

## Chapter Four

# *Racing*

### Introduction

**Charles Maclurcan**

The focus of the Club's Racing Program has altered substantially in the last two decades. In the 60s and 70s, a typical Saturday would see the Starter's Boat leave about midday. She would be manned by a dedicated group of volunteers mainly led by Jack Millard and Ray King. They would determine the course, set the start



*Thunderbirds were popular and competitive boats in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Photo: John Carnemolla)*

line, start the Divisions, set the finish and record the finishers. From all points of the Harbour and the Lane Cove River, Bluebirds, Thunderbirds, Daydreams, Endeavours, Santanas, Stellas, Folkboats, Holland 25s and other small craft that comprised the fleet at the time would appear. Old stalwarts such as the John and Bill Merrington with *Warana* and *Eventide* would never miss a race. The numbers grew to over one hundred yachts.

Saturday Club Racing had reached its zenith. However, the writing was on the wall. An Etchell sank *Buradoo*, *Aroona* sank *Twain* and there were numerous complaints of crowded Harbour conditions and lots of accidents.

In the meantime the preparation of the results had become onerous. The finishing times were normally handed to the Hon. Race Secretary on Saturday evening. He then calculated the handicap positions, generated new handicaps, updated the pointscores and compiled the Race Instructions for the following week. On Monday morning he would deliver them to the Club and the paid secretary would type out the results and post them off to the competitors. Looking back at the complicated hand written spreadsheets that were generated and the enormous mailing that occurred each week, it is amazing that the system worked at all.

In mid 1978 Commodore Crisp was faced with a walkout by his volunteer Race Officials. Never daunted by such matters, he approached Charles Maclurcan, who had driven the tender some ten years before, to join the Club and take over the duties of Chairman of the Race Committee. Maclurcan offered his services and was accepted by the Board on 2nd August 1978. At the same meeting he was admitted to Board membership to fill a vacancy. Rosemary Hay, a rare, keen volunteer, was accepted, after much discussion, as Race Secretary. She became the first woman on the Board and was an extremely hard worker for the Club for some time.

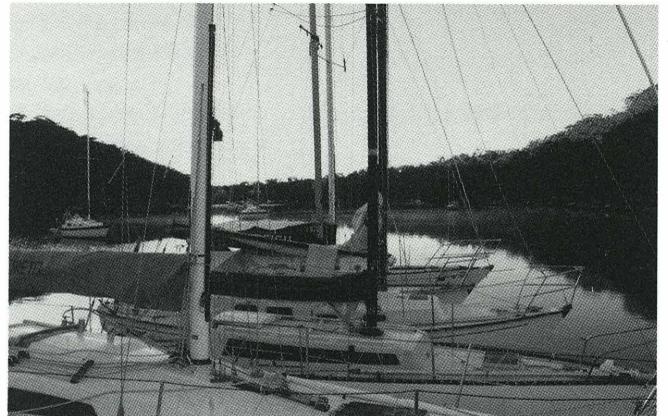
After a few years it was clear to these two, that volunteers were not going to be able to carry on much longer. Most Sundays were spent doing the race calculations and fielding phone calls from indignant competitors usually complaining about their handicaps. Computerisation offered a sensible solution. The amount of time taken to produce the results could be reduced and others could be trained to operate the Race System. Resistance was met in this matter. Some did not trust a computer to calculate the precious handicaps, others did not seem to understand that competitors now demanded quicker and more accurate results. As well, a few old hands had learned to manipulate the current system and feared the introduction of the new.

In the end it was inevitable and in 1986, Charles and Rosemary, with assistance from others, introduced a system designed by Ross Munn. It was in satisfactory operation at Middle Harbour. The Race Secretary and Chairman then put controversy to rest that year by recalculating the Season's Pointscores by hand under the old handicapping system. The overall results remained the same, however, the points under the computer were closer. Even now, when left to its own devices, the computer program, given a sensible starting benchmark, handicaps more fairly than any manual arbitrary system.

The owners of some yachts, for numerous reasons, did not support Saturday Harbour Racing to the same extent as those before them, however, they expressed a desire to participate at other times and in other ways. The Club responded. A Friday Twilight series was established, arguably the most successful continuing event ever conducted by the Club. Details of the impact of this series are described elsewhere.

Charles Maclurcan devised a four Race Winter Series in 1985. Each race had a different course and there was even a

*Sugarloaf Bay in Middle Harbour the morning after the first Winter race raft-up in July 1985. The boats in the picture are Firetel (Bob Lawler), Qui Vive (Charles Maclurcan), Consensus (Peter Hamilton), Sisu (Denis Williams) and Morning Tide (Jim Lawler) (Photo: John Jeremy)*



*Sir James Hardy's Nerida 33 during the inaugural Slocum Trophy race, October 1996, in which she gained third place (Photo: Rex Dupain)*



mid-winter raft up. It is interesting to note the participants in July 1985. *Aroona, She, Consensus, Firetel, Morning Tide, Qui Vive, Thea, Rapier, Tingari, Innisfree, The Hum and Much Ado*. This series remains very well supported today.

Currently, there is a Tuesday evening series and regular events on Sundays. All in all, though the Saturday fleet has withered, the Club actually starts more yachts over a summer week than ever before. There has been some cost of course. Paid race staff now do the work of past volunteers and naturally competitors have become accustomed to a very prompt service. These days the Starter phones in the finishing times. With the computer in good fettle and the Sailing Office manned appropriately, the Race Results are calculated almost immediately. By the time the Officer of the Day gets ashore he may conduct the prizegiving. This has been a very popular development. Naturally, in fine SASC style, suspicion still exists about the handicapping.

Whilst some members may feel the loss of the Club's traditional role on Saturdays there have been two notable exceptions to the trend. The Offshore fleet, under the guiding hand of Bob Lawler has claimed prizes in almost all the important Yachting Classics held on the East Coast of Australia. Races are conducted in conjunction with the CYC. Details and tall stories follow.

The Traditional Fleet, incorporating gaff rigged, Ranger style craft and others, has flourished due to the untiring efforts of Bill Gale. His enthusiasm for the gaff rigged traditional timber yacht has seen the Club develop an excellent fleet of older yachts racing on Saturdays and Sundays. His Gaffer's Day Rallies are legendary and have resulted in the Club enjoying an enviable reputation as a mecca for those interested in preserving and enjoying older yachts.

## The 1979 Fastnet Race

Reflections by Phil Eadie, member of Sydney Amateur Sailing Club, and navigator of *Impetuous*, one of the team of three Australian Admiral's Cup winning yachts.

The 1979 victory of the Australian team of *Ragamuffin*, *Police Car* and *Impetuous* was somewhat buried in the gale that violently swept the Irish Sea the night of Monday 13 August 1979, building quickly with little warning in the midst of the fleet towards midnight. A great deal has been said and written about this race, and a great deal learned from it. Nineteen yachts were abandoned, five sank. Fifteen yachtsmen tragically lost their lives. Only eighty-five of the three hundred and three yachts in the fleet finished, the rest retiring one way or another.

The following is quoted from the official inquiry conducted by the Royal Ocean Racing Club and the Royal Yachting Association, and supported by competitors and specialist advice from the RAF, HM Navy, Meteorology, Coastguard, and Irish Navy:

"The wind reached Force 11 and maximum wave heights were in the order of 40-44 feet. Search and rescue aircraft operating in the race area on 14 August reported winds of 60-65 knots and a wave height of 50-60 feet".

The speed with which the 980 millibar low (notable, but not that uncommon) both deepened and moved, caused significantly large and confused seas to develop quickly. To use the words of the well known English weather forecaster and writer Alan Watts, it created "a wickedly confused seaway as the Force 9-10 winds ahead of the trough were suddenly replaced by an almost right-angled shift to the north west. It is this feature, perhaps more than the wind strength, that had so many craft in terrible trouble".

From my own point of view, a few things which stay clearly in my memory of this race are:

- Tuning in to the BBC news at midnight, thinking this was getting to be a bit interesting but not necessarily expecting to hear anything about the race, to hear it was headline news with a number of yachts already abandoned or in serious trouble.
- Standing behind the helmsmen to make my own assessment of what heading and leeway we were making on the wind on the way to the Rock, with the compass doing occasional full "360s" (a phenomenon I'd not experienced before), as *Impetuous* was tossed about.
- Drilling out the chart table with a large brace and bit (with the owner Graham Lambert's enthusiastic permission), and navigating using a knife blade to mark the chart (pre GPS or Decca). The mast boot had been blown away on the way to the Fastnet Rock, so it was wet weather gear conditions at the chart table as seas broke over the yacht.
- The foam about a metre thick on the surface of the ocean near the Rock, and blowing up in to our faces then vertically straight up the mainsail.
- Rounding the Fastnet Rock at 2am on the Tuesday morning in racing mode at the height of the gale, quite close in, in big seas (it's deeper on the approach side). The whole scene was made more eerie and impressive by the sweep of the Fastnet light penetrating the blackness.
- One of our crew Ken Down being called up by Jim Hardy (now Sir James) for "a look" at the Rock; and as he disappeared down below saying "Thanks Jim, and I hope never to see the bloody thing again."
- Hugh Treharne (later Australian America's Cup winning tactician) calling to tack and cut inside other yachts standing further off the Rock, as soon as I reckoned we could clear the other side (which shelves out). Taking a special interest in that compass bearing, with the compass rose gyrating erratically.

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### 1922

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21st March: "Spray"—L Robertson was disqualified for shifting ballast during a race. He admitted being short handed and having tied two bags of sand on the floor, but between the Heads one had broken and run into the bilge, thus the second one had to be moved to trim the boat.

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- Once round and off the wind, Hugh and Jim calling to maintain some sail on (triple reefed main) as long as possible in order to maintain steerage and control of where to head amidst breaking crests and/or steeper seas. This worked well with a full and very alert experienced crew and excellent helmsmen, as to go slow or to “mis-steer” was to risk destiny.
- We could to some extent choose our “mountains and valleys” to run down, by having both speed and steerage. This however was very selective, and demanding on helmsmen.
- Rob Brown, subsequently of 18 footer notoriety with *Prudential*, and Phil Walsh getting the jib off as we were running too fast down big steep seas, with the rest of the crew in the stern to keep the bow from burying. This whole move was planned with meticulous care.
- Phil coming back calling that he had broken all his fingers holding the flogging jib as it was dropped. They were OK, though battered and badly bruised.
- Occasionally getting fully dumped on by breaking waves, and the little *Impetuous* suddenly becoming leaden and vulnerable as she tried to shake herself free and drain the cockpit, a blessing with adequately sized cockpit drains.
- Rounding the Scillies as the gale eased, and seas starting to line up from the one direction.
- Owner Graham Lambert enthusiastically emptying the yacht of all but the barest provisions, as we sailed past The Lizard in the night, in the knowledge that we were well placed.
- Thinking that we had lost the mast as a huge salami flew out of the hatch hitting the deck with a loud “bang”, and seeing most of the off-watch crew appear at the hatch in time to see it rolling over the side, Graham grinning in satisfaction.

Strangely we saw no flares or yachts in trouble, in spite of the chaotic activity in the Irish sea. Particular lessons for me were, never to slow down unless you absolutely have to (but requiring adequate crew number, experience, and condition), and to always be prepared with gear and equipment thought out in advance to cope in the same situation, in case it should happen again.

I was also fortunate to have been with a top crew, and in having the depth of Hugh Treharne and Jim Hardy’s leadership, experience, and seamanship.

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1928

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11th January: Extract from Minutes—“Commodore referred to the loss by Stan Spain during the Christmas vacation in the wrecking of his boat ‘Mischief’, and also of the heroism displayed by members of the crew, and at the same time referred to the action of another Club member Charles Hayes and his son, who went to assist ‘Mischief’ and stood by for some considerable time and then sent a launch to assist. Stan Spain replied, thanking everyone for their expression of sympathy and explaining that the younger members of his crew had acted under the circumstances in a manner in keeping with the traditions of SASC”

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## Sydney to Hobart on *Morning Tide* 1982

Dennis Williams

The 1982 Sydney-Hobart Race was referred to after the event by seasoned salts as a gentlemen’s cruise and looking back some years later and years wiser, it seemed to me a fair description. However, at the time it was my first foray across ‘the paddock’ and it set a standard that has yet to be surpassed. How often can you enter a 600 mile race and do the first 450 of those miles going downwind at a good speed, in dry conditions and with excellent company?

The crew comprised of the owner one Jim Davern of Melbourne, the mighty Tommo, Mr O’Reilly, Sean James Kelly (the taller member of that dashing duo known far and wide as the Flying Foredeck) Greg “Caruso” Dwyer and your humble scribe. We had made each other’s acquaintance a month or so before the race, though Messers Davern, Tomaszewski and Oh had sailed down the previous year on the boat.

Being an S & S 34, a small boat in the fleet, we got away to a picture perfect start but were soon overtaken by the larger yachts. The wind was a light southeaster and as we left the safe confines of Sydney Harbour the atmosphere of

general apprehension at what lay ahead, especially for us novices in the crew, was apparent. But, lo and behold, within an hour of clearing the Heads the wind had swung to the East and soon thereafter to the Northeast, and away we went on a downhill ride for two days and nights.

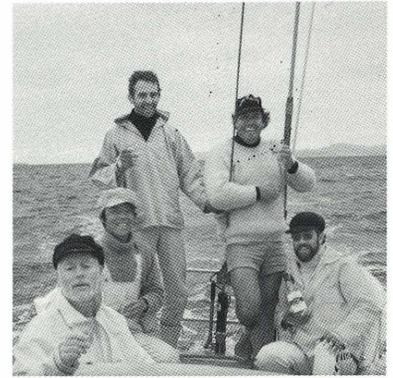
Now the S & S 34 is not a renowned downwind flyer and we did nothing to enhance its reputation on that score but we sure covered some miles. "This isn't so bad after all" he says to himself as he lies in his dry bunk, wearing his dry clothes with a tummy full of good food and the boat swaying from side to side as she rolls down the waves at 8 knots plus before a building northeaster. "This can't last" he thinks to himself; and sadly he was right.

In 20 knots the boat was a handfull under spinnaker, and in 30 knots she was an accident waiting to happen. She had a steering wheel, which on a boat of that size was a pretence, and the combination of a solid gust, a biggish quartering wave and the slow reaction time of the wheel-steering saw the end of the first kite. That was followed by the demise of the wheel-steering itself, and shortly thereafter the second kite, leaving only the storm chute. It was decided (with little protest from the crew) that in that sort of breeze on that boat a poled out jib should fill the bill—and it did.

The nor' easter eventually died for us and we were left with a gentle work across the lower portion of Bass Strait. The weather continued dry and mild, then by the following day we were blessed with another northerly, which took us through the night, past Maria Island in pitch dark (and almost too close for comfort), and then evaporated by dawn.

Until you have been there, it is impossible to describe the scene. Your boat is barely moving, the sun is just up and it warms your tired bones as you look up on the majesty of the famous Organ Pipes forming the cliffs below Tasman Light. For once the tour brochure was telling the truth. "Why haven't I done this race before now?" he thinks to himself. The next race we did answered that question.

The wind eventually filled in from the south east and after turning Cape Raoul, we set the little (and only) kite for a shy run across Storm Bay. Muggins bravely volunteers to steer, and so for the next 20 odd miles he does just that, whilst the other crew members wisely go about eating, drinking, discussing matters of great religious and philosophical moment and generally lazing about. Take it from me that the S & S 34 is heavy on the helm when on a tight run in fresh air, but apart from the occasional nonchalant glance in my direction, there were no offers to take over the helm. By the time we were at the Iron Pot my right arm was about 75mm longer than it was back at the Raoul.



*Who said Sydney-Hobart was hard work?*



*Breakfast in North Head, Hobart 1991*

We squared off to go up the river and Gregory nipped down below to emerge again with a full bottle of 15 year old White Heather. It was empty before we crossed the finish line, but its medicinal properties worked wonders. We finished in a velvet fog, and were greeted by hundreds of smiling onlookers, who barely batted an eyelid when our skipper hailed in true captainly tones "People of Hobart, we are here to liberate you—send out your women." We cleaned up and headed off for a magnificent Italian lunch, then a good night's sleep. The following night was New Year's Eve and Tommo had organised a table at the Polish Club. That was a night to remember; but that's another story.

## Sydney to Hobart 1993

### Bob Lawler

As usual the media has reported high flying stories from the big name yachts and little from the privately funded yachts sailed by their owners and regular amateur crews. Out of the three SASC yachts to compete in the race, all finished without damage and were extremely well placed in their respective Divisions.

In the PHS Division *Charisma* (Jim Lawler) came 1st.

In the IMS *Mark Twain* (Hugh O'Neill) was 3rd in Division D, and *All That Jazz* (Jim Davern) was 9th in Division D.

The SASC was also well represented by crew members on other yachts. Andrew Crow and John Gibson (Jnr) from *Alice B* sailed on *Wild Oats* and *Hartz Mineral Water* respectively and were able to tell stories about last New Year's Eve in Hobart without fear of exaggeration charges. For the record *Wild Oats* was 1st in the IOR Division and *Hartz Mineral Water* (ex *Sweet Caroline*) was 6th in IMS.

Another SASC Club member who is now famous is John Quinn. John sailed his new IMS yacht *Mem* out of Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club. *Mem* was a member of the NSW A Team in the Southern Cross Cup Series. Following failure of safety harness equipment, John was washed overboard and spent some 5 hours in the sea in severe night time conditions before being recovered and taken to Eden by the yacht *Atara*. John's survival and recovery is a tribute to his own self discipline and to the procedures followed by crew members of *Mem*, and other competing yachts in the vicinity of the accident; also to the Master and crew of the tanker *Ampol Sorel*.

This year's Sydney-Hobart differed from previous races where bad weather conditions were experienced, in that the bad conditions lasted for most of the race and not just for a day or so. Also conditions this year were accurately forecast. The recurrence of very low pressure systems moving slowly from west to east meant that conditions which were experienced on day two of the race would make the passage south tough for several days and in fact, for the duration of most of the race. Weather conditions and race withdrawals are now a matter of record however, the *Charisma* story deserves mention in the SASC records.

For most of the day, December 26th, all yachts experienced good conditions until arrival of a southerly change which came as predicted, not too hard at first but gradually increased. By the evening of day 2, December 27th, the leading yachts were experiencing gale force southerly winds as they approached the far NSW south coast. Several of the yachts in the middle of the fleet eased sheets and travelled well to the east of the Rhum line where conditions were apparently worse than inshore.

Mark Twain A113 powering on to Hobart



Through the night of December 27th, news of *Clwyd* loosing her keel and crew recovery by *Nynja Go*, John Quinn lost overboard, several equipment failures and subsequent retirements came over the radio frequencies. With expectation of better sea conditions close to the coast and the possibility of taking shelter in Eden harbour *Charisma* stayed west of the Rhum line.

In the early morning hours of day 3, December 28th, Eden harbour was looking good and *Charisma* anchored at East Boyd Bay near the wood chip mill. During the day available radio frequencies and weather facsimiles were monitored and it became evident that yachts further to sea and further south were making poor progress and doing it tough. Retirements continued and news of the loss of the yacht *Adjuster* was reported progressively. By 11.00 am, the *Charisma* crew had rested and were fed and weather facsimiles indicated the possibility of easing conditions in Bass Strait. *Charisma* then quietly resumed racing observed only by the Eden Coast Guard and CYC's Dave Lawson.

Day 4, December 29th, saw *Charisma* entering Bass Strait still in hard conditions but easing. From Flinders Island and down the Tasmanian coast conditions became light and progress was slow. *Charisma* crossed the finishing line at 4.00pm on the 1st January 1994 and entered an almost empty Constitution Dock to be greeted by the crews of *Mark Twain* and *All That Jazz* who finished earlier that day. Congratulations again to Jim Lawler from all the *Charisma* crew and from all at SASC for a mighty effort in the toughest Sydney-Hobart race in 49 years and the first to bring back Gold to the SASC.

*Charisma* crew were:

- Jim Lawler (Skipper)
- Peter Robinson (Navigator)
- Jim Lawler Jnr (Watch Leader and Camera man)
- Trevor Cosh (Watch Leader and Mr. Fix-it)
- Bill Loudon (Cook and Providor)
- Keith Radford (Shining Example)
- Bob Lawler (Senior Citizen)

## Sydney to Hobart 1994

### Charles Maclurcan

Fourteen members' yachts set sail on Boxing Day 1994 for Hobart. The results were as follows:

<i>Boat</i>	<i>IMS Place Overall</i>	<i>Division Place</i>
<i>Mark Twain</i>	70	7
<i>Rav 4 Celeste</i>	86	4
<i>Emma</i>	95	5
<i>Firetel</i>	126	3
<i>Silverado</i>	140	17
<i>Mistress Mercy</i>	155	18
<i>Archina</i>	215	12
<i>Anitra V</i>	216	13
<i>Tactical Response</i>	217	17
<i>Henry Kendall Akubra</i>	N/A	9
<i>Charisma</i>	N/A	10
<i>All That Jazz</i>	N/A	20
<i>Phantom</i>	RET.	
<i>Zulu Chief</i>	RET.	



*Firetel and Morning Tide finish eight hours behind Mark Twain, 1991*

The Club's results were most satisfactory. *Firetel*, Bob and Michael Lawler gained third in Division H, receiving a trophy at the open air prize-giving for the effort!

Generally, the weather favoured the larger yachts as they were able to make the most of a short lived northerly air stream that rushed them across Bass Strait prior to the arrival of a south westerly cold front. This copy-book front provided spectacular evidence of its presence in the form of a low rolling wedge cloud mass that seemed to reach from the mainland right over to Tasmania. I am sure I saw angels walking across the top of this feature! Twenty minutes later I found out why they were on top. It was far too windy below; 40-50 knots for 24 hours was the result and a position west of the rhumb line was the order of the day. This year's current-induced chop was noticeable on many parts of the course and its element slowed many of the displacement yachts considerably. The smaller yachts were met with another south west change as they approached Tasman Light and most suffered a very rough trip across Storm Bay and up the Derwent.

All was quickly forgotten upon arrival in Hobart. Most members made it to the New Year's Dinner at the Ship Hotel which was better than ever thanks to our perennial host John Best. This function set what was to be a cracking pace for the next few days. The Quiet Little Drink followed, then the Custom's House Hotel and finally, the Shipwright Arms. Some famous names from the past joined us and we were pleased to welcome Kate and Sue, the daughters of Tony Furze and Steve Merrington. Wherever you strayed there was a member of the Amateurs there. For some the experience was more testing than the sail down!

On the evening of the 2nd, some of the Amateurs group dined at the Customs House Hotel, joined by friends from *Young Endeavour*, *Star Ferry* and *Hammer of Queensland* to mention a few. The next day our farewell lunch was held at the Ship Hotel.

Most yachts left on the 4th and struggled home against strong currents and northerly winds. I am advised that various NSW coastal establishments benefited greatly from Amateurs' thirsts over the following week or so.

Travelling with Jim Lawler on *Charisma* was Peter Luke, one of the co-founders of the race. Peter was a member of the Amateurs, his boat *Wayfarer* having been built on the site of the clubhouse and bearing the number A94. It was Peter's 5th Hobart at the age of 79 years.

It was a delight and source of pride to see the Amateur's burgee flown from the forestays of the finishers amongst the huge group of yachts moored in Hobart

this year. The town of Hobart and its inhabitants were splendidly organised and hospitable. Congratulations to all competitors, thanks to all the owners from the crews, and commiserations to those who had to to withdraw.

## Division 2

This Division has been previously known as Division 3 which in the 1977/78 season had 20 boats regularly starting. In the 1985/86 season it was renamed Division 2. A number of boats have raced almost every season over the past 20 years. Kevin Tindal in *Impala* has been one of the most consistent winning the Gold Medal in 6 seasons and is a competitor who never gives up and successfully carries a spinnaker when others are more cautious.

Fred Bevis in *Brigadoon*, when not breaking masts or inadvertently hoisting the spinnaker by catching the halyard on a buoy, has won a couple of Gold medals.

Hal Wise in *Barubi* sailed the Endeavour 26 very quickly but set a dress standard in terms of knowing when and which flag should be flown that has not been matched since.

In the 1976/77 season the Reverend Bill Ostling won the metre Division in *Nemesis*, then switched boats the next season to *Gwenyth* in Division 3 and won the Gold medal and then again the following year. Was it Divine intervention or just good sailing?

Reg Humphrys in *Kalinda* has been a competitor in the division for 20 years. Reg has the ability to keep up with and beat boats that on paper are much faster.

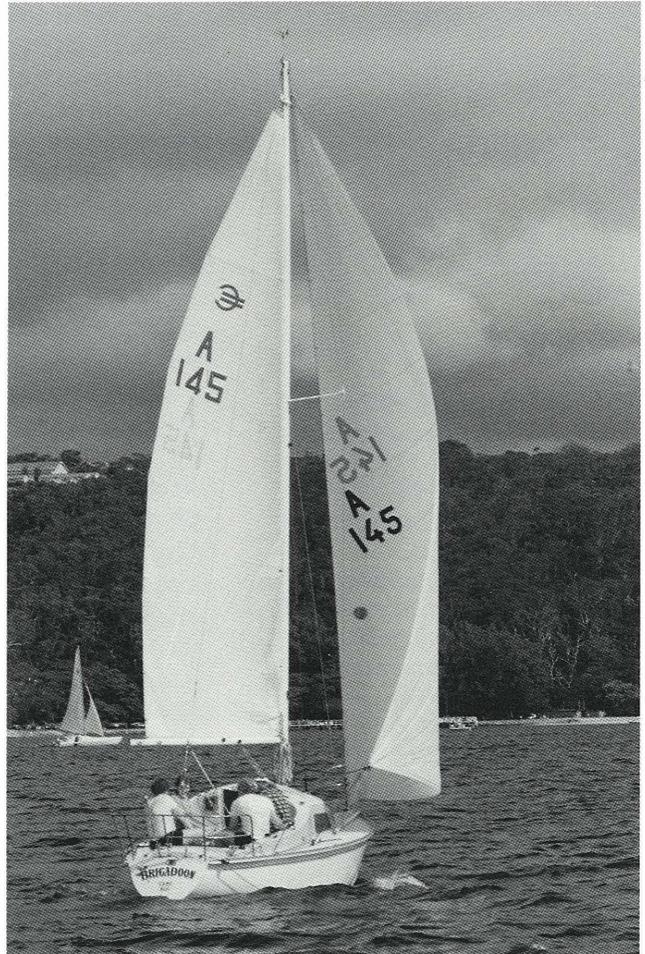
Who could forget the sheer pleasure and excitement which Peter Gray had when, in his eightieth year in the 1994/95 season, he steered *Honeybee* to the Gold Medal?

Tony Barry in *Ben Boyd Road* joined the division in the 1990/91 season from the 1/4 Ton Division and had 4 wins but *Impala* with its consistent performances won the Gold with just one win.

Tim and Sue Ingham in *Fresca* were consistent competitors with great speed on their day and Gold Medals to prove it.

There have been over the years so many great competitors who have or still are sailing in the division—Stewart Chambers in *Twain*, Peter Hamilton in *Concensus*, Richard Lavers in *Manhattan Transfer*, Ross Munn in *Zouave* and so many more.

The division provides great competition with boats of various designs and has been and is still one of the mainstays of the Saturday racing scene.



*Brigadoon* (Fred Bevis) during the 1980 Endeavour 26 Championships that were conducted by the SASC on Sydney Harbour (Photo: John Jeremy)

## Cavalier 28 Fleet

### Richard Lamrock

In the history of the Amateurs the Cavalier 28 stands out as the most successful one design racing fleet ever to have sailed consistently with the Club. The Class owes its success to the excellent design of the yacht and the extraordinary business skills of its original builder in Australia Mr Guy Keon, the original owner of Cavalier Yachts.

The Cavalier 28 was modelled on the Davidson 28 which has sailed in Auckland New Zealand since 1974. Designed by Laurie Davidson (designer of *Black Magic* for the successful 1996 NZ America's Cup victory) for David Blundell, an

OK dingy sailor, the Davidson 28 was so successful that approximately 120 were built and registered with the Davidson 28 Association.

The father of the Cavalier 28 fleet Norm Brown, recalls how he was involved with Guy Keon in the original concept of the Cavalier 28. "In 1978 Guy invited me to go New Zealand in a team of three yachties to try out the Davidson 28 and investigate the possibility of manufacture in Australia. We raced the yacht on Auckland harbour and subsequently evaluated several boats in detail on the slips, including their interiors. Having sailed 18 foot skiffs for 20 years with the New South Wales League I didn't want to be involved with a "slug". It had to have speed. As a result of this trip the Cavalier 28 was born in Australia. Guy purchased *Rhondo* in New Zealand which became the first Cavalier 28 in Australia and was subsequently used as the plug for making the Australian moulds."

One of the keys to the success of the boat in Australia was the modifications which were made to the original Davidson 28. The deck, hull, rig and mast, keel and rudder and sailplan were unchanged. Keel bolting structure, interior layout, headliner, and furniture were revamped. The result was a strong, fully fitted out production boat with enormous appeal for both cruising and racing. Whereas the Davidson 28s were finished by their owners, the Cavalier 28s were produced at Guy's Pendle Hill factory fully finished and ready to sail. In its first two years of production in Australia a staggering 35 boats were built out of the total of 68 on the water today.

The Amateurs owes its association with the Cavalier 28 fleet to Norm Brown. Norm started sailing eighteen footers with the New South Wales League in the 1950s and had 9 boats, all of which had extraordinary racing success on the harbour. In the early 1970s Norm slowed down and joined the trailer-sailor fleet where he was National Champion for three years. He then bought the first Cavalier 26 produced in 1975 which he raced with the quarter tonners at the Club. When the Cavalier 28 was conceived Norm built *Ariki* the first Cavalier 28 built in Australia.

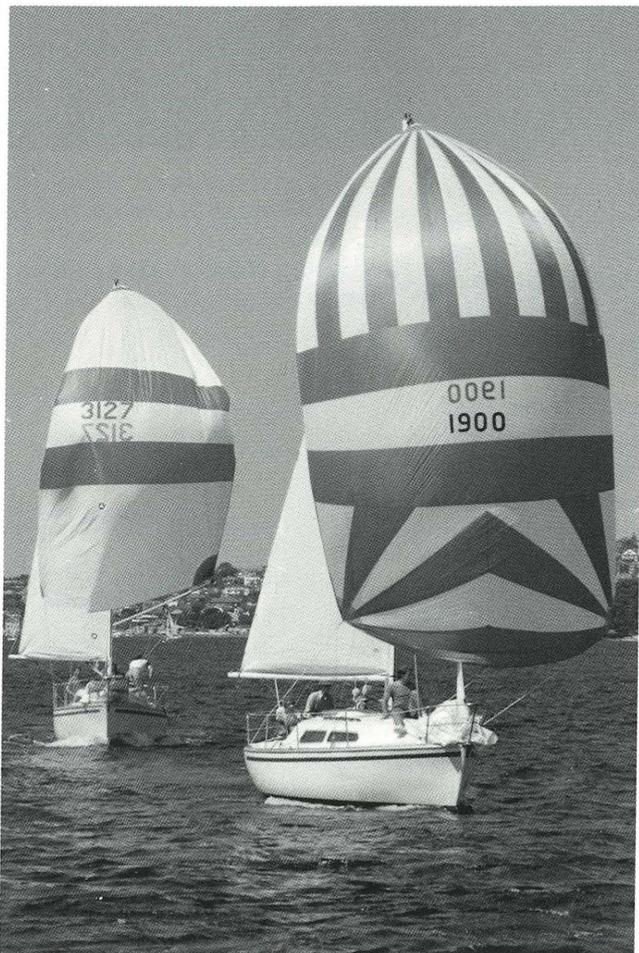
Soon in 1981/1982 several Cavalier 28s were racing together with Dr Rodney Mitchell, *Centaurus* (number six off the moulds) and included *Rusticana*, *Cavort*, *Cavalier 1*, *Ariki*, *Dee Jay* (now *Blind Justice*) and *Allegro*. These boats sailed with the Half Ton Division at first. Their performance was so good that they were asked to leave this Division and form their own in 1982-83. In the next season in their own Division eleven boats faced the Starter regularly.

In 1983-84 there were nine boats racing. This mushroomed to seventeen boats in the 1984-85 and nineteen boats in 1986-87. In 1988-89 it dropped to sixteen boats. In the following year a decision was made to sail on alternate years with the RSYS and the SASC. Numbers have decreased over the years and now twelve boats are racing regularly. The racing is still highly competitive with close margins between most of the yachts.

Guy Keon formed and fostered a strong Cavalier 28 Association to help promote the Class. A set of one design rules was put in place by the Association carefully drafted by its legal adviser Roger Selby, an early Cavalier 28 owner with *Following Sea* (formerly *Rusticana*). Since 1985 the Association in conjunction with the Amateurs and the RSYS has hosted the Cavalier 28 National Championships, a yearly event attracting up to 15 boats.

The Cavalier 28 Championships have been conducted in February/March as a five race series over two weekends.

*Norm Brown's Ariki leading the Cavalier 28s during the Production Yacht Challenge in 1981. The Production Yacht Challenge was run by the SASC for a number of years in the early 1980s. It provided the opportunity for owners of popular modern boats to compete with similar yachts in a regatta format. It encouraged considerable competition between the manufacturers of these production yachts (Photo: John Jeremy)*



Competitive spirit is at the core of any successful racing fleet and as a result the Championships have attracted its share of sailmakers and professionals from time to time. In 1990 the racing was being totally dominated by an unknown entry *The Black Duck* which was sailed by some professionals. The skipper of the *Duck* hoisted an unknown rag (a blooper) contravening the one design rules of the Association. The protest committee at the Club did not uphold the resulting protest and the Association then sought a more appropriate response to maintenance of the Class rules.

The Cavalier 28 has also appeared successfully in offshore racing. Several boats have competed in the JOG series and other long distance races and won significant trophies offshore, the most successful being Dr Bob Tinning in *Basilisk*. Other boats raced offshore regularly have included *Shoshana*, *Swashbuckler*, *Bolero* and *Trickerie Bay*.

Generally Cavalier 28's have been held by their original owners well into retirement. Few come on the market and when they do they are sold quickly. The Club has been instrumental to attracting and holding Class members. Dr Bob Tinning built his boat *Basilisk* in 1983 and hasn't missed a season racing either offshore or with the fleet in the pointscore series. This year will see Bob taking *Basilisk* on its fourteenth Squadron Cruise, the first year where Bob will be helming with a wheel instead of a tiller. Now with two wooden legs Bob is practicing hoisting himself onto the boat from his dingy single handed.

The Interdominion Cup between the Davidson 28 and Cavalier 28 Association was started in the early 1980's. Each year the competition alternated between Auckland and Sydney fostering the wonderful tradition of inter club spirit.

## The S.80 Yacht Association of NSW & Impala Association of Hong Kong Interport Series

### Jim Chambers

In July 1985, SASC member Jim Chambers returned to Sydney after a three year business posting in Hong Kong. During his time overseas he had not let his sailing suffer and had joined the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club and also bought a half share in an Impala class yacht in Hong Kong. The Impala is an English



Alice B (A157, John Gibson), Hot Shot (A67, Peter Chapman) and Riff Raff (A88, Jim Chambers) enjoying close racing during the S80 Championships in March 1990 (Photo: John Jeremy)

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*Motion to allow entrance of lady members was lost on a show of hands but arising from this it was decided to hold more functions or meetings which women (relatives and friends) could attend.*

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design, 28ft long with a fractional, sloop rig. It is popular in Hong Kong and, during Jim's time there, was actively sailed from the RHKYC and the Hebe Haven Yacht Club, which is situated in beautiful Shelter Cove on the eastern shore of the Hong Kong mainland.

One of the regular events in the Impala Association calendar was the 'Interport' with Singapore; an Interport being where one group puts together a team of, usually, four crews which fly to the host country for some racing and recreation. The established format is a weekend of match racing and team racing liberally interspersed with generous hospitality. All boats are, of course, supplied by the hosts and need to be of the same class and, preferably of similar performance.

Regrettably, the Singapore side was having more and more difficulty putting together the required nine boats (four for each side and a spare), to hold their share of these annual gatherings and, when Jim returned to Sydney, it was suggested that he keep open the idea of starting up an Interport series with a group there.

Soon after his return to Sydney Jim realised his ambition to own an S80 class yacht and bought what was to be called *Riff Raff* (A88), a boat that he still owns today. The S80 class was very active in Sydney with fleets sailing at the SASC and MHYC and the Interport concept quickly gained support amongst the Association members.

So it was that preparations began for the first Sydney-Hong Kong Interport. This was hosted by Hong Kong and was held in March 1988. To encourage interest amongst the Sydney people the Interport was timed for the weekend before the annual Hong Kong Rugby seven-a-side competition, and so the format was that the group flew to Hong Kong on a Friday, sailed the Interport that weekend, and then had a week's R&R in Hong Kong before attending the Rugby the following weekend. The group would then pour itself onto a plane the next Monday night to return to Sydney for some rest.

This first event was held by the Hebe Haven Yacht Club in the waters of Shelter Cove. This is a beautiful expanse of water with virtually no traffic. The whole event was considered an outstanding success and preparations immediately began for the return event in the following year. Hong Kong people are busy types and they were not able to give themselves the luxury of a week away from their tight schedules, so it became usual for them to organise their return visits to Sydney over the Chinese New Year break. The SASC was approached by the S80 Yacht Association of NSW to host the first return event and eventually did so for all the Sydney-side gatherings.

And so it was that the Sydney-Hong Kong Interport series developed. It ran for a total of five meetings, three in Hong Kong and two in Sydney. The last of the Hong Kong events was held in 1992 by the RHKYC on the fragrant(?) waters of Hong Kong harbour as the Impala fleet had by then concentrated itself at that club. This year was notable for the appearance of a pod of Pilot whales amongst the fleet. The poor creatures had strayed into the harbour but still managed to swim right through the fleet as it sat waiting for the next starting procedure. They were being carefully shepherded by a police launch to ensure they did not end up as the special for the night at any of the local restaurants. This gathering was also notable for the Sydney visitors winning the Trophy. Notable because, until then, the home town advantage had always prevailed and the trophy had stayed with the hosts.

Each year the hosts tried to improve on the hospitality of the year before and the Interports were renowned for giving a weekend of excellent racing and enthusiastic entertainment. Regrettably, however, the 1992 event was the last as worsening economic conditions around the world at that time made it impossible for either side to put together enough contestants to make up a team. (Team selection had always been on the basis of who could afford the time and money to join in.)

Several attempts have since been made to revive the Interport but have all met with the same problem, and so, at the time of writing of this article, the Interport trophy remains in the display cabinet at the SASC. Maybe sometime soon we will be able to give the Hong Kong people the chance to win it back again.

## The combined Half Ton Division

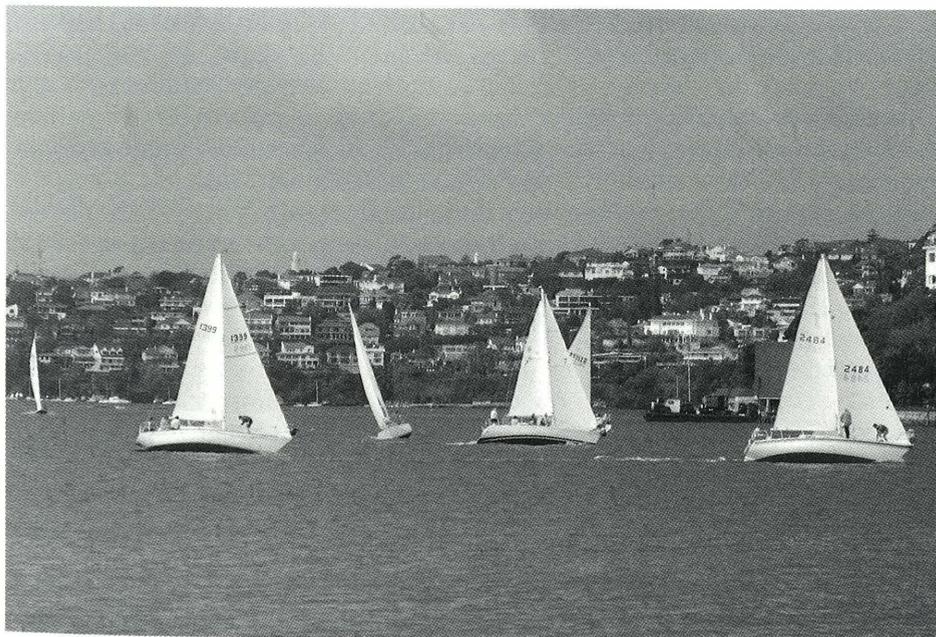
John Jeremy

During the early 1970s, yachts built to the IOR Half Ton rule became popular as comfortable and affordable cruiser/racers. About 30 feet in length, they were, and are still, ideal boats for racing with a modest crew and for cruising at other times with perhaps only two people on board. Some became regular competitors in the Sydney-Hobart, taking a respectable number of trophies over the years.

The first half ton yachts to race in the SASC fleet were Colin Bull's *Magic Dragon* and Warren Anderson's *Granny Smith*, both Joubert designed Currawong class yachts. In the 1972/73 season they competed in No. 1 Division, making a quiet debut for the class finishing 15th and 17th in the point score respectively. This performance soon improved, with *Magic Dragon* taking third place in No.1 Division the following year, and Warren Anderson winning the Dunhill Half Ton Trophy series in the green *Granny Smith*. *Granny Smith* also sailed in several Sydney-Hobart races taking third place overall in 1974.

These boats were soon joined by others, like John Richard's *Vandanick*, and past Commodore Ernest Merrington's *Forte*, a Cavalier 32. By the mid 1970s, many more half ton rated boats were appearing in the Sydney racing fleet. Some were light weight racing yachts, built to compete in the Half Ton Championships at State, National and International levels, but most were the increasingly popular stock production yachts like the Currawong, Cavalier 32, Holland 30, Defiance 30, and the Peter Cole designs including the East Coast 31 and the Nantucket 31.

In 1977, a Half Ton Division was formed within the SASC racing fleet for the first time. Eleven yachts competed in the 1977/78 season, with *Vandanick* taking the Gold medal, and *Magic Dragon* the Silver. Brian McGain's East Coast 31 *Volos* also competed for the first time that year, with her ninth position in the point score disguising a capability that was to be hard to match in coming years.



Typical half ton racing on Sydney Harbour. Lindabel (Lloyd Thornton) leading Norn (Otto Albert), Magic Dragon (Colin Bull) and Akimbo (Alex Williamson) approaching the Explosives 2 mark in the first race of the 1990/91 season (Photo: John Jeremy)

In November 1978, a meeting of members of the SASC and the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron who owned half tonners, decided to recommend to their clubs that a combined Half Ton division be established to take advantage of the growing popularity of these yachts, and to provide a competitive racing fleet. The initial proposal was for the SASC and RSY to each host half a season each year, but a subsequent meeting of SASC skippers decided that a better format would be for each club to host the division each alternate full season.

The first proposal was adopted initially, and the divisions were combined for the first time for the summer season of 1978. The following year, the division raced with the SASC for the spring season, and the RSY for the summer. Subsequently the racing was alternated between the clubs for each full season, a procedure that has been successfully followed ever since.

Whilst the division had been intended for yachts that could be expected to measure as half ton yachts under the IOR rule, by 1981 the popular Cavalier 28 had joined the division as it appeared then that the Half Ton division was the most appropriate for that class. In the 1981/82 Season, Norm Brown's *Ariki* won the scratch pointscore with a remarkable nine wins, five seconds and four thirds. *Ariki* also won the bronze medal that year. As the numbers of Cavalier 28s grew, it was soon decided that they should form their own division, a change that was to improve racing for both the half tonners and the Cavalier 28s.

1982/83 was the first season that the combined division was hosted by the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, and the benefits of the combined fleet were very evident with an extremely competitive season for all the boats. SASC boats took the honours that year, with *Magic Dragon* winning the overall point score, John Jeremy's East Coast 31 *Tingari* (which had joined the division the previous summer) coming second, and Brian McGain in *Volos*, third.

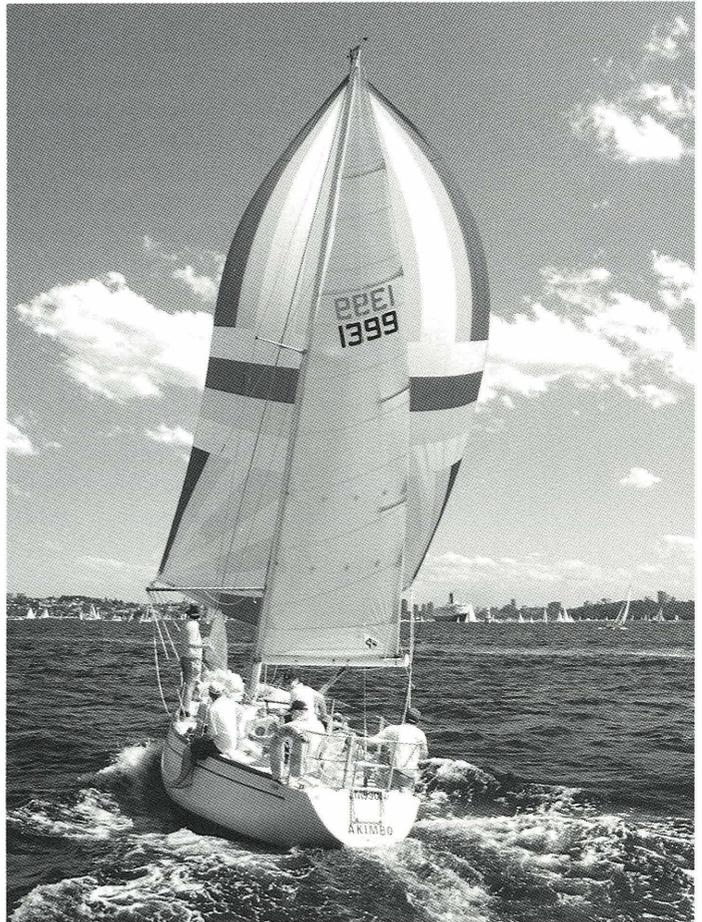
The following year was the best ever for the Half Ton division, with 24 boats on the programme. Two dozen half tonners starting in a fresh north easterly breeze always was a grand sight, guaranteed to keep the helmsmen on their toes, and the starter grateful for the distance mark. SASC boats in the division that year included *Magic Dragon*, *Tingari*, *Vandanick*, *Volos*, *Forte*, *Sea Major* Frank Tebbutt and *The Hum* Max Miller. Max Miller sailed *The Hum* regularly in the division for many years. Most skippers knew his boat by the stern view – *The Hum* had six wins, five seconds and four thirds on scratch in the 1983/84 season.

Since then there have never been so many entries, but the racing has always been competitive and satisfying. Boats from the Squadron (or other clubs) that have sailed with the division regularly have included the East Coast 31 *Triton IX* Pat Taylor, the Adams *Lindabel* Lloyd Thornton, the Nantucket 31s *Ambitious* David Mathews and *Mingara III* Phillip Crane, and the yacht with the rude spinnaker – *Grumpy* John Strutt. Other Amateurs' boats to sail in the division have included the Defiance 30 *Akimbo* Alex Williamson, *Dreamtime* Dennis Lovelock, and *Invader* Bill Mountford.

Since the late 1980s, the definition of the qualification for entry to the division has been more liberally interpreted, as the IOR rules have fallen out of fashion, and more owners of the existing fleet of half tonners have preferred to use the boats for cruising rather than racing. This has seen regular competitors like the Beneteaus *Norn* Otto Albert and *Joss* Terry McDowell join the division, and add greatly to the competition and enjoyment for all, thanks to a handicapping system that, despite the occasional doubts of some, actually works.

In an effort to encourage more boats to join the division, and to provide some novelty in the racing programme, a regatta for Half Ton yachts was conducted by the SASC in December 1991. The regatta was a success, with fifteen boats entered, including some that were not regular competitors in the division. *Lindabel* won on handicap, followed by *Grumpy* and *Akimbo*.

Despite hopes that the 1991 Regatta might be the first of many, the interest has not been there and it seems that most skippers and crews in the division



prefer the regular programme of point score races on Saturday afternoons. With a more varied fleet of boats including light weight fractional rig half tonners like *Half Hour* Jerry Hendry and the slower masthead rig yachts like the East Coast 31s and Currawongs, variety has been tried with two scratch divisions and shorter handicap series within the spring and summer series. Nevertheless, it is the spring, summer and overall point scores that provide the most effective competition, with the final positions often decided by the last few races—a true test of a keen division and a workable handicap system.

In the 1996/97 season, there have been thirteen regular starters, including some boats that have sailed in the division for many years. *Magic Dragon*, now sailing with the SASC for 25 years is still there, with other regulars like *Tingari*, *Lindabel*, *Ambitious* and *Mingara III*. Competition within the Half Ton division is as keen as ever, and SASC yachts have had their share of success over the years as the records show. Nine yachts have shared the Gold Medals in the Half Ton division - *Magic Dragon* (4 Gold, 4 Silver and 1 Bronze), *The Hum* (4 Gold), *Tingari* (2 Gold, 5 Silver and 2 Bronze), *Vandanick* (2 Gold and 2 Bronze), *Volos* (1 Gold, 3 Silver and 1 Bronze), *Norn* (1 Gold, 1 Silver and 1 Bronze), and *Forte*, *Akimbo* and *Half Hour* (1 Gold each).

## Pittwater to Coffs Harbour 1993

Max Prentice *Speakeasy*

Whilst some of our good members were racing to Hobart and victory, two other club members competed in the Pittwater to Coffs Harbour race commencing the

Left: *Tingari* (John Jeremy) on the run from Manly before a perfect North Easterly in a Half Ton Division race in 1990;  
Right: *Akimbo* (Alex Williamson) competing for attention with the Cunard liner *Queen Elizabeth 2* during the Half Ton Division race on 27 February 1993 (Photo: John Jeremy)

day after the Hobart start on the 27th December 1993. This year the club was represented by Peter Haliday in the fast Davidson 40 *Silverado* and Max Prentice in the cruising Farr 1104 *Speakeasy*. Traditionally, Peter and the writer have had a wager on this particular event the prize being a dozen bottles of fine (or not so fine!) Italian Chianti.

In contrast to the Hobart where the fleet was battling wind up to 70 knots on the nose, the Coffs Harbour fleet, in which there were about 70 entrants started with a strong westerly gusting to 40 knots off Lion Island. This set the scene for a most spectacular start! All entrants went for glory right on the line and popped their spinnakers in 40 knots of breeze for a great skate up the coast.

*Speakeasy* was lucky enough to beat *Silverado* over the line and start serious surfing. It was colossal to be up with the J35s and NSX's for at least the first three hours of the race. Mind you it was very scary, white knuckles on the wheel being very much the order of the day. At one particular juncture, *Speakeasy* had the NSX *Midnight Express* below her with the Northshore 38 immediately above. There wasn't any more than 100 feet between the three boats; anyone who broached would end up clobbering the next boat. This set the scene for most spectacular sailing. No-one was game to look behind as the fleet broached its way into various problems.

The eventual line honours winner was *Vendetta*, an Inglis 47 and by far the largest boat in the fleet. Whilst the battle was going at the front of the fleet, a case of Chianti was being closely fought out in between radio skeds. For the first night *Speakeasy* was well and truly ahead of the race-tuned Davidson 40 *Silverado* on handicap. Then a decision was made to go out to sea in the morning and pick up the promised nor'easter. This resulted in *Speakeasy* sailing out into a hole about a mile wide where the westerly finished and the north easterly did not commence.

After three hours we fought, or more correctly plodded, our way back around Port Macquarie to exactly the same place where we went to sea. The race from there on was a lottery between land breezes and sea breezes often with only half a mile between dead spots and two conflicting wind patterns.

At dusk on the second night *Speakeasy* was approaching Smoky Cape. This is one of the most spectacular terrains on the NSW coast with a great old lighthouse sitting above a sheer drop with a couple of small islands just below it. The brave go below between the island and the lighthouse, the more cautious go above it. As night set in we were not making a great deal of progress and the decision was made to go just slightly above it, lest we run out of wind altogether. It took several hours just to round Smoky Cape because of the strong southerly set which comes in at that point quite close to the coast. No-one below us was making much headway in terms of braving it out and going between the headland and the island and eventually we were able to tack around into Trial Bay. A light westerly carried us up the coast with the new Norths lightweight Kevlar Mylar No 1 proving a major asset in these ghosting conditions. Progress was reasonable during the night with breezes around 8-9 knots off the land, principally from the nor'west. However "the gate had been shut" at Smoky Cape with *Silverado* getting around in daylight in a reasonable wind against the southerly set, whereas at dusk and at night the set is so strong it's only possible to make perhaps one to two knots against it.

*Speakeasy* arrived at 7 am to be greeted by the crew of *Silverado* all sitting around *Speakeasy*'s pen quaffing jugs of rum and coke and preparing water bombs. Rapid repartee was forthcoming with Peter Haliday performing a double back flip off the end of the pier and the rest of his crew unrolling fire hoses to appropriately bless the unfortunate *Speakeasy*. (Mind you a blessing at 7 am after a fairly frustrating night sail, does not add to one's sense of humour). We quickly learned that *Silverado* had arrived at 2 o'clock and that with the 4-hour start provided by the inimitable Peter Haliday, we failed by one hour to secure our second case of fine Italian red. The score now remains at one all, *Speakeasy* winning in 1992 and

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### 1938

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*Following a collision between a yacht on SASC Register and a coastal collier all boatowners were informed that they must allow commercial shipping the undisputed use of the Harbour channels.*

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*Silverado* in 1993. *Silverado* however does hold the title for both years for crew double back flips let alone Bundy and coke bathing. This crew really could be all closet Queenslanders, bearing mind the amount spilt let alone consumed!

Overall the race is enormously enjoyable. The passage race is followed by two short offshore races of around 16 nautical miles. The course normally involves all the Solitary Islands group as marks. This is one of the prettiest sections of the coast with lots of dolphins around, great views of the beaches as well as the spectacular Solitary Islands at close range.

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 1945
 

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*Victory Regatta to be held on 20th October, below the Harbour Bridge, but permission had not been granted for any other races and would not be granted till the boom was removed, perhaps at Christmas.*

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## The Lord Howe Island Race; a trip to paradise

For the past few years the SASC Yacht *Mark Twain* and selected other Club Yachts have raced to Lord Howe Island in late October. It is rumoured that most of the crews travel there to participate in Bob Lawlers bike riding lessons. The following extracts from Charles Maclurcan's various logs of the trips will allow the reader to make up his own mind.

21st Gosford to Lord Howe Yachting Classic. *Mark Twain*, skippered by owner Hugh O'Neill was outright winner in the Performance Handicap Division and was placed 2nd overall in the IMS Division only beaten by last years Hobart winner 97.

Hugh was accompanied by Club members, Bob Lawler, Keith Radford, Dal Wilson and Charles Maclurcan. Hugh and his crew considered the race one of the most pleasant ever on the veteran yacht. She was making her tenth trip to the Island. They were delighted as the smooth seas and sunny conditions allowed her to make the most of her potential for fast sailing in flat water.

*Mark Twain* fortunately chose the correct side of the rhumb line heading for the Island. Others were not so lucky. *All that Jazz* and *Akubra* further north were becalmed for some time. *All that Jazz* subsequently retired and headed for home. *Akubra* eventually finished in time to ensure that Peter Pangas was able to add to Bob Lawler's cache of White Heather for the return trip. Those that chose to finish and attend the Official Ceremony were rewarded with a sterling rendition of *Mark Twain's* battle song, which, (not to put too fine a point on the matter) referred rather shabbily to her fellow Amateurs sailing abilities. Bob Lawler offered bike riding lessons to other losers.

It is a pleasure to mention the Sponsor of the Race, Fujitsu Australia Limited. SASC Club member John McInerney, General Manager of Fujitsu's Volume Products Division outlined his Company's continuing involvement with the event, thanking both the Administration of the Island and at the Gosford Yacht Club. He went on to announce that the Sponsor would pay the bar bill for the evening as it was the 21st event. This gesture was greatly appreciated by all.

## 1981 World 5.5 Metre Championships Nassau Bahamas

### Peter Chapman

During the 1970s the Metre Division, comprised mainly of 5.5 Metre yachts, produced highly competitive racing for up to 15 yachts. From this fleet, two skippers, Roy Tutty and Warren Muir, went further afield in the class with some success. Four yachts from Australia contested the 1981 World 5.5 Metre Championships in Nassau. Roy Tutty had left the Club by this time, having sailed his *Zephyr* there for many years, to join the RPAYC which was the home of the class in Australia. Roy conscripted two hands to assist his campaign, Colin Beashel and Phil Smidmore (both of whom were to go on to be crew members of a yacht called *Australia II* in 1983 which won a certain well known regatta). Roy's campaign was well organised and competitive.



Rhapsody surfing during the regatta

Warren Muir on the other hand, first raced at the Club in the Metre Division in *Nemesis*. Warren was a boat builder and had a good track record in the skiff classes previously. He was adamant that the current state-of-the-art Luders designs (maximum displacement/maximum sail area) were not the way to go. He designed and built a radical minimum displacement/minimum sail area boat, which he called *Insurgent*. In his first Australian Championship she was disappointing, but to his credit and after constant sail development (she was quite different to sail to the other 5.5s) she came home for a second the following year behind Frank Tolhurst's *Arunga*, and in front of Tutty's Luders designed *Rhapsody*.

Warren was convinced of the merits of his design (which had not been generally accepted by some expert commentators) and committed to taking *Insurgent* to the Bahamas to confirm his ideas. He also built a conventionally designed boat, *Pop's John B*, for Bobby Symonette of Nassau who was to come third on his home turf in the World's. Warren's crew were Robert Stoddard and Peter Chapman, both sons of Amateur members. *Insurgent* was therefore solely crewed by Amateurs, the rest of the Australian contingent in Nassau being from the RPAYC.

The cost of appearing at Nassau for the Championships was not inconsiderable. The boats were carried on trailers as deck cargo and deposited in South Carolina some 1,000 km from Miami. The owners of the four Australian yachts clubbed together to buy a Ford F150 to tow the boats to Miami from where they again became deck cargo for the 300 km trip to Nassau itself. Remarkably, all of our boats arrived on time. Warren's plan did not involve *Insurgent* returning to Australia; he was successful in selling her after the series to a new American owner.

Around 20 5.5 Metre yachts arrived for the World's from Europe, North America and Australia, seven nations in all. Many competitors had sailed 5.5's in the Olympic Games prior to their exclusion from that event. A feature of the regatta was the presence of King Olav of Norway skippering *Norna XII*. Apparently the King was well known for his passion for the 5.5 Metre Class and consequently the people of Norway regularly gave him a 5.5 for his birthday. At that time he was said to own 11 5.5 s. He was a very personable man and well liked by all.

The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Cup was a four race lead up series for the World Championships – one race each day spanning a little over two weeks. For two weeks it blew 15–30 knots, usually 20–30, 30 being the limit to start a 5.5 Metre race. The venue was however magnificent.

The races were held outside Nassau on open but shallow water, with a reef some distance away with the resultant wind wave being testing on boats and crews. The Swiss crews reported that Lake Berne was never like this. The Swedish crew who had a radical boat which was part of the Swedish 12 Metre America's Cup campaign, soon realised they were mainly there for the parties, having difficulty keeping the boat afloat let alone being competitive. Meanwhile, at the serious end of the fleet the pecking order was being established.

Highlights of the Invitation Races were when the King lent *Norna XI* to sailing legend Buddy Melges and his daughter, who won a very rough race (most boats, including the Australians were using Melges gear), and the race when the Australian boats, including the one with SASC on the transom, twice insisted on putting the King over the start line, and were later politely told of the etiquette issues involved; both starts were the subject of general recalls!

*Rhapsody's* rudder assembly broke in the first race of the World's, and her fightback to win after this setback was both professional and epic, their victory well deserved. *Tolhurst*, previously 5.5 and Etchell World Champion, came home in second place, being pipped by Tully in the last race.

*Insurgent*, which had attracted a good deal of attention with her novel design ideas, revelled in the downwind legs. Most 5.5s do not plane, *Insurgent* did and she loved the fresh breezes. It was always a continuing fight to get her up to the windward mark in a competitive position. That having been achieved she would

more than likely be at or near the lead at the leeward mark. Her overall result was not assisted by a jammed spinnaker halyard sheave box resulting in a DNF after having won Race 3. Even so, a fourth place for *Insurgent* of the Amateurs was a creditable result for her young crew.

*Insurgent* was sold immediately after the regatta and did not return to Australia. However the performance of *Insurgent* resulted in a quiet revolution away from the accepted maximum displacement type boats. Warren returned to North America being in strong demand for his skills in building wooden yachts.

Participation of the King of Norway, receptions at the Prime Minister's residence, the hospitality of the people at the Nassau Yacht Club, a convivial introduction to the "Goombay Smash" and marvellous racing ensured that the regatta was a great experience for the *Insurgent's*, crew.

## Queenscliff (Port Phillip Bay) to Grassie (King Island) Yacht Race, April 1994

Lani Tomaszewski

I must be mad. Many of my friends tell me so, and after this latest escapade, I am beginning to believe them! Anyone who considers doing a yacht race in Bass Strait after January needs to have their head read.

It all started with a quiet trip to Melbourne to visit my sister, Tiare. However, that all changed the morning I was due to leave with a call from *Wild Thing's* owner, Grant Wharington, asking if Tiare and I would like to race to King Island with them over the weekend. I said "yes" immediately and Tiare agreed also. In Sydney the forecast for Melbourne looked promising with sou'westers of approximately 25-30 kts and no mention of rain; this translated to fast and comfortable reaching conditions for *Wild Thing*. The reality of Melbourne's weather hit home when I arrived at the airport and promptly put on another layer of clothing.

Tiare had been filming during the night all week, and I had enjoyed myself too the night before at an Offshore dinner held at the Amateurs. Jokingly I told Tiare that she should be used to sleepless nights by now – not fully realising how apt an observation this was going to prove.

The Rip at the mouth of the Bay was a deciding factor in what time the race would start—and as it turned out the start was off Queenscliff at the ungodly hour of 01:00 Saturday morning. We arrived at Mornington to meet *Wild Thing* at 10:00pm Friday. The weather was bleak, a blustery southerly of 35-40 kts complete with rain squalls for the start of the race. A look at the weather forecast showed that this pattern was not going to abate. So much for the promised sou'wester and my misplaced optimism.

The motor-sail from Mornington Yacht Club to the start (approximately 2 1/2 hours) provided an extremely good indication of what was to come. It was wet, cold and on the nose.

*Wild Thing* had one reef and a number four up for the start. The conditions were pretty wild, with yachts ducking and weaving as we jockeyed for a position as close to the start line as could be judged through the rain squalls. Grant pushed *Wild Thing* through the line only seconds after the gun. This aggressive start enabled *Wild Thing* to lead the fleet through the Rip and out the Heads, a position that was to remain unchallenged throughout the course of the race.

The start also revealed another aspect of the fleet; from a registered 49 entrants, only 36 started, with many of the Melbourne big boats such as *Morning Mist III* and *Gee Whiz* (another Inglis 47) opting to stay at home rather than bash their way across the Strait to King Island. Our crew of six regulars and seven not-so-regulars were disappointed that we didn't have the expected big boat competition as we settled down on the rail for what looked to be a long bash across Bass Strait to King Island.

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1948

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*Middle Harbour Club yachts had been handicapped by agreement as their spinnakers are far larger than ours.*

*Protests received re course sailed for Kelly Cup—all boats sailed the wrong course—resail.*

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By the time we were out of the Bay I was wondering if I had rocks in my head. It was past the middle of the night; I was freezing cold, wet and exhausted after having only three hours sleep the night before. Here I am sitting on the rail going to windward, and knowing that I will be sitting there for most of the next day as well. Sitting on the rail in the difficult conditions quickly sapped the strength and enthusiasm of the majority of the crew, some of whom were so sick that we put them down below and left them there with buckets.

Before dawn a not-so-quick headsail change from the four up to the three did nothing to improve the general morale on board including my own for, despite being mastman, I was decidedly soggy by the time it was completed. Dawn crept dully onto the horizon and I was still sitting on the rail watching the sky change. Grant was doing his best impersonation of sleeping at the wheel, while Scott Gilbert, the other principal helmsman, did the morning sked. We are still leading the fleet and can see two of our competitors in the grey light behind us, whom we identify from the sked as *Barcadi* and *Prime Example*. The fleet had diminished drastically overnight as yachts continued to retire in the rough conditions. Soon after the sked the wind kicked in again, and the four went back up and a very wet three was taken down below for packing.

The rest of the day passed in a blur of discomfort. The majority of the crew sat on the rail slogging it out, with everyone's eyes getting progressively more red as the spray flew and fatigue set in. The truly ill stayed down below surviving their bout of mal de mer. The quote of the day from one who had not raced in Bass Strait before, was, "It's not a race back too, is it?"

Saturday afternoon's sked revealed more retirements and jesting comments were passed around by our crew about the staying power of many of our competitors. I suspect this was prompted by a subconscious envy and desire to get off the rail.

Drama unfolded in Port Phillip Bay when one of the retired competitors, the S & S 34 *Flamboyant* out of Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron, came in too close to Chalice Rock (a reef near the Point Lonsdale entrance to the Bay), and suffered the same fate as *Challenge III* and others before her by going up on the bricks at 03:00. The crew were uninjured and winched to safety at first light by a Police helicopter. *Flamboyant* was washed off the reef later in the day and was subsequently towed out of the shipping lanes to the Pilot's Jetty in Queenscliff by a Pilot boat.

Passing the top end of King Island was deceptive in that it felt as if we had nearly finished the race, when in fact we were only two thirds down the course. This meant that the 35+ nm to the finish line off Grassie seemed to take forever. Meanwhile the crews fantasies were getting more vocal and exotic as we came closer to civilisation. A hot shower. A cold Bundy and Coke. A hot King Island beef steak sandwich, may even some of that famous cheese or a bit of lobster...!!!

When we finally crossed the finish line, my major emotion was relief, followed quickly by the anticipation of some civilised luxuries—primarily warmth and dry clothes. King Island hospitality was everything it had been dreamed of during our hours on the rail. The residents of Grassie and the members of the King Island Boat Club welcomed us with cheers and greetings—the showers were hot, the Bundy and Coke cold, the steak sandwiches delicious, the wonderful potbellied stove provided pure, warm, bliss...They even billeted the majority of our crew of 13 out in their own homes.

Grant Wharington had skippered *Wild Thing* to a victory in both line and handicap honours in what was a fairly torrid race across the Strait with an elapsed time of 18-02-47. Only 15 entrants finished out of an original fleet of 49. Having raced many miles aboard *Wild Thing* I believe this race was a classic example of how a well-sailed ULDB can be both competitive and safe in adverse conditions when balanced by competent crew, sound seamanship skills and the good judgement of the skipper.

## Tuesday Twilight trophy race

The Club's inaugural Tuesday Twilight Point Score Race was completed in 1994, members competing for the Paul Slocombe Trophy. The series was raced over five weeks and turned out to be a very exciting and competitive series. The winner for 1997 was Tony Barry sailing *Ben Boyd Road*. The pace was set by David Hart skippering *Jellicle*. In Race 1 he crossed the starting line with spinnaker in full flight and led the fleet of eleven yachts around the course to achieve line honours on the night. Thereafter each race was just as competitive, and at the start of the last race 6 yachts were well positioned to take out the trophy. A skippers' meeting which followed the last race confirmed that the Tuesday Twilight Series would become a regular event on the Club's racing calendar.

Subsequent winners were:

- 1995 *Qui Vive* Charles Maclurcan
- 1996 *Saldana Magic* R Richards
- 1997 *Ben Boyd Road* Tony Barry

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1949

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*Annual Subscription raised to £2/2/-.  
(Boatowners paid £1/1/- since 1891.  
Ed.)*

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## The 1988 Bi-centennial two-handed round-Australia race

**Ian Lewis with crew David Adams on board *Zulu Chief*, A60**

At 8.08 am on 8th day of the eighth month 1988, 15 starters left Sydney Harbour on the gun fired by Kay Cottee from the inshore minesweeper HMAS *Curlew* and included A60 flying the Amateurs racing flag on her backstay. Four yachts in the fully-crewed division followed; unlike the two-handers they could change crew at each of the eight stages.

The race had been promoted by Don McIntyre, who led the Short Handed Sailing Association with secretary Susie Jack and staked the race through his small yacht chandlery business. Apart from the offer of a grant for the short-handed from the Commission for the Disabled, there was no sign of the budgeted \$1m sponsorship within 6 weeks of the start and the McIntyres faced financial disaster. By chance I mentioned naming rights to Dr John Keniry, then Chief of the Goodman Fielder food company who stepped in at a bargain price but saved the day and the race.

The prospect of the race had finally made me do something about the dream of a new cruiser-racer and a year earlier I'd taken the plunge to phone Kel Steinman, a naval architect in Melbourne who had some successful designs. Followed by a couple of exciting weekends at his CAD screen my concept of a modern cruising yacht from a scrapbook of doodles and sketch designs developed, with building quotes from his close contact at Zulu Yachts.

David Adams, ex merchant navy and master mariner, supervised our fit-out. Zulu Yachts, a small company experienced in plastics for industry, had started a successful works team of Steinman half-tonners and in the optimistic spirit of the late 1980s had ambitions to exceed Beneteau's 2,000 boats a year. My yacht was a promotional offer and badly behind schedule so we named her *Zulu Chief* to put their reputation on the line. We were more fortunate than the 20.8m *Amazon* started earlier but still a shell after two years and evacuated to Sydney shortly before the yard was closed.

Half the fleet was financially sponsored, ranging from the multi-million dollar Steinlager beer promotion down to modest fees for naming rights. On 19th October 1987 the Wall Street crash had signalled the end of a wild era of easy credit with share and property prices then spiralling downwards and only now recovering to similar levels.

Disregarding the conventional IOR formula, a light displacement hull (8,500 kg) allowed the maximum length of 50ft for Div.2 at relatively low cost. After 8 years in the bowels of the flush-decked aluminium two-tonner *Mercedes V* a



Zulu Chief at the start of the Round Australia Race 8-8-88

waterview from the dinette was important and the wide (4.5m) stern was potentially a spacious owner's cabin with access from the aft boarding platform. Short-handed sailing meant all controls from the cockpit and water-ballast of one tonne on each side fed by retractable scoop gave stability without 10 crew on the gunwhale.

Our opposition in Div.2 was from two Adams-Radford 15.2m boats, the well sponsored *Australian Pacific* and the older *Alstar* of legendary sailor Alby Bergin, 73 years old and winner of Hobart, Osaka, and Trans Tasman races, agreeing later with Peter Blake, that this was the hardest race they had ever done. Incredibly Alby had time to open his yacht to benefit a Newcastle charity at every port of call.

The 7,500 mile race was off to a stormy start. Over the next 24 hours the southerly wind increased to 60 knots and claimed the life of one crewman washed overboard at Mermaid Reef, Crowdy Head. A trimaran capsized and the rescuing police launch from Nelson Bay sank; the national press and Police Commissioner criticised the decision to start and sparked a defamation action by the organisers.

From the start we covered 280 miles in 24 hours, largely because the mainsail jammed at the first reef, making Mooloolaba at 10 knots average with nary a broach, where we repaired the damage. The boat had been launched only a week

before the deadline, for public display in the newly-completed Darling Harbour. The hydraulic steering failed periodically; the internal forward steering position continued to function, but at speeds of up to 28 knots the waves over the foredeck put the cabin windows under water, quite disorienting for the helmsman.

After a beachfront memorial service for our lost friend the race restarted for the next leg to Cairns. We pit-stopped at each destination for 2 to 4 days before resuming. Our average time between the 7 ports was 6 days at sea, the longest leg Darwin to Perth taking 16 days.

Watchkeeping was 4 hours by day, halved by night and reduced to 1 hour in bad conditions; mostly steering by hand and staying awake in those night watches was excruciating at times. The Australian-made Coursemaster was excellent but had been located under a deck-leak.

Evening cooking was by the man off-watch, usually a stir-fry in the wok on the gas stove, with plenty of cereals, dried or fresh fruit and salad from the eutectic fridge. We carried a few tins of beer but she was generally a dry ship, entirely due to David's desire to save weight. Everything else, from the bosun's gear to corn-flakes was stored on a large timber box secured to the cabin sole and we each slept in our own pilot berths either side.

Navigation was also by the off-watch, sat-nav intermittent and checked by hand-bearings, especially in northern waters where errors of up to 1/2 mile were a surprise when passing coral atolls. The written log and chart up-dated with the change of watch, radio position reports were twice daily with Derek and Janine at Penta station and excellent reception throughout. We lost a chart in the sequence through the winding channel of the upper Barrier Reef and for 50 miles had to follow the stern light of a boat a mile ahead obscured by heavy rain squalls, which caused some concern at the time.

Passing the warships steaming south for the Bicentennial Naval Review mixed with other merchant traffic whilst we raced under spinnaker at night up the confined inside channel of the reef near Cape Melville was also a sobering experience, especially for David up the mast clearing frequent wraps.

As the weather became lighter towards the north our lead grew shorter and going through the Albany Pass, past the long-abandoned settlement of Somerset, the three of us were in procession only 1/4 mile apart. Gung-ho to retain our lead with a fresh breeze, we alone retained our kite that night to be comprehensively flattened by a bullet off the Carnegie Ranges behind Cape York and were then too timid to get it up again early for the run down Endeavour Strait.

Approaching Darwin one of the fully-crewed yachts was wrecked on a reef. We also had a fright when the 20 knot south-easter dropped to nothing at 1800 exactly, whilst we were nearing a rocky headland with white water off the point. We started the engine, fouled the propellor on the trailing spinnaker sheet but it turned out to be only a tide-race at 6 knots which carried us around Cape Don.

We wallowed in the light breezes and long swells across the north in our wide-sterned boat whilst the slimmer Adams-Radfords got away. David was leaning on the radar-scanner pole on the stern, marking his territory, when it collapsed and he fell with a big splash. After a short cooling swim and up on the stern platform, he turned white as I pointed out the big tiger sharks circling in the crystal-clear sea.

David's ambitions to win the BOC Round the World Single-handed Race had nearly ended. He was using this race for serious training, as a less competitive 51 year-old office worker it was not my chosen pace but he was very considerate and I don't recall a disagreement - unlike several crews where relations became very strained.

Dark shapes underwater, some very large, followed us across the north and whales came close - one like a submarine surfacing a few boats lengths ahead.

Each port of call had a welcoming host and together with Caroline Adams, David's devoted wife and supporter, they helped an exhausted crew with sail-

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 1952
 

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January: AYF announced that to raise finance for the sending of yachtsmen to the Olympic Games at Helsinki an Art Union for a Motor Car was to be run by SYRA.

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repairs, provisioning and fuelling in unfamiliar places, especially hard in the high humidity of the north. I slept on the boat, so faxes from Denis and Louise Williams, Jack Earl, the Tomos and friends at SASC were especially welcome. In Darwin our helpers the Devonports and their friend Brian Hallett properly reinstalled the steering system; little did we suspect then its other weakness.

*Alby* was well ahead at Perth where *Zulu* was slipped to tighten the keelbolts, narrowly avoiding a knock-down on the hardstand with midnight propping by the yard manager. Down to Cape Leeuwin and across the Bight was generally moderate with a 45 knot dusting up Investigator Strait to Port Adelaide which tore the spinnaker pole off the leeward deck, but with stronger following winds we had narrowed the lead on *Alstar* and the 60ft ultra-light (5,000 kg) *Technovator* which had lost time with rudder repairs.

Hobart saw us alongside Elizabeth Street Pier damaged by a tug out of control, and missing one blade of the folding propellor. But we were racing, self-starting again on time at 4pm, off to Bass Strait in pursuit, bound for Western Port and a westerly gale forecast on the nose.

After 48 hours and halfway across Bass Strait the steering was spongy and we saw the hydraulic cylinder gradually tearing off the deck at the base of its mounting. The engine was dead with water in the fuel from a lost deck filler cap and batteries low. The emergency steering was ineffective and the formidable entrance was 50 miles to windward with a regular winter westerly gale of 40-60 knots and big seas. With 4 reefs in the fully-battened mainsail and storm jib we were doing 6.5 knots and 40 degrees to the apparent wind; warnings were out for a new frontal system approaching from the west. Little alternative but to try for port while we had some control.

In these conditions, *Australian Pacific* astern we sheltered at Kent Island for 4 nights. The cat *St Therese* capsized off Tasmania with her crew rescued 56 hours later.

Touch and go on the final approach to Western Port, now dark but only 2 hours behind *Alstar* and *Technovator*, rain squalls to 66 kts, a tired and shivering crew not game to shake out reefs during the lulls to save the steering now literally hanging by a few threads of fibreglass, a cross-current setting us to Phillip Island a mile to leeward, a big breaking wave and we were knocked down helpless.

We rolled and were carried along with the wave, David was still in the surf on his lifeline when we went over again. I remember a thump while clinging to the wheel upside down breathing foam and when we surfaced was pinned down by the boom and top of the broken mast. David saw the rocks 10 yards away and leapt back on board. At some stage we had pranged the rudder as we were swept between the outcrops of Seal Rocks.

We were glad of the hull design with its recessed keel as we were waterlogged and immobile but otherwise structurally sound in calmer water beyond.

Tom Delaney and the Flinders pilot-boat volunteer crew came through wild conditions which David had judged impossible, to take us off at midnight, subsequently receiving the award for Victorian Rescue of the Year.

Next morning we retrieved the bedraggled yacht for tow to Hastings with help from local yachtsman Ron Bibby.

Of 15 starters there were 9 finishers in the two-handers, some taking 3 months to complete. The big cat came home in 33 sailing days, average speed 9.3 knots. Celebrations and drowning of sorrows followed at a memorable sponsor's dinner in the ballroom of the Regent Hotel.

Mosman Bay was glorious for our re-entry on a Sunday afternoon after a slow journey a year later. With sons Ben (13) and John (22) and the stump of the mast, steel plate rudder by Bob Lawler and Trevor Cosh, a progressively slipping clutch on the 48hp Bukh saildrive but fortunately the fresh westerlies now behind us, and still flying the Amateurs flag, we had returned to complete the circumnavigation.

## Sunday racing

Bill Gale had a dream, to see Sydney Harbour filled with racing metre type yachts. As a result, in 1991 the SASC started the Metre/Veteran Division racing on a Sunday. The Division consisted of several 30 square metre yachts, 8 metres and 6 metres, Dragons and classic yachts such as *Windward II*.

The first season had seven races, but by the beginning of the second season the skippers were calling for more, so another three races were added. The start time moved from 1140 to 1200 noon in an effort to get a better breeze, but still take advantage of the traffic-free Harbour.

Around ten yachts raced consistently, with *Gretel II* sometimes gracing us with her presence.

In the six seasons of Sunday Racing, other changes have evolved.

The Metre/Veteran Division now consists of Metre type yachts only, with another Division starting for Heavy/Veteran Yachts.

In 1996/97 season, a third Division of Gaff-Rigged yachts also ran a short series of races. The first race of the series was the inaugural Captain Slocum race to commemorate the centenary of *Spray's* entry to Sydney Harbour. The Spray Trophy was designed for this event.

Provision has been made in the 1997/98 season, for a Fast Division, which it is hoped will get up and running.

The Sunday race days have been very social occasions, with many of the non-member participants returning to the Club to partake of the wharf sausage sizzle.

While the fleet of metre boats has been smaller the last two seasons, the best yachts have been there and the racing has been extremely competitive.



Hoana A100 (Martin Van der Wal) winner of the first Joshua Slocum Trophy race October 1996 (Photo: Rex Dupain)

The Sunday racing has evolved into a very close encounter. In the Metre and Heavy Divisions the series winners are rarely decided before the final race. The promise of more competitors for the coming season will see Bill's dream further realized.

## The story of *Archina* and the 50th Sydney to Hobart Race

John Firth-Smith

I have been fortunate to have always lived near or on the waterfront. I learnt to sail when very young in a wooden box on the lawn with sails made by my mother; shifted around to learn the points of sailing. My first vessel was a metal cabin trunk with the lid taken off; rafts, corrugated iron canoes, double bed kapok mattress, anything that floated would do. Teenage sailing on Pittwater was spent at Avalon Sailing Club. I had progressed to Moths, VJs, and Flying Dutchman classes. I also sailed on *Southwind* a 61 ft ketch owned by Phil Rudder and renamed *Blue Waters*. Little did I know then that I would have a large ketch of my own one day.

My first larger yacht mid 70's, was *Lady Luck* a yacht that had sailed with the SASC, A 26. She was built by Lars Halvorsen, 32 ft long sloop rigged. My next yacht *Janaway* was a double ended flush raised deck sloop designed by Wally Ward for himself and built on a houseboat at the Spit. This boat was inspirational to Ron Swanson who with Ward based the successful Carmen class on her. *Janaway* was on the SASC register sail No MH4.

In January 1982, I saw an add in the paper for *Windward II*. I bought her immediately, trading *Janaway* as payment. *Windward II*, the former schooner now rigged as a cutter had won every major trophy on the harbour while owned by the legendary James March Hardie. Built by Percy Coverdale in Hobart to the plans of Norman E Dallymore in England. The yacht needed a lot of work to restore to racing condition.

Bill Gale left a message on the deck one day to suggest I race with the SASC. I immediately responded. We sailed with Division I and later the Metre Boat series. *Windward II* was a wonderful yacht, loved a big breeze and was loved by everybody. She taught me a lot about sailing and restoring old yachts.

The 50th Sydney-Hobart was comming up. I was researching the history of the race and decided to enter a yacht in the event. I immediately thought of the vintage Hobart Yachts. *Windward II* was not suitable because of its very original state and I did not want to alter this to bring it up to offshore racing standards.

I saw an add for a yacht I remembered on Sydney Harbour, *Archina* now in Tin Can Bay Queensland. I went to have a look. *Archina* was one of the nine yachts that started in the first Sydney - Hobart Race and now has been in six Sydney-Hobarts winning her Division I Benicia Cup and third overall in 1949. I arrived in Tin Can Bay - and there she was - beautiful; well almost. In 1967 the yacht had been turned into a gin palace - huge engine, raised trunk cabin with coachouse, raised cabin sole, huge galley, shower, head, curtains, teak magazine racks and carved mermaids. Tiller steering had been replaced with a wheel and huge quadrant on the aft deck. Sun awnings and clutter everywhere.

Underneath was a very good hull designed by Sydney naval architect Cecil E Boden. Built by Hayes and Sons at Careening Cove in 1935 of the best materials for Mr Luscombe Newman. Hull 52 ft long full length kauri planking with no butts. The masts were timber in good condition. I purchased the yacht and sailed it back to Sydney for preparation for the 50th Sydney-Hobart. We arrived in Lavender Bay in June and moored in front of my house where the enormous task of preparing the yacht got underway. The non-original interior was stripped out, old rusty fuel and water tanks old sails mermaid carvings endless pieces of teak. The yacht was taken to Balmain for a new cockpit, bridge deck, removing the coach house, new combings chainplates and tea tree knees; and a new engine instalation.



At this time Jenny Hazelgrove, whose father won the Hobart race with *Nerida* in 1950, was very much part of the team with her husband JP. They had helped sail *Archina* from Queensland with Fraser Johnston and myself. Jenny also won the SASC Metre division with her 6M *Juno* in 1991. Jenny was trying to obtain sponsorship and was responsible for the crew interviews. Sponsorship, however, was almost impossible to come by. The yacht was slowly coming together by November. Masts were in, sails were being made, rigging done. Painting and varnishing was left to the end.

I needed a Sailing Master who could be responsible for the crew and sailing the yacht while I could concentrate on the preparation. I was now known as PBO, poor bloody owner. Peter Wherry was appointed Sailing Master. We had raced against him on the harbour in his *Struen Marie* in the SASC. Peter and his

*Archina* off the coast of Tasmania approaching Storm Bay in the 50th Sydney-Hobart race 1995 (Photo: Richard Bennett)

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 1956
 

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*January: Meeting attended by three generations of the Backhouse and Merrington families. Bluebird Division to be created in the coming season and six Star Class Boats to race with Club flying SASC Pennant over Star Class Sail Numbers*

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brother Brian had taken *Struen Marie* to Hobart in 1991, 40 years after she won the Sydney-Hobart in 1951. Peter moved things along rapidly with the help of his mobile phone and by the beginning of December everybody was working frantically. The crew consisted of a few old *Windward II* crew. Bob McCauley and Jimmy the Reb (USA) who used to sail on the big schooner *Astor* in the 50s. *Astor* was coming out for the event but declined because of the I.M.S. rating measuring requirements. *Archina* got her IMS certificate, stability certificate, interior certificate for accomodation, water, fuel plus radio certificates etc. The yacht was fitted with a new rudder and painted on the slipway where she was built 60 years before at Careening Cove.

The first sails arrived, main, jib and yankee, about 2 weeks before the start. The yacht having a long bowsprit needed a twin spinnaker pole system. The poles plus the mast fittings had to be made and modified. Jimmy the Reb arrived with the pole ends from North Carolina, USA. We were getting there, but we all wondered if we would ever get to the start line. I was obsessive and everybody very determined. All the sails were now made with one week to go! Everybody very excited for a shakedown sail at night miles off the heads; a southerly buster tested boat and crew resulting in one withdrawing. The crew was now 13. We discussed this, being naturally superstitious sailors, but decided to go with that number as we were coming together well as a team.

The yacht was sailing under the burgee of the SASC sail No. A2 for the race. The numbers were put on the sails. More shakedown sailing. Two days before the start it was drizzling and wet. We were unable to paint the cockpit with non-skid yet managed final touching up and last minute things in the rain while enjoying Christmas.

Start day; up early; load up food; check everything; photos, hugs, kisses, patting dogs, farewells; then off to the SASC for a raft-up before the race. We realized our HF radio, though new was not functioning properly; navigator and SASC people trying to solve the problem. Bob Lawler lent us a hand-held radio.

The start. The big yacht made no attempt to be first over the line in the 30 year veterans division. The spinnaker was up and we were moving up the harbour towards the marks which were drifting westward narrowing the gap between the bouys. Yachts were piling up behind from the other start lines and it became very tight rounding the seaward mark. We did not hit another yacht but came close, and were glad when headed for open sea. Once out the heads we headed south east close hauled with a southerly blowing.

We had won the race to be in the race. I must thank everybody who was committed to *Archina*, now A101. She is as good as new and could do the 100th Sydney-Hobart!

## *Anitra V*

**Philip Brown**

*Anitra V* was designed by Trygve Halvorsen for his own use, built by the Halvorsens yard at Ryde in Sydney and launched in 1956, in time for the Hobart Race. Sailed by the Halvorsen brothers Trygve and Magnus, she came second on handicap to Vic Meyers *Solo* after surviving an 85 mph gale in Storm Bay. She won the Hobart Race in 1957 with a corrected time of 3 days and 55 minutes, the year that *Kurrewa IV* set a new course record of 3 days, 18 hours and 30 minutes for line honours. In 1958 the Halvorsens again came in second, this time to *Siandra* after a close finish. Later in the 50s the Halvorsen brothers shipped her to California for a series and sailed her back across the Pacific.

Built of Canadian cedar using the strip plank method, *Anitra V* was an advanced design for her time with short keel and spade rudder hung aft. She is 11.6m overall, beam 2.92m, draws 2.0 m and has minimum displacement of 2,837

Kg. She has five sea berths plus two in the for'csle. Her canoe stern design is a link to Norwegian design concepts adopted by Trygve Halvorsen, previously seen on his 1948 Trans Tasman winner *Peer Gynt* and later used on the most successful *Freya* in the early 60s.

*Anitra V* was owned for 30 years by Sir Garfield Barwick, a member of SASC, Dudley Stewart was Sailing Master. The 50th Hobart was the 14th for *Anitra V* and the last Hobart for Dudley Stewart and his crew, who sailed together one last time to win the CYCA Veterans Race in 1995. *Anitra V* was purchased by SASC member Philip Brown in 1995.

Under her new owner and the Amateurs burgee she has successfully competed in the 1996 Coffs Harbour Race and the 1997 Southprot Race in the Veterans Division.



*Cutter rigged Anitra V sailing down the coast after the start of the 50th Hobart Race under skipper Dudley Stewart*