



SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club



February 2019

SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB

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Cover:

Sticky (Richard Harris) shortly after the start of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart yacht race on Boxing Day
(Photo John Jeremy)

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COMING EVENTS

February 2019

SUNDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2019

Point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker and Sunday Classic Non-spinnaker Divisions

SATURDAY 2 AND SUNDAY 3 MARCH 2019

Sydney Harbour Regatta and Classic Yacht Regatta Pittwater

FRIDAY 8 MARCH 2019

Friday Twilight Race — *early start*

SATURDAY 9 MARCH 2019

Point score race for Super 30 Gold Cup Division, Classic Divisions, Cruiser racer Fleet and Cavalier 28 Division

SUNDAY 10 MARCH 2019

Point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker and Sunday Classic Non-spinnaker Divisions

FRIDAY 15 MARCH 2019

Friday Twilight Race — *early start*

SATURDAY 16 MARCH 2019

Point score race for Mixed Fleet and Classic Divisions

SUNDAY 17 MARCH 2019

Manly Yacht Club Women's Challenge

FRIDAY 22 MARCH 2019

Last Friday Twilight race — *early start*

SATURDAY 23 MARCH 2019

Point score race for Super 30 Gold Cup Division, Classic Divisions, Cruiser racer Fleet and Cavalier 28 Division

SATURDAY 30 MARCH 2019

Point score race for Mixed Fleet and Classic Divisions

SUNDAY 31 MARCH 2019

Final point score race for Sunday Non-spinnaker and Sunday Classic Non-spinnaker Divisions

SATURDAY 6 APRIL 2019

Summer Trophy Day. Final point score race for Super 30 Gold Cup Division, Classic Divisions, Cruiser racer Fleet and Cavalier 28 Division

SUNDAY 7 APRIL 2019

Ranger/Couta Sprints

SATURDAY 13 APRIL 2019

Club Championship

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SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

Customer surveys, like the online version we recently asked members to participate in, are supposed to be a means of getting real and honest feedback to help management measure satisfaction and performance and gauge expectations.

These days, there seems to be an overwhelming number of companies and organisations wanting us to participate in satisfaction surveys of one kind or another — to the point that survey fatigue sets in. Well at the Amateurs, you can hardly accuse management of over-utilising this approach — our last member’s survey was 18 years ago.

Nonetheless, there were certainly a good number of members obviously afflicted by survey fatigue and who failed to find the necessary time to give us the benefit of their feedback. The good news was that 50 per cent of active members did find the time to respond to our survey and, thanks to them, the Board now has a much better understanding of what you think we do well, what we could do better and the sorts of activities and functions we should conduct to ensure the club remains a relative success and has a clear path to the future.

So what did we find out? Well in terms of our member profile, it was perhaps no surprise that around 90% are male; 60% are aged between 50 and 70; 32 % are 70 or older whilst 50 % live somewhere on the Lower North Shore. Just over 40% of us have been members for 15 years or more and nearly 67% of all members are boat owners.

In terms of the Club, its facilities and operations, the survey confirmed things that we suspected to be true but also challenges some assumptions as well as containing a few surprises. It’s clear that the older, long-term members are generally happier with all aspects of the club as they are now, than the younger more recent members.

Overall, around 80% of those surveyed reckoned they were either “Very Satisfied” or “Satisfied” with the facilities including moorings, the slipway and the tender service and the vast majority were happy with the quality and pricing of work done on their boats by the Boatshed staff. In fact, 70% of our respondents reckoned the tender service represented by far the greatest value to their membership – followed by the slipway and having a club mooring.

To my surprise, at least, the survey challenges the belief that the reason many members join the club is to obtain a mooring. It seems that our location and proximity to where many people live is also important and that the clubhouse itself is held in high regard as a place to simply hang out and talk about boats, sailing or just socialise with friends.

It would come as no surprise to most members that there is a pretty widespread belief that we need to work harder to attract new members



and, in particular, more females. There were some interesting suggestions about potentially running “learn-to-sail classes for women mid-week; providing more crewing opportunities for beginners and generally being a bit more welcoming to those who simply want to come on down and try sailing.”

For a club that has largely focused on racing for much of its water-based activities, there was a lot of support for more cruising events and activities with around 50% of respondents suggesting we should be doing more to accommodate the needs of cruising sailors.

There is interest in having sailing-related courses on offer with round 80% of members reckoning we should be doing more to encourage not just new people into sailing but improving the skills of existing crew to take them to the next level. As such there was widespread support for the idea of members paying for and attending club-run courses on subjects such as rope work, sail trim, mooring techniques and racing tactics — but not so much enthusiasm for just holding more ‘social events’. There were lots of good suggestions from which the board will be considering and prioritising over the next few months.

On changes to the membership structure the majority of people, it seems, are broadly in favour of the changes, particularly the addition of some form of crew membership, although there are a few who simply want to maintain things as they are and always have been. The membership changes will be the subject of a separate email to all members outlining the reasons for the proposed changes, what happens to our financial position if we do nothing and how we intend to preserve and enhance the value of full membership.

Our thanks to the Membership Committee, led by Rear Commodore Peter Scott ably assisted by Tom Moulton, John Brady and Racing Secretary Alice Murphy, for all the hard work that has gone into the preparation, promotion and resulting analysis of our survey. Anyone wanting a more forensic debriefing on the outcome might tap Tom on the shoulder and ask for a meeting.

On a final note, can I ask you all to join me in extending our gratitude to Tender Driver Mike Power, who after 14 years of providing a very valuable service to members, has announced his retirement. Mike who served his time as a captain of big commercial ships was an unfailingly courteous, careful and very competent skipper of *Nancy K*. We wish him well in his new endeavours.

Bruce Dover



SYDNEY TO HOBART 2018



Photos John Jeremy

It was a Sydney spectacle in spectacular weather — the start of the Rolex Sydney to Hobart yacht race on Boxing Day. As is typical today the range of boats starting was remarkable, from maxis like *Comanche* to the small (by today's standards) *Gun Runner* and *Komatsu Azzurro*



Ragamuffin heading on the way to check in before the start



InfoTrack was another of the IRC Division 0 maxis competing in the race. Fourth over the finish line, she finished sixth in her division



Bringing back many memories for SASC members, *Mark Twain* returned to Sydney for the race.



Sallywag reveals her 5.8 m beam during prestart manoeuvres. She was a retirement from the race with a broken bowsprit



Wild Oats XI and *Comanche* make *Enterprise* and *Noahs II* look tiny as the manoeuvre before the start



Sticky (A164, Richard Harris) before the start. She finished 10th in IRC Division 4 and 15th in the Corinthian Division



M3 Team Hungary, Asparas and Ichi Ban manoeuvre off Nielsen Park before the start



Smuggler, Envy Scooters and Gweilo have more room here than you might think. Long telephoto lenses can add to the feeling of drama



Comanche, Prospector and Scallywag 26 seconds before the start



Start line No. 2 20 seconds before the start. Black or dark grey sails dominated the fleet and this photo and the one below illustrate the difficulty race officials have when trying to identify yachts with dark sails and red or blue sail numbers. They are unreadable. This year, fortunately, all competitors had bow numbers



Line 3 was clear when the start gun fired.
No boats were OCS this year



Sticky hard on the heels of Wings about a minute after the start



The super-maxis 1 minute 19 seconds after the start



George O'Malley finding a gap between Audere and others on the way to the Heads



Wait for me! Gun Runner chasing the fleet to the Heads



Photo Fred Bevis

The view from the spectator fleet as the leaders head to sea



Photo David Salter

Sticky heading to sea



Photo Fred Bevis

Black Jack tearing down the coast



Photo David Cox

Wild Oats XI heading for the finish line in Hobart

BLUE WATER GREENIES

David Salter reflects on our save-the-planet credentials

Sailors, it is fair to assume, are at least as mindful of their environment as any other identifiable group. After all, a significant aspect of our sport is the pleasure we take from being out there on clean blue water and breathing fresh, pollution-free air.

But it wasn't always so. Less than a generation ago we were still throwing just about anything over the side. Further back, as a teenager I remember older crewmates leaning across the leeward gunnel to smash empty beer bottles with a winch handle. Meanwhile, the head discharged directly into the ocean and nobody thought that was offensive. Today anyone caught not using a holding tank faces hefty fines.

On the whole this concern for our environment is commendable. If sailors won't care for the planet, then who will? Yet there are some current aspects of this green mentality in the sport that seem over-zealous, and even hypocritical.

One example. To me, the rule preventing crew from wooling spinnakers is just plain silly. Wool is a natural product, and biodegradable. Most synthetic knitting yarns also break down in salt water. In any case, a boat that races every week would use less than a skein in an entire season. Admittedly, rubber bands (which are more likely to be plastic these days) are a different matter. They are potentially hazardous to fish and bird life.

Naval Group was the largest man-powered yacht in the 2018 Hobart fleet

Photo Andrea Francolini



This concern for the environment can take some strange forms. For February 2019 as long as Rolex has sponsored the Sydney-Hobart race it has been a requirement that all competing yachts affix a large Rolex decal on each side of their bow and carry it all the way to Hobart. Failure to do so risked DSQ. But, when the fleet assembled last Boxing Day, there wasn't a Rolex bow logo in sight. Why?

The reason was explained to me by the head of the CYCA/Rolex media team. Too many of the decals have been coming off during the race and Rolex was now concerned that scraps of plastic bearing their name floating around the Tasman might reflect poorly on the company's environmental credentials. Fair enough.

But where was this same sensitivity to pollution when it came to accepting entries from the larger yachts — principally the five 100-foot supermaxis — that run their diesel engines non-stop from Sydney Harbour to Battery Point to power their winches, cant the keel or move water ballast? Surely all that fossil fuel being burnt leaves a substantial carbon footprint? As dear little Kermit the Frog reminds us, "It's not easy being green".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

'From the Archives' in the December edition of *SASC News* refers to the builder of *Captain Amora* as "K Brown". I think you will find K Brown is the late Keith Brown, well-known sailmaker from Putney.

Back in those days Keith lived at 39 Waterview St, Putney, a property that has back lane access, in close proximity to Halvorsen's facility at Putney.

I recall on the odd occasion from mid-1960s onwards, when one dropped around to his place to pick up a sail or related item, there would usually be some form of boat building activity taking place in the back yard, up against the back fence (i.e. a straightforward lift over the fence onto a trailer to remove).

The photo of LFB 445 looks remarkably similar to the boats he had in-build around that time. In addition, I believe he built his yacht *Ropawe* on that site (circa 1964 perhaps) — a Trevor Gowland design along similar lines to the Halvo's *Freya*.

When he moved his loft to Mortlake, he continued to build work boats of a similar size at that site — e.g. fibreglass, hard chine, no-frills, practical 30 ft LOA — some became fishing boats, I think the Avalon Sailing Club had one built, not so long ago, as their committee boat.

Bob Chapman

[*We believe Bob is quite correct* — Ed.]

Dear Sir,

Over the weekend of 15–16 February, Friday twilight and Saturday races have had to be rescheduled (the latter to Sunday) because of the Sail GP event occupying the harbour.

Sydney Harbour belongs to the people of Sydney. For more than 150 years those that enjoy sailing on weekends on our beautiful harbour have been able to do so relatively unhindered. Yet now commercial forces are taking over the harbour on Friday and Saturday afternoon.

Sail GP or extreme sailing is setting an extremely worrying precedent!

Dennis Wood

Dear Sir,

I write in response to John Pennefather's comments on my "Drop The Drops!" article.

His first point is one that has been raised with me by a number of members, namely, that the drops allow for days when the skipper is not able to race. Indeed they do, but surely there should be some reflection of these DNC days in the cumulative pointscore. Otherwise, skippers who compete on every scheduled race day are, in effect, being penalised for their good participation.

John also suggests that there could be a limited series of races for owners who are too busy to race every week. There already are. "Short" series — racing every second week — have been fixtures on the SASC sailing programme for many years. In the Classics we have the Top Ten Trophy, awarded to the yacht with the lowest aggregate score in its ten best individual results over the Spring and Summer series, excluding those that finished first, second or third in the Overall Pointscores in their division.

As it happens, the Top Ten Trophy was instituted by me as Divisional Rep in direct response to complaints from some skippers that other commitments prevented them from contesting the overall championships. That issue — and the role of "drops" — has concerned me for some time. But interestingly, all the winners of the Top Ten Trophy so far have been yachts that competed in every race of the season anyway.

Loyalty, commitment and consistency should be recognised. Inducements to sandbag for handicap advantage should be minimised. Drop the drops!

David Salter





Photos Maz Kivi

Friday twilight races are always popular, and the first race of 2019 on 11 January was no exception. The diners spread to the boatshed, a unique SASC experience



Rear Commodore Peter Scott and Captain Chris Manion preparing to present the prizes on 11 January



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At the staff and volunteers Christmas Party in December, Commodore Bruce Dover named Ian Anstee as Club Member of the Year and presented him with a framed burgee. The award recognised the great work done by Ian in refitting *Captain Amora* during the previous winter. The work included internal repainting and varnishing and extensive rewiring of electrical circuits, replacing many of the cables installed forty years ago. Ian led a team of volunteers including John Pennefather and Mike Warner and the work was completed to a very high standard



Photo Fred Bevis

CAPTAIN AMORA TURNS 40

February 2019



Photos John Jeremy

As reported in the last edition, *Captain Amora* turned 40 on 20 January. LFB445, selected for conversion into the Club's new starters boat, was slipped by Tony Ashleigh for survey on 1 August 1978



Starter Jack Millard (on the left) ready for the first day's work in *Captain Amora* on 20 January 1979, the first race of the summer season



Connie Crisp, wife of Commodore Colin Crisp (on the left with the megaphone), officially named *Captain Amora* on Closing Day 7 April 1979



At Easter 1979 Charles Maclurcan and John Jeremy took *Captain Amora* to sea for Pittwater to finish the Bob Brown Trophy race. In those days the race started at 8 pm on the Thursday. *Captain Amora* made the voyage north on smooth seas that afternoon. This photo shows her at anchor at Coasters Retreat on Good Friday shortly before setting out for home

Waiting for the wind during the Production Yacht Challenge in March 1980. The young man in the hat is Charles Maclurcan.

One memorable day in similar conditions *Captain Amora* ran out of fuel and had to be towed to the RMYC by the Water Police to refuel. Very embarrassing for the starter and puzzling for the competitors





Colin Crisp and Charles Maclurcan in *Captain Amora* during the Endeavour 26 and Timpenny Championships in January 1980



Hon. Racing Secretary Rosemary Hay at work in *Captain Amora*. There were no computers in those days



Charles Maclurcan, MHYC Commodore Dac Harrington, Rear Commodore David Willis and Commodore Vic Dibben during the SASC/MHYC inter-club Daydream Shield competition in July 1981



Nancy K, driven by Charles Maclurcan, guarded alongside *Captain Amora* by Tony Saunders during the Cavalier 28 Championships in 1985



Vic Dibben holding numbers aloft during the 1982 Daydream Shield



Vic Dibben and Peter Garrow starting a Friday twilight race in December 1989
For some years *Captain Amora* was sponsored by the Australian Guarantee Corporation



Captain Amora high and dry alongside *Charisma* at the
Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron in June 1999



In August 1999 *Captain Amora* had a major refit when the original venerable BMC six-cylinder diesel engine was replaced by the Volvo diesel she has today



Captain Amora and *Jack Millard* off Chowder Bay running the Cavalier 28 NSW Championships in February 2001



One Saturday afternoon in July 2003 the ferry *Lady Herron* experienced some mechanical difficulties and threatened to come alongside *Captain Amora*



Captain Amora was rescued by Robbie White in *Nancy K* without any damage. The ferry also escaped unscathed



Captain Amora on station west of Fort Denison for the finish of the Regatta held to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the completion of the Sydney Harbour Bridge on 18 March 2007



Stalwart volunteers Brian Guest and Kevin Dixon during a Paul Slocombe Trophy race in February 2012. Cameron Edwards is lying astern in *Jack Millard*



Long-serving paid hand Cameron Edwards demonstrating how to deflate a mark



Andre Van Stom and Cameron Edwards during the Club Championship race in May 2014



Captain Amora's crews have to take the rough with the smooth.
This is the start of the 2016 Lion Island Race



Beautifully refitted by Ian Anstee and his volunteers, *Captain Amora* is set for many more years' service. Here she is on station in November last year with her Saturday crew led by Tony Barry



Photo Michal Tomaszewski

On Friday 7 December it was 70 years since Jack Earl's *Kathleen Gillett* sailed back into Sydney Harbour after her world voyage. To commemorate the event the Australian National Maritime Museum took *Kathleen Gillett* to the CYC for a weekend visit. Two other boats which had been owned by Jack Earl also visited the CYC — *Maris* and *Smoky Cape* — seen here secured astern of *Kathleen*.

Note *Mark Twain* at the neighbouring berth



Photos John Jeremy

As You Do prepares for a Friday twilight race as HMAS *Warramunga* arrives from sea

SUNDAY SAILING



Photos John Jeremy

Unlike the first Sunday race of 2019 on 20 January which had to be abandoned for lack of wind, the 16 December race enjoyed a beautiful fresh northeasterly and sparkling seas, as *Reverie* demonstrates above



The crew of *Fidelis* ready for the start



As You Do tacking to cross *Crackerjack*, *Solveig II* and *Camilla* soon after the start. *Camilla* finished second in the Non-spinnaker Division



Vivienne Marie following *Reverie* and *Lahara* after the first of the two starts of the Classic Non-spinnaker Division. *Vivienne Marie* also took second place



Anitra V and *Caprice of Huon* after the second start (for the larger boats — the computer sorts it all out) for the Classic Non-spinnaker Division



Fidelis well-heeled in the fresh breeze. She was not really as close to the Ferry *Queenscliff* as the photo suggests



Cherub displaying a very clean bottom as she passes *Captain Amora* on the way north



Caprice of Huon and *Josephine* heading for a close finish



Plenty of weight on the rail for *Clewless*? as she beats to windward



Josephine about to cross the finish line. She finished third on handicap in the Classic Non-spinnaker Division



Sana well pressed in the breeze. On handicap she beat *Vivienne Marie* by thirteen seconds to win the Classic Non-spinnaker race



Photo John Jeremy

Polar Star in
Sydney on
30 December

Each year a distinctive red-hulled ship visits Sydney on her way to or from Antarctica, this summer berthing at Chowder Bay.

Homeported in Seattle, the 42-year-old US Coast Guard cutter *Polar Star* is the United States' only operational heavy icebreaker, and her crew of 150 is making their sixth deployment in as many years to directly support the resupply of McMurdo Station — the United States' main logistics base in Antarctica.

Operation Deep Freeze is a joint military service mission in support of the National Science Foundation — the lead agency for the United States Antarctic Program. Since 1955, US Indo-Pacific Command has assisted in providing air and maritime support throughout the Antarctic continent. This year marks the 63rd iteration of the annual operation.

Each year, *Polar Star* creates a navigable path through seasonal and multi-year ice, sometimes as much as 6.4 m thick, to allow a resupply vessel to reach McMurdo Station. The supply delivery allows Antarctic stations to stay operational all year round.

The 121 m long, 13,236 t *Polar Star* arrived in January after completing an 18-mile trip through the ice to McMurdo Sound, where 400 containers were to be offloaded from the supply ship *Ocean Giant*.

Today the US Coast Guard maintains two icebreakers — the Coast Guard Cutter *Healy*, which is a medium icebreaker, and *Polar Star*.

Commissioned in 1976, *Polar Star* is showing its age. Reserved for Operation Deep Freeze each year, *Polar Star* spends the southern summer breaking ice near Antarctica returns to dock in the US in order to complete critical maintenance and repairs in preparation for the next Operation Deep Freeze mission.

During this year's deployment, one of the ship's electrical systems began to smoke, causing damage to wiring in an electrical switchboard, and one of the ship's two evaporators used to make drinkable water failed.

The ship also experienced a leak from the propeller shaft which halted icebreaking operations in order that scuba divers could repair the shaft seal. A hyperbaric chamber on loan from the US Navy aboard the ship allows Coast Guard divers to make external emergency repairs and inspections of the ship's hull.

Polar Star also experienced ship-wide power failures while breaking ice. Crew members spent nine hours shutting down the ship's power plant and rebooting the electrical system in order to remedy the outages.

If a catastrophic event, such as getting stuck in the ice, were to happen to *Healy* in the Arctic or to *Polar Star* near Antarctica, the US Coast Guard is left without a self-rescue capability.

By contrast, Russia currently operates more than 40 icebreakers — several of which are nuclear powered.

The US Coast Guard has been the sole provider of the US polar icebreaking capability since 1965, and is seeking to increase its icebreaking fleet with six new Polar Security Cutters in order to ensure continued national presence and access to the Polar Regions.

Meanwhile....

Seen on a freezing day in January, Australia's new icebreaker *Nuyina* is rapidly taking shape in the Damen shipyard in Romania



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Wendy Anstee	Joel Cape
Tenille Chapman	Nicholas Cocks
John Currie	James Kerley
Nicholas Lawther	Ned McMahon
Alice Murphy	Allan Williams

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The Amateurs — The Second Century Begins	\$40.00
Ranger Sprint Series (very limited stock)	\$65.00
The Australia Day Regatta	\$35.00

SASC NEWS IN COLOUR

Don’t forget that the *SASC News* is published on the Club’s web site in full colour. If you haven’t had a look yet, do so today. Past editions are also available.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next *SASC News* will be the April 2019 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 29 March 2019. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.





Photo John Jeremy

Veteran of a daring raid on Singapore by commandos of Z Special Unit in 1943, the Japanese-built fishing vessel *Krait* arriving in Sydney for the first time after the war on Anzac Day 1964. Owned by the Australian War Memorial and in the custody of the Australian National Maritime Museum, this memorable and valuable little ship was meticulously restored to her 1943 configuration at the Woolwich Marina in 2017–18. She is now on display afloat at the ANMM in Darling Harbour. There are hopes that one day it will be possible to build a climate-controlled permanent home for *Krait* ashore to preserve her for future generations

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