

offshore

YACHTING

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

SPEED BUILD

HOT REGATTA FORM HEADING
INTO THE WINTER CHILL

BOX SEAT

JIMMY SPITHILL ON
CARVING A NEW CHAPTER
IN AMERICA'S CUP HISTORY

MODEL CITIZENS

STYLING PROWESS AROUNDS IN THE LATEST
OFFERINGS FROM EUROPE'S BIG YARDS

REALITY CHECK

GUIDE TO THE BEST WET WEATHER
GEAR WHEN YOU REALLY NEED IT

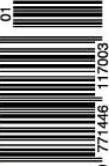
SIXTH SENSE

SEAN LANGMAN REVEALS THE
SECRETS TO BETTER HELMING

JUN/JUL 2017

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JUNE / JULY 2017



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W

ith a redevelopment now in motion, it is a hugely exciting time for our club. To be carried out over the coming months, this work is the first stage in a reinvigoration plan that will bring new opportunities for a stronger and more durable future.

The tide has changed and the outlook for our club is extremely bright. Stage one of our building work, which will see the internal redevelopment of the annex building, is now underway. The outcome will be new changing rooms for members and sailors, as well as new offices to house the whole club administration – management, sailing, marina, commercial, communications, finance, membership services and YSA teams.

To cover working requirements during the refurbishment works, two 40-foot shipping containers have been placed on the hardstand: one for storage and the other for our onsite shipwright. They sit alongside two demountables that house temporary offices for the Pacific Sailing School and our maintenance and marina offices.

We have planned to keep disruption to an absolute minimum over the coming months while the work is undertaken. During this stage of the work, most members and guests will still be able to enjoy the club's facilities as access to the annex is not required to participate in the club's activities, dining or functions.

An enormous effort has been made by a number of individuals to get the approvals and contracts for the works done. In particular, I acknowledge and thank Vice Commodore Paul Billingham and his committee, and also CEO Karen Grega in getting the club development ready. This has happened at the same time as a very significant governance reform, led by the board, which is ongoing.

While the club's reputation in Australia is unparalleled, and our development work will only strengthen this, it has been enhanced in Asia with the recent evolution of the live broadcast of the start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

We were invited to address the International Boat Show in Shanghai recently, and I accompanied the club's



I wish all participants fair weather and winds for a thoroughly enjoyable series, and I thank Land Rover for their strong and valuable support.



CEO Karen Grega to China where we took in sixteen clubs, one regatta and several meetings with two government departments in four cities over six days.

The high regard in which our club is held in China is in no doubt, and through the many media opportunities that reach vast audiences, we have strengthened our position. Please read on within the magazine for more on our achievements during the trip.

Meanwhile, our focus on development does not rest with the interest from overseas. A number of new members have joined the club, and I remind existing members to keep an eye out for them as well as other who would like to join us in sailing. Our new members are already discussing ways to contribute to the activities of the club, and that includes planning the celebration of our 75th year and the 75th instalment of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Core to the various requests from China and elsewhere is our legacy of bluewater racing that continues to define the club. This is exemplified by the great interest in the Sydney Noumea Yacht Race 2018, with potential sponsors at an advanced stage of discussion. Meanwhile we've also seen greater attention for a 2019 Auckland Sydney race, and plans are moving forward for the club to host annual TP52 regattas.

Over the past few weeks we have also seen sensational weather for the commencement of the Land Rover Winter Series with the Opening Ladies Day and a strong fleet of 100 boats on following Sundays. Through the upcoming races and months, I wish all participants fair weather and winds for a thoroughly enjoyable series, and I thank Land Rover for their strong and valuable support.

JOHN MARKOS
Commodore CYCA

A LEGEND IS REBORN

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34
NEW



NOMINATED 2017



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Those of us employing various strategies to catch the early morning live action from the impossibly blue waters of Bermuda's Great Sound have been rewarded with absorbing and exciting racing.

Despite the purists' lament, the America's Cup has always been a contest about technology and design. In 1851 boat speed under sail was paramount – delivering history changing commercial and military advantages to its possessors.

The 35th America's Cup is also more than ever about visions of the future, and the relevancy of the contest, which inevitably carry implications for sailing.

The once clear lines between defender and challengers are shifting, with Jimmy Spithill, Tom Slingsby and the other Aussies aboard Oracle Team USA racing in the first phase of the America's Cup qualifiers that will determine just who will line-up against them in the first America's Cup Match race set down for Saturday 17 June.

The fact there are so many Australians taking part in the Cup, and we lack our own team does rankle, but as Jimmy Spithill explains in our interview with him, our sailing diaspora fully commit themselves to the relentless pursuit of success, improvement and refinement no matter whose AC gear they're wearing. Jimmy also gives us an insight into the brutal physicality of the ACC boats, and the sheer physics of doing 44 knots in 10 knots of wind.

Just getting ten knots up on the displays in recent CYCA Winter Series races has proved a challenge but tuning for the Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Race on July 29 is well and truly underway. *Wild Oats XI* will make a welcome return to offshore racing, and faces a duel all the way up the coast with Peter Harburg's new *Black Jack 100*, (Neville Crichton's *Alfa Romeo* in a former life).

If you are thinking it's possibly time for new wet weather gear, don't wait for the first wave smacking into the rail to galvanise your decision. Fabric technology is constantly evolving and improving, the new stuff is very good and our technical feature showcases the latest kit.

Technology is also delivering an impressive crop of offerings from the European yards. Kevin Green seizes the opportunity to test the space, comfort and refinement in these slick hulls which leave racing boats of quite recent vintage, in their wakes.

In From the Vault Michael Troy recounts a brilliant sailing career with Gordon Ingate. Wingnut's boat handling and tactical skills are still sharp enough at 91 to ensure he's the current Australian Dragon champion, putting younger aspirants to shame.

And, if you want to steer and race your boat faster and more efficiently, or simply want to understand how to helm better, then you'll find Sean Langman's tips invaluable.

See you on the water.



SCOTT ALLE
Editor



offshore YACHTING

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TICKET TO RIDE

It was two wins from a possible two for the CYCA teams representing Australia in the World Match Racing Tour (WMRT) in Miami USA, with the YSA's HARRY PRICE and EVAN WALKER skippering their respective boats to the top prizes.

In this first to three-point series, Walker convincingly took the first. In the second match, the team won the start and was ahead again. As the pair came down the second run, the gap was closing with each cross before Price dealt a penalty and Walker was forced to slow, giving the win to the Down Under racing team.

Due to time limitations, the race committee made the final a sudden-death, single-race match-up. Price was able to build an unassailable lead early on against his American challenger Nevin Snow, who never convincingly closed the gap. The CYCA teams are not new to meeting Snow in match racing finals, having done battle with him in several Governor's Cup Regattas.

"We're ready to step it up in Marstrand. We're pretty happy with the performance here so want to keep this flow going and see how we fair against the big boys," he commented after the first event.

With one trophy in the bag, the focus turned to the second regatta in Miami, the Coconut Grove Cup, where Price finished the round robin series in one of the top two spots. Despite their strong run of form, Price's team went down in the quarter-final leaving Evan Walker as the CYCA and Australian representative.

Walker cruised into the final with a 2-0 semi-final win, securing his team a spot in the World Match Racing Tour Championship level event, Match Cup USA, in the process.

As was the case with the Miami Match Cup, The Coconut Grove Cup final was to be sailed in a sudden-death style, first to one-point match. Walker's American opponent Nevin Snow won the start and led the Australian around the track. On the last beat the race appeared to be over as Walker trailed up until the final cross before the last mark when he made his surprise gain. From out in front, the team glided around the final mark and reached home to victory.

The tour now heads to Europe for the World Tour level event the Gothenburg Match Cup, with the next Championship level event the Match Cup Sweden. ↓ wmrt.com

The four-day WMRT events in Miami saw ten teams compete in the M32 catamaran across two match-racing competitions (the Miami Match Cup and the Coconut Grove Cup), with silverware and qualification for future rounds up for grabs.

First up for the spoils was the CYCA's Harry Price. After leading the qualifying session during the first two regatta days, Price had a series of losses at the end of the qualifying series, but kept his calm when it mattered most to sweep through to the knockout stages and clinch the title. The win also earned his team a ticket to the upcoming World Match Racing Tour Championship level event, the Match Cup Sweden, taking place in Marstrand in July.

Price's Sydney-based Down Under Racing team, was one of the more experienced teams at the event. This was their third WMRT qualifier in the M32, and after progressing through qualifying, the team faced off against their local rivals, fellow YSA graduate Evan Walker and his team KA Match.

PACESETTERS
The CYCA's Harry Price performed when the pressure was on to win the Miami Match Cup.

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ABOVE & BEYOND



In August 2016 Range Rover Sport took on its ultimate challenge – the Inferno downhill ski course in Mürren, Switzerland. Unlike the skiers, however, the vehicle had to overcome 14.9km of sheer ice, sharp rocks, thick mud, wet grass and asphalt.

landrover.com/downhillchallenge

In just over a decade, the number of sailing clubs in China has grown from one to more than 300. Fuelled by a new government commitment to sport and recreation for all (in contrast to a previous focus on elite performance), the appetite for sailing is growing at a pace previously unseen.

While such an exponential increase in an interest in sailing could come with the risk of skipping vital steps, on a recent visit to China CYCA Commodore John Markos noted that many clubs are not just aware of the pitfalls, but are looking to avoid them by learning from the best.

Joined by the CYCA's CEO Karen Grega on his fact-finding mission, Markos gave a presentation at the China International Boat Show in Shanghai and, on a hectic schedule visited 16 clubs and associations, attended one regatta, and held meetings with government departments in four cities over six days.

He recounts with *Offshore* the trip's highlights and the deepening ties between the Club and various clubs and officials in China.

CHINA MISSION

What was it that put China on the agenda for your recent overseas trip on behalf of the CYCA?

In 2015 we saw the first Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race entry from China with *Ark323*, and with that came the inaugural publication of the Notice of Race in Mandarin, while last year *Ubox* finished third overall in their first attempt. It was a clear sign that China's intent for greater participation in bluewater racing was growing.

This led to our invitation, as well as the request for us to present at the International Boat Show. We also felt that both culturally and philosophically, China is a place that must be visited in order to be understood – by increasing our understanding of their needs, we can work toward common ground so both sides can benefit.

Along with general growth in China, the developments within sailing have been exponential, and it is here that we can lend our expertise in youth development, race management and marina operations gained over many decades. We have a huge amount to offer sailing in China where there is a real hunger for our experience, and a very healthy

respect for our club and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Last year the start of the race was watched live in mainland China by an online audience for the first time, aired by the channel LeSports. The same feed was broadcast live on Fox Asia, which boasts 17.7 million subscribers. With figures like that, there is an enormous opportunity to work collaboratively to help build sailing in China, welcome more sailors, and give back to a sport that we are all extremely passionate about.

Could you pick out a couple of highlights from the trip?

We had a few unexpected but positive surprises, and each was a highlight in its own way. The first was the number of youth sailing programs that have started up in a very short period of time. It was terrific to get an in-depth tour of one such training facility in Shenzhen, where it was exciting to see such a big focus on recreational sport. The objective is no longer to simply create the best of the best, but to teach and enjoy the values of sailing and life skills alongside elite development.

At one club we learned that their newly

opened youth sailing academy had attracted 400 students in 12 months – proof of the passion that China is developing for sailing. There is an enormous desire to build the sport, which far exceeded our expectations, and we were left in no doubt that our club is viewed as a hugely successful model of how to do so sustainably. That was particularly rewarding, as were all the conversations surrounding the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and the success enjoyed by our graduates from the Youth Sailing Academy (YSA).

Everywhere we went we were met by groups of sailing fans hoping to catch a glimpse of the Tattersalls Cup. Media opportunities were set up at each stage to discuss the race that was consistently described as yachting's Everest. Over the few days we visited the country, I was interviewed a number of times, which resulted in 78 articles published online reaching 7.6 million people and valued by media analysis at over AU\$700,000. That alone is a fantastic return on the journey and

MAINLAND TOUR

Clockwise from below:
The Official Opening, China Australia Sailing Seminar in Shenzhen; John shaking hands with Mr. Wei Jun (Chinese sailing pioneer, skipper of Shuguanghaiyang) – First skipper of a sailing team competing in the RSHYR; Main map: Presenting the Tattersall's Cup at Shanghai Yacht Club.



paid testimony to having the trophy travel outside of Australia for the first time.

How do you see the relationship with China growing in the future?

From the many officials, skippers and crew we met on our trip, the healthy respect for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race really stood out. They realise that it is not something a team should enter into lightly, and the need for preparation, skills development, and training in sea safety, is enormous. These are areas in which we can support and guide Chinese sailors.

We've already seen this happening. Last year we had our highest ever contingent of yachts entered from Asia with two from China, and one from Hong Kong, Japan and South Korea respectively. In this regard, the race is a platform we can

use to help sailors build their skills, and through their involvement, we can create opportunities to spread the message of our club into new markets. Indeed, I am currently being pressed to identify appropriate members who would be available to coach the new teams.

Sailing and racing is our shared passion, and through this common interest we find common goals –the development of young sailors, the growth of sailing, and the enjoyment of the social and recreational aspects of the sport. While we may not share the same language, our love of sailing supersedes all, and we look forward to growing together and strengthening ties with valuable partners. ⚓

#sailinghasnoborders



"We have a huge amount to offer sailing in China where there is a real hunger for our experience, and a very healthy respect for our club and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race."

JOHN MARKOS

BOX SEAT

Big asymmetric kites straining, the Clipper fleet heads for the open sea.



N

ow in its eleventh edition, twelve 70-foot Clipper Race boats, packed with approximately 250 crew, will take transverse the iconic route to from Sydney heads to Hobart this year as part of their 40,000-nautical mile adventure.

Race Director Mark Light is already looking forward to the rare challenge in December, "Taking part in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is the only time in our eleven-month long event where teams get to test themselves against non-Clipper Race competitors like this, so excitement for Skippers and Crew is always huge."

The unique offering of the Clipper Race, where no previous sailing experience is necessary and the crews are safely guided by a fully qualified skipper, means a new group of ordinary, everyday people will experience one of the toughest offshore races in the world.

HOBART BOUND

The 2017 – 18 version of the Clipper Round the World Race will again incorporate the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, an opportunity for the Clipper crews to pit themselves against the Hobart fleet, and the inevitable challenges on the trip south.

Light added, "We make sure that all our competing Race Crew know that the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is one of the world's classic offshore races and to get the opportunity to participate in such a race that also counts towards the overall Clipper Race Trophy is a very, very special experience.

"As it is a relatively short race compared to others in the Clipper Race calendar we stress the importance of getting a good start and keeping the intensity up until that finish line is crossed in Hobart."

Due to tie-up at CYCA in December, the

Clipper Race fleet adds a refreshing addition to the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race with a huge presence and colour at the dock in the days leading up to the race start.

The Clipper fleet will depart Liverpool on Sunday 20 August, with stops in South America, Cape Town and Western Australia, before arriving in Sydney.

A Clipper training entry, the 20.7 metre Clipper Ventures 5, took part in the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart, taking just over four days to complete the journey. ↓
clipperroundtheworld.com

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SILVER SEASCAPE
Ariki Tai bound for Port Davey.
Right below: Denis Doyle spent several unhurried weeks exploring the anchorages and pristine waterways that make southern Tasmania a unique cruising destination within a few days easy sailing of Hobart.

BEYOND THE HORIZON

The CYCA Cruising members are an intrepid bunch. Venturing to remote and beautiful locations, they employ their considerable sailing skills and knowledge to cross challenging stretches of water such as Bass Strait – confidently and safely. As DENIS DOYLE recounts, a recent sojourn exploring Southern Tasmania’s many anchorages highlights the good reasons to take your time on your way back from Hobart.

The CYCA boasts a proud cruising history. The embryonic Sydney Hobart Yacht Race quickly grew out of a family cruise proposed by renown marine artist Jack Earl. (A born adventurer, Earl sailed his ketch *Kathleen Gillett* on the second circumnavigation of the world by an Australian yacht in 1947–8.) And it was very much in this spirit that the Cruising Committee embarked on the fifth edition of the CYCA Rendezvous Cruise Sydney to Hobart in February.

Coinciding with the MyState Wooden Boat Festival – the biggest of its kind in the southern hemisphere – the plan was to spend several unhurried weeks exploring the anchorages within a few days easy sailing of Hobart.



SOUTHERN BEARING

At various times during January, 12 boats including five participating in the festival – *Anitra V*, *Smoky Cape* (Earl's last boat), *Lydenne*, *Flemingo*, and *Kintail* – departed Sydney.

While some unsettled weather conditions were experienced on the southern leg, daily forecasts from Roger 'Clouds' Badham helped everyone find the very short windows prevailing this year. Having experienced boisterous conditions while crossing the Strait, most boats reported that it became far more manageable as they travelled down the east coast of Tasmania.

Lynne and I were aboard *Ariki Tai* ('Chieftain of the Sea' in Maori), a 52-foot aluminium cutter we acquired in August 2016. We have enjoyed some serious cruising on *Ariki Tai*, including Lord Howe Island, but on this trip we planned to investigate more of the pristine bays and waterways that make southern Tasmania such a unique cruising destination.

SCENIC PASSAGE

Following the now traditional Spirit of Cruising dinner at the Shippies, the next day we headed into the Southern Ocean, taking full advantage of the relatively stable weather in February and March. We overnighted in the idyllic, protected Recherche Bay, which is home to the southern-most communities in Australia, and where the battered French ships under the command of Admiral Bruni d'Entrecasteaux found respite in 1792.

Heading north-west for Port Davey, we unfurled the jib, tucked in a reef in a fresh southerly wind, and were soon sailing past Maatsuyker Island and the breathtaking scenery to make Port Davey early afternoon. We spent over a week in its 18,000 hectares of diverse marine ecosystems that stretch inland for more than 20 kilometres to the north and east, and boast kelp forests and

abundant seafood, but could have lingered much longer.

Having explored Hannant Inlet, Bathurst Channel, Claytons Corner, Iola Bay and Spain Bay, we anchored in Payne Bay in preparation for the trip up the reaches of the spectacularly wild Davey River in the Southwest National Park.

A truly remote area of great tranquillity, it is accessed by dinghy over a rock bar at its entrance, and a five-mile long winding passage through marshes before reaching the Davey Gorge and pristine wilderness.

Tasman Island with a stopover in Wineglass Bay and met up with *Anitra V*, now owned by Philip Brown. While waiting for the weather window to cross Bass Strait back to the mainland, we were again supported by the CYCA-sponsored weather forecasts from 'Clouds', and kept in touch via HF and sat-phone email, which has become very popular and works well in remote areas.

It was a quick, uneventful trip across the paddock, but the whole cruise left us eager to sample more of Tasmania's breathtaking scenery.

"Heading north-west for Port Davey, we unfurled the jib, tucked in a reef in a fresh southerly wind, and were soon sailing past Maatsuyker Island and the breathtaking scenery to make Port Davey early afternoon"

HOMeward BOUND

Reluctantly we returned to Hobart and civilisation, rounding South West and South East Capes back into the channel in the wake of legendary explorers Tasman, Cook, Bligh, La Perouse and Flinders, before returning to the Derwent Sailing Squadron to prepare for the return to Sydney.

Other cruisers had sought out different anchorages and experiences including Port Arthur, Bruny Island, the Huon River, Port Cygnet and the d'Entrecasteaux Channel. Boats from many different clubs including the CYCA, RSY, SASC, MHYC, CCCA and SASC and veterans of the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race all became part of an ever-growing cruising community.

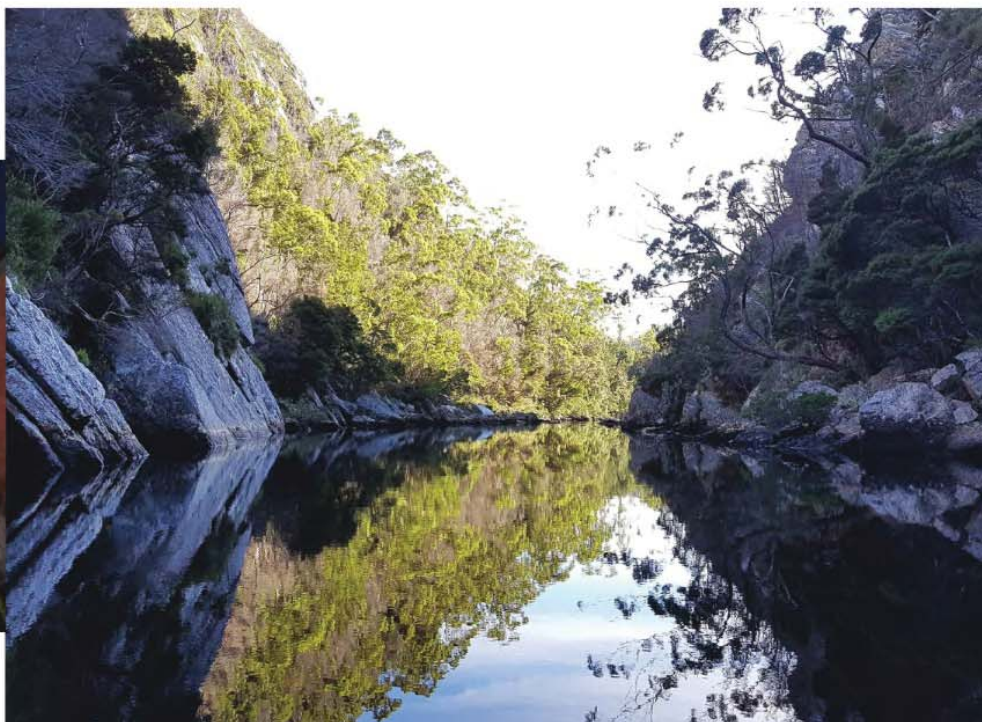
Finally casting-off from Hobart in a fresh south to south-westerly, we rounded

The CYCA founders were eager to imbue "sailors with a love of cruising and the seamanship that goes with cruising". Values and a legacy that are worth preserving and expanding – and that were embodied in this year's Rendezvous Cruise.

The CYCA's Cruising Committee is committed to growing cruising within and outside the club, and held an information night on 6 June that included a session on Heavy Weather Sailing.

There was an emphasis on handling a modern yacht in heavy or storm weather, through presentations from Wendy Tuck, Sean Langman and Ed Psaltis.

The Cruising Committee would like to thank the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia for its support, and looks forward to hosting more events in the future. ⚓





Summer Series Prize Giving

In April this year, 160 guests packed in to the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia for the club's annual Summer Series Prize Giving. Vice Commodore Paul Billingham and Rear Commodore Noel Cornish officiated proceedings and congratulated the prize winners on their successful summer sailing campaigns. Special thanks from the evening went to the hugely supportive sponsors Club Marine, Grant Thornton and Makers Mark.



1. 2017 Great Veterans Race. 2. Rear Commodore, Noel Cornish thanks the CYCA race officials. 3. *UBS Wild Thing*, who finished second overall in the Club Marine Wednesday Twilight Summer Series. 4. Colin Wilson of *Never A Dull Moment* and Vice Commodore Paul Billingham. 5. Phil Tomkins of *Next* with Vice Commodore Paul Billingham. 6. Stunning sailing in the Great Veterans Race. 7. Paul Clitheroe of *Balance* with Vice Commodore Paul Billingham. 8. 2017 Great Veterans Race. 9. Land Rover Winter Series – Opening Ladies Day. 10. Rear Commodore, Noel Cornish officiated the proceedings. 11. Greg Mason and Barb Maunsell of *Sinewave* with Vice Commodore Paul Billingham.



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CYCA Blue Water Pointscore Series 2017 – 2018

1. Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race Saturday 29 July 2017
2. Flinders Islet Race Saturday 16 September 2017
3. Newcastle Bass Island Race Friday 13 October 2017
4. Cabbage Tree Island Race Friday 10 November 2017
5. Bird Island Race Saturday 2 December 2017
6. Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race Tuesday 26 December 2017

*Dates and destinations subject to change.
Discounted berthing is available for a limited amount of interstate and international yachts.
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SUNSET AND SUNRISE

It is guaranteed that I will have a camera in my hand. at sunrise and sunset. The golden hour aboard *Brindabella* in the 2010 Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race was epic. Bowman Charles 'Chuck' Kosecki performs acrobatics while adjusting the spinnaker sheet.



A silhouette of a person climbing a rope on a sailboat at sunset. The person is positioned in the upper center of the frame, with their body angled towards the right. They are holding onto a rope that runs horizontally across the frame. The background is a vibrant sunset sky, transitioning from a deep blue at the top to a bright orange and yellow near the horizon. The ocean is visible at the bottom of the frame, with dark blue waves. A large, dark sail is visible in the upper left corner. The overall mood is adventurous and dramatic.

CRAIG GREENHILL'S STUNNING NEWS AND SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY HAS TWICE EARNED HIM JOURNALISM'S HIGHEST ACCOLADE, A WALKLEY AWARD. HE'S ALSO THE ONLY PHOTOGRAPHER WHO REGULARLY PULLS ON THE SEABOOTS TO CAPTURE THE OCEAN'S MANY MOODS.

IN THE FRAME



WORKING THE PUMPS
Nigel 'Professor' Steffensen on Volvo 60 *DHL Daily Telegraph* during my first Rolex Sydney Hobart in 2007. My lifetime dream came true when my newspaper assigned me to photograph the bluewater classic from aboard the competing yacht. Putting me through eight weeks of big boat training, I thought I was prepared, but nothing could have prepared me for the sled ride where we reached 31.8 knots of boat speed. Smashing through the swell, I was sure we would crash during the night. We survived and held off *Hugo Boss* for eleventh over the line.



HAVE CAMERA, WILL TRAVEL
Being both a professional photographer and a sailor has brought me many opportunities. Being invited to join the crew of *Southern Excellence II* enabled me to capture the team's offshore campaign for 2014. This image was taken standing on the boom during my fifth Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

ONBOARD PHOTOGRAPHER
With me onboard, the crew of Volvo 70 *Southern Excellence II* didn't need to take selfies. I took advantage of the light conditions at sunset while heading north, as Bérénice 'Bernie' Charrez turned fashion model for Zhik during the Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race 2014. Sunset is often the calm before the storm. During the night I put away the camera and do my bit to keep the yacht going as fast as we can.



BRING IT ON

The 2010 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race almost ended my offshore career. *Brindabella* was knocked out of the race after 8-metre waves broke over the boat, ripping our mainsail and eventually forcing us to retire to Eden. With floating floorboards downstairs and without a change of dry clothes, I went hypothermic. I declared that I wouldn't go offshore racing again, but what didn't kill me, made me stronger. I now enjoy heavy weather. When it hits, I just smile and say, "Bring it on!"





EPIC SEASON

Left: As racing crew for the 180' schooner *Elena of London*, I was offered the Wally tender as my camera boat during the 2013 Les Voiles de Saint Tropez. With a racing crew of 35, and a yacht that flew no less than seven sails, this was the most epic season of racing. Built and launched in 2008, the yacht is a replica, and races in the Royal Classics of the French Mediterranean and in the Bahamas. My biggest challenge was when Malcolm 'Shrek' Banks offered me the role as main trimmer, calling trim on eight sails. I'll leave that to the pros next time.

TOUGHEST RACE

Below Left: In 2013 I joined *Mission Performance*, Clipper Round the World competitors for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. Most of the crew had very little racing experience, but they faced the challenges that hit them hard with determination and courage. The 50+ knots and 7-metre seas punished them as we raced down the coast of Tasmania. After sailing from England, many of the crew said the 630-mile race was their toughest challenge of the circumnavigation.

SUDDEN HALT

Right: Racing aboard IRC3-winning yacht *Oiltanking Juno*, the 2013 Rolex Middle Sea Race came to a complete stop when 80 of the 109 starters came together in a void of wind. On the second day of the race, the fleet effectively had a restart, with each yacht searching for their own pocket of wind in the Mediterranean off the coast of Sicily, Italy.



As the AC Round Robin series gets underway, what are you focussing on?

The big goal for the practice racing series has been to work on the reliability of the boat, the functionality, and the efficiency of the systems. Obviously we've been checking where our competitors are, and working on our time-management systems: when our day starts, when we get out there. Each minute counts, but we're also in this relentless pursuit of increasing boat speed. There have been long days of up to eight hours on the water. When you are sailing boats like this, you are pushing it. We've put in a lot of hours and we've definitely learnt a lot, even in the past week. We haven't stopped our development program, but it's just as important to go through the race situations.

What's the main difference this time around?

The obvious difference is that there are five challengers, but you could argue that isn't such a change because we're only going to face one team. The fact is they all have resources and money, which means the challenger that comes out of the competition will be battle-hardened, and we will have the fight of our lives. So that's something we have to be very aware of, but that also motivates everyone on Oracle Team USA.

Some commentators are ranking you only third in the form guide, behind Artemis and Emirates Team New Zealand. How do you feel about that?

[Laughs.] I think that's good. I'm happy to be the underdog. I'm surprised they've given us a such a high rating. It's awesome. I just hope we can give the others a decent race.

Who do think is shaping up as your main rival, or is in the best form at this stage?

It's hard to say as it will change, but based on what we've seen and on the practice so far, the Swedish (Artemis), the Japanese (Team Softbank Japan), and Team New Zealand (Emirates Team New Zealand) are one step above the French and the British.

How critical do you think actual match-racing experience will be? Or will it come down to executing manoeuvres?

In the (America's Cup) game today you have to have everything. You can't just be good at match racing, or fleet racing, or foiling. You've got to have every single area. You also have to be an incredibly high-level athlete just to sail these things. A lot of my friends are racing car drivers and there are parallels. You're at the forefront of technology with these boats, and you are seeing just what's possible in a boat that's heavily undermanned.

What are you thinking about when you set-up for each leg? How much is reflex, and how much is strategy?

Some of it has to be reflex, but we're aiming to be a step or two ahead at any given point on the course, and to anticipate. That's not just driving the boat; every single person has to do that. There are going to be times when it's not possible to communicate what's going to happen.

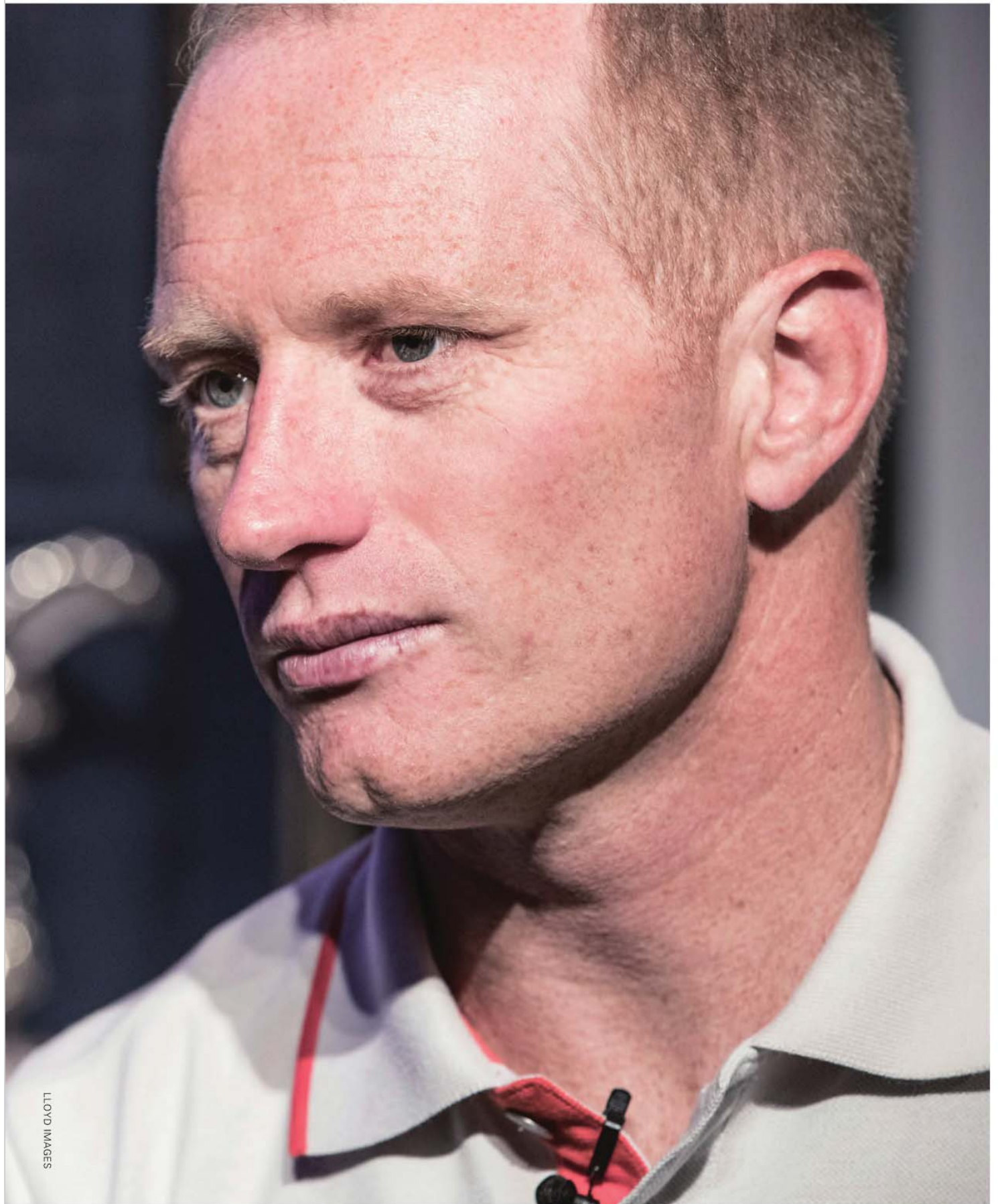
What about the technical developments such as the pedal-grinding positions on Emirates Team New Zealand? Aren't you considering putting in something similar for the tactician (Tom Slingsby)?

We're always open to trying new things.

SUPREME COMPETITOR
Jimmy Spithill at the America's Cup 2017-2021 framework agreement press conference in London.

MATCH FIT

Jimmy Spithill is again revelling in his natural environment, putting it all on the line at the sport's pinnacle of competition, the America's Cup.



Everyone has looked at the bike, and that's because it's an obvious change. The media, and especially the Kiwi media, like to make a big deal about it, but for us it's not that big a deal. Back in the 70s, the Swedish team were the first ones to bring it in, and I think the big Kiwi boat may have had it as well, so it's not new. Frank Cammas (skipper of Team Groupama), had it in one of his big trimarans that went around the world, so it's not the first time in a multi-hull either. We're always looking for any edge we can get, so we're going to try everything. When you see us in Race 1 of the America's Cup, that may not be the final configuration. We'll continue to develop the whole way to the end.

That's a good point. Things are constantly evolving, and will continue to even through the America's Cup Match?

For sure. I think you see that in a lot of high-end car and bike racing. In Formula 1 and Moto GP, the set-ups change the entire way through. You can be fastest in the practice session, you can win pole position, but that doesn't mean you win the race. They are constantly changing their set-ups and that's the attitude you need to take.

What would you equate the physicality of doing a current America's Cup race to?

These boats are brutal, physically. It's basically like starting a race sprinting on a treadmill then the elevation just keeps going up, and if you slow down you're going to get thrown off. The guys get to the exhaustion stage really quickly. There's never been anywhere near this kind of athletic effort in the cup before. In the fitness tests, the records the grinders are setting are mind-blowing. We brought in Ky Hurst, one of Australia's best-ever surf ironmen. He's a machine, he really is a freak. But a lot of the teams have got a guy like that involved – rowers, cyclists, and Artemis have an Olympic gold-medallist kayaker. When you get a champion at that level from another sport coming in, it raises the intensity.

What about the helming experience? Is it a bit like steering a (foiling) Moth on massive steroids?

Some of the principles are similar to the Moth. The problem is that you don't have that kind of autopilot set-up like the Moth has. You have to rely on the power from the guys onboard and you're not allowed to use feedback logic like you would on aircraft if you were going to fly control systems. Any little adjustment, or movement, whether it be the wing or the foil, affects a whole bunch of other stuff. It's a very, very demanding boat to sail because it's very unstable. If you can get it right, if you can pull these manoeuvres off, the rewards are incredible. It's the hardest, yet the most satisfying sailing I've done, and I think all the other guys would say the same.



NATURAL SYNERGY
Jimmy Spithill
at the helm in
New York City.

How much is intuition and how much is by the numbers?

I think it's like anything, once you get the hours under your belt, and that goes for everyone onboard, you get the ability to start to get your head out of the boat. But there are times you have to be so focussed, and put the blinkers on, just trying to keep the thing on its feet. You definitely need some key numbers, but as time goes on it becomes more instinctive.

Do you expect we'll see more collisions like the one between Land Rover BAR and Emirates Team New Zealand?

[Laughs.] From Ben (Sir Ben Ainslie), probably. It's disappointing, especially in practice racing to do that. Clearly he could have avoided it. These boats are right on the edge. It's like the best racing-car drivers in the world still crash. If you want to finish first, you've got to make it over the line.

What do you say to the critics who say the America's Cup isn't a true reflection of the sport?

Like it or not, to a large degree it is a contest of technology. There are sports that haven't evolved, and they get left behind. Who I want to hear from is the next generation, the kids, what do they think, what do they want to do? If there's a Laser sitting at the

dock or a foiling Moth, I can guarantee you what the kid is going to jump on.

You love to compete and to race, you must be relishing the next month?

That's what we all live for. That's why we're in here early and stay late. You don't want to let your teammates down. In Race 1, when you're in that start box and the adrenalin is running high, it takes you completely out of your comfort zone, but that's when you learn the most about yourself.

What have you enjoyed most about the lead-up to this America's Cup?

Just the development of these boats. The other day we were out in ten knots of wind and we did 44 knots in a bear away. That's incredible. These boats are doing more than four times the speed of the wind, and none of us thought that would be possible. The design, engineering, boatbuilding; it's just such a cool time to be involved with the cup, and the resurgence of sailing. Prior to the last one, unless you were sailor no-one really cared, or you couldn't really watch it on TV. Now we have fans that come up to us that know nothing about sailing, and they're into it and the kids are into it. ⚓

Jimmy Spithill spoke to Editor, Scott Alle courtesy of Red Bull.



**TRIM. PUMP. PUMP.
TRIM. PUMP. PUMP. PUMP.
HOIST. TRIM. PUMP.
RETRIEVE. PUMP.
REPEAT.**

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SPRING FANCIES

THE EUROPEAN SPRING LAUNCHING SEASON IS WHEN THE BIG YARDS PULL BACK THE COVERS FROM THEIR LATEST DESIGNS, AND PUT THEM THROUGH THEIR PACES. WE DISPATCHED KEVIN GREEN TO SCRUTINISE THE GLEAMING GRP EMERGING FROM THE SHEDS, AND INVESTIGATE WHAT'S IN THE PIPELINE.

Business is booming again in Europe as seen by a strong Düsseldorf Boat Show where new models abounded from the big production builders. Some of these yachts made it to the springtime waters on the Med, while others were still in the shed, so I tried to visit both.

Major trends include strong growth in the multihull market. The approximately 1,000 units built annually (80 percent sailing and 20 per cent motorised) have created a global industry worth 450 million Euros. For the monohulls, especially cruisers, there is a trend toward larger yachts. There is also a trend to increase the luxurious aspect of them as builders strive to differentiate themselves in a competitive market.

French builders such as Dufour are launching a new 63, while over at Beneteau, they engaged superyacht stylists to help develop its Oceanis 62. But Jeanneau stole a march on everyone two years ago with its 64, which has sold an incredible 60 hulls. In La Rochelle, specialist bluewater yard Amel will shortly splash

its brand new Amel 50 sloop. Hanse has recently announced a 588, while over in Italy the performance cruiser Solaris 55 is described as a new benchmark.

Elsewhere, the Bavaria C57 premiered at Düsseldorf. Bavaria's reaction to the growth of catamaran sales was, wisely, to buy a leading company, Nautitech, which has been successful, particularly in the healthy sales of the new Nautitech models (the Open 40 and Open 46).

Improved detailing on these largely production yachts is making life difficult for the semi-custom builders, but some are successfully fighting back.

CNB in Bordeaux, for example, is launching a new 66 model, using semi-production techniques to reduce costs. This has already proved successful for them with the 76 model that has been a steady seller during its three years, while six of the new 66 hulls are on order.

On the production performance side, new offerings include the Elan GT5, Beneteau's upcoming Figaro 3 and Jeanneau's 3200R2, while other niche cruiser-racers racking up numbers include the revamped Dehlers.

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new European yacht? Get ready to hoist your sails
and let the adventure begin, already.

KEVIN GREEN



MODEL Beneteau Figaro 3
DESIGNER VPLP
LOA 10.85 metres
BEAM 3.4 metres
DRAFT 2.48 metres
ENGINE 21 hp
FUEL TBC
WATER TBC
SAIL AREA 70 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 2,900 kilograms
BALLAST 1,100 kilograms
PRICE Euro 200,000



BENETEAU FIGARO 3

I managed to sneak a peek at the in-production Figaro 3 during April. Beneteau showed me its factory outside Nantes, but this was no ordinary factory – it was the old JTA Yard where Jeanneau developed some amazing race boats, and not to forget the first-ever, fully infused hull. Along the walls were pictures of illustrious winning sailors such as the great and late Florence Arthaud. Aboard her Groupe Pierre Ier trimaran in 1990, Florence Arthaud completed an incredible race beating all the men. She finished ahead of Fleury Michon and RMO. It was a triple win for Jeanneau, who built all three boats on the podium. (Most famously, Florence fell off her boat in the Med a few years ago while answering the call of nature, only to phone her mother who arranged the rescue. Ironically, Arthaud died in a helicopter crash in 2015.)

In the yard, looking at the mould of the very first 33-foot Figaro 3, the smallest foiling production monohull going into build, the similarities to the Sunfast 3200

R2 seemed apparent. I commented the same to my host for the day Eric Ingouf who replied, “the project was a joint development from the whole Beneteau Group, so includes Jeanneau engineers.”

The basic specifications include twin rudders to control the infused hard-chined hull, while the cockpit is suitable for both single and double-handed racing. Replacing the popular Figaro 2 is a major challenge because the yacht has been the platform for Vendée Globe skippers throughout the ages, so designing a solid trans-Atlantic raceboat to modern specifications was not done lightly. It required a wide consensus of opinion, including with the key stakeholder – the Figaro Class Association – and racing sailors from the 42 Figaro 2 boats. From the list of designers, VPLP was chosen as the design house.

Other names associated with it include industry heavyweight and now Volvo supremo Englishman Mark Turner, who is keen to see fleets in England. The basic design replaces the water ballast

tanks of the Figaro 2 with inward curving foils that extend from above the water on the topsides to generate lift, known as a dynamic stability system (DSS). This allows it to be 30 per cent lighter than the previous boat. “We’re not necessarily claiming better performance, but will be happy if these foils can successfully replace the stability given by the water ballast,” explained Eric.

These boats will also be a good training ground for the larger foilers such as the Open 60s, of course. Overseeing the project is Beneteau’s Director of Yacht Marketing Gianguido Girotti, who spoke with me earlier about the rationale of the new boat. “The market is not there anymore for the style of boats that don’t plane or surf; they don’t create the excitement that we need now.”

The project plan is for 50 boats to be built in 18 months, and for competitive fairness, all will be delivered at once in late 2018 with a unit cost of approximately 200,000 Euros. beneteau.com

SUN FAST 3200R2

I had a mouth-watering sea trial planned on the Sun Fast 3200R2 until the infamous mistral wind swept across the Med and took with it my chance. C'est la vie. Nevertheless, it's a race boat worth mentioning. The race-winning Sun Fast 3200 is a well-proven boat from the very practical pen of Daniel Andrieu, a sailor and designer I enjoy talking to. His views on life and boats in general are refreshingly sensible; rather than reinvent an already good design, he has simply tweaked it.

The new version, named R2, is dedicated to crewed racing. Avoiding the bane of coastal racers that snag fishing gear, the T-keel, the R2 has an L-shape keel. There's an optional straight keel, but it's lead to maximise the ballast ratio, improve righting moment and to help your IRC rating. Also helping the righting moment is a carbon mast that is taller than the original alloy one.

Cockpit space is maximised. The mainsheet is aft and just ahead of the tillers to increase control and twist on the mainsail. For the ultimate feel, the twin rudders have a tiller on each, but a wheel is also available. The infused GRP hull weighs 4,950 kg.

Its first real test will be the Transquadra Trans-Atlantic Race that goes from two starting points in Europe – Barcelona on 12 July 2017 and Lorient on 16 July – and finishes in Martinique. The event uses small production race boats crewed by double and single-handers. Boats this year include the JPK 10.10, Pogo 30, Figaro 2 and the Sun Fast models (3200 and 3600).

jeanneau.com

**PERFORMANCE ORIENTED**

The race-winning Sun Fast 3200 is a well-proven boat from the practical pen of Daniel Andrieu.

MODEL Sunfast 3200R2
DESIGNER Daniel Andrieu
LOA 10.10 metres
BEAM 3.48 metres
DRAFT 1.90 metres
ENGINE Yanmar 15 hp
FUEL 75 litres
WATER 80 litres
SAIL AREA 56.2 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 3400 kilograms
BALLAST 1305 kilograms
PRICE \$180,000

JEANNEAU 51

Braced behind the wheel of Jeanneau's newly built 51, I tacked into the 15-knot breeze that blew across the shoal-strewn archipelago lying offshore from Cannes. As my bow settled on Cap Antibes, the joy of sailing was felt throughout my body: the buffeting of the wind, the tug of the wheel, and the enjoyment of command. Just some of the reasons to buy a modern cruising yacht such as the spacious Briand designed Jeanneau 51.

Its in-mast furling mainsail may not be the best performer, but the convenience for the cruising sailor is evident. The addition of the Code Zero furler on the end of the anchor roller is just the sail plan required for the fickle Med or indeed the Pacific. To compete with the growing hordes of catamarans and motorboats, the modern cruising monohull must offer plenty of conveniences, something the Jeanneau 51 does well. The practical hydraulic swim platform doubles as a sunpad, plus there are cleverly designed retractable davits. Below lies an owner's layout with two or three VIP cabins.

jeanneau.com

MODEL Jeanneau 51
DESIGNER Briand Yacht Design
LOA 15.38 metres
BEAM 4.69 metres
DRAFT 2.28 metres
ENGINE 80 hp sail drive
FUEL 240 litres
WATER 640 litres
SAIL AREA 118.8 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 14,400 kilograms
BALLAST 4,300 kilograms
PRICE \$547,000



**BENETEAU SENSE 51**

Further down the Med, I sailed a strong competitor to the Jeanneau 51 in the new Beneteau Sense 51, a major improvement in my opinion on the smaller earlier versions (the 43 and 46). The Sense concept has the accommodation forward of the saloon to allow a vast cockpit and the new, more seaworthy drop-down transom was another key improvement.

Overhead, the fibreglass bimini could be retracted. The responsive helm was enjoyable to steer from, and oversized winches made sail trimming easy. So far 80 percent of the buyers have chosen in-mast mainsail furling, and despite its modest canvas in only 9 knots of wind, boat speed was 7.2 knots while pointing at 48 degrees. Back at the marina, docking can be a stressful time, but the Sense 51's fore and aft thrusters reduced this significantly.
beneteau.com

MODEL Beneteau Sense 51
DESIGNER Berret Racoupeau
LOA 15.56 metres
BEAM 4.86 metres
DRAFT 2.20 metres
ENGINE 80 hp
FUEL 415 litres
WATER 570 litres
SAIL AREA 123 metres²
BALLAST 3,965 kilograms
PRICE \$700,000



MODEL Beneteau Oceanis 62
DESIGNER Berret-Racoupeau Yacht Design
LOA 19.07 metres
BEAM 5.33 metres
DRAFT 2.98 metres
ENGINE 160 hp shaft
FUEL 1,000 litres
WATER 1,060 litres
SAIL AREA 176 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 26,109 kilograms
BALLAST 5,900 kilograms
PRICE \$1,250,000

BENETEAU OCEANIS 62

Stepping onto Beneteau's flagship the Oceanis 62 was a very different experience to the Sense 51. Reflecting on the crossover between modern power and sail, the Oceanis 62 has been worked on by Italian power-boat designer Andreani, so his skills from the Monte Carlo range are in evidence in this three- or four-cabin yacht, with the stylish hardtop bimini dominating the topsides.

The angular, hard-chined Racoupea hull has enormous beam and volume — enough to have a dinghy garage for the Williams jet tender. A wardrobe of stylish black Incidence D4 performance sails and a Code Zero pushed the 30 tonner along at 3.5 knots in the zephyrs of breeze blowing along the Spanish coast. In these conditions, many owners would start the 160 hp shaft drive Yanmar and click the autopilot before lounging on the electric sunbeds in the cockpit.
beneteau.com



MODEL Solaris 55
DESIGNER Javier Soto Acebal
LOA 16.70 metres
BEAM 4.85 metres
DRAFT 3.00 metres
ENGINE 75 hp
FUEL 380 litres
WATER 520 litres
SAIL AREA 176 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 17,600 kilograms
BALLAST 6,500 kilograms
PRICE POA

SOLARIS 55

Venetian builder Solaris has established a strong reputation for solidly built and slippery performance cruisers, so expect more of the same with the 55 that has just splashed in Europe. Having sailed some of these yachts with local dealer Windcraft, I saw firsthand their high standard of finish combined with performance.

The new 55 continues the collaboration with Argentinian designer Javier Soto Acebal. Some key points about the 55 include a high ballast ratio of 40 per cent with its lead keel, allowing you to hold onto full sail for longer than your average production cruiser.

The sail plan varies and can include a user-friendly, self-tacking jib, but there are numerous performance options including full carbon rig. The hull includes a dinghy garage, while structurally bonded bulkheads add stiffness. Inside this stylish 55-footer, the master cabin is forward with two aft cabins.

teamwindcraft.com

HANSE 588

This is the German builder's first model in its new 8 Series, a 58-footer that includes a dinghy garage complete with Williams jet tender. Inside there's an island bench in the kitchen, and owner's suite forward that is described as a "silent master cabin" due to special insulation and the remote location of systems from the cabin.

The 157-square-metre sail plan includes Hanse's signature self-tacking jib, or 208 square metres with reacher flown from a 25.85 metre triple-spreader mast. There is also an inner forestay for staysails, ideal for long-distance cruising, and a hydraulically driven headsail furling system for easy sailing.

Guest accommodation has two double cabins aft plus another with bunks, but variations are many and include four doubles with crew bunks as well. Local dealer Windcraft have reported several orders already for this model that will arrive later this year in Australia.

windcraft-hanse.com



MODEL Hanse 588
DESIGNER Judel/Vrolijk
LOA 17.20 metres
BEAM 5.20 metres
DRAFT 2.60 metres
ENGINE 110 hp
FUEL 520 litres
WATER 810 litres
SAIL AREA 157 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 19,800 kilograms
BALLAST 6,500 kilograms
PRICE \$935,000



YARD WORK

The thrill of seeing a new yacht in build is something I never tire of: watching how the workers connect the infusion pipes to the hull, the assembly line of components behind it, supervisors checking project milestones and so on. Some of these activities I found at CNB in Bordeaux.

This distinguished naval dockyard has been transformed by the huge sheds built around the structures first created by Monsieur Gustave Eiffel of the tower fame. Dominating the yard is the large, new red-fronted shed dedicated to Lagoon's flagship catamarans – the Seventy 7 sailing yacht and the Seventy 8 motoryacht.

Having a peek around the very first Seventy 8 was fascinating. Boasting superyacht-style features including a side swim platform and crew areas, it will launch in June with hull #2 sold to Australia by local dealer TMG. tmglagoon.com



MULTIPLE CHOICE
Behind the helm of the slick MC60 I managed 14 knots boat speed in only 12 knots of wind. Left: Catana maintain their performance reputation with the new 53 that comes with carbon daggerboards and carbon spars while having a luxurious interior.

The highlight of the year for multihull fans is Europe's largest show for these boats at La Grande Motte (19–23 April 2017) in southern France, where I strolled along the pontoons looking at 60 different models. Onshore the hall hosted distinguished designers and associated companies, so it is the place to ask about multis.

Boats premiering included the towering topsides of the Catana 53 that sported carbon daggerboards and polar diagrams showing boat speed matching wind speed at 16 knots. Seeking yet more grunt, I sidled over to the McConaghy built and Renaud Banuls designed MC60. A day later I was behind its wheel doing 15 knots in only 12 wind speed on a broad reach as the carbon rotating mast gave a clean profile to the Quantum Sails. These boats are now marketed by mc2catamarans.com.

Slowing the pace, I found myself on the comfortable new cruising catamaran, the Fontaine Pajot 47, that sports a fly bridge and towering binnacle allowing our two crew to fly a Code 0 from its sock. Below decks the vast acreage of saloon and equally grand owner's suite plainly showed the attraction of catamarans.



MODEL CNB 66
DESIGNER Philippe Briand
LOA 20.61 metres
BEAM 5.51 metres
DRAFT 2.95 metres
ENGINE 180 hp Volvo D4
FUEL 1,200 litres
WATER 1,000 litres
SAIL AREA 215 metres²
DISPLACEMENT 31,100 kilograms
BALLAST 9,350 kilograms
PRICE \$1,500,000

CNB 66

Walking around the flooded naval dry dock to a more modest shed brought me to the first hull of the CNB 66 monohull, a semi-custom yacht that continues a distinguished line of the previous Bordeaux 66 (that sold 46 hulls).

The new 66 is a collaboration between Philippe Briand, Jean-Marc Piaton and Raphaël Bonet that creates an individual family cruiser and looked to me like a more modest version of the three-year-old CNB 76. Just like the successful 76, the 66 interior is installed from pre-fabricated modules that hasten the build process (seven months per boat), while allowing technicians to work comfortably on the components.

On board, I met with company co-founder Olivier Lafourcade to discuss the new boat. The double circumnavigator hasn't just built yachts, but has used them thoroughly as well. He and I checked the quality of the trimmings, noting any slight detail that required changing – with all the woodwork done in-house, this could be done quickly. Hull #3 has been sold by Vicsail to an Australian owner. en.cnb-yachts.com

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MUSTO

THE INSIDE
EDGE



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
MANUFACTURERS OF OUTDOOR CLOTHING
ESTD 1976

BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
MANUFACTURERS OF OUTDOOR CLOTHING
ESTD 1976

If you intend to do any extended offshore miles in the next twelve months there are two things you cannot afford to skimp on: safety, and wet weather gear.

Safety is both an individual and boat management responsibility. Very few racing programs supply a full set of wet weather gear, so it's usually up to you to work out what best matches your needs.

I can speak from some experience here. First night out in the 2011 Rolex Sydney Hobart I was in first position on the rail of a Sydney 38 and my gear couldn't take the battering. In fact, at one stage I was sure a wetsuit would have been a better option as I seemed to be underwater half of the time.

TECHNICAL ADVANTAGES

The latest generation of breathable and flexible offshore jackets, overalls and trousers are a quantum advance of what used to be top-of-the-line. Remember Line 7 from the late 80's. These days the products are rugged, waterproof, quick drying and breathe to draw perspiration away from your body.

Each brand has its own patented fabric technology; Gore-Tex for Musto, Isotak for Zhik, 5-Dot for Gill, Helly Tech for Helly Hansen, while Henri Lloyd also uses Gore-Tex with Slide Glide tweaks. In the past I've owned Musto HPX and was grateful for every cent I invested in it. Currently, I've got a set of Zhik Isotak Ocean and it represents the very best utilisation of technology to keep the sneaky, mercurial ocean in its place.

CHECK-LIST

- You will be putting on at least two, or possibly three layers of thermals underneath, so make sure you try on whatever you buy so you can move easily and complete any tasks – especially true for the fraternity of the bow and grinders
- The placement and types of pockets, the zips, is important – you need your hands to be free. How easy is it to get into the trousers especially and do up the velcro straps – that can take precious minutes when you need to be up on deck
- Work out what's best for you – don't get coastal when what you really need is offshore – you will regret it later

Here's the latest ensembles to hopefully to make your time out water more enjoyable.



DRY ARGUMENT

With a new set of decent wet weather gear costing around \$2,500, SCOTT ALLE offers some advice to carefully consider the wide range of choices available.



PROVEN PERFORMER

Musto has just launched its new BR2 Offshore range, renowned for its durability and comfort, with a series of additions allowing for added comfort, visibility and protection as the fire-hose gets turned-up.

The BR2 Offshore Jacket continues to improve on a trusted design with double cuffs, an adjustable hem and double storm flap including zip drainage channels. The rollaway fluorescent hood keeps the wearer protected whilst adding further flare to the slick new design. Comfort remains paramount, as with all Musto products, and the new BR2 jacket includes articulated sleeves for freedom of movement, while the fleece-lined collar and fleece lined pockets add further warmth. Add in safety features such as prismatic reflectors for low light visibility.

The BR2 Offshore Trousers are breathable and durably waterproof, and ensures you remain warm and dry whilst able to move freely thanks to articulated seat and knee constructions. The hi-fit trousers are designed with wear resistant seat and knee patches and the water resistant pockets also ensure personal items remain safe and dry. Available in both men and women's sizes, in new colour schemes for 2017.

HPX PEDIGREE

As mentioned I've had HPX kit before and it withstood a succession of Hobart encounters.

The unisex HPX GORE-TEX® Ocean Jacket provides waterproof and windproof protection, as well as enhanced durability and breathability through the 3-layer GORE-TEX® Pro fabric with its Ocean Technology® membrane and Gore™ Micro Grid Backer Technology

Stretch GORE-TEX® panels across the upper back and arms give you the freedom of movement for all jobs. Neoprene inner



ULTIMATE TEST
Armel Le Cleach gives Musto's HPX Smock and HPX Salopettes a rigorous work-out.



cuffs with adjustable outer cuffs claim to give you near drysuit protection. The abrasion-resistant CORDURA® on the seat adds durability and the photoluminescent reflectors help keep you visible at night moving around.

musto.com.au

HARDLINE REGIME

Zhik is proud of the lengths it goes to in its product development – and I can testify it pays off. Its design team distills extensive feedback from the world's top sailors to engineer superior waterproof durability and resistance while maintaining breathability in a multi-layered approach, from robust outer shells to feather-light base-layers.

Zhik quotes a 2016 independent Australian study showing that based on accelerated wear testing, its Isotak® fabrics were four times more waterproof durable than a leading competitor. It says that's the reason two of

the five 2017/18 Volvo Ocean Race teams have opted to undertake the gruelling endurance test wearing its gear.

It requested the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) pioneer a waterproof durability testing method specifically designed to simulate accelerated wear and tear in wet conditions, when the waterproof membrane is most vulnerable. The method involved placing waterproof textiles in an accelerated wear device that simulates impact and abrasion in wet conditions to determine waterproofness after defined intervals of accelerated wear. Zhik says results showed its Isotak product out-performed the industry benchmark by at least 4:1.

HURT LOCKER

Prior to developing its Isotak range, Zhik listened to sailors explain how common shortfalls left them wet and wondering how their new gear could keep leaking and failing. The realisation that gear rubs on the deck while a sailor's on the rail, and takes a pounding at the knees and elbows informs new design parameters. Their designers also know that wet weather gear is commonly crunched up in a bag if it's not taking punishment against cleats and stanchions, wave after wave, hour after hour.

In the tougher Isotak Ocean foul weather range, every material, construction process and feature has been selected to provide the toughest, lightest most durably waterproof ocean kit available. Isotak Ocean is a multi-layer highly breathable composite membrane fabric featuring 3 layer-seam sealed shell, a quick stow PDF compatible hood, ocean collar and ergonomic face shield, reflectors and YKK zippers and fast drying Hydrobase.

zhik.com

RE-ENGINEERED PROTECTION

Gill have overhauled their OS1 range and potentially raised the bar with a 4-layer fabric which boasts a completely new outer shell. The result is what the brand says is the most durable waterproof garment its ever released.

The OS1 Jacket and Trousers are available in sizes for both men and women. The garments are made using the company's most durable 5-Dot high performance fabric, which is made up of an impressive four layers. The weight across the range has been reduced by 10 per cent for greater softness and flexibility, yet Gill says resistance to surface wear has increased by 15 per cent.

Director of Product Design, Matt Clark,

said comfort has also been a major focus.

"The OS1 is our ultimate offshore sailing defence, and what we've done with this new generation is made extreme protection exceptionally comfortable to wear. Of all our enhancements, we're really proud of the fabric innovations. This really means something when you're making an ocean crossing. Rather than make a compromise, we've dialled up both comfort and durability."

gillmarine.com

GLOBAL CRED

Henri Lloyd are the official suppliers to the Clipper Round the World Race so have had plenty of sea miles to hone the best combination of performance and comfort.

Henri Lloyd says its Elite Offshore Jacket and Hifits are 30 per cent lighter and 20 per cent more breathable than best in class predecessors, derived from technology with three years proven performance in the market.

The range's Slide glide technology reduces interlayer binding when used with the award winning Elite Therm mid layer garments. Features include the Optivision hood system allowing excellent peripheral vision, quick drying rentex mesh inner collar lining, fast draining outer pockets including lower dual cargo hand warmers.



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HANDS FREE
Gill's OS1 range gets the tick for good pocket placement.



COMFORT ZONE
Helly Hansen's HP Foil Jacket and Pants are lighter weight but offer increased flexibility



USER FRIENDLY
Henri Lloyd's Elite Offshore Jacket features a handy EPIRB/knife pocket on the left sleeve.



Added protection from extreme weather ingress includes hook and loop external wrist adjusters, double storm flap with drainage channel, differential hem with shock cord adjustment. Safety features include fast draining EPIRB/knife pocket at left sleeve, buoyancy loops, reflective trim detail across upper body panel and sleeves, premoulded Photoluminescent reflective patches at shoulder, storm flap, cuffs and hood.

The jacket is configured for ease of movement and contoured to reduce windage.



ELITE HIFITS

These overalls feature a double storm flap with drainage channel, chest handwarmer pockets, self-fabric shoulder straps, diverted critical reinforcement seams to reduce wear and 500D Cordura seat and knee reinforcement.

Bat wing waist and hook and loop external ankle adjusters allow the wearer to tailor the Hifits to a perfect individual fit.

They are unlined to speed up drying time, reduce weight and reduce interlayer binding. All garments have two way non-corrosive zips.

henrilloyd.com

HELLY HANSEN

Helly Hansen's lighter weight HP Foil Jacket is more suited to inshore racing. It's made from the company's well proven 3 ply Helly Tech fabric with a very soft lining for extra comfort. The cut also allows easy movement. The mid height collar keeps the wind off your ears, without the bulk of heavier offshore jackets.

The HP foil pant is low-waisted, making kneeling or bending or scrambling across a deck much easier. The fabric is 2 ply with a mesh lining to mitigate some of that nasty chafing that can occur. It has a reinforced seat, and thoughtfully placed pockets.

hellyhansen.com



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RACE TEAM

IN THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE





UP TEMPO

The VX is one of the most exciting small keelboats to hit the racing scene in recent years. As DI PEARSON explains, its pocket-rocket credentials have attracted a dedicated following, including well-known Sydney sailor Andrew York.

It's no accident that Andrew ('Yorky') York finds himself entrenched in the upper echelons of sailing – it's in his DNA, after all. But the son of famous yachting parents and stalwart Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA) members Michael ('Mick') York OAM and Jeannette York OAM, has moved on from his big boat yachting days, instead making a name for himself in the adrenalin-charged arena of sports-boat racing.

WELL CREDENTIALLED

Yorky's father Mick is the CYCA's longest-standing member (he joined in 1945). While his wife Jeannette, a member since 1952, was the first woman to receive Life Membership of the club. It has been a long family affair with Jeannette's father Merv Davey helping to pioneer the club and steer as Commodore from 1949–51, and again from 1957–9.

Yorky, also a CYCA member, was inducted into sailing early on, and

followed in Mick's footsteps when he represented Australia at the America's Cup as a main trimmer and navigator (respectively) on *Advance* in 1983, and aboard *Kookaburra* in Fremantle in 1985–7.

The Sydney sailor has also contested several Sydney Hobart Yacht Races, including aboard *Geronimo* (1975), *Prime Time* (2004, 2005), *Alacrity* (2006, 2007) and *Balance* in 2011.

"My favourite was on David Mason's *Prime Time* in 2005. We broke our spinnaker pole and gooseneck in 40-knots plus in Bass Strait. We repaired both and finished the race well enough to win the CYCA's Blue Water Pointscore before the final race," remembers York, who has also podiumed in a variety of other boats such as Dragons, Etchells and Lasers.

THE NEED FOR SPEED

But roughly five years ago, in his fifties, Yorky discovered the sexy, fast VX One and

became an adrenaline junkie. Described by devotees as "the most fun you can have on the water," the VX One's speed and ease of use captured Yorky's imagination.

He has also developed the VX One's newer, slightly longer offshoot – the REO 7.2 – and won four national and two NSW titles across the two boats, all while proudly representing the CYCA.

His winning streak has been interrupted however by Brett Whitbread (a big driver of attracting people into the VX One in his local Brisbane), who took the national title at the Festival of Sails in Geelong, and relegated Yorky from second to third place on countback.

Yorky has sailed with a variety of crew, including old school friend and Laser adversary Anton Lynar and 15-year-old Felix Prince. They competed at the recent 2017 VX One Nationals where Tom Siganto (a talented 29er champion) finished second, and former Laser Olympic campaigner and now Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron (RQYS) coach Ashley Brunning (crewed by 2016 Laser Olympic gold medallist Tom Burton), filled out the top three, indicating the high calibre of the fleet.

"When I bought a VX One in 2012, it was just the third boat in the country, so the only place to compete was in Australian Sports Boat Association (ASBA)

events," Yorky remembers, comparing his smaller 5.8-metre boat to the rest.

"They were bigger, so for us, it was hard to be competitive," says Yorky. "The boat is a lot of fun, fairly wide, so it's stable, has a shorter keel than the other sports boats, and a low freeboard.

"It's exceptionally quick off the breeze. I can't remember the number of times we've done over 20 knots."

SPREADING THE WORD

Completely enmeshed in the adrenaline-fuelled sport, Yorky took the boat on the road to promote the class.

"We went to Hamilton Island, Perth, Adelaide – everywhere," he says.

"My wife Julie and I averaged 1000 kilometres a month – 24,000 kilometres in the first two years. Mostly it was to show the boat off at sports boat and class regattas."

It was time well spent. "We've now got 17 VX Ones in the country and we've had four national championships to date."

He is also the Australian VX One Association class secretary, and drafted the constitution, as well as ensured the class was affiliated with the national body.

WINDS OF CHANGE

Experimenting with boats is one of Yorky's character traits. And he couldn't resist the VX One. The first person in the world to put a masthead kite on the boat he says. "The rig was designed to take one, so it was easy to convert.

"While I love the one-design racing in the boat, I wondered from an early stage how a bigger version would go. I knew by using form stability instead of a deep, heavy keel, that the boat would have a lot of potential.

"So in 2015, over six months, I built a bigger hull and used a modified VX One rig. From my experience in sports boats I knew a bit about the SMS rule, so my idea was to design a boat to the rule," says Yorky, the first person to take this approach.

"I had a long boat with a proportionally small rig on it, because I figured we'd mostly sail in 15 knots of breeze in Australia over summer. The boat I built is 1.4 metres longer than the VX One, and the masthead kite is twice the size, but the mast is only 400 millimetres longer, which rated well," Yorky explains.

"When I first put it in the water and sailed it at the Sports Boats Nationals in 2016, I could see the mast was too flexible and we couldn't power up. Each day of the Nationals I made modifications to the rig to improve performance."

The final day of racing it blew 15 knots and Yorky's crew scored 1–2–1 results to claim

the title, but later dropped to third after a clerical error was found with the boat's rating. Nevertheless, Yorky was pleased.

"I've sailed it in 25 knots and got up to 19-knots boat speed, but I knew I needed to put a stiffer mast in the boat, so this year I rigged a second-hand, 18-ft skiff mast. We went sailing, took photos for the sailmaker who cut a main to fit, then took it to the Nationals in April."

On Day 1 in a light 6–7 knots, Yorky and his crew of Fred Kasperek (President of Australian VX One Class Association) and

doing 7 knots upwind on a 7-metre boat. We have better VMG upwind than the Melges boats, which have always been the boats to beat in light air.

"One of the Melges boats finished second overall, the other one fourth. Of the 21 boats that raced, Graham Sherring in *Returned*, a Leech 750, came third. Like us, he lost out in the breeze shutdown of the final race.

"The performance of *REO Speedwagon* at these Nationals confirmed my opinion that light boats with form stability are the way to go," says Yorky, who admits, "I'm pretty competitive and analytical."

PASSION AND PERSISTENCE

At around 18 years old, the idea of designing, building and campaigning a boat formed in the back of Yorky's mind. "It only took me around 40 years," he says laughing.

But it was worth it. After Yorky spoke to Brian Bennett (the trademark holding designer of the VX One) about his plans for the REO 7.2, Bennett and his design team drew the lines for Yorky, who then drew the sail plan, positioned the keel correctly, and looked after the engineering for the keel and keel-shroud reinforcements.

"I built the boat in my factory where I build portable buildings," Yorky says.

The REO 7.2 looks like the VX One, just bigger. Yorky named it *REO Speedwagon*, and there is the possibility that a development of this design will come out in the future.

(For those into numbers, the VX One can be sailed two- or three-up – around 200–225 kilos worth of crew. *REO Speedwagon* sailed at the Nationals three-up – 260 kilos of crew.)

Yorky's plans for this year include taking *REO Speedwagon* to Airlie Beach Race Week where he will sail four up (300 kilos) in the Sports Boat division. It has a self-tacking and furling jib, like the VX One. The furler makes crewing easy and has the added bonus of being a good safety feature.

"I also plan on sailing *REO* in the Saturday winter series on Sydney Harbour and at sports boat regattas, while I'll sail the VX One in major class regattas."

There are VX One boats in Melbourne, Brisbane, Airlie Beach, Perth, Adelaide, Canberra and Sydney, and Yorky is happy to organise a ride for interested parties in any of these locations, such is his passion for the class. "If you want to have a run in either of these boats, you can call me," Yorky says. He adds: "Nobody in Australia makes any money out of importing and distributing the VX One. We all do it because we love the boat and the class. We just want to get more people sailing them." ♣

vxoneaustralia.wordpress.com

To contact Andrew Yorky, phone 0400 180 095.



SPEED TO BURN

Top: Andrew Yorky next to *REO Speedwagon*. Above: VX Ones fly downwind. Opposite page: Andrew Yorky at the helm of his VX One *REO Speedwagon*.

Andrew Maher (a Laser sailing friend he has known for 29 years), headed up the second beat and caught weed on the keel to finish thirteenth from 20. In the second race that day he ended fifth, but the next day in 13–16 knots, which suited the boat down to the ground, they won all four races.

"After that first day I thought, 'Aagh, it'll be hard to pull this out of the frying pan, but the second day was great. Going into the third and final day we were leading by six points and in 6–7 knots, won the first two races.

"We were doing well in the final race until the breeze shut down. Half the fleet came down on top of us, as did the 40-footer fleet sailing on the same course. We fared badly out of that and finished tenth, but we won the Nationals by seven points."

"I was amazed by our performance on the final day considering it was light air. We were

**FINAL STANDINGS
(8 RACES)**

1. *Platoon* (GER, Harm Müller-Spreer), (2,3,2,2,2,6,3,2) 22 points
2. *Quantum Racing* (Doug DeVos, USA), (1,2,8,1,1,7,2,7) 29 points
3. *Azzurra* (Roemmers Family ITA/ARG), (3,1,6,8,6,4,4,1) 33
4. *Alegre* (Andrés Soriano GBR/USA), (5,6,4,4,3,2,6,5) 35 points
5. *Gladiator* (Tony Langley, GBR) (6,10,1,3,8,10,1,6) 45 points
6. *Rán Racing* (Niklas Zennström, SWE), (10,5,5,7,9,3,7,3) 49 points
7. *Sled* (Takashi Okura, USA), (4,9,7,9,7,1,8,8) 53 points
8. *Provezza* (Ergin Imre, TUR) (RDG6.3,8,10,6,4,5,5,9) 53.3
9. *Bronenosec* (Vladimir Liubomirov, RUS), (8,7,9,5,5,9,9,4) 56 points
10. *Sorcha* (Peter Harrison, GBR), (7,4,3,10,10,8,10,10)



The 2017 Rolex TP52 Worlds were won by Harm Müller-Spreer's *Platoon* from Germany. In some respects, they made it look easy, never seeming to put a foot wrong and winning by a seven-point margin from Quantum Racing. This is not even half the story. Müller-Spreer's reaction to the victory pointed to the effort it had taken to finish top of the ten-boat fleet. "It means a lot. This regatta is so hard to win. I've been sailing for more than forty years, but this is a different level."

Harm Müller-Spreer's *Platoon* crew got the better of the five-time title holders *Quantum Racing* during an exciting winner takes all final day showdown to win the Rolex TP52 World Championship title for the first time.

With many years of sailing experience that includes three Dragon Gold Cups, Müller-Spreer is a knowledgeable owner-helmsman. He knows what it takes to succeed and how difficult it is to construct a win like this. "All the teams are more or less the same, with Olympic medallists and America's Cup winners in the crew. This class is very hard to win."

Platoon's seemingly unerring consistency across the challenging, hard-to-read conditions, with a wind range of 5 to 18

knots, proved telling. Though they did not win a race, only once in eight contests did *Platoon* finish out of the top three, counting five second places.

The vastly experienced German owner-driver returned to the TP52 class in 2015 joining the 52 SUPER SERIES with a Vrolijk designed successor to his earlier versions of *Platoon* after a seven year hiatus finishing fourth overall. Technical changes to the boat last winter and bolstering his team line up with America's Cup winner John Kosteci as tactician from the back end of last season, bringing on Dirk De Ridder as mainsheet trimmer from the beginning 2017, and having Pepe Ribes as boat captain and pitman – have

stabilised the team's confidence, but more importantly improved their speed. This has been an important component in *Platoon*'s consistency this season.

According to Ed Reynolds, Director of defending world champions, *Quantum Racing*, Kosteci was one of several keys: "Most importantly, *Platoon* avoided the big number. Alongside that they had a really good mode for whatever condition they were in. When they were bow-forward they were able to go fast and extend. When they needed to hold a tight-lane in a tough situation they were able to until things cleared out. They had patience and their situational boat speed was impeccable." 52superseries.com

COMMANDING PERFORMANCE

Platoon proved too consistent at the Rolex TP52 World Championships in Scarlino, Italy, dominating in a fleet studded with Olympic medallists and America's Cup winners.

Magic finish

A record 112 boats and their crews participated in the 10th Sail Port Stephens regatta in close to ideal conditions.

A magic final day at the 10th anniversary Sail Port Stephens in gentle east to nor'east winds belied the approaching cold front and low pressure system soon to deliver rain and strong winds to the New South Wales Hunter coastline.

The record 112 boats and crews made the journey to Port Stephens from South Australia, Victoria, Queensland and other NSW ports for the week-long event split into two halves and deemed the best-ever in terms of perfect autumn sunshine and a range of manageable sailing conditions.

Sunday's closing races determined the Garmin IRC state title, Seabreeze Hotel Super 12 state title and Performance Racing and cruising fleet placegetters in the second-half Pantaenius Port Stephens Trophy.

IRC NSW state title winner *RKO*, Aaron Rowe's Sydney based TP52 from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, was in a league of its own over the three days.

Rowe and his top crew scored 1-3-1 in Sunday's building NNE breeze up to 16 knots, adding up to a combined low-score of nine points from six races.

"The standout for me was how hard the crew worked in terms of getting to the regatta and right throughout, making sure the boat went



fast," Rowe said. "The weather, competition and regatta management were fantastic. We were very pleased to battle it out against the other 52s and come out on top."

Sam Hayne's TP52 *Celestial* (CYCA) was the nearest challenger to *RKO* on 20 points and third was Tony Kirby's Ker 46 *Patrice* (CYCA).

In IRC division 2, Bob Cox's DK46 *Nine Dragons* (Middle Harbour Yacht Club) commanded the scoresheet until the penultimate race when Gerry Hatton's Mat 12.45 *Bushranger* (Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club) slipped into the lead.

Dates for Sail Port Stephens 2018 are set down for 9 to 15 April 2018 which is the week leading into the school holiday break. ↓ sailportstephens.com.au

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Image: Sport Sailing Photography.com



Reflections on a perfect day

The recent Beneteau Pittwater Cup attracted a fleet of 26, some first-timers and many regulars for a beautiful day of competition and camaraderie.

By DAVID CURNON



Now if you had been on the water a little after midday on Saturday, race day, you would not have let yourself think that there would be any racing for a long time, but the first two divisions did get away on time, just. Shortly thereafter, and as Division Three struggled to even make the line, let alone cross it, the Answering Pennant was hoisted, and a 20 minute delay ensued.

Well done to Race Management, for it was a brave call at about 12:45hrs to send them off, but their courage was met with conviction, and the ride North improved as the afternoon wore on, with a healthy, and completely usable, East Nor'easter of up to 12 knots powering the fleet home in the end.

Then the most curious of thoughts also arrived, for you would not have contemplated that dispersed throughout the fleet of Beneteaus were accomplished Volvo Ocean Race stars, Sydney Hobart legends, 18-foot Skiff Champions and also relatives of sailors about to commence the 35th edition of the America's Cup. Yet there they were helping new owners master their boats, and ensuring all were safe and happy. That is certainly one magnificent achievement for the traditional Beneteau regatta on Pittwater.

In the case of Greg Newton, he was helming his Oceanis 45 *Antipodes of Sydney*. He and the boat's crew had a ball in their Hawaiian shirts, and also kicked on as that breeze filled, with their kite propelling them to a win in the prized Spinnaker Division.

The jury is out as to whether they had more fun than Newton's son, Sam, who is one of the many Australians involved in the America's Cup.

Richard Fleck's, *Scuffy* was in second place, while third went to long time participant, Bob Batchelor and the crew of *Beau Soleil*.

In the Non-Spinnaker Division, Kevin Gray and the crew of *Eau de Vie* were thoroughly ecstatic with their win.

The next keenly anticipated Beneteau regatta is the 2017 Beneteau Cup on Sydney Harbour on October 27. ⚓
flagstaffmarine.com.au



Superb showcase

Thailand's award-winning Top of the Gulf Regatta presented by Ocean Marina delivered a challenging mix of sailing conditions for the near 200-strong fleet which competed 4 to 8 May 2017 in Pattaya.

GUY NOWELL

Racing went down to the wire in all classes and the final day turned on the goods for the keelboat and multihull classes, showcasing the Gulf of Thailand at its best – 15-20 knots of breeze, sunny skies and warm weather sailing – and was proclaimed the “best day of the regatta” by all.

Previously unbeaten in its first season on the Asian circuit, the TP52 THA 72 (THA), skippered by Kevin Whitcraft, struggled in the lighter airs and it was the modified Sydney 40 *Imagine*, skippered by Scott Bradley, that claimed the IRC Racing 1 title with a 2,1,1,2,1,2,2,[3] scoreline.

Known for its close and competitive racing, the one-design Platu class, which race for the prestigious Platu Coronation Cup, did not disappoint with the winner being decided on the final run of the last race on the final day of the regatta. With the Russian team lead by Valeriy Dichenko comfortably ahead in the race, Rolf Heemskerck (*Team Viewpoint*), Chris Way (*Easy Tiger 111*), Ithinai Yingsiri (*Pine-Pacific*) and Colin Simonds (*Wikk*) were four-abreast, spinnakers up on the final run to the line. The final series result saw a tie at the top between Heemskerck and Way with the count back this time breaking in favour of Rolf Heemskerck and his crew on *Team Viewpoint*.

Close racing underscored IRC Racing 3 with all in the class finishing on the podium during their eight-race series. However, with six wins from eight there was no denying the clear winner, *El Coyote* (AUS), skippered by Gary Baguley.

Despite a protest by *Lady Bubbly* (AUS) in the final race, which they won, it did not affect the overall results as four wins from five races saw them comfortably win the Cruising class title while elsewhere on the race course, a win in the final race saw Kirati Assakul and his crew on *Sonic* (THA) defend their Ocean Multihulls title.

The 2017 Top of the Gulf Regatta will go down as a success – a success in terms of sailing and all round fun, hospitality, and a successful showcase of the Gulf of Thailand. ⚓
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AIRS & GRACES
Local, Kevin Fogarty's Beneteau 40.7, *Twister* will be back in the mix at Airlie Beach.

Healing agent

The Whitsundays is well down the road to the recovery in the aftermath of Cyclone Debbie, with preparations underway for the winter season of racing and cruising, including Airlie Beach Race Week, to be held from 10-17 August 2017.

Tourism Whitsundays chief executive officer Craig Turner said now that the Whitsundays had conquered the immediate recovery phase, the priority was to re-build momentum to restore visitation back to the level prior to Cyclone Debbie's impact.

Part of supporting that message is letting

yacht owners and charterers know Airlie Beach and the Whitsundays are totally capable of accommodating their racing and cruising desires.

Luke McCaul, General Manager at Abell Point Marina confirms the popular facility is rapidly getting back to full operations.

"The cyclone is behind us, so the message

we want to get out there is that our focus is on preparing for the winter season for racers and cruisers. It's a busy period for us and already boats are booked in for Airlie Beach Race Week.

"From July this year, all 507 berths will be back in service. We had no choice but to be ready".

"We lost 100 of our 507 berths, but we've already demolished the damaged ones and we're currently piling them," said McCaul. He added, "we have 407 berths that did not suffer damage. We are a large marina, so there is plenty of room."

At Port of Airlie Marina, the Marina's Operations Manager Clayton Matthews provided this welcome update. "Port of Airlie is open for business post-Cyclone Debbie. Construction of the new D Arm berths, ranging from 15 metres to 30 metres, has commenced and is scheduled for completion in late 2017. With 70 percent of the unique 90-year-plus berth lease options being taken, only eight berths remain."

So far, Race Week entries have been received from Western Australia, Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania and Queensland, not to mention the strong support from the locals such as WSC's Kevin Fogarty, a regular with his Beneteau 40.7, *Twister*.

For those who would like to race but are yet to find a boat, and equally for those short on crew, select 'On Water' from the main menu at the official website and click on 'Crew Wanted/Available'. It does work, with some great match-ups made over the years. ⚓

abr.w.com.au

Stealth Training

Townsville sailors are getting in some pre-event regattas to gain an early advantage against their interstate counterparts, when Sealink Magnetic Island Race Week gets underway on the last day of August.

The eleventh running of Magnetic Island Race Week will be held from 31 August to 6 September and members from the host, Townsville Yacht Club (TYC), are buoyed up and ready to rumble ahead of the Coral Sea classic.

"A few of us headed to Quicksilver Port Douglas Race Week in May. It was a good opportunity to put in some racing practice outside of our Townsville Yacht Club races," confirmed TYC's Rear Commodore Tony Muller.

Meanwhile Mike Steel, Townsville Yacht Club's Event Chairman for Magnetic Island Race Week, is feeling grateful they can go ahead with the event as the region escaped the wrath of Cyclone Debbie.

"We all bunkered down for Cyclone Debbie, but all we saw were gusts to 30 knots. Fortunately for Townsville and the Magnetic Island region, we escaped unscathed," Steel commented.

"We were lucky to be on the northern side of the system, unlike our neighbours in



Yachts from all over the Eastern seaboard are heading to Magnetic Island.

the Whitsundays and Airlie Beach who experienced excessive damage.

"Thankfully, North Queenslanders have bounced back and we'll see all three northern regattas run as per plan."

At this stage, entries from

Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria exceed 20. The event is open to IRC, PHS, Cruising in Spinnaker and Non-Spinnaker yachts, Trailable Yachts, Sports Boats along with divisions for Multihull Racing and Cruising boats. ⚓ magneticislandraceweek.com.au

Early indications are that while the fleet might not match last year's record of 252 it could go close to that figure.

The 100th entry for this year's regatta was lodged by Sydney yachtsman Mark Michalowsky. He is returning to race week after a 10-year absence, and will be racing the same yacht, his Beneteau 47.7, *Carla M.*

"The desire to return to race week has always been there, but until this year business obligations have caused it to be just that – a desire," Mark said. "I bought the yacht in Spain in 2000, had it sailed to Australia, then competed at race week in 2004, and again a decade ago, but that's where it ended. Fortunately I've finally got my business activities sorted out now so I can get back to spending more time sailing."

Mark stressed that he is an "around-the-cans man" who loves competing in twilight races more than anything else.

"I've only done one overnight race, a 17-miler from Sydney to Pittwater a long time ago. Since then it has been all about cruising division races."

His favourite memory of his last Audi Hamilton Island Race Week was of "Jimmy Barnes rocking the night away on the waterfront." And, apart from enjoying some superb, around-the-islands racing in the tropics this year, he is looking forward to the camaraderie of the post-race cockpit parties that he enjoyed so much last time.

German luxury carmaker Audi is returning for the twelfth year as principal sponsor, demonstrating the brand's continued commitment to high quality, competitive offshore racing and a benchmark onshore social calendar that is as inclusive as it is exclusive.

Audi Hamilton Island Race Week is schedule for August 19 to 26. ↓
audihamiltonislandraceweek.com.au

PLAY IT AGAIN

The entry list for Audi Hamilton Island Race Week 2017 has passed the magical 100 mark and continues to climb at an impressive rate.



RAIDING PARTY

There will be three Australian crews mixing it with the 390 boats starting the Rolex Fastnet Yacht Race from Cowes on the Isle of Wight on 6 August this year. Ludde Ingvall's supermaxi *CQS* will be looking to gauge its performance against the northern hemisphere's big names; Paddy Broughton will bring the recently purchased *Kialoa II*; and a group of sailors from Manly, including **MARIKE KOPPENOL**, will be out to make their mark among the highly competitive 40–50 footers. Here, she explains how the campaign came together.

Which is the tougher race, the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race or the Rolex Fastnet Race? It's an often-debated topic of conversation in yacht club bars and on the rail in an overnight offshore race – and one that late in December

2016, Muir Watson and I were determined to settle.

After we had suffered the bitter disappointment of withdrawing from the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart with a blown motor on *Enigma*, a Beneteau 47.7, we made a last-minute decision to enter the 47th Rolex Fastnet Race in 2017 on a chartered yacht, *Sailplane 1*.

We would make the comparison firsthand...

SHARED EXPERIENCE
Right: Marike (centre, at wheel) will tackle the Fastnet with confidence thanks to serious ocean miles with crew members.





CLOSE TO THE WIND

While wistfully watching the first boats successfully finish the Rolex Sydney Hobart, we started talking in more detail about finding a boat and getting over to Cowes.

By chance, in early January, we came across the website of Performance Yacht Charters that had a First 40 available. A couple of emails later, we had a boat – *Sailplane 1*, a Beneteau First 40 Carbon Edition – and our entry for the 608 nautical-mile classic was confirmed. She's well-maintained and competitive, with an enviable racing record representing France at the 2010 Rolex Commodores' Cup as well as many offshore and inshore race wins.

With our boat organised, we had only four days to get our entry in and confirm the crew. But we were determined to get another big adventure under our belts, and Fastnet had been on the bucket list for many of the crew we recruited mainly from the Manly Yacht Club: Chloe Tetlow, Grish Stromov, Karl Onslow, Keith Thomas, Muir Watson, Peter Bennell, Tomas Kliman, Sandy Farquharson, Steve McKeogh and I.

Incredibly, the race was fully subscribed within just four minutes and 24 seconds of race entry opening, and the excitement ramped-up seriously when our entry was accepted.

ANTICIPATION BUILDS

Our crew have completed multiple Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Races plus the Gosford – Lord Howe Island, Sydney – Gold Coast and Pittwater – Coffs Harbour races, but none of us have previously tackled the gruelling and technically challenging Fastnet. We are at once looking forward to it, and are undeniably a little nervous given its reputation.

Muir and Grish will co-skipper. Together the three of us completed the character-building 2012 Rolex Sydney Hobart Race on BH 36 *Local Hero*, and won the Battery Point Trophy for fastest small yacht (with Grish as skipper). We will also be joined by three more skippers from other yachts, so the crew won't be lacking an afterguard!

The two main characteristics of any harmonious crew are trust and experience. At least half the *Sailplane 1* crew have sailed together for the last six years, and as many of us know each other from the Manly Yacht Club, we are confident we have the makings of a happy crew. Naturally, our number-one priority is crew safety, then boat safety and then to race to the best of our collective ability – while having fun!

The crew will be training together in Sydney during June and July before flying over to the UK to compete with almost one thousand other keelboats in Cowes Week, the largest sailing regatta of its kind in the world.

We know that by taking part in two of sailing's most iconic events – the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and the Rolex Fastnet Race – that we are realising many a sailor's dream. And we can't wait for the adventure to begin. ⚓

rolexfastnetrace.com

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Supermaxi drag race

The countdown is on to the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race with a highly anticipated big boat clash already whetting appetites.

The 2017 edition of the popular fixture north to Queensland will start at 1300 hours on Saturday 29 July 2017 with a fleet of at least 65 expected to take part in the 384-nautical-mile journey to the finish off Main Beach.

Early suggestions that race record holder *Wild Oats XI* would once again compete in the landmark race have been proved correct. The 100-footer will return to race mode for the first time following her disappointing retirement from the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race (RSHYR) 2016, where she

suffered keel damage while leading the fleet.

Oats will face a very well-credentialed rival in the form of *Black Jack 100*. Skipper Mark Bradford expects a refit on Peter Harburg's supermaxi to be complete in time for the race up the coast that will see the two 100-footers tussle in what should be a thrilling contest.

When it comes to the overall winner, both the supermaxis will be up against the relentless TP 52 pack. Last year there were nine of the boats involved with Matt Allen's *Ichi Ban* taking the win. A similar showing is expected in 2017 with Sam Hayne's *Celestial* and Paul Clitheroe's *Balance* due to feature.

Making a notable return for 2017 in the TP52 category will be Michael Spies, a veteran of the Gold Coast Race and also the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. He'll be onboard his new boat *Fifty Two Hundred*, formerly *Cougar II*, a runner-up in the 2008 RSHYR.

Speaking ahead of the event in July, Spies said, "It's always an enjoyable race but unpredictable. That's part of the charm. We expect the TP52 size group to be very competitive; there's always a large number packed with some talented individuals. With a higher contingent, it increases the odds that the overall winner could come from the group, and with the quality sailors on board it increases the chances even more."

The Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race is the first race of the CYCA's Blue Water Pointscore and signals the start of the northern circuit of races and regattas.

Entries close at 1700 hours on 7 July 2016. Online entry and Notice of Race are available on the official race website. goldcoast.cyca.com.au



GIRAGLIA MILESTONE

One of the Mediterranean's premier offshore races, the Giraglia Rolex Cup celebrates its 65th edition in 2017.

Another big fleet is expected for this Med classic, a highly tactical 214-nautical-mile contest that takes competitors between Saint-Tropez and Genoa, passing by the Rock of the Giraglia in the north of Corsica that gave its name to the race.

The entire regatta, which includes warm-up inshore races, will be held from 9-17 June. It's organised by the Italian Yacht Club and the Société Nautique de Saint-Tropez, with the support of the Yacht Club San Remo and the Yacht Club de France.

The 2016 race will be remembered as one of the most challenging in the regatta's history. A record fleet of 268 entrants representing 18 nations battled against 30-plus knot winds over the final leg from Giraglia to Genoa.

Frenchman Gilles Pages and his crew of the Sunfast 36 *Tip* emerged as the overall winners, beating top professionals, racing and Corinthians alike, all racing in an extremely wide range of boats, and each with a chance to win. yachtclubitaliano.it



Competitors in the Giraglia Rolex Cup will race between Saint-Tropez and Genoa, passing by the Rock of Giraglia in the north of Corsica.



50TH



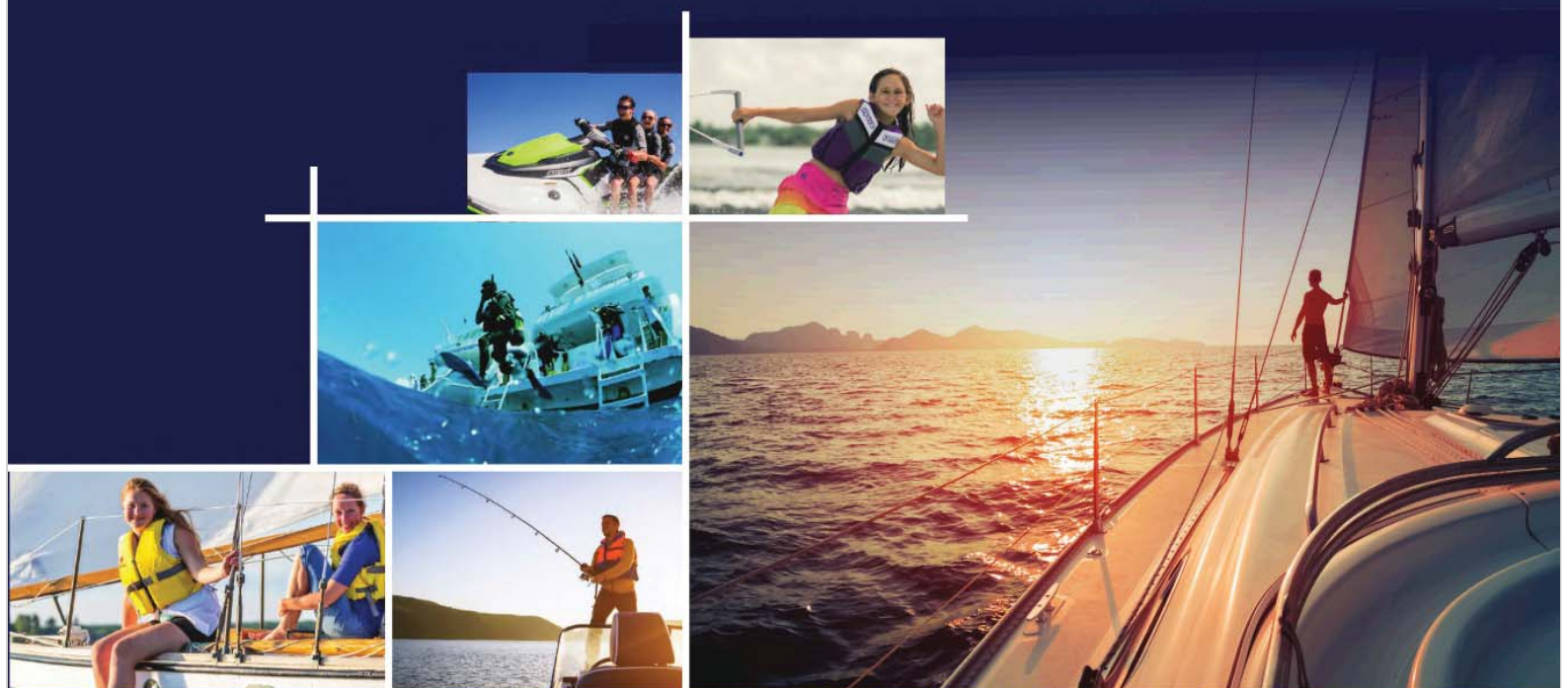
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SEAMANSHIP
AND HELMING

Seamanship is a word that is taken in the context of a connection – with the sea, a person, and a ship.

The helmsperson must have a complete understanding of sea state and the idiosyncrasies of the particular type of yacht being helmed as each will behave differently. A full-keeled yacht, for example, will not tack or bear away as quickly as a fin-keel yacht. In a mixed-race start, such as the Rolex Sydney Hobart, the strategy of starting and making it to sea without incident must take into consideration the manoeuvrability of the yacht. Once at sea, a helming mode is selected based on the sea state. For example in flat water, upwind VMG, and in bumpy conditions, upwind a faster VMC helming mode.

EQUIPMENT

To do your job as helmsperson, all rudder components must be in good working order. From experience, rudder bearings don't get serviced until they have an issue. Damaged and unlubricated rudder bearings make helming difficult, and expends physical energy. Check for bearing play by pushing the rudder blade sideways. Check steering cables for excessive wear and tension. Beware of over-tensioning steering cables as the tension force transfers onto the steering wheel hub. Understand the capabilities of all the rudder equipment from the rudder blade to the stock and cable attachment points. On tiller-steered yachts, beware of adding people and purchase when heavy running. On *Maluka* in last year's Rolex Sydney Hobart, the decision was made to back off when heavy running once we had three crew and the purchase to hold her straight.

There is no doubt that there is a breaking point for a spotted-gum timber tiller!

SUMMARY

Helming is fun, exhilarating and challenging. To achieve proficiency takes a little discipline, but for me, being a helmsperson evokes a love of the sea on a well-found yacht and complete enjoyment.

FEEL

Helmspeople often refer to feel. Feel is something that has zero scientific basis, but is a skill that all helmspeople must acquire.

Dinghy sailors, it seems possess an innate ability to helm a yacht well and at speed. To develop this, go sailing with the instruments turned off. Hold the tiller or wheel with soft hands. Move your hands around the wheel or along the tiller until you find the area where your body is most relaxed, and most importantly, you can feel the wind on your face. Look forward, and after five minutes sailing, close your eyes. Continue with soft hands and listen. By listening and feeling the wind on your face, you will be able to understand where the yacht's heading without seeing it. Your ability to feel is complete once the soft hands can interpret the changes of force on the wheel or tiller and adjust course accordingly.

TARGETS AND
COMMUNICATION

As the helmsperson, know your job! It has a few layers: helm a course, helm at the desired speed, helm through a bad sea state to negate damage, and... don't hit anything! To helm without collision requires communication from all crew members. To helm a course requires communication from both the navigator and the tactician, but the helmsperson must respect all communication from all crew members. To helm at desired speed requires a VPP (speed and performance) chart, as well as communication from trimmers. To helm through a bad sea state requires an appreciation of the old adage: to finish first, first you must finish.



Invisible touch

SEAN LANGMAN

In the third of our Seamanship Series we focus on the role of what has traditionally been called the helmsman, but which we understand today as the man or woman who has, in theory, a simple task: steering the boat to go as fast as possible. This requires a split-second evaluation of wind shifts and sea states, the ability to anticipate and react to crew work, and a sixth sense to guide the boat into its groove, or optimum performance parameters. SEAN LANGMAN is acknowledged as one of the best around – a champion on tiller and wheel, from dinghies to maxis. Here, he gives us his valuable insights into the technical and intuitive components of helming.



SAILING BIO

Managing Director of the Noakes Group, Sean Langman is one of Australia's best-known sailors. His competitive spirit and raw sailing ability has seen him achieve outstanding success across an amazingly diverse range of craft from 49ers, 18-footers, speed records in his ORMA 60 trimaran, "too many seconds" in the Rolex Sydney Hobart, and wins in other major offshore races aboard the downwind flyer *Xena*. Add to that recent appearances on the GC 32s and the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart on the beautifully restored *Maluka of Kermadie*, which continues to threaten to steal IRC honours from her state-of-the-art carbon rivals.

CONCENTRATION

To helm effectively takes concentration. Understand your own limits and don't stay too long at the helm. Ask the trimmers how you are performing, and ensure the back-up helms are well rested. At sea, water should be supported with an energy drink to maintain salt levels. Don't hold on from going to the heads, and above all, stay warm and dry. Regardless of which yacht I sail offshore, I ensure all crew have appropriate wet weather gear. I use a sealed smock top and wear a beanie. I don't wear a hood as I find it best to have the wind about my face for those moments when feel takes over. If there is a distraction such as a breakage that requires attention, it's best to hand the helm over to a fresh crew member rather than losing focus.

BALANCE

A yacht, by definition, is a machine. It has moving parts and is propelled by conversion of energy. What makes this machine both special and challenging is that the energy converted is natural, and the energy used (wind), is not constant. Understanding the balance and the load paths of each particular yacht is crucial to successfully managing the helm. To do this, look at the yacht out of the water to determine if the mast is over the keel, or well in front. Typically, if the mast is over the keel, the yacht is a masthead rig and driven by large headsails. If the mast is well in front of the keel, then a fractional rig with larger mainsail is typical. Most helmspeople prefer a degree of weather helm, whereby the yacht will naturally head up into the wind when close hauled. A degree of weather helm is desirable for simplicity, however the rudder is a brake when in use, and should be used as little as possible. Each racing yacht must have a sail cross-over (selection) chart. If used correctly, the chart will keep the yacht in balance both in the hydrostatic sense, as well as heel angle. Excessive heel angle increases weather helm and leeway. Both are enemies of VMG.

PUSHING THE LIMITS
Tim Westwood will take on the world's best young sailors in Bermuda.



fourth). "The CYCA had a huge role in my application; they [Team Softbank] were very impressed with the match-racing experience I inherited from the CYCA youth program," added Westwood.

Putting all his CYCA-gained experience into action, the young star's Red Bull Youth America's Cup campaign gets underway in mid-June this year when he'll face-off against teams from Germany, Switzerland, France, Denmark and Sweden in the form of Artemis Youth Racing in Group A.

Still, Westwood is under no illusions. "Being involved with the Youth America's Cup is a huge honour, and it has opened a lot of doors into professional sailing. What drives me is the knowledge that I am competing against the best youth sailors in the world, on the most challenging boats, in the toughest racing circuit. Winning is the only goal."

The race course for the Red Bull Youth America's Cup will be the official America's Cup track on Bermuda's Great Sound with the RBYAC sailing base located in the heart of the America's Cup Village, next to the senior, professional team bases.

Although he won't be involved in the main event, the close proximity and exposure will be a major plus for the young sailor who is thrilled to be competing. "Sailing has always been a huge part of my life. I love the mental, technical and physical challenge it presents. You are required to dynamically maintain your focus, both on the water and in the boat. In extreme sailing, such as the GC32 and the AC45F, the adrenaline and speed is just unreal – you need to be 30 seconds ahead of what you are doing all the time, or things can get nasty."

All racing in Bermuda will be in the same one-design AC45 foiling catamarans the America's Cup teams competed in at the Louis Vuitton America's Cup World Series. A fleet of eight AC45Fs will be made available by the America's Cup Event Authority, including a communal shore team whose mission is to help the RBYAC teams familiarise themselves with boat technology, handling and maintenance.

Sailing knowledge and the skills to push the boats to their limits are major factors, but when it comes to the centimetres and milliseconds that can be the difference

Representing the best young sailing talent worldwide, twelve youth teams will take part in this unique series. Competition will be fierce, but for 20-year-old Japanese-Australian Tim Westwood, the Red Bull Youth America's Cup is a perfect opportunity. He commented, "my path to the competition started with the America's Cup SoftBank Team Japan trial back in November 2015 where, over the course of three days in Japan, we were put through a gruelling physical test. Unfortunately I didn't make it through the trials, but I was asked to be involved with the Youth America's Cup. For me, this is an even greater opportunity than the America's Cup."

A sailor from the age of six, Tim is one of many competitors at the America's Cup who have refined their trade at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Youth Sailing Academy. After joining the CYCA last year, Westwood has been an integral part of the CYCA Youth Sailing Academy Advanced squad, competing at the Victorian state titles (finishing third), and the club Marine NSW States (finishing

Extreme competition

Running alongside the 35th America's Cup will be a competition with a smaller audience, but just as important in terms of the future of sailing – the Red Bull Youth America's Cup (RBYAC). The best national youth teams will descend on Bermuda together with CYCA Youth Sailing Academy alumni TIM WESTWOOD, who will put his skills to the test onboard Japan's entry, Kaijin Team Japan.

between winning and losing at the peak of professional sport, Westwood offered some advice. "The boats are getting faster and the racing is getting tighter, so I would suggest people work on their fitness if they want to get into extreme sailing. Sail as much as possible, and take every sailing opportunity you can. Sailing is very much about who you know, so get your name out there, and you too can make it to the top levels."

The Red Bull Youth America's Cup starts on Monday 12 June with the Group A competition underway from Thursday 15 June. ↓ americascup.com

INSPIRING TALENT
 Wil Ryan and Mat
 Belcher with members
 of Southport Yacht Club
 High Performance Team.



This seems to be long overdue given the depth of sailing talent in this region. Who will be using the training centre?

It's great now that two of the ten Olympic classes can be based at the Southport Yacht Club. The fact that a lot of the experienced athletes and coaches can be onsite, that's a huge plus. For the Youth Programs and the Tackers Program, the fact there will be multiple Olympians around the Club encourages a great vibe. In the short term we're going to be focussing quite a lot on development and squads for nationals. There will be training camps, and state programs through the Queensland Academy of Sport will be able to use the site.

What about your role? You've confirmed you are going to campaign for Tokyo with Will in the 470s, you are juggling a few responsibilities?

I love competing, representing Australia, so it's a pleasure for me to continue to do what I love. This site is instrumental in Will and my campaign for Tokyo, I can train here where my family and my two young kids are. And, there's the great opportunity for me to put back and support the squads. It means more training here, less time overseas and hopefully we'll do what we need to do to get the results.

BASE LAYER

Olympic medallists and World Champions Mat Belcher and Will Ryan, along with the remainder of Australia's 470 sailors will officially call the Gold Coast home with the announcement that the Australian Sailing Team will establish a training centre there. As Mat explained to SCOTT ALLE many benefits are set to flow from the first facility outside of the NTC (National Training Centre).

So this is a pretty big change in your preparation strategy?

A lot has gone into this. It's not a matter of getting a couple of containers and building the site; there's a lot of changes in strategy, there's changes in the way we've been running the programs and it's going to be a shift or an adjustment for the 470 group. But it's something that the team needed and we are looking forward to it.

You and Will recently placed third behind the Swedish crew at the 470 European Championships. How you feel your form is?

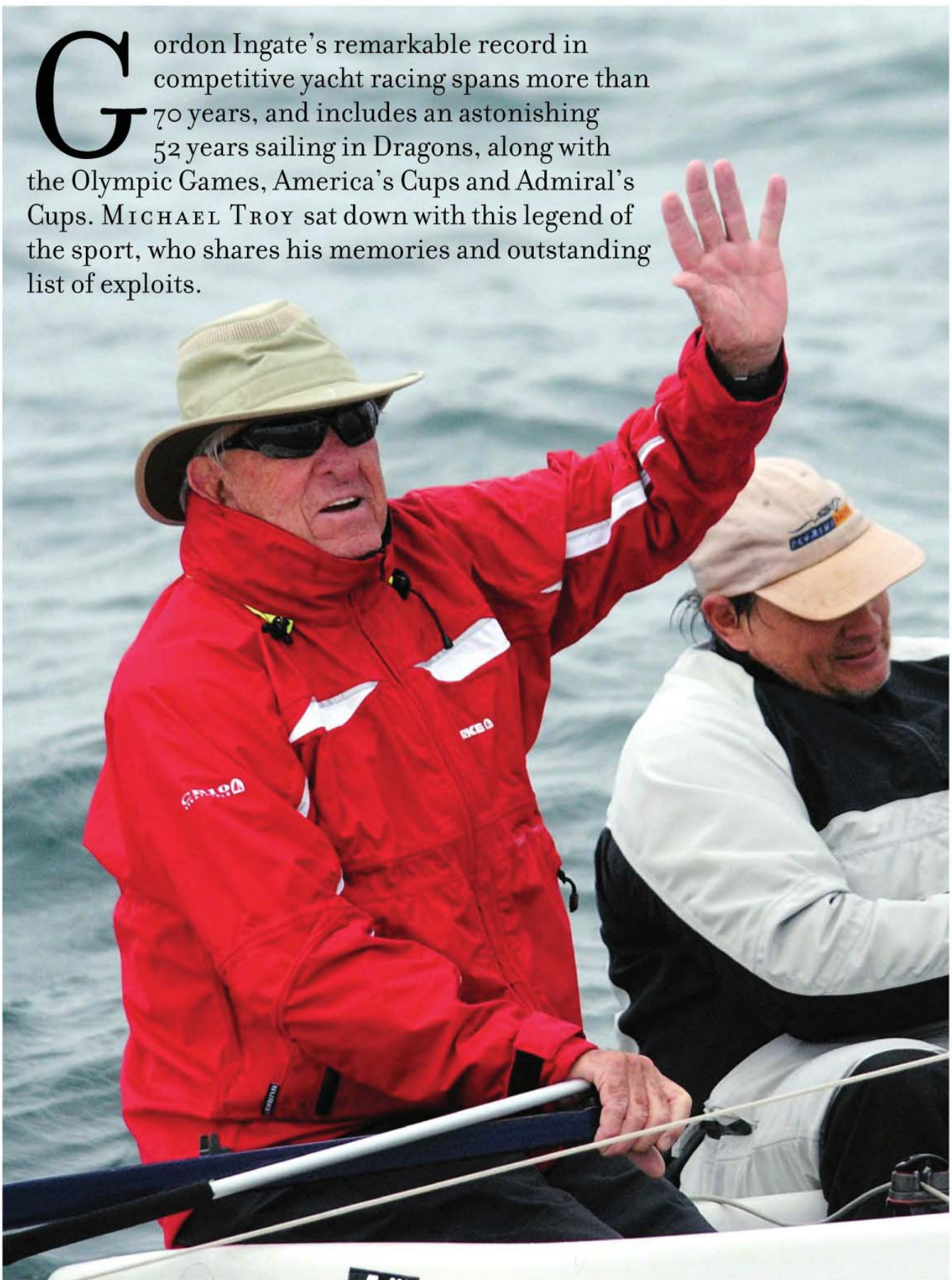
We wanted to see where we're at. Unfortunately, we broke our forestay toward the end of the regatta when we were

winning the race on the second beat and forced us to count our worst result. We're going to head back overseas for Kiel Week and our World Championships, (7-15 July in Thessaloniki, Greece).

Like many of us you'll be watching the America's Cup in Bermuda. What will you be particularly interested in?

The AC is really starting to transform sailing. You can see it with the enthusiasm for foiling; just looking at the dynamics, the technology, the crew work, the psychology of the racing. Like everyone I'll be enjoying the tight contests; it's pretty cool. ⚓
australiansailing.org
southportyachtclub.com.au

Gordon Ingate's remarkable record in competitive yacht racing spans more than 70 years, and includes an astonishing 52 years sailing in Dragons, along with the Olympic Games, America's Cups and Admiral's Cups. MICHAEL TROY sat down with this legend of the sport, who shares his memories and outstanding list of exploits.



RARE VINTAGE
Gretel II in a tacking duel with *Gretel* during a trial race off Sydney Head. Left: Ingate at the helm of *Whimsical* is still the Australian Dragon champion, having won the Prince Philip Cup for the third time in January.



A BRILLIANT *Career*

Everyone deserves at least one big break in their life, and for 91-year-old Gordon Ingate, or Wingnut as he is universally known, it came in 1967 with a phone call from Frank Packer. He was sounding out his interest in racing 12-metre yachts because he had shown great skill skippering *Caprice of Huon* to second in the 1965 Admiral's Cup, and because of his reputation for match racing in the Dragon Class.

The next day Ingate went to the third floor of the Packer's Park Street office in Sydney, where he remembers a gruff Frank Packer sitting at a very small desk. He looked up and said, "Where is your hat?" to which Ingate replied, "Sorry sir, I don't have one."

"Well, go and buy one," Packer barked.

Then, as he reached into his desk, Packer grabbed some keys and threw them at him. "Would you like to sail a 12-metre?"

They were the keys to *Vim*, and she was his to do with as he wanted, so Ingate picked a crew that included a young James Hardy,

but also a lot of blokes off the street. He recalls, "it was the best 18 months I've ever had. We just learned to sail this beautiful yacht. With no stress, the crew just got better and better."

And so started Ingate's twenty-year campaign to win the America's Cup, something he described as simply, "the best thing I've ever done."

A LIFE ON THE WATER

Like many Sydney kids of the era, Gordon took to sailing young, joining the sea scouts in Sugarloaf Bay in Sydney at nine years of age. Somehow he earned the nickname Wingnut, not because his ears were sticking out, but because his mates found it easier to say than Ingate.

Reflecting on his extraordinary 82-year career on the water, Ingate says the essence of sailing well is "to be aware of where you are, of what's going on around you – the wind and waves – and make the best of what you've got available."

He also believes the perfect combination is when the wind is blowing at 14 knots, and has never lost his passion for just being on the water. "The wind is never consistent. I like to watch the shape of the waves, and how they impact the boats."

Ingate recalled his father's advice to never use the four-letter word 'work'. He was to 'attend to his affairs' instead, which he took to mean that he needed a job that gave him the flexibility to sail.

In his twenties, he designed and built his own waterfront home at Cammeray, where he still lives. (There's a 1950s ship's bell at the front door, and inside is a living history of Australian sailing, full of paintings and photographs of a bygone era.)

At the time, in a radical break from tradition, Ingate installed Sydney's first aluminium roof, and was then asked to fit another at the Coogee telephone exchange – it became a career that kept him employed until his mid sixties.

DRAGON'S BREATH

While admitting to being a vocal skipper, he was always happiest in a Dragon, a three-crew class designed in 1926 that he first sailed competitively in 1956, narrowly missing out on taking the Australian title. It took him 52 more years to eventually succeed in Hobart.

Ingate loves the simplicity of the Dragon class. "It's the only class that has remained true to its design. You can't change a thing. And it's the only sailing class where the skill of the crew is the deciding factor – the boat that comes last can easily come first if sailed well."

And at 91, Ingate is still the Australian Dragon champion, having won the Prince Philip Cup for the third time in January with long-time crew member David Giles who worked the foredeck, and Giles' daughter Amy in the middle.

Ingate's *Whimsical* from the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron won the deciding last race by just 35 seconds, but he did admit that it took a lot out of him to beat the crews half his age.

DOGGED BY CONTROVERSY

Beside his love of sailing round the cans at home, Ingate is an accomplished international yachtsman and competed in every Australian Olympic qualifying round from 1948–76. He also represented Australia in the Tempest class at the ill-fated Munich Olympics in 1972. At 42 years of age, he came second last with what he jokes was the oldest, heaviest and tallest crew to ever compete at the Olympics.

In that same year, Ingate was caught up in another controversy that saw him walk away from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and ocean racing. He was favourite to take out overall winner in the 1972 Sydney Hobart Yacht Race with *Caprice of Huon*, but he had some pretty stiff competition in the

form of American millionaire Ted Turner's revamped 12-metre *American Eagle*. Ingate came in second by the excruciating slim margin of just six minutes.

He said he was perfectly happy with second, but found out a week later there had been a mistake. "An official let it slip that I had actually won the race by 21 minutes – the CYCA had miscalculated Turner's finish time."

CHASING THE CUP

Ingate then put all his effort into the America's Cup campaign, but it wasn't without drama either. After spending 18 months learning to sail a 12-metre around Sydney Harbour, Ingate and his crew on *Vim* were in top form – and Sir Frank Packer wanted to stir the pot.

Ingate said, "On my 67th birthday, Frank told me to sail *Gretel*... on a weekday... against *Dame Pattie*. I was to use the *Gretel* crew. My boss wouldn't let me go for the day, but I just went – and was sacked on the spot."

When Ingate arrived at the dock, the *Gretel* crew walked off, angry at the decision to put him in charge, but eventually agreed to sail the boat. Ingate said, "the tactician never said a word the whole day. We didn't win, but we did well enough. Sir Frank said to me afterwards, 'you were having trouble, weren't you? Don't worry, I fired the tactician.'"

"Wealthy people are up the front of the race because of their money, it's nothing to do with their ability. I like them but the money distorts the true value of sailing."

The campaign still had a lot of challenges to overcome. Ingate remembers, "the original *Gretel* was designed in 1962 by Alan Payne to sail off Sydney Heads. The only race they won was in 1962 when it was blowing like it does off the Heads. It took a long time to work out that we had to build a 12-metre for Rhode Island conditions."

Unfortunately, Frank Packer never succeeded in taking the Cup from the Americans, and it took four attempts by controversial Perth businessman Alan Bond for him to finally succeed in 1983.

STIRRING THE POT HIMSELF

Ingate has never been afraid to ruffle a few feathers when he feels the true spirit of sailing is being compromised: in particular, he wants the 100-foot maxis in the Rolex Sydney Hobart to be put in their own race, as he argues they have too many mechanical advantages. He believes "wealthy people are up the front of the race because of their money; it's got nothing to do with their ability. I like them, but the money distorts the true value of sailing."

Arguably one of the oldest one-design yachtsmen in the world, Gordon Ingate remains one of the sport's great achievers – and characters. ⚓



MASTER CLASS
Gordon Ingate has been centre stage for many of the milestones in the history of Australian sailing.



The Medal Maker

Author: Roger Vaughan
 Publisher: Altamira-Verlag
 282 pages
 Price: \$39.95

The Medal Maker is the biography of Victor Kovalenko, Australia's world beating sailing super-coach. It charts his amazing journey, from Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine, growing-up as a student on the Ukrainian athletic team, to 10 years later becoming an Honorary Master of Sports and subsequently team President. It describes his own Olympic sailing aspirations, denied the opportunity because of a boycott on the 1984 Games.

Kovalenko overcame that disappointment to coach the 1996 470 Men's and Women's Ukraine crews to Olympic Gold and Bronze respectively, Kovalenko first visited Australia with his team in 1991 for the 470 Worlds.

"I stayed to help Jeni Lidgett and Addy Bucek with their 470 Olympic campaign. I loved Australia. I loved the people and the gold and green hills – Australia is my love affair," he declared on his return in 1997.

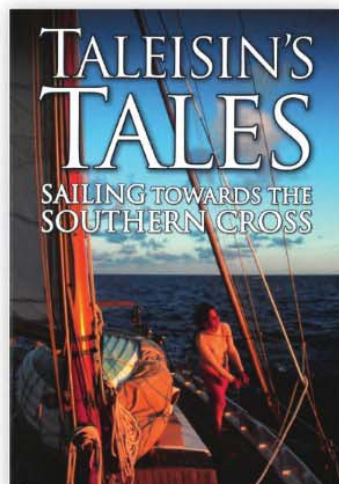
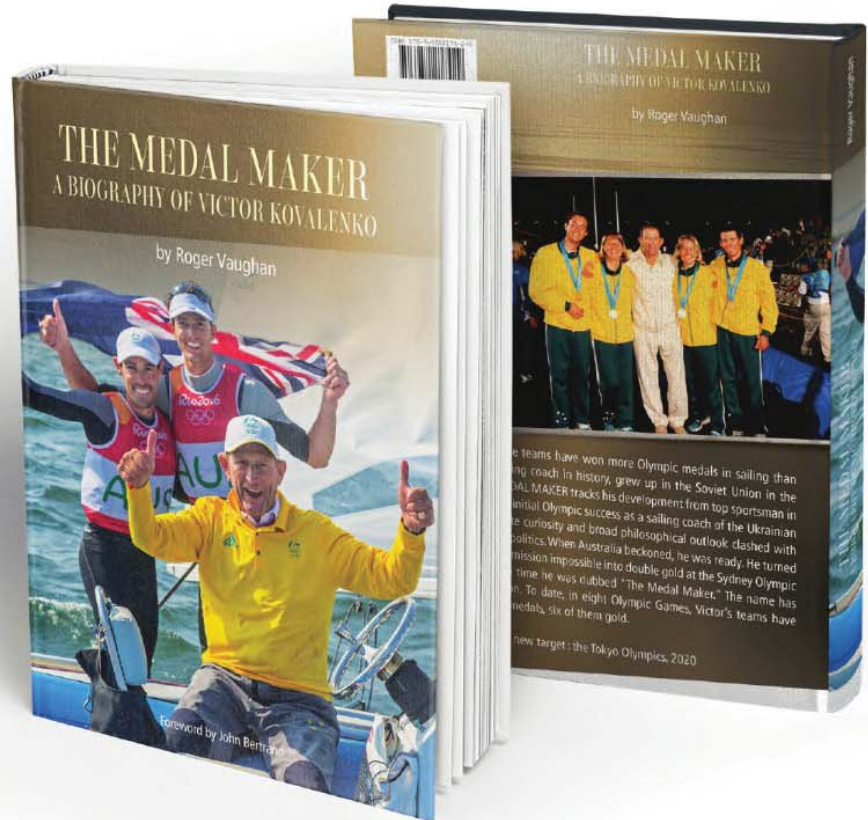
Struggling to coax results from its 470 sailors, the Australian Yachting Federation (now Australian Sailing) asked Kovalenko to coach its male and female 470 teams, his reputation earning him the sobriquet, 'The Medal Maker'.

He shunned that moniker, saying it made him uncomfortable, but as the Olympic medal tally continued, Kovalenko became accustomed to it.

The man behind Australia's most successful results at the 2012 Olympics has received many accolades since arriving in Australia; an Order of Australia medal in 2012 and inducted into the Sport Australia Hall of Fame in 2013.

The boat whisperer, is arguably the most successful sailing coach in the world. He has coached crews to 10 Olympic sailing medals, among them Malcolm Page, the first Australian sailor to win back-to-back Olympic Gold medals, and the most decorated 470 Men's sailor of all time.

boatbooks@boatbooks-aust.com.au

**Taleisin's Tales:****Sailing Towards the Southern Cross**

Author: Lin and Larry Pardey
 Publisher: Pardey Books
 220 pages
 Price: \$29.95

Including stories from paradise and hard-won lessons in seamanship, *Taleisin's Tales* reflects back to the first miles Lin and Larry Pardey gained together on their second boat – one they built lovingly with teak carvel planking over sawn black locust frames. The book begins with the boat launch and the transition from their cherished *Seraffyn*, and includes details from outfitting, provisioning and final detailing during the early months Lin and Larry spent getting to know their new bluewater cruiser, as well as moments of melancholy as they let go of attachments to their first trusty boat that took them around the world.

In the style readers have come to know through the Pardeys ever popular *Cruising in Seraffyn* series and Lin's award winning *Bull Canyon*, this book relates stories sometimes harrowing, sometimes cautionary, sometimes hilarious and often heart-warming, especially when it comes to encounters with the people of the South Pacific who become family. If there is a lesson to be gained from reading *Taleisin's Tales*, it's that slowing the pace and taking each day as it comes brings unexpected moments of clarity and joy.

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STAYING CONNECTED

Garmin's new quatix 5 smartwatch lets you steer your boat remotely and mark waypoints on your chart.



With autopilot control and the ability to mark MFD waypoints, the new quatix 5 marine GPS smartwatch showcases the latest wrist-worn marine configured technology.

Due out mid-June, the quatix 5 is Garmin's next-generation marine GPS smartwatch with comprehensive boat connectivity. The device pairs with onboard Garmin electronics to stream NMEA 2000 boat data to your wrist no matter where you are on the boat.

Targetted at sailors, powerboaters and personal watercraft users, this dedicated marine smartwatch offers accessible navigation functions and data – including autopilot control, remote multifunction display (MFD) waypoint marking, and data streaming — including speed, depth, temperature and wind.

Of course, remotes for autopilots are commonplace, but this is the first smartwatch we know that can change your boat's heading and perform a long list of other boating functions from your wrist as you roam the deck.

STEER YOUR BOAT, SAVE WAYPOINTS

When the quatix 5 is paired with a GHC 20 autopilot control unit, it can be used to control the autopilot to change heading, engage heading hold, steer to an active GPS route, and initiate patterns so that users can maintain control of the vessel even if they're not at the helm.

Garmin says the new quatix 5 can also remotely mark a waypoint on a connected chartplotter(s) - from anywhere on the boat — at the touch of a button.

For yacht racing, the quatix 5 features tack assist, race countdown timer, distance to start line, and time to burn. It also relays up-to-date tide data downloaded for the area you're in through a smartphone and will have access to that data for seven days.

INTERCHANGEABLE BANDS

The new QuickFit bands are available in metal, leather or silicone, users can interchange their watchband in seconds without tools. The design with a stainless steel bezel, buttons and rear case is more compact than previous models.

Water rated to 100 meters, the quatix 5 is built to withstand the elements and features a sunlight-readable colour display with an LED backlight screen.

LONGER BATTERY LIFE

The quatix 5 boasts up to 24 hours of battery life in GPS mode, 60 hours in UltraTrac mode and two weeks in smartwatch mode (depending on settings).

In addition to preloaded marine-specific feature sets, the quatix 5 includes a host of built-in activity profiles for land and water sports like running, hiking, biking, swimming, rowing, and paddle boarding. When paired with a compatible smartphone, you can get call, text and email smart notifications on your wrist.

The quatix 5 is expected to be available in two versions: the quatix 5 with a blue silicone QuickFit band for AUD\$799; and the quatix 5 Sapphire with a scratch-resistant sapphire crystal lens and a stainless steel band, as well as a blue silicone QuickFit band for \$949. [garmin.com](http://www.garmin.com)


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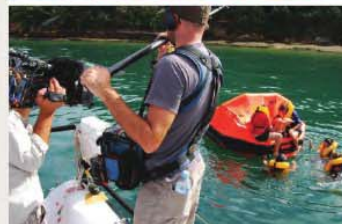
A long-lasting, quick drying and low odour finish for protecting your boat's topsides, Marinecoat is the ideal combination of an economical choice and good performance. Its popularity stems from its ease of application, durability, gloss finish and excellent colour.

Marinecoat is also highly versatile – able to be applied with a brush, roller or spray to hull, deck (either smooth or non-skid), in the bilge and lockers, and to exterior and interior cabin areas, including most helpfully, hard-to-reach or awkwardly shaped trim items. Colours are practical choices; Surf White, Off White, Oyster White, Alpine White and Royal Blue in 500ml, 1 litre and 4 litre, (Surf White only, pack sizes). yachtpaint.com

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RACE & REGATTA DATES

KEEP TRACK OF THIS SEASON'S IMPORTANT EVENTS.

AUSTRALIA	DATE	CLUB	INTERNATIONAL	DATE	COUNTRY
JUNE			JUNE		
Off The Beach Catamarans Winter Series Day 1	3 Jun	SYC	151 Miglia, Livorno	1 Jun	Italy
Winter Series Race 1	3 Jun	RPAYC	Match Race Germany 2017	1 Jun	Germany
Land Rover Winter Series Race 6	4 Jun	CYCA	WMRT Match Cup	1 Jun	Russia
Winter Series Dinghies Race 3	4 Jun	BSC	J/22 World Championship	2 Jun	The Netherlands
Two Handed & Women's Winter Series	4 Jun	RPAYC	RS Feva European Championship	2 Jun	Switzerland
Offshore Sailing Winter Series Day 4	4 Jun	SYC	Trofeo de Vela Conde Godó	2 Jun	Spain
Off The Beach Dinghies Junior Autumn Sunrise Series	4 Jun	SYC	Soling Austrian Championship	3 Jun	Austria
Off The Beach Dinghies Club Championships	4 Jun	SYC	RS FEVA European Championship 2017	3 Jun	Switzerland
Inshore Division Pot Hunters Race 2	7 Jun	SYC	Oakcliff Early June Grade 4, Oyster Bay	3 Jun	USA
Thursday Twilight Winter Series Race 6	8 Jun	SYC	Kyiv Sailing Week	3 Jun	Ukraine
Off The Beach Catamarans Winter Series Day 2	10 Jun	SYC	Young Europeans Sailing	3 Jun	Germany
VX One Midwinter Championships	10-12 Jun	RQYS	New Zealand Youth World Trials	3 Jun	New Zealand
Land Rover Winter Series Ladies Day Race 2	11 Jun	CYCA	Sailing World Cup Final, Santander	4 Jun	Spain
Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta	11 Jun	RMYS	Brindisi – Corfu International Regatta	7 Jun	Italy
Winter Series Race 2	17 Jun	RPAYC	International Dragon World Championship	9 Jun	Portugal
Land Rover Winter Series Race 7	18 Jun	CYCA	International Snipe Regatta	9 Jun	Italy
Winter Series Dinghies Race 4	18 Jun	BSC	RS: One World Championships	10 Jun	Vietnam
52nd Frostbite Regatta	18 Jun	RMYS	Soling Dutch Open	10 Jun	The Netherlands
RYCT Winter Series – Race 1	18 Jun	RYCT	Laser European Master Championship	10 Jun	France
Shelving Systems Regatta	24 Jun	CYCA	GKSS Spring Cup 2017	10 Jun	Sweden
Winter Series Race 3	24 Jun	RPAYC	Women's 280 Match Race Cup	10 Jun	Finland
Land Rover Winter Series Race 8	25 Jun	CYCA	Giraglia Rolex Cup	11 Jun	France
JULY			IFCA Slalom World Championship	12 Jun	France
Land Rover Winter Series Race 9	2 Jul	CYCA	Star Western Hemisphere Championship	13 Jun	USA
Darwin International Youth Match Racing Champs	4 Jul	DSC	Women's Match Racing World Championship	16 Jun	The Netherlands
Inshore Division Pot Hunters Race 4	5 Jul	SYC	29er Canadian Championship	22 Jun	Canada
Thursday Twilight Winter Series Race 10	6 Jul	SYC	J/70 Eurocup	23 Jun	Italy
Off The Beach Catamarans Winter Series Day 5	8 Jul	SYC	Extreme Sailing Series Act 3	29 Jun	Portugal
Great Northern Series (Whitsunday Island)	8 Jul	WSC	2.4mR World Championship	30 Jun	The Netherlands
Ted Elkes Memorial Yacht Race	8-9 Jul	SYC	JULY		
Off The Beach Dinghies Polar Bear Series Day 3	9 Jul	SYC	Star World Championship	1 Jul	Denmark
Land Rover Winter Series 10	9 Jul	CYCA	Nieuwpoort Week	1 Jul	Belgium
Thursday Twilight Winter Series Race 11	13 Jul	SYC	Summer Wind Trasimeno	1 Jul	Italy
Off The Beach Catamarans Winter Series Day 6	15 Jul	SYC	IFCA Slalom Womens World Championship	4 Jul	France
Land Rover Winter Series Closing Ladies Day Race	16 Jul	CYCA	International Europe Class World Championship	4 Jul	Spain
CYCA Annual General Meeting	18 Jul	CYCA	IFCA Men Slalom European Championship	4 Jul	France
Captain John Piper Regatta	22-23 Jul	CYCA	470 World Championship	7 Jul	Greece
Land Rover Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race	29 Jul	CYCA/SYC	Optimist World Championship	11 Jul	Thailand
AUGUST			Rolex Farr 40 World Championship	13 Jul	Italy
Club Marine Brisbane to Keppel Tropical Yacht Race	4 Aug	RQYS	M32 Catamaran World Championships	13 Jul	Sweden
Crab Island Classic	5 Aug	SYC	F16 European Championship	16 Jul	Switzerland
Spice Islands Darwin Ambon Yacht Race	5 Aug	DBCYA	Laser 4.7 Youth World Championship	16 Jul	Belgium
Club Marine NSW Youth Match Racing Championship	5-6 Aug	CYCA	Paralympic Sailing European Championship	18 Jul	Poland
Airlie Beach Race Week	10-17 Aug	WSC	Moth World Championship	23 Jul	Italy
Spring Series	13 Aug – 3 Sept	CYCA	Nacra 15 Racing Championships	24 Jul	Italy
Audi Hamilton Island Race Week	19-26 Aug	HIYCS	Melges 24 World Championship	28 Jul	Finland
			29er World Championship	29 Jul	USA

To have your event added to the calendar, please email: editor@oceanmedia.com.au.

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