



SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club



February 2004

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Cover:

Lolita (A156 — Nick Cassim) and *Vanity* (A2 — John Crawford) charge to the finish line during the 2004 Australia Day Regatta on Sydney Harbour.

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COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 04

TUESDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2004

Third race in the Paul Slocombe Trophy Series

SATURDAY 21 FEBRUARY 2004

Thirteenth race for Cavalier 28 Division and sixth in Cavalier 28 short series. Fifteenth race for OK Dinghies and seventeenth race for Classic Division and Division 2.

TUESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2004

Fourth race in the Paul Slocombe Trophy Series.

SATURDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2004

Fourteenth race for Cavalier 28 Division. Sixteenth race for OK Dinghies. Eighteenth race for Classic Division and Division 2. Eighth race in Division 2 short series.

TUESDAY 2 MARCH 2004

Last race in the Paul Slocombe Trophy Series.

SATURDAY 6 MARCH 2004

Seventeenth race for OK Dinghies. Nineteenth race for Classic Division and Division 2.

SUNDAY 7 MARCH 2004

Seventh race for Division 6 (non-spinnaker) and Gaffers Division.

SATURDAY 13 MARCH 2004

Fifteenth race for Cavalier 28 Division and seventh in Cavalier 28 short series. Eighteenth race for OK Dinghies. Twentieth race for Classic Division and Division 2. Ninth race in Division 2 short series.

SUNDAY 14 MARCH 2004

Ranger World Championships.

SATURDAY 20 MARCH 2004

Sixteenth race for Cavalier 28 Division. Nineteenth race for OK Dinghies. Twenty-first race for Classic Division and Division 2.

SATURDAY 27 MARCH 2004

Trophy Day. Seventeenth race for Cavalier 28 Division and eighth race in Cavalier 28 short series. Twentieth race for OK Dinghies. Twenty-second race for Classic Division and Division 2. Tenth race in Division 2 short series.

SUNDAY 28 MARCH 2004

Last race for Division 6 (non-spinnaker) and Gaffers Division.

***NEED
THE TEN-
DER?***

***Call Robbie
on
0418 678 690***

Sat: 0900-1800
Sun: 0900-1700



SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

Once again the Christmas-New Year period was filled with yachting activity for those who chose to be involved. Australian and World Championships were held on Sydney Harbour for the International Yngling Class yachts at which a number of SASC members assisted. These events proved once again that Sydney Harbour is a risky venue for an Olympic-style regatta. Wind shifts, commercial and private traffic combine to put considerable stress on Regatta Management. I believe Port Phillip remains essentially a better championship environment and with the State Government support that has been provided in Victoria has more promise than the Harbour.

In the meantime our association with SCEGGS is bearing fruit. The school is about to adopt the Cadet dinghy as its basic trainer. It will be housed in our Mosman Boatshed and I believe that this fits nicely with the Club's philosophy. The more happy kids sailing out of Mosman Bay the better.

Bright Morning Star was our only representative in Hobart this year again reflecting the changing times in ocean racing. It almost seems inconceivable that less than 25 years ago small centerboard yachts were racing offshore chasing an ever shifting rule advantage. Many of these boats were subsequently fitted with weighted keels but spent much of their time rotting on moorings, not suitable as cruisers and too extreme to race casually. I can't help but feel that yachting is often its own worst enemy aided and abetted by the ill advised who sign the cheques.

Finally, to end on a cheerful note what a pleasure it was to conduct a couple of championship races for the OK dinghies in *Patrick Whittington*. A steady breeze, beautiful starts, close finishes and polite and grateful competitors — a Race Official could ask for no more.

I hope that all members have a great 2004.

Charles Maclurcan

OK Dinghies
rounding the
windward mark on
Sunday 1
February 2004



Twelve boats and some forty people attended the SASC Putt Putt Picnic on Sunday 16 November 2003. The wind was from the south at up to forty knots — fortunately we did not get the full blast at the Club, but we certainly had enough. He windy conditions cut down the boat numbers by at least five, however as usual the atmosphere in the clubhouse was very convivial and everyone agreed that it was a great event. Our good friends from the Balmain Sailing Club braved the elements and arrived with large numbers of attractive ladies.

Dal Wilson and other directors cooked steak and sausages, manned the bar and advised on mooring the putt-putts on the leeward side of the pontoon. Once again it was obvious that this pontoon has given the Club a new dimension, further I doubt if all members realise just how much of our directors' time is devoted to us.

Maggie Stewart came along with a large green salad and helped with signing up some new members.

Our longest (1.93m) member gave a talk on the virtues of the SASC and later conducted an auction for a copy of *The Amateurs — The Second Century Begins*. Craig Milne was the successful bidder and signed membership papers on the spot!

The top boat award, a bottle of red, was presented to the owners of *Ollie*. She is a delightful raised-deck fishing boat built by 16-footer legend Jack Lyons in 1953 and is moored at the head of Mosman's Bay.

There are so many events scheduled for November that it is planned to hold future Putt Putt Picnics in late March or in April when the weather is generally more suitable.

Southerly

Putt putts moored alongside the pontoon at the SASC





The boats that came for the Putt Picnic at the Club on 13 November appreciated the shelter provided by the pontoon (above).
For some reason, the windward side was unpopular (below).





Bill Gale and Commodore Charles Maclurcan welcomed the dedicated Putt-putters to the Club (above) whilst the southerly wind whipped up the waters of the bay (below).



AUSTRALIA DAY REGATTA 2004

by
Peter Campbell

On 26 January Sydney turned on for the biggest on-the-water Australia Day celebration since the 1988 bicentenary, with official estimates at 3,000 vessels on the water and 200,000 spectators around the foreshores to watch events that included the colourful Ferry Race, an Australia Day Parade of craft of all shapes and sizes, the Tall Ships Race, and the 168th Australia Day Regatta.

The Commonwealth Bank of Australia-sponsored Regatta, the oldest continuous annual sailing regatta in the world, attracted 80 yachts racing on the Harbour and more than 60 in the ocean race to Botany Bay and return.

In addition, an estimated 300 dinghies, catamarans and small keelboats competed in satellite Australia Day regattas on waterways north to Lake Macquarie, south to Lake Illawarra and inland to Chipping Norton Lakes. At least 2,000 sailors took part in Australia Day afloat in NSW.

Brindabella, arguably still Australia's best known ocean racing maxi yacht, gave owner George Snow a triple treat in the 168th Australia Day Regatta ocean race to Botany Bay and return.

The Jutson-designed 79-footer took line honours and first place on corrected time in both the IMS and IRC handicap divisions, missing out on winning the PHS Division just 1 minute 22 seconds to *Cadenza* (Gunner & Illi Tuisk).

Brindabella, having her first race since returning from contesting her

The start of the non-spinnaker division in the Australia Day Regatta, with SASC competitor *Hebe* nearest the camera.





11th Sydney Hobart Race, the 21st for her owner, scored a comfortable line-honours win in the 25 nautical mile race, finishing near the Regatta flagship, HMAS *Canberra*, after a three fast 3 hour 17 minute race in a 12-15 knot southerly breeze.

Earlier, major rival Ludde Ingvall's *Nicorette* had snapped its mast into three parts just south of the Heads when a rigging fitting broke.

Brindabella won the new Geoff Lee Trophy for the fastest elapsed time in the ocean race, while the City of Sydney Sesquicentary Cup for the lowest corrected time went to *Lady Ann* (John and Ann Kirkjian).

In the 168th Australia Day Regatta on the Harbour, sponsored by the Commonwealth Bank of Australia, two former CYCA Commodores, David Kellett and David Fuller did well in Division 1. Kellett steered

Sylvia on the way to take line and handicap honours in the Classic Division in the Australia Day Regatta.

Competitors in the CYCA Australia Day Regatta ocean race head to the finish as *James Craig* prepares for the Tall Ships Race.



the 60-footer *Sydney* to take line honours, while Fuller won on corrected time with his recently acquired 42-footer *Bashful*.

The Harbour fleet of 80 boats, modern and classic yachts and modern and historical skiffs, provided a colourful focal point for Australia Day celebrations that have centred on this regatta for the past 168 years.

In Division 2, first place went to *Senta* (Terry and Julie Clarke) while the Thunderbird class yacht, *Tsoona* (Glen Ilic) took line and handicap honours in Division 3. The strong Catalina production yacht class went to *Sagacious* (Peter Muller) while in the Yngling class, *shipshape.com.au* (Hamish Jarrett) took the honours.

Some of Sydney's finest Classic yachts contested this division, with first place on line and handicap going to Phillip Kinsella's gaff-rigged 'cota boat, *Sylvia*, while champion sailor John Winning took out the Historical Skiffs in *Alruth*, his beautiful replica of an early gunter-rigged 18-footer.

The Non-Spinnaker division is always a popular way to sail for many sailors whose families join them for the traditional Australia Day Regatta, with *Jackie-Clare*, skippered by Geoff Davidson, finished first, handicap honours going to Sailability's *Primary Wave*.



Some people preferred to have a picnic afloat on Australia Day and absorb the atmosphere, like *Tingari* anchored near the Regatta flagship HMAS *Canberra*.

RANGER

FEBRUARY 04

Cliff Gale designed *Ranger* and commissioned his very good friend Billy Fisher to build her in his shed at La Perouse. She was his last and most-loved boat and Cliff sailed her for thirty-five years. His greatest delight was to sail her single-handed and he sailed thousands of miles this way.

When he passed on he left her to my late brother Roger and me. Now seventy she has been in my care for thirty-five years. I race her and fish from her and I am privileged to do so.

It pleases me greatly that it is possible that she will continue to race with the SASC indefinitely.

Southerly

Ranger crossing the finish line during the Australia Day Regatta on 26 January 2004



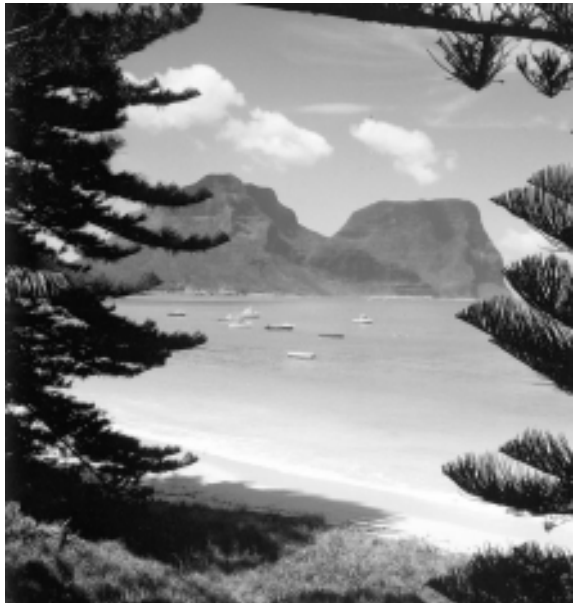
COME and ENJOY SASC FRIDAY TWILIGHT RACING 2003/2004

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A CHANCE TO BECOME ELIGIBLE TO

Win a trip for
2 to

**LORD
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David Salter Photo

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David Salter forgoes his annual race South for the return cruise on Bright Morning Star

It was a peculiar feeling bobbing up and down off North Head as Mick Lawler's guest on *Firetel* to cheer the Hobart fleet on their way. A combination of circumstances had conspired to prevent me from doing the race this year, but as *Bright Morning Star* surged past us close-hauled on starboard tack I was cheered by the knowledge that within a week or so the powerful Peterson sloop would again be my home, this time for a relaxed delivery back to Sydney.

A courtesy call to Dal Wilson made as I waited for my kit bag to emerge on the luggage carousel at the airport yielded the dramatic news that Tony Purkiss and his wife would now not be coming with us on the cruise. Tony had a reasonable excuse: he'd suffered a major heart attack during the New Year's Eve celebrations at Constitution Dock and was now in Royal Hobart Hospital. Thankfully, Big T made a speedy recovery and flew back to Newcastle within the week. Tony's oversize sea boots were filled by two youngsters: Don Maclurcan (son of our Commodore), and his university mate Andrew McMillan. The rest of the crew was co-owner Hugh O'Neill and his son Richard, the ever-dependable Steve Grellis as nominated Guesser, Dal and myself. No sheilas. Standards of personal grooming were unlikely to reach great heights over the next ten days.

FULL TILT...
Bright Morning Star powers through the heads on her way South





The dynamics of racing and cruising offer stark contrasts, the most obvious of which is that in cruising mode you can actually *stop*. This profound advantage struck me with heart-warming force on the first night as we swung gently on the pick in the sheltered waters of Port Arthur. Fresh seafood (local prawns and crays), chilled white wine and a crisp salad – all consumed in civilised leisure sitting around a real table with Vivaldi on the stereo and the boat completely still. Makes a change from trying to shovel in a few quick gob-fulls of tepid stew while bashing to windward. The light lingers well beyond 2100 at 43°S and that first serene evening helped put everyone in a holiday frame of mind.

Cockpit cushions! Any lingering doubts that we weren't seriously hanging loose were scotched the following morning when a pair of pristine white seat-softeners emerged from the forepeak. Rear-Commodore Wilson was so moved by the moment that he immediately rang Mel Godfrey on the mobile to announce that her splendid creations had finally been deployed. We loped along behind Maria Island reaching at 9.5 knots under full main and No 3, letting the waterline length do all the work. But those sparkling early conditions soon gave way to typical Tasmanian coastal weather: alternate bursts of rain, calm, sunshine and savage little 40 knot gusts that often clocked through more than 90° in seconds. It kept us all interested until we rounded Schouten and sprinted up the Freycinet Peninsula to a late-afternoon anchorage in Wineglass Bay. A stream of icy-cold Cascades was coming up the companionway one nanosecond after Hugh pronounced himself 'Finished with Engines'.

SHORT CUT ...
slipping between
Tasman Island
and Tasmania
and proper

Wineglass was at its glorious best and remains one of the most beautiful stopovers on the east coast. Mixed in with the tough little cray boats



WAY TO GO ...
Hugh prepares to make a mark on the chart

OFF WATCH ...
Dal hard at work converting baked beans into energy



and cruisers were some familiar racing yachts: *Merit*, *AFR Midnight Rambler*, the S-H handicap winner *First National* and a mob of Victorians returning from the Melbourne-Hobart event. The friendly VHF chatter was broken only for Morning Devotions — the 0745 Tasmanian Coastal Weather forecast — which is always heard in respectful silence. Our tiny Zodiac took an eternity to inflate by hand pump (prompting the inevitable sequence of Viagra jokes) but the opportunity to get ashore prompted some notable heroics. The youngsters embarked on a hike/climb expedition to conquer the closest peak while Richard swam the 200 chilly metres from the beach back to the boat — an impressive effort from a bloke with only one good arm.

Our rough plan, weather permitting, was to sail that afternoon and overnight up the coast, through Banks Strait the following day and on to Deal Island. By midnight *Bright Morning Star* was abeam of Eddystone Point, sauntering along at 6 knots with sheets just eased in the warm glow of a full moon. Only half concentrating on the helm my mind was swiftly snapped to attention by the tell-tale “swoosh” of broken water. We’d been joined by dolphins. An extended family pod of more than 20 of these elegant creatures played tirelessly at the bow or arched through the air in stunning displays of synchronised swimming. The glimmer of moonlight on their glistening backs formed the visual signature to an unforgettable moment. The company of dolphins is one of the sheer delights of blue-water sailing.

Not so delightful was a robust cold front roaring up from the south. The unflappable, computer-generated voice of the weather sked cheerily promised 30-45 knots and average seas of 4 metres. Time to reassess the plan. We’d get there OK, but Deal may not be such a flash destination if the southerly system kept us pinned down for a few days. Flinders was the better option, but by the time we’d decided to make for Lady Barron we were to the west of Cape Barren Island and would have to take the long route in up Franklin Sound. With the wind already gusting to 25 knots Hugh and Dal made the prudent call to tackle this tricky passage under motor. It’s easy to be distracted by the wild beauty of the area and forget that in many places it shoals to just 3 metres. For the next few hours we were all kept busy picking up leads and transit points, callings headings, watching the sounder and checking the GPS against the chart.

As we finally inched towards the wharf at Lady Barron we could see *First National* already tied up snug alongside an old long-line trawler. The delivery crew sensibly eased the yacht's docklines to allow us in between. They didn't fancy their optimised Beneteau beachball being crunched all night between our substantial tonnage and a wall of rusting steel. This seamanlike courtesy also gave them the prime outside possie for a spot of fishing off the stern. Within minutes they'd hauled in a bucket load of decent-sized Trevally for breakfast. On *BMS* our interests were more to do with issues of hygiene. For a modest \$2 in the ablution block behind the Fish Co-op we enjoyed our first hot shower for four days. Now, off to the pub!

The bar of the Furneaux Tavern would see a fair bit of us over the next few days as the predicted NW blow set in. Our masthead instruments were registering 50+ gusts as rain squalls churned the surface of the Sound into a soup of spuming whitecaps. Not much sense in taking on Bass Strait in *that*. We shouted ourselves a slap-up dinner in the pub restaurant and waited a mere 90 minutes between ordering and the arrival of the food. Never mind, have another glass of Merlot. There was a memorable 'full and



LANDING PARTY ... the alpine assault team heads ashore at Wineglass Bay

BIG DECISIONS ... Dal and Steve ponder the charts for the days cruising





AMONG FRIENDS ... *BMS* rafted up with S-H winner *First National* at Lady Barron

SAFE & SOUND... sheltering from 50 knots (viewed from the Fumeaux Tavern bar)



frank' exchange of views in which Dal and Hugh began from positions somewhere to the right of Genghis Khan while young Donald gamely held the humanist line for The Leaders of Tomorrow. Needless to say, the reptiles of the press (and this writer in particular) copped a hammering from both sides. Truce was only declared over coffee-and-a-dash back at the boat.

But no matter how convivial the company, cabin fever always tends to set in after a couple of days of enforced shore time. Dal made a strong bid for the "Captain Grumpy" award by complaining he was being denied his favourite ration of baked beans at breakfast. It was explained, with considerable tact, that this predilection placed him in a likely minority of one and that securing a feed of beans might require him to exercise his own culinary skills. Rising to the challenge he cooked breakfast the next morning (for the one and only time on the trip) and we all got to contribute our methane to the atmosphere whether we liked beans or not. Point made.

A very weather report was transcribed and exhaustively analysed. Hopes for departure rose and fell with each forecast. Clearly, we needed our own predictive measure as a reliable guide to local conditions. Steve eventually provided the appropriate mechanism: "Listen, guys. If your last piss of the night off the stern doesn't blow back on you then it should be OK to leave the next morning." Immediately known as *The Grellis Index*, this foolproof system will no doubt take its place beside the Beaufort Scale as an invaluable guide for seafarers. Meanwhile, we kept listening to the skeds.

GOOD COMPANY ... Steve, Dal and Don make the best of a squally morning



SASC NEWS

On the third morning at Lady Barron we spotted indicators that seemed like they might develop into a 12-hour break between systems. Certainly worth a go. Out through the treacherous Pot Boil and into open sea at last. Three reefs and the storm jib was plenty of sail as we thrashed into Bass Strait just a few degrees cracked off a work. It was wet and hard sailing (hey, we're supposed to be cruising!) but by now pride wouldn't let us even consider turning back into the lee of Flinders. After a full rotation of watches we were rewarded by slowly moderating conditions. Shake out the reefs and back to the No 3. From mid-afternoon the breeze lightened even further and went NNE. The boys had a 0730 bus to catch from Eden to Sydney the following morning so by the time Gabo came into sight the motor was running. We made it with 5 hours to spare.

Somehow the magic of cruising seems to diminish once you're stopping at familiar ports and sailing along well-known coastline. Eden was its usual inhospitable self (with the exception of the generous Volunteer Coastal Patrol people) and none of us felt like staying a minute longer than we needed to provision, re-fuel and top up the water tanks. The stiff SW breeze had returned and *Bright Morning Star* was soon romping towards home. In one, perfect watch we sailed from Bermagui to abeam of Montagu in three hours. Absolutely glorious, stress-free sailing that reminded us all of just how much we enjoy being offshore. But before long the odd plastic bag began to appear and we could hear the distant roar of aeroplanes. Cruise over. Motoring quietly up the Harbour to the SASC at dusk the Bridge and city suddenly burst into the striking coloured light show left over from New Year's Eve celebrations. We'd returned to civilisation with a bang. And Dal could now have all the baked beans he liked.



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GEORGE AND WILLIE CLARK AND *MATHANA*

FEBRUARY 04

Having sailed the 28 foot Ranger-type *Maluka* to the Barrier Reef, Lord Howe Island and Tasmania, the brothers George and Willie Clark took a cruise to Asia by ship. This inspired them to commission the 35 foot *Mathana* to sail to Singapore in 1939, but their plans were spoilt by the actions of Herr Hitler.

Cliff Gale was called on to design the boat but as he had no maths skills he insisted that his plans be checked by calculation. This was done by a naval architect, Mr Blackman, who passed the concept with flying colours and recommended no alterations. She was beautifully built by Mr Hoyle at Drummoyne. George insisted on an alteration to the deck line which compromised her appearance a little.

She was raced for many years as a gaff-cutter with the SASC. After World War II the courses for all Clubs were to Manly and back regardless of wind direction. Each Saturday when off Middle Head on the way back Willie would say ‘George it’s time for tea and scones’ — George would then retire below, make tea, heat the scones and serve the crew with this bounty.

During a race in the late 1940s the southerly increased to more than 50 knots and the only boat able to return and finish was *Mathana*. All other competitors from all clubs had to remain in North Harbour. When *Mathana* arrived off Middle Head, working back into the savage seas, Willie made the usual request and tea and scones were served.

At the first SASC meeting after Willie’s passing several members spoke about the brothers’ lives. Bill Gale related the tale about afternoon tea served in the teeth of the southerly. The audience hooted with laughter and a few comments such as ‘Nonsense!’ were voiced. When the noise died down past Commodore Brian Wood rose to his feet and said “Stop laughing — I was there, the story was true, not one of the other yachts returned, the wind and seas were colossal and I did enjoy the afternoon tea!”

Southerly

Postscript — Scones on the Run from Manly

The story of scones on the return from Manly was often told in *Tingari* as one of the great ‘legends’ of the SASC. Eventually, on a typically beautiful Sydney summer day in the 1980s, one of the crew, Terry Spilling, announced ‘Today we are going to have scones on the run from Manly — I’ve brought the scone mix.’ The oven was duly fired up and as the spinnaker broke out down-wind from Manly East the enticing smell of fresh scones wafted up from the galley. Terry went below to prepare the feast but returned with a puzzled look and a collection of rock hard small lumps of material that bore little resemblance to the promised scones. The lesson — scone mix out of a packet should be mixed immediately before baking, not three hours before!

Sadly the products of this abortive exercise were offered to nearby seagulls off Middle Head, but the birds fled from the hurtled missiles which sank like stones to the bottom of the western channel.

John Jeremy

MARINE RADIO CERTIFICATES OF PROFICIENCY

On 1 December 2003, the Australian Communications Authority (ACA) launched an education campaign reminding Australia's small boat owners that they must hold at least a Marine Operators VHF Certificate of Proficiency if they are using a VHF marine radio.

Holding a certificate is a condition of the Maritime Ship Class Licence that authorises the operation of these types of marine radios. Penalties for operating a VHF radio without a certificate include fines of up to \$165,000 and even imprisonment.

The campaign has been developed because the ACA is concerned about an increasing number of reports about breaches of licence conditions related to marine radio operations.

The issues being reported are:

- less vigilant use, by recreational boat owners, of responsible radio operating practices, including those that apply to distress procedures and frequencies;
- a rise in delinquent radio behaviour on Australian waterways; and
- a significant fall in the number of people sitting for marine examinations.

The reports indicated that International Maritime VHF radio operation is the greatest area of concern.

The ACA is also taking the opportunity to urge small boat owners using 27 MHz marine radios to obtain a certificate of proficiency. Even though they are not required to hold one, it would assist them to become competent in using marine radios, especially in an emergency.

In addition, the campaign will remind operators of marine radios on vessels equipped with radios other than 27 MHz or VHF radios, that they must not only hold a Marine Radio Operators Certificate of Proficiency, but also have an individual ship station licence.

Operators of marine radios at maritime coast stations will also be reminded that they must hold a relevant marine radio operator's certificate of proficiency and that maritime coast stations must be individually licensed.

For information about marine radio communications contact an ACA office on 1300 850 115 or visit [www.aca.gov.au/radcomm/marine radio/about marine radio/index.htm](http://www.aca.gov.au/radcomm/marine%20radio/about%20marine%20radio/index.htm).

MOORING MAINTENANCE

Annual maintenance of SASC moorings in Mosman Bay will begin in late February 2004

Members with private moorings in the bay who would like to Club to arrange for the contractor to maintain their moorings whilst in the bay should contact Rod Phillips at the Club on 9909 2185 as soon as possible

A New Year, and a few minor items from the boatshed. We have survived the last year without any more pollution spills on the slip, and we are making slow, but steady progress, with our Sydney Water commercial waste application. We still however need your help to make sure we don't have any more pollution events. If you are working on the bottom of your boat please make sure that you have the anti-pollution boom in place and, on the two lower cradles, the drain hose attached.

We have had a number of empty dinghy racks in the boatshed for some time, and if there were the demand, we would consider converting some of the space to lockers. If you are interested please let us know and conversely if you have a dinghy and never use it but have no where else to keep it again let us know as we are looking for alternate solutions that will free up boatshed space for other purposes.

Robert Evans



SASC CLOTHING

The SASC shop — otherwise known as the office, has a range of clothing and other useful items for sale. All prices include GST.

Polo shirts, two styles in navy and one in white:	\$36.00
Rugby shirt, navy with white collar:	\$65.00
Club tie:	\$20.90
Club belt:	\$18.70
Club burgees:	Large: \$25.00
	Small: \$21.00
Racing flag:	\$10.00

PARKING

Some local residents have reported that access to their driveways has been obstructed recently by cars that may have been parked by SASC members or their guests. This careless and inconsiderate behaviour has caused them considerable inconvenience.

We would ask all members and their guests to carefully observe parking restrictions and to park responsibly.

WIND HER UP AND HANG ON

David Salter tests his loyalty to displacement offshore yachts with a ride on Sean Langman's hi-tech maxi

For most people the words "Sydney Amateurs" conjure up images of our harbour fleets — the mixed division yachts, Cav 28s and Classics. We're known for our modest, traditional boats and crews, happy to race in the Corinthian spirit — and on flat water. In truth, the club can boast a proud offshore tradition and has on its register one of the largest and most technically-advanced offshore yachts racing anywhere in Australia.

A99 is *Grundig* (formerly *Xena*), Sean Langman's 66-foot downwind rocket. Last year she chased the 90-foot *Alfa Romeo* home in the Sydney-Hobart to finish an amazingly close second across the line, well ahead of the much larger *Canon Leopard* and *Nicorette*. The yacht began life as an Open 60 for Kanga Birtles. Then it was modified for fully-crewed racing and later grew a 6-foot sugar scoop stern. This year Langman pulled the boat apart again for yet more modifications in his never-ending search for speed.

An assignment for *Australian Yachting* magazine had me joining *Grundig's* crew for the recent 92-mile Flinders Islet Race. The opportunity to test my faith in traditional displacement yacht designs against the blistering performance of a proven lightweight flyer was too tantalising to decline.

It always pays to thoroughly familiarise yourself with a new ride before

BRUTE FORCE...
Resting on her
cradle *Grundig*
dwarfs the 28-foot
day sailer under
her stern



going to sea. I made sure to be at Noakes, where *Grundig* lives, about three hours before the 2000 start. First surprise was that the boat wasn't in the water. Langman campaigns his yacht "dry" — she has no antifoul whatsoever — which is fine if you own the boatyard but a tad expensive for the rest of us. (There's a special keel pit dug into the hard stand at Noakes so that the boat can be maintained at a reasonable height off the ground.)

The next heart-stopper was the sheer size of the sloop. It's not just the overall length but the volume of the hull and its incredibly long and narrow keel. The lead bulb looks impossibly small against the mast height and sail area. It is. *Grundig* would hardly go to windward at all without her water ballast. The pumps can lift up to 3,000 litres into tanks on the high sides of the boat in around 60 seconds. That's the equivalent of having more than 40 blokes on the rail. (This trick does, however, involve firing up the engine for every tack, a process that makes sailing uphill feel strangely un-nautical).

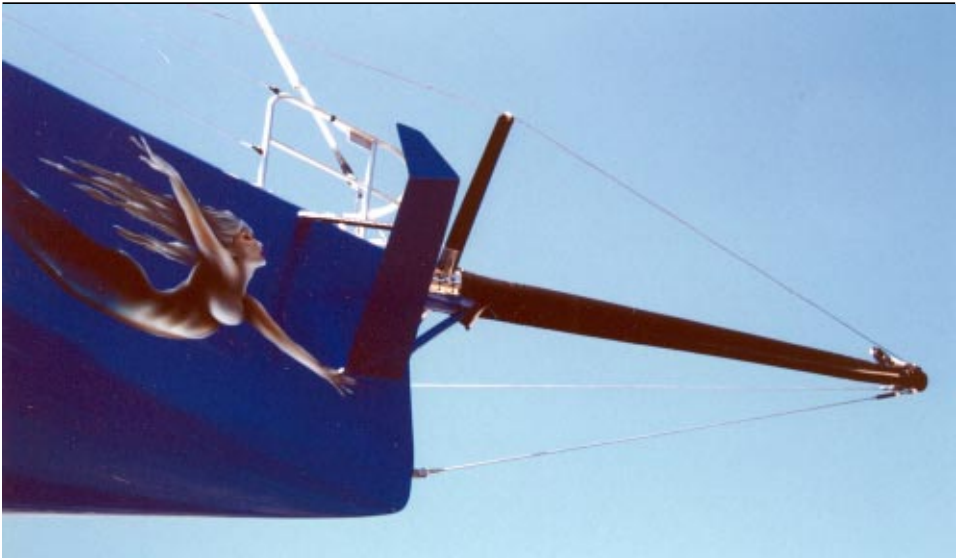
Below the waterline *Grundig* has an innovation that would be an invitation to disaster on anything other than a professionally-campaigned boat. There's a spindly, rectangular trapdoor cut into the centerline behind the keel. Through that drop the drive shaft and prop, hinged down through about 30° on an elbow coupling. The whole arrangement is wound back into the boat under sail, leaving a clean bottom. But heaven help Sean and the lads if a trailing kite sheet ever got fouled up in that lot!

At the bow *Grundig* now looks more like an aeroplane than a yacht. Langman has fitted a set of lateral foils (with 747-style turned up wingtips) to help counter the boat's tendency to nose-dive at speeds over 25 knots. The strutted bowsprit is carbon, fashioned from a broken spinnaker pole off *Nicorette*. The whole space-age effect is embellished in rather bizarre fashion by an enticingly topless mermaid painted on each side.

But the real shock for someone used to the homely comforts of *Mark Twain* and *Bright Morning Star* is the fit-out below deck. There isn't any. No galley, no nav station, no table, no grab rails, no cabin floor. Nothing. Moving about below involves trying to find some footing between the maze of frames and stringers. You're actually standing on the inner skin of the fibreglass hull. Athwartships just below the companionway is the obstruction of a huge,

**RIGHTING
MOMENT...** With her long keel and bulb appendage *Grundig* draws all of 4.2m





FLYING HIGH... the bowsprit/bow foil configuration makes the yacht's front end look more like an aeroplane [removed before the Hobart — and probably just as well — Ed.]

slippery transfer tube for the water ballast. Once *Grundig* started punching into a seaway the idea of spending any time awake below became distinctly unattractive.

So how was the boat to sail? Impressive. It's startling at first to crew on something that can sail faster than the true wind but, within an hour, you become so blasé that 15 knots seems

TRAPDOOR... the intricate hideaway apparatus for the prop (note water ballast sea inlets either side)



positively glacial. The winch layout, halyard clutches and runners are just a scaled-up version of boats half *Grundig's* size. Gear loads were remarkably low. We raced through the night down to Port Kembla in 15-20 knots with a crew of just eight and were never under pressure.

Despite the water ballast, anyone without an immediate job was perched on the rail. The lack of a spinnaker pole keeps the foredeck wonderfully uncluttered and the minimum-overlap headsails make tacking simple. I was surprised what fun it could be to push such a large boat hard through darkness and rain. Checking our position entailed no more than a quick glance at the large, full-colour Raytheon chart plotter that sits on the cockpit sole between the wheels.

Grundig steers neatly on all angles but the revelation in driving technique came when we threw in a long sequence of gybes chasing *Nicorette* back up the coast. Langman helms his 66-footer like a skiff, feeling for the fastest line underneath the huge asymmetric kite. The boat's power-weight ratio is so advantageous (she weighs no more than 8 tonnes) that there's no point trying to find the "groove". You just wind her up – and hang on.

Grundig missed first place by 51 seconds. A full account of the race can be found in David's report for the January edition of Australian Yachting.



BAREFOOT WARRIOR...
Langman drives *Grundig* through the night, keeping an eye on the chart plotter in foreground



SKIFF STYLE...
the 66-foot boat is easily sailed by a crew of just eight

THE AMATEURS

The Board and Members of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club would like to express their sincere appreciation to the following for their interest and generous support in the maintenance and running of the Club's training vessel, the Adams 10 - *The Amateurs*.

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Carina (Michael Maxwell) sailing towards a fog-shrouded Bradleys Head on 20 November 2003 before the start on the Royal Australian Institute of Architects race day. The eastern parts of the harbour were covered by the sea fog until early afternoon.



Six yachts started in the annual Captain Slocum Trophy race, sailed last year on 9 November. The trophy was won by *Rob Roy* (J. B. Rousselot) seen approaching the finish line (below). *Yeromais V* (John Diacopoulos) was second with *Sylvia* (Phillip Kinsella) third.





One historical skiff sailed in the Captain Slocum Trophy race last year. *Britannia* was skippered by Bill Gale, who reminded everyone just how many decades it was since he last sailed an 18-footer. Rob and Kathryn Evans kept a close eye on progress in *Jack Millard*.

CONGRATULATIONS BILL MERRINGTON



On behalf of all members, we extend our congratulations to Past Commodore Bill Merrington on his 90th birthday on 27 January 2004. We wish him many more and look forward to seeing him at the Club and on the water in *Eventide*.

Bill Merrington in *Eventide*.





The 2004 International Yngling Class World Championships were sailed on Sydney Harbour during January. The series was won by Neville Wittey (AUS 54, above). Second overall was the first women's crew of Nicky Bethwaite, Kristen Kosmala and Karyn Gojnich. They secured their third win in an Olympic Nomination regatta and a place on the water in Athens later this year. The Ynglings are the first class to complete their four Olympic Nomination regattas.

REMEMBER TO USE YOUR BOAT!

John Morris has provided this revealing photograph showing what can happen if you don't use your boat often enough. The meaning is clear — get out there sailing!



The Sydney-Tasmania passenger ferry *Spirit of Tasmania III* arrived in Sydney for the first time on 9 January 2004 (above). The ship commenced regular passenger services on 13 January.

A large crowd of boats gave the 2003 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race fleet a traditional send off on Boxing Day. *Skandia* showed her speed soon after the start on the way to line honours in Hobart (below).



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Ordinary: Patricia Briggs
Charles Davis
Ian Kiernan
Craig Milne
Malcolm Reed
John Samaha

Associate: Kathryn Evans
Mary Kinsella

NEW BY LAW

At its meeting on 3 December 2003, the Board approved a new By Law 19:

19. Associate Membership

Subject to approval by the Board, a partner of a voting member may be admitted to Associate Membership. Associate members shall not be entitled to vote at any meetings of the Club or be eligible for appointment to the office of Director or any other position in the Club, but shall otherwise be entitled to enjoy all the rights and privileges of full members.

No entry fee is paid for this class of membership. Annual subscriptions are proposed by the Board and are subject to approval by the members in a General Meeting.

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

The next SASC News will be the April 2004 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Wednesday 24 March 2004. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.

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