course – an improvement of 18 per cent! The 2005–2006 course, however, is significantly different, starting from Vigo in Spain and stopping at seven ports in six countries in the northern and southern hemispheres before finishing back in northern Europe.

The Spanish yacht *MoviStar*, built by Boatspeed at Somersby, NSW, has already broken the world ocean speed record, achieving a 24-hour run of 530 nautical miles four days out of Wellington, New Zealand, en route to Cape Horn. The Volvo 60 *Illbruck* set the last race standard of 484 nautical miles in 24 hours. ■

## THE TEAMS

**ABN AMRO 1 (Netherlands)**

**Skipper: Mike Sanderson (NZL)**

**Designer: Kuan Kououmdjian**

**ABN AMRO 2**

**Youth Team**

**Skipper: Sebastien Josse (FRA)**

**Designer: Kuan Kououmdjian**

Team ABN AMRO is made up of two boats racing under one banner. The first boat, *ABN AMRO 1*, is a fully professional boat, racing with a crew who have competed in many offshore ocean races.

The second boat, *ABN AMRO 2*, will be sailed by a crew who are all under the age of 30 and who have yet to sail a Volvo Ocean Race.

Four of the boat's 12 sailors are professionals while eight were chosen from a worldwide selection process, which finally selected two crewmembers each from the Netherlands, Brazil and the US.

**ERICSSON RACING TEAM (Sweden)**

**Skipper: Neal McDonald (GBR)**

**Designer: Farr Yacht Design**

Race veterans, Richard Brisius and Johan Salén from Sweden, who have achieved podium finishes in each of the last three races, are managing this project.

Sweden's Magnus Olsson will also bring his experience of five around-the-world races to the campaign, with the veteran British yachtsman Neal McDonald as the skipper.

McDonald skippered another Swedish yacht, *Assa Abloy*, in the 2001–2002 Volvo Ocean Race, taking Line Honours in the 2001 Rolex Sydney Hobart Race, which was then a leg of the around-the-world event.

Among the crew will be Australian Tom Braidwood, regarded as one of the best bowmen in the world.

**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN II (US)**

**Skipper: TBA**

**Designer: Farr Yacht Design**

The *Pirates of the Caribbean II* entry is the result of a unique film and licensing agreement between the Walt Disney Company and Volvo (Volvo Car Corporation and AB Volvo), to create a competitive US entry for the race.

Volvo Ocean Race CEO, Australian Glenn Bourke, says this entry has taken the race to a whole new level in terms of global profile and exposure.

The Pirates' boat will be called *Black Pearl*, taken from the name of the pirate ship that featured in the films *Pirates of the Caribbean—The Curse of the Black Pearl* and *Pirates of the Caribbean—Dead Man's Chest*, due for release in July 2006.

When *Offshore Yachting* went to press the skipper had not yet been named.

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New South Wales  
191 New South Head Road, Edgecliff 2027  
Tel: (02) 9087 1900 Fax: (02) 9363 2013  
Email: nsw@clubmarine.com.au  
Queensland  
11 Cambridge Parade, Manly 4179  
Tel: (07) 3348 1818 Fax: (07) 3348 1819  
Email: qld@clubmarine.com.au

South Australia  
Level 6, 89 Pirie Street, Adelaide 5000  
Tel: (08) 7420 8244 Fax: (08) 7420 8240  
Email: sa@clubmarine.com.au  
Western Australia  
24 Mews Road, Fremantle 6160  
Tel: (08) 6462 1888 Fax: (08) 6462 1892  
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CLUB  
MARINE

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This confirmed participant in the Volvo Ocean Race was constructed from a female mould and built using Structural Polymer Systems' (SP) new low-temperature epoxy prepreg, SE70. The carbon-fibre hull is lightweight and robust with a clear coated finish. According to SP, their technical team liaised closely with the Boatspeed builders and various hull laminates and build processes were simulated to ensure that weight savings were at a premium.

A key stage of the development of the project was mapping the internal core structure to provide maximum strength around the load paths in the hull, whilst minimising weight.

SP's SE70 prepreg proved the ideal product for the construction as it cures at 70°C and offers low thermal movement, which reduces the distortion of the structure's shape. The resulting surface finish was so smooth that it required no filling or fairing and the hull laminate came in exactly on weight when measured by the Volvo 70 Ruling Committee. This allowed an increase in the keel size. ■

### Aussies in other camps

Australia's renowned international navigator, Adrienne Cahalan, is the only woman so far registered to sail in the Volvo Ocean Race. She is scheduled to be the navigator aboard *Brasil 1*, Brazil's first entrant in the event.

Cahalan is one of the best navigators in the world. She held the same position on the 125ft catamaran *Cheyenne* when it smashed the world ocean speed sailing record in 2004.

The International Sailing Federation has nominated her four times for the title of Rolex Sailor of the Year. Cahalan has also sailed in 14 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Races, more than any other woman.

Although Cahalan is a qualified lawyer with a degree from the University of Sydney, her main career is in offshore navigation for round-the-world racing and weather routing.

In 2003, she completed a Master of Science in Applied Meteorology at the University of Reading, UK, basing her thesis on southern hemisphere meteorology.

Another prominent Australian sailor involved in the Volvo Ocean Race is Tom Braidwood who will be bowman with the *Ericsson* team from Sweden skippered by British yachtsman Neal McDonald. Braidwood sailed with McDonald in the 1995 America's Cup and worked with him as a shore crew for *Silk* in the 1997-98 Whitbread Around the World Race.

Adrienne Cahalan,  
at the CYCA  
PHOTO: Daniel  
Forster/Rolex



## THE TEAMS (continued)

### BRASIL 1 (Brazil)

**Skipper:** Torben Grael (BRA)

**Designer:** Farr Yacht Design

Brazil's Star class world champion Alan Adler will lead the South American nation's first challenge for the Volvo Ocean Race with another champion, Olympic Star class sailor Torben Grael, as helmsman.

As *Offshore Yachting* went to press, the team had secured most of its funding and planned to announce its builder once discussions with sponsors were concluded, leaving a very tight construction time frame.

The boat's navigator is to be Australia's best known woman ocean racer, Adrienne Cahalan, who navigated the giant catamaran *Cheyenne* during its around-the-world record-breaking sail. She has also competed in 14 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Races.

### PREMIER CHALLENGE (AUSTRALIA)

**Skipper:** Grant Wharington (AUS)

**Designer:** Don Jones

Premier Challenge, the Australian team headed by Grant Wharington, was joined by a construction sponsor, ING Real Estate, in time to allieviate any financial concerns during the design and construction phase. However, an overall sponsor had not been announced when *Offshore Yachting* went to press.

Chief designer Don Jones, an engineer and innovative yacht designer, also designed Wharington's 30-metre super maxi *Skandia*. Like *Skandia*, the yacht was built at Mornington, Victoria, by Mal Hart.

Also involved in the syndicate is CYCA Vice Commodore Matt Allen, while the sailing master is the widely experienced Ian 'Barnie' Walker.

### MOVISTAR (Spain)

**Skipper:** Bouwe Bekking (NED)

**Designer:** Farr Yacht Design

Led by Spain's ten-time world champion, Pedro Campos as general manager and inshore helmsman and Dutch sailor Bouwe Bekking as skipper, *MoviStar* is the only Spanish team in the Volvo Ocean Race.

This is a truly international project, with the team to participate in a Bruce Farr-designed boat built at Boatspeed in NSW.

On its maiden voyage, *MoviStar* set an ocean sailing monohull world record of 530 nautical miles in one day, between New Zealand and Cape Horn.

*MoviStar* will sail under the pennant of the Real Club Náutico de Sanxenxo, the Galician port scheduled to host the first inshore race in the history of the Volvo Ocean Race on 5 November.



The Sun Odyssey 49 comes in two configurations  
PHOTOS: Barry Tranter



# TWO CHOICES FROM ONE FRENCH HULL

Barry Tranter tests the new Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 49 and Sun Odyssey 49 DS – two fast cruisers with the same hull but different layouts below deck

It's 7.30am on a Sydney winter's morning. We're leaving the marina aboard two versions of the new Jeanneau Sun Odyssey – the 49 and 49 Deck Saloon (DS). We are setting off at this terrible hour in the hope of finding wind, which can be hard to come by during a Sydney winter. I hope the guys from Performance Boating Sales (PBS), the NSW Jeanneau agent, know something I don't because the water is glass smooth, undisturbed by even a whiffle of God's breath. It is far too early for Huey to be up and about.

There is no wind at Sydney Heads. A mile or two offshore we have 15 knots and it is obvious that the guys from PBS know more than I do about weather, which is fact, not a huge compliment.

Jeanneau has used the same hull for the Sun Odyssey 49 and 49 DS fast cruisers, though the boats feature different internal layouts and cockpits. The 49 DS has the sleek coachroof profile that we first saw on the 54 DS.

There is another fundamental difference. The mast on the 49 DS is set further aft, adding area to the furling



The more conventional 49 has a flatter deck line and different cockpit layout – and the saloon is on one level

headsail to offset the loss of area if in-mast furling is specified for the mainsail. You can have a furling main on the 49 too, so why give only the 49 DS the extra sail area? Don't know. Both boats here had conventional mains with boom bags and lazyjacks.

If Ron Jacobs and Lee Condell of PBS have done a good job with the weather, they have done an inspired job of organising the sail because the owners have come along with us. John, owner of the Sun Odyssey 49, has three kids, the youngest is a year old, and he

## SUN ODYSSEY 49 and SUN ODYSSEY 49 DS

Length overall	14.98m
Waterline length	2.9m
Beam	4.49m
Draught	2.15m
Displacement (light)	12,650kg
Ballast	3,750kg
Mainsail	52sq m
Genoa	62sq m
Fuel	240 litres
Water	700 litres
Auxiliary	75/100hp Yanmar
Price:	Sun Odyssey 49 starts from \$518,993; Sun Odyssey 49 DS starts from \$613,606.

More information from Performance Boating Sales, Gibson Marina, 1710 Pittwater Road, Bayview, NSW 2104. Phone (02) 9979 9755, website [www.performanceboat.com.au](http://www.performanceboat.com.au)

chose the 49 in preference to the 49 DS because he thought the kids would be safer in the more defined accommodation layout.

The owners of the 49 DS, Steve and Scott, chose the 49 DS for its good looks. "Styling was a big part of it. People walk past on the marina and say 'Nice boat, guys'," says Steve. "I love the amount of light below deck – there are so many windows and hatches."

They also preferred the more open layout below because they wanted a party boat. The cockpit on the 49 DS is also good for parties because the primary winches are aft near the helm stations, which keeps the workers out of the way of the slackers. On the 49 the winches are further forward.

The accommodation layouts on the boats are similar but not identical. Both have three cabins – the master cabin with ensuite bathroom is in the bow and the two other cabins are aft. They're similar, but the portside one has a door.

But it is not that straightforward. The 49 offers a four-cabin option with four heads and removable panels between the cabins, presumably for a mix of charter and private use. The 49 DS has an option with three cabins and three heads, only this time the owner's cab is in the stern, and the two bow cabins have the removable central panel. You need to sit down with the dealer and a set of drawings to understand.

### SALOON STYLE

The boats we sailed had basically the same layout but differed in the saloon. The 49 has a substantial dinette with a settee on the centreline. The galley is fore and aft down the portside – the cook can brace against the settee. On the starboard side is a huge navigation area with a fabulous semi-reclining, moulded timber seat

On the 49 DS, the galley is in this spot and the more conventional nav area is to port. The sumptuous dinette and seating arrangement on the 49 we sailed is an option and both boats offer choices for this area.

There is nothing complicated about the deck layouts. There is a full-depth sail locker in the bow, the genoa cars can be moved under load and the mainsheet traveller is on the coachroof ahead of the companionway. The control lines are all led aft although, in deference to style they are led between the mouldings on the 49 DS.

The 49 had a locally made spray hood and folding bimini over the helm station. The masts, deck-stepped on a compression post, feature double spreaders and a split backstay arrangement. The latter is adjusted only by bottlescrews.

Both boats had a single electric winch on the coachroof's portside, perfect for raising the mainsail or furling the headsail. Raising the mainsail this way is no harder than rolling out a furlled main and the system is fail-safe. Sheeting the large genoa was the time-honoured method of applying muscle to the self-tailing Harkens.



**Both designs provide luxurious, spacious and well illuminated interiors with plenty of headroom, but in the DS version the headroom and light really have to be experienced to be believed**

The 49 has a 75hp Yanmar, good for 9 knots or so at just under 4,000 revs. This felt fast enough for waterskiing, but the 49 DS has the 100hp option and went half-a-knot faster, digging a big hole in the Tasman Sea. Both boats had fixed three-blade 22-inch props.

A 49-footer is big enough to provide a comfortable ride, and these owners report the boats have an easy motion in a seaway. Certainly they stand up to their canvas and although we had an absolute top windspeed of less than 20 knots, the Jeanneaus heeled only moderately and rode the way that a boat with a 42-foot waterline should.

Number crunching reveals the displacement/length ratios to be quite low, so the hull is easy to drive and the sail area/displacement ratio is quite low as well. You don't need to be Stephen Hawking to work that out – the masts are not tall and look like the spars on a cruising yacht.

We saw 6.8 knots upwind in 14 true, but we were a few degrees off the wind and that big fixed-blade prop was freewheeling in the slipstream.

The crews took turns at sailing the boats. We took each boat out of gear without telling the other crew and the speed difference was immediately apparent. John is researching the folding/feathering prop market, Steve is not too concerned.

We did not stack the windward rail with beef to find best upwind speed because these are cruising boats and, when Steve tracked down a thermos of hot, milky coffee it seemed far more important than anything else at the time.

Both these Jeanneaus will be used for social sailing and coastal cruising and the owners are delighted with their boats. The only criticism Steve had was that the 49 DS could do with a little more storage space in the galley, but apart from that he reckons his boat is perfect.

Jeanneau's Sun Odyssey 49 and 49 DS are easy to handle and provide easy onboard living. The cockpits are comfortable because of the twin-wheel arrangement, the fixed central table and the good seating. The cabins are big and well-appointed with plenty of headroom, as are the saloons.

The cockpit is well designed and the companionway perfectly pitched with cambered steps. The stepped floor in the 49 DS gave me no problems (which means I didn't trip up it when I first went aboard), but it is certainly different.

After a morning spent charging around the Tasman in two very nice boats, the rest of the day was a serious anticlimax. Life in microcosm, you could say. But let's not go down that path. ■

# A LIFE BY DESIGN: ALAN PAYNE



Alan Payne

Yacht designer Alan Payne will be inducted into the Rolex America's Cup Hall of Fame, in San Francisco, on 14 October. Adrian Herbert looks at the remarkable career of one of the founding members of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia

Alan Payne is well remembered as a key figure of America's Cup history. However, the designer also loomed large in the development of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and ocean racing in Australia in general.

But to those who knew him, Payne is best remembered as a modest, humorous man who simply loved sailing and helping others enjoy the sport.

Payne, who died in 1995, will be honoured at the thirteenth annual Rolex America's Cup Hall of Fame induction ceremony, to be held on 14 October at the St. Francis Yacht Club, San Francisco. Payne's daughter, Rozetta, who has followed her father in becoming a naval architect and Official Measurer of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, will attend.

Payne's international fame resulted from his 12-metre *Gretel* and *Gretel II*, among the most impressive yachts ever to challenge for the America's Cup. His destiny as a designer can be traced back to a summer's day in the early 1930s when he and his brother Bill were playing with model yachts on the Tweed River in northern NSW. This was the era of the majestic J-boats. To the boys, the toy boats soon became *Enterprise* and *Shamrock V* in the 1930 America's Cup challenge.

Fast forward three decades to Newport, Rhode Island and Alan Payne was to see a yacht which he had designed make history.

It was 1962, the year of Australia's first tilt at the America's Cup. In the second race of the series a fresh

breeze was powering the defender, *Weatherly*, around the gybe mark for the final time, 14 seconds ahead of Payne's *Gretel*. Both yachts hoisted spinnakers. Then *Gretel*, with skipper Jock Sturrock at the helm, was lifted on a wave and surged forward as the crew of *Weatherly*, skippered by Bus Mosbacher, struggled to get their kite set. Yachting photographer Stanley Rosenfeld later wrote: "Spawned far out in some distant disturbance, a fast moving swell combined with a local wind wave and perhaps some chance wake of the spectator fleet crested under *Gretel's* stern. It carried her along on a surfing sleigh ride, doubled her speed over the bottom. She surged ahead at about 14 knots."

*Gretel* passed *Weatherly* to windward and crossed the line 47 seconds ahead to set a new course record. This was the first time a challenger had won a race in the 12-metre era and showed that the America's Cup was not a fixture at the New York Yacht Club, despite the lack of success of more than 100 years of challenges. That day marked Alan Payne's emergence as one of the world's leading yacht designers.

In early designs, Payne appeared to have followed two quite different threads; bringing the two together was a key to his success. On one hand, he focused on light displacement, producing the 1952 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race Line Honours winner *Nocturne*. On the other, the focus was on heavier displacement craft with exceptional pointing ability.

Payne had become a strong exponent of the

metacentric shelf analysis system early in his career. (The metacentre of a hull is the point at which a vertical line through its centre of buoyancy at rest intersects with a similar line through the centre of buoyancy when it is heeled.) He argued that yachts designed to this system were well balanced and tended to head up to windward less as they heeled.

This was particularly relevant to the design of heavier displacement craft such as the International 12 metre class, which after World War II had replaced the much larger J-class yachts as the America's Cup class.

Payne first used the system to help design an easily driven fast cruiser-racer. This boat was designed as *Killara* (although it was launched as *Margaret M* and is now known as *Karralee*). Payne entered the design in an international competition which, incidentally, was won by Philip Rhodes, the US designer of *Weatherly*, the 12 metre that went on to successfully defend the America's Cup against Payne's *Gretel* in 1962. The then unknown Payne, described by the judges as "a promising young designer", took third place.

In the 1950s, Payne was given the opportunity to design what was at the time seen as a very large ocean racer, the 62ft cutter *Solo*, by good fortune, about the size of a 12 metre. The steel-hulled *Solo* soon established itself as the boat to beat for Line Honours in the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

When Frank Packer (later Sir Frank) decided in 1959 to make Australia's first challenge for the America's Cup (through the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron), Payne, as Australia's most successful ocean racing designer, was the obvious choice as designer. After the challenge was accepted by the New York Yacht Club, Packer cannily requested that Payne be allowed to carry out tank testing at the Stevens Institute in the US. This request was accepted and helped Payne design a surprisingly competitive challenger.

The resulting yacht, *Gretel*, included many innovations, one of which would become a standard feature of 12 metres – cross-linked winches.

*Gretel* was designed by a small team at Payne's home in Cammeray. His design assistant on the project was another talented designer, Warwick Hood, who had worked with him at Cockatoo Island during the war. They were assisted by two draftsmen.

One of the draftsmen, Alf Lean, recalls that Payne designed just about every fitting for *Gretel*, many of which were fabricated in the workshops of Packer's Consolidated Press publishing company. Payne, who was a qualified engineer as well as a naval architect, designed the boat's cross-linked main coffee grinder winches. The cross-linking proved to give the Australian crew a significant advantage in tacking duels.

Lean says working with Payne was "a delight", but there were drawbacks. The words: "I've been thinking," inevitably meant hours of re-drawing.

The design process for *Gretel* started with analysis of the Olin Stephens-designed *Vim*, which Packer had

bought and shipped to Australia. At that time, no-one in Australia even really knew what a 12 metre was, says Lean, so the first job was to measure *Vim*. A set of hull lines was drawn and individual drawings prepared for every part.

"In the end, we knew *Vim* inside out," Lean says.

Then the real designing began. Lean remembers drawing plans for the ballast keel 40 to 50 times, with each redraw meaning a complete re-calculation of figures. The major reason for the re-draws was the realisation that minimal movements of the centre of gravity would have great effects on performance. The hull shape was tested in the US against data for *Vim* helpfully provided by Stephens. Results from the tank testing eventually indicated that *Gretel*'s hull shape was "a bit better than *Vim*," according to Lean. But that didn't excite Payne. While regarded as a good 12 metre, *Vim* was a pre-World War II design and had been eliminated in the 1958 defender selection trials.

Of course, there was no way for Payne to know how his hull shape compared with Stephens' *Columbia*, which had successfully defended the Cup in 1958. (In later years, Pierre 'Pete' DeSaix of the Stevens Institute said the tank tests told him it compared very favourably.)

*Gretel* was built at Lars Halvorsen's yard at Ryde. Her keel and frames were of laminated Queensland maple, and the hull planking was two layers of oregon. Late in the process, the shape of the cockpit was still being worked out. Lean remembers a full size mock-up was built in Payne's house, filling the breakfast room and obstructing the way to the bathroom. Despite that, the final design was drastically reshaped after early sailing in Newport.

### Packer not impressed

Lean remembers *Gretel* beginning to take shape. He had carried out the lofting and was in the boatshed the day the frames were to be set up on the backbone.

This stern-to-the-bottom-of-the-keelson structure was a massive block of laminated pieces; it had been marked with chalk for notches to receive the frames. Boat builder Trevor Gowland carried out the task of cutting the notches, swinging an adze as nonchalantly as if he were whittling a stick.

Later, Lean worked on the fitting out. He remembers helping polish the underwater surface to a mirror-like finish. Then Payne surprised the work team by suddenly announcing they were going sailing. Lean still remembers the feeling of power as Australia's first 12 metre surged down Sydney Harbour on its maiden voyage. Packer was not impressed and impounded the boat for the next week.

In Newport, *Gretel* was subjected to numerous changes after Payne analysed its performance on the waters where it was to challenge for the Cup. The crew were unsure whether all the changes were necessary and would have preferred to opt for more sailing time.

When the racing started Bus Mosbacher and his



**Christening of Gretel at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron**  
PHOTOS: Courtesy of Wendy Payne

*Weatherly* crew quickly discovered that the Australians had the faster boat but they also soon realised that their opponents didn't understand how to take full advantage of this in match racing.

Steered by skipper Jock Sturrock, *Gretel* won the start of the first race but soon after was held on the wrong tack for about two minutes, enabling *Weatherly* to get back on level terms. Then *Gretel*'s backstay parted and by the time a jury backstay had been rigged *Weatherly* was well ahead and won the race by 3 minutes 45 seconds. Sturrock won the start again in the second race. He then initiated a tacking duel that Mosbacher

broke off when he realised that the Australians, with their cross-linked coffee grinders, were gaining. But when the two boats next crossed tacks, *Weatherly* was well ahead of *Gretel*. From that, Mosbacher concluded that although *Gretel* might be the faster boat, without a yardstick, Sturrock didn't know how to keep her going at her fastest, a fact that he kept in mind for future use.

Despite further tactical errors by the Australians, *Gretel* kept on *Weatherly*'s tail in a westerly breeze which gusted up to 25 or 30 knots, setting up that spectacular finish described earlier.

The third race was an anti-climax. Started in a fading 10-knot breeze, *Gretel* still appeared to be the faster boat but tactical errors by the Australians left her trailing. At one stage she was 24 minutes behind but recovered well enough to finish only 8 minutes 40 seconds behind.

In the fourth race, Sturrock lost the start to Mosbacher and by the windward mark, *Weatherly* was 1 minute 26 seconds ahead. But on the reach *Gretel* lopped 31 seconds off that lead. Late in the race the wind picked up to 16 knots and *Gretel* loomed even closer. A change in the wind direction had made the final leg a run and it seemed inevitable *Gretel* would catch *Weatherly* before the line.

As Hoyt later wrote, Mosbacher reacted by sharpening his course to reach away from the line and set a genoa. "At first, Sturrock reacted by setting his genoa inside his spinnaker and accelerated, eating away at Mosbacher's lead. For two minutes *Gretel* was actually closer to the finish line than *Weatherly*, but Sturrock sharpened still more on to Mosbacher's course, took down his spinnaker and dropped speed. Mosbacher gauged his move exactly, set spinnaker, dropped genoa and ran for the mark. The wind had faded back to 10 knots and Sturrock went back to spinnaker and chased Mosbacher. But Mosbacher's play for time had worked and now there was not enough space left to close the gap." The wind was down to 8 knots when *Weatherly* crossed the line 26 seconds ahead in the closest finish in an America's Cup race so far. *Gretel* had been steadily gaining in the final minutes and would have overhauled *Weatherly* had the course have been just a little longer

The fifth race was another anti-climax with *Weatherly* winning by a convincing 3 minutes 40 seconds. And that was the series. But the Australians, and particularly Payne as the designer, had gained a lot of respect.

Gordon Ingate, who later skippered *Gretel* and *Gretel II*, believes the yacht could have won in 1967 had Payne not been so insistent on seeking lay days. Payne was responsible for the Australians calling a lay day the day after their second race win. That day, the wind was still strong, which should have been to the Australians' advantage, he says.

Ingate has great respect for Payne's achievements but he points out that he could be pedantic and unwilling to consider suggestions from those who actually sailed his 12 metres. "Sometimes, when we'd suggest there was a case for doing things differently he would say: 'I'm a chartered engineer and it *would* not work.' The problem was that we went sailing to win but Alan went sailing to finish." He always insisted on everything being over-engineered and there were occasions when this affected performance. For example, the main halyard lock on *Gretel* was designed for winds of up to 60 knots and weighed about 3lb. But we never raced in anything like that. Saving a couple of pounds there would have been as good as saving hundreds of pounds in the hull."

Packer decided to challenge the America's Cup again in 1967 but Payne had by then made a decision to pursue a career away from yacht designing.

### New challenge

Packer came up with a scheme to 'repair' *Gretel*, primarily as a way of continuing to use the sails made from superior US Hood sailcloth. He then had the underbody re-built to a design by Trygve Halvorsen.

Meanwhile a syndicate headed by Emil Christensen was formed to build a yacht to contest the right to take up the challenge made again on behalf of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. The new syndicate recruited Warwick Hood as designer and Jock Sturrock as skipper. Their yacht, *Dame Pattie*, won a selection series off Sydney Heads but proved uncompetitive in the US largely because its sails, made of Australian sailcloth, were clearly inferior.

*Dame Pattie* was also unfortunate in coming up against the Olin Stephens-designed *Intrepid*, a boat design that had made the biggest step forward in the entire history of 12-metre design with its cut away keel.

Packer decided to challenge again in 1970. Payne, who had by then returned to full-time yacht designing, was given the task of designing a new boat, *Gretel II*.

Howard Peachey was design assistant on *Gretel II* and remembers a long and exhaustive process. This time, experimentation focused on the position of the centre of buoyancy. Peachey recalls successions of lines plans being prepared and abandoned as model testing continued.

The scheduled building commencement date had long passed when, one Friday, Payne took models and

lines plans home with him. When the designer returned on the Monday he had made some small alterations and that basically was the shape that became *Gretel II*. But before building started, intelligence altered the construction method. Peachey remembers that Payne seized on a remark by US designer Britton Chance that he had been able to "reduce the weight of a 12 metre hull by 2,000lb". Payne pondered how. He quickly decided that a saving of nearly a tonne could only have been achieved by eliminating a lot of metal. It obviously wasn't from the keel so where else was there a lot of metal? All over, the fastenings, he decided. From that it was decided that the hull would be fastened with glued timber trunnels instead of screws.

Fortunately, the boat was to be built by Bill Barnett of Blues Point, who was familiar with lightweight timber construction as a builder of 18ft skiffs.

Payne gave *Gretel II* twin steering wheels to give the helmsman a better view of the headsail. Like the cross-linked winches of *Gretel*, this became standard on America's Cup yachts.

In Newport, the Australians beat the French for the right to challenge. Then, when *Intrepid*, updated by Britton Chance, finally defeated the newer Olin Stephens-designed *Valiant*, everyone was expecting a close contest and they were not disappointed.

The first race was a debacle for the Australians. Rounding the weather mark for the first time, the *Gretel II* crew failed to hoist their spinnaker properly, breaking the pole in the process. By the time the mess was sorted out, *Intrepid*, skippered by Bill Ficker, was well ahead. Then *Gretel II* lost a man overboard and lost more time picking him up. *Gretel II* lost the race by 5 mins 52 secs.

A second race had to be abandoned because of fog. Before it started, Packer had decided Martin Visser should be at the helm for the start instead of skipper Jim (now Sir James) Hardy. After pre-start manoeuvres, Visser tried to close out *Intrepid* on the line and a collision resulted. After the collision, *Intrepid* crossed

the line at good speed while *Gretel II* was almost stopped. Nevertheless, Hardy then sailed brilliantly, soon cutting *Intrepid's* lead to just 42 seconds. The gap was then closed to 30 seconds on the second windward leg. Then, with David Forbes at the helm, *Gretel II* pulled past *Intrepid* half a mile from the finish to cross 1 minute 7 seconds ahead. Unfortunately for the Australians, they lost the protest hearing and the race was awarded to *Intrepid*.

Ficker won the third race with some astute sailing and seemed likely to take the fourth and wrap up the series when he led by over a minute at the final mark. The wind then dropped from 12 knots to 6 knots and *Gretel II* was able to show how fast she was in light air, closing to within 100 yards of *Intrepid*. Then the wind shifted through 90 degrees with both boats tacking parallel with the finish line. Luckily, the wind shift favoured the Australians and enabled them to lay the line, winning by 1 minute 2 seconds.

The next race was a thriller, "one of the most brilliant ever sailed", according to Hoyt. Hardy won the start. The wind was light and both competitors used every trick they knew to get ahead and stay there but in the end the Americans' superior knowledge of wind patterns and the cunning of their skipper put them across the line 1 minute 44 seconds ahead of the Australians to take the series. So the US held on to the America's Cup but there were many sailors who wondered whether *Intrepid* really was the better boat.

Typically, Payne was not satisfied. Ingate remembers Packer seemed pleased with the Australian effort and was talking about challenging again. He asked the designer what should be done with *Gretel II*. "Take it out and burn it," replied Payne. Payne was never satisfied with his designs however successful. ■

*This article was prepared with the help of Alan Payne's widow, Wendy Payne.*



*Gretel II* sailing in the 1972 America's Cup series

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# WINTER WINDS & WAVES

This year's BMW Sydney Winter Series was simply the best yet

**W**ith 205 block entries and an average Sunday fleet of more than 160 boats, the 2005 BMW Sydney Winter Series conducted by the CYCA proved the best yet. Ten of the 11 scheduled pointscore races were sailed in a variety of winds but mostly on sunny days, with the final race being abandoned because of gale-force conditions.

Only a few points separated the top three boats in each of the nine divisions, with one of the closest being Division E for sports boats, which saw six different race winners over the series. In addition, there were two Ladies Day races, each contested by more than 70 boats with women at the helm. ■

## HONOUR ROLL

- Division A** *Atomic*, Denis O'Neil, Murray harbour racer
- Division B** *Assassin*, Robin Crawford, Farr IMS 40
- Division C** *Lexi*, Anthony Liddy, X412
- Division D** *Extremist*, Peter Wherry, Adams 10.6
- Division E** *Margaret Anne*, Peter Sorensen and Howard Lamble, sports boat
- Division F** *Sensai*, Andrew Dally, Catalina 320
- Division G** *Laissez Faire*, Sam and John Hill, Northshore 33
- Division J** *Wings Three*, Paul Bellingham, Northshore 38
- Sydney 38s** *Team Lexus*, James Mayo







BMW Sydney Winter Series action on a windy day on Sydney Harbour  
PHOTOS: Andrea Francolini

# SMALL BOAT FASTNET

The biennial Fastnet race proved there is still plenty of interest in ocean racing in Britain and the dominance of the results by small boats should boost that, write Adrian Herbert and John Roberson



*Skandia Wild Thing* rounding the Fastnet rock in calm conditions  
PHOTO: Carlo Borlenghi/Rolux

This year's Rolex Fastnet Race attracted a massive fleet of 283 boats – the largest number of entries since the disastrous 1979 race.

This showed that ocean racing is alive and well in Britain, particularly at the small boat, club racer level. With the trophy for the overall winner going to an old small boat this level gained a deserved boost.

Before the start of the 608 nautical mile race, forecasters predicted a light air race in which the tidal 'gates' along the course would prove crucial. That proved true and for once it didn't result in the race being handed to one of the bigger boats on a platter.

The race began with a series of seven starts off Cowes in blazing August sunshine and not much wind. Fortunately, a strong ebb tide was soon carrying the enormous fleet out of the Solent and through the narrow gap between the Needles and Hurst Castle.

As usual, attention was focused on the battle for Line Honours. A strong contest had been tipped between New Zealand's *ICAP Maximus* and Australia's *Skandia Wild Thing*.

*Skandia Wild Thing* was sailing in its first long ocean race since being refitted with a bigger rig in its rebuilding, following the loss of its keel in the previous Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Unfortunately, last minute repairs to the mast resulted in *Skandia Wild Thing* being two minutes late for the start. This gave the advantage to the Kiwis and they never relinquished it.

Further back in the fleet, an interesting contest was beginning between Irish TP52 *Patches*, Eamon Conneely, and the winner of the last Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the Ker 55 *Aera* (Nick Lykiardopulo). Many were tipping that this particular battle would provide the handicap winner.

The bigger boats made excellent progress through the first night, the leaders reaching Lands End by early morning, having successfully negotiated the tide 'gates' off the major headlands.

Smaller 30ft–40ft boats were not so fortunate. Some were even forced to anchor to avoid losing ground in the adverse tide. It certainly looked like a big boat race as the leaders used their momentum to keep moving as they entered a virtually windless Celtic Sea.

*ICAP Maximus*, showing a remarkable ability to generate substantial apparent wind, increased her lead in these conditions, rounded the rock and then enjoyed a fast run back up the English Channel. But the super maxi still recorded an elapsed time of almost three days to reach the finish in Plymouth. *Skandia Wild Thing* finished 15 hours later.

For a while, *Patches* looked a good bet for handicap honours after keeping up with the Open 60s for much of the race, but she failed to beat the corrected time of *ICAP Maximus*.

The next day, new breeze swept in from the west boosting the chances of small boats still at sea. That evening *ICAP Maximus'* corrected time was beaten by the IMX-45 *Exabyte III* and then by a succession of even smaller boats finishing in freshening breeze.

Most of the fleet was in port when one of the smallest and oldest yachts, the almost 30-year-old Nicholson 33 *Iromiguy* (Jean Yves Chateau, France) recorded the best corrected time after more than five days at sea.

By then the IRC leader board was dominated by small boats. After *Iromiguy* came *Cavatina*, Erick Lisson's Granada 38 from Ireland and *Exile*, an X-312 owned by Nicholas de la Forniere of France came third.

In the doublehanded division, the Australian Brolga 33, *Berrimilla* (Alex Whitworth and Peter Crozier) took second place to the J105 *Night and Day* (Pascal Loison).

## Stunned

*Berrimilla* was also eleventh overall. After five days and eight-and-a-half hours at sea, Whitworth and Crozier were stunned to learn how well they had done. They had noticed, however, when they were 25 miles out into the Celtic Sea, that they were still in touch with much bigger boats.

*Berrimilla* didn't get to the Fastnet early enough to get maximum benefit from the building north-westerly and had the wind on the nose for the last 30 nautical miles of the outward trip.

Once around and on their way home, however, they hoisted a kite and carried it most of the way before peeling to an asymmetric, which took them to within sight of the finish. ■

# Cruising Yacht Club of Australia

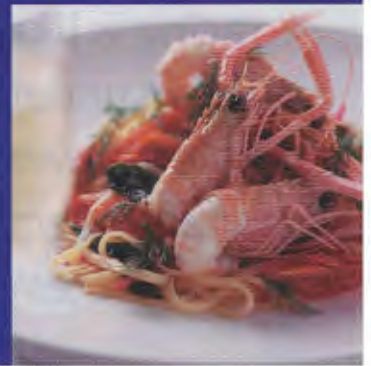
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# NEWS FROM ALL PORTS



Ted Heath and his *Morning Cloud* crew in Hobart in 1969



## THE SAILING PRIME MINISTER

Former British prime minister, Sir Edward Heath, who recently died, will be fondly remembered by sailors in Australia as well as Britain. Ted Heath skippered his Sparkman & Stephens-designed, *Morning Cloud*, (pictured above), to an overall win in the 1969 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, a victory that began a highly successful international sailing career and spawned the successful S&S 34 production yachts.

In 1969, Heath was leader of the opposition in the British House of Commons but he had been elected prime minister when he entered his new, and larger, *Morning Cloud II* for the 1971 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race as part of the British team for the Southern Cross Cup.

Unfortunately, affairs of state kept him at the helm of 10 Downing Street and Sammy Sampson skippered the yacht, placing fourth in the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, with the Brits winning the Cup.

Heath was Prime Minister during a volatile period in British history. His tenure included Bloody Sunday, soaring energy costs and the three-day week as well as his lifelong political ambition of taking Britain into the European Community, which he succeeded in doing in 1973.

Yet throughout this period he found time to sail his series of five *Morning Clouds*. His racing CV includes winning the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race with *Morning Cloud* in 1969 (the last British boat to do so before *Aera* last year) and captaining the British Admiral's Cup team to victory aboard *Morning Cloud II* in 1971.

Ted Heath subsequently competed in the 1973 and 1979 Admiral's Cups aboard *Morning Cloud III* and *Morning Cloud V*.

During this time it was Heath who came up with the now famous analogy with which many racing yacht owners will empathise: "Ocean racing is like standing under a cold shower tearing up £20 notes."

A man who knew the seafaring side of Edward Heath better than anyone was Owen Parker, Heath's long-term skipper and author of the book *Tack Now, Skipper* about his time afloat with the former Conservative leader and Britain's longest serving member of parliament.

Parker feels that Heath used sailing to get away and clear his mind from his troubles ashore. "There was no politics on the boat – we talked sailing because he loved his sailing. I think it was because he could really get away from it, there were no mobile phones in those days."

– Peter Campbell and [TheDailySail.com](http://TheDailySail.com)

**"Ocean racing is like standing under a cold shower tearing up £20 notes"**

## AUSTRALIAN YACHTING AWARDS

Richard Perini, winner of the 2004 Mumm 30 World Championship and the 2005 Rolex Farr 40 World Championship, was named Male Sailor of the Year at the 2005 Australian Yachting Awards.

Peter Campbell, former Editor of *Offshore Yachting* and now editor at large, received the Media award for his services to yachting. Both are CYCA members.

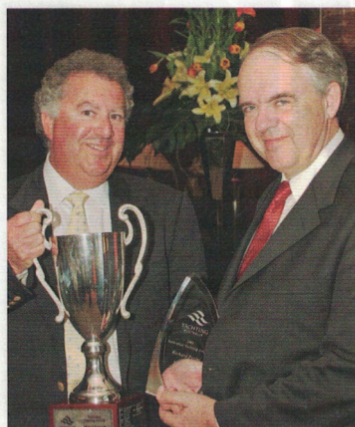
The Yachting Australia sponsored awards were presented at a dinner at the Park Hyatt, in Melbourne, attended by 180 prominent yachtsmen and women from around Australia.

In selecting Perini, the Yachting Australia judging panel made specific mention of his support for the sport of yachting and his encouragement of young sailors gaining international experience during his Mumm 30 and Farr 40 campaigns.

Perini plans to defend his Farr 40 title at Newport, Rhode Island next year.

Other finalists included Peter McNeill, the 2004 Etchells World Champion, Rohan Veal, the 2005 Moth World Champion and 2004 European Champion, and Nathan Wilmot and Malcolm Page, 470 World Champions and Olympic Games representatives in 2004.

The Yachting Australia Media award to Peter



**Richard Perini receives his award from Senator Kemp, Federal Minister for Sport**



**Peter Campbell receives his award from John Bertrand**

Campbell recognised his services as media director of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and his role as editor of *Offshore Yachting* magazine over many years, and his coverage of most of the world's major yachting events.

The Female Sailor of the Year award went to Adrienne Cahalan who has sailed in 14 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Races – more than any other woman – and who was navigator aboard the giant catamaran *Cheyenne* in its record-breaking circumnavigation.

The Youth Sailor of the Year award went to Sydney sailor Nathan Outteridge for the third consecutive year, following his third win in the ISAF Youth Sailing Championship double-handed event and a second in the Laser Radial World Championship.

Awards for Services to Yachting also went to Arthur Hodge for race official work in Queensland, Stan Burnicle for services to Dobroyd Aquatic Club in Sydney over more than 40 years and to David Tillett, the South Australian international yachting jurist and umpire.

Paralymptians Jamie Dunross, Jeff Milligan and Colin Harrison from Western Australia won the Sailor of the Year with Disability award while a Services to Yachting award went to Jackie Kay for her contribution to sailing for people with disabilities.

– Yachting Australia

## STAGG IN CHARGE

Geoff Stagg, the US-based Kiwi yachtsman who, with Bruce Farr and Russell Bowler established and developed the Farr International yacht design office in Annapolis, has bought out his former partners.

After 23 years of trading as Farr International the company has been renamed Stagg Yachts Inc and will continue its present operation under his ownership.

Farr and Bowler will maintain working relationships with Stagg Yachts as Geoff continues the classes management of the Farr 40, Mumm 30 and Farr 395 programs, together with the sales and marketing of new boat products.

## SYDNEY HARBOUR REGATTA ANNOUNCED

Geoff Box, Commodore of Middle Harbour Yacht Club (MHYC), has announced plans for a Sydney Harbour Regatta on 4–5 March 2006, with more than 200 yachts racing on four courses on the Harbour to be held during Sydney Harbour Week.

A regatta of such magnitude has not been staged on Sydney Harbour for more than 40 years, which was when the last Middle Harbour Regatta, featuring 469 boats racing in 12 classes, was held on Middle Harbour.

## WAIKIKI OFFSHORE SERIES 2006

Drawing on the experience of the successful Royal Hawaiian Cup, Pan Am Clipper Cup and Kenwood Cup series, the famous Waikiki Yacht Club in Honolulu is conducting the 2006 Waikiki Offshore Series from 22–29 July next year.

Courses will include several offshore round-the-buoys races, a 40 nautical mile intermediate course along the scenic leeward coast of Oahu and a 145 nautical mile race across the channel between Oahu and Molokai. This race will take the fleet along the spectacular cliffs of Molokai and around a mark of Maui before returning to Waikiki.

In addition to the handicap divisions, which are being structured according to the numbers and interests of registered boat owners, Waikiki has extended invitations to owners to create specific classes or divisions, such as the TransPac 52s, J-05s and Cal 40s, Farr 40 and Sydney 38 One Design classes.

One of Sydney's leading yacht clubs, MHYC is renowned for its expertise in providing competitive yacht racing, such as the annual Short Ocean Championship.

Integral to the success of the Sydney Harbour Regatta will be the support of other Sydney yacht clubs, with MHYC taking the role of the organising body, staging and coordinating the event both on and off the water.

Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and CYCA will be assisting with the conducting of racing, with other yacht clubs agreeing to support the event in their racing calendars. Event information is online now at [www.sydneyharbourregatta.com](http://www.sydneyharbourregatta.com)



**The 8oft 1970s maxi Kialoa III, above, which held the Sydney Hobart Race record for 21 years, has been gifted by owner Jim Kilroy to Orange Coast College in California.**

# RACE & REGATTA NEWS



## TRIUMPHANT GERONIMO'S NEW RECORD

After its record Australian circumnavigation of 17 days 13 hours 32 minutes 39 seconds, the Capgemini and Schneider Electric sponsored trimaran *Geronimo* has set another Pacific record.

The Tahiti Nui Challenge course from Sydney Heads to Papeete, French Polynesia, took the big trimaran north of New Zealand over a course of approximately 3,310 nautical miles to set a benchmark record of 13 days, 8 hours 25 minutes and 56 seconds, mostly sailed in frustrating conditions.

— Peter Campbell

*Geronimo* arrives in Sydney after its record-setting around Australia trip  
PHOTO: Andrea Francolini

## SKANDIA COWES YOUTH WEEK

Twelve teams from around the world competed in the 2005 Skandia Cowes Youth Week Grade 3 Match Racing event.

Teams from Australia, New Zealand, the US, France and Germany joined four crews from the UK in contesting the event raced in a fleet of 7m Sonars operated by the Island Sailing Club.

Australian skippers were the two top seeds. In the semi-finals, Seve Jarvin chose to race against Mark Dorling and beat him 2-1. Michael Dunstan was paired with Graeme Sutherland and went through to the final winning two straight matches. The final, between Jarvin and Dunstan went to four matches with Dunstan turning the tables on Jarvin to be the first to three wins.

— *Seahorse magazine*

### FINAL PLACINGS:

Skipper	Nation	Total Wins
1. Michael Dunstan	AUS	18
2. Seve Jarvin	AUS	15
3. Graeme Sutherland,	NZL	14
4. Mark Dorling	AUS	10
5. Andy Cornah,	GBR	8
6. Jonathon Pinner	GBR	7
7. Pierre-Antoine Morvan	FRA	10
8. Silke Hahlbrock	GER	4
9. Robert Grieg-Gran	GBR	8
10. Brian Angel,	US	6
11. Victor Lanier	FRA	5
12. Katie Archer	GBR	2

— *Seahorse Magazine*

## AUSSIES RETAIN 11 METRE WORLDS

Steve McConaghy and his crew from Australia successfully defended their 11 Metre world title in Arendal, Norway, in late July. Going into the final race, McConaghy, from the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club (RPAYC), with crew from his 2004 defence – brother Scott and Michael Spies, along with additional crewman Matt Allen – needed to finish no worse than four places behind the Norwegian *Dag Usterud*. They placed fourth; the Norwegian after a bad start, finished 15th.

Sailing *SLAM*, the Australians won five of the nine-race series, which included only one race drop. On day two, the Aussies were black-flagged, putting them under pressure to perform well for the rest of the series.

This was one more triumph for McConaghy who sailed in the Soling class for Australia at the 1996 Olympics and called tactics for Colin O'Neil on *Aftershock*, in the RPAYC team's win of the 2003 Admiral's Cup. Spies and Allen are both members of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA), where Allen was recently elected Vice Commodore.

Both he and Spies have impressive sailing records of their own. Spies holds the Line Honours record time for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race with *Nokia*, and also won the race overall in 2003, skippering *First National Real Estate*, not to mention his many other skiff, dinghy and yacht titles.

Allen won the prestigious CYCA Bluewater Championship this year, following a consistent eight-month campaign with his Farr 52 *Ichi Ban*. He also finished second at the Farr 40 One Design 2005 Pre-Worlds and won the first two races of the Farr 40 Worlds.

— *Di Pearson/Sail-World.com*

## DREAM RACE

Russell Coutts won the inaugural Dream Race Mykonos match racing series, defeating Francesco Bruni's Luna Rossa team 2-0 in a light-wind final.

This event was organised by Sofia Bekatorou to introduce the world of match racing and the America's Cup to Greece. Reigning Olympic Women's 470 dinghy champion Bekatorou made an important step in her bid to learn the game of match racing when she beat Kiwi legend Chris Dickson in their match early in the series.

For Bekatorou, arguably the greater achievement was in having organised this regatta in less than a year, and in convincing so many top names to compete in an event with no history.

The young sailor's ultimate dream is to assemble a Greek challenge for the next America's Cup. "Of course we are in no position yet to talk seriously about such a project," Bekatorou admitted, "but this event has worked as a good introduction to the America's Cup. We proved as a nation that we can manage big projects, with the Athens Olympics last year, and I believe we could make a credible challenge for the Cup."



Dream Race series introduces match racing to Greece PHOTO: Kurt Arrigo/Rolex

Bekatorou plans to make the Dream Race Mykonos a regular fixture in the calendar.

This year saw two days of good winds, enabling some good racing in Beneteau 25 keelboats, followed by two days of almost zero breeze. Fortunately enough breeze came in to enable a quick final to be held between Coutts and Bruni. Chris Dickson was third and Santiago Lopez Vasquez of Desafio Espanol fourth. Best of the four Greek skippers was Theodore Tsoulfas, followed by Bekatorou. — *Seahorse magazine*



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## LATINS TOP IMS WORLDS

The title of 2005 Rolex IMS Offshore World Champion has gone to the Spanish JV57 *Azur de Puig*, owned by Marta Mas Borrell and helmed by Jose Maria Torcida, with America's Cup veteran Dee Smith calling the tactics in the Non Corinthian division.

The Spanish Farr 54 *Cam*, owned by Olympic medal winners Fernando León (Gold, Tornado class, 1996) and Kiko Sánchez Luna (Gold, 470 class, 1992), ended the championship second overall. Third overall went to the Italian GS42R *Movistar*, co-skipped by Lorenzo Bressani and Iker Martínez, gold medalist in the 2004 Athens Olympic Games, with Italian America's Cup veteran Tommaso Chieffi also in the afterguard.

Winner of the Corinthian division was the Uruguayan GS42R *Andalucia* owned by Santiago Mesa and skippered by Ricardo Fabini. Forty-one yachts competed in the event, with crews representing Argentina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Russia, Spain, Switzerland and Uruguay. — *Rolex Yachting*

## STAR EUROPEANS

Iain Percy and Steve Mitchell (GBR) won the ISAF Grade C1 Ringhals Star European Championship with a race to spare in Varberg, Sweden. Defending champions Frederik Loof and Anders Ekstrom (SWE) were unable to pull away from the Brits in the penultimate race giving the European title to Percy and Mitchell, and putting the Swedish team's long time lead of the ISAF World Sailing Rankings seriously under threat. Percy and Mitchell set up their victory with a terrific two races on Tuesday, when the pair scored two bullets to give themselves a 16 point lead at the top. Frederik Loof and Anders Ekstrom (SWE) secured second place in front of World Champions Xavier Rohart and Pascal Rambeau (FRA). Top three results:

1. Iain Percy/Steve Mitchell, GBR, 18 points
2. Fredrik Lööf/Anders Ekström, SWE, 21
3. Xavier Rohart/Pascal Rambeau, FRA, 26

— *Seahorse Magazine*

## AUSSIE SKIPPER WINS GLOBAL CHALLENGE

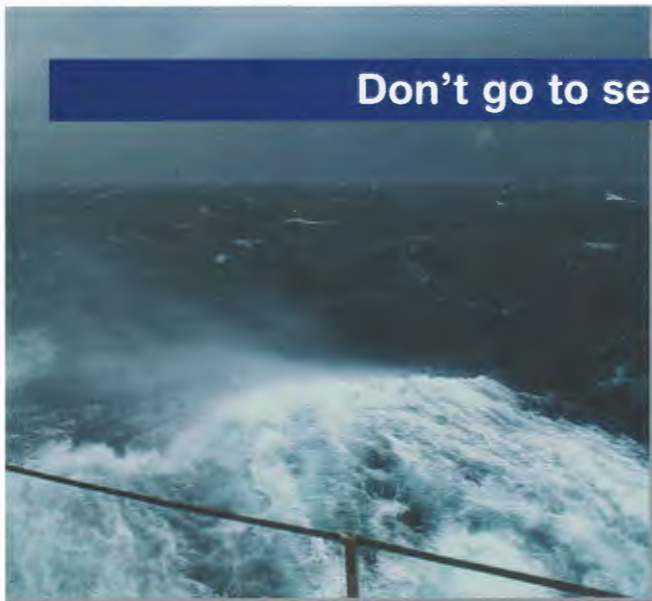
Australian Andy Forbes skippered *BG SPIRIT* to first place in the final leg and first overall in the Global Challenge 2004–2005.

The crew had a battle on their hands the whole way, particularly fierce on the final English Channel leg, but arrived first – just four minutes in front of *Barclays Adventurer*. Tens of thousands of friends, families and spectators packed the finish line from Southsea Castle all the way to Gunwharf Quays, the fleet's final berthing place. An air display, bands, grand carnival and other entertainment celebrated the fleet's arrival.

"I'm absolutely flabbergasted about the amount of people here today and the support out on the water; I didn't even think we were going to get across the line at one point," said Forbes. "I'm just proud to be part of them [speaking of his crew] ... I mean this is what it's all about. I'm just a skipper who drives the boat! These are the guys who sail the boat – 70 per cent of them are inexperienced and have never really sailed before – and here they are after nine-and-a-half months, 33,000 nautical miles and sailed around the world and in first place. Incredible!"

— *Rachel Anning*

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# NEW ON THE DOCK

The latest products and developments in the world of yachting

## Helly Hansen in Melbourne

Helly Hansen, the Northwegian performance apparel brand, is launching two new stores in Melbourne. Already trading is the new store at Chadstone Shopping Centre and soon to come is the flagship store at the Galeria Plaza (corner of Bourke and Elizabeth streets), right in the centre of the Melbourne CBD.

Helly Hansen has manufactured technical outdoor apparel for more than 127 years since introducing the world's first waterproof fabrics for commercial fishermen and dockworkers in 1877. Today the brand is recognised as a global leader in technical apparel and footwear designs for the full range of alpine and water sports activities.

Now progressive street-smart styles, innovative fabric techniques and proven performance are driving the brand's popularity among skiers, snowboarders, climbers, sailors, windsurfers and all cold weather and water sport enthusiasts.

Helly Hansen's winter 2005 line has included seven new design categories including V-Concept (the pinnacle of outerwear) and Fundamentals (eternal warmth).

## Henri-Lloyd branches into fashion

Henri-Lloyd has long been one of the leading marine technical clothing lines, with its gear used in many sailing events including the America's Cup. Now, after 15 years in the Australian marine clothing market the brand has entered the fashion market, with a nautical slant.

A two-day celebration at the Whitsunday's Hayman Island heralded the arrival of the UK's largest lifestyle name in the Australian market as the company unveiled its fashion range to the nation's leading fashion and lifestyle press.

Henri-Lloyd's first concept store opened in August in Sydney's North Shore suburb of Mosman. "At the moment, Australia is our fastest growing market," says Henri-Lloyd's Head of Marketing, Alex Burke. "Australian's embrace the coastal lifestyle that Henri-Lloyd's core values are built on."

The latest fashion apparel from Henri-Lloyd features the signature colour palette of red, white and blue, as well as white, surf, lime, coral, snapper and zest. The garments incorporate European



Henri-Lloyd makes a fashion statement

styling, cable knots, and traditional French sailor stripes. For further information, contact Burkemarine in Sydney, phone: (02) 9638 4333, email:sales@burkemarine.com.au

## Tacktick's trailable triumph

The Australian National Trailable Yacht Championships is a fiercely competitive series attracting the finest and best-equipped vessels. Line Honours in six of the seven races went to a Ross 780, an achievement due in part to the state-of-the-art Micronet system from Tacktick.

Winning owner Rod Caldwell said: "We are rapt with it, the system is awesome. In particular, the wireless wind instrument is fantastic because we are constantly dropping and raising the mast so 'wireless' is good!"

"In addition to the seven race regatta, we won a number of other passage races with the benefit of the system – especially the NMEA interface allowing BTW and COG to be displayed on a night



## Wine in a can

Glass wine bottles, like beer bottles, are not safe items to store on a yacht, so we sailors usually drink our refreshments from a can. As well as beer, we can now enjoy a premium quality wine in cans.

Barokes Wines uncorked history by creating Vinsafe – wine in a can. Last year the company won a silver medal for its Sparkling Chardonnay and a merit award for its Chardonnay at the Wine for Singapore Expo, making a significant impact on the wine market worldwide.

This year has seen a new innovative packaging design for the can and an expansion of varieties, aimed at those who like a drink while on a sporting excursion, typically sailing or playing social golf.

Barokes Vinsafe wine in a can range now includes Cabernet Shiraz Merlot, Chardonnay Semillon, Bubbly Cabernet Shiraz Merlot and Bubbly Chardonnay Semillon, each in a 250ml can with an easy to open pull ring.

when fog and smoke produced zero visibility. We had to rely on the numbers to get us through ... and it took us to victory."

The system aboard Caldwell's Ross 780 comprises speed, depth, compass transducer, wind transmitter and display plus two dual displays and an NMEA interface that connects to a handheld GPS. The system is totally integrated and, of course, coming from Tacktick is robust, reliable and wonderfully user-friendly.

For more information, contact the Australian Tacktick distributor, Oceantalk, phone: (02) 9981 9500 or visit [www.oceantalk.com.au](http://www.oceantalk.com.au)

## Seagoing tales on a CD

Author Julian Stockwin has released a special CD for Reading Groups in which he reads from his enthralling seagoing adventure tales about Thomas Kydd, a British Royal Navy sailor in the great days of sail.

The tales range from Kydd's first day at sea (book 1, *Kydd*) after being grabbed in his English village by an infamous Press Gang, and through his career at sea when he becomes an officer and a gentleman in his fourth book, *Quarterdeck*.

Stockwin, who served in the Royal Navy and the Royal Australian Navy, has received outstanding reviews such as *Publishers Weekly's* comments: "[His] richly detailed portrait of life on board and shore is engrossing and he knows how to stage enthralling action scenes."

Specifically designed for the marine environment, Oceantalk's SUPERdigi Mobile TV Tuner means that ghosting, blurred images or fading are a thing of the past.

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# SHIPBOARD THAI CURRY



Hugh Fitzhardinge comes up with an authentic Thai green curry suitable for serving on board a boat

**W**hen I was growing up, there weren't many Asian restaurants in suburban Sydney. In fact there was only one in my neighbourhood, Chinese. It specialised in the Anglo-Chinese dishes that Roy and HG like to make fun of – lemon chicken, sweet and sour pork, beef with black bean sauce and no. 46, fried rice.

Something happened in the early 1980s in Sydney – Thai food arrived. Here was a cuisine that was quite healthy and not at all stodgy. It had subtlety and class, with the fragrance of lemongrass, holy basil and kaffir lime. What's more, this cuisine suited our climate. Now, Sydney seems to have more Thai restaurants than anywhere outside Bangkok.

In Thai cooking there are four distinct flavours – sour, sweet, creamy and salty – and the secret of a good dish is finding the right balance of flavours. Generally, a Thai meal would consist of meat and vegetables served on rice, just like the five food group pyramid that I learnt about at school.

More recently, Sydney has taken Thai food and re-interpreted it. Thanks for this is due to David Thompson, who served remarkable food in his restaurant, Darley Street Thai, which has since closed. Thompson now juggles the running of Sailors Thai in Sydney with his Michelin-starred restaurant, Namh, in London. As with all innovators, Thompson has his followers, one of whom is Martin Boetz who worked for Thompson and now runs Longrain in Surry Hills.

Longrain takes Thai to new heights – try the betel leaves topped with chicken and smoked chilli, tomato and garlic relish (pictured). It's probably not something you'd cook at home, so here's a recipe for a simple green chicken curry that you can easily whip up and serve on the boat.

And remember, like good wine and yachties, curry improves with age. ■

*Hugh Fitzhardinge is a reviewer for The Sydney Morning Herald Good Food Guide*

## SIMPLE GREEN CHICKEN CURRY

### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons green curry paste (ready made)
- 1½ cups coconut milk
- ½ cup water
- 500g chicken thigh fillets, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 1 handful of green beans, cut into short pieces
- 6 kaffir lime leaves
- 1 tablespoon fish sauce
- 1 tablespoon lime juice
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- Fresh coriander leaves

### Directions

Heat the oil in a wok or heavy-based pan.

Add the onion and curry paste and cook for one minute, stirring constantly.

Add coconut milk and water to the wok and bring to the boil. Add the chicken, beans and lime leaves, stirring to combine.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until the chicken is tender.

Add the fish sauce, lime juice and sugar to the wok, stir to combine.

Sprinkle with fresh coriander leaves before serving over rice.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF LONGRAIN RESTAURANT

# INNOCENT BYSTANDER



## A favourite yacht name leads Paul Foster to some excellent wines produced by a new winery

I have an idea that *Innocent Bystander* was the name of a boat that sailed some years back with the RANSA fleet in Sydney. I'd always thought that it was a good name for a yacht. At this year's Good Food and Wine Exhibition, at Darling Harbour, Sydney, I saw the name again, but this time it was on a bottle of wine.

Innocent Bystander is the new winery at Healesville, in the Yarra Valley, in Victoria, that high-profile producers Phil and Allison Sexton have built and the four Innocent Bystander wines they showed at the Good Food and Wine Exhibition were very good.

Phil and Allison are busy people. Phil founded the celebrated Margaret River vineyard, Devil's Lair in the early 1980s and in 1997; he and Allison took the brave step of selling it to cross the Australian continent and establish a vineyard 50km east of Melbourne.

That vineyard climbs two ridges of the Warramate ranges of the Yarra Valley and in the process rises from 120 to 360 metres. They called it Giant Steps and its wines are much sought after. But making top wines from a single 115-acre vineyard wasn't enough for them and they set about establishing Innocent Bystander.

They decided they would build a winery of sufficient size to allow the creation of a range of wines they could source from fruit grown in other regions – approachable wines in volume.

"After three years of scrapping with local authorities, neighbours and the bank," says Phil, "we began work on the building in August 2004. Now it's operational and it's everything I ever wished for. In fact, it is the stuff of winemaker's dreams."

What he means is that he has lots of room and high ceilings that allow gravity flow. He has an overhead gantry system that enables the movement of tanks around, even when full of wine, and there is insulated storage for 3,000 oak barriques. "But the pièce de résistance," he says, "is the really big pizza oven – fired by vine cuttings, of course."

Even so, the winery wasn't quite finished for the last vintage and, as in previous vintages, there were difficult moments as equipment was juggled about.

"In fact, two of our top people had threatened to quit," Phil says. In order to save the day he had to promise that he would complete the building work by September 2005. He managed, and the impressive new winery is now finished and open to visitors. It is opposite the pasta shop on the Maroondah Highway at Healesville, Victoria.

**Innocent Bystander Pinot Gris 2004** Pear and peach flavours and true to the Alsace style, a silkiness of texture. The fruit is from Victoria's northeastern high country. Has the weight for chicken or turkey and in its maker's words is perfect for ABC – anything but chardonnay – drinkers. About \$20.

**Innocent Bystander Pinot Rosé 2004** Demonstrates structure and length and displays raspberry and red cherry flavours. Drier than most Australian rosés and suited to salmon or prawns. Yarra fruit. "We were dreaming of long afternoons in Provence drinking Bandol," Phil says. About \$16.

**Innocent Bystander Sangiovese Merlot 2004** In Chianti, in Italy, this blend is called the Super Tuscan. It has dust, licorice and plum aromas and is both sweet and savoury with dark berry flavours and ripe tannin astringency. King Valley Sangiovese. Merlot from Giant Steps. Delicious. About \$20.

**Innocent Bystander Shiraz Viognier 2003** A northern Rhône blend. Smooth, rich and plump with plummy blue and red berry flavours. It's sweet and spicy and not in the hot, jammy style. Shiraz from Heathcote and Strathbogie and white viognier from King Valley. About \$20. ■

• Paul Foster writes, teaches and talks about wine and has, over the last 10 years, been Wine Master at The Wine Society. Paul has two passions, sailing and wine, and reckons he can make a living out of one but can hardly afford the other.



The Innocent Bystander label is arresting

PHOTOS: COURTESY INNOCENT BYSTANDER WINES

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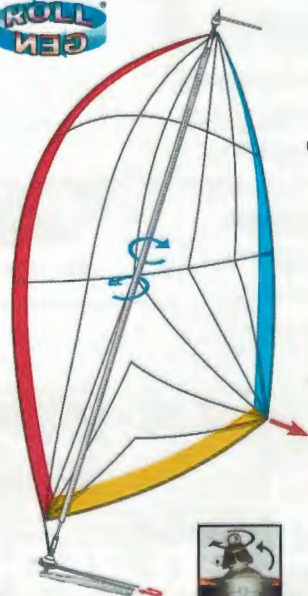
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\* marine incidents annual report 2004 MSO



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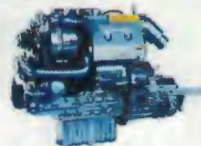
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# LAST THOUGHT

A warm, fresh tradewind, the Whitsunday Island group astern and amazing boatspeed – who could ask for more? Onboard shot of *Alfa Romeo* PHOTO: Christophe Launay

# OFFSHORE RACING CALENDAR

MAJOR AUSTRALIAN AND INTERNATIONAL OFFSHORE AND INSHORE EVENTS FOR 2005

## AUSTRALIAN

### OCTOBER

- 1 Short Ocean Race MHYC
- 5 St Arnou Twilight Race 1
- 7 Bird Island Race & Short Haul Night Race
- 8 Lion Island Race
- 12 St Arnou Twilight Race 2
- 14-16 Farr 40 One Design Regatta - Port Stephens
- 17 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 1
- 19 St Arnou Twilight Race 3
- 21 Flinders Island Race
- 22 Port Hacking Race & Short Haul Ocean Race
- 24 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 2
- 26 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 4
- 28-30 Rhodes Waterside Farr 40 Regatta (RPAYC)
- 29 Gosford Lord Howe Island Race (GSC)
- 31 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 3

### NOVEMBER

- 2 St Arnou Twilight Race 5
- 5 Gascoigne Cup Short Ocean Race (RSYS)
- 7 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 4
- 9 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 5
- 11 Cabbage Tree Island Race and Short Haul Night Race
- 12 Rotany Bay Race
- 14 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 5
- 16-20 Bavaria International Youth Match Racing Regatta (ISAF)
- 16 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 7
- 18 Rotary Charity Regatta Harbour Race
- 19 Short Haul Race to Pittwater (Morna Cup)
- 21 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 6
- 23 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 8
- 26-27 Savills SORC (MHYC)
- 28 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 7
- 30 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 9

### DECEMBER

- 3 Short Ocean Race
- 5 Mount Gay Twilight Series Race 8
- 7 St Arnou Twilight Series Race 10
- 10-12 Rolex Trophy - One Design Series
- 13 Big Boat Challenge
- 15-18 Rolex Trophy - Rating Series
- 26 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race

## INTERNATIONAL

### OCTOBER

- 2-9 Swans les Voiles de St Tropez
- 8-9 Hamble Big Boat Series 1, Hamble, UK
- 9-15 Swan 45 Gold Cup
- 15-23 King Edward VIII Gold Cup, Bermuda
- 21-23 China Coast Regatta, Hong Kong
- 22-23 Hamble Big Boat Series 2, Hamble, UK
- 22 Rolex Middle Sea Race
- 26 Hong Kong - Hainan Race

### NOVEMBER

- 3-6 Rolex Farr One Design Invitational, Miami
- 4-6 US East Coast IRC Championships, Chesapeake
- 5 Volvo Ocean Race 'in port' Vigo, Spain
- 12 Volvo Ocean Race Leg 1 Vigo, Spain - Cape Town South Africa
- 16-20 Pizza La Red Lobster Nippon Cup, Japan

### DECEMBER

- 10-12 Rolex Trophy - One Design, CYCA Sydney
- 15-18 Rolex Trophy - Rating Series, CYCA Sydney
- 12-16 Corum Melges 24 Worlds, Key Largo
- 26 Rolex Sydney Hobart Race
- 26-30 Olympic Classes Regatta, Palamos, Spain

### JANUARY

- 2 Volvo Ocean Race Leg 2, Cape Town-Melbourne
- 4 South Atlantic Race (inc Mini 6.5s)
- 8 Sotogrande Cadiz, Spain - Martinica
- 8 Corum Phuket - Singapore Race
- 16-20 Key West Race Week 2006
- 23-27 Rolex Miami OCR

### FEBRUARY

- 12 Volvo Ocean Race Leg 3, Melbourne - Wellington
- 19 Volvo Ocean Race Leg 4 Wellington - Rio

### MARCH

- 8-13 Acura Miami Race Week/TP52 worlds

### APRIL

- 2 Volvo Ocean Race Leg 5, Rio - Baltimore
- 13 China Sea Race
- 30-May 5 Antigua Race Week



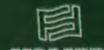
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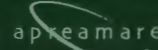
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