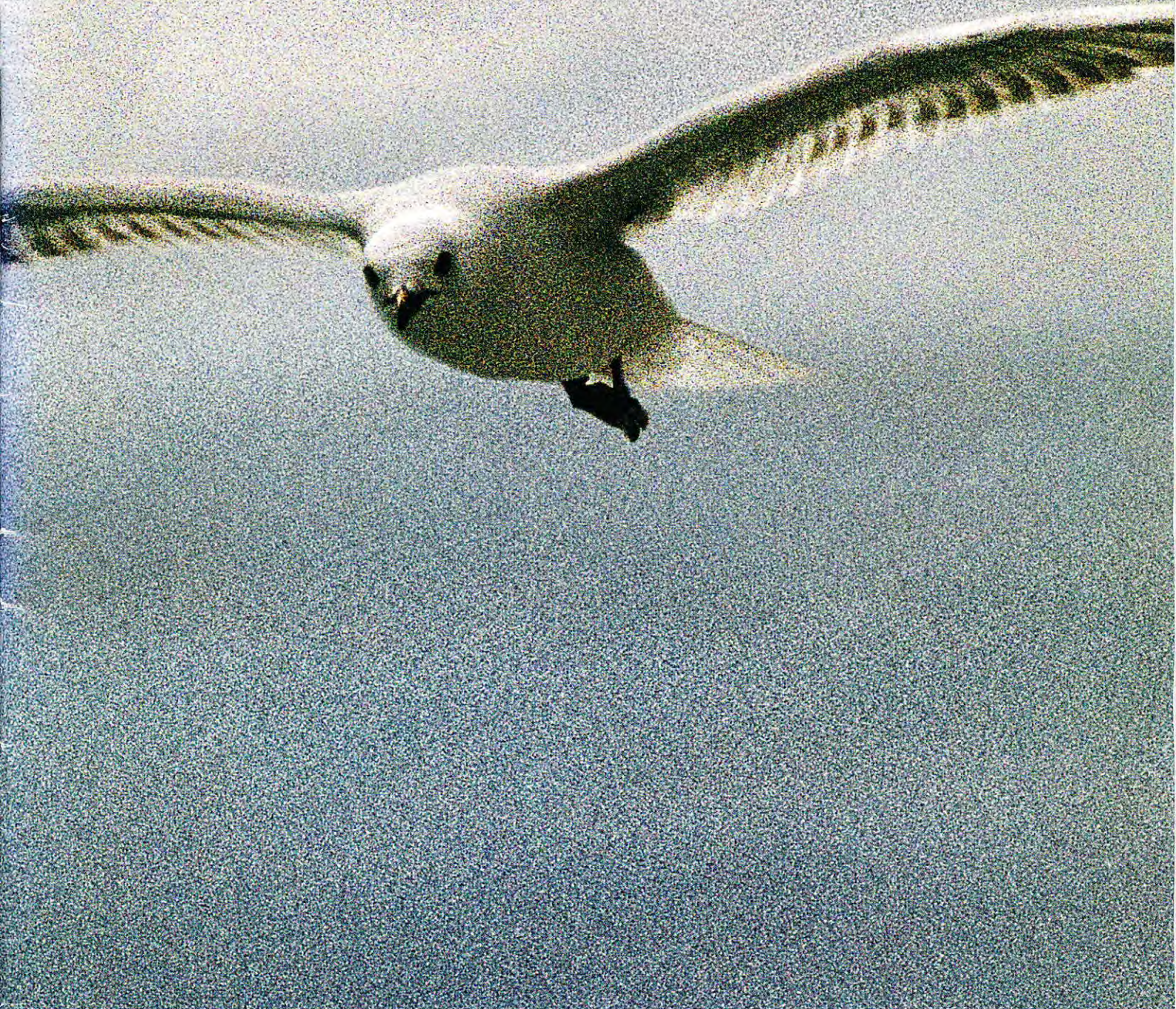


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the **Rip**

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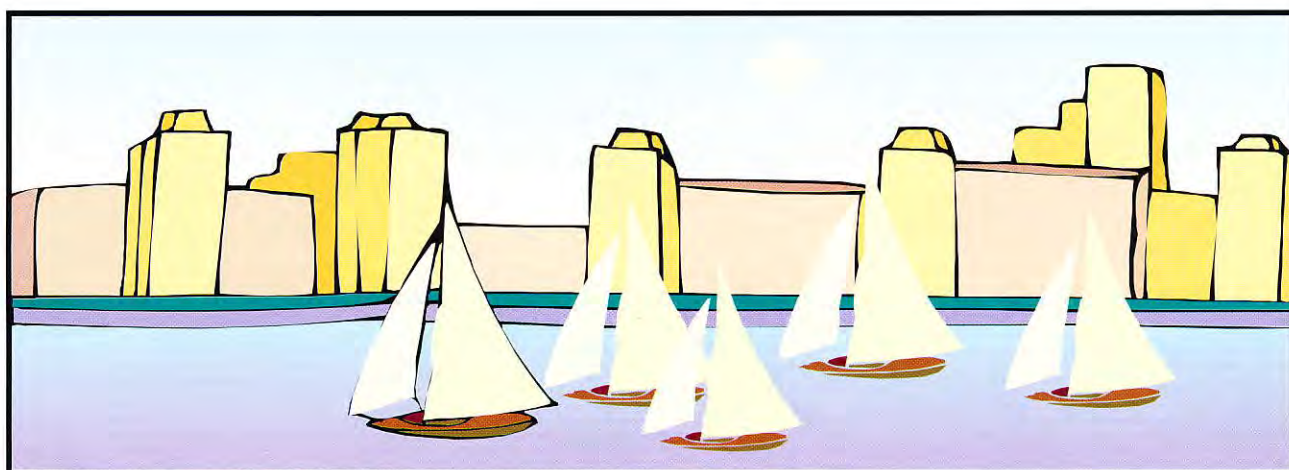
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24th November 2001

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the Rip

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www.sailingacademy.org.nz



Front Cover: The corporate logo of the Martin Bosley's Yacht Club Restaurant.

the Rip

THE RIP is the official magazine of the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club (Inc.)

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The opinions expressed in this Magazine are those of the individual author and not necessarily those of the RPNYC.

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ROYAL PORT NICHOLSON YACHT CLUB (INC)

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Governor-General of New Zealand

President: Alan D Martin

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Friday 3.00 pm - late
Saturday 10.00 am - close
Sunday & Public Holidays midday - 7.30pm
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(Note: These hours may be varied at the discretion of the Executive.)

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Honorary Racing Secretary:	Scott Atkinson	496-0489
Honorary House Secretary:	Anna Ward	025-787-724
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	John Field	495-6920
	Stephen Moir	381-1416
YNZ Delegate:	Arthur Stewart	384-5747
WYA Delegate:	Paul Cudby	025-421-374

Wellington...

...wild and windy

Opening day was a great reminder of sailing in Wellington.....wild and windy.

The second Ambassadors Regatta went off very well especially the formal part of the day with Rt Hon. Jonathan Hunt, the Speaker of the House, doing the honours and opening the Club for our 119th season.

President Alan and Shirley Martin once again hosted a magnificent brunch for all the guests with their usual aplomb. Thank you again for your continued support - it is much appreciated.

Unfortunately, due to the international terrorist attacks, most of the Ambassadors were officially in mourning and unable to participate, but did us proud by sending new silverware for the prizes, which were most impressive indeed. Thank you and we look forward to seeing you all next year.

There were a number of incidents on the water that highlight the need to be prudent and one could not help but notice the opportunity that exists for some 'on the water training' from the Academy. But it all contributed to one of the best opening days I can remember. Thanks to all involved.

A couple of weeks earlier we celebrated another significant event, not just the Champagne Breakfast but the launching of the new rescue boat, Te Ruru. Our Patron, Her Excellency the Hon Dame Silvia Cartwright broke the bottle in a very practiced manner and joined members at the breakfast.

A very special thanks must go to Stewart Thwaites and Bill Day, CEO of New Zealand Community Trusts, for funding this wonderful asset.

We welcome the introduction of a new era in the Club with the opening of the new Yacht Club Restaurant.

Martin Bosley and Gavin Bradley are the new owners and already we are noticing a huge change. Their professionalism and quality are sure to impress. Their attitude towards the Club is so positive. It is refreshing to work with professionals.

The first goals are to get the systems in place and getting the new staff trained then develop the Friday night meals and weekend café in the Wardroom. By the time you are reading this, these facilities will be in place. I can absolutely recommend the new restaurant and I invite you to come and enjoy this revitalised facility.

The new membership system was introduced at the end of the Winter Series and while there is still the odd gremlin it has had very positive results indeed with over fifty new members for September and October. Thanks to Donna for all her patience in getting this system in place.

It is good to see Boz, the Academy Director, back from his international sailing exploits. He was invited to join Lou Abrahams aboard his new Sydney 38 for the Australian Nationals at Airlie Beach, which they won. Then it was over to Hamilton Island where they were second of the 38's. So you can see he practices what he preaches. Of course there had to be a recovery period so Boz and Deb took their annual leave cruising in the Greek Islands.

I would like to welcome two new fulltime coaches to the Academy. Neil Murray who skippered CGNU in the BT Global Challenge and Gerry Booth who has been a part time coach for some time. With the Academy growth it is great to have Gerry full time.

It is good to see our Club well represented at Hamilton Island with Starlight Express and Pretty Boy Floyd

commodore's report



murray bridge



plus a charter by some of the Flying Boat and Nedax Crew. I understand that all represented the Club and themselves with some distinction even if the bar stories are only half true.

We have the Hitachi Data Systems Corporate Yacht Race coming up on 24th November. This will be a big event so get your sponsors and nominated yachts in early so you will not be disappointed.

On December 06th-09th we have our signature event of the year - the Line 7 Port Nicholson Regatta. This is the National ORC Club Championships so make sure you get all measuring up to date and training programmes under way for this great event. We have yachts coming from Lyttleton, Waikawa, Napier, Nelson and Mana so competition will be intense.

It was a bit disappointing that the Squadron decided to hold their inaugural National PHRF Regatta just two weeks before our established ORC Regatta. This has effectively precluded yachts from both centers competing in the other national event. I had intended to have our new yacht in Auckland along with at least four others but this is not possible this year. We will try to get the programme better coordinated next year.

The ongoing development of the Club and the implementation of the Strategic Plan is going well. There are a large number of people assisting with this process - thank you all. Also, as is the case when any-organization is developing, it requires a huge amount of cooperation from staff - thank you for your support, it is much appreciated.

See you all in the new Martin Bosley Yacht Club Restaurant or on the water.



of rules, regulations and stuff

The intricacies of running a boat seem to get more convoluted every season. Between the variety of statutory regulations and components of the racing rules, "relaxing" on the water appears to be a reasonably stressful pastime.

Harbour Regulations and Collision Regulations - and for the racers, the Racing Rules, Notice of Race, Sailing Instructions and Amendments. Grrr!

In truth, none of the sets of "rules" is deliberately written to cause difficulties. The business of boating and yacht racing is somewhat more complex than just buying a boat and setting out on the water. A good number of the "rules" are there for your protection, the peace of mind of your loved ones and for the protection of the Club.

In truth, the whole deal is really simple - just do the un-kiwi thing and read and understand the instructions.

The Club maintains a positive and open relationship with the Harbour Master, Maritime Safety Authority and Police. The common thread in these relationships is the prevention of accidents and incidents through understanding and education. Here are some anecdotes to put my comments into perspective.

A common example such as, "...that *** on the such and such a ship purposely

cut me off, couldn't they see I was racing..." takes on a whole new meaning when you speak to a Harbour Pilot with years of experience as a deck officer.

"This is not about ramming regulations down people's throats. I sometimes wish that over the years I had taken some video footage of negotiating Wellington Harbour. Even if I had, it couldn't show the feeling you get when you get close enough for a small boat to disappear from the radar screen. You know a boat is there, you don't know exactly where, and you know you can't stop or turn in a hurry. If only they knew..."

During the same conversation the failure of some Club boats to display navigation lights after dark was also discussed.

Another common example relates to offshore racing and the apparent reluctance of some boats to furnish accurate crew lists and shore contact details. Imagine our surprise when phoning shore contacts after a boat had been involved in an incident, to be told *"oh no, he's not on that race, he's on the couch next to me..."*

...Or perhaps the one about the boat that didn't make any radio reports for 36 hours on an offshore race. They thought it was audacious of us to growl at them, but simmered down when they were told that Maritime Operations had been 15 minutes from scrambling an

vice commodore's report



paul cudby

Orion, which fully fuelled would have had to stay aloft for 12 hours before being able to land safely.

... Or the skipper that cheerfully confided that he had signed a declaration confirming compliance with a safety category but didn't have a clue if he had all the gear.

Every season we debate a variety of those racing rules that are within our control to modify. Those that need changing get changed. Those that don't get changed are normally there for a good reason. As for the rest, they are beyond our control to change but not beyond your control to adhere to.

I appreciate in the modern day it is the done thing to question rules but my plea to you all is to keep that theory in the classroom. In the meantime, read and understand your obligations and put those obligations into practice. Throwing in a healthy dose of common sense is probably not a bad idea either!

The Club takes your wellbeing on the water very seriously. There is a fine line between some of the incidents reported already this season, and disaster or tragedy. Take care on the water this summer and if you are racing the best of luck.



a pause... ...not a cessation

Opinion at the last Skippers meeting indicated that most of those campaigning boats would appreciate a relatively short sequence of racing followed by a pause... ...not a cessation in sailing but a break from championship racing.

In response to that suggestion you will note from looking at the Sailing Calendar that the programme is broken up by a number of varied events. Some

of these events are competitive - some are not - but any boat on the Club register may enter. The events include a Poker Run, a Harbour Rally and a Predicted Log Race.

Also included as breaks in the championship calendar are the more traditional events such as the Veterans Race, His and Hers Race and the Single Handed race.

In addition to all these are two night

cruising captain's report



graham rowe

races, hosted by LBYC on Friday 29th February and Friday 05th April, 2002. These races were especially interesting last year and they test crews and systems in a way not normally encountered when racing in daylight.

Give these events a go... ...and afterward send your feedback to me.



members and their guests

Congratulations to all members on their foresight and vision in instructing the Executive to pursue the membership protocols being adopted now to welcome members and their guests to the Club.

This procedure has taken some time to complete as the database was also being updated and we had to be sure that our list of members was as accurate as possible. Obviously, too, all the new swipe cards had to be mailed out to members so that they could take advantage of member prices in the Wardroom as well as having a current membership card.

There was a concern in some quarters that there would be huge delays to enter the Wardroom. This has not happened to date. In fact, the process takes no time

at all for members who produce their cards as they pass through the door into the Wardroom.

At this point I would like to stress that this procedure is focussing on welcoming members and their guests to the Club and adding value to your membership as has been requested by members on many occasions.

Every now and then a person – more often than not a non-member – may express negativity towards this procedure but I can tell you that the majority of the feedback has been so positive and it has come not only from our newer members but also from members who have been around the club for a very long time.

During the summer when all the doors are open, I would like to ask all

rear commodore's report



cheryl ferguson



members bringing guests to the club to continue the tradition of taking them to the desk to sign them in. As I said before, this is not a policing procedure so anyone who feels that they may be slipping through unnoticed are using and relying on the goodwill of their fellow sailors and colleagues who end up subsidising those who have not paid their subscriptions. *Not a good look!!!*

Already the growth in membership has increased considerably and we look forward to this trend continuing.

Thank you all for your support.



our new restaurant is up and running

Isn't life interesting? It's a bit like sailing really - you can be flying out in front with your sails full and the next minute you're in a huge Chinese and wondering if the world is coming to an end!

Managing the Club is a bit like this too with staff members receiving consistent praise over the years then all of sudden those services and the commitment being provided are questioned. Still the Club has been here for nearly 120 years and whilst it is sad some clubmembers are looking at short-term solutions for long-term problems the Club will survive and eventually prosper.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Kirsty and Donna for the service and commitment they provide. Believe me, it can be the most

frustrating place to work at times however there are enough positive, open and helpful members to make the job worthwhile.

To those volunteers who question what we do and insist on telling us that they also have a "real job", get a life! Volunteering is all about putting something back into a sport you love and not expecting benefit above other members. In short, if you can't volunteer without complaint (as opposed to constructive criticism) or expectations, don't do it!

WARDROOM

Now I have that off my chest some of you will be aware we have had some hiccups with our point of sale system in the Wardroom. We are working through

chief executive's report



mike piper

this with software suppliers and Donna is doing all she can to remedy the situation. In the meantime please be patient and in time this will be an excellent and worthwhile system

RESTAURANT

Now we have our new restaurant up and running it is opportune to remind members to call the restaurant (phone: 385-6963) to quote for catering for all their functions at the Club. Martin and his team will provide excellent value for money **and** superb food and service to make all your functions at the Club a success.



WELCOME ABOARD TO THE NEW CORPORATE YACHT RACE SPONSORS - HITACHI DATA SYSTEMS

We are very pleased to welcome Hitachi Data Systems as the new sponsor of this year's Corporate Yacht Race, the major fundraising event for the Academy. HDS will bring a strong yachting enthusiasm with them as they were a major sponsor of *Stars and Stripes* Denis Connors' challenge for the 2000 America's Cup Race.

As a wholly owned subsidiary of Hitachi Ltd, Japan's largest electronics company, HDS is committed to providing the technological infrastructure for the world's most information-intensive businesses. In New Zealand, HDS has more than 55 employees with three offices in Auckland and one in Wellington.

Hitachi Data Systems is a leading supplier of storage hardware, software, solutions and services. It specialises in storage solutions for government, health, corporate, and education sectors.

Chip Dawson, National Sales & Marketing Manager states "Hitachi is excited about supporting the Sailing Academy and the RPNYC this year. We are looking forward to raising awareness in the Wellington corporate environment about the Sailing Academy and Hitachi Data Systems".

The race on **Saturday 24 November 2001** is an ideal opportunity to entertain clients and reward staff with an afternoon of sailing, a BBQ and party. Ring the Club office on 384 8700 for a race pack.

KEELBOAT INSTRUCTING TEAM GROWS JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER

With the start of another busy summer it is excellent to have our largest team yet of keelboat instructors ready to go. Nicki has returned from her Pacific Island travels aboard *Rhumblin* while Shaun has added a Tasman crossing to his experience along with a Hamilton Island Race Week. Mike is also back after winning the Sydney 38 Australian National Championships and having a sailing holiday in the Greek Islands. Dave returns from the UK to join his countryman, Neil, who we are very pleased to have here full time after finishing the BT Global Challenge. Mel has rejoined the instructing team, Gerry has started full time to work on the school's project and Jason has switched to keelboat instructing from the WBBC

sailing academy report



mike boswell, coach



dinghy programme. When combined with the experience of the evergreen Phill, it is a great team to start the season with and thankfully so because it's not yet November and all courses are booked out until the New Year.

THE ACADEMY TEAM FOR 2001/2002

Without doubt our biggest strength is our people and other than Lyn, as our awesome Office Manager, and myself you may or may not know all of the people who are now involved in instructing at the Academy. The following therefore illustrates the keelboat and dinghy instructing team for this year with obviously most of these people being employed in a part-time capacity.

Senior Instructors

Gerry Booth*
Neil Murray**
Phill Weeks
Shaun Sheldrake

Instructors

Anna Gatland
David Wilson
Greg Wright
Hayden Swanson
Jason Parkin
Melanie Hargreaves
Neil Boniface
Nicki Murray
Steve McDowell

Assistant Instructors

Craig Ryburn
Dave McGahan
Nick Lantz
Sam Melville
Sophie Lloyd
Tim Henderson
Tom Moody
Tom Taylor

* Gerry is this year responsible for the Schools programme

** Neil is this year responsible for the WBBC Dinghy programme

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Phill Weeks

An insight into one of the team Phill Weeks.

Phill Weeks has been an instructor with the Academy since 1995 not long after he left the Police. At that time his 'day job' was as a partner in the boat brokerage firm Capital Marine Brokers. In 1998, he sold his shares in the business in order to study Philosophy and Criminology full time at Victoria University. After completing his degree he worked briefly for Barton Marine before returning to the Police as the District Training Co-ordinator/Manager for the Wellington District.

In the time Phill has been with the Academy he has taught most of the keelboat courses on offer but has dedicated the majority of his time here over the past three years to the Intro Plus and Boatmaster courses.

He has owned and raced three different keelboats including the Young 88 *Heartbeat* which won the RPNYC Winter Series, and Roger Land Young 88 Trophy in the 1997-98 season. He is also a keen offshore yachting.

When not sailing or teaching Phill spends every second weekend with his 10-year-old son, Daniel.

DEVELOPMENT OF A MORE COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOLS PROGRAMME

For almost as many years as the Academy has been in existence we have tried to make sailing available to school groups. Unfortunately our lack of resources both physical (not having enough instructors and boats) and financial (limited in the amount we could offer at subsidised prices) has meant we have had to say "no" more than "yes" to school requests. One of our objectives this season is to investigate the viability of a more comprehensive range of options for schools that is sustainable year round.

The first part of this initiative is to find out what schools/teachers want and what will work for them and the Academy. A number of individuals who work in the teaching profession have in the past offered to help with trying to develop something that will work. With our decision to commit resources to this initiative we would really welcome your input so please give Gerry a call if you feel you are able to assist in any way with this project.

LEVEL TWO RACING COURSE ON TRIAL

At the time of writing we are in the middle of testing a new racing course designed to follow on from the Intro Plus. The key aspects of the course are that it involves participation in standard Club racing and is position specific. We have both boats involved and the aim is that it becomes another permanent course option.

COACH'S COMMENT – "LET YOUR OPPOSITION MAKE THE MISTAKES"

It is no coincidence that experienced sailors tend to win regattas as with experience comes the confidence of having been there and done that. 'Success breeds success' and there is nothing better than starting a race being confident in your ability to be successful. When this happens your mental approach is a positive one and you tend to be more conservative in your racing. Instead of looking for that large gain that will give you the win, but also comes with the risk of a large loss, you look to chip away rather than bang a corner. 'People don't win regattas - they lose them' often by taking risks they don't need to. It's a slippery slope because an early poor decision drops you back and motivates you to try recover your loss all at once, don't be tempted. So, rather than going out to "win" the race, next time you compete try letting just the opposition make the mistakes.



Thanks to the following companies for their support

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DATA SYSTEMS

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WILLIAMS & ADAMS
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PERFORMANCE



"Promoting and Developing Sailing in Wellington"

CLUB PROFILE - REAR COMMODORE CHERYL FERGUSON

by Dale Adams

Desexing onions in New Mexico may sound as if there could be no possible connection to Port Nic in Wellington but there is! When Cheryl Ferguson, our Rear Commodore, worked in the USA at what she described as 'therapeutic', her job was to walk down endless rows of female onion plants and when she discovered a male 'intruder', pull it out, break it in four and stamp it into the ground. Now, no one wants to frighten the Executive but with these credentials Executive Meetings must now take on a whole new look!

Cheryl first discovered the "thrill of sailing" six years ago when she attended the Sailing Academy. From there she sailed with the all women crew on *Distraction* and 18 months ago joined the crew on *Gucci*. She had always enjoyed most water sports and has kept up the tradition of spending time in the water – the squelching sound through the Wardroom usually means she has fallen in the water again although recently it's been with the help of her skipper!

Cheryl has been Rear Commodore for 18 months and prior to that House Secretary for a year. She never knew about the endless meetings she would

have to attend or some of the entrenched attitudes that she would have to contend with but has still found the position rewarding as well as challenging. *"It's a way to give back to the Club the support that it provided to me when I started out with this whole sailing affair."* When she took on the role, she had an idea of the workload but it was considerably undersold by what she calls some very experienced salespeople! They did a "good job" on her but she is quick to point out they have also provided a lot of support as well.

The other group of people who she feels she could not operate without is the House Committee. She is grateful to have such a *"supportive, enthusiastic, reliable and fun"* Committee and is thankful for their untiring support.

On reflection, bringing up a family and community positions such as a Victim Support Volunteer and long time supporter and Manager of the City of Wellington Pipe Band have prepared her for the role of Rear Commodore more than any career position. However PA at Lloyd's Bank in London, tutoring at Wellington Polytechnic, Hansard Reporter at



Chris Coad

Rear Commodore, Cheryl Ferguson after an unexpected "swim".

Parliament and Cheryl's current position working in Inter-Parliamentary Relations all add to her rich experience. So the next time you're in the Wardroom check out the smiling face – it'll be our Rear Commodore.

And if anybody wants more information about desexing onions...



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Steve Adersley, Phillip Bratton, Jane Godwin and Paul Barker.

It's time for a ball, or maybe that should read, time to have a BALL, with our Yacht Club. But before you can have this 'Ball', you must survive the expectation and anticipation of where you are actually going! How should you attire yourself? What about the hair? So many excuses to play at girlie stuff!

The only facts you have are: -

You are going by bus and they don't have EFTPOS or credit card facilities! Sounds remote doesn't it?

Everyone going to the Ball got to go to the Yacht Club first. (That's because that's where the buses departed from). A tickle of champagne to set the tone for the evening is awaiting and an inspection of the Ball-goers in their finery is an opportunity not to be missed. Wow, can RPNYC yachties really turn it on! Not only do these persons go out in all weathers dressed in their fine wet weather gear but they can also do penguin suits, Scottish formal kilt attire, (lets not go there...), starched white shirts and black bow ties (for the boys). Then there are the girls!

Well, what a dazzling, sumptuous display of class, beauty and elegance! There is the rumour that some girls were hard to identify in these disguises and confirmation of name was required to ascertain to whom one was talking to! Our members are multi faceted indeed!

So, inspections over, the call to the buses is made. Clearly, the bus drivers had been given a briefing by Chief Secret Ball Organiser alias Cheryl Ferguson.

Engines on and down Wakefield Street we go. Ah ha, turning left into Taranaki St - that could mean Brooklyn and the Castle! Into Vivian St - Yes, could still be Brooklyn. Left hand lane "Oooohhhhhh" say the busers, as the bus carries on toward the motorway, "No it's not the Castle!"

The motorway is easy (nowhere to get off is there?) until the Highway 1-2 split arrives. Yes, we're in the portside lane - somewhere out at Mana? Hang on. The bus driver makes a last minute lane change. The Hutt Valley is where we are heading! Or is it? Time for the Petone turn off. The busers start "oooohhhhhing" and "ahhhing" (it's amazing what a small amount of lubrication can do to one's vocal cords). And yes! Petone has won!

Well, we're running short of options now. There are some persons (nameless of course) who have had an instinct from the first. Thus far, every move made by the bus driver is confirming their theory.

What is to our starboard? Well, it must be Wainuiomata... or Eastbourne. Surely they have EFTPOS and credit cards there?

As the Wainuiomata turn-off looms up the busers again vocalise their anticipation.....and yes, Eastbourne it is!

There's no turning now, so it has to be here somewhere? Hang on, we've passed Eastbourne. Hello... we're stopping in the dark. No street lights. In front of the bus there is a gate and a gravel road! No wonder they don't take EFTPOS and credit cards, they don't even have a proper road either.

By now, many busers have an inkling of where the destination must be. A picnic at Pencarrow lighthouse, in intermittent dark, in a southerly? But



Liz, Austin and Mike



HDS sponsor Paul Wilton and partner.

luckily no; no one was dressed for a picnic. Along the coast a complicated 270 degree hairpin turn, up a steep hill designed for buses to get only just to the top and there, in front, was Pencarrow Lodge. In the dark gloom of a southerly lies the welcoming lights and warmth of the lodge!

Well, the evening starts getting a bit blurry from now on. There is music and dancing, scintillating conversation with the refined company, delicious food, and it would appear that the cost of lubrication might be an opportunity for barter! Well, we won't go there...

And, just like Cinderella, the coaches awaited on the stroke of midnight to whisk these yachtie ball goers away before they turned back into their normal wet weathered suited images!



THE MOMENT *FLATRON* PASSED US

by Susie Smith, Olympic Group

Location: Off Cape Palliser

Time: 12:00 ships time

The day had started off so well. We were in the lead, seventeen miles ahead of *Flatron*, flying along at twelve knots on a reach. We were due into Wellington by lunchtime, just before the worst of the expected bad weather would hit us. An enormous low was approaching; the isobars so close that on our blurry weather fax they appeared to be one solid band slashing across the South Island of New Zealand:

It had been a beautiful night. Plankton was caught up in the spray and blown over the deck like iridescent green fairies. We looked up at the night sky, scattered with stars, and knew that victory was truly within reach. After the high that we had been stuck in the day

before, and the frustration of seeing *Flatron* to the south clawing the miles back on us, we had put seven back on them over two scheds. We had held the lead for days now but with *Flatron* and *Compaq* chasing we knew we couldn't let up. We had been constantly looking over our shoulders, awaiting each new position report with anxious dread.

First a light was seen: the lighthouse on Cape Palliser. As the sky brightened, the mauve shapes of distant hills could be made out on the horizon. Dawn lit the building banks of clouds a fantastic red-purple above the gold-tinged skyline. Dolphins appeared and played alongside. I was smiling, inside and outside. Dry land and all that means to someone who has been at sea for over five weeks – non-dehydrated food, beer, a hot bath – was finally in sight.

Someone noticed that the main-sail wasn't flying correctly. The top batten

car had come out of the mast track sometime in the night, probably when we had been putting in or shaking out a reef. We needed to drop the main, hoist the trysail, and replace the car before finally rehoisting the main. We got the trysail up, but with twenty knots of wind we were severely underpowered, making only about two knots. I spent the whole time looking behind us expecting *Flatron* to appear any second on the horizon and speed past. I looked ahead to land – it all seemed so close. I had a sick feeling in my stomach. Manley worked with Jungle to replace the car and the main was rehoisted. *Flatron* could not be seen. I breathed a huge sigh of relief.

The wind started to increase. The grey skies closed in and became menacing; white caps appeared all around and the seas started to build. The wind was soon

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hitting forty, forty-five knots. It was watch changeover but we needed to change down to the orange storm sails - the trysail now had to go up for real as well as the storm staysail. Both watches worked together before my watch could finally leave deck to breakfast on whatever breakfast-type food there was left over - we had eaten our final day's rations yesterday. The sched showed that we had lost seven miles to *Flatron* through the mainsail problem but that meant we still had a ten mile advantage with about thirty to go. As the off watch, we went to our bunks to try to get some sleep.

It was 9:30am. The boat suddenly came up to wind with an ominous lurch and remained too upright. Loud flogging along with much shouting could be heard. Down below we just looked at each other - we knew that the headsail had blown without needing to be told. After checking we weren't needed, we lay back down, sleep now impossible. The noise continued

unabated; they were obviously having problems. We were being blown sideways at three knots by the large tattered flag suspended from our forestay - the remains of our number three yankee. They tried brute force, they tried winching it using the downhaul, but it would not come down.

As Trout came down the companionway to wake us up he just stood there on the bottom step. His face was that of someone who doesn't have anything more left to give. In a flat voice he said, "*We can see Flatron off the starboard bow*".

When we had gone off watch four hours earlier it had been rough. Now you could hardly see anything. It was blowing over sixty knots, hurricane force. Everywhere was white, the air solid with spray. You could almost see the wind itself. In its fury it was tearing the tops off the waves obliterating them to foaming streaks. The noise was deafening: the high pitched scream from the rigging, the crashing of the bow

through the steep waves and the ever present flogging of the remains of our headsail. The boat was heeled right over, the leeward winches under water. For the first time since leaving Southampton five months earlier I was scared. And then I saw them. As we came up on a wave there off to starboard was a faint orange shape - *LG Flatron*.

Manley shouted out that we would heave to in a final attempt to get the headsail down. I was to take the leeward staysail winch. Anyone not with a job was to go below. I nervously took up my position, waiting to be washed backwards down the deck by the incoming waves. The words of our weather router during our heavy weather briefing kept going through my head - "*always make sure you keep some boat speed up. If you don't and the sea is beam on, the first wave will take you over, the second will knock you down*". We were about to put ourselves in that position deliberately.

We hove to. The foredeck team went



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forward yet again and finally managed to haul in the remains of the sail. They lashed it down still hanked on and came back tacked back onto course. *Flatron* could no longer be seen. They had passed us.

We sailed on. The wind gusted to 66 knots. A wave came over, knocking the boat down flat on its side with the spreaders touching the water. I was underwater, whether from the wave coming from windward or leeward I don't know.

At last the wind began to ease. A gap appeared in the blanket of cloud and the sun came out. The procession of waves instantly changed from their menacing grey to a deep sapphire blue. Once again we could see the coast, Palliser Bay. This was our final outside chance – we had ducked right inshore to find some shelter from the waves and hoped that *Flatron* might have gone too far out on her tack.

Down below looked like a sail junkyard. Sails had been left simply

where they'd been dropped through the hatch as we hadn't had the time to do anything else. Hanks had been lost and the leech line had come out of the staysail. People still in drysuits were lying amongst them, asleep where they dropped, but ready to go on deck in an instant if needed. With the sunshine people came back to life. Hanks were sewn back on, sails repacked, just in case we needed them.

A new noise was heard – that of the press helicopter's rotors. People looking at the photos afterwards saw pictures of a team hiked out on the rail, still racing despite the conditions, fighting to the bitter end. We were; the whole crew giving its all.

The wind continued to abate and visibility improved. We saw *Flatron* ahead of us at the entrance to the heads. We would not catch her. Reduced winds meant sail changes were required. Trysail down, main up, reefs out, staysail for storm staysail, a headsail up. Behind us in the distance we could see *Compaq*,

orange storm sails still flying. A quiet had descended on the boat. The disappointment was a live thing that gnawed low in our bellies. In any other situation we would have been overjoyed to be coming in second but at that moment it seemed empty.

As we came through the heads and into the sheltered sunshine of the harbour it suddenly didn't matter so much any more. We had survived the rigours of the Southern Ocean and proved ourselves equal to the challenge; made our dreams a reality and rounded the infamous Cape Horn. Us ordinary people had achieved extraordinary things. We had given it our all and more besides. We had not missed out through a lack of effort. We had lived up to our team motto of being *LARGE*. As we came onto the pontoon to a rapturous welcome from our friends and family, as well as the people of Wellington, we were a proud crew in second place.



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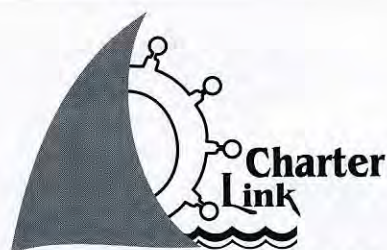
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The Olympic Team leaving Wellington

BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE WIND DOWN

by Justine Maddock, Olympic Group

Two months after the finish of the BT Global Challenge I am now enjoying being back at home in Wellington. Today is exactly one year since the start of the race. This is a significant day. For the last five years we have been counting down the years to the start and now I am counting the years since the start. There is no doubt that this was an experience of a lifetime for me. I really am struggling to think of something that I can do that will compete with this experience. We certainly had some ups and downs along the way but it was all worth it.



Olympic Group passing the English War Ship the Iron Duke off the coast of Argentina

Along the way we had some very interesting and exciting experiences. Off the coast of Bermuda we ran into a yacht that was heading to Antigua for a regatta. The skipper just happened to be an old friend of our skipper, Manley. They decided to get a closer look and motored towards us. They circled us for an hour or so, threw us a few beers and said their farewells. Another time we were sailing down the coast of Brazil when we had to sail through a large group of oil rigs. This was a fantastic site to see. We were able to make radio contact with one of the rigs and had some humorous

conversations. They looked at us and we looked at them. Just before we reached the Strait of Le Maire we were found by a helicopter from the English war ship, the *Iron Duke*. The helicopter radioed for the war ship to come over and visit. We had another exciting day talking by radio to both the helicopter and the war ship. These are only a few of the many different vessels and people we came across out on the water. It really is a small world when you are out there, especially when you think you are in the middle of nowhere, then along comes a good friend of the skipper!

The biggest high for me personally was coming into Wellington on that wicked horrible day in January. Although we did not come in first as expected it was still a fantastic welcome from Wellington. The next biggest high had to be leaving Wellington. We had an exciting battle out in the harbour as we rounded several buoys before leaving the harbour in first place. We were lucky enough to have Murray Bridge on board and along with his expertise we were able to show Wellington that we were able to race competitively. The third biggest high was arriving back in Southampton at the end of June. We had a great race from La Rochelle up to Southampton. This leg took only four days but was fought by all boats very aggressively. We were lucky enough to hold onto fourth place into Southampton followed very closely by *Compaq* who were only 15 seconds behind us.

The atmosphere in Southampton when we left was exciting but it was more exciting when we returned. We had achieved our goal of sailing round the world!



Olympic leaving under promotional spinnaker



AND THE ANNUAL LEG WRESTLING AWARD GOES TO...

by Tony Chamberlain

Participants in this year's annual Champagne Brunch were welcomed into the Club wardroom *Love Boat* with high expectations of a repeat of last year's entertaining and interactive Fawty Towers environment. The 100 plus cruise guests included Club patron, Her Excellency the Hon Dame Silvia Cartwright, Rev Bob Peters, Bill Day, Stewart Thwaites and other notables fresh from the launching of the Club's new chase boat – *Tē Ruru*.



Viivi Ronko, *Slinky Malinki* crew member, was awarded the 'Keen As Mustard' award.

Fun expectations were heightened when Kim McMorran was volunteered into the *Love Boat* team as Isaac – a character that he played almost too naturally at times! The *Love Boat* characters worked diligently to enliven the brunch atmosphere but the sparkle of last year's performance was just too hard to match. However, the awards ceremony again provided an interesting and humorous focus for this annual event.

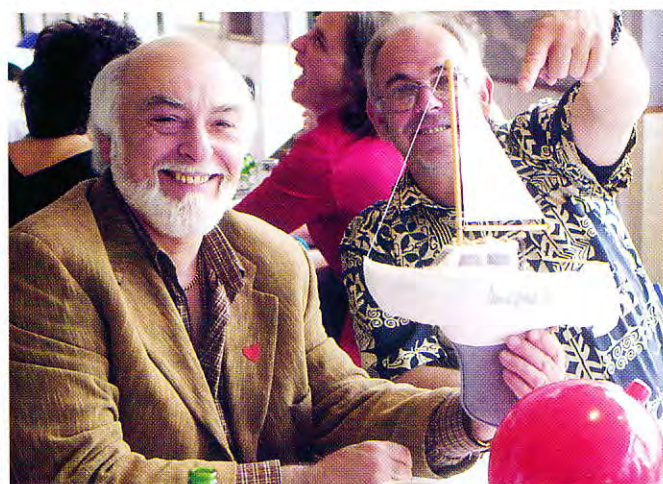
The Boat of the Year was awarded to *Starlight Express* in



Andrew Taylor demonstrates Leg Wrestling.



Justine Maddock accepts the personality of the year award on behalf of herself and fellow BT Challenge competitor Helen Couling.



Skipper Peter Kirby, *Imagine II*, shares a reluctantly accepted Velco Island Bay Mark.

recognition of its outstanding achievements during the year. In accepting the award a very proud skipper, Stewart Thwaites, acknowledged the contribution of his crew and his appreciation of the Club's support.

Awarding the Personality of the Year, Commodore Murray Bridge took the opportunity to commend the endeavour of Club members for their involvement in international events. Justine Maddock, on behalf of herself and Helen Couling, accepted the award for their



Captain Kimbo of the *Love Boat*.



Chris Coad

Andiamo Skipper Andrew Taylor



Donna O'Connor

Prior to the annual Champagne Breakfast our Club Patron, Her Excellency The Honourable Dame Silvia Cartwright, PCNZM, DBE, officially names and commissions the new PIB *Te Ruru*.

participation in the BT Global Challenge. Obviously surprised, and somewhat lost for words, Justine recommended the experience as positively life changing (with the absent Helen a good example we are told). She thanked the Club for its recognition of their efforts and acknowledged the support of the many boat buddies and supporters who had helped to make it all possible.

Perhaps it was not surprising that a previous Commodore, well known yachting and president of Yachting New Zealand (indeed someone who should know better), was not present to receive the Training Wheels award. This award recognised the unique achievement of *Charisma II* in ramming (in broad daylight) the ever present, immovable, and rather obvious Chaffers Marina sea wall. There is a rumour that the rather embarrassed skipper, Arthur Stewart, was attending to a personal zipper at the time of the collision!



Chris Coad

Starlight Express Skipper Stewart Thwaites accepting the Boat of the Year award for an outstanding season on both national and international sailing circuits.

Still muttering about the intolerance of those unhelpful skippers and crews who were upset by the challenge of rounding a sailing mark, Peter Kirby, the skipper of *Imagine II* reluctantly accepted the Velcro Island Bay Mark award. Expertly crafted by the artiste lobby of the House Committee, the award gave the

Imagine II (table) crew ample opportunity to analyse their achievement. Apparently it is not as difficult as you think to collect and sail away with the Island Bay mark – but it is much more difficult to let it go again!

The Keen as Mustard award went to Viivi Ronkko, a member of the *Slinky Malinki* crew, who in real fireman style had pulled on her wet weather gear over her pyjamas in order to make the boat on time for the race start. It is not clear how this came to be known or indeed what it is about that crew that encourages this extraordinary performance.

There was one champagne brunch activity that escaped the attention of most – the *Andiamo* Leg Wrestling challenge. With attendance restricted to those members who were still partying into the early evening, there is little doubt that the feature match between Mandy Smith and Lesley Hamilton was an event worth waiting for. According to the event promoter (and high school champion), Andrew Taylor, Lesley emerged the clear winner but not before a number of would be contenders had been defeated. Rumour has it that a number of the participants are suffering from post event trauma and are unlikely to be contesting the title next year!

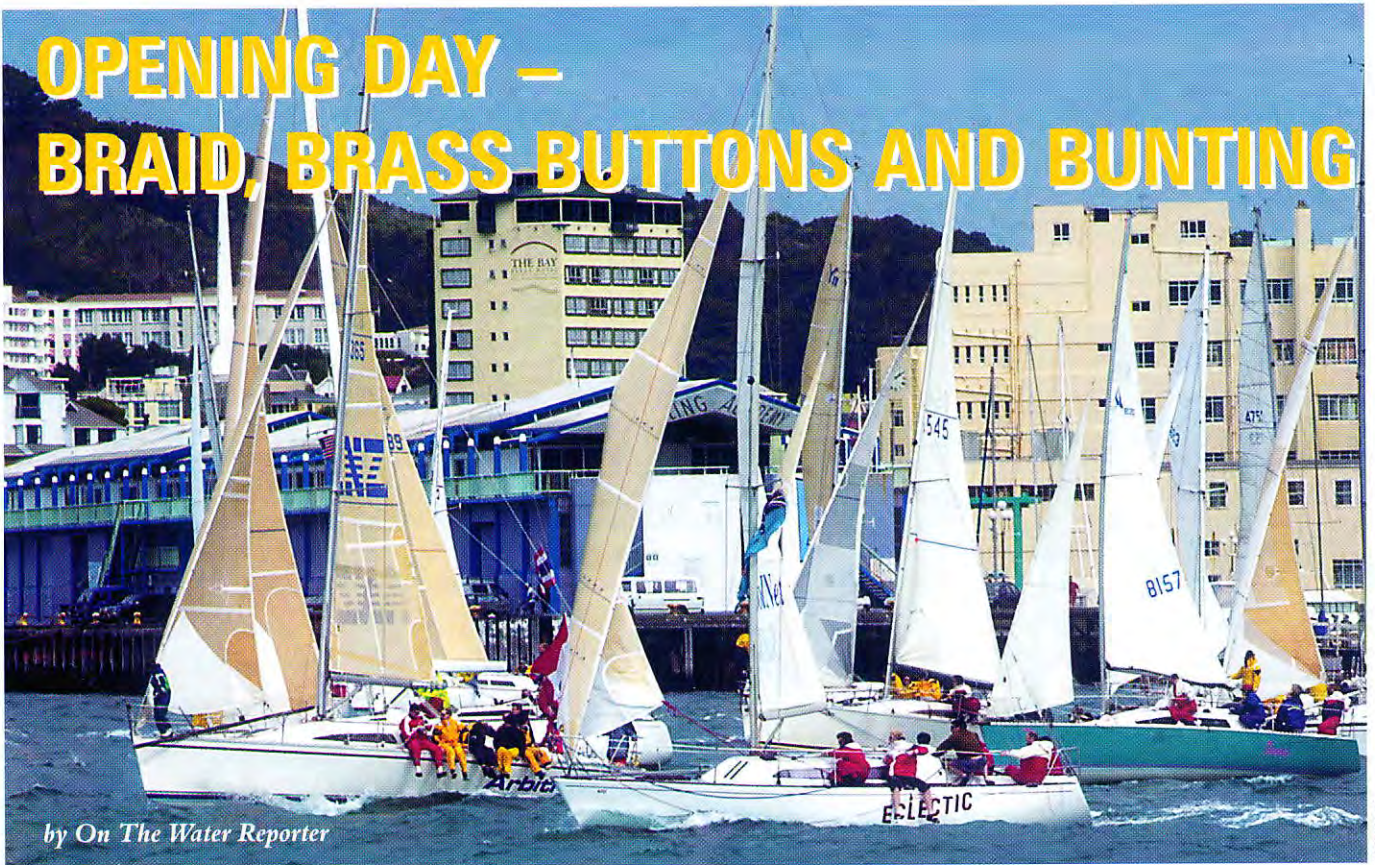
Special thanks to Cheryl, Anna, Phillipa, Jo, Linda and club staff for another successful calendar event.



Chris Coad

Is this our illustrious Boatmaster conducting his own private christening of *Te Ruru*?

OPENING DAY – BRAID, BRASS BUTTONS AND BUNTING



Chris Coad

by On The Water Reporter

The early morning hustle of the Office Team and members of the House and Sailing Committees scurrying to dress the Club gives way to the aroma of bacon and coffee as another season grinds inexorably closer. Members and guests arrive, ushers usher, sponsors sponsor and members member.

With the last sailing event of the previous season a dim memory after a break of 5 whole weeks and the first regatta of the Wellington season completed a distant fortnight ago,

anticipation is high. Crew and skippers are poised like coiled springs, eager to shake the torpidity, which has threatened to engulf their every fibre.

After a fine and succulent brunch, which was enjoyed by all, the time was here. Bristling braid and brass buttons in they strode a sight to behold. The words were said and the Burgee broken.

Yippee, here we go again. Another season is under way. As if on cue, the wind god served up a healthy dose of north wind and the race starts.

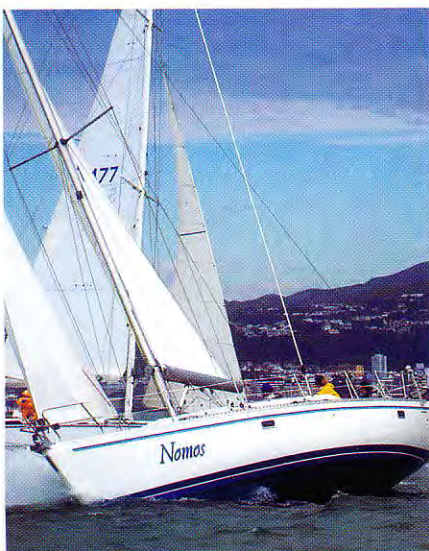
Bang! Ooh, that can't be good. *Pretty Boy Floyd* skids out on the start line, driving into *Andiamo*. Damage to both, an inauspicious start to the season.

Meanwhile, out on the racecourse, the rest of the fleet makes their way round the mark at Point Jerningham for their first beat of the season. In the shifty, gusty conditions most make hard work of the leg to Ngauranga.

Starlight Express rounds first with *Andiamo*, still composing themselves, second around the mark. A gaggle of 35 and 40 footers follows. The stable of Young 88's and Farr 1020s were also enjoying a good mix-up.

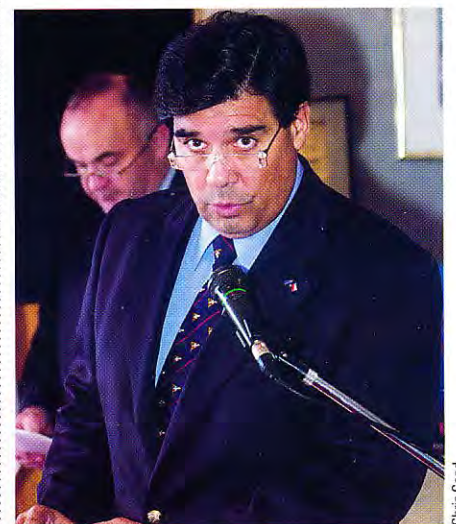
This was a new course with boats running down from Ngauranga to a mark off Point Halswell then turning to beat up to the new Horokiwi mark. The run to Halswell was heaven and hell. Heaven if you could handle your spinnaker, hell if you couldn't (and purgatory if you didn't try).

Flying Machine treated the onlookers to a broach of mighty proportion; *Nukawai* bettered that effort in proportion, duration and drama. Had it not been for the possibility of tragedy



Chris Coad

Terence Arnold's President's Division boat *Nomos*



Chris Coad

H.E. Ambassador Carlos Appelgren
(Ambassador to Chile)

in the latter boat's efforts, this reporter may indeed have seen some humour in the situation.

At this stage all thoughts of watching the race were abandoned. *Nukawai* was clearly in dire straits. Laying on her chubby mid section, with the rudder and keel out of the water, and the spinnaker wrapped round the forestay with the top still filling, this boat was not coming up in a hurry!

As the situation progressed, a valiant but foolish attempt to free the spinnaker by shimmying along the horizontal forestay by one of the crew produced the terrifying (but inevitable) result of man overboard!

Well oil, beef hooked (say it fast) – you couldn't see that coming!

Such a commotion had these events caused, the spectator launches were standing by to recover the swimmer. Well done to the team aboard *Acheron*.

By this point aboard *Shalimar*, standing by to assist had caused one of our embassy guests to have a mighty fall. On the way back to the marina and waiting ambulance, there was time to catch a glimpse of *Starlight Express*, *Andiamo* and *Flying Boat* powering down from the Horokiwi mark. Ah, the sight of boats in control – pure poetry in motion.

This reporter had to wait until much later to hear of the efforts of *Maranui*, *Tabasco*, *Kahukura* and the many others, which performed brilliantly in the tough conditions.

With silverware and product to burn, prizegiving was a glittering affair.

Credit to the prizewinners in the Rutherford & Bond Opening Day Race and the Ambassador's Regatta. Credit also to the Embassies of Chile, Mexico, Brazil, Peru and Argentina for their generosity and support.

Thanks to Rutherford & Bond Toyota for the efforts of your staff and the sponsorship you provide. Port Nick members, if you want to be involved with a winning team make sure you involve yourself with Rutherford & Bond.

And a super big thank you to Alan and Shirley Martin for hosting the club guests at the Presidents Brunch.

So Opening Day is over, the coiled springs have sprunged, the torpor dissipated. How did Opening Day score? First collision, first man overboard, first ambulance, oh.....and first race for the season. Lets get rid of the rest and stick with racing Port Nick, but thanks for a wonderful day.

Editors Note – While the opinions expressed by On the Water Reporter are not always shared by the club, On the Water Reporter did express concern about the potential for tragedy if the man overboard had not been witnessed by spectator launches. In particular the boat the crew fell off was not in a position to render assistance, nor to have called for

assistance or maintain a lookout to observe the position of the MOB. On the Water Reporter is of the opinion that on any other race day this crew may well have become another drowning statistic. The Club shares this opinion.



Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt, Shirley Martin OBE and Commodore Murray Bridge

Chris Coad

Results

Club handicap

1st *Starlight Express*, 2nd *Flying Boat*, 3rd *Maranui*

Ambassadors Regatta

1st *Starlight Express* (Russia), 2nd *Flying Boat* (Argentina), 3rd *Maranui* (Singapore), *Flying Circus* (Peru), *Andiamo* (Cook Islands), *Kahukura II* (United States of America), *Cervantes* (Papua New Guinea), *Arbitrage* (Indonesia), *The Guarantee* (Switzerland), *Floating Free* (Iceland), *Manhattan* (Philippines), *Southern Belle* (Thailand), *Flying Fish* (Mexico), *Marishka* (United Kingdom), *Gucci* (Israel), *Tabasco* (Chile), *Slinky Malinki* (Brazil), *Pretty Boy Floyd* (New Zealand)



Kerry Prendergast (then Deputy Mayor) Rex Nichols and Executive member Stephen Moir enjoying the hospitality of Club President Alan and Mrs Shirley Martin OBE at the annual Presidents Brunch.

Chris Coad



Phill and Kim Brattons, SAP sponsored boat, *Eyes Wide Open* heads of *Can Do Too* at the mark.

Chris Coad

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Lining up for a good start.

by Brett Bennett onboard *Distraction*

Racing as two divisions with separate start times but combining the results over the entire fleet results in a different approach to normal divisional racing. We discussed this on *Distraction* prior to the series starting and agreed that we would just have to sail as well as we could in every race while keeping an eye on the other 1020s racing. What this actually turned out to be was match racing with *Charisma II* in each race; something quite different from what we had discussed and agreed!

Winter racing also brings challenges in having the same crew available for all races. The attractions of snow skiing or warmer climates result in a number of 'ring ins' being required to keep the crew numbers up to the level required, seven in *Distraction's* case.

Race 1 was no exception. As I was unable to race due to issues at work relating to the electricity crisis Gavin Goddard was given the task of getting the best out of the boat and crew. I was quite glad to miss the race as it was sailed in a cold southerly of 18 to 30 knots with rain. *Pretty Boy Floyd* cleaned up on line and club handicap, with *Nedax Backchat* winning the battle with *Flying Boat* across the line and scoring first on PHRF and ORC Club. *Distraction* finished 6th across the line, 49 seconds ahead of *Charisma II* to score a 5th on PHRF and ORC Club. The well-sailed Y88 *Breakfast* recorded a faster time around the course than the two 1020s for 5th on line and 4th on ORC Club.

Race 2 was an interesting race. There was no wind at the scheduled start time but a light southerly started to fill in and

the race got under way 55 minutes late. The wind continued to build during the race and by the time the boats were on the second run the breeze was up to 25 knots. On the final beat the breeze continued to increase and at the top mark we were recording 35 knots. *Pretty Boy Floyd* was first home followed by *Flying Boat*, *Nedax* and *Arbitrage*. On *Distraction* we had our usual battle with *Charisma II*. Buried at the start we could only watch as *Charisma* established a good lead over us on the first beat. We managed to catch up downwind and got in to a tacking duel halfway up the second beat only to be forced away to the unfavoured west, which enabled *Charisma* to stretch out again. On the second run we gybe set and picked up some good gusts. These coupled with two good gybes and a Chinese gybe from *Charisma* saw us in front starting the 3rd

beat. By this stage we were down to number 2 and full main. *Charisma* had not been able to change and was still carrying her number 1. With the increasing wind we stretched our lead while *Charisma* reefed her main. The final run home under main and number 2 saw speeds of 12 knots plus and we ended up 2 minutes 36 seconds ahead of *Charisma*, scoring 2nd on PHRF and ORC Club. Sixteen boats failed to finish.

Race 3 was sailed in a moderate southerly. Right from the start we were locked in a close tussle with *Charisma*; tack for tack, gybe for gybe around the entire course, never more than a few boat lengths in front. Eventually we finished 29 seconds ahead. *Frid* sailed extremely well to claim 1st on ORC Club, we were 1st on PHRF and 3rd on ORC Club, *Charisma* was 5th on PHRF and 2nd on ORC Club. Our main rival on ORC Club and PHRF, *Nedax*, scored a 7th and 5th to give us some encouragement that we could complete the double.

Race 4 saw the helm back in Gavin's hands as I was enjoying the warmth of Fiji. *Pretty Boy Floyd* had departed for the Hamilton Island regatta so that was one less to worry about. The race was sailed in a moderate northerly and *Charisma* had her nose in front for almost the entire race, however a bad spinnaker drop at the last mark let *Distraction* though. *Distraction* maintained her lead to finish 34 seconds ahead, 1st on PHRF and 5th on ORC Club. The Y88's had a great race on ORC Club with *Legacy II* taking out 1st, *Breakfast* 2nd and *Slinki Malinky* 3rd. *Nedax* finished 3rd on



Gloomy overcast skies can't put a dampner on good sailing days.

PHRF and 4th on ORC Club to set up a great battle for the final race.

Race 5 was sailed in a northerly that fluctuated from 10 to 30 knots. We had gone out early to practise and had run down with the small spinnaker doing 13 knots, so decided that was the one to go for in the race. The race itself started in 25 knots. We quickly established a jump on *Charisma* as she had on her # 3 while we were carrying our # 2. Ngauranga did its usual good job of significantly reducing our lead as the wind lightened

right off and our choice of small spinnaker did not look good as everyone else put up their large spinnakers. Positioning the boat to gain most advantage of the gusts saw us maintain our lead and we



Chris Coad

Slinky Malinki helmed by Mark Gordon.



Chris Coad

Veteran (and very experienced) skipper, Phil Hartley, helming President's Division boat *Frid*

stretched out again over the next beat. The big spinnaker took us home in style, with a big shift halfway down the run enabling us to gybe and run straight to the finish line at the start box end, 5th over the line.

Charisma lost ground on the final run to finish 12th on line.

Results: *Nedax* finished 1st on Line, 2nd on PHRF and 1st on ORC Club, we were 1st on PHRF and 3rd on ORC Club, so the overall result was a win to *Nedax* on ORC Club while we were second, a win to *Distraction* on PHRF with *Nedax* second. *Breakfast* was the overall winner on Club handicap.



We lead, others follow

Doyle Linton Sails
Chaffers Marina

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Fax (04) 384-8011

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All the best to all the crews competing for the Crews Cup in the future.....and remember rules are rules!



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CREWS CUP

by Bruce Askew & Bill Brambleby



Although the Crews Cup is not one of the Clubs oldest trophies the Crews Cup never the less has been competed for since 1938. It was presented by PR MacMillan Esq for an annual race between A & B class yachts, which now means all classes of keelboat.

The helmsman is to be a regular crewmember of the yacht for the previous divisional races provided that he hasn't helmed a yacht during that season.

The cup is to be held by the winning crewmember for a period of one year but is to remain the property of the Club.

A Crews Cup could be described as one of many yacht clubs more important trophies. It gives a crewmember the opportunity to try their skills at the competitive helm of the yacht he has been sandpapering and sailing on, in for some cases, many seasons.

By studying the list of previous winners it often appears this momentary "power of command" leads many a crewmember to acquiring his own yacht.

The choice of crewman for the occasion is usually made by the rest of the crew in a democratic manner but sometimes the owner seizes the opportunity of defusing the most critical of his crew to almost everyone's advantage.

The list of winners features many well-known Club members of long standing; people well known to us all in various eras.

The first winner in 1938 was Bill Mason who built *Malua*. In 1941 the *Wakarere* won, sailed by Bill Fisher who later built *Ruawaka*. *Restless* was an early winner in 1948 but her skipper was unnamed. 1949 Barry Hargreaves sailed *Mariri* then went on to build *Solveg* who in turn won in 1972 helmed by Trevor Manning. *Astral*, owned by Brian Millar in 1953, was sailed by Les Thorstenson, who although he was never a gun yachtsman rose to owning a hotel in Patea. In 1958 *Atlanta*

won sailed by Gavin Loe, our Picton Port Captain. In 1960 Peter Prendeville, sailing *Shemara*, was the winner. In 1969 Arthur Parson won the Crews Cup sailing on *Kotuku*. Arthur Parson was a character well known to many members and sadly passed away earlier this year in Australia.



John Duurloo Current owner

Kotuku

Other recent winners were Chris Urry (*Virgo*), Jim Cottle in 1978 (*Odette*), Dave Catchpole (*Nizam*), Chris Sutton (twice on *Pugwash*), Richard MacAlister, Jamie McDowell, Geoff Herd; and we all hope the list continues to grow. It is actually one of the many reasons that the Club retains its prime interest as a yacht club.

And on a different vein now, when looking through the archives for any information that could be added to the above we discovered a few interesting snippets.

One notable snippet was an editorial from an old RIP by John Mansell. He brought to our notice to the fact that Wellington is a windy place! The year in review produced 187 days where the wind exceeded gale force (which is officially 35 knots) up to October 31st, 29 of those days were in October. It doesn't blow like it used to in the old days, or perhaps this recent photo below shows it still does.

There was also a photo (pg 22) of the start of a race from Point Jerningham taken by Grant Scoones showing an almost perfect lineup on a perfect day. In view of that it may not





Sea Spray photo

Editorial

IT'S official!

This year, and the spring in particular, is the windiest on record. 187 days with winds over gale force (35 knots) up till October, and 29 of these were out of the 31 days available in that month. Apparently it is not El Nino that is doing it this time but a close relative named La Nina. Giving these violent weather phenomena cute names doesn't really help, as anyone who has lived through a tropical revolving storm named Freda or Gertrude will testify.

And, anyone who has survived this spring and still retained their enthusiasm for both living in Wellington and trying to sail here could be rated as either a true stoic, a born optimist, or both.

Unfortunately the Met. Office, with their budget cuts, user pays, and sparsity of reporting stations, haven't always got it right as I discovered to my cost when delivering the yacht to the South Island for the summer. The forecast northerlies of 15-20 knots were 25 by the time we reached the Outer Buoy and 35-40 past Karori and most of the way across the Straits. We heard a belated gale warning while having the tripe knocked out of us under double-reefed mainsail alone. Fortunately, apart from losing a headsail over the side and getting a thorough soaking, nothing went wrong.

The same could not be said for another day recently when the weather took a particularly nasty turn towards the end of a harbour race. A serious and potentially-tragic collision took place between two yachts, resulting in critical injuries to two crew members.

Both the yachts involved were well founded and powerful 36 foot racing yachts, and the collision could not be blamed on any inherent fault in the boats themselves. Rather they were both overcanvassed for the prevailing conditions resulting in loss of control. Coupled with an admitted failure on both sides to keep a proper lookout in a narrow waterway with many yachts in close proximity, the inevitable collision occurred.

It is significant that many skippers realised that their yachts could not handle the storm-force winds and steep seas and prudently retired, and other, far smaller, yachts carrying an appropriate amount of sail remained under control and completed the race.

We are used to sailing in strong winds in Wellington but it must never be forgotten that the basic rules of seamanship should always apply and skippers have a serious responsibility to not only their yachts but also their crew. The preamble to the NZYF Safety Regulations for Category One to Four racing yachts states the case as succinctly as anyone: "The safety of a yacht and her crew is the sole and inescapable responsibility of the owner, who must do his best to ensure that the yacht is fully found, thoroughly seaworthy, and manned by an experienced crew who are physically fit to face bad weather. . . ."

"... It is the sole and exclusive responsibility of each yacht to decide whether or not to start or continue to race."

Or as Joseph Conrad put it, "I have known the sea too long to believe in its respect for decency."

JOHN MANSELL

have been the crews race.

Another very interesting turn up is an original Club Rulebook (1883). Apart from having rules that cover most of the niceties of running a successful club there is also an amazing list (269) of numeral signals. The Club had its own code as shown below and some of the more interesting combinations are:

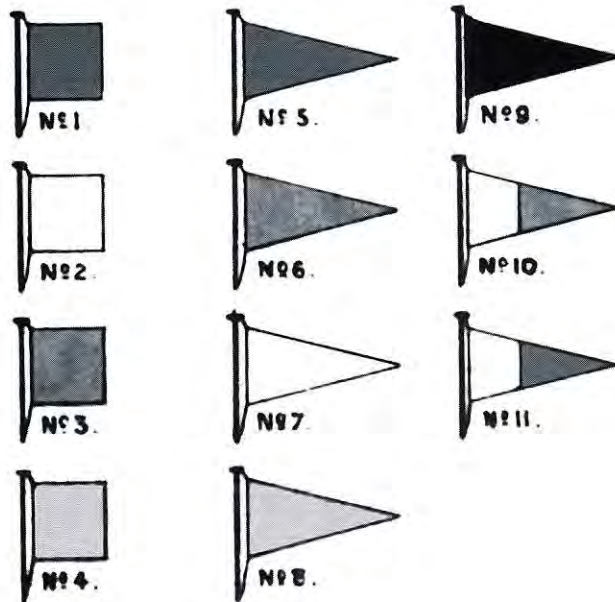
- No 38 - *I have shifted my ballast*
- No 60 - *Come and take breakfast*
- No 83 - *Have you got the RPNYC code?*



- No 103 - *Distress - are you in?*
- No 120 - *Fish - have you caught any?*
- No 174 - *No*
- No 214 - *Set your spinnaker?*
- No 239 - *Have you any spirits onboard?*

Plus many, many more fascinating (and somewhat amusing) signals.

SIGNAL CODE.



I wonder if the yacht in the photo (pg 23) had the presence of mind to fly No 42 "*Is the landing easy on the beach?*" Or No 8 "*I am aground*". Aren't today's VHF's marvellous!

There was also some misplaced correspondence regarding protests, or perhaps nearer the mark, apologies. The letters used some quaint turns of phrase. One from the Hon Racing Secretary to EWP Bucholz that ended..... "*I should esteem it a favour if you would so do at your convenience*". They were asking for an explanation for a mishap (collision) and an apology. Their reply commenced..... "*I am totally in receipt of your favour of 29th Nov and in reply*". Nice isn't it!

In 1964 the Sailing Committee roasted the fleet in general



claiming that everyone could be disqualified at any time for their lax behaviour, notably no entry fees paid, no entry forms at all, no registrations, unnotified alterations, no sail numbers etc. Read the rules they say! A few disqualifications work wonders. Just like smacking cheeky kids - you know you have to do it once in a while.....and some things just never change! The following is an extract from that circular published in 1964.

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Hamilton Island 2001

Sail *Flying Boat* – No Go

Ship *Flying Boat* – No Go

Fly *Flying Boat* – No Go

Charter a boat – Way to Go!!

After much deliberation on the best way to charter a boat for Hamilton Island Race Week 2001, Auckland Connections suggested we contact Jeni Tidmarsh from Sail Connections in Sydney. By chance, she came back within a day with a Beneteau 40.7 (a beach ball) just out of the wrapping – what a find!

Numerous emails between Sail Connections, travel agents and accommodation providers ensued – and finally, everything was organised – thanks Steve and Mal. Having changed the arrangements only 54 times we all arrived at the same time in Hamilton Island along with thousands of other yachties. The crew was made up with a nucleus of the *Flying Boat* crew (Paul, Steve, Graeme, Jan, Mal, Andrew, Mike) but as we were missing a drink's carrier we invited Bonk (Tony Phillips).

There was some trepidation about the lack of communication regarding the confirmation of the accommodation reservation (this was written over a bottle or two of wine!). The accommodation was five star: a four double bedroom townhouse with a garage (essential for those who have to escape the snorers) with two stunning decks overlooking Dent Passage and the Marina (perfect for early morning breakfasts and late night drinks).

The rules were set early. The welcoming cocktail party set the scene

for the week when the sponsor's representative informed the gathered masses that the previous year 22,000 bottles of Hahn Premium Lager had been drunk. The challenge was set..... This challenge was only topped by the Beneteau agent informing us that there was a compulsory debriefing from 5-6pm nightly for all Beneteau Skippers and Crew in an open air marina-side bar. From then on the nights became a blur.

Day one, twenty-eight degrees, cloudless blue sky, T-shirts and shorts, and 6 knots of breeze – a pattern that was set for the rest of the week. We took *Panacea* out for a test sail and heard the first quote of the week – how important can local knowledge be? With 4 knots of tide, little breeze and an uncharted moving rock (or was it a whale), the answer to this question soon became quite clear!

Race One, 32 miles, hot, little wind, and the finish line placed up a veritable river. We learned that 32 miles can be a very long way in no wind but became experts in back eddies, presenting the keel to the tide, and that only charter boats can go inside anybody else. Needless to say there were very few finishes in the six-hour time limit. There was, however, plenty of wind at the after match function. The quote of the day from Rick "So bats do crap when they are flying" (Rick Menalda in a white shirt).

Race Two (the long race) was another beautiful day of light breezes and a stunning sunset off Hayman Island. We



Mike Cackoen

very much appreciated Mal's night time reef navigation via chart plotter. One untrusting crewmember asked whether we could go any closer – reply – if you want to jump off and run alongside – go ahead! We also discovered that second hand local information can prove quite handy at the end of a fifteen hour race in no breeze. Thanks, Hoggie, it was hugely gratifying to pass all those boats at anchor while taking your advice to go early across the tide.

The following day was our lay day when we discovered that the damage done to our bodies from nine days of sailing was nothing compared to the one hour of full-on *Flying Boat* vs *Flying Boat* (plus a couple of token locals) beach volleyball competition.

Race seven ended at Whitehaven Beach – described as one of the world's most beautiful beaches. A statement difficult to challenge. When we arrived the party was in full swing and the Queensland clothing was evidently very much appreciated going on the multiple requests for binoculars.

Transportation on the island – there are only buggies. You can't race them, rally them or roll them – despite much trying from our crew! Very handy, however, for moving Australian wildlife off the road. We can't name names but several notable Wellingtonians had issues with the island constabulary re Australian Driving Etiquette. Needless to say they spent the rest of the week



Mike Cackoen

Flying Boat crew enjoying the warm Aussie weather.

walking. Essential equipment for serious partygoers.

At this point it would be appropriate to make a brief comment on the competition. Those with a \$600K budget were in bed at 11. Others, like ourselves, stuck to the time tested rule of being in bed before the cockatoos start their morning chorus. There is no need for an alarm clock in the great Australian outdoors. The sound of the Australian cockatoos is only exceeded by the sound of two drunk Australian women found on our deck at 2am. Say no more.

We were, of course, not alone. Wellington was well represented by *Pretty Boy Floyd*, *Starlight Express*, ourselves, as well as many other



Flying Boat skipper Mike Calkoen

Wellington and ex-Wellington personalities firing up the startline.

For those of you who really want to upset your bank managers the only possible improvement would be to do the Hogg's Breath Week at Airlie Beach the week before Hamilton Island. That way you're certain to get a week of strong breezes.

If you want a fantastic week in the sun, great sailing with some of Australasia's top boats in a relaxed and friendly environment with an outstanding after match programme, Hamilton Island cannot be surpassed. Tip of the week: the 50kg of HPX we lugged 4500km to Hamilton Island would have better off stayed at home!

See you there next year...



LIFE IN A MARINA

by Dale Adams

When Peter and Pat McHaffie decided to live on their launch *Colonsay* at Chaffers Marina in Wellington 18 months ago, little did they realise that at Defence Headquarters it was generally accepted that they wouldn't last six months! Having the Chief of Naval Staff live on a boat just didn't fit into the mould that everyone had of them but what they didn't take into account is the attitude that Peter and Pat have. *"We thought it would be more fun (to life aboard)."* said Pat.

As living on a canal barge in the UK in their retirement years, although some way off yet, had been one consideration it was a natural choice to bring *Colonsay* down from Auckland and set up home on her in Wellington. They are both amused by some people's reaction when they discover that they live on a boat but with a beautifully appointed stateroom, large living area and necessities such as a washing machine and dryer, you could think you were in a modern apartment anywhere in the city. But living amongst boat people can have its amusing side. Walking along Chaffers Marina one

morning dressed in his white Naval uniform, Peter was asked what charter launch he operated! Ever the diplomat he replied *"Well actually I run the ships that you own."*

However being promoted to Rear Admiral 18 months ago didn't improve his handyman skills as he readily admits. It's always with great amusement that Pat knows when she finds a hatch open in the deck, a tradesman will soon be



Pat and Peter McHaffie

called to fix the damage then repair the original problem!

Peter's impressive Navy career has taken him from training on the Chilean Navy sail training vessel *Esmeralda*, which is due to visit Wellington again early in December, exchange service in the Royal Navy on *HMS Arrow*, and

study at the Canadian National Defence College. He has been posted to several HMNZ Ships including, *Paea* (a fisheries launch, which he commanded as a young Lieutenant), *Waikato*, *Taranaki*, *Canterbury* and *Wellington* (his frigate command) along with being awarded an OBE in 1992. In spite of such a distinguished career and prominent position, Peter's relaxed and down to earth manner, along with his sense of fun makes him and Pat popular visitors to the Club.

It was Peter's keen sense of humour that caused a stir in the Hauraki Gulf a few years ago when hiring a launch to take his family cruising. More than once he had to reassure the staff he had enough experience to take one of their launches for a week's cruise. They looked rather relieved when he wrote Commander under occupation on the form. *"Oh, you won't have any problem out there will you sir?"* *"No."* replied Peter very seriously, *"But I am wondering where I'm going to fit the other 239 people who usually help me!"* They still gave him the boat.

We can only hope that when he sails in the Bacardi Rum Races on Friday nights he won't have too much trouble finding room on the yacht for these 239 people.....



EZ STREET HEADS OF TO NOUMEA

by Ken Burt



EZ Street and crew member Richard Clausen in the viaduct basin prior to the start of the race.

The return of the Auckland to Noumea race yacht on 19th May 2001 (last raced in 1986 by the Royal Akarana Yacht Club in conjunction with the Cercle Nautique Caledonien) saw a reduced fleet of 14 yachts due to the unfortunate clash of dates with the Auckland to Fiji race being run by the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron.

EZ Street racing under the banner of the Timaru Yacht Club (also a member of the RPNYC) was the only entrant from Central Southern New Zealand. Having been delivered from her home base in Picton in 4 days, time was spent in readying the boat for the race.

A new B&G chart plotter was plugged in to the navigation system and a new gennaker taken delivery of. Careful consideration had been made of the race and the anticipated conditions to make the sail choice and subsequent need to revalidate the ORC Club rating.

The RAYC ran compulsory safety briefings along with the standard skippers and navigators briefing. Social functions were enjoyable as ever, capped off by the farewell festivities on the

dockside on race day morning. These included a bevy of cancan girls along with a French band, champagne and fun. Sitting on *EZ Street* watching the show proved a distraction for some but the sight of a lazyboy on the foredeck of one yacht had us wondering about the plushness of some entrants fittings down below.

At 1200 the seasoned campaigner *Anticipation* led the fleet from the Viaduct to the starting area. The breeze was building slowly from the west and at 1400 start time was 25-30 knots.

On the way to the starting area the crew on board settled into a final team talk and a general tactics talk including start tactics. The crew consisted of Bruce Lund (owner), Ken Burt (skipper and navigator), Terry Miller (keyboards and galley slave), Richard Clausen (foredeck), Paul Cherry (helm and trim), Dennis McManaway (helm and trim), Matt Kerr (main), Rob Clifton (mast) and David Rowe (trim).

The start cannon was fired by the French Consul Pierre Gaston from the quarterdeck of the *HMNZS Hina*. John Lidgard aboard *Nimble* took start line honours. Aboard *EZ Street* we carried full main and #3 headsail reaching through the heads at 9 knots. Followed by spectator craft the fleet made its way out of Auckland on the way to New Caledonia. With the wind slowly dropping out as night approached we

settled in for a pleasant sail along the coast while Terry, our resident chief cook and bottle washer, fired up the oven to reheat the first of the six days of prepared meals put together so well by his wife Dawn.

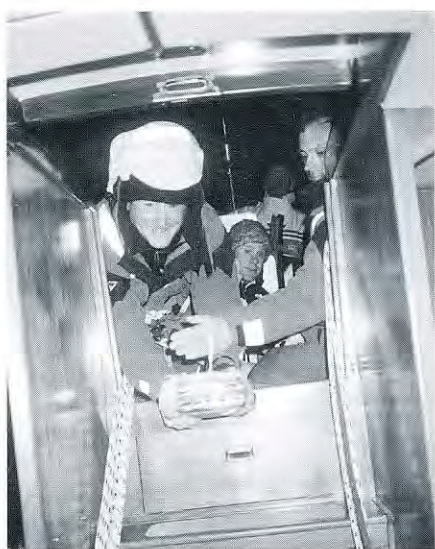
By 0400 on 20th we had covered 105 miles (average speed of 7.5 knots) and were abeam of Cape Brett. This began the 864-mile leg to Amedee Light and was the last point of land at New Zealand. With a rhumb line of 315 degrees (M) and a wind that was building slowly and varying between 205-230 we became optimistic about a good fast ride. The forecast provided at the briefing was looking good for a fast race, which added to our expectations. The downside was that we knew there were boats that would get up the track faster in these conditions but the crew worked hard to squeeze the speed.

For the next 24 hours winds build up to 39 knots for a brief period and we managed to cover 220 miles (9.2 knots) with a number of headsail changes and reefing the main. The expected wind change to enable us to get the spinnaker out did not quite happen and the forecast was now looking decidedly dodgy.

Midmorning the wind started to drop and clock forward. The forecast went in the bin. By mid afternoon winds were shifting up to 40 degrees from west



EZ Street crew at New Caledonia prizegiving. L to R Ken Burt, Denis McManaway, Rob Clifton, Richard Clausen, Matt Kerr, Terry Miller, David Rowe, Paul Cherry (missing is owner Bruce Lund) (Paul is an Aussie who flew in especially for the race)



EZ Street owner Bruce Lund celebrates his 63rd birthday at 2200hrs about 30 miles of Cape Palliser on route to Auckland for the start of the Auckland Noumea Race.

to northwest to east. This continued until late in the evening. The barometer had started a downward slide and rain portended an approaching front, which was not forecast. Unbeknown to us a small low was developing and heading our way.

At 0000 on Tuesday 22nd we were in rain and the winds now had moved further right from the northeast. Watch change at 0400 and shortly after that we were hit by 40-knot squalls, which seemed to come from two directions. The low had arrived! Amidst the scramble to get the headsail down and reduce the main two crew members suffered injury, one badly bruising his leg and the other receiving facial injuries as he was thrown onto a primary winch by a wildly gybing main. By the time the boat was settled down and on the right course to get into the right quarter of the low it was time to take stock of damage. Apart from a few broken cars on the main halyard track the main issue was attending to the injuries. During the time we were having problems two other yachts were also in trouble, both breaking main booms.

1200 Tuesday and we were on track reaching at 7 knots. We had covered 164 miles in the past 24 hours and were out to the right of the rhumb line. With the wind now settling down to about 15 knots from the east the question was what the weather was going to do now.

The wind continued to drop during the afternoon and into the night to 8 knots with shifts up to 60 degrees along with rain.

By midnight we were halfway along the ocean leg. In the next 5 hours of Wednesday morning the wind settled into the southeast and picked up to 25 knots, enabling us to get back up to 9 knots of boat speed. Seas had become confused with a southwesterly and a southeasterly swell making this a little difficult on the helm. Midday and, at last, time for the kite! Eight hours of spinnaker and on track saw us chew up 70 miles but this could never last. The wind died away overnight but Thursday morning saw it return from a more easterly direction. Up went the gennaker and stayed up all day with the wind dropping away to very little.

There is a guaranteed way to bring the wind back. Cook a nice roast! Just as it was coming out of the hatch the wind returned but this time from the northwest. We hoped that this was a wind shift that would continue to clock left and made a tactical decision based on the weather pattern hoping that it would take us into New Caledonia. Just after dusk we crossed tacks with *Touchdown* as she headed out to the left behind us.

With the wind slowly moving left and building to a nice warm 16 knots during the night we headed straight up the track and sighted New Caledonia at 0810 on Friday 25th. The aim now was to finish before 1400 NZST so that we could complete the race under 6 days.

Sliding up the reef alongside New Caledonia with the spinnaker up and averaging 9.5 knots was certainly welcome after the sometimes-hectic ocean leg. The unusual (for New Caledonia) wind direction from the southwest enabled us to carry the kite in the entrance - gybing a few times to avoid the reefs - and make our way from Amadee Light to Noumea, 14 miles away, still flying the kite.

It was a beautiful day. The final leg allowed us to reflect quietly on the race although Terry, having raised the French courtesy flag, rendered his own fine rendition of *Le Marseilles*. Gybing through the entrance to the marina at the CNC we crossed the finish line 145.18.26 hours after starting - a little over the 6 days we had hoped to beat.

Fastest time went to the New Caledonia based 17 metre Crowther cat in 113.34.25, while the fastest keelboat was *Antaeus* at 123.03.08 closely followed by *Elliott Marine* at 123.52.24, then *Ondine VII*, *Anticipation*, *Cruise Control*, *Blizzard*, *Touchdown*, *EZ Street*, *Noumea*, *Internautic*, *Nimble* and *Paladin Steel* with *Bushido II* having retired.

At the wharf we were met by two doctors who quickly whipped our injured crew off to hospital for treatment while we were assisted through the customs and immigration by Gavin our boat buddy - an expatriate Kiwi living in Noumea. He was to look after us very well in the days that followed and certainly earned his honorary crew status bestowed on him at the end of the stay.

A fairly hazy 24 hours followed but by all accounts it was most enjoyable in the CNC. *EZ Street* was to stay on and cruise the Isle of Pines in the company of a number of French boats in an organised rally.

More of this to follow in Part 2 ...

P.S. Bruce Lund has since sold *EZ Street* and she will soon be racing the coasts of Australia.



RPNYC Skipper and "Race Chaser" Dawn Miller.

STARLIGHT EXPRESS GOES OFFSHORE AGAIN

by Dale Barcham



It all started many months ago. In April we began to prepare *Starlight Express* for another offshore trip. The mast and boom came out for a thorough check, including dye testing the rod rigging. *Starlight* was slipped to sand the bottom and put on a new coat of antifoul.

Long lists were processed to make sure that every item of equipment would be fully functional before we left. Some changes were made down below, such as new lee cloths, as a result of problems in this area during the Sydney Hobart last year.

The plan was to take *Starlight* to Auckland, do the Auckland to Fiji race and the Presidents Cup in Fiji, then return to Wellington. We had decided, after much discussion, to use two different rating configurations during the campaign. For the Auckland to Fiji race we were configured for overlapping headsails and masthead spinnakers. The Presidents Cup was to be sailed with non-overlapping headsails and fractional spinnakers. We obtained rating certificates for both ORC and PHRF for the two configurations.

We had scheduled a date for leaving Wellington and unbelievably managed to get away on time. The mast had only just gone back in and a day before we left there were still many items to be addressed. As usual everything came together at the last minute and four of us headed for Auckland; Peter, Grant, myself and Jude Ellice who thought she should get some open water experience before attempting the Atlantic-rowing race. People think yachting is crazy!!

The trip to Auckland went well and we berthed at Westhaven to start stage two of the preparation for the Auckland to Fiji Race. The SSB needed servicing, some problems with the B&G needed attending to, the water maker was not working, there were some issues with the self steering, the mainsail needed a rebuild, and as we were to discover, one of the life rafts had holes in it. Seven days before the race started we still had 100+ items on the list. It all got done. We attended the race briefing, moved *Starlight* to the Viaduct basin, and started thinking about the race.

Saturday, 26 June, saw a fleet of 14 yachts start the Auckland to Fiji Race in a building southwesterly. The first twenty four hours were exciting. We had picked up a new fractional gennaker the day before the start, and it was the sail for the job. We covered 270 miles in those first twenty four hours. The gusty conditions saw the fleet spread out fairly quickly.

As we were going for line honours we knew the competition would come from *Hydroflow* and *Systems Thunder*. By the next evening *Hydroflow* reported in some 30 miles ahead of us. *Systems Thunder* did

not report in, in fact never managed to for the whole race, but we had seen her disappear over the horizon to leeward the previous evening. Only 30 hours out and we needed to play 'catch up!' To be fair we knew these two would be faster than us in hard reaching conditions.

We had decided before the race that we would try to stay on the rhumb line unless conditions dictated otherwise. If so, we would favour east in the expectation that the southeast trades would kick in eventually. We stuck to the plan and over the next few days made ground sched by sched on *Hydroflow*. While we did not know where *Systems Thunder* were we knew they would be slow in the easing, on the nose, conditions that were developing. The weather maps were starting to indicate that the southeast trades were a myth and the wind was likely to go northwest. We started to move slightly west of the rhumb line.

As we neared the finish we had *Hydroflow* in our sights, although we could not see her. The decision had already been made twelve hours before that everyone was to be on the rail for the last twenty-four hours. Then it all happened! We got hit by lightning then by a 30 knot squall. A tired crew quickly reefed the main and changed headsails. We were back up to speed but without some of the instruments.

As we approached Navoula passage (the finish line was inside the passage) I asked the boss, Stewart, how we should approach the passage; low risk, high risk or very high risk. The visibility was already starting to get worse. Stewart stated: "If it meant that we were going to get line honours we should go for the very high risk strategy".

It was then that we heard on the VHF that *Hydroflow* was already in the passage. The whole crew went silent. We entered the passage cautiously in very poor visibility relying, on previously taken GPS waypoints aided by the chart plotter, and finished 37 minutes behind *Hydroflow*. On handicap we ended up 1 min 30 secs behind them to take second place. Had we stuck with the very high-risk strategy we would have won on handicap. We had loosened the reigns at the last minute and paid the price.

The finish boat delivered some beer and rum, plus an extra bottle of rum, and we headed for Musket Cove. The boat we had kept so tidy for the whole race was a complete tip by the time we got to Musket Cove. The condition of some of the crew was not flash either.

We quickly settled in to the Musket Cove lifestyle and prepared for the Presidents Cup. This was to be sailed in the waters between Maloli Lailai and Nadi. A good fleet had assembled including *Antaens* who had competed in the Auckland to Noumea Race.

The race series was well organised and so were we. Our change of rating to non-overlappers and fractional spinnakers took our closest competitors, *Antaeus* and *Hydroflow*, by surprise. In the end the issue ended up in front of a protest panel. We won the protest and the series.

Where to next? Before we left Wellington many people who knew that we planned to do the Hayman and Hamilton Island Race Weeks later in the year had asked why *Starlight* was going to come back to Wellington then go back north to the Whitsundays. At the last minute, after many late night meetings in Musket Cove's \$2 bar, the decision was made. *Starlight* would head west rather than south.

The delivery crew converted *Starlight* back to delivery mode and we headed off to Vuda Point to fuel up and buy some charts for Vanuatu and Noumea. Then on to Lautoka to clear Customs and Immigration and get some provisions. In no time we were heading back to Navoula passage and off to Vanuatu.

The wind was just forward of the beam and we were making good time. As the wind built we put in a reef to reduce the loads on the rig and hull. Ting!! What was that? Round up immediately! A look up the mast revealed that a D2 (an angled stay that runs from the outer end of the first spreader to the mast) had gone on the windward side.

We quickly lowered the sails and set about securing the rig. The seas were lumpy which made the job difficult, but after a couple of hours we were confident we had the mast reasonably secure but only enough to use headsails. We also now knew that the rigging screw rather than the rod rigging had failed.

A couple of days later we arrived at Port Vila, cleared Customs and tied up at the sea wall. Two of the crew, Chris and Robby, who had time constraints, booked to head back to NZ the next day. A few days later, Grant, who was chasing a job in the UK, also headed off. It then rained for two weeks solid. It was nice to wake up one morning and find *Mr Roosevelt* a Davidson 42 tied up along side (I had done quite a lot of sailing on her previously). The two Davidsons looked really nice. I read seven books while waiting for Peter and Jenny to come to Vanuatu to help take *Starlight* to Hamilton Island.

They arrived at 2300 on a Thursday night. Their time frame meant that we had to repair the mast, pump on some fuel, and head out around 1800 the following evening. They brought a heap of charts, an Australian Pilot, other items I had not been able to locate locally, and the 'mast jack'.

The rig on *Starlight* is so heavily loaded that the rigging screws cannot be turned. The 'mast jack' allows the mast to be jacked up enough to allow a shim to be removed from under the mast and thus reduce the rigging load so that the rigging screw can be undone.

We spent the day up the mast replacing the rigging screw pins of all four D's. This included having to drill and tap new holes in each barrel to take an additional locking screw. Jenny went to town to clear customs and immigration and pick up some last minute supplies. We untied on time to get out on the high tide. It was touch and go on the way out but in no time we were on our way to Australia.

We had decided to go in through Hydrographers Passage then down to MacKay to clear Customs. Light airs saw us motor sail for three days, then the southeast trades kicked in. We covered the last miles quite quickly and arrived at MacKay early in the morning. We were cleared quickly and decided to head back north to park *Starlight* at Hamilton Island until the racing started.

With *Starlight Express* safely secure at Hammo, Jenny and Peter headed back to the Wellington winter while I went to the mainland and headed north to Cairns and south to Surfers in a rental car. In no time at all Peter was back to get the *Starlight* into racing mode. We

slipped *Starlight* to clean the bottom and repair some minor damage to the keel - I always said the keel was too deep! We then unloaded the biggest pile of gear anyone has seen into a shed at Hammo.

A new mainsail arrived at the last minute and we fitted the battens and sorted out a problem with the batten cars. Tina arrived and the three of us we were off to Airlie Beach for the Hoggs Breath Regatta.

The Hayman Island Series that we were going to do had been cancelled, so we decided to go to Airlie Beach instead. For those that have not been there it is a backpackers mecca. Consequently there are a large number of young people of both sexes in a town, which meant parties every night. We were worried about the ability of the younger members of our crew to handle the night conditions and be focussed during the racing. In reality we all had a pretty good time!!

Overall we had an average series. We had decided it should be a fun regatta. The theme was Hawaiian shirts and we didn't have any. Before the racing started we went in and out of every shop trying to find the brightest shirts at the cheapest price. In the end only one shop had the shirts we wanted and enough for all the crew. Two days of hard negotiating and we had the shirts at only ten times what the shop had paid for them! While our results were average we did win a couple of slabs of VB for the best shirts!

Off to Hammo for the serious racing. Hamilton Island is a really neat place. The regatta they run is world renowned as one of the best. This year there were 190 yachts including more than a dozen from NZ. We were in the Big Boat division up against the best the Skippy's could put together.

The rules for the regatta were spelt out to all the crew. This regatta was to be taken seriously. It had taken a lot of money, time and effort to get *Starlight* to Hammo. Socialising and partying were to be kept to a minimum.

The transport on Hamilton Island is golf carts and Stewart had rented one for his own use. After a couple of drinks and a meal on

Sunday evening Peter, Jamie and one of NZ's top designers borrowed the buggy and headed for the biggest hill to test its speed. As they were coming down, the designer hopped on the roof to improve the aerodynamics. The next thing lights start flashing and the Hammo Police take control. Buggy confiscated immediately with the suggestion that even trying to get another one would be a waste of time. After lengthy negotiations the next day Stewart achieved the unachievable managed to get another buggy. Designer dispatched to NZ. This incident meant that the regatta rules were slightly eased.

Overall we sailed well. We got some very good results and some that we regretted. We ended up 4th in the Big Boat division which was a good result. We were beaten by a very highly optimised IRC yacht, *Heaven Can Wait*, and two 'Wednesday night racers' of the same design - *Another Duchess* and *After Shock*. But we did beat *Brindabella*, the New Zealand *Georgia* and others.

As soon as the last race had finished we loaded the mountain of cruising gear back on board, and reverted *Starlight* to delivery mode. Dodger on, self-steering connected, cruising main installed, and water tanks filled. We then took a couple of detours that all seemed to lead to the prize giving. I think we all had a good time.

The next morning arrived all too soon. However, Tim and myself were back on board early. Our other delivery crew, Kevin and Marty, arrived by plane at midday. We untied the lines and headed for MacKay to clear customs. *Pretty Boy Floyd* left around the same time. We arrived at the MacKay marina just after dark having flown a kite most of the way. We, and the PBF crew, headed off to the local surf club for an excellent meal, and turned in for an early night. Up at sparrow's the next morning determined to complete the formalities, do the shopping, fill the diesel tanks and leave for Wellington as



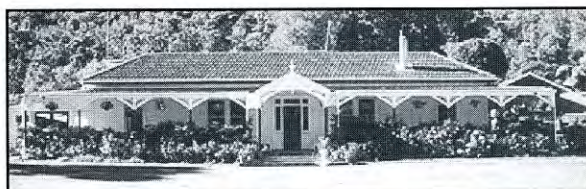
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we're on the pace because we race

early as possible. The wind was from the north so we wanted to make the best of it.

We had a quick breakfast at the marina, grabbed a cab, and headed for customs. They were in turmoil as their computer system was down but they managed to clear us very quickly. Off to the supermarket where Marty got carried away. We managed to get the three trolley loads into a cab as well as ourselves and headed back to the marina. After loading the stores on board, pumping in an additional 350 litres of diesel, we headed out. We cleared the port area at around 1400 with *Pretty Boy Floyd* not far behind us.

The breeze enabled us to put in some really good miles for the next few days. The total distance from MacKay to Wellington is 1800 miles. We had no intention of pushing *Starlight* hard but had on our minds that it would be nice to get there in under 9 days. Sandy Cape was behind us in less than two days, then we were past Middleton Reef, and then the self steering ram broke.

Over the last few years I have done around 15,000 miles with Autohelm ST7000 systems on different boats doing the steering and now this one was broken. I had always praised their reliability while others had different ideas. Now we had to steer *Starlight* by hand!

By the time my watch came round I decided that fixing it was preferable to steering. I found an exploded diagram of the ram on board so Marty and I attempted the surgery. We thought we had fixed it the first time but to no avail. As we put it together for the

third time we were getting pretty good at it and voila – it worked.

We had a couple of light days then as we got closer to New Zealand the wind began to increase. For 36 hours we had 30 to 40 knots, then in the middle of the night Kevin spotted a ship that seemed to be keeping up with us. We had to explain that the Maui Platform did not actually move!! Then we passed Stephens Island and in what seemed like no time we were back in Wellington Harbour being greeted by the boss, Stewart, aboard the new RPNYC support vessel *Tē Ruru*. Customs and Agriculture arrived shortly after we tied up. Stewart had brought along the obligatory bottle of rum so we had a few before heading home for a much needed sleep. Another good trip....

For the statistically minded the following may be of some interest. During the campaign



we:

- Sailed 5500 ocean miles
- At various times had on board 26 sails comprising
- 3 mainsails
- 2 storm sails
- 11 headsails
- 10 spinnakers, gennakers
- Had 30 different people on the crew

I know that every one of the 30 crew, and other support people, would like to thank Stewart Thwaites for giving them the opportunity to sail on *Starlight Express*. The last season has seen *Starlight Express* again become New Zealand's best offshore campaigner.



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NEW BOATS

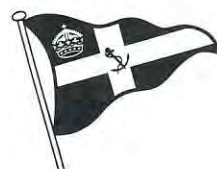
We welcomed the following new boats and new owners to the Club.

BOAT NAME	Sail No.	TYPE	LENGTH	DESIGNER
Soulmate	8354	keeler	16.45m	Eade 54
Marconi	-	launch	36 ft	Pelin
The Guarantee	8625	keeler	10.6m	Ross
Australis	-	launch	45 ft	
Diva XV	8323	keeler	12m	Lidgard
Minika	5587	keeler	8.4m	Marauder
Saucy Sausage	3465	keeler	25 ft	Stratus 747
Protocol	4321	keeler	11.6m	Farr 11.6

NEW MEMBERS

We welcomed the following new members to the Club over the months of November and December 2000 and January, February, March and April 2001.

MEMBER	CATEGORY	MEMBER	CATEGORY
Stephen McNeil	Senior	Maggie Mouat	Associate
Erica McPherson	Associate	Frank Bradley	Junior
Caitriona Rush	Senior	Claude Bradley	Junior
Maurice Feijen	Associate	Martin Bosley	Senior
Andrew Lynch	Senior	Julia Symmans	Associate
Campbell Means	Associate	Isobella Bosley	Junior
Liz Means	Senior	Mark McGuinness	Senior
Ian Murray	Senior	Evan Still	Senior
Grant O'Connell	Senior	Patrick Still	Junior
Steven Barnard	Senior	Adam Still	Junior
Yve Sturman	Country	Isaac Still	Junior
Diana Murfitt	Senior	Louise Miles	Senior
Judy Lymberry	Senior	Alister Holden	Senior
Ray Aspey	Senior	Kim Leigh	Senior
Kevin Allan	Senior	Tapio Sorsa	Senior
Grant Withers	Senior	Viivi Ronkko	Senior
Alison Burton	Senior	Mike Levi	Senior
Ronald Diack	Senior	Hilton Brown	Senior
Belinda White	Senior	Gregory Neal	Senior
Linda McIlroy	Senior	Peter Chappell	Senior
Benjamin Spencer	Senior	Ian Brenton	Senior
Andrew George	Senior	Kate Beresford	Senior
Isobelle Aitken	Senior	Steve McCallum	Senior
Patricia Brisson	Senior	Sharon Wright	Senior
John Hargreaves	Senior	Colin Peard	Senior
Jenni Hargreaves	Associate	Douglas Newdick	Senior
Rachael Hargreaves	Junior	Diana Perry	Senior
Duncan Dunning	Senior	Carlos Appelgren	Family
John Hamilton	Senior	Bernadita Appelgren	Associate
Ellen McDowell	Associate	Carlos Anders Appelgren	Junior
Shona Ward	Senior	Bernadita Appelgren	Junior
Gary Ross	Senior	Richard Splinter	Senior
Susan Southward	Associate	Danielle James	Senior
Blair Cudby	Junior	Vicky Strange	Senior
Cheyne Cudby	Junior	Angie Piper	Associate
Jason Parkin	Junior	Emily Piper	Junior
Howard Grieve	Senior	Claire Piper	Junior
Ishbel Hay	Senior	Stella Bridge	Associate
Robert Sinclair	Senior	Jenny Steven	Associate
Anne Sinclair	Associate	Alistair Marsh	Country
Jody Sinclair	Junior	Ivan Ryniker	Senior
Philip Taylor	Senior	Greg Sloane	Senior
Gabrielle Taylor	Associate	Chad Leigh	Senior
Benjamin Taylor	Junior	Angela Taylor	Senior
Steven Henderson	Senior	Christine Howard-Brown	Senior
Gail Seatter	Senior	Deborah Mosley	Senior
Gavin Bradley	Senior		



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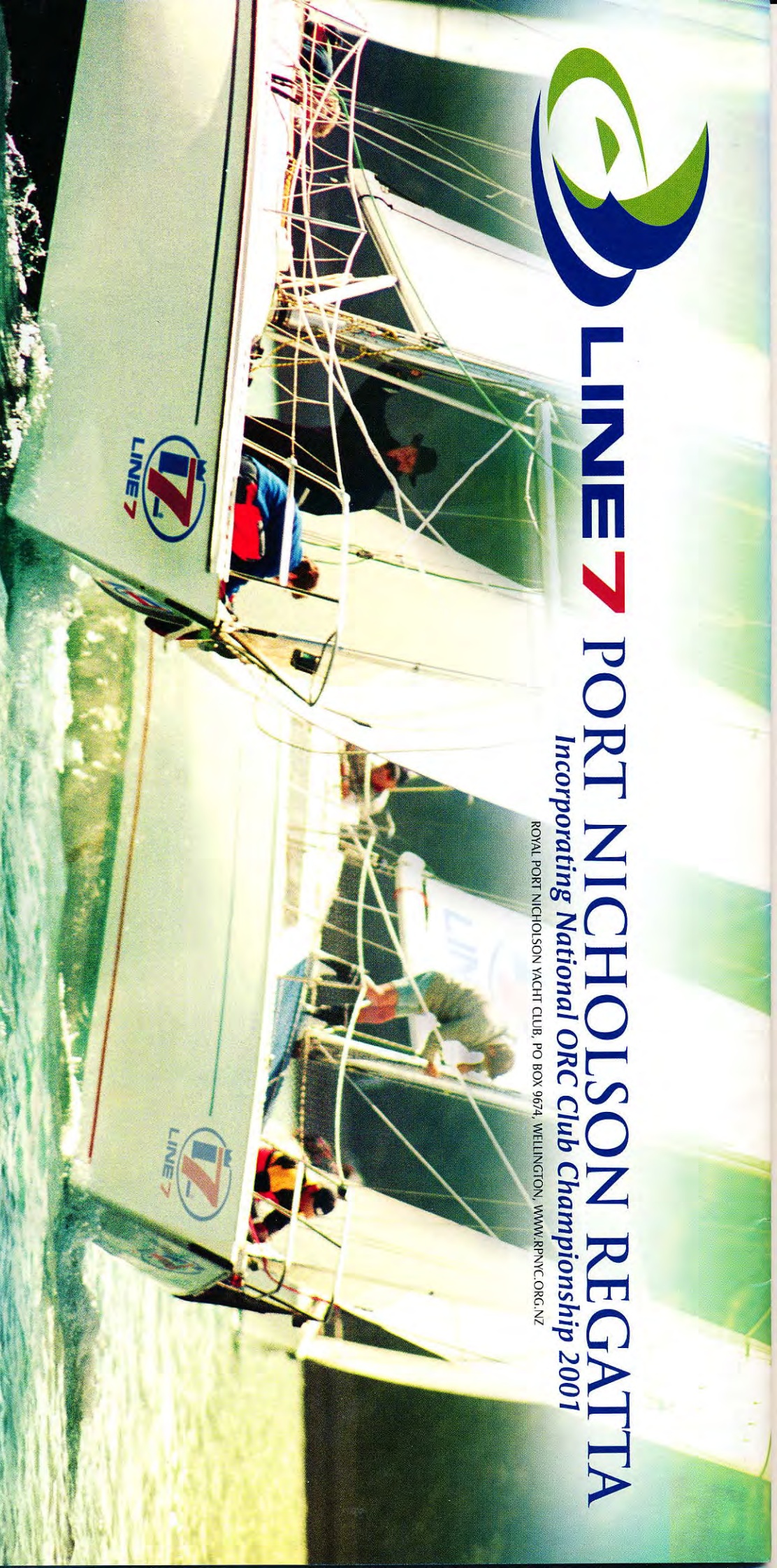
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