



# SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club

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April 2001

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## COMING EVENTS

APRIL 01

### THURSDAY 12 APRIL 2001

Bob Brown Trophy Race to Pittwater.

### SATURDAY 21 APRIL 2001

Kelly Cup and Tara Ipo Trophy races.

### SUNDAY 13 MAY 2001

Mother's Day Breakfast on the Wharf.

### WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2001

At 2000 — General Meeting of Members to approve proposed joining fee and annual subscriptions for 2000–2001.

### SATURDAY 19 MAY 2001

First Winter Series Race.

### SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2001

Second Winter Series race.

### FRIDAY 22 JUNE 2001

Annual Prizegiving Cocktail Party at Mosman Returned Servicemans' Club.

### SATURDAY 7 JULY 2001

Third Winter Series race.

### SATURDAY 28 JULY 2001

Last Winter Series race.

**TENDER!**

**Call Robbie  
on**

**0418 678 690**

Friday 1700-2100  
(during Twilights)

Sat: 0900-1800

Sun: 0900-1700



## MOTHER'S DAY BREAKFAST

**Sunday 13 May 2001**

Book early for this popular autumn event

Cost (incl. GST) \$17 for adults, \$8 for children under seven

*Telephone Faye at the Club on 9953 1433 NOW!*

## SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

Unfortunately, I was absent from the Club for the four weekends in March as I had the opportunity to sail to King Island and Tasmania and in addition I needed to travel to New Zealand for ten days. Accordingly I missed the Daydream Shield, and I thank Fred Bevis for deputising for me on that occasion.

From all reports it was a fantastic event and our Chairman of Racing Tony Waugh is to be congratulated for persisting to overcome all the obstacles to stage the event. The format was substantially changed this time to a series of three short races for each match and, to ensure fair matches, boats were borrowed if necessary. We thank those who lent their boats and all who competed so enthusiastically.

I am pleased to tell you that the new Governor of New South Wales, Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AO has granted Vice Regal Patronage to the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club with effect from 1 March 2001 and during her term as Governor.

One matter that I have mentioned on a number of occasions at the weekly prize presentations is the need to keep clear of ferries and shipping. It was disappointing to note that one Friday evening in February, a yacht (not from SASC) was actually hit by the Manly ferry. A number of our yachts stood by to assist and whilst no one was seriously hurt, it was an accident that could have been avoided if the yacht in question had taken the appropriate action earlier. On another occasion, one of our own yachts was observed ducking under the bow of a large ship whilst the ship was proceeding down the channel. It is essential that we keep well clear of ferries and ships at all times. If we do not, we will eventually be banned from racing in the main shipping channels, which would effectively destroy our racing programme.

The clean up of the Mosman Boatshed was undertaken on Sunday 11 March and planning is now well under way as to the future use of that facility. Planning for the replacement pontoon is also well advanced.

For some time the Board has been considering consolidating the various rules we observe for the smooth running of our Club and recently approved a set of By Laws for the SASC. A copy is included with this edition of *SASC News*.

I trust members enjoy their sailing for the balance of the Season and I hope we have a good roll up for the Bob Brown Trophy race at Easter.

*Tony Clarkson.*



## DAYDREAM SHIELD 2001

APRIL 01

Sunday 4 March dawned a partly cloudy but generally fine day with a 8-12 knot sou-easterly. Perfect for the re-incarnation of the Daydream Shield after a three year hiatus. Vic Dibben in his inimitable style had the start/finish crew handpicked to facilitate a trouble free regatta. After a brief discussion it was decided to set out the trapezoid course from Taylor Bay to Shark Island/Steel Point.

With time counting down quickly for a 1100 start Rob Evans and myself in *Jack Millard* scurried off to lay the four marks of the course and marks for a start and finish line. And then drop off different coloured ribbons to all the boats racing in their appropriate pairs. Just as we were congratulating ourselves on a mission accomplished John Crawford, the MHYC Team captain requested 'Jibs only' for the J24s. Like a kelpie rounding up sheep we were off after the eight J24s scattered over the harbour and passing on the edict.

'Who the f..... says so?' — 'Jibs or your disqualified.'

Next boat — 'Whadya mean jibs — we've only got three minutes till we start.'

'OK, we'll continue the start sequence an extra three minutes and you go after the last Adams 10 pair.'

by  
Tony Waugh

*Alibi and Hotspur  
at Mark 3.*



Phew I think we made it. But wait. Where's the MHYC J24 in the second pairing? Bugger me he looks like he's off cruising around Bradley's. Off goes the sheep dog to round him up — it's John Crawford in *J Bird* apparently under the impression we were delaying the start until all were notified. Oh well seven out of eight pairs in the first race wasn't bad with a decision to call Pair 2 a no race.

Representing the SASC in the first pair off was Chris Rodowicz in *Jayded*. Chris had agreed enthusiastically to race before going overseas then suddenly had to find crew on his return. The Rear Commodore was pressed in to service and the sight of bright orange floral board shorts in front of the mast jibing a J24 spinnaker was a sight to behold. Never short of a word he seemed to be talking furiously but it was not evident if he was giving advice to the cockpit in general (as most for'ard hands seem to do) or the helmsman, or perhaps himself. Our gallant lead up boat seemed to have the measure of the MHYC boat in the first race beaten by a mere 17 seconds, but the MHYC boat proved more than a handful over the last 2 races.

Similarly Sam Wesley in *Won One* also found the going tough against *J Bird* from MHYC and lost their series 2-0 after their first race was accorded 'No Race' after genuine confusion at the start.

Rod Mitchell got out of his Cav 28 to help us out in a borrowed J24 *Innamincka*. Rod was able to win the first race but after the MHYC made amends for their error in the first race they ran out convincing winners in the second race. Though the transition proved difficult from

*Fuji Film and Wildfire* during pre-start manoeuvres.



a Cav 28 Rod improved in the third race to go down by less than a minute.

Our second borrowed J24 *Wildfire* was skippered by Ian Macdiarmid and crewed by James Bevis and Guy Irwin with his crewmember from *Clewless?*. What a sight this was with *Wildfire* sticking to *Fuji Film* like a fly to a jam tart at a picnic. Ian countered every tack and gybe as he hunted *Fuji* all over Taylor Bay winning every start, controlling every race and ending with a 3-0 score.

Bill Hogan in *Hotspur* was our representative in the S80s. Both *Hotspur* and *Alibi* from MHYC had finished the S80 State championships on equal points and we were looking forward to a close tussle. We were not disappointed. Bill's pre-race preparations were upset two days earlier when he found he was a suddenly a crew member down and rang to see if I knew of anyone who might help out. In fact my veterinary colleague Louise Stevenson (a very experienced sailor) said she would be available. On telling Bill he asked: 'is she strong?'

'Very strong for her size.' said I — 'Why?'

'I need her on the headsail' said Bill. Silence.

'I don't think I'll mention that' I said, 'we'll just let her turn up and you can let her know at a convenient time she's replacing a 120 kg man with a 50 kg (wringing wet) woman'.

'OK' said Bill.

I told Louise to look for a guy that looked like Santa Claus (probably with a green can) at about 9.45 on the SASC pontoon.

*Spectre* leading  
*Eve's Delight*  
around Mark 4.



Off to the line goes Bill. Round the course go the S80s. The start crew had just got the last pair off and were settling down for a well earned cuppa but before they had time to add the milk around the bottom mark and heading for the line were *Hotspur* and *Alibi* going at it hammer and tongs.

‘Crikey,’ I said. ‘They’re bloody quick.’ It transpired both boats had misread the flags and sailed the short course — no race.

Second race, the proper course this time and it was *Alibi* by one second! Third race and Bill’s credibility was on the line. *Alibi* got the better start and led in the first 4 legs but as they approached the bottom mark for the last time Bill got *Hotspur* inside *Alibi* with literally inches to spare. Bill hung on to his advantage to win by 10 seconds. One all and a no race.

Our Cavalier 28 representative was Jonathan Rosenberg in *Shoshana*. The Cavs had just finished their State Championships over the previous two weekends and Jonathan was a little unsure if he and his crew could get leave passes to race on yet another Sunday. I had to inform him that MHYC were going to stack the boat with Skiffies and had pencilled in three wins. Well, red rag to a bull.

‘We’ll be there’ he said and went on to produce an excellent three nil result in SASC favour against *Happy Halyard*.

The Club was able to put up two Super 10s (formerly Adams 10s). Peter Chapman in *Spectre* said when approached that he may not be very competitive against some of the MHYC boats as he was just sailing on a performance handicap in SASC Division 1 and his gear was getting a little tired. In true SASC spirit though he said he’d certainly give it a go.

Peter and crew covered themselves in glory winning the first two races and fighting back from a big deficit in the third race and but for some spinnaker trouble may just have pulled off a 3-0 win but had to settle for 2-1. Great racing Peter — you served the club proudly.

Our final boat was *The Amateurs* organised and sailed by John Sturrock. They won the first race by five seconds and went down by just under two minutes in the second. Like *Spectre* in the race before they got behind in mid-race only to slowly haul in the opposition *Contentious*, finally losing by a mere 22 seconds.

The final result: 11-11 with two ‘no races’. MHYC retain the trophy by the closest of margins: 1 second in the second S80 race perhaps. Oh well, there’s always next year. Certainly all the competitors were enthusiastic with the concept and had an arduous but enjoyable day sailing. The spectators who were fortunate enough to see the racing had a thoroughly entertaining day.

Finally, I would like to congratulate MHYC on retaining the trophy. To all the skippers and crews from both Clubs I thank them for sailing in the right spirit as befits the fine traditions of the Daydream Shield. Lastly my appreciation to John Crawford for all the hard organisational work at the MHYC.

*Matthew and Ruth Holliday are on a six-month contract operating the Antigua Yacht Club Marina, and have written to tell us of their new world.*

For six months of each year the tiny Caribbean island of Antigua becomes the nexus of the world's super-yacht industry, and the winter home of some truly extraordinary craft. The historic Nelson's Dockyard was the birthplace of this charter-yacht madness, but with the recent explosion in yacht dimensions the much larger Falmouth Harbour is now host to the biggest and best — and the location of the Antigua Yacht Club Marina.

Within days of arriving at the marina, we underwent a spectacular dimensional paradigm shift — an 80 ft yacht is a 'small' boat! The dock is full of sailboats 150 feet and over and 200 foot motor yachts from the yards of Huisman, Benetti and Feadship, and their order books are filled with orders for boats up to twice these dimensions. These stupendously extravagant machines arrive for the winter charter season in November, and cruise the Caribbean before crossing the 'pond' back to the Med for the summer. But Antigua is famous for two things: varnish, and rum! Here on the dock the sun beats down on the rastamen flowing on varnished coats of liquid amber, while the crews pickle themselves on rum punch in the myriad local bars with such colourful names as *The Last Lemming* and *The Mad Mongoose*. Meanwhile the wealthy owners stoke the industrial and financial powerhouses of Europe and the US, forking out huge sums to keep the marina food-chain alive.

Chartering one of these behemoths is not for the weak-walleted either. An American talk-show megastar recently chartered the 200 ft Feadship *Virginian* for what amounted to a long weekend — the bill came to US\$175,000. And that's not including dockage, grog, tips, fuel etc. But topping out the current jaw-drop quotient is the 300 ft *Tatoosh*, which comes complete with twin-engine helicopter, fully-rigged 35 ft sailing yacht, and 36 ft Hinckley Picnic Boat — US\$1.2 million of tender, complete with bow-thruster. And private, not for charter. The new 200+ footers just keep slipping down the ways — *Amnesia*, *Nymptia*, *Cakewalk*, *Moneikos* — all fresh out of the box, and complete with interiors which range from Louis XIV on Viagra, to Liberace meets Pixie Skase.

We're also berthing some awesome sailing yachts, including the 168' *Georgia* (currently the biggest sloop in the world), and *Hyperion* — arguably the world's most technologically advanced boat — a 155 ft sloop owned by Dr Jim 'Netscape' Clark and built by Royal Huisman in Holland. *Hyperion* is driven by a battery of Silicon Graphics computers (24 of them) and controlled by touch-screens around the yacht (but not in the owner's marble bath tub). Walking around the yacht it's easy to forget you're on a sailing yacht, particularly when you're surrounded by major works by Monet, Picasso and Sisley. The art is reputedly worth more than the yacht. But if you think that's outlandish, consider Clark's new project. Royal Huisman are currently laying the keel for the 292 ft Athena — a three-masted gaff schooner. Yes, he's keeping both yachts. No, they're not for charter. But ready for Gaffer's Day 2004 — maybe!

On a more 'realistic' level, we have two current favourites. *Brilliant* is a 63 ft gaff schooner designed by Olin Stephens in 1932, and masterfully constructed by Nevins in New York. For the past 25 years she's been run by Mystic Seaport Museum as a sail-training vessel,

and has introduced thousands of teenagers to the magic of wooden yachts under the beneficent eye of Captain George Moffat. She's never had a restoration and is the most handsomely honest yacht in original condition.

And lying alongside our office is the spectacular *Savannah* – a 90 ft Pedrick designed 'recreation' of a 'Fife' sloop constructed entirely of carbon-fibre. She has the most perfect neo-Victorian yacht interior you could imagine, down to the claw-foot bath in the owner's cabin (carbon, of course). Down below she's all raised mahogany paneling (veneer on nomex); below the waterline she's deep fin-keel and spade rudder; on deck she's pure Fife – but on the water she's a weapon. Definitely one to watch at Antigua Classics week, where the creations of Fife, Herreshoff and Nicholson race around the cans for trophies engraved with names such as *Ticonderoga*, *Endeavour*, *Velsheda*, *Mariella* and *Thendara*.

Our season winds up with a big bang — Antigua Sailing Week. This is a major international regatta with hundreds of hot-shot yachts. Mike Slade's new 90 ft Reichel-Pugh *Leopard* is an all-carbon sled resembling an Audi TT with a (carbon) mast. She'll be quite a sight racing against the 70' 'turbosleds' out of the US — *Pyewacket*, *Magnitude* etc, with their interesting technique for gybing their 4 400 sq ft asymmetricals. The spinnaker pole sticks out 11 feet past the bow, so during the gybe the pole goes forward to the forestay and the kite rotates around the front of the boat. When everything is steady on the new gybe the foredeckhand pulls the clevis-pin and *disconnects the forestay*. He lifts the stay over the pole and then reattaches it. This is apparently illegal under IMS, but allowed under PHRF — and definitely not for the faint-hearted. Never a dull moment in Antigua!

Yachts of modest proportions at the Antigua Yacht Club Marina.



The Ranger World Championship was held on Sunday 25 March 2001. There was a very happy gathering at the SASC both before and after the event. It was great to see nine Rangers at the Club's pontoon, two of which *Retreat* and *Valiant* came all the way from Pittwater.

The star of the show was *Vanity* built for John Crawford by Sean Langman, brand new, timber built using modern methods with glossy black topsides. *Vanity* is the first Ranger built for 50 years and she exhibited dazzling boat speed on the day. John Crawford kindly invited Bill Gale to sail her but he failed to see the shorten course flag and subsequently withdrew.

*Cherub* (John Westacott) took the gun having gone very well in the light airs followed by *Vagrant* (Sean Langman) with *Ranger* (Mark Bethwaite) five boat lengths behind.

The Ranger owners are grateful to the SASC for staging the event and in particular thank the starting crew for giving up their Sunday.

by  
Bill Gale

John Crawford, proud owner of the new *Vanity*, with the new yacht on launching day 9 March 2001.





Rangers gathered at the SASC before the start of their World Championships. (above)

*Cherub* approaching the finish. (below)



For those who didn't race in the Australia Day Regatta, the 'Australia Day Weekend' was a break from racing at the Amateurs. This allowed families, friends and spouses to finally get to spend a whole weekend with their sailors!

Those skippers suffering withdrawal symptoms from the week away from racing were therefore keen to get to the starting line for race 13 on Saturday 3 February. The fleet was greeted with strong nor'easterly winds, so most boats had set No 2 headsails and/or had reefed their mainsails. At the start a lot more decorum was shown by the competitors, which was quite in contrast to the race the previous fortnight.

During the race, as the wind increased, a number of boats were forced to change to smaller sails. Gusts to 33 knots were reported. *Hotspur* was forced to change sail soon after the start as they blew out their No. 1 headsail. It didn't seem to slow Bill Hogan and his crew up too much. Richard Lavers on *Manhattan Transfer* was quite perplexed about the whole issue. Heard later to be grumbling under his breath, that they were leading past the first mark and had their spinnaker set, then *Hotspur* still sailed past him with just a poled-out headsail. Your day will come Richard!

Anyone see *Bandersnatch* during the race? She was seen at the start struggling to tie on the headsail sheets, but nobody can recall her even getting her mainsail up. There is no record either of her actually starting or finishing the race — very odd. Perhaps her owner, Frank Heatherton, can enlighten us later.

It was the day for the Endeavour Class boats in the fleet to excel and take all handicap honours. *Pajo*, an Endeavour 24, was first. Obviously the strong winds suited Frank George and his crew. *Corinna*, another Endeavour 24, skippered by Dr Darryl Hodgkinson still sailing consistently well, was third. *Brigadoon*, an Endeavour 26 completed the trifecta. Her skipper Fred Bevis had a complete form reversal to take out second place on handicap, and third on scratch. Fred, finally coming good with a clean bottom.

Good News. The 'entertainers', (Michael Morris and David Dale) have got themselves a new boat. It is a Masrm 720 called *Escapade*. He and David feel quite confident it will be a lot faster than their old boat, *The Entertainer*. In fact Michael has stated that they anticipate being with the faster boats in the fleet contesting the lead — we await in anticipation.

*Wangi Girl* found good boat speed too take out the handicap honours when the short and long series boats combined for race 14 on Saturday 10 February. Skipper, David Brown had mentioned the previous day

by  
Guy Irwin

that they had made some adjustments to their rig, and had just slipped the boat. Obviously the improvements paid off — well done David!

We again achieved our record of 18 boats for this race. The numbers also reflected the competitiveness of the Division at the start. Boats were searching for a hole and the advantage on the start line. So much so it caused a number of boats to break prior to the gun and they were subsequently recalled. *Gannet* was one of those boats, but she failed to re-start, and was disqualified. Another offender was *Wind Shadow*, but this did not deter the Brady Bunch (Mark and John Brady), after their restart they went on to post a 3<sup>rd</sup> on handicap. I understand they didn't even fly their spinnaker. This boat is just starting to show its true colours. As we said before “watch out for the Brady Bunch” when they get their act together.

*Hebe*, with Ray Wilson taking over the helm from son, Tim on the day, showed what a great boat she is (particularly in the stronger winds). *Hebe* went on to record second place on handicap and second over the line.

‘Lifts and Knocks’ were the order of the day when Division 2 mustered for race 15 on Saturday 17 February. Winds 10 to 15 knots shifting from sou-east to south sou-west tested the fleet. However the shifting wind played second fiddle to the weather. Generally everyone agreed that it was one of the most pleasant race days we have had this season.

Obviously my little dig at *Brigadoon* (remember! — dirty bottom — running last) finally got Fred Bevis and crew into action and spur them on. They showed their true colours to win the race on handicap. *Riff Raff* was second, and *Pajo* came third. Paul Haas from *Riff Raff* said his new forward hand for the race; Lachlan Irwin (slightly related to me) made all the difference. Just goes to show that there is no family loyalty here, as I can never get him to sail with me on Saturdays.

*Hoo Ha*, no relation to Poo Bear or any other of those comic characters from the distant past, was the surprise performer in the small fleet that contested race 16 on 24 January. *Hoo Ha's*, skipper, Peter Howes said that the boat's name is not a mystery, but is in fact a derivative of *HOO-D HA-LVERSON*. Anyway, *Hoo Ha* found a new set of legs to give *Impala* and *Clewless* a run for their money. Even leading them both until the last windward leg to Taylors Bay and in doing so won the day on handicap. First on scratch was *Manhattan Transfer* followed by *Impala* then *Clewless*?

Race 17 — 3 March. Suddenly we are already into Autumn — where did summer go? Although overcast and a little wet earlier on the day it did not deter a large field of both short and long series boats line up at the start. Both series are hotting up now with only one short series, and five long series races to go to the end of the season.

Notably missing again from the fleet was *Hotspur* (two weeks in a row). I caught up with Bill Hogan the next day and his excuse was that he is only allowed out racing one day in a weekend, and the Day Dream Shield (club match racing challenge against Middle Harbour) took precedence on this weekend. Last weekend he was contesting the S80 championships. I guess we can't argue with him about that.

The Day Dream Shield held on Sunday 4 March was a great day, I crewed on a J24 borrowed from Middle Harbour that was skippered by Ian MacDiarmid (of sail making fame). What a wonderful experiences that was. Ian is a very good skipper and he somehow man-

aged to mould our crew (who had never sailed together) into a formable unit with about 20 minutes practice. We then went on to win our three match races.

Back to the Division 2 race — *Brigadoon* won on handicap (how I don't know) I even asked Fred if he were actually in the race, as I didn't see him as he was so far behind. I think he must know the Handicapper very well. *Hebe* came second on handicap and first on scratch. *Wind Shadow* (the Brady Bunch) again showing their prowess to sneak into third place on handicap. Although *Wind Shadow* had a little help on the day, as Ron Royal was among her crew. Ron is very experienced. He used to skipper *Sanctuary*, a Holland 25, and used to sail her regularly for many years in Division 2 until sold last year.

*Bandersnatch* won race 18 on Saturday 10 March. We have noticed that *Bandersnatch* either comes in first or around the tail of the field. There seems to be no in-between for Frank and his crew. *Orpheus* came in second place, and *Impala* third place.

Unfortunately the race result was subject to protest, but was subsequently dismissed by the Protest Committee. The protest was dismissed because of a technicality — in that the protesting boat did not carry out the correct protesting procedure. Generally we don't encourage protests in division 2. However it is important to remember that if someone infringes a race rule, a 720-degree turn on the water will absolve the infringement. It is much less painful and time consuming to take your penalty on the water than fronting up to the Protest Committee.

Race 19 — 17 March. Vic and the boys on the Starter's Boat set the start line for a southerly course — course O, south of Shell Cove Bay. Everybody was expecting the wind to blow in strongly from the Sou-west at around 20 to 30 knots, as forecast by the Weather Bureau. Then a minute or so from the start no wind whatsoever, it totally died away. Then a faint wisp of air was detected!

First to notice the wind change was Bill Hogan on *Hotspur*. Bill described the moment to me. He said, 'I had me fag in me mouth having a last puff, and then suddenly I noticed the trail of smoke had changed direction, only faintly mind you! It was coming over my shoulder. Instantly I thought to me-self this wind has changed to a north westerly. I shouted to my crew...set the spinnaker'

As all those who raced on the day know, that was the last we saw of *Hotspur*. While the rest of us were still thinking about getting a spinnaker up, *Hotspur* had set theirs, and was away leaving the rest of the fleet in her wake. She was going so fast that she even caught, and passed a number of the Cavalier 28's before the first mark.

For the remainder of the fleet it was a stop-start race. The front boats would get away then stop, and the trailing boats would get a puff and catch up. At the end of the race the handicap honours went to *Pajo*, followed by *Orpheus*, then *Riff Raff*. Scratch results were *Hotspur*, first, *Manhattan Transfer* second, then *Clewless?* in third place.

I thought I would take this opportunity to thank all those who have participated in Division 2 racing. In my mind it has been a very exciting and competitive division. Hopefully it will be bigger and better next time. I might add that we plan to introduce some special trophy races during the next race season, and will advise you of these plans in our next news article. Good luck to those boats in contention for race honours — see you on the water.

*A ship is a creature which we have brought into the World, as it were, on purpose, to keep us up to the mark. In her handling, a ship will not put up with a mere pretender. A ship is not a slave. You must make her easy in a seaway, you must never forget that you owe her the fullest share of your thought, of your skill, of your self love. If you remember that obligation, naturally and without effort, as if it were an instinctive feeling of your inner life, she will sail, stay, run for you as long as she is able, or, like a sea-bird going to rest on the angry waves, she will lay out the heaviest gale that ever made you doubt living long enough to see another sunrise.*

These beautiful words by Joseph Conrad (from *Mirror of the Sea*) encapsulate the relationship between the seaman and his ship, and will have meaning to anyone who has spent time at sea in ships or boats. The reality is, of course, that any ship may at some time encounter weather and sea conditions that will overwhelm her, regardless of her seaworthiness and the skill of her crew.

It is easy to forget, moreover, that those large and apparently invulnerable steel ships we see entering and leaving our harbours can be as vulnerable as any other craft when the conditions become sufficiently extreme. Even large liners like *Queen Elizabeth 2* have been badly damaged when encountering some of the very large seas that can be found occasionally in the North Atlantic.

When rowing one's dinghy to windward in Mosmans Bay in a strong southerly, a wave 0.5 m high can seem quite large enough. Actually, it is very easy to overestimate the size of waves. It is also very difficult to measure wave height from the deck of a ship with any precision because of the lack of accurate levels and reference points. How big do ocean waves get? The simple answer is — very large!



A ship encountering a very large steep sea. [1]

When wind blows over current the waves generated by the wind can become very steep. Whatever the size of our ship, most of us who have been to sea will recall encountering a ‘wall of water’ at some time. Large cyclonic storms can generate very high pyramidal waves. Wave heights of nearly 30 m have been confirmed. The impact of such freak seas on a ship, particularly if the wave is breaking, can be disastrous.

It is well known that large steep seas can occur off the east coast of Africa, in the Agulhas current. The South African sailing directions describe the dangerous sea conditions there as follows:

‘The Agulhas Current flowing off and parallel to the east coast of South Africa is about 60 miles wide and attains rates of up to 5 knots on occasions. This current is normally kept outside the continental shelf by the fact that it extends downwards to a depth of more than 200m. It attains its greatest rate along its western edge. Between Durban and Port St. Johns the average width of the continental shelf is 5 miles, and it is in this area between the shore and the western edge of the Agulhas Current that a counter current is sometimes generated when a strong wind from the SW is associated with an atmospheric depression moving to the ENE. This current, moving in a NE direction, is composed of a gradient current caused by the level of the sea being raised in the low pressure area and the surface drift caused by wind friction.

In the NW quadrant of the depression, strong to gale force SW winds blowing contrary to the direction of the Agulhas Current cause very steep waves, especially in the western part of the current immediately to seaward of the shelf edge. These waves are approximately 5 – 10 m high, have a frequency of about 10 seconds and a length of 60 – 80 m. At the same time there may be wave trains emanating from storm centres further south, whose lengths are much longer and whose frequency is about 16 seconds. These also travel in a general NE direction against the current.

It is thought that a combination of the waves in these different wave trains, together with some aberration in the Agulhas Current caused by the influence of the counter current, has on several occasions caused an exceptionally large wave to form, the notorious freak wave of the Natal Coast. For some reason, as yet not fully understood, a very deep trough precedes the crest of the wave, with the result that a ship steaming against the sea suddenly and without any warning, plunges into it, and before the bows can lift to the oncoming wall of water, which may be as much as 20 m high, the forepart buries itself in this mountainous wave with disastrous results.

The lifetime of such a freak wave is very short, and it will extend over a distance of not much more than 11 cables, so that the chances of a ship encountering it are small. Nevertheless, mariners are warned to treat that section of the coast between Richards Bay and East London with caution when steaming SW into a rough sea when the barometer is low and there is a strong SW wind blowing, on a course lying within 20 miles to seaward of the 100 m bathymetric contour.

Between 1964 and 1973 six ships reported having encountered freak waves in this area. One of these, the tanker *World Glory*, broke her back and sank on 13 June 1968.’

This phenomenon was probably responsible for one of the long-standing mysteries of the sea, the loss without trace of the Blue Anchor Line passenger ship *Waratah*. Built in 1908, *Waratah* was a cargo liner of 9,339 tons, and had 211 passengers and crew on board when she vanished between Capetown and Durban in July 1909. No wreckage or sign of the ship was found at the time. In 1997 a salvor claimed to have found the wreck lying in 113 m of water. Her bow section is extensively damaged and her mid section collapsed. The stern is more or less intact.



*World Glory* sinking in June 1968.

That a well-found large ship could sink without trace is hard for most people to imagine — yet it can, and does, happen. One of the most famous such losses in recent times is that of the British oil/bulk/oil carrier *Derbyshire*, the largest British ship ever to be lost at sea. One of six sister ships, *Derbyshire* was completed in 1976. She was 281.94 m long, 44.2 m in beam and 24.99 m deep. She could carry 173,200 t of cargo and had a maximum displacement of 203,800 t. On her last voyage she was carrying 158,000 t of ore concentrates from Canada to Kawasaki. Her complement was 42 crew and two passengers (wives of crew members).

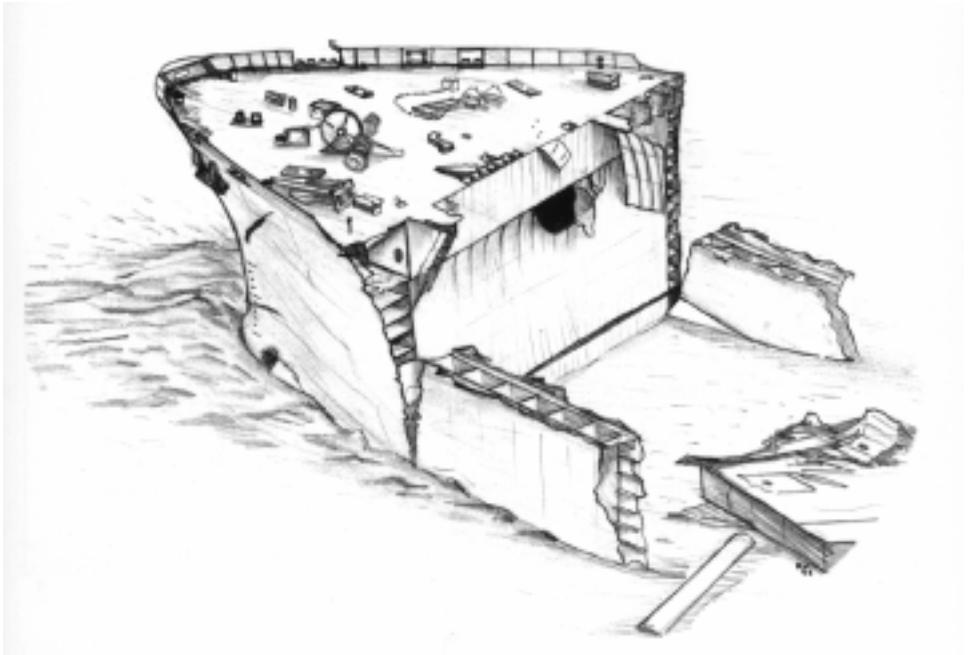
A few days before her scheduled arrival she encountered typhoon Orchid. Her route on 9 September 1980 was crossed by the worst sea conditions associated with the typhoon, and she was last heard from at 1019z that day. The conditions she would have encountered were severe but not exceptional, and vessels of the size and design of *Derbyshire* were (at the time) assumed to be quite capable of withstanding such conditions, even if they had to reduce speed or be hove to.

No trace of the ship or her people was found. A formal investigation into the loss was carried out in 1987 and 1988. A number of casualties had been sustained by her sister ships involving fractures in way of Frame 65, just forward of the superstructure, but in the absence of any evidence as to the actual circumstances of the loss of *Derbyshire* the subsequent report was inconclusive. This did not satisfy the relatives of the lost crew, but at the time there was no way of locating the wreck or technology to adequately examine it in water 2½ miles deep.

Eventually, in 1994, the wreck was located in 4,200 m of water, and the British government agreed to fund a detailed survey of the remains. The survey was conducted by the US Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and resulted in 135,000 still photographs over 98% of the wreckage field, which measures 1,500 m x 1,000 m. Some 2,500 individual items of wreckage were identified, and with the aid of 200 hours of high-definition video, a very

clear picture of the ship's remains was obtained. The underwater survey was probably the most complete ever carried out on a wreck at great depth (including *Titanic*).

The subsequent assessment effectively exonerated Frame 65, but implied that the failure of the crew to adequately secure the forecabin hatch leading to the cable locker may have contributed to the loss. Following pressure from the families of the crew, a further formal investigation was opened in the High Court (the first such inquiry ever). The hearings lasted 54 days, concluding on 26 July 2000.



A sketch of the bow of *Derbyshire* as it lies in the wreckage on the bottom of the north Pacific. [2]

The final report concluded that the initiating cause of the loss was the destruction of some or all of the ventilators and air pipes located on the foredeck by sustained green water loading. Water was thereby able to enter the bosun's store and other spaces in the bow which would have progressively reduced forward freeboard in a manner imperceptible from the bridge. As the conditions got worse, the No. 1 hatch cover would have collapsed, allowing No. 1 hold to fill, probably in minutes. No. 2 and 3 holds would have followed, at which point the ship was irretrievably lost. Whilst the ship clearly broke up on sinking, the bow of the ship is more or less intact, although evidence suggests that it was not completely full of water when the ship left the surface.

Naturally, the report had much to say about the design standards for hatch covers, but the ship was lost by being overwhelmed by the sea, in conditions when the wind speed was estimated to be over 56 knots and the significant wave height 10.86 metres. [Remember, the significant wave height is the average height of the highest one third of the waves].

It is hard to imagine the loss of a ship as large as the *Derbyshire* as a result of the weather. Yet, it is easy to forget that all ships are designed to withstand the anticipated loads, and when those design conditions are exceeded, the structure of the ship can fail. Whilst the ship looks big and strong, imagine an exact 100<sup>th</sup> scale model of a bulk carrier like *Derbyshire*. It would be 2.8 m long, and 0.4 m wide. The thickness of the side shell and decks would be about 0.2 mm, like a sheet of foil. Load the model with ore cargo, and then try to pick the model up by the ends. It will collapse.

The structure of ships is carefully designed to resist the stresses imposed by the ship's weight and the buoyancy forces imposed by the sea. Structural failure can even occur in still water when loading procedures are incorrectly followed. That so many ships safely travel the seas without loss is a tribute to the designers, builders, maintainers and the crew who sail them.

Hopefully, most of us will never have to weather a typhoon in the northern Pacific, or survive freak waves of the east coast of Africa. We should, however, always be aware of the power of the sea and the seaworthiness of our ship.

References:

1. Faulkner, D. *An independent assessment of the sinking of the MV Derbyshire*, Trans. SNAME Vol. 106 1998.
2. *Report of the Re-opened Formal Investigation into the Loss of the MV Derbyshire*, London 2000.

## **SYDNEY AMATEUR SAILING CLUB**

### **Slipway and Boatshed Services**

In order to expand the range of boatshed services available to members, the Club has engaged shipwright Andrew Miller.

Andrew brings additional skills to the Club, enabling the boatshed to undertake a wider variety of work. He is skilled with timber, glass, composite materials and rigging systems.

Until recently Andrew was employed as full-time sailing master and shipwright on the yacht *Titan Ford* and is a veteran of some 14 Sydney Hobart yacht races as well as many interstate and overseas deliveries.

***For your maintenance and upgrading projects contact Rod Phillips at the Club today on 9909 2185***

## VALE DENNIS ADAMS

APRIL 01

Australia lost one of its finest marine artists when Dennis Adams died recently at the age of 86. A regular visitor to the SASC on Gaffers Day he was the creator of the Captain Slocum Trophy, awarded each year by the SASC to the winner of a race of gaff rigged yachts.

Dennis Adams was born in Sydney and studied art in Sydney before sailing for England via Cape Horn as a passenger in the four-masted barque *Hertzogin Cecilie*. He was one of the last remaining Cape Horners. After study in England, he returned to Australia in 1938 as a member of the crew of the barque *Lawhill*.

Dennis Adams was an official war artist during World War II and many of his paintings are in the collection of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. After the war he taught at the East Sydney Technical College and the University of NSW. His many paintings and sculptures can be seen throughout Australia.

Adams was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in 1989 and in 1995 became the founding president of the Australian Society of Marine Artists.

He is survived by his wife Anne and daughter Josephine. A memorial service for Dennis Adams will be held at the Garden Island Chapel on Sunday 1 July 2001. All are welcome, and parking will be available.

Dennis Adams in his studio in 1983 with one of his paintings.



## CAVALIER 28 CHAMPIONSHIPS

The SASC conducted the Cavalier 28 NSW Championships on 18 and 25 February 2001.

Thirteen yachts contested the series of five races sailed on triangular courses on Sydney Harbour. Scratch results were decided on count-back, with *Whisperer* taking first place, *Shoshana* second and *Quambi* third. On handicap *Scuttlebutt* was first, with *Quambi* second and *Blind Justice* third.

*Centaurus* rounding the leeward mark during race 2.



## SASC ANNUAL PRIZEGIVING

The annual prizegiving and cocktail party will be held at the Mosman Returned Servicemen's Club, 719 Military Road, Mosman on

*Friday 22 June 2001*

\$27.50 per person (incl. GST)

Dining and entertainment is available at the Club for those who want to party on, and there are excellent restaurants in the area.

*Put the date in your diary now!*

**Bookings essential — please telephone Faye Buckley on 9953 1433  
no later than Friday 15 June 2001**

# S80 ANNUAL REGATTA

APRIL 01

The 2000/2001 S80 Yacht Association of NSW Leichhardt Trophies Annual Regatta, sponsored by long term supporters Leichhardt Trophies of Gladesville, was held by the Vacluse Yacht Club from 23 to 25 February.

by  
Jim Chambers

The program was for each day's racing to be run on windward/leeward courses followed by Olympic triangles, with a Club course thrown in on the Saturday afternoon to add some variation with six races with one discard. Confusion over the course for race two on the Friday afternoon lead to that race being abandoned with a resail being held on Sunday morning.

With the exception of the Saturday afternoon all races were held in light easterlies or north-easterlies with winds rarely exceeding 10-12 knots. The Club course on the Saturday afternoon saw a good sea-breeze pushing to the top end of the No.1 headsail range. Just prior to this race one of the fleet (not a SASC boat) provided some unexpected entertainment by trying to pluck the (initially unhoisted) spinnaker from a passing Adams 10 by hooking its mast under the halyard of the Adams. Fortunately both boats kept their masts but the S80 was a little short on mast-top hardware for the rest of the series. No report on the Adams has been available.

The racing was very open with four different heat winners in the six race series. Going into the last race *Hotspur*, *Alabi* and *Periwinkle* were within one point of each other with *Chocolate Eclare* another 1.5 points behind. A win by *Chocolate Eclare* and a slump to fifth by *Hotspur* pushed *Hotspur* to equal third with *Alabi*, *Hotspur* then missing out on the silverware on a count-back.

Vacluse Yacht Club ran the racing smoothly and proved to be an excellent venue for the after race gatherings.

## Scratch Results

- 1 *Periwinkle* (Albert Hoggett — Middle Harbour YC)
- 2 *Chocolate Eclare* (Chris Matthews — Middle Harbour YC)
- 3 *Fujitsu Alabi* (Bill Gillett — Middle Harbour YC)

## Handicap Results

- 1 *Hotspur* (Bill Hogan — Sydney Amateur SC)
- 2 *April Showers* (Bob Hearn — Vacluse YC)
- 3 *Riff Raff* (Jim Chambers — Sydney Amateur SC)





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Whilst the NSW Yachting Foundation's inaugural Legends of Sailing dinner was held in March last year, we have not previously reported the nomination of two well known members of the Amateurs as Legends of Sailing for 2000. The award was intended to pay tribute to some 40 of this State's leading sailing personalities. The SASC recipients, Bill Gale and Ian Macdairmid described themselves in the programme for the dinner as follows:

## Bill Gale

**In the beginning:** A family occupation for many generations, with sailing always part of my life since 1930.

### Top five achievements in sailing:

1. The promotion and formation of seven divisions over the past 40 years at the SASC, of which three are still active.
2. Sailing 53 seasons at the SASC in *Ranger*, A1.
3. As Chairman until recently, the promotion of the SASC Gaffers' Day since its inception in 1972 to mark the Centenary of the SASC.
4. Working with other organisations to promote sailing of gaff-rigged boats.
5. Being handicapper for 40 years at the SASC — and, I believe, still having some friends.

**My most memorable moment in sailing:** Winning my and (so far) only SASC Gold Medal in Division 2 in the 1968-69 season on scratch, gaining the winning points in the last race.

**My role model in sailing:** My Father, Cliff Gale, who designed *Ranger*.

## Ian Macdairmid

**In the beginning:** At high school my brother was taken sailing in Manly Juniors with a friend, and I strung along.

### My top five achievements in sailing:

1. Member of 1980 Olympic Yachting Team.
2. World Soling Champion crew, 1982.
3. World J24 Champion crew, 1982.
4. Winning crew in National Championships in 1982 for both Soling and J24, and State championships for Soling.
5. Winner skipper in the 1999 Prince Phillip Cup (Dragon class).

**My most memorable moment in sailing:** Winning the 1982 Soling World Championships.

**My role model in sailing:** Mark Bethwaite, one of the best yachtsman the world has ever seen.



There can hardly be a greater contrast than between the replica of the seventeenth century Dutch East India Company (VOC) vessel *Duyfken* and P&O Cruises' latest ship, the 76,000 gross tons *Aurora*.

Visiting the Australian National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour for a limited period, *Duyfken* was built in Fremantle by the Duyfken 1606 Replica Foundation at a cost of \$3.7 million to help tell the story of Australia's first recorded European visitors. The original *Duyfken* was built in about 1598 and visited the western shores of Cape York under the command of Willem Janzoon.

Since 8 April 2000 the replica has been retracing this historic voyage including a visit to Indonesia and there are plans to take the 24 metre ship to The Netherlands for the celebrations marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the VOC.

The cruise liner *Aurora* visited Sydney for the first time in February. Built in Germany at a cost of about \$550 million, the ship is 270 m long and 32.2 m wide. Diesel electric power gives the ship a service speed of 24 knots. The maximum 2,000 passengers are accommodated in 920 cabins (of which 406 have private balconies) over ten decks.

*Duyfken* at the Australian National Maritime Museum (left), and *Aurora* at the Circular Quay passenger terminal (below).



***THE AMATEURS***

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

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The prizegiving ceremony for the 165th Australia Day Regatta was held at the Sydney Town Hall on Wednesday 14 March. The photograph (by Peter Campbell) shows Philip and Mary Kinsella with Australia Day Regatta Management Committee member John Jeremy and the SASC Centenary of Federation Trophy (Sainora Medal) won by Philip in *Sylvia* on 26 January.

## ALL IN THE FAMILY

The Flying 11 Class is alive and well in NSW with about 90 boats facing the starter's gun on the final heats of the NSW State Championships on 17 and 18 February. When was the last time you hit the start with 90 odd boats in a one-design regatta?

Will and Andrew Chapman, sailing *Two Boys in a Toy* are sons of Peter (*Spectre*) and grandsons of Russ (Saturday starter, *Captain Amora*). They excelled in their first season in the class and in a boat together by taking first place on handicap in the championships. Their win came as a result of winning the start of the last heat and hanging in to finish fourth over the line just behind the three class rock-stars. Congratulations Will and Andrew!

Very old Gaff rigged Heron (ply)  
"can be sailed — complete"  
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## NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new members:

Adam Addario	David Cox
Donald de Boer	David Drover
Denzyl Hendrickse	Craig Mitchell
Paul Ross	Robert Shaw
David W. Smith	Rod Weir
Michael Wynter	

## TUESDAY TWILIGHTS

The Tuesday twilight series ended on 6 March and was closely contested, with the final positions being decided on count-back. There were sixteen entries this year, although only nine boats were regular starters. Winners of individual races were *Clewless?*, *Hoodoo*, *Classic Blue*, *U2* and *The Amateurs*. Overall, the series was won by *Clewless?* with *Hoodoo* second and *Classic Blue* third. Congratulations to the winners — we look forward to seeing you all at the starting line again in 2002.

## MORE COFFS NEWS

Whilst Sean Langman's big red boat achieved high-profile results in the 2001 Strathfield Pittwater to Coffs Harbour race (*SASC News* February 2001), other SASC boats also did very well. *Farr Horizons* (Ivan Resnekov) was seventh on PHS overall in the race north, second in PHS Division C and took second place in the Coffs Series. *She's Apples Two* (Max Prentice) came third in PHS Division B.

*Aroona* (Paul Berkemeier and Duncan Hill) came second in PHS Division D. Although 29 boats retired because of the rough conditions, Paul and Duncan did not realise it was exceptional, keeping the No. 1 up all the way. A dead patch for a few hours outside Coffs Harbour robbed *Aroona* of a convincing victory — but at least there was still ice in the cooler for the rum and coke.

## NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next *SASC News* will be the June 2001 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Wednesday 17 May 2001. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



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The photographs in this edition of *From the Archives* are not very old, but we thought they should be published for the record. Bob Lawler's *Firetel* was missing from her well-known position just off the Club for some months last year undergoing a very thorough refit. She was re-launched near the Roseville Bridge as these two photos show.

Members wondering just why the crane lifted *Firetel* over, rather than around, the trees should ask Bob Lawler!





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