

the **Rip**

NOVEMBER 2008

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Super Yacht :
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125th
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For more information contact:

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Wednesday (May to August inclusive):

Closed

Friday: 1700 - 2000 hours

Saturday (race day): 0900 - late

Saturday (during winter months and non race days): 1200 - 1900 hours

Sunday: 1400 - 1930 hours

Sunday (winter series race days):
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Contents



Page 14

Erazer, that smoking hot pink and grey boat, that is only matched in hotness by her crew

Page 16

125th Season Prizegiving



Page 24

To cross or not to cross?
'Skipper's Responsibilities' at sea

Page 28

Bacon & egg pie and the back of the front: HSBC Premier Coastal Classic 2008



- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 Commodore's Report | 16 125th Season Prizegiving |
| 3 Vice Commodore's Report | 19 Boat of the Year |
| 4 Rear Commodore's Report | 21 Personality of the Year |
| 5 Chief Executive's Report | 23 Stay in touch with communications – and stay on top |
| 6 Academy Update | 24 To cross or not to cross? |
| 8 Youth Scheme Update | 27 Wardroom Whisper |
| 9 Wellington sailors pick up gold on world stage | 28 Bacon & egg pie and the back of the front: HSBC Premier Coastal Classic 2008 |
| 11 A day in the life of Te Ruru | 31 Cups raced for by Centreboard Yachts of the day |
| 12 Martin Bosley cooks | |
| 14 Erazer a Super Yacht on a Trailer | |



Commodore's Report

Peter Vause

Get to Know Your Boat - Lessons from Tom & Vicky Jackson and *Sunstone*

In October we were delighted to host legendary offshore sailors Tom and Vicky Jackson in the wardroom.

Since 1981, Tom and Vicky Jackson and their 1965 vintage Sparkman & Stevens design 40 foot floating home have been a dominant force in offshore racing. They've been consistent winners both inshore and offshore, and under three different rating systems.

Their first big win came in 1985, when *Sunstone* won the Channel Race overall, beating all the Admiral's Cuppers and the rest of the fleet by 20 minutes. Shortly afterwards, she won her class in the Fastnet by 11 hours, taking out the season's points in class. In every year for the next decade, *Sunstone* either won a Yacht of The Year award (an honour she earned six times under IMS and once under CHS (now IRC), or was champion in her class. She also won the Fastnet on IMS, the IMS national titles, and the Channel race on IRC. In 1992 and 1996 she represented Britain in the Commodore's Cup, the international IMS teams event for cruiser/racers. In the 1996 Commodore's Cup, *Sunstone* won her class and top-scored in the fleet.

So how did an amateur crew on an old live-aboard boat become so successful?

"Unless you're really gifted (and I make no claims to that) the way to be competitive is to really get to know your boat" says Tom. "It's about wanting to learn every time you go out sailing; keeping alert and putting information back into the brain after every race, because next time there might be something similar."

"It's doing your homework" adds Tom. "If you don't sail up the first beat before the start

to check out the wind, you're probably in for some surprises. And we also notice that many get so focussed on the tactical picture with other boats that they're not looking at what's actually going on with the wind."

On the offshore races, part of the Jackson formula is to sail with a small but compatible crew. "We actually think that carrying around more than seven is definitely a penalty, because of the weight. It's slower downwind, and it doesn't make any difference upwind. The only time you need seven is in a heavy-weather gybe" says Tom.

"It goes back to having a crew that works together and is very competent" says Vicky. "If you've got a lot of people who are doing nothing but sitting on the side deck, they're not enjoying themselves. And with the kind of crew we have, people actually get to do things a lot, and that's a benefit in keeping crew happy and working."

It was in September 1997 that Tom and Vicky took early retirement to start that long-delayed cruising career. Their course took them across the Atlantic via Spain, the Canaries and the West Indies. They then raced in the Newport-Bermuda race. They then sailed up to Nova Scotia and Maine (perhaps their favourite cruising ground) before heading back down to the Caribbean and across the Pacific. They spent two seasons in New Zealand, circumnavigating the country, before heading west across the Tasman for the Hobart race. Apart from the Atlantic crossing, where they brought an old friend who'd long wanted to cross the ocean, all their cruising has been two-handed.

So how does *Sunstone* rate as a cruising yacht? "It's not everybody's cup of tea" admits Tom. "We've lived on it for 27 years, so it's home as far as we're concerned."

By the standards of some modern cruising boats she's spartan- no hot or pressurised

water; no refrigeration or even an icebox- but there's a diesel heater; a good galley, good sea berths, and loads of the practical comforts that you pine for when you're rattling around the ocean in a stripped-out lightweight.

Sunstone was built by the famous Scottish yard of McGruiers in 1965 to the design of Sparkman and Stephens. At first glance with her long overhangs, teak decks, and varnished topsides and cabin sides, the 40 footer looks to be a typical classic of the '50s. In reality, she is an unusual design- a development of the famous yawl Finisterre, (three times winner of the USA offshore classic, the Newport to Bermuda race) but with a sloop rig replacing the yawl and a hull designed to fit the British RORC rating rule instead of the American CCA rule.

Winning so many trophies with an old boat has, of course, ruffled a few feathers. When *Sunstone* won under IOR, many people said it was all because of her age allowance- ignoring the fact that there were many other boats with almost as much allowance. When UK racing switched to IRC, the same call was repeated. And when the IMS was introduced, there were more calls that *Sunstone* was somehow singled out for lenient treatment.

"In 1985 a consortium of owners paid for her to be re-rated on IOR (without any changes) and in '92 or '93 the ORC paid to have the boat re-measured (under IMS) for "research purposes". Once again, it came out the same."

Is there any truth in the rumour that another syndicate of disgruntled owners was being formed, this time to buy the boat and burn it? "They kept saying that, but I think seeing the back of us as we sailed out of the Solent saying we were going cruising put paid to it!" says Vicky.



Vice Commodore's Report



Dave Roberts

It's almost Christmas; at least that's what the advertisers say, with their exhortations to buy, buy, buy. I've usually got no money left after the winter overhaul and Spring Series damage repairs, so I'm just looking forward to a break in the Sounds on the old 'caravan'; the only course decision is, will I have beer or wine with that? And the volunteer roster is about who gets to do the dishes.

No doubt I'll start getting fidgety, but the Waikawa Regatta (9/10/11 January) should see me through. I'm told there'll be boats there from Lyttelton, so I hope to see more than a few RPNYC boats too. Could this be the start of a three-way Southern Championship?

Back to Wellington and the New Year brings the always-popular Nelson Race, then the LINE 7 Regatta in mid-February. We'll be running a LINE 7 feeder race from the top of the Sounds to Wellington on Waitangi weekend - just in time to party with the Sevens, and with prize money on the race some could have a bit to party with. Given that this event will be held over Waitangi weekend it would be great to see a number of RPNYC boats crossing the strait and racing back with our colleagues from the south.


Mark Waters is organising a LINE 7 Regatta event for launches big and small.

Looking back, thanks to Paul Davies, Ken Burt and the usual suspects running races, we've had some good sailing since the Season opened. Play was disrupted as usual by spring gales, and we only just completed the Spring Series with three races. After the second blown-out day we ran a special race on Sunday for those suffering withdrawal symptoms. Twelve boats came out to play, so you can expect we'll do the same again.

I'm particularly enjoying the Twilight Series. Thanks again, Paul.

The Brothers Race had to be postponed 24 hours with a 50 knot southerly forecast. Typically, there was little wind the next day for the nine boats that lined up for the start. *Andiamo* was first home, followed by *Young Nicholson*, *Clear Vision* and *Midnight Express*. Three pulled out after slopping about for hours off Sinclair Head with no wind - one said they were making 1.2 knots, but didn't say whether forwards or backwards. *Marangi* and *Illusions* hung in to finally finish some time after 11pm. So the record still stands.

One of the things I hear a lot is "The Club should do this". What is usually meant is that the staff or flag officers should do it. It's true, there is plenty we should be doing (maybe I'll get a round tuit for Christmas - does Barton Marine sell those?). There's also plenty we are doing. But often the best person to act on a good idea is the one who came up with it. After all, there are 750 members and only three flag officers. So next time I hear "I want to do something about this", I'll be all for it.

Thanks again to all the volunteers who deliver the Club's Sailing Programme, and thanks to the club members who continue to encourage and support new boat owners and sailors. That's what this Club's all about. 

Rear Commodore's Report



Peter Sandford

Greetings, the 126th Season is well underway but first we should recap. Over the break we renovated the toilets in the entry foyer, installed new floor vinyl and repainted the Wardroom toilets, painted the service hall and repaired a significant water ingress issue in the Men's Shower area. This problem had been a few years in the making and we believe we have addressed the cause. We have christened the new mini bar in the Boardroom and installed two new trophy cabinets placing significant trophies on display again.

I am currently working with Bill Brambleby and Bruce Askew sorting through more of the club's historical items that have been in storage, expect to see some new items on the walls soon. We should express our appreciation for the work Bruce and Bill put in preserving our history, this assistance is invaluable, thanks to you both.

The to do list includes the exterior staining and repainting, install more history in the Boardroom, conduct a review of the hot water system as this is a costly and inefficient system and cost out new vinyl for the Wardroom bar and kitchen.

We are still wanting your best photograph of your boat, eight skippers have provided

some great images and not all of them are racing related, please get them to us.

I am still hoping the club member who borrowed the carton of VCR videos will return them and we do want the book on the History of the America's Cup returned for our Library.

You missed a great talk by Tom and Vicky Jackson from *Sunstone*, we had 50 club members attend which was disappointing in that this story was very topical. We will have another evening soon with the Safety at Sea group, we are finalising details now, please support these events as they are directed at our community.

We are on the water in the Cook Strait Classic the following day, that will slow a few down. After we cross Cook Strait head to Waikawa where berths are being arranged for the the night, we are being hosted by Waikawa Boating Club, dinner, drinks and with some luck the results of the days racing. The following offshore races will see a return of the raft up, we did enjoy them last year. We are planning a Picnic Day, probably to Somes Island, the details and preferred date will follow.


The forward planning has seen us meet with the Commodores and Rear Commodores of Evans Bay, Lowry Bay, Mana and Worsler Bay, add the support of Waikawa and Pelorus and we have the makings of a combined Yacht Club party and following that inaugural event we are working on the details for a Grand Ball.

We are pleased with the level of support from our fellow clubs and I can guarantee

you a surprising first up event, the venue will be a secret, expect a neutral place and a bus ride. The only theme will be to have a good time in the company of people who share our love of the sea. This initiative has more work to do before we announce the detail, we will get back to you, the timing is expected to be in May.

In February our focus is on the Line 7 Regatta, this has a tradition of being a very social time and next year is no exception. The main party night is set down for Friday night, we have arranged a great band and we expect to make a bit of noise - come and join in, catch up with the sailing stories of the day and just simply have a good time.

Finally we offer our very loud applause for Hugh Poole, Hugh was recently awarded Life Membership of Yachting New Zealand, well done to you Hugh and well deserved.

If you have anything to offer in the form of assistance or ideas, please contact us, see you on the water and in the Wardroom. 

**We should express
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Bill put in preserving
our history, this
assistance is
invaluable**

Chief Executive's Report



Brian Budd

Life Membership

Also at the Annual General Meeting Life Membership was awarded to Ken Burt (Burtie). Ken's contribution to the club over the years has been tremendous and this was a well deserved honour. Congratulations Burtie on your Life Membership Award.

The next edition of the Rip magazine will carry an in depth article on the life and sailing exploits of Burtie.

Round the World Yacht Races

The Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club along with Wellington City will host this summer the boats competing in the Portimao Global Ocean Race.

On 12 October 2008 six Open 40's departed from Portugal on a course which takes in some of the roughest waters on the planet. Starting in Portimao the race has stopovers in Cape Town (South Africa), Wellington (New Zealand), Ilhabela (Brazil) and Charleston (USA) before finishing back in Portugal.

It is anticipated that the fleet will arrive in Wellington around Christmas and will be here for three to four weeks preparing for the second half of the race.

Local personal support which club members are able to provide is a unique feature of any stopover in Wellington. It is widely acknowledged as being appreciated by the crews. For this event we would like to extend that hospitality and set up "Boat Buddies". If you would like to be a buddy to a Portimao Global Ocean Race Crew please give me a call.

Further details and race progress can be followed on the event website www.portimaoglobaloceanrace.com

Moore Wilson's Winter Series

We would again like to acknowledge the support of Moore Wilson for its support of the Winter Series. Graeme, Terry and your team, thanks for the support you provide the Club as sponsor of this event.

Despite the frustrations provided by the weather there was some great racing.

Line 7 Regatta 2009

In early February, the weekend after the Seven's Party, the LINE 7 Regatta, the major regatta for the year, takes place on Wellington Harbour. We are looking forward to having an increased number of boats participating in the regatta and to very lively social happenings in the Wardroom and on the deck.

Also during Waitangi weekend the Club will be hosting the OK Dinghy Nationals. This is a precursor regatta to the OK Worlds being hoisted by RPNYC in 2010.

In the Youth Match Racing space the Club will host New Zealand and International teams for the CentrePort International Youth match Racing Regatta in early March. Youth sailors from Wellington have been making their mark on the international yachting stage during the past year and during the next four months a number of youth match racing teams from Wellington will compete in a series of International Regattas in New Zealand and Australia.

Volunteers

I would like to thank all those members who volunteer during the year to put the Club's sailing programme together, manage the running of races, crew Te Ruru and cover the myriad of other tasks around the Club which have to be taken care of.

We are going into the really busy part of the sailing season and I would like to thank

in advance all those who will be working in a voluntary capacity to ensure that the Clubs Championship, Offshore Series, LINE 7 and CentrePort Regattas all run smoothly and provide enjoyable sailing for those participating.

Business House Races

The Club recently had its first association with the New Zealand Business Games. The organisers of this annual event introduced yachting into the lineup of games and sports on offer. The response to the yachting event was overwhelming with 152 punters on 25 yachts taking part in a harbour race early in October.

I would like to again thank all those Club Members who so generously made available their boats and crew to sail the paying guests around a harbour course. A great time was had by all and the Wardroom was buzzing with enthusiasm after the on water experience. This was the first experience of yachting for many of those who took part.

The Club's own Business House Race Series is scheduled for 21 November this year and 20 March 2009. In recent years the participation in these events has been disappointing. The Business Games association showed me that there is an increasing interest out in the community in yachting and an association with a yacht club or a yacht club event is really the only way that people get to experience the thrill of sailing.

Lets try and get at least 25 boats on the water for each of the Business House races. Encourage your friends, workmates, staff, employers and families to put a team together and support the Club by supporting the Business House Race Series. It is a fantastic day out with great food and wine to follow.

Merry Christmas and have a safe and happy summer sailing!



Academy [Update]

I'm pleased to be able to report the Academy has had an extremely busy winter. Not only have we been running courses on the water throughout the winter including, Introductory Keelboat, racing and cruising courses, and theory courses such as Boatmaster, Coastal Skipper and VHF. But over the last three months the Academy has entered into its biggest new undertaking since its inception. This has seen the Academy take over the running of Wellington's MRX fleet.

The Year of the MRX

Having the MRX's professionally managed and fully compliant with maritime regulations is a huge step forward for Wellington yachting and will greatly enhance the sailing options provided by the Academy.

I would like to briefly detail the work that has gone into bringing the boats into compliance and the opportunities that are now available to members as a result.

Background

Earlier this year the Club entered into a management contract with Yachting Promotions Limited covering the running of Wellington's four MRX's. In very broad terms the contract envisaged that the MRX's would have multiple uses including; being available for charter on race days, being integrated into the Academy Keelboat programme and inclusion in an expansion of the high performance match racing program.



Once the decision had been made that the Club and Academy would take over the management of the fleet the first big issue was bringing the boats into commercial compliance. In New Zealand any vessel over 6 metres in length that is used for any commercial purpose is required to be in survey with Maritime New Zealand.

As the Academy has had two vessels in survey for a number of years now, we were fully aware of how much time, money and effort would be required. This process was made even more difficult because of the multiple uses intended for the vessels. In short, as well as being a learn to sail school we were now becoming a charter boat operator.

Without going into all the details, just a few of the compliance issues that we have had to address include; the formulation of standard operating procedures for both skippered and bareboat sailing, risk management assessment and hazard register; maintenance plans for the boats and the creation of a charter agreement that takes all reasonable

steps to ensure that those who charter the boats are suitably skilled to do so safely.

Although the boats have been in Wellington for a few years now, they were never brought into compliance. As a result we had to spend over three months bringing both the boats equipment and operating procedures up to standard. For anyone who might question the need for this level of thoroughness, you need only to look as far as the charges brought against the Hillary Centre in the Wellington High court on 14 October 2008, to see our potential liability should anything go seriously wrong on the water.

All those who own boats will know that trying to maintain a boat to a high standard is a bit of a moving target, this is magnified by the multiple users and uses that the MRX's encounter. So either way you look at it, the boats are a really significant undertaking.

Now that the MRX's are in survey, they have two general categories that all sails must come under; being either bareboat or skippered sails.

Bareboat sailing

Bareboat sails include all sails without a commercial skipper. This is the category of sail that will be of most interest to members. The boats can now be chartered for the very low price of \$210 for half a day.

Members wishing to charter an MRX for race day need to fill in a charter agreement, which can be down-loaded from the clubs website. One of the most important sections of the charter agreement relates to the experience of the skipper and crew. It is obviously important to ascertain that those who are chartering the vessels have sufficient experience to do so safely. There is an obligation on both us the Academy and the users of the vessels to take all

Skipped sails

Sails have become Skipped when a commercial skipper is onboard and in charge of the vessel. This includes all uses of the boat in the Academy keelboat program. The main areas that we are looking at to make use of the boats include, corporate and team building sails, racing courses and any other time that there is a demand for sailing and the Muirs are already booked.

Although the MRX's are bigger, faster and better suited to corporate sailing than the Muirs, the real benefit for us is the increased capacity to deliver. We have gone from having a maximum of 14 people on the water at any given time to a maximum of 42!



reasonable steps to ensure that this is the case.

In New Zealand, unlike a number of other countries, yachting is often big on experience and short on qualifications, so having some type of mandatory qualification for the hire of vessels is not going to be a practical way of ensuring people are suitably skilled for the task.

As well as relaxed manning requirements on bareboat sails, the MRX's can be operated without lifelines during racing, however users are made aware of the increased risks that are associated with the absence of lifelines. When the MRX's are used as bareboat they also have maximum allowable wind strength of 25 knots.

While it is our desire to make the MRX's as accessible and user friendly as possible, there are going to be a few safety hurdles for users to jump over.

Those who don't have sufficient experience to charter an MRX can still get out on the water with a skipped sail.

This means that we are now a corporate sailing or team building option for organisations that have larger numbers of staff. It also means that we can take several smaller bookings on the same day. So the end result of that is far more people out on the water; then if we are doing our job, more of them will want to do learn to sail courses etc, etc.

The MRX's also help bridge the gap between learning to sail and boat ownership, as although we run level three courses (skipper), we never had boats available to charter. So now once a grad has progressed through our series of courses and has sufficient experience, they can put a crew together and head out without an instructor.

The operating parameters differ when the MRX's are being used as skipped vessels as opposed to bareboat's. When being used by the Academy the MRX's must have lifelines fitted, the main sails may be reefed and the boats are allowed to sail in over 25 knots of wind.

Logistics

In some respects we were set up well to take on the running of the MRX fleet, but in other respects we have had a lot of work to do.

The areas in which the transition was the easiest include such things as our booking procedures, course preparation and the operating procedures covering skipped sails, as these all transfer over from the Muirs very easily. The Academy is well set up to deal with large numbers of bookings and courses, but the bottle neck for us was always boats and instructors. We have been steadily increasing our instructor numbers over the years, so were well positioned to make use of the extra vessels.

The biggest problems we encountered were in the areas of equipment compliance, boat configurations and just the sheer number of boats. You only need to look at what the club spends keeping the Muirs in Survey each year and times that by two in order to get an idea of the costs involved. This is further multiplied by the fact that the boats are operated by a wide range of users, making it a constant battle to keep the boats maintained to a high standard.


We still have a number of issues to work through in relation to the boats, such as having to move the boats to and from Shed 5, finding berths for them once they are at Clyde Quay and the fitting and removal of lifelines. But huge progress has been made and the MRX's are fitting really well into the Academy's keelboat programme.

While we do consider ourselves experts at keelboat learn to sail, we are far from experienced when it comes to charter boat operation, we expect to encounter a few 'growing pains' as we develop this aspect of our operation and ask you all to be patient with us as we find workable solutions to any difficulties encountered.

The plug

So please consider booking an MRX, either as a bareboat on race day or as an Academy sail for your work group end of year function or team building session.

When booked as an Academy sail the MRX's are still only charged at \$125 per hour per boat, which pans out at \$18 per person per hour if you have 7 people. For that you get an instructor, wet weather gear and access to Yacht Club or Academy after the sail.

We are really looking forward to a busy summer and hope that all 6 boats run by the Academy are fully utilised. We will settle for nothing other than our most successful season on record. 

Youth Scheme Update

The Youth Scheme has been very active over the last few months, introducing new sailors to match racing and supporting teams to compete in events.

Winter programme

Over the winter we introduced a new group of sailors from around the region to match racing. Sailors from almost all of the Wellington dinghy clubs were represented in the eight teams that took part in the winter programme. Matthew Steven did a great job of showing these young sailors some of the finer points of match racing. Next winter we aim to take these and other sailors to the next level by running a series of ISAF grade 5 match racing regattas. This will enable them to start gaining points on the world ranking system.

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National Youth Match Racing Champs

Once again Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club was host of the National Youth Match Racing Championships. This event is open to teams of sailors from around the country who are under 21 years of age. Last season the club won the national championships with a reasonably experienced team. We decided to split that team up for this year in order to bring on some new talent.

The strategy proved a good one as not only did we win the event but we also took out second place. The new national youth champions are Matthew Steven, Matthew Clough and Chris Jones who convincingly beat Josh Junior, Josh Porebski and Tim Coltman 3-1 in the finals.

College Sport Wellington Match Racing Champs

This year we ran a coaching programme for Wellington Secondary schools. Eleven teams were provided with coaching in match racing one night a week during terms 2 and 3. We made it a requirement that each team had an experienced skipper and at least one sailor who hadn't sailed before.

During the secondary school's sports week in term three we held a match racing regatta

Chris Jones, Matthew Clough and Matthew Steven sailing to victory at the National Youth Match Racing Champs
Photo by Chris Coad

involving seven of these teams. In the end Scots College took out the regatta with two teams in the final. Tim Coltman, Elliot Andrew and Mackenzie Taylor won the championship in a close fought final against Chris Staub, Tom Spooner and James Kane.

The next few months

The scheme has a busy period in the lead up to Christmas including the following activities:

- Running a 'Women on Water' match racing course
- Hosting 'GO match racing' days for Wellington secondary schools
- Holding a 'Have a go day' for the general public
- Competing in the National Keelboat champs in Auckland
- Competing in the Harken International Youth Champs in Sydney
- Competing in the National Open Match Racing Champs in Auckland. 



Wellington sailors pick up gold on world stage

During the winter sailors from the Wellington Yachting Talent Development Programme traveled to Europe to compete on the world stage. Not only did they compete but they also brought some gold home to Wellington.

First stop on the tour was the World University Match Racing Championships which were sailed at the Polish National Sailing Centre in Gdansk. Thirteen teams from ten countries descended on the centre for five days of match racing.

New Zealand sent two teams to Poland, one representing Auckland University and the Royal New Zealand Squadron and the other representing Victoria University, Massey University and Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club.

The team from Wellington consisted of Josh Junior (skipper), Matthew Steven (mainsheet), Carl Syman (trimmer) and Chris Jones (bow).

World University Match Racing Champions
Chris Jones, Matthew Steven,
Josh Junior, Carl Syman

Although quite a lot younger than the other teams competing, the Wellington sailors showed a great deal of maturity and skill throughout the regatta. They steamed through the round robin phases finishing well up the leader board. They then lifted their game in the quarters, semis and finals to take out the trophy convincingly.

"Stoked!!! would be the best word to describe how our team felt after the final day of racing in Poland. We had showed awesome speed all week and we knew this could be one of our biggest advantages over Corbett (in the final). Even starts were key,



The Wellington Yachting Talent Development Programme is a Wellington City Council and Yachting New Zealand initiative, administered by the New Zealand Academy of Sport - North Island, designed to help increase the number of Wellington youth sailors achieving international success.



World OK Dinghy Junior Champion
Matthew Steven

“Stoked!!!
would be the
best word to
describe how
our team felt
after the final
day of racing in
Poland”

and this then gave us a chance to use our speed and tactics upwind. We managed to do this and pulled out an amazing 3-0 victory” said Josh Junior on the team’s blog jjsailing.com

The team’s performance has earned them a merit award and a nomination for young sailors of the year at the 2008 Yachting New Zealand Excellence Awards.

The team then split and went there separate ways. Carl and Chris returned home while Josh and Matthew stayed in Europe to compete in further regattas. Matthew took the train to Warnemunde to join the New Zealand team at the World OK dinghy championships.

Matthew gained selection for the New Zealand team by performing well at the 2008 national championships despite using


a borrowed boat and only ever sailing and OK a handful of times. With over ninety boats in the world championship fleet it was going to be a difficult task to succeed with yet another borrowed boat and very little preparation time between regattas.

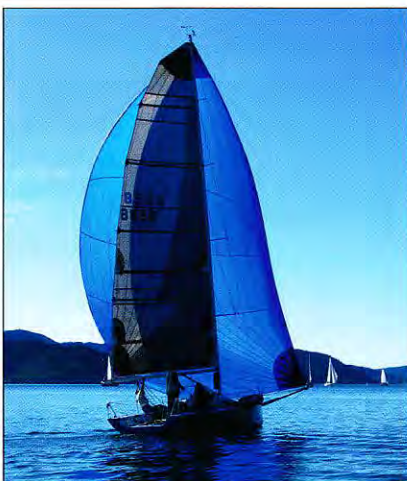
Matthew rose to the challenge and sailed a rock solid regatta to finish in 11th place overall and take out the Junior World Champion title. He was joined on the prize giving stage by fellow Wellingtonian Karl Purdie who took out the overall OK Dinghy World Championship title.

Meanwhile Josh traveled to Belgium for the Laser European Championships. This regatta included 150 laser full rigs sailors and 130 laser radial sailors, all launching on one ramp! The men’s fleet included half the sailors who were destined to sail

at the Olympic games meaning it was real baptism of fire the young Wellingtonian. Josh ended the regatta in 38th place and top Kiwi. He showed some blistering speed in the light pulling off top five finishes but was out muscled in the heavy breezes.

From Belgium Josh joined a group of sailors who traveled to France for the European Under 21 Championships. Josh showed devastating form in the first section of the regatta and was in 1st place at the half way stage. An equally dramatic form slump in the second half of the regatta saw him drop back to 22nd place in the 130 boat fleet.

Both sailors have at east two years left in the youth category and are planning to be back to defend their title and make amends respectively in 2009. 



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A day in the life of

Te Ruru



ABOVE: Ross and Te Ruru
INSET: Ian Dewhurst
Photos Chris Coad
Story by Deb Watkins

Phone goes, (Wed, Thurs) – “lan, can you drive Te Ruru?”

First thought, what's on in town? Yes, can I get a park? No! Leave early!

Sat morn – down to the shed, see Ross, usual drill, get the buoys out, give them a pump, cast iron weights (from sash windows to hold the buoys down, life jackets, put the cradle track down, winch cable notice out so no passers by get tripped up. Other jobs include fueling up, then a quick coffee at the club before setting out on the harbour.

Wait for the race officer to tell us where to go, (if a course is organised), load up the appropriate buoys and push *Te Ruru* out of the shed (this takes 2 people).

Head out to the start; wait for instructions from the Race Officer of the Day. Put the bottom mark in and measure how far it is from the start to the top mark. Wind strength and direction? Wait for more instructions as to where to drop the marks. They are always dropped upwind so no dangly ropes get around the prop. (This has happened before)!

During the race we may have to move marks, be available to signal shortened course, or assist yachts in trouble. (Broken masts, collisions, ropes around props, flat batteries, injured crew etc. etc.)

Racing has just about finished. Will that tail ender ever get round the last mark and get to the finish so we can pick up the yellow buoy? Finally they make it. Permission from the start box to pick up the last of the marks. Dragging those anchors out and onto Te Ruru certainly keeps a man fit. Thirsty work. Must get back to the club.

Get *Te Ruru* onto the cradle. Is it on straight? Up she goes. Run fresh water through the motors, remove buoys, gear, fill out the log book, hours, details of race.

That's the usual drill but there are other aspects to T R that some of you know about and some don't. The man who really makes it happen, according to lan, is Ross. He explains everything, which includes “keep away from shipping (evidently Ross has quite often been known to have ‘morning tea’ with the harbour master), other boats... He tells race control about any problems on the water, is full of knowledge, knows about *Te Ruru* maintenance and does a huge amount of work on the boat during

the week, including re fueling it down at Evans Bay. As lan says, “Ross is always there, always got the door open when you get there and everything is always ready”

lan started working on Te Ruru after illness prevented him from doing as much sailing on *Gucci*. Ask him what a bad day is like on *Te Ruru* and he'll soon tell you:

Boat will not start – batteries flat – has not been out for 6 weeks.

Running out of time to get a mark down.


Trying to find boats that have radioed up.

Photographers (no, not Chris or John) wanting to take photos right on a mark.

Avoiding getting run down by yachts when trying to lay or retrieve marks.

Boat cradle wheels falling off when putting it back on the track.

Best thing – sitting near a mark and watching boats come into it. Seeing how different boats are sailing.

In the bad old days, competing yachts had to go out and lay the marks before a race, and the last yacht in the race had to pick them up on the way home to the finish. Thank God for *Te Ruru* and her crew. 

Martin Bosley Cooks.

I enjoy the play of flavours in this dish, with a rich and surprising earthiness coming from the mushrooms. Don't let anyone tell you that red wine does not go with fish - it can handle bold flavours, and be treated robustly. Blue Cod is wonderful with mushrooms because of its slight mineral taste, but if you can't get it use monkfish.

Grilled Fish with Roast Kumara Purée and Red Wine and Mushroom Ragoût

Ingredients / Serves 4

Kumara Purée

500g kumara
olive oil for roasting
50g unsalted butter
salt and freshly ground pepper

Red Wine and Mushroom Ragoût

50g unsalted butter
2 shallots, thinly sliced
8 portobello mushrooms, thinly sliced
1 sprig fresh thyme
1 bay leaf
250ml red wine
250ml chicken stock

Fish

800g firm white-fleshed fish fillets
2 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
salt
juice of 1 lemon

Method

To make the purée, preheat the oven to 180°C. Scrub the kumara clean, coat in oil and bake in the oven until tender, for about 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and when cool enough to handle peel of the skin. Purée the remaining flesh of the kumara in a food processor until smooth, adding the butter. Season and set to one side, keeping warm.

To make the ragoût, heat the butter in a deep saucepan and when it begins to foam add the shallots. Cook for three minutes, then add the mushrooms and cook for a further eight minutes until the mushrooms are nice and soft. Add the herbs and wine, and simmer for five minutes. Pour in the stock and bring back to a gentle simmer, reducing by half until the sauce becomes lovely and syrupy.

To cook the fish, preheat the grill. Place the portions of fish on a shallow baking sheet and brush with the melted butter. Put the fish under the grill and cook for three minutes, turn the fish, season with salt and cook for another three minutes depending on the thickness of the fillet. Remove the fish to a plate, add the lemon juice and keep it warm.

To Serve

Place fish on the kumara purée and spoon the ragoût over the top.

Members are able to purchase a signed copy of Martin's new cook book 'Martin Bosley Cooks' for \$40, available from the restaurant or email: office.mbycr@actrix.co.nz. Recommended retail is \$45.



Erazer a Super Yacht on a Trailer

Erazer, that smoking hot pink and grey boat, that is only matched in hotness by her crew, Max Hawkes, Rory Graham, Ryan Leatham and skippered by Chris Hargreaves.

Photos by Chris Coad



You may have seen them blitzing around the harbour, but then again they may have just been a blur as they blasted past with the big white masthead kite.

After an average performance at Line 7, the *Eraser* crew knew they could improve and similar to Thor, God of Thunder striking his hammer, the *Eraser* team's intentions boomed loud and clear at the conclusion of race one.

Like a master craftsman with a fine chisel, Chris Hargreaves carved perfection out of a crew and boat that was full of raw talent and potential.

As the warning signal of race one sounded, Chris Hargreaves stood up to say:

“History is about to be written, and we have the tools to engrave our names into club history forever. Remember a champion team, will always beat a team of champions. That we will show them today!”

The crew responded to their great leader's commands, what *Eraser* lacked in waterline, was made up by the testicular fortitude of the crew. When other teams were debating the wisdom of flying a kite in big breeze, the *Eraser* crew without hesitation went for the largest spinnaker in their arsenal and blew apart the large keelers one by one.

We have been told that this is meant to be a race/series report, unfortunately the boys have very little recollection of the actual racing and those bits that can be remembered are probably highly inaccurate. To be perfectly honest, some members of the crew didn't realise the boat was in the

running to win the series on the final race day. In fact, one member even left after the prize-giving without realising that he was part of the winning crew. The following are some memorable, hazy highlights.

Heretaunga mark on race one, we had just shaken out the reef and were preparing for a hoist when as Chris put it “a snotter” of a squall came through. The big masthead kite was like a mad dog straining at the chains, just waiting to be released into the 30 knots of breeze, when the call came from the back of the boat, “Do you think we have the right kite selected?”

The instant response from the foredeck “I didn't know we had a bigger one?” set the tone for the whole series and 14 knots of boat speed answered the question that we could handle anything.

was made up of two builders and two accountants, “friendly rivalry” developed whenever it came to winding up the keel, or drinking rum. While the accountants easily defeated the builders in the drinking stakes, the tables were turned when it came to winding up the keel, “A little help?” would commonly ring out.

And as always, retrieving the boat on the trailer was a comedy of hysterical errors, the infamous highlights were Max going through the deck; the skipper reacted by telling the offending crew member to sort himself out and lose weight before the next race.

The other was Chris demonstrating that you can put a 7.8 metre yacht flying into an 8 metre gap, with a wharf on one side and jagged rocks on the other, spin the boat




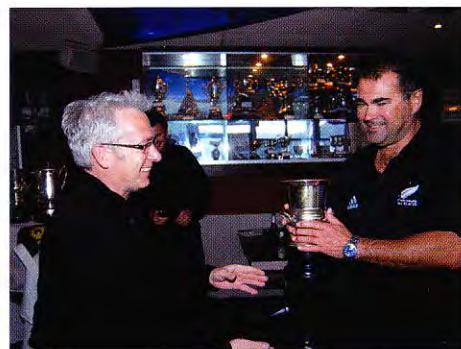
The commitment and dedication to the team was demonstrated on the final day, when Ryan looking to be upon his death bed, showed up to race. Describing his morning, coughing up blood, Chris inspirationally lifted the team by saying “Don't worry, that's not as bad as waking up and coughing up Durex!” This put things into perspective and a day of *Eraser* domination due to flawless crew work and decision making, sealed the series win.

One of the norms abroad *Eraser* is toasting the completion of a race, good or bad, on the trip back to Evans Bay. As the team

into a 180 degree slide and still come out looking famous.

Following the success of *Eraser's* winter series campaign, all eyes are firmly fixed on three upcoming events; the spring series, Line 7 and the 100 miler on the Hauraki Gulf.

The team is confident it can replicate the success in these events and with \$250 of Moore Wilson vouchers to spend on that sweet gold rum, the *Eraser* team may be ready to blast past with an even bigger white kite in the future. 







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Photos: Chris Coad

BOAT of the Year

Launched in September 1982, *Splash Palace* is a glass over ply Ross 930, built before the mould produced fibreglass models. The name had a lot to do with the Bruno Lawrence movie *Smash Palace* showing at the time.

Originally a centreboard yacht, she was later converted to a fixed keel. Sold in 1986, she was raced in Auckland and on Lake Taupo until 1996, when she was purchased by Graham and Sue Eathorne and brought to Lowry Bay.

A compression bend appeared in the mast in 1998, and a new rig was installed.

In 1999 *Splash Palace* was taking part in a night race on Wellington Harbour when that phenomenon so common in this part of the world, lack of wind(!), forced her to withdraw. While motoring home the boat came into rather sudden contact with the reef off Leper Island, causing severe damage to the keel which hung on to the boat by a thread.

Laminated keel floors and keel were rebuilt at Seaview incorporating a new design which allowed for a deep bulb keel. However contractual issues with Murray Ross meant he would not release the plug design. A hybrid was built using the original foil design. Eighteen months later in 2001, *Splash Palace* was bought by Geoff Herd, who had a plug modified to take the required weight of lead in the bulb.

Geoff had previously crewed on *Splash* but had never helmed her. In his first outing, in a spring series at Lowry Bay, there was some consternation among competitors when

Splash Palace led the fleet for the first two thirds of the race. In the 2000/2001 season *Splash* went on to win the championship on Line and Club Handicap, acquiring 12 out of the 14 trophies presented. In 2002 Geoff transferred to RPNYC and has been racing here ever since.

In 2006, *Splash* was trucked to Auckland for 7 weeks to compete in the 25th Anniversary Coastal Classic, being part of the RPNYC Team, (*Candu II*, *Kahukura*, *Mrs Jones*, *Splash Palace*). Local knowledge can be crucial in this race and *Splash* was caught in the wrong place at the wrong time before Brett, becalmed. However after a jibe off the Poor Knights in 25 knots, using the big kite and with a 1.5 metre following sea feeling in control, a top speed of 19.7 knots was achieved.

**the boat came
into rather sudden
contact with the reef
off Leper Island**



*“Splash Palace
is not for
cruising. There’s
no time for
that, we’re too
busy doing real
sailing”*

Top speed ever was in the 2004/2005 Island Bay race in a 25 knot southerly, when she reached 22 knots off the waves past Barretts, before a magnificent broach while still doing 16 knots.

“*Splash* is really fun to sail compared to other boats I’ve been on. She’s tricky to keep at a constant speed to windward and can be a handful with her narrow skiff shape. She has to be eased off the waves or else a crash and stall will result. Her forte is reaching and she loves a gutsy breeze off the stern quarter, when she will readily sit up and plane. Her stern hung rudder can create cavitation problems at high speed and we rely heavily on the trimmers to ease

in time. I have a great crew who work well together and can handle most things.”

The length of the shaft and size of the cockpit well restricts her to an 8 horse outboard, very tricky to manoeuvre into a berth in a strong wind. This has meant pulling the plug early on a race sometimes. And what of last season’s results?

Firsts in:

Summer Series: Club, IRC, PHRF

Autumn: IRC

Two Handed Offshore: Club, PHRF.

Commodore’s Trophy

Pat Thompson Trophy

Season Champion: Line and PHRF.

Add to these 4 second places and 3 thirds.

And Future Plans?

“I’d like to do more offshore. Two handed with Phil Gurnsey. We aim to have a shot at the next Round The North Island 2-handed in 2011. With that in mind next year *Splash* will get a renovation and repaint and be brought up to spec for the North Island Race.”

Any plans for cruising?

“*Splash* Palace is not for cruising. There’s no time for that, we’re too busy doing real sailing”.



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Wellington



Personality of the Year

Deb Williams with Kevin Shoebridge at the Champagne Brunch
Photos by Chris Coad

Other than actually being born on a boat, it would be hard to be any younger than Deborah was for her first time on board a yacht. It was at the tender age of ten days that she first sat on Dad's Paper Tiger, Toby Jug, at an opening day of the New Plymouth Yacht Club. This proved to be the beginning of a life growing up with sailing.

When she was six, Dad bought a Noelex 22. Every holiday for 12 years after that involved towing the boat to Auckland for family cruising in the Hauraki Gulf and Bay of Islands. While anchored at Waiheke lightning struck the yacht, shutting down the electrics and punching a hole in the foredeck. The bolt exited upwards which was fortunate "because Mum was on the loo."

When Deb was 13 the Noelex was upgraded to a 25, the sailing holidays continued for another 6 years, and she was aboard for the 1985 Noelex 25 Nationals off Buckland's Beach.

The family moved to Wellington in 1990 and started racing the Noelex in Evans Bay. In 1992 she crewed in the Women's National Keelboat Championships in Auckland for RPNYC. The boat was skippered by Mel Hargreaves, coach was Ken Hargreaves and

the crew included Collette Kraus. A great experience and lots of fun.

The next chapter in Deb's sailing career was a move to racing at Lowry Bay with Woody on *Titus Canby*. Apparently this often involved getting up close and personal with that Asian Yachtie trick – the Chinese Jibe. During this time she went cruising in the Sounds on a chartered Carpenter 29 called *Alante*. Sailing had always been the love of her life, but she arrived back from the cruise with a new one, in the form of a certain Geoff Herd. Much to Woody's disgust Deborah jumped ship and crewed for Geoff on *Saucy Sausage* for the next two years, followed by 2 years on *Splash Palace*, after which they moved to Port Nick.

One highlight since then was being part of the team which met and assisted the competitors in the 2-handed Round the


North Island Race when they arrived in Wellington. The sailors were very tired and she met them in *Te Ruru* after they crossed the finish with food parcels and other refreshments. Everyone, including the welcome committee, was very wet and tired, and she remembers the Auckland helpers and all the crews as a great bunch. Another memorable event was trucking *Splash* to Auckland and taking part in the Coastal Classic.

Seasickness is the bane of many a keen sailor's life and Deb is one of the afflicted. On a trip on *Spirit of Adventure* from Napier to The Sounds, while motoring through heavy swells she suffered from Mal de Mer for 2 days. For the sake of the rest of the crew, she now chooses not to do offshore racing.

As well as crewing on *Splash Palace* ("usually main, I hate foredeck") Deb does race assistance in the start box when she can.

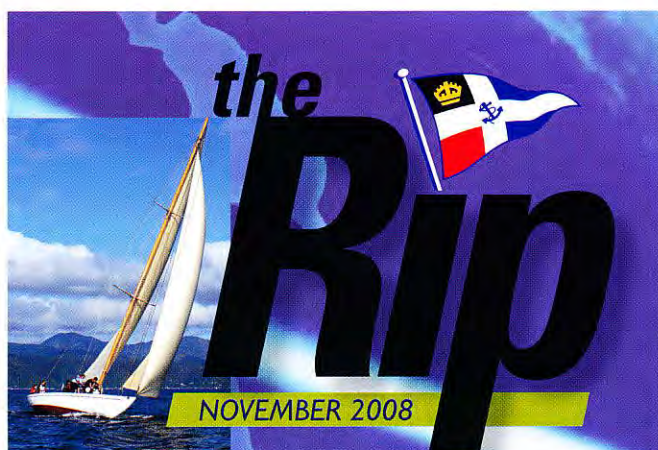
She works for Contact Energy as a Learning and Development Adviser and her leisure time is taken up pretty much entirely with The Club and/or sailing.

"I've been sailing my whole life. What else is there?"

A true sailor; a very friendly, cheerful personality and a great person to have in our club. 



Geoff Herd (Boat of the Year Winner)
with partner Deborah Williams



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BOAT BUILDING
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STAY IN TOUCH WITH COMMUNICATIONS



...AND STAY ON TOP

With summer just around the corner and recreational boating activity set to increase, Maritime New Zealand (MNZ) is urging all yachties and boaties to ensure they are carrying reliable communications equipment.

"No matter how experienced the skipper, or how expensive the boat, no-one is immune from a potentially life-threatening situation on the water," says Jim Lott, MNZ's Manager of Recreational Boating and an experienced yachtsman.

"But if the worst happens and you cannot tell someone that you are in distress, then the chances of survival are very slim."

This is backed by figures from the 2007 Review of Boating Safety in New Zealand, which found that of the 130 pleasure boat deaths between 2000 and 2006, 40 of those who died would have lived had they been able to communicate that they needed help.

"Today, there's many communications options for boaties to ensure that they can keep in touch and raise the alarm should the worst happen – some of which are relatively inexpensive," Jim says.

"For about \$200, a handheld, waterproof marine VHF radio is one of the cheapest and most reliable forms of communication currently available. While many yachties have a fixed VHF radio, if the radio or battery is swamped by a wave or capsized, it stops working instantly – so a reliable alternate means of communication is critical.

"The maritime radio network also covers around 98% of the New Zealand coast out to about 30 nautical miles, and provides 24/7 coverage."

Jim says the emergency position indicating radio beacon – or EPIRB – is another excellent emergency communications tool, but unlike VHF radio, is not limited to within range of the coast.

"Marine EPIRBs are very robust and are specifically designed for use in the maritime environment. The more modern 406 Megahertz (MHz) type beacons are extremely reliable and able to be detected usually within a few minutes, depending on geography and other factors.

"We encourage yachties to carry a 406MHz EPIRB on board – and for crew members on boats going further offshore to each have their own 406MHz Personal Locator Beacon" Jim says. "The 406MHz EPIRB's accuracy is also much enhanced if it is fitted with GPS, which provides more detailed positional information when activated."

Jim says All 406MHz EPIRBs should be registered (for free) with the Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand, as this provides rescuers with critical contact information should things go wrong.

Anyone using the older type of 121.5MHz emergency beacon should have it replaced with a 406MHz type, as 121.5MHz beacons

will no longer be detected by satellite from 1 February 2009.

Jim says cell phones are NOT an adequate substitute for a VHF Radio or EPIRB – except in limited circumstances.

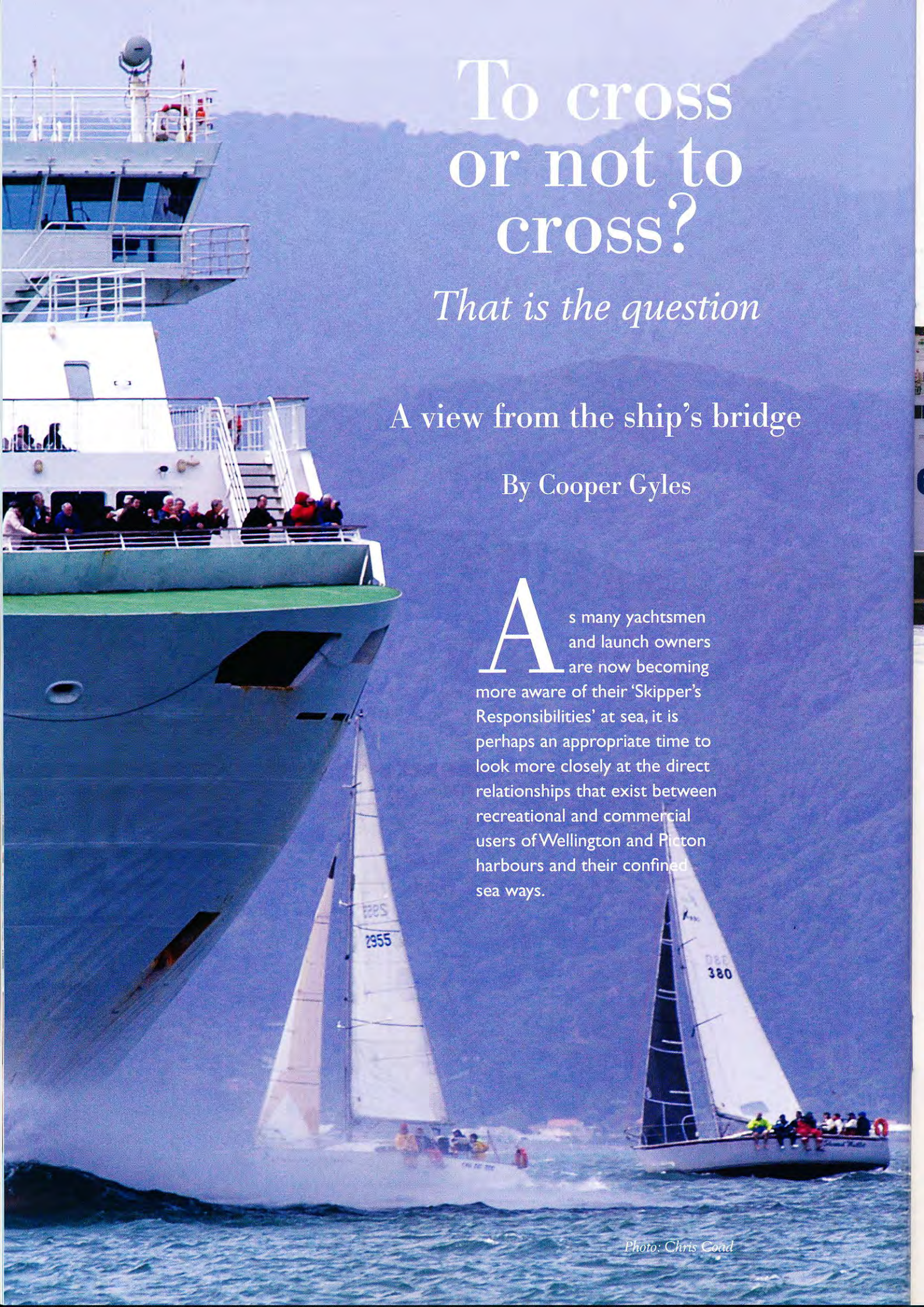
"Cell phone coverage on the water is limited, with considerable gaps in many places. Cell phones are also sensitive to moisture and will quickly become useless if wet – even wet fingers may cause them to not work properly. A tip is to carry your cellphone in a resealable plastic bag, as it will still work fine, even through the plastic."

Jim says visual communications are also important. "Red flares, either parachute or hand-held, are very effective and widely recognised. At night, every boat needs a waterproof torch and other signalling methods which can also be used to signal if you are in trouble. Don't forget to have a waterproof torch in your dinghy."

Jim says it is also a legal requirement to carry lifejackets for everyone, even in the dinghy when you are rowing ashore or to another boat.

"The over-riding message is that if you're heading out to enjoy the water at any time, make sure you carry at least two forms of reliable communications – one as a primary source of contact and one as a back up. Jim says. "Remember, if you can't contact someone, then no-one can rescue you". 🚤

 **MARITIME**
NEW ZEALAND



To cross or not to cross?

That is the question

A view from the ship's bridge

By Cooper Gyles

As many yachtsmen and launch owners are now becoming more aware of their 'Skipper's Responsibilities' at sea, it is perhaps an appropriate time to look more closely at the direct relationships that exist between recreational and commercial users of Wellington and Picton harbours and their confined sea ways.

Photo: Chris Coad

The approach that MNZ takes in regard to maritime safety has to be taken far more seriously, in light of recent 'incidents' between vessels. Two members of RPNYC, one of whom is a Master of the MV Aratere agreed to jointly observe, discuss and consider the implications of the interactions that exist between recreational and commercial users of the sea lanes, in and around Wellington and Picton harbours. The results of these real time observations, could enable yachties to gain a better perspective of the issues related when 'ships meet' at sea.

the sea-lanes are shared with other 'smaller users'.

One often hears in casual conversation that; "Ah, the ferries don't give a damn for small vessels. They give us 5 blasts and expect us to get out of their way without understanding our racing activity. They don't believe we yachtsmen have any rights". The reality of our joint experience in sea time indicated quite the opposite situation, in fact. Yachties however need to be knowledgeable of Rule 91 that clearly gives the right of way to vessels over 500 gross tonn.

Officers of the Watch. (This is known as Bridge Resource Management).

On this sailing the first set of decisions (within one minute letting go) was of the arrangement with the MV Arahura, who was raising anchor in mid harbour, as to just what the exact movements of both ships would be. This was a precise and exact set of communications. Having moved to outer Lambton Harbour, Captain Shepherd, who has some yachting experience, enquired from Gyles what he believed would happen when we moved into a 25 strong fleet of RPNYC yachts engaged in racing. Three classic scenarios discussed.

That considerate sailors who were at or near a converging course would bear way on starboard by making a substantial and early course change.

That leaders of the pack would possibly seek to sail above the ships course to keep their apparent wind and protect their racing position, but possibly offer limited passing options to the ship.

Others would slow down but keep their stand on course and allow the ship to pass ahead.

Well, as one can imagine, all three events occurred almost at the same moment... and here is the reason why things can and do go horribly wrong.

From the 360-degree vantage points of the bridge and being 20 meters above the sea, the bridge team have a far more effective 3 dimensional view of the immediate area than any smaller vessel. When entering the oncoming fleet (with some yachts on port and others on starboard tracks) the Master has four main considerations to deal with concurrently.

Is there a clear passage way through the fleet available to me?

What is my defensive avoidance posture going to be?

Where, if I make an emergency avoidance manoeuvre will my ship end up and will this endanger my position, or someone else's position?

Where will I be placed in relation to other shipping movements if I have to take avoiding action?

This is the dilemma faced by the Master. He is receiving inputs from three other observers and is required to think not just of the immediate closing bearings of two or three yachts within the next 60 to 90 seconds but also, he must be looking at the big picture further down the set course, which may include incoming shipping.

On today's trip ex Wellington one yacht will pass ahead with around 40 seconds clearance. They 'stood on' and maintained their course...that one was easy.



Most recreational sailors will have at some time or other been confronted with the view of ships entering and leaving port with their own vessel situated between ships at either end of the harbour entrance. To many skippers this situation can place them in a dilemma.

What do I do and what are my responsibilities?

To Masters, the same difficulty will exist and this can be the cause of considerable irritation and potential danger between them and the recreational vessel.

Cooper Gyles at the invitation of Graeme Shepherd, Master of InterIslander MV Aratere both RPNYC club members, joined to experience in 'real time', on the water interaction between small vessels and ships over 500 tonnes. Both men met on the bridge at 14.15hrs on 12 May 2007 for Wellington Picton return Wellington at 1700 hr. sailings

Gyles was given unusual access to operations on the bridge during the entire sailing in and out of Wellington and into Picton harbour together with the return crossing of Cook Strait. The resulting 8 hours of sea time and discussions with all Officers of the Bridge provided great insight to the issues that face large ship movements when

Firstly lets set the stage; when a ferry is departing its berth, the Master has the 'con' and full control of the ships path and is aided by an Officer of the Watch, a Helmsman and one 'Lookout'. The ship is under manual control and steering inputs of no more than 5 degrees are general, for safety and comfort of passengers. All targets no matter how small, are appraised visually and in most cases also plotted by accurate computer assisted radar. This gives the bridge team an accurate assessment of passing distances (CPA closest point of approach) and the potential of any risk of collision. Manoeuvres, during these changes of course can take two minutes 'depending upon speed', before the ship comes to a new course heading. These four team members work as one to guide the ship to the open sea outside the pilotage area where the bridge team is reduced to the Officer of the Watch and a Lookout.

While sophisticated software driven navigation aids are used on large ships, within confined waterways, manual control is required.

Within harbour limits where most of the potential dangers are likely to occur, the writer was impressed by the 100% overlaying of question and answer and orders given in response between the

A second yacht to port, appeared to vacillate as to whether they could make it across our head... they finally decided that when about 400 meters from us, that our closing speed was much faster than he realised, turned onto port and moved away...a prudent but late safety call, even though it did affect their VMG to the next mark.

A third boat made a substantial and immediate change to starboard and passed at speed behind us. Their VMG to the mark would not have been badly effected, how ever they may have lost some wind pressure for 20 odd seconds...sensible and keeping the situation safe for all.

So the golden rule for racers is to be very aware of closing speeds, planning their anticipated move very early and bear-away to starboard as the favoured option. All recreational sailors must be aware of the 500 tonne automatic give way rule. While no Master will deliberately impact

of us. That fellow slipped under our bows with 15 seconds to spare...a stupid and ill informed manoeuvre.

So this is the real issue that the Master must deal with. In the heat of a yacht race, the yacht Skipper is thinking of his immediate advantaged position and spatial situation and will not be concerned with kayackers and lasers 1000 meters away. He doesn't have too. But the ship's Master by comparison must be very concerned. He has to plan a five to eight minute strategy to take his vessel safely to sea, keep within the starboard hand side of his exit track, consider the impact of an emergency manoeuvre and to be aware that another ship maybe passing him down his port side near the outer leading light.

We make it to sea safely and all is well with the racing yachts.

When crossing Cook Strait in mid afternoon on a late sunny autumn day, just seeing the waves through sun scatter is really difficult,

across blind corners against oncoming ships. And, of particular danger are the occurrences when during tight turns around closed headlands such as the Snout and Dieffenbach a small vessel suddenly appears from nowhere, on the wrong side of the track. Radical evasive changes of course at speed, are unwise due to inertial forces and the danger to passengers and freight stowage. Sharp changes of course would only be made when there is imminent danger of collision. Yachts making passage on the same ships heading and without aft lookouts often fail to appreciate the closing speed of a ship travelling at 18 to 22 knots.

On the night return the first thing that became very apparent and was discussed at length was 'running lights' visibility. We experienced two situations where small craft lights were so dim as to be an almost ineffective warning device. Masthead tri-lights also came in for critical review as colours merge at a distance when situated



their ship into a racing fleet, they have to maintain a correct course and being in excess of 500 tonnes, do have right of way. Generally people don't realise just how fast a ship will closed on them at normal operating speed of over 19 knots.

Mean while with all this going on the Master is confronted with the option of making a course change that could confuse the yachting fleet. Most small vessel Skippers will realise the importance of a ship adhering to its 'stand on' course as this gives very clear signals to the yacht or launch as to what is intended by the Master.

We now see a clear opening in the race fleet but at the same time becoming aware of a cruising yacht meandering across our course on a closing bearing some 500 meters ahead. And what's more there are two kayackers 500 meters north of Falcon shoal smack in the middle of the sea-lane together with two lasers sailing down wind on no particular course.

All eyes are on the cruising yacht, making about 4 knots. What is he trying to do? Suddenly they notice us bearing down onto them at 19 knots and go to full power and decide to motor clear ahead

so radar is a must. However with a two-meter sea running, small sailing boats and outboard pleasure boats are dammed near impossible to see through the glare. A suitable radar reflector, the reader appreciated, is a must on small vessels, even during daylight. Modern ship's radars are highly sensitive but making yourself visible is your first responsibility.


Once out at sea the Master will pass the 'con' to the 'Officer of the Watch' to do the 'drive' across Cook Strait aided by one 'Lookout'. The Master may take leave of the Bridge to do other things.

We agreed that generally open sea passages are somewhat more relaxed and attention is given to monitoring other shipping movements and other small craft. At the 10 minute point of entry and exit from Tory entrance VHF announcements are made on channels 16 and 19 for Picton. The ship is placed under manual control with the lookout still in place. The Master returns to duty for the run into Picton.

In the Sounds, both during night and day sailings, Captain Shepherd and Gyles agreed the major cause of problems for large shipping, is smaller vessels cutting

so close together and distance calculation can be confusing when viewing masthead lights. The yacht can appear much further away than it really is. And, again the problem of vessels opening from around closed headlands at night had all on the bridge at high alert when passing these waypoints.

The return sailing and lessons learned have highlighted the very real and potential hazards that exist every time ships go to sea. This trip, with the Officers of the Watch was of real value in that it gave Gyles the opportunity to gauge the enormous size and mass difference between commercial and recreational users. It gave Captain Sheppard and his team the opportunity to understand some of the issues faced by racing competitors.

So next time when considering passing ahead and across a ships course, give some thought to how the Master must react... not to that split moment or three, that the racing yachtsmen will be orientated to, but what will the outcome be for the Master in five to ten minutes time...he's thinking that far ahead, for sure. 



Wardroom Whisper

As I write this article we are reminded daily of the downturn in business but here at the club the current and forward bookings are very active. People are still booking ahead for their birthdays, weddings, cocktail parties, Xmas functions and of course our day time bookings which are a regular occurrence both in the Wardroom and Boardroom.

The Boardroom Members Bar is nearly complete and certainly will be utilized to its full potential in the next coming months as we cater for private functions in the Wardroom. It certainly makes work a lot easier that it is a full working bar complete with eftpos and our own till system attached to it. When open to members it has a

designated staff member so we are able to provide excellent service to the members.

As we welcome new staff in the Wardroom, members may be asked to produce their member's card as staff members may not be familiar with the actual club member. I would ask that you do not take offence to this as it is club policy that the staff are adhering too. Membership cards are not transferable and therefore can only be used by the member themselves.

I have just placed a new membership book in the downstairs foyer to the bar and would ask that members sign their invited guests in.

We have reintroduced a new bar meal on a Friday night and I am delighted to report that it has been well received. We have added one or two new choices to the beverage and catering menu and will continue to change these as the months go by. I am always approached to stock particular wines and while we cannot support all the wineries large and small so by changing the wine menu frequently I am able to support more rather than less.

As always a big thank you to all my team who play a huge part in the delivery of service to all at the club.

Look forward to seeing you in the Wardroom.

Louise



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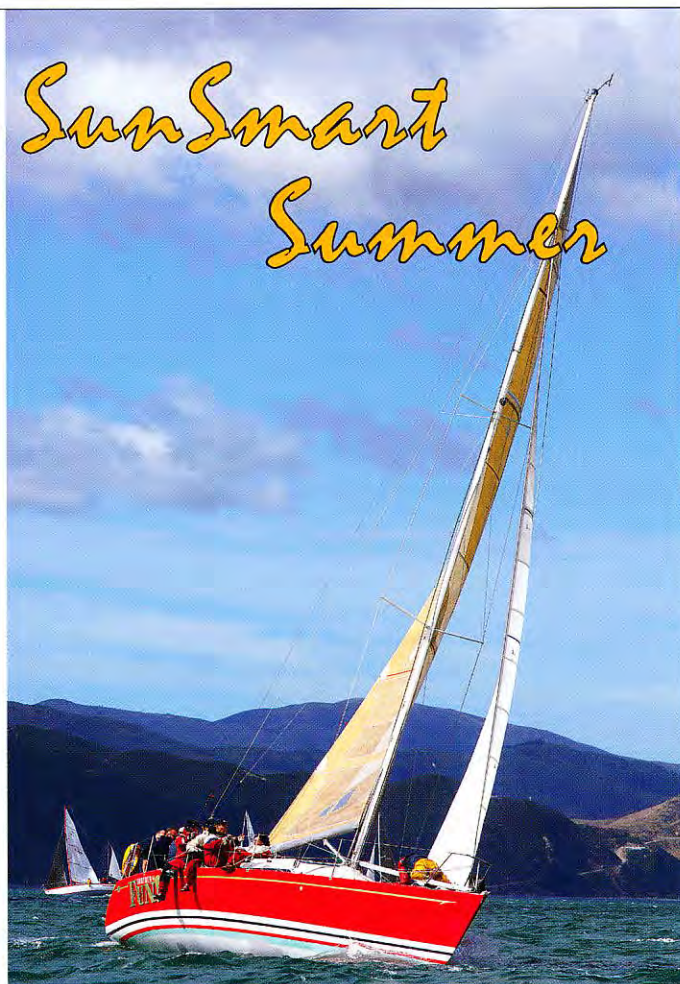
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Bacon & egg pie and HSBC Premier



The Coastal Classic from Auckland to Russell has marked the start of the summer sailing season for nearly 30 years. For the third year in a row, Anne French crewed on Iolanthe II, a Beneteau 51. Here is her race report.

On Thursday 23 October, the main hall at the Squadron was crammed with yachties, all concentrating hard on the jolly, bearded man on the podium.

ABOVE: Heading for the finish
RIGHT: Just getting under way
Story and Photos: Anne French

'We've got weather! You'll have 15 to 20 knots from the north-east on the start line, but it will build quickly, reaching 30 gusting 40 by late evening. Once the barometer drops from 1012 to 1005, expect the wind to strengthen. The front will bring rain – 10-20 mm per hour! We're expecting the front to go over the Northland coast about midnight, and once the barometer drops below 1005, the wind will die – to less than 10 knots. On the other side of the front, it goes northerly, rising to more than 20 knots. But later on the Saturday it should go west: 20 gusting 30 on Saturday afternoon. That could be helpful if you're still out there! The wind will build to 50 knots by midday Sunday, easing off late in the day. On Monday, you'll have a good strong 20-30-knot sou'wester for the trip home, dropping to less than ten...but it should be sunny. On the nose both ways!'



“Breaking with Iolanthe tradition, we managed a reasonable start”

the back of the front: Coastal Classic 2008

Bob McDavitt looked positively gleeful. 'I predict this race won't be won by the usual suspects, but that boats from the middle of the fleet will do well. Any questions?'

A lone voice spoke for the assembled skippers. 'Is there any good news?'

Next morning, it looked as though Bob the Weather Man had underestimated slightly. There was a good 20 knots on the start line, with the nowcast beacon on the Bean Rock lighthouse reporting 30 in the gusts. We had the usual multi-cultural crew on *Iolanthe* II – three French-speakers, of whom Cécile was the most experienced sailor – plus a Mexican graduate student, and Graham from Zimbabwe. Half the crew of twelve was new to the boat, and we put a few experimental tacks in, with instructions flying in both French and English till we got used to each other.

Breaking with *Iolanthe* tradition, we managed a reasonable start, and took the first board right across to the leading light before tacking up into the Rangitoto Channel. We had the No 1 up, and leaned over in the gusts (more than you'd expect a 17-ton boat to be capable of) until we took a tuck in the main. We were still with the rest of Division 2 when we came up right under the Whangaparaoa Peninsula, near Gulf Harbour, to change down to the No 3. Then it was tacking through the Tiri Passage, where the wind was no heavier. Lunch was served in the lee of Tiri: bacon and egg pie, brought by one of the new crew.

Just after 1300 we reached Flat Rock, off Kawau Island. I went below to do the first radio sched. The wind was steady from the NNE in the high twenties, but already people were starting to radio in their withdrawals. Kawau is a nice place to sit out a strong nor'easter; you can watch the rugby at the pub in Smelting Cove; and the charms of Russell (on the other side of the promised front, with its 40 knots and heavy rain) must have been looking a bit dim for some boats.

But not for us! We rattled on up the coast, enjoying the breeze and making good time. As we came round Cape Rodney young Guy started looking green and excused himself. I found him a while later, lying on the No 1 at the foot of the companionway, still in



his wet-weather gear, clutching the winch-handle bucket. His face was greyish white.

By 1800 we were off Sail Rock. The sky was dark with ominous cloud, and there was rain in the air. Our progress was great, thanks to the 30-knots from the NE, and as we came abeam of Sail Rock, we passed another boat that loomed up suddenly through the murk.

But the sea began to get lumpy, as it often does between the Hen and Whangarei Head. The tide had started going out again, the 1-metre swells were close together, and the sea was confused. I was surprised to find myself feeling queasy (though I had been going below every hour to do the nav), and found myself throwing up. Again. And again. Worse, I wasn't the only one. Other people were vomiting, and several of them looked as though they wanted to join Guy below with a bucket.

I couldn't understand it. I never get seasick! But there I was, saying, 'I think I'd better get myself down into a bunk for a bit,' and down I went like a dead man. 'I'll come back up when we get a bit closer to Brett,' I thought.

Some time later I could hear that the wind had died. John, the skipper came into the portside cabin. Below me, Steve lay pole-axed – like me, still wearing his boots and foulies.

'Er, Steve. There's only two of us up. We need a hand to get the No 1 on. There's no wind and we're not going anywhere with the No 3.'

There was a silence. Then a very small voice said: 'John, if I stand or talk, I throw up.'

Another silence. John looked quizzically at me – I could hear the question-marks – and vanished without a word.

A couple of hours later I woke, fell out of bed past Steve, flopped in and out of the forward head one last time – and headed out to the cockpit. It was dawn. Guy had returned to the land of the living and was on the helm. Over his shoulder I could make out the Sugarloaf Rocks, south of the Poor Knights. The sea was glassy. I brought out water and plain bread for the still fragile helmsman, and tea and Tim-tams for the two huddled figures keeping him company. Then I went below to do the nav. We'd moved less than twenty miles since I collapsed the previous evening.

**“I was surprised
to find myself
feeling queasy”**



LEFT: Wind at last
BELOW: Another man down

We were looking at the Poor Knights for a long time as day broke and the sun rose. But Guy's home-baked jam tarts made everyone feel more positive. (Still no takers for the traditional Shearer's Breakfast, though.) By 9 am I managed to get my hands on the wheel, and almost immediately the wind came in from the north-west. Suddenly we were bowling along at eight knots, overtaking boats, heading for Brett.

We rounded Brett just after 1300 – a whole 24 hours after our first sched! This time last year we'd been in for 9 hours, and were lounging about in the Waterfront Café, playing yahtzee. The breeze stiffened as it went round to the west, and we bounded down the Bay to Fraser Rock, overtaking smaller boats as we went. We were a tad over-canvassed with the No 1, but it was great to be in flat water at last. We cut the point tight, and sprinted for the line. BANG! went the gun at 1616 – our worst

time by some ten hours. Passengers on the Bay Belle, the ferry to Paihia, cheered. And when we came in to the wharf at Russell, half our crew got off.

In the end, only 83 boats out of 229 made it to the finish. The bay at Russell was empty, the water taxi was prompt, and the shower at the HSBC Hospitality Apartment turned four wind-swept and salt-encrusted sailors into diners fit for Gannets. Next morning at prize-giving, the marquee was strangely empty. *Taeping* was the first boat home, arriving not long after midnight – and the only boat in Div 6 (big multihulls) to finish. V5 won First Division with a corrected time of 16:40:33. The skipper of *Sababa* (4th in Div 1) confided that he'd spent the night rock-hopping up the coast. Hard on the navigator, he reckoned, but he had never lost the wind.

With over half the fleet missing, our chance of a spot prize was much improved. And we got it: a De Walt cordless drill! 'Just the thing for core samples, John.'

The marquee rattled and shook as the wind hit it. It was definitely time to leave. When we got back to the boat, anchored well out, as usual, waves were breaking around us. Bob McDavitt's promised 40-plus knots had arrived. It took a concerted effort to win the anchor, and we sped off to shelter and do a spot of fishing before the long voyage home. The remains of the bacon-and-egg pie that had made us so ill went to the seagulls. The traditional Shearers Breakfast, bought for twelve, served the four of us for every meal over the next day and a half, culminating in my best culinary effort off Kawai – ham and cheese omelettes. With Guy's wonderful, inexhaustible jam tarts for afters. And no shortage of sou-wester to bring us home. 



Cups raced for by Centreboard Yachts of the day



D Kircaldie Cup

Presented to RPNYC 1934-1935
Won by Lavina Kitty 1936-1938



Grey Cup

Presented by Capt Grey 1919
Won by Wellesley 1923-1926, 1927-28



Te Aro Sailing Club Cup

Presented by Mr Winder
Won by Wellesley 1927-1928,
Lavina 1933-1937

By Bill Brambley and Bruce Askew

The following article is a letter written by Mr Nigel Blair in 1981 a well known and respected club member of the day. For many years as he says he became more interested in racing centre board yachts namely the x class of which there are none around today actively racing. We are sure you will enjoy his article and to some members take you back to those great keep centre board yacht racing at our club in those early days.

I joined the PNYC in 1910 as a junior member at the age of 14 and was attending Wellington College. I have been a member ever since, so that makes my period of membership as 65 years and my age 79 this month of January, 1981. From 1919 until 1950 I was engaged in all phases of the club's activities, namely active sailing and administrative positions including Commodore in 1933.

The following is a list of the boats I have owned or been connected with during my period of membership. I actually started my boating career living at Karaka Bay and was given an 8ft new kauri boat for my 6th birthday. Then in 1912 my father

bought me a 20 ft keeler named *Nikau*. I kept her moored at Karaka Bay and spent my weekends and holidays sailing around the harbour with school mates, learning the rudiments of the game. I never raced in her and we sold her in 1916 when we purchased the 22 ft keeler *Rawene* from Kiernan. She was an excellent little ship having been built by Ralph Millman who had also built the *Windward* which was lost on a voyage to the Chatham Islands on the return voyage.

I kept the *Rawene* moored in the Boat Harbour as we found it too dangerous to keep our boats moored at Karaka Bay, although we kept a mooring there which I used for her during school holidays. Bob Murie a member of the club was a partner with my father and me in *Rawene* for about three years.

I sailed *Rawene* regularly in all the RPNYC 2nd Class Keeler races from 1916 until 1926, also in Ocean Races to Port Underwood and back, as well as regular cruises to the Sounds for annual holidays.

Before making my first crossing of Cook Strait in *Rawene*, however, my father DK

Blair, suggested I should serve as a member of the crew in a larger yacht with an experienced skipper. Accordingly, in 1918 I joined the crew of the *Kotiri-II* owned and skippered by Professor J.E.L. Cull and in that year, and the next, made three cruises with him to the Sounds including one to Nelson and Tasman Bay. Prof Cull who was Designing Engineer for the Public Works Department and was one of the stalwarts of the club during the First World War period when many members were serving overseas and their boats laid up, was the father of Lorna who is now the wife of Jack Maddever. I also sailed with the Professor in *Kotiri* on many occasions during school holidays, in harbour cruises. I owe much to Professor Cull for my early training with him which has held me good stead during my yachting and naval careers.

In 1924 we bought the 32ft Ketch *Oyster* from J Glasgow and I sailed her from Nelson during Easter that year. My father then took over the *Rawene* and one of my old crew sailed her for him in the race, etc until after D.K.'s two terms as Commodore in 1927 -1928. Incidentally, my father, David K Blair, and I as far as I know, were

RIGHT :Wellington crew of "Kitty":
Roy Morrison, Jack Elliot,
Noel Banner, Nigel Blair
BELOW: Kitty



the first father / son combinations who held the Commodore post until Noel Manthel and his son, Roger, did so.

I did not race the *Oyster* as she was purely a cruiser with her ketch rig and auxiliary engine, and I used her for regular cruises to the Sounds and Tasman Bay. From 1924 until the end of 1930 when I got married, I made at least two cruises a year to the Queen Charlotte and Pelorus Sounds plus two long trips to Nelson and Tasman Bay. I sold her to Gray Young, well known Wellington Architect who kept her at Lowry Bay but later Ralph Millman took her over and added a keel as she originally only had a centerboard type keel to her. She is back in Nelson again and I believe still as sound as a bell in spite of her age. She was built in 1902 by Chas Bailey.

In 1926 I decided to take on centerboard class racing as it was much more exciting than the keel boat racing with such a varied size and boat type.

As interest in the Sanders Cup Contest was growing, I decided to join the "X" Class and got into the crew of the Wellesly Club's Boat *Wellesley* as mainsheet hand with Bruce White as skipper.

From then on I set out with ambition to win the Sanders Cup, but it took me over 10 years to ultimately achieve that goal.

I sailed in *Wellesley-1* for one season then *Wellesley-11* as skipper for the (Wellesley Club) and sailed in all RPNYC Club Races also Easter Regatta races at Paremata, and Sanders Cup Trials.

Then in 1931 Sandy Coleman and my father had the *Lavina* built to try and win the Cup for Wellington and I skippered her in all RPNYC, Evans Bay Club, Sanders Cup Trials, also Paremata Regatta and Wellington Regatta races for her Class. We were selected to represent Wellington in *Lavina* at Lyttelton in 1933 when we won 2 of the races (7 races sailed) and again in

1934 also at Lyttelton when we won only 1 race in the 6 race contest.

Jack Coleman took over the *Lavina* from me for the 1935 season and I had a spell from racing until 1936 when Bill Wagstaff asked me to sail the *Kitty* for him in Club and trials races. We missed selection for the 1937 Contest but were successful for the 1938 one which was held at Dunedin and we won 3 races and had 2 seconds and won the Cup. Jack Coleman actually won the Cup in *Lavina* in 1937. In all I had represented Wellington in the Sanders Cup 5 times, namely in 1928 (in crew), 1933, 1934, 1938 (all as skipper) and 1952 at Timaru (as manager of the crew).

During the last war I was away from Wellington serving overseas and in New Zealand waters in the Navy for 5 years. After the War I served for another 5 years in the Wellington Division of the R.N.Z.V.R.

Yours Sincerely,

Nigel Blair



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