



# SASC NEWS

**The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club**

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December 2020

**SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB**

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**Cover:**

*Shambles, Ca Va*  
and *Paper Moon*  
heading for SM  
during the Twilight  
race on 9 October  
(Photo John Jeremy)

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# COMING EVENTS

December 2020

## FRIDAY 8 JANUARY 2021

First Summer Twilight race (see note on Page 35)

## SATURDAY 9 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Super 30s, Classic Division (Summer Series)  
Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division

## SATURDAY 16 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Classic Division (Summer Series) and Mixed  
Fleet (Sheep Station Series)

## SUNDAY 17 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Sunday Non-spinnaker Division and Sunday  
Classic Non-spinnaker Division

## SATURDAY 23 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Super 30s, Classic Division (Commodore's Cup),  
Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division

## TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2021

Australia Day Regatta

## SATURDAY 30 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Super 30s (Around Islands Teapot Trophy),  
Classic Division (Summer Series), Cruiser Racer Division (Codock  
Trophy) and Cavalier 28 Division

## SUNDAY 31 JANUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Sunday Non-spinnaker Division and Sunday  
Classic Non-spinnaker Division

## SATURDAY 6 FEBRUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Classic Division (Summer Series) and Mixed  
Fleet

## SUNDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2021

Metre Boat Rally

## SATURDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Super 30s, Classic Division (Commodore's Cup),  
Cruiser Racer Division and Cavalier 28 Division

## SUNDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2021

RANSA Regatta

## SATURDAY 20 FEBRUARY 2021

Pointscore race for Classic Division (Summer Series) and Mixed  
Fleet

**NEED THE  
TENDER?**

Call

Nancy K

on

0418 678 690

or

Jack Millard

on

0418 678 819

(race days)



## SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

“To racing yachtsmen everywhere – and to the wives, families and friends who put up with them.” So reads the dedication in one of Australia’s sailing “bibles” first published in 1972, two years after the release of the *Female Eunuch*, itself a weighty tome in hardback. Our Club is not alone in concluding that half the population has some catching up to do where sailing is concerned. The aforementioned author has now coached many of our best female sailors, but in an era when women were excluded from various areas of clubs, his sentiment would have seemed uncontroversial. The Amateurs once kept a red pay phone in the boatshed and if some romantic fool answered it late on an afternoon, the standard riposte would be, “Yes missus, I saw him leave about five minutes ago, we had to rescue a boat full of kiddies.”

Attempts to homogenise just about anything into categories involves ignoring multiple exceptions. Recent discussions on what constitutes a classic yacht provides a good example. Some may suggest that any definition of a classic yacht should not begin with construction, keel shape, buckets leaked per hour, futtocks or vintage, until those very same parameters are applied to the classic yacht’s owner. One issue that does vex however, relates entirely to gender.

When all that is between the mariner and the bug-eyed fluorescent fish of the great depths, is the few millimetres of a vessels skin, it does seem reasonable to be anthropomorphic about that vessel. A crystal strung from the hair of a narwhale’s tail above *Lonely’s* windswept decks, fails to oscillate in any discernible pattern, not that I can recall which way of the clock signifies whether to paint the stable pink or blue before heading for a prawn trawler off the Cape, so the question remains, is *Lonely* a He or a She, here or out on the island? Am I, when below, held warm in her womb, or do I represent nothing more than a blockage in his rumbling lower intestine?

Regardless of the vessel’s gender or the condition of the owner’s futtocks, our sole aim at the Amateurs is to provide opportunities for you to enjoy that vessel. Close racing is a priority for many but can be challenging to arrange when faced with disparate designs and corrupt officials, while the last survey indicated that cruising is of great interest to members, but what does cruising encompass? Our largest fleets come out to play for the Friday twilights, are there lessons for us? Should shore-based children’s sport be prohibited on Saturdays? Metaphysics aside, how many dancers does the world seriously need?

Perhaps some of the answers will come from the healthy influx of new members who have washed ashore this year for close inspection by Detective Moulton and his acolytes. A group interrogation will occur when the easing of pandemic restrictions allows us to invite our new



arrivals to attend an inappropriate, if overdue, welcoming event. The SASC's Water Women Committee is now actively promoting events to increase female participation in sailing. Where barriers prevent more women from sailing and otherwise dissipating the children's inheritance on yacht ownership, the loss is borne not just by authors, but by us all. Chairman Mao observed that it is always darkest just before it goes totally black. Overall, it has probably been a good year for bats, albeit a most shocking year of death, sickness and loss across the globe. That we have managed to keep our doors open and provide members with the opportunity to race or just visit their boats to contemplate the dietary habits of seagulls, is due to careful oversight, loyal employees and the teams of diligent volunteers who exude such great kindness and goodwill throughout the Club. Until the next five minute gun, those later sentiments are reciprocated and extended to you all.

*Sean Kelly*



*Lonely in the Friday  
Twilight race on  
9 October*

Photo John Jeremy

## THANK YOU INTERNATIONAL PAINT



The SASC would like to thank International Paint for their generous donation of Micron AP anti-fouling paint for the Club's starter's boat *Captain Amora*



## SASC WATER WOMEN

### Beryl Dibben Trophy Race — Cruiser Racer Lady Helm Race

The concept of a Lady Helm Race is not new to the Amateurs as they were held regularly in the 1960s but it wasn't until 2015 that an annual lady-helm race became part of our Saturday spinnaker series. Originally there were many raised eyebrows! What will this do to my pointscore placing? How will I find a woman to helm my yacht in a spinnaker race? But with assistance from the Sailing Office and persistence from the Divisional Representative, Herschel Smith, everyone seemed to find a competent woman to take the helm each year. In 2018 and 2019 the weather took over and the racing was abandoned. However, in 2020 we have hit the groove and all yachts entered in the Cruiser Racer Fleet invited a woman to take the helm. The forecast again threatened the likelihood of abandonment due to no wind but, after a delayed start, the fleet took off in a very pleasant 10–15 knot ENE breeze. It was a shortened course but pursuit racing is great fun when trying to catch the boat in front while not being overtaken by the boat behind.

Congratulations to all our entrants — and an extraordinary Hat Trick to Barbara Elliott who skippered *Lonely* and has won the trophy for the third time. Well done Barbara! In second place was our new Racing Secretary Catherine Baker who steered *Shambles* and in third place our new Club Captain Alice Murphy who had taken on the challenge of racing in *Double Dutch*.

Alice in command  
of *Double Dutch*

Photo by Tish Van de Walt



Alice reports “There were six on board *Double Dutch* — four women and two men. We had a great start and headed off to Lady Bay at great speed. Unfortunately, the wind dropped off and swung a bit more to the east, making the tack across to Watsons Bay a losing tack — not much we could do but keep going and hope for a lift or two. After a few more tacks we arrived at the Lady Bay mark alongside *Mid Wicket* (of course they had an overlap so we went wide). Lady Bay in a light ENE provided the fleet with a big wind shadow (Note to the Div Rep!) so we took a bit longer than expected to get round and set the kite — now we were away again! Or were we? On port tack as downwind boat we didn’t have any rights, so when a fleet of Lasers approached we tentatively suggested “windward boat”? A reply of “you’re on port” indicated that we should ease the pole, come up, bring on the main, duck through the gaps and then continue on course. Just as we were relaxing into the downwind sailing, a racing yacht came reaching in on starboard, so again, ease the pole, come up etc.... Now we only had to avoid Shark Island, drop the spinnaker and round Point Piper mark — too easy! With *Shambles* on our port side and *Mid Wicket* again on our starboard side we managed quite well. On the beat to the finish at Taylor Bay we overtook *Mid Wicket* and *Windshadow* sneaking into third place by a few seconds. Gotta love pursuit racing!”

So how about it? Super 30 Fleet, Cav28 Fleet, Classics Fleet — do you want to make this a Lady Helm Day in 2021?



Photo John Jeremy

Only a small number of yachts (including *Anitra V*, above) braved the heat to head to the start of the RPEYC Women on Water race on 29 November. Faced with a gale warning the RPEYC sensibly abandoned the race shortly before the scheduled start

# AUSTRALIA DAY REGATTA

185  
YEARS

2021



Endorsed  
by the  
Australia Day  
Council



AUSTRALIA DAY  
IN SYDNEY

**The 185th Australia Day Regatta will be sailed on Tuesday 26 January 2021. Come and add to the spectacle — the Notice of Race is available at [www.australiadayregatta.com.au](http://www.australiadayregatta.com.au) and [www.sasc.com.au](http://www.sasc.com.au)**

# SEASONS GREETINGS

**THE COMMODORE, FLAG OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS EXTEND THEIR BEST WISHES TO ALL MEMBERS FOR A HAPPY CHRISTMAS SEASON AND GOOD COVID-SAFE SAILING FOR 2021**

*BEST WISHES TO ALL OUR STAFF ON BEHALF OF ALL MEMBERS WITH THANKS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND EFFORTS OVER A VERY CHALLENGING YEAR*

SEASONS GREETINGS FROM PAULA, KAREN AND CATHERINE (ADMIN AND RACING) ROD AND ROY (BOATSHED), PETER (CLUBHOUSE), AND ALL THE TENDER DRIVERS AND STARTING TEAMS



## NOT THE LORD HOWE BBQ CRUISE

*Uncertainty this year about the impact of COVID-19 led many of the regular LHI voyagers to undertake a coastal cruise instead. David Salter reports.*

A change is as good as a holiday and, in this case, we had both. The alternative to the annual 840 n mile round trip to Lord Howe became a very welcome five-day coastal cruise — and a wonderful break from the Coronavirus cares of the Big Smoke.

Our rendezvous destination was the rather posh new marina at Soldier's Point, Port Stephens, for a BBQ on the traditional date of the second Tuesday after the Melbourne Cup. As is customary there was no formal organisation but the word quickly spread and fourteen boats eventually made the trip.

Yachts registered with the Amateurs and RSYS comprised the largest club groups. Seven of us flew the SASC burgee: *Samphire*, *The Indefensible*, *EZ Street*, *Fidelis*, *Mister Christian*, *Anitra V* and *Lunacy*. It was heartening to have this confirmation that the old offshore spirit of the Amateurs has survived.

Entry to Port Stephens between Tomaree and Yacaba headland is spectacular

On the mighty *Mister Christian* my crew was Jim Nixon, Paul Connett and Bob Morley. We headed north straight after the Saturday pointscore race and made Coaster's Retreat by nightfall. Rafting up with *EZ Street* in this delightful anchorage is always a pleasure, and a hearty dinner

Photo by Paul Connett



(with appropriate amounts of rehydration) followed. We turned in early anticipating a dawn start for the much longer passage to Newcastle.

A solid south easterly soon saw us romping past Terrigal under full main and the No. 1 genoa. What a blessing not to be tacking into the predominant NE up this often tricky section of coastline! We averaged a comfortable 6 knots before rounding Nobby's Head for the run into Newcastle Harbour and our pre-booked berth at the NCYC. Hot showers all round, then a leisurely dinner and bottle of Shiraz at the pub across the road. Sydney already seemed a world away.

The leg from Newcastle to the Port Stephens entry is no more than 35 n miles so there was little need for an early start. Once again we had a helpful wind direction. Our luck held until just North of Anna Bay when the breeze increased and swung ahead of the beam. So we bashed into steep seas for a couple of hours approaching the Fingal lighthouse — the first time there had been any water on deck.

Bearing away around Tomaree Head we were greeted by the splendours of Port Stephens — and its many navigational hazards. The large sandbanks are shown on the chart and their limits by a succession of markers, but sandbanks tend to move and we were careful to give any green water a wide berth. Running before a stiff three-quarter wind we flew down the Port with poled-out genoa, often exceeding 9 knots, which is close to warp speed for *Mister Christian*.

The marina at Soldier's Point is very well appointed — some might even describe it as “luxury” — and the whole facility is efficient, welcoming

The tranquility and peace of Fame Cove

Photo David Salter



## SASC NEWS

and situated in a properly protected corner of the port. As the rest of the fleet slowly arrived during the afternoon and crews began swapping their stories of the passage it became apparent we had struck upon an attractive alternative to the annual Lord Howe Island trip: coastal cruising in company with planned overnight stops.

But to moderate our enthusiasm a violent westerly thunderstorm hammered us later that night. As 50 knots roared down into the marina from the Hunter Valley, boats that had been less than diligent securing their sails paid the price. Two big genoas on the yachts either side of *Mister Christian* began to unfurl and the noise as those tear-away sails snapped back and forth in the storm was like rapid artillery fire. Neither owner was anywhere to be seen, so a volunteer rescue team brought both genoas under control after lengthy struggles in the dark and rain.

With time to kill the next day we first took one of the marina's courtesy cars to drive into 'town' (Nelson Bay) to shop for the BBQ that night and provisions for the passage back to Sydney which we hoped to do in one leg. Next, we motored across the Port and picked up a mooring for lunch in Fame Cove, a beautiful little hideaway on the Northern shore. As we quietly sipped our beers the only sound came from the birds calling to each other in the dense shoreline scrub.

Nigel Stoke addresses the BBQ multitudes

Photo by Paul Connett



The Soldier's Point marina has a small function area at the end of one pontoon arm that worked perfectly as the venue for the BBQ. Observing the COVID protocols, each boat took turns cooking their meal and there was plenty of seating to ensure social distancing. Tom Moulton did his customary twisting of arms for donations and the group quickly raised \$1,520 for the Lord Howe Island Public School — a good result. It was an extremely pleasant gathering but the *Mr C* contingent was careful not to over-indulge as we planned an early start for the passage home.

The pre-dawn motor back up Port Stephens was tranquil, although we had to take a wide arc to avoid the savage tidal flow around Halifax Point. The main went up in the lee at Shoal Bay as we headed for open sea and the long passage back to Sydney. After a few hours of motor sailing a robust following breeze arrived just before Bird Island and we charged South under our 'Chicken Chute'. Everyone took a couple of long tricks at the helm in these glorious conditions. It was offshore sailing at its very best — and the cold beers didn't hurt, either.

The spinnaker came down as we approached that nasty slop at North Head. A couple of careful gybes put us safely in the Western Channel and we sailed sedately down the Harbour to come alongside at the club. The whole passage — from the marina at Soldier's Point to the Amateurs pontoon — had taken just 14 hours.

Arriving home  
after a 14-hour  
passage

Photo by Paul Connett



## A NEW VENTURE

by  
Wendy Anstee

As Ian and I are now closer to 80 than 70 we felt that the time had come to swap the sails for a larger motor — shock horror!

Ian, having owned a VJ, a Gwen 12, a Laser then, with the family, a Hartley 16, East Coast 31, CAV 37 and 43 and finally our beloved Moody 41 which we very sadly sold. Then began a hunt for something which we could call our holiday home once again and would keep us on the water.

There were such a variety of boats on offer but we finally decided that a Palm Beach 38 would fit the bill and went looking. As fortune would have it we found one, the third one built 20 years ago. *Willo* had been kept out of the water and is in very good condition. Our challenge now is getting used to a very different type of cruising.

The new boat has good accommodation for a couple with a slide-out couch to accommodate the occasional overnight visitor. I am still getting used to the fact that I have a toaster, microwave and stove top but no oven however we manage and, hopefully, we will soon have a BBQ. *Willo* has a large cockpit with a removable awning.

We have much more speed now but, to keep the bank balance somewhat intact, we prefer to mosey along at about 8 knots. *Willo* copes with the ocean swells very well and at least we can run for cover if the weather turns nasty.

*Willo*, Ian and  
Wendy Anstee's  
latest boat



As we now have no mast we are able to explore areas under the many bridges that have eluded us until now.

Hence we have recently completed our inaugural cruise up the Hawkesbury River to Windsor, a trip we can highly recommend.

With friends from the Coastal Cruising Club of Australia we headed out in mid-September, with the first stop at Dangar Island. As many of you know the current rushes around the island at a great speed and the tide can be coming in on one side while it is still running out on the other. The island was originally called Mullet Island because of the number of fish that Captain Phillip and his party caught when they first visited in March 1788.

The railway bridge spans were built there in 1886.

A walk around the island was very pleasant with lovely views of the surrounding waterways, interesting houses and friendly locals. A ferry service from Brooklyn brings locals and visitors over and there is a very good coffee shop on the wharf.

After an overnight and no dragging we set off again, motoring under the railway and vehicle bridges, before passing Peat, Long and Milson Islands. Many of the islands have an interesting history.

Long Island was declared a nature reserve in 1911 and landing is not permitted. Peat Island, originally called Rabbit Island, had a mental hospital and is named after George Peat who began a ferry service across the river in 1844 mainly to transport livestock to Sydney from the Hunter.

Milson Island was used to accommodate mentally-ill patients from World War 1 and then as a low-security prison from 1973 to 1981. It is now used by the Department of Education. There is a channel between the island and the mainland and it is a pleasant diversion to travel through this well marked area.

The hulk of the first HMAS *Parramatta* went ashore off the eastern end of Milson Island closer to the northern shore in 1935 but cannot be seen from the water.

The river has many twists and turns before Berowra Waters. There are several small bays off the main river here, some with public moorings of which we made good use one night. We went ashore here for a wander and a passing local retired mechanic towed us to shore when the outboard we were using misbehaved. After some tinkering he fixed it.

From there we continued on past Spencer, a small settlement on Mangrove Creek. It all looked very shallow so we gave it a miss and then passed Bar Island, again historical with many early settlers buried there.

The scenery varied from many large homes in amongst the forest to thick stands of mangroves and beautiful high sandstone cliffs, many with large holes weathered into them and caves where you can imagine the indigenous people living. Much of the area is good farming land and there were many disagreements between the early settlers and the aborigines who were finally given some land, much of it unusable — they were very badly treated.

Our next stop was Wisemans Ferry where a very kind local who hired out houseboats let us use a couple of his moorings for the night. He also allowed us to go ashore at his jetty as there seemed to be nowhere else. This enabled us to visit the pub for a meal and also the cemetery, 3½ km away, with the help of a shuttle from the Pennefathers who joined us for lunch.

The cemetery is very old and it is most sobering when you realise how many young children died and — whole families were buried there.

There are two vehicle ferries at Wisemans Ferry, the first one began in 1828 for traffic on the Great North Road linking Sydney with the Hunter. The punts cross constantly 24 hours a day. There was a charge in the early days but they are now free — a rare treat.

We also spent a night in Cattai Creek, a good peaceful place to anchor and where there were a couple of public moorings. It would also be interesting to explore in the rubber duckie.

Between Wisemans Ferry and Windsor we passed many caravan parks and ski gardens as it is a very popular water-skiing area. What it is like in summer I hate to think. The ski boats must be cheek by jowl and the word is that the mozzies are vicious.

There have been many floods over the years on the Hawkesbury, the worst being in 1867 when the water came up way over the level of the new bridge and would have flooded half the town of Windsor.

Our last stop was Windsor where once again some local workers pointed us in the right direction to anchor upstream of the bridge. The new one has only just been opened and the old one not yet dismantled though the locals are trying to prevent it. A walk through town learning about all the beautiful old buildings was very pleasant and enlightening.

After a very pleasant peaceful evening with our friends we left early on a calm and misty river to Refuge Bay for the night before it was back to *Willo's* new home at the Empire Marina.

It was a very enjoyable cruise, made even more interesting by travelling in company. It was also a learning experience of the dos and don'ts for our next foray into uncharted waters.





Photos John Jeremy

After a long delay caused by COVID-19, a prizegiving for the 2019-20 sailing season was finally held at the Club on 23 October. Due to the pandemic restrictions it was much more low key than usual, with generally only one representative per boat able to attend. It was also a sit-down affair



Wearing his COVID Marshal jacket, Rear Commodore Chris Manion made sure that everyone had a great time. A selection of photos of prizewinners is on the following pages

SASC NEWS







Photos John Jeremy

5 to 6 at the start of the Sunday series race on 27 September



*Fidelis* and *Caprice of Huon* starting in the second classic division start on 27 September



A close Sunday finish between *Samphire* and *Clewless?*



*Caprice of Huon* approaching the finish



*Surprise finishing in the Sunday race on 27 September*



*A busy start for Division 2 in the first Friday Twilight race on 9 October*



*Clewless?* and *Tula* approaching Naval 3 in the first Twilight race of the season



*Gecko*, *Blue Peter* and *Clewless?* on the way to the Beashel Buoy



The SASC Twilight fleet on the way from the Beashel Buoy to Shark Island



*Rambull* at Point Piper



There wasn't room for everyone at the starter's boat end of the line for the Super 30 start on 7 November



*Paper Moon* close behind *Bordeaux* after the start on Sunday 8 November



*Cherub and Surprise at the start on 8 November*



*Fidelis powering to the finish*

*Computer technology is changing our sport and challenging its traditions. David Salter ponders some current implications.*

It has been fascinating to follow how the CYCA has handled the issues surrounding their new double-handed division in the Sydney-Hobart race. At first, the innovation was greeted with much enthusiasm. We were told that more the 30 boats had signaled their intention of doing the 628 n mile trip South two-up.

But then the fully-crewed offshore community realised that there was nothing in the Notice of Race that excluded the double-handed entrants from competing for the overall prize — the Tattersals Cup — which is awarded to the winner on IRC. Unfair! (They said). Why? Because the two-up boats would all be using Autohelm while long-standing practice confined the traditional boats to hand steering all the way.

It is indisputable that for both safety and practical reasons the double-handed boats must have Autohelm capacity. The issue is whether that gives them an unrated advantage over conventionally crewed and sailed yachts. The world's best short-handed skippers freely admit that modern autopilot systems now steer considerably better, and faster, than humans.

Driven by highly sophisticated computer programs the latest Autohelms go far beyond simply holding a heading. They take into account wind speed, direction, angle of heel, wave motion and a range of other variables, then interface all of those inputs with optimised computer tracking. They are potent tactical devices customised to a specific boat — and they never lose concentration, energy, or need food and sleep.

Confronted by concerted opposition from some of the most prominent and successful owners in local offshore racing the CYCA then reversed its original policy. There would now be an amendment to the NoR restricting the double-handers to their own division. They would not be eligible for the overall prize, nor for any of the normal handicap divisions. Entries in the two-up fleet for the Sydney-Hobart then reportedly dropped by a third — from 33 to 18.

Most regular offshore sailors would probably agree with the CYCA's about-face. Helming skill is a fundamental part of the sport. But there are some associated issues — and an apparent anomaly — that demand further consideration. They arise from the club's decision, almost two decades ago, to amend their Notice of Race for the Hobart to ignore one of the key Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) and allow powered winches and canting keels. Here's the actual wording in this year's NoR:

*7.3 (d) RRS 52: RRS 52 does not apply to the adjustment and operation of sails or to the adjustment of movable appendages.*

So that this exemption is clearly understood, here is Rule 52:

*52 MANUAL POWER A boat's standing rigging, running rigging, spars and movable hull appendages shall be adjusted and operated only by the power provided by the crew.*

There is little doubt that the CYCA lifted this prohibition on the use of stored power to accommodate the 100-foot supermaxis which cannot be sailed effectively without their powered winches and canting keels. But while that decision might well have helped generate greater public interest in the Hobart line-honours contest, it now leaves the club with a difficult inconsistency.

This is the snag: rudders are “movable appendages”. If the NoR exemption from RRS 52 allows them to be operated by non-human power, why haven't *all* yachts been entitled to use Autohelm in the Hobart race?

More to the point, why are the double-handed yachts now excluded from competing for prizes in the IRC, ORCi and PHS divisions when, on face value, the 7.3 (d) NoR exemption allows their rudders — “movable appendages” — to be operated by Autohelm systems?

It may well be that this anomaly could be resolved by a change of wording in the rule so that appendages are specifically defined, but even that could be contentious. Foils, daggerboards, DSS planks and all the other weird design developments of recent years are all “appendages”, many of which require non-human power.

There is an even more significant inconsistency to resolve. If the two-up boats are to be excluded from the divisional and overall prizes because their auto-pilots cannot be operated “only by the power of the crew”, should that exclusion not logically also apply to *any* boat with powered winches and/or a canting keel?

*Samphire* approaching N3 during the Twilight race on 9 October

And here's an even more radical suggestion. With the supermaxis now in decline, is this not an appropriate opportunity for the CYCA to consider reinstating Rule 52, banning stored power, and taking the race back to its origins as a traditional sailing contest?





Photo Lindy Danvers

This little family convoy was spotted in Mosman Bay off the Club on 16 November running the gauntlet of yachts, tenders and ferries. Hopefully they survived safely



Photo John Jeremy

What the...? No need to wait for the tender if you had one of these, although it might not qualify for a dinghy space in the Green Shed. One could be yours for only \$17,995 Inc. GST & shipping

# NOT QUITE THE BRIGHTEST SPARK AT THE BARBIE

by  
Rob Evans

*A healthy spark has always been at our side.*

Our ancestors learnt how to make fire by hitting two rocks together to make a spark shortly after they came down out of the trees. Wellington's soldiers used flintlock muskets at Waterloo. The musket fired when the flint hit the frizzle, which made a spark, which fired the charge. Just imagine if the Duke of Wellington hadn't had a reliable spark at Waterloo — we could all now be speaking French, singing the Marseillaise and eating escargot.

So how is it, therefore, that Joseph Lucas couldn't make a reliable spark to make my Mini go? My Mini was a great little car, apple green, east west engine, sliding windows, rubber block suspension and amazing performance for an 848 cc car. But you couldn't take it out in the rain. The spark making gizmos, coil and distributor, were at the front of the engine. Mr Issigonis' bit of brilliance became a nightmare for the owner. Of all the brilliant innovations, east west engine, rubber block suspension and front wheel drive it is the wet days, and the Lucas Electrics, which we remember.

Without a spark no petrol motor goes. How to make the spark to fire the mixture that drives the piston that pushes the rod that turns the crank has challenged the motor engineer since the earliest days of motoring. The theory to make a spark is relatively simple. A magnet moving in a magnetic field produces an electric current. If you interrupt the current you can produce a spark and this is exactly what Henry Ford did in his Model T, the world's first mass-produced car. He added a battery, a magnetic interrupter, and a spring arm to make the contact. The device is known as a trembler coil and it survived in Ford's T-model until the 1920s.

The trembler was adequate for the cars of the day but failed when the compression and engine revolutions increased.

The only time I saw one was in Paddington where I was flatting in the late sixties. One of the guys I shared a terrace with had a Morris Cooper S. This was a very hot little car with everything close to the ground. The local dogs were not. The local pack was led by what looked like a Great Dane/St Bernard cross. The dogs' great delight was to use the Cooper S as a pissoir. The problem of the dog urine leaking through the sunroof was solved with one of Henry's trembler coils, a battery and a steel plate, connected to fire a spark when the doggie leg was lifted. The result may well have been the first canine knee trembler. The high 'C' howl was better than a dingo's. Fortunately for the dog the kick from the trembler coil is not that strong. It is nothing like the belt I get every time I try and adjust the timing on the TF with the engine running.

Owning a car for over fifty years exposes all the idiosyncrasies in the car's design — like dry rot, suicide doors and a soft top which leaks so badly it is not worth putting it up. The TF is one of those cars where every male over a certain age either owned one or knew someone who did and as a consequence cannot resist the temptation to fiddle with the mixture and timing that you have just spent half a day tuning.

The MG TF was the last of the MG Car Company's square-riggers with a solid chassis, bolt-on guards and that lovely long bonnet. And hidden away on the near side of the engine are one Lucas coil and distributor. Their job was to produce a spark.

To fire the engine you need a spark. To make a spark you need a coil, a condenser, distributor points, a rotor a cam, a camshaft, a distribution cap, high-tension leads and spark plugs and it all lives together in an aluminum housing. Assemble with care, as failure to follow the manual will bring a world of pain.

The torturous path to produce a spark is through the points, one thousandth of an inch at a time, to set the timing, to one degree at a time and send the spark to the coil. The spark, amplified a thousand fold, is sent by cap and high-tension lead to where the spark plug fires the charge. A healthy roar is music to the mechanic's ear. A persistent miss heralds a litany of potential faults. The battle joined the fault corrected, another victory against Lucas, the Prince of Darkness.

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## Icebreaker Progress



Photo Damen

Australia's newly-completed icebreaker, RSV *Nuyina*, left the Netherlands port of Vlissingen on 24 November to commence trials in the North Sea

## HOLIDAYS AT THE SASC

Members often decide to work on their boats during the holiday period — boats at the Club for work should be moored at the piles in order that the pontoon is available for members to pick up and drop off guests and other short-stay visitors.

Despite COVID-19, New Year's Eve in Sydney will be a special day and many members may want to join in the celebrations with a picnic at the clubhouse or afloat.

There will be a tender service over the holiday period during the hours below. It would help greatly during busy periods if members could use their dinghies when practicable and by picking up passengers from the wharf. On New Year's Eve, it would make it easier for everyone if members could refrain from securing their boats at the pontoon except to pick up or drop off guests, and then for the shortest time possible. The kitchen and barbecue facilities will be available, but the bar will not be open.

### TENDER SERVICE

No service on Christmas Day, normal service on the following days.

Saturday 19 December 0900 – 1800

Sunday 20 December 0900 – 1800

Saturday 26 December 0900 – 1800

Sunday 27 December 0900 – 1800

Monday 28 December 0900-1800

Thursday 31 December 0900 – Sunset

Friday 1 January 0900 – 1800

Saturday 2 January 0900 – 1800

Sunday 3 January 0900 – 1800

The office will be closed from COB Wednesday 23 December 2020 to the morning of Monday 11 January 2021. Racing will be closed from COB Friday 18 December 2020 to the morning of Monday 11 January 2021 (first Friday Twilight 8 January). The Boatshed will be closed from COB Thursday 17 December 2020 until Monday 11 January 2021.

## MANAGE YOUR GARBAGE

Despite clear signs, some people are still putting garbage containing recyclable materials in the general garbage bins. This requires our garbage contractor to spend time sorting through the garbage — **at the Club's expense**.

The problem arises from sheer laziness amongst those coming ashore from boats or enjoying the facilities of the Club.

**Please** — sort your garbage before dumping it in the bins — it's not rocket science and you will save the Club money which is much better spent on other things.

## REMEMBER THE NEIGHBOURS

We share our little patch of paradise with our neighbours. Please ensure that you and your guests avoid parking inconsiderately and, when leaving the Club, do so quietly and without inappropriate behaviour.

# WHARF RULES

December 2020

With the holiday season just about upon us, many members will be looking forward to days on the water or at the Club completing that essential maintenance on the boat before the summer season begins. So that all may enjoy everything the Club has to offer, please ensure that the wharf rules are observed at all times. As a reminder, they are set out below.

1. No yacht shall moor on the pontoon in the area reserved for dinghy launching.
2. No long term work on yachts during the weekend or Public Holidays should be carried out while moored to the pontoon. Such work should be carried out while yachts are moored fore and aft to the wharf and piles in front of the Clubhouse.
3. Yachts moored to the pontoon should ensure bows and sterns do not interfere with the touch and go area at the end of the pontoon and so allow easy access to this area for the Club tender and other vessels.
4. Owners/skippers must remain on the Club premises while yachts are moored to the pontoon and wharf area. No yacht attended or otherwise is permitted to remain overnight on the pontoon and only attended yachts are permitted to remain overnight while moored to the wharf.
5. Members may use a Club dinghy but must return it within a reasonable time to the dinghy shed. Under no circumstances may a Club dinghy be left on a mooring.
6. No dinghies may be left on the pontoon.
7. Masts after removal from yachts are to be carried to the grassed area south of the Clubhouse. Long term work on masts is not permitted on the wharf.

Obstruction of the dinghy launching area on the pontoon by moored boats causes considerable inconvenience to members who use dinghies.

***Please keep this area clear at all times***





*Caprice* in the 1960s, before the restoration of her gaff rig

## NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following new members:

Christian Condé	Michael Edye	Gabrielle Feron
Megan Greenwood	David Grinston	Julian Haskard
Rod Hislop	Hugh Hodgkinson	Brian Horgan
Nicola Mepstead	Douglas Talbert	John Terzis
Christopher Thompson		Hendrick-Joost Timmer
Anselm Waterfield	John Weeks	Shue Zhang

## TENDER HOURS

Members are reminded that the hours of operation of the

Club's tenders are:

Saturday/Sunday (EST) 0900–1700

Saturday/Sunday (DST) 0900–1800

Friday Twilights 1600–2100 (approx)

### TENDER DRIVERS NEED A BREAK TOO

On some days the demands on the duty tender driver never slacken. They need a break just like everyone else, so please avoid calling them between 1245 and 1315 so they can grab some lunch.

## FRIDAY TWILIGHT 8 JANUARY 2021

Table bookings/food orders will be taken **via email only by 4pm**

**Wednesday 6 January** (no phone bookings).

## SASC SHOP

*Subject to availability*

### SASC Club Merchandise

Burgee – Medium 30 cm x 45 cm	\$41.00
Racing 'A' flag (new stock)	\$27.00
Racing 'A' flag (old stock)	\$20.50
Club Tie	\$25.00
Club Cap	\$20.00
Club Wide Brimmed Hat	\$30.00
Polo Shirt – Short Sleeve	\$40.00
Polo Shirt – Long Sleeve	\$45.00
Rugby Top	\$55.00
SASC Water Bottle	\$15.00

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next *SASC News* will be the February 2021 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 29 January 2021. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



*Sana* heading for the finish of the Sunday non-spinnaker race on 27 September  
(Photo John Jeremy)

