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It has been an exciting few months of racing both at the CYCA and for those members competing in regattas in northern waters.

The CYCA Blue Water Pointscore Series got off to a somewhat slow and frustrating start for those competitors in the Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race. *Wild Thing*, skippered by Grant Wharington, won line honours in a time of two days, one hour, 21 mins and 14 secs. *Branneu*, owned by CYCA member Chris Bran, won the race overall from Phil Moloney's *Papillon*, and Roger Hickman's *Wild Rose*. Andy Kearnan's *L'Altra Donna* took ORCi honours, whilst James Murchison's *Abracadabra* won the PHS Division.

Congratulations to all divisional winners (see page 19 for full wrap).

The inaugural five-race Spring Series, that followed on from the CYCA Winter Series, proved popular and was well supported by 26 yachts with Vice Commodore John Cameron's *More Witchcraft* winning the Spinnaker Division from *Sea Rug Hoo Ha* and *Speedwell*. The Non-Spinnaker division was won by Rear Commodore John Markos and Michael Delaney's *Eye Appeal* from *Apple Jack* and *Silver Minx*.

Many CYCA members sailed on to the northern regattas and achieved success. My own boat *Flying Cloud* won IRC division at Abell Marina Airlie Beach Race Week from *Tulip*, owned by Bernie Van't Hof. Matt Allen's Farr 400 *Ichi Ban* finished

third in the Performance Racing at Abell Marina Airlie Beach and second at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week. Marcus Blackmore's *Hooligan* won IRC racing division for the second consecutive year at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week with *Celestial* (Sam Haynes) third. *Balance* (Paul Clitheroe) and *Equinox II* (Anthony Dunn) finished second and third respectively in IRC Passage Division 1. *L'Altra Donna* (Andy Kearnan) won IRC Passage Division 2 from *Local Hero* with *Flying Cloud* third.

At the SeaLink Magnetic Island Regatta, Bob Steel's *Quest* won IRC with *Flying Cloud* finishing third. This series was sailed in moderate South East trade winds unlike the light conditions experienced at the Airlie and Hamilton Regattas. I am proud to say that *Flying Cloud* won the inaugural Queensland Season of Sailing Cup on the basis of the results in IRC division at the three Queensland Regattas.

The new Youth Sailing Academy Elliott 7 fleet made their regatta debut in August in Club Marine NSW Youth Match Racing, which was won by the CYCA team of Murray Jones and his crew of Cam Gundy, Brett Dixon, Beynon Telford and Matt Stenta, from two Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club teams skippered by Milly Bennett and Malcolm Parker. In late September, the CYCA Youth Sailing Academy hosted the Australian Open and Australian Women's Match Racing Championship, concluding with the Australian Youth Match Racing Championship. The new fleet has exceeded expectations in their performance and is a great asset to the Club.

The CYCA YSA Alumni Party – celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the YSA, was held on 20 September. It was wonderful to have many of our graduates back to the Club. We can be proud of the CYCA Youth Sailing Academy with over 2000 young people having passed through the program over its 20-year history with many progressing to champion status and with others continuing their sailing at the Club.

Our CYCA team lead by Bruce Foye finished a credible 10th in the New York Yacht Club Invitational Cup sailed at Newport, Rhode Island in Swan 42s. Some 20 international teams representing major yacht clubs from around the world keenly contested the regatta.

As I write my column our redevelopment sub-committee

has received an updated program scheduling the practical completion of the new hardstand for 18 October 2013. This revised date represents a delay of around three weeks from the original program that is attributed to delays experienced with the fabrication of the steel beams and subsequent painting of those beams.

This will be a great asset to the Club, and I thank members for their patience during construction.

On the evening of Friday 25 October, the annual CYCA SOLAS Trusts Dinner with Grant Simmer as guest speaker will be conducted and I encourage you all to attend. The CYCA Sydney Hobart Yacht Race Safety of Life At Sea Trust (CYCA SOLAS Trusts) was established by the CYCA in 1998 following the tragic loss of life in the Sydney Hobart Race. The Trust's objectives are to assist immediate family needs of those lost at sea during Yachting Australia-sanctioned races, provide assistance to search and rescue organisations and foster research and training to improve procedures and equipment for use at sea.

Since 1998, the Trusts have donated more than \$840,000 to search and rescue organisations Australia-wide.

You never know when or where you may need to call on emergency help and by attending this event you will be supporting the sailors own charity that in turn supports the organisations that you may one day call upon.

It is pleasing to note at the time of writing, that we have already received 51 entries for the 69th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race. We welcome the entries of the 12 Clipper Round the World Yachts to our Race this year and expect a fleet of 80 yachts to compete with strong competition in all divisions.

The International Fleet Review, celebrating 100 years of the Royal Australian Navy, will be conducted on Sydney Harbour during 3-11 October. For further information on this historic event log on to www.navy.gov.au/ifr/. If you would like to participate and host a sailor from a visiting naval vessel in the RANSA International Fleet Review Sailing regatta on Thursday 10 October, please enter your boat with RANSA today.

Finally I would like to wish all members a successful Summer Sailing Season and I look forward to see you enjoying the wonderful facilities of our Club.

HOWARD PIGGOTT
Commodore CYCA

SAVE THE DATE
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Welcome to our cruising edition of *Offshore Yachting*, well at least what we like to think of as a more laid back approach to the joys of life under sail. Bookended as it is between the racing and revelry of the Queensland regatta weeks in August and the competitive club pointscore series of racing leading up to the iconic Rolex Sydney Hobart come Boxing Day, this mild mannered October issue is a welcome breather.

Our prolific cruising coverage this issue includes a host of special features starting with the popularity of brand rallies, increasingly organised by a multitude of yachting brand names competing to keep the hearts, souls and wallets of their brand's loyal owners committed to their sailing creed and breed. In *Cruising Essentials*, world cruising diehard Nancy Knudsen regales us with her ten top tips to keep your cruising simple and enjoyable.

For our Yacht Review, Kevin Green sails the latest luxury cruiser from Beneteau, the Oceanis 55, recently launched at the Sydney Boat Show.

The two dozen or so UK-built, bluewater cruising yachts sailing in the Oyster World Rally, perhaps the ultimate expression of the brand rally concept with its truly global scope, stopped over in Queensland during August. I was at Hamilton Island to meet and greet them on arrival, and I have many inspiring tales to recount in our special World Rally feature this issue; and Jeni Bone gets her feet wet looking into the yacht tender market today – from 'boats in a bag' to high-speed chase boats, tenders have come a long, long way for a little boat designed simply to get you from ship to shore.

For the racing set, fear not, as this edition rounds up all the racing action of the Sydney Gold Coast race, Airlie Beach and Hamilton Island race weeks in a feast of glorious yachting photography. Club Commodore Howard Piggott



spent a month racing his Beneteau 40 *Flying Cloud* in each of the above events, commencing with the CYCA's Sydney Gold Coast and culminating with Magnetic Island Race Week. Both skipper and crew should be commended for achieving a podium finish for their division in every one of the Queensland race weeks, with a first at Airlie, third at Hamilton and third again at Magnetic. Topping off those results, their consistent efforts saw Piggott and *Flying Cloud* crew awarded the Queensland government's inaugural 'Queensland Season of Sailing' trophy. Congratulations!

We hope you enjoy the read!

ANTHONY TWIBILL
Publisher

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ANDREA FRANCOLINI



CYCA SOLAS TRUSTS

Fundraising dinner

Friday 25 October

Commodore Howard Piggott together with CYCA SOLAS Trusts Chairman Matt Allen, and the CYCA Associates Committee, extends an invitation to all CYCA members, ocean racers and guests to attend an evening with Grant Simmer in support of the CYCA Safety of Life at Sea Trusts.

Simmer is a renowned navigator and was an integral part of Team Alinghi and their America's Cup campaigns for 10 years. In February 2010, Simmer was appointed CEO of Team Origin, Britain's team for the 2013 America's Cup, as part of the team's bid to strengthen leadership and management. He was also the navigator on board *Australia II* when she won the Cup in 1983 – the first time it had been out of US hands for 132 years.

Simmer has competed in numerous ocean races around the world including the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

"I would like to encourage you all to book a table at this dinner as it raises vital funds for the CYCA SOLAS Trusts charity, the sailors' own charity, which was established after the tragic 1998 Sydney Hobart race," Commodore Piggott said.

"To date, CYCA SOLAS Trusts has donated over \$840,000 to search and rescue organisations Australia-wide," chairman Matt Allen said. "These organisations can be called on to respond to all types of emergencies including coming to the aid of yachts in distress, whether racing or cruising, and grants from the CYCA SOLAS Trusts allow these organisations to continue to provide vital services to the community at large."

Tickets are \$110 per head, that includes pre-dinner drinks, three-course dinner and wine. A silent auction will also be conducted on the evening with great items from Evanslea Boutique B&B in Mudgee, Camilla, Hunt Leather, Harken and two tickets on a vessel in the exclusion zone to watch the start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

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OCEAN RACER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominations now open

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia has announced that nominations are open for its prestigious Ocean Racer of the Year Awards.

THE 2013 Ocean Racer of the Year Awards will be announced on Thursday 12 December 2013, and the CYCA welcomes nominations from fellow offshore clubs that have suitable candidates they feel would be eligible for these awards.

THE 2013 AWARD CATEGORIES

- Ocean Racing Yachtsman of the Year
- Sally Gordon Memorial Trophy for the Ocean Crew Person of the Year
- Ocean Veteran of the Year
- Ocean Rookie of the Year
- Ocean Navigator of the Year

Nominations close on Monday, 18 November and should be forwarded to the CYCA with a brief history of the candidate's offshore performances and achievements for the period of 20 July 2012 – 20 July 2013.

"These awards recognise many yachtsmen and women from around

the country, some of whom are icons of the sport, and some who participate in the sport of sailing just for the love of it," CYCA Commodore Howard Piggott said.

"I encourage Commodores of fellow clubs and yacht owners to nominate eligible individuals for these prestigious awards."

Since its inception in 1985, the Ocean Racer of the Year Award has gone to many of Australia's most notable ocean racing skippers, starting with Tasmanian Don Calvert and including Victorians Gino Knezic and Lou Abrahams, South Australian Kevan Pearce and Sydney yachtsmen Syd Fischer (four times), Roger Hickman, Geoff Ross, Matt Allen (twice), and Bob Thomas and Ed Psaltis (twice).

To download the nomination form log on to the website.

www.cyca.com.au

SILVERWARE CLUB
2012 Ocean Racer of the Year Award Recipients, Phil Eadie (Navigator), Gail Harland (Crew Person), Justin Wells (Rookie) and Darryl Hodgkinson (Ocean Racer of the Year).



RENDEZVOUS CRUISE TO HOBART

Slow boat to Hobart

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Rendezvous Cruise to Hobart is now becoming a biennial tradition with a designated arrival time in Hobart of early February, allowing participants to link up with the popular Australian Wooden Boat Festival and the Van Diemen's Land Circumnavigation Cruise, reports DENIS DOYLE.

ORGANISED by like-minded members of the CYCA, with previous cruises sailed in 2009, 2011 and most recently 2013, the Rendezvous Cruise is open to all and the event embodies the spirit of a relaxed cruise. The departure time therefore is up to the individual crews, though some yachts leave in groups for company and support.

For 2013, 14 yachts registered for the voyage south. Notable boats included *Taratibu*, and famed Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race veterans *Fare Thee Well*, *Fidelis*, *Kintail* and *Malohi*.

The east coast of Australia and Tasmania contains stunning cruising destinations. Starting in Sydney, one of Australia's most beautiful harbours, sailors can experience the history and natural beauty of the New South Wales coast as they cruise south. There is a customary stop in Twofold Bay to top up on fuel and wait on a suitable weather window for the Bass Strait crossing and also a stop to sample the historic hospitality of Eden.

The weather was a touch volatile for most of the participants and the daily weather forecast from Roger Badham was once again invaluable.

After crossing Bass Strait the island of Tasmania greets you with rugged scenery and welcoming anchorages. Wineglass Bay is a popular first stop where yachts and their crews gather

to relax as the sun goes down, sharing memorable meals and swapping stories of their Bass Strait crossings and other adventures. Other popular rendezvous are Schouten Island, Triabunna, Maria Island, Fortescue Bay, Dunalley Canal, Bruny Island, Kettering, Kermadec and many more.

In 2013 Skipr.net again served as the communications hub. In the months leading up to the cruise a program of cruise information evenings were held at the CYCA and rendezvous locations were organised. The radio communications schedule and tailored en-route weather information was made available to all yachts and discussed with great interest.

Many of the yachts on the cruise had also made arrangements to participate in the Wooden Boat Festival and as it drew to a close they were organising to continue cruising, circumnavigating Tasmania or planning their return. All yachts were warmly welcomed at the many anchorages and marinas around Tasmania, in particular the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania whose members were enthusiastic to share news, anchorages and welcome all.

A very strong sense of community was obvious at the many impromptu gatherings at anchorages and marinas along our route.

SOUTHERN CHARMS
The CYCA Rendezvous Cruise to Hobart allows owners opportunity to circumnavigate Tasmania, as well as enjoy the city delights of Hobart.

The Rendezvous Cruise to Hobart is a relaxed way to enjoy your yacht and the ideal cruising grounds that we have available to us on the east coast of Australia and Tasmania.

Organised support and support from fellow cruisers takes the stress away and makes the experience one to be enjoyed and remembered for years to come.

We hope you can all join us in early 2015 as we once again set off on our own Sydney to Hobart, albeit by the slower route south. For more information contact Denis Doyle at cycacruising@gmail.com ⚓

EIGHT BELLS

Dr Peter Geddes

By Peter Campbell

Dr Peter Geddes, former Cruising Yacht Club of Australia member and husband of prominent CYCA Associates president, the late Monica Geddes, has passed away in Sydney, aged 84.

Dr Geddes, a radiologist and enthusiastic competitor in the international 30-square-metre class, gave his wife great support in her long and dedicated role with the Associates. She was president in 1994 and 1995.

Monica was also one of the important members who volunteered to assist in the preparations for the annual Sydney Hobart and while Peter was not an ocean racing yachtsman, he was there to back up his wife's efforts.

The Monica Geddes Memorial Trophy Race has been the traditional opening event of the CYCA summer racing season for the past 18 years.

Apart from being a keen competitor in the '30 squares' Peter compiled a portfolio of photos of most these classic yachts that raced in Australia and these are on the class website.

Peter Geddes is remembered as a gentle, lovable and generous man, described by friends and family as "always a gentleman."

He was father and father-in-law of Andrew and Annie, Louisa and Andrew Copley, Elizabeth-Anne and David Quartly, Simon (deceased) and Ghia and his three grandchildren.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Peter John Geddes was celebrated in St Josephs Church, Edgecliff on 25 July. Born on 16 June 1929, he passed away on 22 July 2013.

EIGHT BELLS

Sir Robert Crichton-Brown

Past Commodore Sir Robert Crichton-Brown passed away in London. By Peter Campbell.

Sir Robert Crichton-Brown, one of a group of very proactive Commodores of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia back in the 1960s and '70s, both as club administrators and ocean racing yachtsmen, has died in London aged 93.

Sir Robert, an international insurance tycoon and yacht owner, was Commodore of the CYCA in 1969-1970, taking over from another successful businessman Norman B Rydge Jr. From 1967 to 1970, their skills and judgement greatly advanced the Club's fortunes, enabling expansion of the waterfront holding in Rushcutters Bay, with new premises and up to 84 marina berths.

Sir Robert is one of only a handful of yachtsmen to have won the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race while Commodore of the CYCA, but his most significant contribution to ocean racing was to be part of Australia's winning team at the Admiral's Cup in 1967, a watershed year for yachting in this country.

He had lived in London since 1985 when he was asked to become chairman of Rothmans International, moving up from being chairman of the Australian subsidiary. Under his firm leadership, Rothmans diversified from being Britain's third-largest cigarette maker into luxury goods through the Dunhill and Cartier brands.

Robert Crichton-Brown was born in Melbourne in 1919 and educated at Sydney Grammar School. In 1938 he followed his father to work in the family-owned insurance business, Edward Lumley Ltd, but in 1939 he joined the Royal Artillery in England and embarked with the British Expeditionary Forces for France. Rising to the rank of major, and later on the general staff, he served in Iceland, India and Burma and was twice mentioned in despatches. On demobilisation he rejoined Lumley's in Sydney, becoming managing director in 1952, chairman from 1974 to 1989, remaining on the board until 2003.

He was federal treasurer of the Australian Liberal Party from 1973 to 1985, working closely with prime minister Malcolm Fraser. He was also involved in many other aspects of Australian public life, including the Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, an adviser to the Scouts and Girl Guides association, and president of the medical foundation of Sydney University.

Away from his business career, Robert Crichton-Brown's passion was for ocean racing, competing in at least 10 Sydney Hobarts, the Admiral's Cup and the Fastnet Race.

In 1967 his relatively new Camper and Nicholson-designed *Balandra* was chosen in the team for Australia's second challenge for the Admiral's Cup in England, along with Ted Kaufman's Bob Miller (Ben Lexcen)-designed, state-of-the-art *Mercedes III* and Gordon Reynolds' *Caprice of Huon*, the graceful but then 15-year-old Robert Clark design. In a watershed year for Australian yachting the team won the Admiral's Cup in fine style and Australia became a force in international ocean racing.

During his term as Commodore of the CYCA, Sir Robert bought the 55-footer *Pacha*, which had been built with no expense spared for a French industrialist. Optimised for Australian conditions, she went on to win the 1970 Sydney Hobart. Robert Crichton-Brown was appointed CBE in 1970, knighted in 1972 and made KCMG in 1980. He married, in 1941, Norah (Nono) Turnbull, who died in 2011. They had a son, who himself became chief executive of the Lumley group, and a daughter. Sir Robert passed away on 11 July 2013, with a funeral service being held St John's Church, Hyde Park Crescent, London.

Sources: London *Daily Telegraph* Obituaries; David Colfelt in *Ratbags to Respectability, A History of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia*, and the records of Peter Campbell, yachting journalist.

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CLUB MARINE NSW YOUTH MATCH RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Keeping up with Jones

Murray Jones wins the Club Marine NSW Youth Match Racing Championship.

MURRAY Jones and his crew of Cam Gundy, Brett Dixon, Beynon Telford and Matt Stenta, representing the host club, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, won the Club Marine NSW Youth Match Racing Championship in August.

Jones started the final day finishing on top of the leader board, two points clear of clubmate Oliver Hartas, Milly Bennett and Malcolm Parker, both representing Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, who had all finished equal on seven points.

Jones elected to sail against Malcolm Parker in the semi-finals leaving Oliver Hartas to battle Milly Bennett. Hartas, Bennett and Parker all finished equal but after a countback, Hartas was second with Bennett third and Parker fourth.

Jones quickly dispatched Parker to make his way into the grand final, where he would only need two matches against Bennett to take the championship title.

"This is my first major regatta win and I'm pretty happy," Jones said in the wake of his victory.

"We sailed much better today – our boat handling was tighter and we hadn't sailed five-up as a crew before yesterday and we were still sorting out a few communication issues.

"By the last race I think we had it all down pat."

Milly Bennett and her crew of Alice Tarnawski, Kajsa Doyle, Jess Russell and Seldon Coventry finished the regatta off in style to claim second place. It was almost a different sailor who came out in the semi-finals and finals. "We lost the first race of our semi-final against Oliver (Hartas) and had a close second match and came away with the win. In the third race he (Hartas) had kite troubles and we were able to take an advantage from there.

"In the finals, Murray got us in both pre-starts and we had to play catch up both times – which we never really managed to do. This has been one of our most successful match racing regattas so far. It was a bit tough in the heavier breezes as we were underweight but it's a good thing we've been in the gym so we could hike hard," Bennett added.

John Messenger, representing Club Marine said, "Congratulations to all competitors in this regatta. I was able to witness some of the close racing. One of the flights I saw ended up a bit like a fleet race at the end.

"Congratulations to the CYCA Training and Development Committee on selecting the Elliott 7s as the new fleet for the Youth Sailing Academy. From what I saw, they look like real downwind flyers – I'd be keen to jump on board to see how they perform."

FINAL STANDINGS

- 1st: Murray Jones, CYCA (pictured above second from left with his team).
- 2nd: Milly Bennett, RPAVC.
- 3rd: Malcolm Parker, RPAVC.
- 4th: Oliver Hartas, CYCA.
- 5th: Nicholas Connor, RPAVC.
- 6th: Clare Costanzo, RPAVC.
- 7th: Jaiden Stevens, RSYS.

Marine Safety & Equipment Day

Sunday 3 November

FOLLOWING the success of last year's Marine Safety Equipment and Demonstration Day (MSED), the CYCA Cruising Committee will again be holding the event in 2013 for the benefit of CYCA members. This will keep members and the sailing community up to date with the latest developments in personal safety. The focus of the day is on man-over-board safety/location and retrieval with as many in-water and live demonstrations of equipment as can practically be arranged.

If your company would like to participate and showcase your products please contact Denis Doyle at dddoyle@bigpond.net.au. For more details log on to the website www.cyca.com.au

CYCA SOLAS Trust grant

CYCA SOLAS Trusts has provided Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter (Lismore), with \$7,850 to purchase an EAM T7AS Life raft.

Zeke Huish, fundraising manager for Westpac Life Saver Rescue Helicopter (Lismore), said the grant provides the necessary funds to purchase a life raft that will improve the service's ability to respond effectively to missions over water.

The service supports a region of over 80,000 square kilometres, which includes 40,000 square kilometres of ocean. On average, the service performs six to seven missions per week ranging from responding to accidents/emergencies, transporting patients between hospitals and performing search and rescues.

50 years of the Associates

The CYCA Associates Committee, formerly the Ladies Auxillary, celebrated its 50th anniversary with a champagne high tea, on Sunday 8 September.

Commodore Howard Piggott officially welcomed guests that included past Presidents Kendi Kellett, Janey Treleaven, Margaret Psaltis, Jeannette York, Lee Ratcliff, Gail Lewis-Bearman and Carole Evans, along with current Associates Committee members.

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International Fleet Review Spectacular

The Royal Australian Navy International Fleet Review is without doubt one of the largest and most exciting public events to be held on Sydney Harbour since the Sydney Olympics in 2000. With a full program of events on the water and on land for over a week, Sydneysiders will be able to take part in one of many unique activities, but the jewel in the crown of the International Fleet Review will be the Fireworks and Lightshow Spectacular being held on Saturday 5 October at 7:40pm. The Spectacular will be the most complex, highly choreographed fireworks, projection, lighting and live action show ever seen in Australia, or even the world, and centres around Sydney's famous harbour and Opera House. The Spectacular will see Sydney Harbour come alive in a 30-minute show that celebrates the proud history of over 100 years of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN), and in particular, commemorates the original seven warships that entered Sydney Harbour in 1913. Fireworks will be launched from city rooftops, barge positions from Cockatoo Island to Fort Denison, the Harbour Bridge, and for the first time ever, from the decks of RAN warships. This will all be joined by a lightshow from land, warships and Harbour Bridge positions, and a full projection show telling the history of the Royal Australian Navy on the Opera House sails, Harbour Bridge pylons and National Maritime Museum roof. Live action scenes will also take place on and off ships and support boats, plus choreographed fly-overs from Navy and Air Force aircraft. The entire show will be choreographed to a soundtrack created in collaboration with the Royal Australian Navy's director of music, Lieutenant Commander Paul Cottier. The Royal Australian Navy and Imagination Australia are creating a fireworks and lightshow that is bigger and better than anything ever attempted in Australia. The Spectacular is something that will live in the memories of every officer, sailor and the rest of Sydney for many years to come, and we urge everyone to come down to the harbour and watch this once-in-a-lifetime event.

INTERNATIONAL NAVAL FLEET REVIEW

Tall stories

Some 40 warships and 17 tall ships will descend on Sydney Harbour in October to join in celebrations being held for the centenary of Australia's navy entering Sydney Harbour.



IN late 2011, the Chief of Navy (CN) – Vice Admiral Ray Griggs, AO, CSC, RAN extended an invitation to over fifty nations to send a warship or tall ship to participate in an International Fleet Review (IFR) to be held in Sydney from 3-11 October 2013.

The Review is being held to commemorate the centenary of the first entry of the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet into Sydney. On 4 October 1913 the flagship, HMAS *Australia*, led the new Australian Fleet Unit comprising HMA Ships *Melbourne*, *Sydney*, *Encounter*, *Warrego*, *Parramatta* and *Yarra* into Sydney Harbour for the

first time to be greeted by thousands of cheering citizens lining the foreshore. This was a moment of great national pride and importance, one recognised as a key indicator of Australia's progress towards national maturity.



Throughout 2013, tall ships from around the world have been sailing to Australia to participate in the International Fleet Review (IFR) in Sydney in October. Prior to their arrival in Sydney, the international tall ship fleet has been holding festivals around the country as they have arrived at Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne and Hobart, sailing from July to October, finally arriving in Sydney on 3 October for the Review, before sailing on to Auckland one week later. Sydney will also witness the start of the first Australasian Tall Ship Regatta, sailing from Sydney to Auckland on 10 October 2013, as they exit the harbour following the IFR celebrations.

The current plan for the International Fleet Review will see RAN and visiting warships rendezvous in Jervis Bay, NSW, on 1 October to conduct final preparations and briefings. The IFR will officially commence with all tall ships entering Sydney Harbour on Thursday 3 October and with all warships entering on Friday 4 October – exactly 100 years after the first RAN Fleet entry.

To mark this historic occasion, the Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, the Hon Ms Quentin Bryce, AC, CVO will welcome the Fleet from Bradley's Head on 4 October, and officially review the fleet onboard HMAS *Leeuwin*

on Saturday, 5 October, as part of the Ceremonial Fleet Review. The Review will include a moving line of seven RAN ships to further symbolise the 1913 entry.

The day's events are also likely to feature such entertaining events as formation fly-pasts by fixed and rotary wing aircraft, naval displays and demonstrations, naval gun salutes and naval band performances, and will culminate in a spectacular evening fireworks and lightshow on the harbour.

Other activities being planned to occur during the week-long celebrations, include a combined naval march through the Sydney CBD, ships open to the public, inter-navy sporting competitions, naval memorial and religious services, and a range of community and cultural events.

The tall ships will depart on Thursday 10 October followed by the fleet departing on Friday 11 October to participate in Exercise TRITON CENTENARY in the East Australian Exercise Areas (EAXA).

The International Fleet Review is planned to be similar in scale and public impact to that experienced during the RAN 75th Anniversary in 1986 and the Bicentennial Naval Salute in 1988. www.navy.gov.au/ifr/events
www.tallshipfestival2013.com

Fireworks and lightshow

Show time 7:40pm-8.10pm Saturday 5 October 2013.

Best public vantage points Dawes Point, Bradfield Park, Mrs Macquarie's Chair, Circular Quay.

IFR Smartphone App Download it for live maps, more info on all of the IFR, and to be part of the show on the night (Available from early September).

Radio simulcast Listen to the soundtrack via live radio simulcast (radio station details TBC).

TV Broadcast If you can't make it to Sydney, tune in to ABC1 and News24 to watch all the action live.

IFR Schedule

Monday 23 September to Tuesday 1 October 2013
Exercise TRITON CENTENARY 13 – Part 1.

Saturday 28 September to Friday 11 October 2013
Royal Australian Navy Band recitals.

Tuesday 1 October 2013
12.00noon-4.00pm Warships enter Jervis Bay.

Thursday 3 October 2013
7.00am Warships depart Jervis Bay for passage to Sydney.

11.00am Tall ships enter Sydney Harbour.

Friday 4 October 2013
6.00am-4.00pm Warships enter Sydney Harbour

9.30am-10.30am Air displays by Navy Squirrel Display Team and RAAF Roulettes.

9.30am-5.00pm Tall Ships open to the public. Location: Cockle Bay, Darling Harbour

10.00am Ceremonial Fleet Entry and 21 Gun Salute. HMA Ships *Sydney, Darwin, Perth, Parramatta, Bundaberg, Diamantina and Huon*. Location: Sydney Harbour, Bradleys Head.

11.00am-4.00pm Australian Surf Rowers Reception. Location: Sydney Opera House.

Saturday 5 October 2013
Dress ship. Location: Sydney Harbour.

11.00am-2.30pm Ceremonial Fleet Review. Location: Sydney Harbour.

11.20am-11.35am Formation flypast by Navy, Army, Air Force and International military aircraft. Location Sydney Harbour.

2.00pm-5.45pm Air Displays by Navy, military and civil aircraft, including heritage aircraft from Australia's maritime history and Naval band performances. Location: Sydney Harbour.

7.40pm-8.10pm Fireworks and Lightshow Spectacular. Location: Sydney Harbour.

Sunday 6 October 2013

9.30am-5.00pm Tall ships open to visitors. Location: Australian National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour.

10.00am-11.30am HMAS *Sydney* (I) Memorial Service. Location: Naval Memorial, Bradley's Head.

1.00pm-6.00pm Warships Open Day. Location: Fleet Base East, Garden Island and Barangaroo.

2.00pm-3.30pm Ecumenical Service. Location: St Mary's Cathedral.

Monday 7 October 2013

8.00am-6.00pm Warships Open Day. Location: Fleet Base East, Garden Island and Barangaroo.

9.00am-10.15am Opening of Sea Power Conference 2013 and Pacific 2013 International Maritime Exposition. Location: Sydney Conference and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour.

9.30am-5.00pm Tall ships open to visitors. Location: Australian National Maritime Museum, Darling Harbour.

Tuesday 8 October 2013

8.00am-5.00pm Sea Power Conference 2013 and Pacific 2013 International Maritime Exposition continue. Location: Sydney Conference and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour.

9.30am-5.00pm Tall ships open to visitors. Location: Cockle Bay/Darling Harbour.

12.30pm-2.00pm Navy Memorial Service. Location: Cenotaph, Martin Place.

12.30pm-2.00pm HMAS *Penguin* Freedom of Entry to Mosman. Location: Military Rd, Mosman.

1.00pm-2.30pm HMAS *Parramatta* Freedom of Entry to Parramatta. Location: Church St, Parramatta.

Wednesday 9 October 2013

8.00am-5.00pm Sea Power Conference 2013 and Pacific 2013 International Maritime Exposition. Location: Sydney Conference and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour.

10.30am-11.00am Sea Power Conference 2013 Chief of Navy Closing Comments. Location: Sydney Conference and Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour.

12.30pm-2.30pm Combined Navies Parade. Location: George Street – The Rocks to Town Hall.

2.00pm-4.30pm Pacific 2013 Post Parade Ships Companies Lunch. Location: Sydney Conference & Exhibition Centre, Darling Harbour.

Thursday 10 October 2013

10.00am-3.00pm Combined Navies Sporting Competition. Location: Randwick Barracks/Macquarie Park.

11.00am Tall ships depart for Auckland. Location: Sydney Harbour.

3.00pm-5.30pm Sailing Regatta with RAN Sailing Association. Location: Sydney Harbour.

Friday 11 October 2013

From 7.30am Warships depart for Exercise Triton Centenary 13 – Part 2. Location: Sydney Harbour.



YOUTH SAILING ACADEMY

New CYCA Youth Sailing Academy Fleet launches Elliott 7s

A new fleet of 10 Elliott 7s for the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Youth Sailing Academy was officially launched on 25 July by Commodore Howard Piggott and Anthony Dunn, the chairman of the Training and Development Committee, reports JENNIFER CROOKS.

THE launch of the new fleet is one of the major milestones in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the foundation of the Youth Sailing Academy. After an extensive selection process, the Elliott 7 was selected as the new sail training boat as they have precise symmetrical balance and build weights, strong components, versatility in sailing conditions and racing modes – from symmetric and asymmetric spinnaker sailing to match racing and fleet racing.

The ability of the boats to accommodate up to five junior sailors when in training mode and sail with up to four senior sailors in match racing conditions, was also paramount in the decision-making process.

Commodore Howard Piggott presented each sponsor of the new Elliott 7 with a branded half model in recognition of their support of the academy. "On behalf of the Club, I would like to thank all sponsors of the Youth Sailing Academy. Your support enables us to continue to deliver excellence in youth sailing. Some of you have been with us from day one and some are new to the YSA family," he said.

"Thank you all for your continued support – you are investing in the future of our great sport of sailing. The Youth Sailing Academy holds a

unique place in the CYCA and in the sport of sailing in Australia as it is one of Australia's leading full time Youth Sailing Academies," Commodore Piggott added.

RAN Chaplain Max Walker from HMAS Watson conducted an official blessing of the fleet on the marina adjacent the CYCA pond.

The new boats made their regatta debut in the Club Marine NSW Youth



Match Racing Championships held in August. A Youth Sailing Academy Alumni function to commemorate the 20 years of the YSA was also held on 20 September for all past and present students and graduates.

The fleet was once again in action with the CYCA hosting the Australian Open, Women's and Youth Match Racing Championships from the 20-29 of September. ⚓



SEVEN HEAVEN
Clockwise from top left: Sponsors of the Elliott 7s are presented with their half models; The Elliott 7 was selected because of its precise symmetrical balance and build weights; The new boats can accommodate up to five junior sailors in training mode and four in match racing.



Mickleborough's Corner

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and friends honoured Don Mickleborough on 9 August, with the naming and unveiling of a plaque reading 'Mickleborough's Corner', now placed where Mickleborough has held court with his sailing mates for some years. Reports DI PEARSON.

LEGENDS UNITED
The *Southerly* crew. From left: Tony Cable, Bruce Jackson, Don Mickleborough, David Reid, Dick Logan and Rob McAuley. (Absent is John Sheridan).

OCEAN Racing 'blasts from the past' attended the memorable naming of 'Mickleborough's Corner', the brainchild of Mickleborough's friend Rob McAuley, an old *Southerly* crew mate and now co-owner of the yacht with another old friend and crew mate, John 'Sherro' Sheridan. The CYCA board was very much behind the project and arranged the hanging of the beautiful Huon pine plaque it donated, to be hung at the naming ceremony in the corner of the Coasters Retreat.

A member of the CYCA for 55 years, Mickleborough owned the 75-year-old famous Huon Pine yacht *Southerly* for 53 years, before passing it to his crew mates, McAuley and Sheridan in 2011 after sailing the Great Veterans Race – his last. For the 88 year-old, the night was highlighted by storytelling and remembrances, with Mickleborough regularly cutting in "to tell my version," and "to correct" others. MC

Peter Shipway handed over to sometime *Southerly* crew mate, Tony Cable, the Hobart race record holder (he's done 47), to read the apologies.

Cable first asked for a minute silence for long-time club member, QLD co-founder and friend, John Dawson, who died on August 5.

Mickleborough, who thought he was attending a CYCA celebration of old sea salts, was truly chuffed when CYCA Vice Commodore, John Cameron, presented him with the plaque in front of so many old ocean racing greats.

"In view of Don's longevity and standing at the Club, the committee and board thought it was entirely appropriate that this corner of the bar, where Don has drunk more than his fair share of scotch, will be named in his honour, so I'd formally like to name this Mickleborough's Corner," the Vice Commodore said. To end the 'official' part of the night, the *Southerly* song was sung by its crew. ⚓



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SYDNEY GOLD COAST
YACHT RACE

Call of the wild

WILD THING finds pot of gold at end of the rainbow and BRANNEW wins her first major title in the Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race. In one of the slowest races on record, the Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race was challenging and exciting, with both line and overall honours going down to the wire. DI PEARSON reports.

Neither the open race record holder, *Wild Oats XI*, or the conventional yacht record holder, *Loki*, were on the start line of the 2013 Sydney Gold Coast race, and the fleet was a smallish one at 47 yachts, but it did not detract from a diverse grand prix fleet representing NSW, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania.

Grant Wharington's 100-foot *Wild Thing*, taking part in only its second ocean race, led the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's annual 384-nautical-mile race from its midline start on Sydney Harbour. It was only headed once, in the last hours of the race, by John Honan and Peter Millard's 98-foot *Lahana* (NSW). But a short time later, the

Queensland super maxi regained control and sailed to line honours victory at 14:21:14 on 29 July, in 2 days, 1 hour, 21 minutes, 14 seconds.

Wharington and crew threw everything into keeping *Lahana* (NSW) and Peter Harburg's newly purchased Volvo 70, *Black Jack* (Qld), at bay, as the two came within two nautical miles before the *Wild Thing* crew found their pot of gold at the end of a colourful rainbow, caused by a rain squall just short of the finish line.

"Since early this morning [on the final day] it became very challenging – we had to think more tactically to keep *Lahana* and *Black Jack* behind us," said Wharington, who sailed *Wild Thing* over the line with full main and an R1, the largest light air

reaching sail (for up to 12 knots) in his inventory – the same sail he used at the start of the race.

Lahana finished at 14.26.25, just five minutes astern and *Black Jack* (the former *Telefonica*) at 14.35.19.

On taking line honours, well outside the open record of 22hrs 3mins 46secs and the conventional yacht record of 1day 2hrs 52min 39sec, both set last year, Wharington admitted: "What a tricky race. It was a bit of a painful situation – to get 30 miles in front of our nearest rivals and then it was reduced to 20 miles – and then to have them come back at us so closely, especially this morning.

"We're very pleased," added the skipper, who also claimed line honours in 2006 with a two-feet shorter *Wild Thing*. "It's a shame *Wild Oats XI* couldn't make it; it would've been interesting to see how it handled the light conditions we got, apart from a couple of patches of 15 to 20 knots."

Black Jack's crew sailed their first ever ocean voyage on the boat on the delivery from Queensland to Sydney

THROUGH THE HEADS
Above: Light conditions ensured this year's Sydney Gold Coast Race was a slower affair than usual.

for the V70's maiden ocean race in Australia.

Crew member Peter Dowdney remarked: "The boat's quick – even though it was predominantly built for hard reaching and running. It handled the light weather very well. It's an easy boat to sail in a lot of respects, which might surprise some people, and it accelerates quickly."

Around the time *Wild Thing* finished, Chris Bran made a final push for overall honours with his one-year-old Beneteau First 40 CR, *Brannew*.

Bran was victorious, but not

with great crew work, and said it had him contemplating doing this year's Hobart race.

Celebrating with his crew at Southport Yacht Club, Bran commented: "To win the race is an incredible feeling.

"I went for a Bruce Farr design because they are tried and tested. A couple of years back, Bruce made the statement: 'Every now and again we get one right'. This is one of the ones he got right," he said.

The Sydney yachtsman agreed that it was a very tactical race. "We went

various scenarios. All my crew are top notch and it's them who got us into first place," he allowed.

Contenders knew the forecast ahead of the 28th edition of the race, so were under no illusion that it would be a quick simple one. Roger Hickman described it as: "Classic Sydney Gold Coast," while from 2008 Hobart winner *Quest*'s owner, Bob Steel's point of view, "It was a race you want to forget."

Michael Logan from the Bureau of Meteorology prepared competitors for light and variable winds, forecasting a light westerly for the race start on July 27 (it was three knots, but increased to around eight within the hour). He said the wind would tend northerly up to 10 knots in the southern part of the course and then light easterlies as the fleet sailed into the northern section, with a westerly or two mid-race.

A southerly was due on the fourth day, too late.

The variable weather was reflected in the changes of overall leaders throughout, from super maxi *Lahana*, to Rod Jones' 50-footer, *Audi Sunshine Coast*, to Bob Cox's *Nine Dragons* at 46 feet and *Flying Cloud*, owned by CYCA Commodore Howard Piggott and Phil Molony's *Papillon*, both 40 feet, among others.

Kim Jaggard, co-owner of the 25-year-old Davidson 34, *Illusion* (one of the smaller yachts in the fleet), was not so sure. "Only if we don't get too far behind in the first couple of days can we capitalise on the southerly," he said.

"The big boats will get the stronger northerlies (up to 10 knots) and the westerly of up to 16 knots, which will push the bigger yachts quickly up the coast, and they should get away from us there. It will all come down to the transition in breeze and whether we can be in the right place at the right time. It'll be tricky and there'll be a bit of luck involved," Jaggard summed up.

The decision makers at the back of each boat had to work out whether to go offshore or hug the coast – some did a bit of both – but most stuck with the coastal route.

During the first race of the CYCA's annual Blue Water Point Score (to determine the best offshore performer in the six-race series), *Celestial*'s owner, Sam Haynes, who finished the series second last season, noted: "This race had more holes than a golf course."

The holes left plenty of time for other fun pursuits, such as whale, dolphin and bird spotting. Graeme



without some angst. Late in the race, he still had to contend with various yachts, keeping the *Brannew* crew working overtime all the way to the finish line for their first major offshore win. After the CYCA skipper finished, he had to wait it out for several others to do the same.

Eventually, there were just three standing in *Brannew*'s way; Phil Molony's Archambault 40 *Papillon*, Andy Kearnan's Summit 35, *L'Altra Donna* and Roger Hickman's Farr 43, *Wild Rose*, which caused the longest wait. In the event, Bran's overall win was a good two hours on corrected time from nearest rival, *Papillon*, with *Wild Rose* pipping *L'Altra Donna* for third.

Launching *Brannew* in February 2012 "to race in the Hobart," Bran finished 18th overall in both the 2012 Sydney Gold Coast and Rolex Sydney Hobart races. He put this victory down to a bit of luck, some by missing many of the holes in the course, along

both offshore and inshore – it was a very frustrating at times – but it was a great race," he said.

Bran praised those who kept him sailing hard. "Phil on *Papillon*, *Close Hulled*, and *L'Altra Donna* all pushed us hard and were major competition for us, as was *Wild Rose*," he said, before describing the final 24 hours: "The wind dying on the last night at sea and there were rain squalls coming through.

"We got a shift, put our Code Zero up and sailed some of our best miles," he said of their last day at sea, which ended shortly after 1pm after three days of racing. "We knew then we were in with a real chance.

"Then *Papillon* caught us up again, but at Evans Head we cleared out and started to find our legs," added the yachtsman, who paid tribute to his crew, in particular Glen 'Hedgie' Cooper, his navigator, "who is very methodical. He's constantly checking the weather models and looking at the

SLOW GOING
Above: Wind speed was only three knots for the race's start, testing the tactical nous of even the most experienced of yachtsmen.



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Hall and his *Close Hulled* crew got their amusement by sitting a dressed up dummy at the helm, declaring: "Crew morale? Wasn't so good till we found a stowaway – and at least she could steer!"

Of their race, Roger Hickman, who had competed in 27 out of 28 editions, said: "We knew what we had to do to win." He described conditions as: "Light and shifty on the first night with smooth water, which helped us. We went offshore at Seal Rocks and lost time, so we cut our losses.

"Off Coffs, we got classic Gold

"It was long and lumpy. The winds were so variable. All in all, for our first shakedown, we were chuffed. It was very close in our division," he said before realizing he had won Division O.

Rod Jones has spent time completely revamping "a Welbourn 50 from 2000, with a keel rudder and deck from the 1989, IOR 50 footer, *Heaven Can Wait* – it's had a major facelift," he said of *Audi Sunshine Coast*.

Jones plans on sailing his second, and according to him, "my last Hobart race. And for that, the boat had to be

"We're leaving straight after the Brisbane Keppel Race and can't wait to go," he said after finishing 30th overall.

Under ORCi, *L'Altra Donna*'s crew had their revenge, beating *Wild Rose* for the win, with *Occasional Coarse Language One* (Robert Alder and Bill Bailey) third. The top three under PHS were *Abracadabra* (James Murchison), *The Banshee* (Corinne Feldmann and Rob Francis) and *Upshot* (Wayne Keavy).

Some of these yachts are competing in The Cape Byron (for those competing in ORCi) and Tasman Performance (for PHS competitors) Series', held in conjunction with the Blue Water Point Score. The CYCA, for the first time, has also added a line honours trophy to the prestigious series.

Ten yachts retired from the race; all but two (electrical and radio problems) because of time constraints. *She's the Culprit* (Culprit Syndicate) and *Copernicus* (Greg Zyner) stuck to their guns, the last two finishing in 03:16:17:53 and 03:17:23:41 respectively.

For more information and full results visit the website. ⚓

<http://goldcoast.cyca.com.au>



Coast race rain squalls and gusty winds. The second night it was westerly up to 17 knots at one stage, although the average was 12 to 15 knots – but within minutes it would drop to five, and so it went.

"Cape Byron to the finish was one of the toughest parts. We were trying to sail to our ability and were following the tracker to stay in touch with what others were doing. We sailed as hard as we could and just scraped in to beat *L'Altra Donna*," finished Hickman, a big fan of race tracker: "It's used just as much by the fleet as it is by those following the race."

And while conditions favoured the smaller yachts, three in the 50-55 foot range showed great promise. Former BWPS champion, Darryl Hodgkinson, sailed his new *Victoire*, the Cookson 12 formerly known as *Jazz*, in their first ocean race together. He was pleased with their seventh on line and ninth overall.

structurally good. It's good upwind, and as long as it's not a screaming downhill race, we should do OK."

"It's become what we hoped it would become," the two-time Australian IRC champion said of his yacht that crossed the line ninth for sixth overall, the best of the 50-footers.

Bill Wild and his RP55 *Wedgetail*, the former 1999 Hobart-winning *Yendys*, have recently returned to racing and carried some of the best ocean racers aboard to finish fourth on line, for 14th overall, not reflecting how well the boat was sailed. The Queenslander has put a two-year program in place, inclusive of the Rolex Sydney Hobart.

Meanwhile, Rob Date's RP52 *Scarlet Runner* will benefit from a world trip the Victorian plans to take his yacht on shortly. While away, Date and some of his crew plan on contesting a few major regattas, before arriving back in Australia for the 70th anniversary Rolex Sydney Hobart.

NEARLY THERE
Grant Wharington's 100-foot *Wild Thing* pulls in to the Gold Coast to take a line honours victory in only her second ocean race.

The winners

Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race
2013 divisional winners

IRC Overall

Brannew, Chris Bran, NSW

IRC Division 0

Victoire, Darryl Hodgkinson, NSW

IRC Division 1

Audi Sunshine Coast,
Rodney Jones, QLD

IRC Division 2

Occasional Coarse Language Too,
Warwick Sherman, NSW

IRC Division 3

Brannew, Chris Bran, NSW

IRC Division 4

Wild Rose, Roger Hickman, NSW

ORCi Division 1

Audi Sunshine Coast,
Rodney Jones, QLD

ORCi Division 2

L'Altra Donna, Andy Kearnan, NSW

PHS Division

Abracadabra,
James Murchison, NSW



BLUE & GREEN
Pioneer Bay off Airlie Beach at its serene best for race week. Below: Winner of the national title in OMR Division 1, *Morticia*.

**ABELL POINT MARINA
AIRLIE BEACH RACE WEEK**

Allure of Airlie Beach

The Whitsundays sparked as the fleet slipped their way around the stunning bays and islands, competing in the 24th Abell Point Marina Airlie Beach Race Week held mid-August. It was a week full of fun in this perfect sailing location, reports TRACEY JOHNSTONE.



This year's Abell Point Marina Airlie Beach Race Week was six days of clear skies and soft breeze. The race committee, under the guidance of PRO Ross Chisholm and regatta director Denis Thompson, worked hard to ensure there was plenty of fair racing for the fleet of 110 boats comprising monohulls, multihulls and sports boats.

While the sailors waited around for the breeze to fill in each day, their antics will be remembered for being atypical of the lighthearted Airlie Beach race week; challenges as to how many multihulls could raft up at one time, water pistol battles of mammoth proportions, lessons from the Beneteau *Holy Cow* on how to make cow-tails, show-offs sailing unmanned, pretty ladies on the foredeck and lots, lots, more.

When the breeze did finally arrive, the laughter and antics disappeared and the competitive sailing spirit quickly returned.

For the first time, the multihulls division integrated their national championship into Race Week. The 29 multihull entrants came in all shapes and sizes. There were the fast machines and the much gentler racer/cruisers. The winner of the national



title in OMR Division 1 was Chris Williams's Sea Cart 30 *Morticia*.

Early on in the regatta Williams was hesitant about how he well thought his Sea Cart 30 would perform. On day four he said, "We are yet to do windward/leeward racing. We haven't tackled that one yet. It will be a challenging day for us as it will be very light, fickle, and I don't think the type of boat you sail is going to be too relevant. I think it is going to be who sails the smartest today."

"In these conditions we try to limit the number of tacks that we do because the difference between tacking speed actual ramped up maximum speed is huge. You have to figure what knocks are worth tacking on and which to leave. It's a learning curve for us that's for sure," Williams said. He may still be trying to work out what he was worried about as Williams and his crew of former monohull sailors took handicap honours in every race, whether the race was a passage or windward/leeward course.

In OMR Division 2 the prize went to Andrew Stransky's 50-foot *Fantasia*. In the smaller Division 3, Tony Richardson's *Pocahontas* was first overall, while in the PHS

division, it was Clare and Wayne Kirby's *Clear Horizons* on the podium.

The 11-boat Sports Boats competition was won by Noel Leigh-Smith's slippery *Viper QLD*. Noel is also the importer of Vipers to Australia.

In the monohull fleet racing at Airlie, the IRC division saw a tough line honours battle between two high-performance TP52s, Bob Steele's *Quest* and John Woodruff's *Frantic*, and Darryl Hodgkinson's Cookson 50 *Victoire* with his crew of international plastic surgeons. But when it came to handicap honours, the team on CYCA Commodore

A NEW START
Above: No less than 29 multihulls competed at Airlie Beach Race Week 2013, the first time the division had integrated its national championship into the event. Below: At the start of the Sports Boats race.



The winners

Abell Point Marina Airlie Beach Race Week 2013
divisional winners.

OMR Division 1
Morticia, Chris Williams

OMR Division 2
Fantasia, Andrew Stransky

OMR Division 3
Pocahontas, Tony Richardson

PHS Multihull
Clear Horizons,
Clare and Wayne Kirby

Sports Boats
Viper QLD, Noel Leigh-Smith

Performance Racing
Huntress, Phillip Grove

Cruising Division 1
Fifty Shades of 50,
Brad and Craig Ginnivan

Cruising Division 2
Mistery, Bill Hopton

Cruising Division 3
Barney Army, Andrew Barney

IRC Racing
Flying Cloud, Howard Piggott

Howard Piggott's Beneteau 40 *Flying Cloud* did a good job to sail the boat consistently to place within the top four in all seven races, sailing into first place overall.

"It was rather gratifying under IRC that we had such close margins, just a few points between the boats in the three placings," Piggott said at the end of the regatta.

In the Performance Racing division, the honours went to Philip Grove's Sydney 39 *Huntress*, but not before local legend Matt Allen and Walter Lewin's Farr 400 *Ichi Ban* proved that the best can get it wrong, at least once, and New Zealand MC38 entrant *Menace* unfortunately encountered her own problems.

Approaching the first mark of the day in race four, *Ichi Ban* along with *Menace* rounded the mark the wrong way. A helpful call on the radio from the race committee advising all boats that the rounding should be to "starboard as indicated on the start boat" alerted the two leading boats to their predicament. Both had to return to the mark to round it correctly.

Menace got around cleanly the second time. *Ichi Ban* however then had the misfortune of hitting the mark forcing the team to complete a further full turn around the mark, all in very soft winds.

In the Cruising divisions, Bradley and Craig Ginnivan and their friends came along to Airlie to celebrate the identical twins' 50th birthday. They chartered a boat and renamed it *Fifty Shades of 50*, dressed it up with plenty of colour and went sailing. Little did they expect that their joint birthday present would end up being first on handicap in Cruising Division 1!

In Division 2, Bill Hopton's *Mystery* took out handicap honours. The trailable boats in Division 3 had a super time, but it was Andrew Barney's *Barney Army* sailed with his wife Carmen and their three young children, Hayden, Jordan and Ayla, that took out the divisional honours.

In the Cruising Non-Spinnaker Division, it was Dan White's *Riff Raff* on the top spot of the podium.

Every day ashore there was a range of fun filled activities for competitors and supporters to enjoy. The Lay Day was splashed with the colour and vibe of tropical shirts, live music, margaritas and a little madness, with long lunches being held all around Airlie.

In the grounds of the Whitsunday Sailing Club a collection of handcrafted art by local artist Sean Oomens was on display, while on the adjacent beach visiting crews were amazed by sand carved sculptures that had to be seen to be believed.

Back in town the week-long Whitsunday Reef Festival started with a huge fireworks display on Saturday night with music playing throughout the main street during the day and into the night.

Next year is the 25th anniversary of Airlie Beach Race Week with the dates already set for a week of racing and revelry from the 8 - 15 August 2014. Planning is well underway for more superb Whitsunday racing.

With the redevelopment of the Abell Point Marina precinct, competitors and their supporters should also plan to pack their dancing shoes as there will be plenty of onshore entertainment and celebrations.

The Abell Point Marina Airlie Beach Race Week 2013 is hosted by Whitsunday Sailing Club and was sponsored by Abell Point Marina. It was also supported by the Queensland Government through Tourism and Events Queensland as part of a growing calendar of sporting, cultural, regional events throughout the state. ⚓

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Audi Hamilton Island Race Week 2013 will be remembered as one for the light air specialists with a week of the lightest conditions in racing memory.

All states of Australia and the ACT, and many other countries too, were represented among the 157 entries and near 2,000 sailors who made the pilgrimage to the Whitsundays to be part of 30 years of yachting history.

In 1984 when the regatta was first raced, Hamilton Island was significantly less developed, the boats a lot beamier and men's shorts much briefer. Three decades later the island is a world-class destination but the people at Race Week are essentially the same, and the spirit of competition that arose in the inaugural year lives on.

This year the 30th edition of Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, held 18-24 August, was open to a wide spectrum of sailing boats – from sport boats to cruising yachts, cruiser-racers and grand prix level keelboats, plus for the first year a new multihull division and one-design MC38 division, and even the creation of 'First Fleet' division for the four originals from the 1984 race week starter's list.

The fleet of 157 yachts tackled a week of light winds entertained by the addition of several playful baby whales and their watchful parents regularly seen throughout the passage.

The 12 divisions battled it out offshore on the stunning Whitsunday Islands courses while ashore Race Week's renowned social calendar offered exquisite lunches, dinners, fashion parades, and nightly dockside entertainment.

The pointscore for all 12 divisions racing at the 30th anniversary Audi Hamilton Island Race Week wrapped up the regatta with the final day's race around an island course in a patchy easterly breeze, typifying a week of light pressure and testing tides. The race management team led by regatta director Denis Thompson worked as hard as the competitors, altering the courses before and sometimes during races according to the changing breeze and tidal flows. Sailors acknowledged it was hard yakka starting and keeping 157 boats racing in light and testing conditions, which made for a challenging though thoroughly enjoyable week of racing in the Whitsundays.

Congratulations to all the division-winning yachts and their crews, which included:



AUDI HAMILTON ISLAND
RACE WEEK

Hamilton Island Race Week turns 30

Three decades on, Audi Hamilton Island Race Week has renewed its identity as one of the keystone sailing calendar events in Australia, constantly adapting and reshaping as sailing trends change. Happy 30th Ham!
By LISA RATCLIFF, LAURA MCKEE and AHIRW MEDIA TEAM.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS
A total of 157 yachts took part in the 30th Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, facing light winds throughout the regatta.



This year saw the introduction of two new regular divisions, the lightning quick MC38s racing in one-design format and the fledgling Multihull Division, which has huge potential for growth. The 'First Fleet' division was also introduced this year to recognise the 30th anniversary of the regatta.

In the IRC Passage Division Peter Hewson's *Storage King Wallop* celebrated with his crew at Hamilton Island Yacht Club after the final day's racing saw the Lake Macquarie sailor finishing at the top of the Passage Division 1 results.

Hewson, a former 505 Australian champion, and his Lake crew, including Keith Jensen the father of Olympic 49er gold medalist Ian Jensen, went into the final day's

IRC RACING *Hooligan* (TP52, RPAYC), skippered by Marcus Blackmore.

IRC PASSAGE DIVISION 1
Storage King Wallop (Sydney 41, LMYC/RMYC), skippered by Peter Hewson.

IRC PASSAGE DIVISION 2
L'Altra Donna (Summit 35, CYCA), skippered by Andy Kearnan.

PERFORMANCE RACING DIVISION 1
Huntress (Sydney 39Cr, BSC/RSYS), skippered by Philip Grove.

PERFORMANCE RACING DIVISION 2
Jump (SB20, CYCHI), skippered by Greg Hyde.

CRUISING DIVISION 1
Circe (Beneteau Sense 55, SYC), skippered by Ross Johnston.

CRUISING DIVISION 2
Next Light (X35, RPAYC), skippered by Chris Ryan.

CRUISING DIVISION 3
Starkers (Catalina 350, TCYC), skippered by Alan Stark.

NON-SPINNAKER DIVISION 1
Smart Choice (Hunter 50ac, RYCT), skippered by Rodney Smart.

NON-SPINNAKER DIVISION 2
Christina Jay (Beneteau 343 Oceanis, SCYC), skippered by Stuart Pascoe.

MC38 OD DIVISION *Vino* (MC38, MHYC), skippered by Chris Hancock.

MULTIHULL DIVISION
Box Office (Box 8.5m, RQYS), skippered by Matt Johns.

FIRST FLEET DIVISION (eligible for yachts that also raced at the inaugural 1984 event), *Hitchhiker* (Frers, RPYC), skippered by Peter Briggs.



WHALE OF A TIME
Left: Sailors were greeted by playful baby whales at various points while competing. Right: Competitors receive guidance at a morning briefing before heading out on to the blue.



curtain closer just one point adrift of Paul Clitheroe's Beneteau 45 *Balance*, from Sydney.

The well-known financial commentator and his crew finished sixth in the light air against *Storage King Wallop's* second place, the position Hewson needed to ease into the top spot overall. It was close with just 11 seconds the difference between second and third in the final day's deciding island race.

"Our game plan came together," said Hewson as the corks were popping off the champagne.

The 15-year-old Sydney 41 design is having a good year, taking out the Australian PHS Championship title and the Pittwater to Coffs Harbour Regatta on PHS back in January.

Paul Clitheroe was delighted with



SAILS UP
Left: The regatta's light airs suited the smaller yachts competing, so long as crew could successfully harness them.

second overall, "Eleven tonnes of Beneteau in no wind... second is a miracle and we are very happy," said the grinning skipper as crews celebrated before the final night's official trophy presentation.

Andy Kearnan's Summit 35, *L'Altra Donna* from Sydney's Cruising Yacht Club of Australia was sitting out in front in IRC Passage Division 2 by a comfortable eight-point margin from Matt Owen's *Local Hero* going into the final race. The gap tightened to four points on the final progressive score sheet but Kearnan held firm with first overall and collected some extra baggage of the silver variety to take back to Sydney.

Local Hero was second and Howard Piggott's Beneteau First 40 *Flying Cloud* third in division.

In Performance Racing Philip Grove's Sydney 39Cr *Huntress* had set Matt Allen and Walter Lewin's Farr 400 *Ichi Ban* as its yardstick in Performance Racing Division 1. The pair continued the on-water battle that swung in *Huntress'* favour at Airlie Beach Race week held just days earlier.

It came down to the final race on the final day's racing to settle the score and again things tipped Grove's way.

His crew boss Chris Townsend explained, "We had led all week except for one day. It's been hard work chipping away and trying to keep ourselves out of trouble. The essential thing was to go out and sail as hard as we could every day and not worry about the handicap, as that would sort itself out.

"We were plugging away in the middle of the pointscore while others were moving back and forth either side of us.

"We got the double (for us) of beating *Ichi Ban* here and at Airlie Beach." The question was asked, "Must be a nice feeling?" and the response came, "I don't think they [*Ichi Ban*] like it too much," he joked.

Though Allen, the divisional winner last year, was gracious. "The great thing about the regatta was the tight finish. The Melges 32 Mac 2 did a great job in light airs of the final day and if we'd been a minute faster against them we would have won the whole regatta. It's a great credit to the scoring and handicapping," Allen said.

"*Huntress* sailed really consistently like us, and the light air regatta suited. Unfortunately the bigger, heavier boats didn't get a run this week."

Allen also paid tribute to the hard-working race management



team led by regatta director Denis Thompson. “The race committee did a sensational job. It was the toughest Race Week I’ve seen and it was hard yakka for those guys.”

Performance Racing 2 honours went to local boat *Jump*, owned by Dennis Winstanley, a builder on Hamilton Island. A margin of half a point was all that separated *Jump* from Sarah and Piers’ new Tasmanian Elliott 7, *Rum to Paradise*.

Greg Hyde, a former Olympic (1984) and world champion windsurfer who has suffered serious health issues, including a stroke, skippered the SB20 along with Mark Long then Winstanley’s partner, Hannah Gardener, who was on the bow for the final race.

Hyde needed to be lifted by the crew from side to side as the boat tacked and gybed, but when it came to picking wind shifts he needed no assistance.

“Greg is my childhood hero and mate of 30 years,” said Winstanley. “He was an absolute freak in his day on the windsurfer and was well-known on the offshore scene, including being part of two Sydney Hobart overall winning campaigns.

“We had lots of experience on board for this Race Week. We picked good

HITCHING A RIDE
 Right: Once the heat of competitive racing is out the way, a different kind of fun on the water can be had. Below: *Kite Runner*, skippered by Dave Simpson, competed in EHC Division 2.



lanes to sail in and we had a great week with plenty of sunshine.”

In Cruising Division 1, although the wind speed wasn’t ideal for the bigger boats throughout the week, on the final day the winning Cruising Division yachts had a field day on course 28 and 29.

Cruising 1 featured three classic Australian maxis from a bygone era in *Hammer*, *Condor* and *Whitebirds*. *Condor*, a two-time line honours winner in the Sydney Hobart race

and winner of the famous Fastnet race out of England, returned to Audi Hamilton Island Race Week for the sixth consecutive year.

The trio unfortunately didn’t feature in top placings, as they needed a lot more breeze to push their vast bulk around the track.

The James Murchison-skippered Tripp 47, *Abracadabra*, may have claimed first place in the final race of the week for Cruising Division 1, but the more weighted overall series win



went to Ross Johnston's Beneteau Sense 55 *Circe* from Sandringham Yacht Club.

Second overall was the glamorous Oyster 655 *Proteus* of London that has been competing in the Oyster World Rally circumnavigation, which had a fleet stopover at Hamilton Island earlier in August. *Proteus* remained behind the departing fleet for a couple more weeks so as to race in the historic 30th Race Week. In placing second,

"The crew have been superb all week and we couldn't fault them, the results tell the story," added the member of RPAYC in Sydney's Broken Bay.

In Cruising Division 3, first time Race Week skipper Paul Giles steered his Jeanneau 39i *Lookout* to success in the final race.

"We smoked the whole fleet at the top mark [on the final day] and we are really happy," Giles said. "Today

FRESH FACES
Below: The one-design MC38 division was completely new to Audi Hamilton Island Race Week this year.

In Non-Spinnaker Division 2, Stuart Pascoe's Beneteau Oceanis, *Christina Jay*, won the division overall, with *Star Ferry* closely behind in second place.

But it was the flood-damaged *Star Ferry* that came across the line first in the Non-Spinnaker Division 2 final race of the week, a significant moment for skipper John Brand and a result that put the Marchi 39 into second on the final pointscore of the division. This year's Race Week is the first time *Star Ferry* has been sailed since the 2012 Bundaberg floods ravaged his boat, and Brand couldn't be happier.

"I am ecstatic," he said post-race. "It was a tough race in our big old heavy boat, but we got the course right today. We had to play with the boat to get it going because there was only a little bit of breeze. He also commended his crew for their efforts. "All these people jumped on the boat with next to no sailing experience, but they got the hang of it by the end of the week," Brand laughed.

Upping the ante and the racing excitement throughout Race Week was an all-new division dedicated to the growing fleet of McConaghy MC38 one-design racing yachts.

Sydney-based MC38 skipper Chris Hancock racing *Vino* triumphed in the division overall, winning his first regatta as an owner at this year's 30th anniversary race week.

It was tight going into the decider but when the points from 10 windward/leeward and island races raced by the fleet of five MC38's were tallied, Hancock's MC38 *Vino* had created some breathing space, prevailing over Leslie Green's *Ginger* by a comfortable five-point margin.

It was touch and go on the final day with a late charge from the Kiwis aboard Howard Spencer's black-hulled *Menace*, which "jumped out of the bushes and took everyone by surprise in the second half of the



Proteus picked up two individual podium places – a second and a third – in the six-race regatta schedule, which was all the more remarkable for the 50-tonne yacht given the week was raced in such light airs.

Third was Stephen Everett's *Salacia*.

In Cruising Division 2 the X35 *Next Light* came out on top in the division's final race and sealed the series with a deserved win for skipper Chris Ryan.

"We travelled 1,000 miles to get here from Pittwater in Sydney and that took 10 days," Ryan said. "On the way we managed to pick up unmarked fish floats on the keel and the shaft, which was very awkward. We stopped twice in the night to try and untangle the nets."

Ryan persisted with the journey and finally arrived at the island, where he has had a brilliant week, topped off by a win on the last day of the regatta.

"On the final day's racing we did exceedingly well. The light winds suit the boat and we are probably one of the only crews who don't complain about the lack of wind," he said.

suited us because we were able to use sails effectively, but we did struggle downhill."

However, the overall winner of Cruising Division 3 was Alan Stark's Catalina 350 *Starkers* by just a two-point cushion from Jason Jordan's *Jasambri 2*.

Rodney Smart's Hunter 50ac *Smart Choice* wrapped up the overall divisional results of the cruisers competing in Non-Spinnaker Division 1, ahead of yachts *Uluruatu* and *Namadgi*. Though Lindy Robertson's Sydney 38 *Guilty Pleasures IV* stole the show in Non-Spinnaker Division 1 final race of the week.

Among the 'First Fleeters' Peter Briggs, the only owner/skipper with the same boat he raced at the inaugural Race Week in 1984, the Frers-designed *Hitchhiker* of Royal Perth Yacht Club, also tasted success with the overall win in the First Fleet division. Briggs and his immaculately red and white dressed crew won the division of four great ocean-going boats, which were on the original starter's list some three decades earlier.





regatta," acknowledged Hancock.

Menace finished third on a countback in the latest owner/driver one-design class, which made its Race Week debut during the stunning week of clearest blue skies and lightest breezes that characterized the 30th anniversary event.

"We were leading around Pentecost Island when the Kiwis started bearing down on us with their big black kite and they managed to pass us just after Isolated Rock," recalled Hancock. "It was pretty intense, but thanks to great crew work by my team we were able to pick up *Menace* and hold them out all the way to the finish in Dent Passage.

"This is the first regatta I've won as an owner; I'm chuffed. The crew carried me on their shoulders," added Hancock, who has worked in the wine business with Hamilton Island owner, Bob Oatley, for some four decades. Hancock dedicated his divisional win to Bob and Sandy Oatley, "It's one for them," he said, recognising their enduring friendship.

On the MC38 class's first experience at Race Week, Hancock added, "it's been a terrific week, the camaraderie has been fantastic."

Leslie Green had to fly home mid-week, leaving *Ginger* in the capable hands of his top crew. Mainsheet hand Peter Bourke acknowledged the great competition his MC38 classmates *Vino*, *The Cone of Silence*, *Ghost Rider* and *Menace* provided. "It was a fabulous week and *Vino* did exceptionally well," with Bourke commenting that "the MC38 class attracts great people".

The MC38 class now returns to its regular one-design series in Sydney as they work towards their national championship this November on Sydney Harbour.

Even the fledgling multihull division attracted attention from the thousands of die-hard keelboat racers, especially one little 30-footer that carved its hulls through the monohull fleets each day.

Leading the multihulls in terms of speed on the course was *Wings* – Matthew Johns' self-designed, carbon-fibre 8.5-metre one-design catamaran built by Box Boat at Cooloom Beach. Crewing with Johns was Paul Mitchell and Mike Kite, the owner of Wings Dive Adventures, which sponsored *Box Office* for the regatta.

Race Week was the perfect way to showcase the new performance-racing catamaran, which is just starting out in Australia thanks to Johns and his business partner Dave Bigger. Given the lithe 30-foot cat

BOX OFFICE BLOCKBUSTER

Left: MC38s in action, a division won by *Vino*, skippered by Chris Hancock. Below: *Box Office*, skippered by Matthew Johns, was victorious in the Multihull Division. Opposite above: *Wild Oats X* tangles with *Wild Thing* in IRC Racing. Opposite below: Ernest Bertarelli at the wheel of *Wild Oats X*.

has been sailing through the fleet to the front of the pack all week it's been hard to miss!

"A multihull division at Race Week is a fantastic idea," said Johns, now a convert after many years on the IRC big boat circuit. "Surely everyone will see how good the racing is and more boats will be here next year. The room for growth is amazing.

"These lightweight cats are all carbon with rotating rigs; they are built to be a manageable racing catamaran. A boat like ours can be sailed with three people and the logistics are straightforward. The boat is just 500 kilograms with a 400-kilogram trailer so it can be easily towed anywhere. The set-up time is around three hours and takes a couple of hours to pack up."

The Box 8.5's sweet spot is 12-14 knots running downwind and it performs best in up to 18 knots of breeze. Johns suggests it is perfect for twilight racing with a couple of experienced sailors, not so much a family boat as there aren't any creature comforts or a downstairs area. It's a flat-out racing boat.

So is he a multihull convert? "Absolutely, there's no going back."

Recent extensions to Hamilton Island's marina freed up the extra berthing space needed to have multihulls added to the racing program for the 30th anniversary event and beyond. This move attracted five cats to the new division this year and it's likely there will be many more in 2014.

Regatta director Denis Thompson says, "This is one of the growth areas





we are looking at. Multihulls haven't been at Race Week since the late '80s. Five is a good start and they had a ball, and next year there is potential for separate divisions for cruising and racing multis."

Hamilton Island's Sunsail yacht operations manager Graham Black says they are turning over a batch of monohulls next year, replacing them with a matched fleet of six Robertson & Caine catamarans being sailed over from the yard in South Africa, so there should be available cats to charter for racing too, as with Sunsail's monohull fleet.

"Over the last year we have seen a definite trend towards catamarans. If you have weather like this it's perfect, with air conditioning and big fridges, and that's where I see it going next year!" said Black.

Hamilton Island CEO Glenn Bourke is also delighted with how the 30th anniversary event panned out.

"There are a lot of happy punters around," he said.

"The theme of 1984 worked really well, people liked turning back the clock and certainly the \$2 and \$4 afternoon beer prices were a hit, as was the F-arm BBQ after racing each afternoon.



"The entertainment fit the demographic and the light air facilitated fewer arguments. I know from sailing on *Wild Oats XI* that there was great empathy between Ernesto Bertarelli and his *Wild Oats X* crew, and between *Wild Thing* and us (aboard *Wild Oats XI*). We all had fun.

The first Virgin direct flight out of Melbourne, which started on 15 August, was also a really important boost for the event in terms getting southern sailors up and back. That was a big coup for the island and made life a lot easier for the yachties," Bourke added.

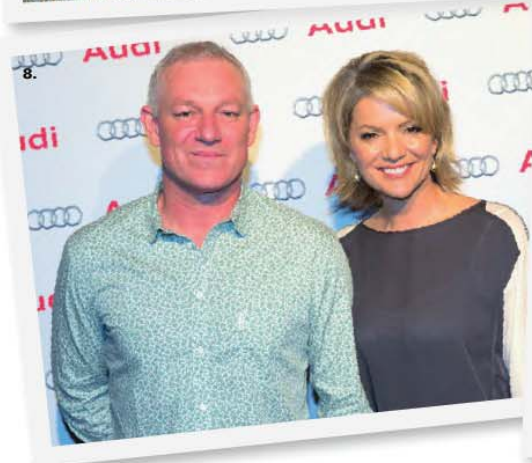
All attending the 30th Anniversary Presentation dinner following the final day's racing were in good spirits, made more so by the announcement by Audi Australia's Managing Director Andrew Doyle that Race Week's naming rights sponsor Audi would be back for 2014 in their ninth year of supporting this great week of competition, camaraderie and cheer on the water and off.

Full results for all 12 divisions racing at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week are available at: <http://www.topyacht.net.au/results/2013/ahirw/series/index.htm> or visit the website. ⚓ www.hamiltonislandraceweek.com.au



30th birthday celebrations

Guests celebrated the launch of Audi Hamilton Island Race Week's 30th Anniversary with fireworks over the Marina and Piper-Heidsieck Champagne on the Bommie Deck. Attendees danced the night away at the live outdoor stage, soaking up the party atmosphere on Front Street. Chefs Matt Moran and Shannon Bennett cooked up a storm and Collette Dinnigan sent models sashaying down the catwalk. The traditional gift for a 30th anniversary is a pearl, and to commemorate Race Week's milestone, Paspaley fittingly showcased the exquisite Paspaley Pearl.



1. Opening ceremony at the Hamilton Island Yacht Club. **2.** Ronan Keating with girlfriend Storm Uechtritz. **3.** Bradley Cox and Collette Dinnigan. **4.** Robert Oatley with his wife Valerie. **5.** Sandy and Carol Oatley and Patrick Boutellier. **6.** The outdoor live music stage on Front Street was party central. **7.** Brad Butterworth and Marcus Blackmore. **8.** Symon Brewis-Weston with wife Sandra Sully. **9.** Collette Dinnigan fashion show in Qualia's Long Pavillion. **10.** Matt Belcher, Andrew Doyle (managing director of Audi Australia) and Malcome Page.

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 ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART
YACHT RACE

Sydney Hobart blockbuster

The 69th edition of the Rolex Sydney Hobart is shaping up to be a blockbuster, with a strong international field predicted, bolstered by the inclusion of 12 brand new Clipper yachts racing in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race.



This will be the first time ever the Clipper fleet has taken part in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's 628-nautical-mile race, although not for its originator, Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, who competed in the 2010 Rolex Sydney Hobart aboard *Titania of Cowes*.

"The timing was perfect and the opportunity irresistible," said Sir Robin, the first person to sail single-handed and non-stop around the world (between 1968 and 1969). He started the biennial Clipper race to offer amateurs from all walks of life the opportunity of experiencing the thrill of ocean racing and a circumnavigation of the planet.



TRUE PIONEER
Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the originator of the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race, who competed in the 2010 Rolex Sydney Hobart aboard *Titania of Cowes* will be sending his Clipper fleet to Hobart on Boxing Day this year.

VANTAGE POINT
Left: Spectators
will line the shore
for the start of this
year's Rolex Sydney
Hobart, joined by
a worldwide TV
audience for the
historic race.



"The Clipper sailors will have sailed halfway around the world to participate in the Rolex Sydney Hobart, one of the world's great classic ocean races. It will give these amateur crews a chance to test themselves against some tough opposition outside the Clipper Race," he said.

Other early international entrants include the race's first ever participant from Cyprus, Gerhard Ruether's 100-foot super maxi *Zefiro*; *Nikata*, a British Swan 82 to be skippered by Tom Brewer; *Varuna* a Ker 50 from Germany owned by Jens Kellinghausen, and Jean Luc Esplaas, returns from Noumea with his Archambault 40, 41 *SUD* for a third tilt at the race.

New Zealander Jim Delegat, managing director of Delegat Wine Estate, distributor of Oyster Bay wines, purchased the 2011-2012 Volvo Ocean Race winner, *Groupama*. The rebadged *Giacomo* is expected to line up against at least two other Volvo 70s come Boxing Day.

Once again, the boat to beat for line honours will be Bob Oatley's super maxi *Wild Oats XI*, skippered by Mark Richards. The reigning race record holder has taken line honours in six of the last eight Hobart races, including four consecutive victories from 2005, when it first broke the record.

As always the Rolex Sydney Hobart's prized trophy, the Tattersall's Cup, presented to the

overall race winner, is wide open.

Leading the charge will be Matt Allen's brand new Carkeek 60 *Ichi Ban*; Chris Bran's 2013 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race winner, *Brannew*, a Beneteau First 40; Sam Haynes' Rogers 46 *Celestial*, last year's runner-up in the CYCA's Blue Water Pointscore and Victorian Bruce Taylor will make his 33rd attempt to win the race with his IRC 40 *Chutzpah*.

Philip Childs is again bringing his Farr 49, *Knee Deep*, all the way from Western Australia. The former *Yendys* won the 1999 Rolex Sydney Hobart for original owner, Geoff Ross.

Rod Jones has entered *Audi Sunshine Coast*. In his second offshore outing, the Queenslander showed promise, winning Division 1 of the CYCA's 2013 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race, with the revamped *Heaven Can Wait*.

Other entrants registered at the time of writing include Jim Cooney's Jutson 80, *Brindabella*, the 1991 line honours winner and Andrew Wenham's newly purchased Volvo 70, *Southern Excellence II* (the former *Ichi Ban*). Wenham's previous *Southern Excellence*, a Volvo 60, will also be on the start line as *Spirit of Mateship*.

Spirit of Mateship, will be crewed by 10 wounded, injured or ill, current and former Australian Defence Force personnel, known as 'Brave Mates', to raise money for the Mates4Mates charity. Mates4Mates was established by the RSL's Queensland Branch to provide support to wounded, injured or ill members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and their families.

The nominated Mates will participate in a series of training activities to ensure all are ready for what awaits come 26 December.

Led by skipper Russell McCarte, the Brave Mates will be stretched physically and psychologically to develop both individual and team skills such as fortitude, strength, resilience and resourcefulness to name a few. By experiencing and conquering any negative aspects, the individuals and teammates can overcome adversity.

The CYCA is predicting a fleet of approximately 80 yachts for the 69th edition of the race which starts each year on 26 December at 1pm AEDT.

The start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race will be broadcast live on the Seven Network throughout Australia and the Australia Network throughout the Asia Pacific Region, and webcast live to a global audience on Yahoo!7. ↴

CLIPPER ROUND THE
WORLD YACHT RACE

Clipper fleet adds colour to Hobart

The Australian ports of Albany, Sydney, Hobart and Brisbane will be stopover hosts to the 2013-2014 Clipper Race, with the 12-boat fleet already well on its way 'Down Under'. By PETER CAMPBELL.

Twelve identical 70-foot ocean racing yachts, each with a professional skipper and a crew of amateurs with varying experience, are well on their way to Australia in the 2013-2014 Clipper Round the World Race, with stopovers at Albany in Western Australia, Sydney in New South Wales, then Hobart in Tasmania and finally the Queensland capital of Brisbane.

In an exciting diversion to their original circumnavigation plan, the fleet will contest the famous Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, starting from Sydney Harbour on Boxing Day.

The fleet is due to reach Albany, W.A. on October 27 after a tough 3,600-nautical-mile race from Cape Town across the Indian Ocean. After a break in the West Australian port, the boats, some with new crew, will set sail across the Great Australian Bight and Bass Strait to Sydney, where they are due on 19 December. Then it's the Rolex Sydney Hobart Race with its spectacular start on 26 December.

After a quick stopover in Hobart after the big race, the fleet will dash

back north to Brisbane, scheduled to set sail on 31 December. However, Hobartians have suggested to race organisers that they start from Hobart in the morning of 2 January, just before the iconic King of the Derwent, traditionally attracting a large fleet of spectator craft.

In each of the Australian ports, locals will be able to get a close-up view of the new Clipper 70s and meet their crews. In Sydney, the Cruising Yacht Club plans to berth the dozen boats at the end of D marina.

Whether the Clipper Race fleet has its own start line or starts with the rest of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Race fleet is still under discussion, but the Clipper 70s will be eligible for the line honours trophy and, if they produce valid IRC or ORCi rating certificates on arrival in Sydney, they will also be eligible for overall and division trophies.

Early indications of the speed of the Clipper 70s is that they have the potential to be among the front runners in the Rolex Sydney Hobart, although crew experience could



Clipper 70s break event record

The Clipper Round the World Race has already set a new race speed record of 30.7 knots in the North Atlantic, only days into first long leg of the event.

The Henri Lloyd team hit this speed as the boat surfed south towards the Equator line and their eventual destination of Rio de Janeiro. The previous record was 27 knots, achieved in the Pacific by *Visit Finland*, in the 2011-2012 Clipper Race.

Clipper Race director Justin Taylor said most of the fleet was reaching surfing speeds of 20-plus knots in the current conditions. "These speeds are pretty much what we expected from the Clipper 70s although we didn't really expect them to be setting speed records until they reached the Southern Ocean," he said.





be a factor in just how competitive they prove to be against the other 70-footers in the fleet, including the winner of the most recent Volvo Ocean Race.

In Hobart, plans are underway for the Clipper 70s to be berthed together in Sullivans Cove, again allowing easy access to the public to view the world's largest one-design fleet of ocean racing yachts. Most of them should reach Hobart by 29 December, giving a short stopover for any repairs, crew changeovers and provisioning for the 1,200-nautical-mile dash up the Australian east coast to Brisbane.

The Clipper 70, the third generation of the event's ocean racers are, by design, stripped of luxuries for the crews. Sailing efficiency and speed are the key factors in the new

hull design by British naval architect Tony Castro,

New features include twin helms, twin rudders and a six-foot bowsprit, which allows the inclusion of three large asymmetric spinnakers and a suite of Yankee headsails that all add to increased performance and boat speed. The Clipper 70s have a LOA of 23 metres, a beam of 5.65 metres, a draft of three metres and displacement of 31,700 kilograms. The bulb keel alone weighs 12,000 kilograms. The mast height from the waterline is a towering 29 metres.

Mainsail area is 123.19 square metres, headsail area 168.43 square metres, and an asymmetric spinnaker area of 330.34 square metres are all the makings of powerful ocean racers.

The 2013-2014 Clipper Round the World Race is the world's longest

ocean race. A total of 670 amateur crew aboard the 12 matched Clipper 70s will sail 40,000 nautical miles in 15 races between all six continents, taking 11 months to complete the voyage.

The fleet left London on 1 September, completing the short Race 1 in Brest, France. As we went to press the fleet was racing across the Atlantic on Race 2 bound for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and making exceptional times.

The Clipper Race then continues via Cape Town, South Africa on to Australia, with stopovers at Albany and Sydney, followed by the famous Rolex Sydney Hobart Race, then on to Brisbane, Singapore, China, San Francisco, Panama, Jamaica, New York, Derry / Londonderry and the Netherlands, before returning to London in July 2014. ⚓

www.clipperroundtheworld.com

HISTORY MAKERS
Above: The record-breaking Henri Lloyd team starts the world's longest ocean race from Brest. Left: The Swiss team in action in the 2013-14 race.

Starting on October 13, the Tasmanian master mariner and winning skipper of *Gold Coast Australia* in the 2011-2012 Clipper Round the World Race, will be taking on another world yachting challenge.

Richard Hewson will sail a tiny 6.5-metre yacht in the 2013 Mini Transat Race – one of the longest, toughest and most challenging ocean races in the world.

wooden boat on extended voyages up the east coast of Tasmania.

Describing the Mini Transat, Hewson said some critics considered the race across the Atlantic in such small boats a ‘mad’ event and potentially dangerous.

“The Mini Transat combines the hazards of solo ocean racing in a very small craft, about the same size as a family mini van, with a gruelling test of the skipper to conquer pure

SINGLE CHALLENGE

WITH THE 2013-2014 CLIPPER RACE WELL UNDERWAY, THE PREVIOUS RACE WINNER RICHARD HEWSON IS ABOUT TO TAKE ON A NEW OCEAN RACING CHALLENGE, THE MINI TRANSAT. PETER CAMPBELL INTERVIEWED RICHARD BEFORE THE START.

The Mini Transat is considered the most extreme single-handed race anywhere. Yet up to 80 ‘minis’, 6.5-metre boats, from 18 different countries will race from Douarenez, France via Lanzarote (Canary Islands) and then rocket across the Atlantic to the finish line at Pointe-à-Pitre, Guadeloupe in the Caribbean.

The yachts are expected to arrive there between November 22 and 30, after spending over a month racing solo at sea.

Hewson, who grew up sailing at Hobart’s Lindsfarne Sailing Club, Sandy Bay Sailing Club and the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, skippered *Gold Coast Australia* to a remarkable victory in the 2011-2012 Clipper Round the World Race, completed just last year.

Working with a crew of amateur sailors, Hewson sailed the yacht to first place in a remarkable 12 of the 15 legs, achieved 15 podium positions and broke records in the Atlantic, the Pacific and the Southern Ocean.

“That’s fantastic news about this year’s Clipper Race fleet using the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race as part of their course around the world,” the Tasmanian yachtsman said.

The Mini Transat is a long way from Hewson’s earliest attempts at long-distance solo sailing – in a tiny Sabot dinghy on the Derwent – and later with a friend sailing their small

physical and mental exhaustion,” Hewson explained.

“With the boats potentially reaching speeds of over 20 knots, peak performance and sound tactical decisions have to be made despite snatching sleep just 10-20 minutes at a time.

“Navigation equipment is minimal and no external weather or advice is allowed, including information gained from satellites or communications, so competitors need to be very proficient with their meteorology, using only the clouds, thermometers and a barometer to decide on the best tactical strategy.”

Hewson will be racing a new RG650 series yacht, designed by Argentinean Nikolas Goldenberg, with the project managed by fellow Australian Brett Perry.

The RG650 it is the first mini series boat to be built in the Southern Hemisphere and has demonstrated itself to be very powerful and fast.

Hewson has spent the last 12 months completing the gruelling qualifying races in the Mediterranean and during September he moved the boat north-west to the coast of France for further racing and preparation.

The Mini Transat can be tracked by satellite trackers through the website www.minitransat.fr. Richards’s blogs are available on his website. ⚓

www.hewsonracing.com



LONG SLOG
In traversing the Atlantic in a Mini Transat, Richard Hewson is expected to spend a month solo at sea.



In mid-December 2012 Sam Haynes sailed *Celestial* to ORCi victory in the 2012 CYCA Trophy Passage series. He went on to finish 19th overall in the 2012 Rolex Sydney Hobart (where he was third in division and won ORCi Division 2) cementing second overall in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's 2012-2013 Blue Water Point Score (BWPS) and victory under ORCi.

These results eased Haynes' disappointment at having to retire from the 2010 and 2011 Hobart races. He frankly admits: "Not finishing those two Hobarts gutted me."

Being runner-up to Stephen Ainsworth's exceptional *Loki* in the BWPS has established Haynes and his Rogers 46 as one of the front-runners for the series this year.

Sailors know weather is a fundamental factor in deciding race outcomes, and it was patently clear that the 2013 Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race favoured those in the 35-40 foot range. *Celestial*, at 46 feet, finished 18th overall (and second in division), which translated to seventh in the first race of the BWPS.

Since then, Haynes and his mostly amateur crew have produced solid results with the yacht variously known as *Celestial*, *Pirelli Celestial* and most recently *Celestial Assistance Dogs*.

Following the Sydney Gold Coast race in late July, *Celestial* won the Club Marine Brisbane to Keppel Tropical Yacht Race overall from the likes of the RP52 *Scarlet Runner* and RP55 *Wedgetail*, *Black Jack* (a VOR70) and super maxis *Wild Thing* and *Lahana*. The result gave Haynes impetus going into the 30th Audi Hamilton Island Race Week, where *Celestial* placed an impressive third overall in the IRC division behind two in-form TP52s *Hooligan* and *Shogun V*.

While *Hooligan* won by a country mile, the second placed *Shogun V* only beat *Celestial* by a single point, after Haynes won the Lindeman Island Race on the final day. The top two TP52 yachts run professional programs and both are purpose-built regatta boats, while *Celestial* is predominantly an ocean racer, with a largely amateur crewed run on a comparably small budget.

"It's not a bad thing to have paid people though," concedes Haynes, whose 'gun for hire' is Steve McConaghy, with Tim Davis also making guest appearances as navigator or tactician.

CELESTIAL ALIGNMENT

SAM HAYNES' STRING OF SUCCESSES WITH *CELESTIAL*, HIS APTLY NAMED ROGERS 46, HAS ENCOURAGED HIM TO PUSH FORWARD WITH HIS SAILING PROGRAM. RACING AGAINST SOME OF THE BEST YACHTSMEN AND BOATS AROUND LAST YEAR, THE REWARDS ARE ALREADY COMING HIS WAY WITH NUMEROUS WINS AND PODIUM PLACES EARLY THIS SEASON AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. DI PEARSON CHATS WITH THE DOCTOR DOOLITTLE OF SAILING.

"We've always been a mostly amateur crew. Every now and again Steve is joined by one or two others if I feel my crew can benefit from the knowledge of a 'pro'," Haynes says, before going on to describe winning the Lindeman Island Race on the almost windless final day of the recent Audi Hamilton Island Race Week.

"We were racing really well and knew we were in the lead. Then we saw the wind behind us, glass in the middle where we were with *Victoire*, and wind in front of us.

"Then the tide turned against us and was pushing us towards the shore. I thought we were going to hit the rocks, but we got into a back eddy that edged us back into the channel and breeze - 3 knots - that got us going again.

"We could see the big boats and breathed a sigh of relief because we knew we were back in the game. A lot of gybes later, we got into steady breeze and went on to win. It was really satisfying."

Celestial's crew is looking forward to the rest of the CYCA's Blue Water Point Score, being a Sydney-based boat. The BWPS decides the best ocean racing yacht from six races, of

DOG DAYS
Sam Haynes (right) accompanied by Assistance Dogs Australia CEO Richard Lord and a couple of the charity's employees, aboard Haynes' Rogers 46, *Celestial*.



ANDREA FRANCO/NI



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STARS ALIGNED
Clockwise from left: *Celestial* in top form at Hamilton Island this year, where she finished third overall; *Celestial* on the way to ORCi victory in the CYCA Trophy Passage Series 2012; *Celestial* heads offshore during the CYCA Trophy Passage series 2012; Sam Haynes (middle with trophy) celebrates winning CYCA Trophy Series 2012 in ORCi.



which the Rolex Sydney Hobart is the grand finale and Haynes is pinning his hopes on a great result.

Relatively new to ocean racing, Haynes originated from Perth, where sailing dinghies formed part of his childhood. He moved to Sydney in 1988 and took a big step up from sailing on a variety of smaller yachts locally to purchasing a Cavalier 35 and sailing it on Pittwater, in Sydney's north.

In 2008 he moved the Cavalier to the CYCA on Sydney Harbour and raced it before trading up to a Sydney 39, which he also raced at the CYCA. That's when the grand prix racing bug bit.

"My kids got older (they are now 15 and 12) and I just got into it. Once you get a solid crew and a good boat, you just get more interested," reflects Haynes, who purchased the current Rogers 46 from Rob Hanna in late 2010 and finished 10th in the 2011-2012 BWPS.

After a solid preparation in the lead-up with *Celestial*, Haynes was struck a blow when forced to retire from the 2011 Hobart race – making it two years running.

"That was very hard to take," Haynes acknowledges. "We did everything we could to prepare the boat, but after we retired, the whole crew wanted to get back out there and do better – it made us stronger."

Finally the tide turned in the 2012 race: "Positions went up and down so much, because there were so many holes in the course. We found ours in the Derwent," he remembers.

"We were happy though, because we finished – and were third in IRC division, won ORCi in division and won ORCi overall in the Blue Water Pointscore for 2012-2013. This boat is an ORCi weapon and it's also doing well in IRC."



Now *Celestial*'s crew has its sights set on BWPS victory this season and "a solid Hobart result with a couple of other wins along the way is what it'll take," Haynes says.

"We added a new square top mainsail from OneSails just before the Gold Coast race and we're getting good results from it," the Sydneysider says. "Then we added a fixed bowsprit just before the Port Stephens regatta in April where we won the NSW IRC Championship."



Among the CYCA member's competitive threats for the current BWPS title are *Victoire* ("They will improve for sure") and *Audi Sunshine Coast* ("They will have a good showing"). "Then there's *Wild Rose* and *Midnight Rambler*, which are always in the mix," Haynes says. "It's a very solid field again."

After Hobart, Haynes intends defending *Celestial's* NSW IRC crown and contesting the Audi IRC Australian Championship being sailed off Newcastle next April. He says he is in sailing for the long haul, despite being busy with his family and successful veterinary practice.

"My wife Kathryn misses me when I'm not around, but she supports my sailing and so do my sons who race Flying 11s at Vaucluse 12-footers. They come to Hobart to greet us; there's nothing like arriving and finding your family there – they are so supportive," he says.

Dr Sam Haynes is proprietor and founder of the Sydney Animal Hospitals Group (there are four practices in NSW). Prior to establishing it, he was a flying vet in the Kimberley, WA, and had stints working in the pig, dairy and goat breeding industries. The latter led to him briefly being involved in the movie business, filling the role of behind-the-scenes vet in the Australian-made movie *Babe*.

"The producer brought a dog in to us, which was to be used in the film. He asked if I knew anything about pigs – and guess what! It was very interesting but really hard work," Haynes admits.

Invited onto the Assistance Dogs board five years ago, Haynes remains passionate about the charity. "I help on the board with the charity's governance. The *Celestial* program helps raise awareness. Those who benefit from the dogs are disabled generally to the point of needing to be in a wheelchair. Some are paraplegics. A lot are relatively young, and need help to be more independent," Haynes says. "I get a lot of fulfilment out of my role there. It's challenging work, but it's always good to give back to society."

For the Sydney Vet who's arguably a relative newcomer to ocean racing, Haynes and his *Celestial* crew are certainly one to watch as they look to the stars and the silverware to come. ⚓



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RALLY CALL

SAILING WITH A GROUP OF LIKE-MINDED PEOPLE IS WHAT YACHT RALLIES ARE ALL ABOUT AND ACROSS AUSTRALIA, AND EVEN ABROAD, THERE ARE PLENTY TO CHOOSE FROM, REPORTS KEVIN GREEN.

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FIRST FLEET

The Beneteau Cup Regatta, seen here in Sydney, always draws a big fleet with models spanning Oceanis, First and Sense in 2012/13, all enjoying both spinnaker and non-spinnaker racing.



Having something in common is a fantastic way to foster friendships, thus yachting brand rallies continue to grow around Australia and abroad. Families get to know one another and those with kids usually find instant playmates. Owners can ask the yachtbuilders those awkward questions face-to-face while the distributors benefit from feedback, and everything is made easy by the rallies taking place in a convivial atmosphere with a few chilled wines or beers on hand.

"Rallies are of course more than just fun, they are an essential part of building brand loyalty and customer satisfaction," explains Hanse brand manager Mary Bickley from Australian distributor Windcraft.

It's also a great way to foster pride of ownership, exchange advice and find out about new boats. Jumping aboard as a guest or prospective owner is a good way to find out about your next boat. But for many the social aspect is top of the list, so just rafting up for a laugh, sparking up the barbie and having a drink or two afloat at a beautiful location is what it's all about. Catamaran marketers Multihull Solutions and Seawind both run rally events in the Whitsunday Islands of North Queensland and in another favourite location, Sydney's Pittwater and Broken Bay region. This is also a regular sailing spot for the annual Hanse Rally, run by distributor Windcraft, which also regularly organises a flotilla cruise north to Port Stephens.

Major French yachting brands such as Jeanneau and Beneteau run similar cruising and social racing events, with the annual Beneteau Cup a much sought-after accolade. For those sailors seeking some overseas adventure, Mariner Boating's Beneteau First 45 fleet rally in Croatia looks an exciting option as well, arranged by this experienced company that has been taking sailors, their family and friends to the Adriatic Sea for a decade. Anyone can join these international sailing sojourns – sailors or non-sailors, singles, couples, or entire crews and no sailing experience is necessary. Additionally for next year, Mariner Boating are hosting a regatta that will run right after the cruising rally for those seeking a more competitive way of sailing the fast, one-design First 45s, powered by the Med region's famed Mistral breeze that blows in most afternoons to eat up the passage miles. Closer to home, for those new

sailors first dipping their toes into the sailing scene, chartering is a good option, especially around Airlie Beach where most of the major brands supply boats for Whitsunday-based cruising and social regatta events.

BENETEAU

French builder Beneteau run an annual Beneteau Cup Regatta across all Australian states. These events kick off with Queensland in October, Sydney Harbour in November, Melbourne in March, Western Australia in April and finish with the final Australian event in Pittwater during May.

Last season witnessed the biggest Beneteau Cup yet with over 150 owners and crew enjoying competitive sailing mixed with plenty of social sampling of French champagne and alfresco culture.

The 2013/2014 series of Beneteau Cup Regattas will commence this October in conjunction with the Beneteau Queensland Owners Group, Beneteau Qld Dealer Spirit Marine and the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron in Brisbane.

Beneteau owners across Australia have enjoyed an exciting series of Beneteau Cup Regattas with models spanning the Oceanis, First and Sense range participating in the 2012/2013 season. This concluded with the Vicsail Pittwater Beneteau Cup in May in which 17 yachts enjoyed good breeze on the beautiful Pittwater in Sydney's north, with both spinnaker and non-spinnaker divisions included in this 13th celebration of Vicsail's annual Pittwater event.

The Vicsail Beneteau Cup event on Sydney Harbour is one of the oldest in the country with a 20-year history behind it. The one-day event includes two races and entertainment at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia.

A more recent rally event is for the growing fleet of Beneteau Lagoon multihulls, which sailed their inaugural Lagoon Escapade earlier this year in Victoria. The fleet of cruising cats met up at Martha Cove for a French-influenced breakfast and hot drinks while the sailing instructions were announced.

Afterwards the crews, even including some four-legged family members, headed to their vessels to rendezvous again at the start line just inside Port Phillip. The big multihulled cruisers suddenly turned into racing machines with laughs and smiles all the way to the finish line.

www.beneteau.com.au

HANSE

Hanse Australia distributor Windcraft has been running Hanse rallies since 2007, ever since Windcraft director Peter Hrones achieved his target of attaining 100 owners of the popular German cruising brand.

For that inaugural event 25 boats entered and as numbers have risen over the years to some 300 owners, the rally now attracts up to 50 boats each year for the Pittwater regatta, with yachts sailing from as far away as Melbourne to participate, as well as regular fleets of Hanse boats coming from nearby Port Stephens and Port Hacking. The sheltered waters of Broken Bay and Pittwater are an

ideal rally area with plenty of marina berths, secluded coves and the twin clubs of the Royal Motor Yacht Club and the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club providing excellent hospitality.

The Windcraft rally fleet now represents a history of the Hanse models, plus the addition of Moody and Dehler yachts. Next year the largest Hanse in Australia, the 575 that arrived for the Sydney Boat Show, is expected to participate too.

The seventh annual rally on Pittwater was held on Saturday March 23, attracting over 30 Hanse, Dehler and Moody yacht owners. The event, organised by Team Windcraft, encouraged family fun and included

owners that were new to sailing in a fleet. Windcraft also provided experienced staff and sailors to help any yachts desiring racing assistance throughout the day. Due to the light breeze, the fleet enjoyed a successful close start and a picturesque course around Lion Island, before finishing near the secluded Hungry Beach where sailors and spectators enjoyed a relaxing swim and snorkel. Lunch was even provided by Windcraft, while chilled champagne and beer was delivered to every boat.

The prize-giving featured sailing jackets from sponsor Helly Hansen, along with prizes from other sponsors including Navico, Club Marine, North Sails and both local yacht clubs.

Windcraft's other major event each year is Sail Away to Port Stephens, which recently took place on the September 21. "The idea of the

The Pittwater regatta attracts up to 50 boats each year, with yachts sailing from as far away as Melbourne.

**SHOW OF HANSE**

Left: Hanse dealer Windcraft hosts its annual Pittwater rally in March, which now includes Dehler and Moody brands. Above: Pittwater's secluded coves and beaches are an ideal area for convivial raft-ups.

Port Stephens rally was to provide our owners with the opportunity of undertaking a sea passage with the confidence of sailing in company," explained Mary Bickley. For some this ocean experience is a first, particularly if they take the night departure option, with a great sense of achievement felt by all on arrival in Port Stephens. Over the years, regular participants now take a more leisurely route via Newcastle and some stay in Port Stephens for an extra few days or weeks after the rally.

Melbourne owners have already formed their own owners association and are planning cruises and get-togethers on Port Phillip Bay – check out the Windcraft website for activities organised by dealer Roger Poulter at Anchor Marine in Melbourne.

Plans for the future include New Zealand Windcraft owners, following the recent expansion of Windcraft New Zealand with an office in Auckland, so Peter Hrones is already checking out the Bay of Islands as a forthcoming New Zealand rally venue. www.windcraft.com.au



MARINER BOATING

Mariner Boating's Maggie and Trevor Joyce organise international yachting rallies as their business and way of life. Their Beneteau Croatia event is the most popular, they told me, with two different events in Croatia, both using a charter fleet of ten one-design Beneteau First 45s and 35s, with these rallies escorted by a committee from Mariner Boating and a local technician from the charter operator.

Their first 2014 event is the Croatia Yacht Rally, which operates using the typical Mariner Boating rally format of a race day followed by a leisure day. The Rally sails past the spectacular islands of the Dalmatian Coast from Split to Dubrovnik allowing plenty of time for sightseeing including visiting UNESCO-protected historic towns and of course plenty of shore-side socialising.

The sailing legs are passage races and are generally run in the afternoon over a distance of 10-15 nautical miles (with no spinnakers). In 2014, the Croatia Yacht Rally will run from June 13-28, and I believe it will be the 11th year for this event. Prices are \$10,695 for the First 45 and \$8,175 for the First 35.

ADRIATIC AT ITS BEST

The Beneteau First 45 fleet of 10 boats (as seen below) offers a sublime way to enjoy Croatian sailing with experienced Australian operators Mariner Boating.

The second event is the inaugural Croatia First Regatta, which will begin immediately after the Croatia Yacht Rally (June 28 - July 5). This one-week regatta will sail the same Beneteau First 45s, however spinnakers will be used and cruising gear removed. During the six days there will be three 30-mile passage races, two days of windward-leeward racing and a lay

day. All crews will have the comfort of staying in hotel accommodation after the races, which means each yacht can have up to 10 crew racing aboard during the day. In addition, there will be yachts for spectators, so family and friends can still experience sailing in the Adriatic while being transported between ports on race days.

www.marinerboating.com



JEANNEAU

Jeanneau owners sail together in regular rallies in Sydney (March), Melbourne (June) and Tasmania (March). Over the years I've enjoyed taking part in Jeanneau rallies on Sydney Harbour, where a fleet usually sails around many of the harbour bays and past the iconic Opera House and Bridge. This year was no exception with nearly 40 yachts competing in an event hosted by NSW Jeanneau dealer Performance Boating and the experienced management team of Ron Jacobs and Lee Condell.

With three divisions run, two for the more competitive-minded and a cruising division, the weather gods were smiling for the 2013 event with beautiful sailing conditions of sunny skies and light breeze (other than a quick downpour at 5pm, the day was completely perfect).

Afterwards, festivities were hosted by the Northbridge Sailing Club where most of the major marine manufacturers provided gear for the prize-giving. Trophies were awarded



JEANNEAU JOY
 Nearly 40 yachts competed in the 2013 Jeanneau Rally. Below: A brisk winter day saw the inaugural Victorian Jeanneau event in Melbourne.

to each division, and naming sponsor Sydney City Marine generously supplied a full yacht antifoul, valued at up to \$4,000, which was won by Greg O'Neil for his Jeanneau SO36i. Sydney City Marine also issued a \$250 gift voucher to every yacht that attended and a wide variety of prizes were distributed to all yachts.

Elsewhere, in Victoria Jeanneau owners had their own inaugural event this year sailed on a cool winter's day on June 8, supported by local Victorian distributor 38 South Boat Sales. Despite the season, unusually fine weather attracted some 17 Jeanneau owners from around Port Phillip Bay who brought their yachts to the mouth of the Yarra at Melbourne City Marina for the event.

Anecdotal awards on the day even included 'most worn headsail', 'oldest rigging' and the yacht with the 'highest engine hours', with many prizes from local sponsors Club Marine, Sandringham Marine, Doyle Sails, Mariner Engineering and Ocean Rigging Services.

www.jeanneauaustralia.com

The weather gods were smiling for the 2013 event with beautiful sailing conditions of sunny skies and a light breeze.



STRIKE A POSE
Fun is just as central to the Multihull Solutions Rendezvous as the racing itself.



MULTIHULL SOLUTIONS

Multihull Solutions take rallying very seriously, devoting an entire week in early September to sailing around the springtime Whitsunday Islands. While down in Sydney's Broken Bay the Royal Motor Yacht Club hosts an October long weekend (4-5) event with the 2013 APC Logistics Lock Crowther Multihull Regatta (LCMR) set to be the biggest yet.

Taking an open book approach, the Multihull Rendezvous in the Whitsundays is open to multihulls of all brands. The event includes a relaxed itinerary of casual sailing, themed parties, and social events that embrace a spirit of fun, according to Multihull Solutions' Kate Elkington. Entries have already been received from many owners of Fountaine Pajot, Seawind, Grainger, Schionning and Oram catamarans. A highlight is anchoring at the stunning Whitehaven beach, and for others it's watching the wildlife including the humpback whales that cavort around the island waters at this time of year.



Down in Sydney, competition is expected to be fierce in the LCMR's racing division with a large number of entries received from all around Australia. These include Shaun Carroll's new Seacart 30 trimaran *Morticia*, *Foxy* and *Two Tribes* from Lake Macquarie, and *Indian Chief*, *Voodoo Spirit*, *Quickstep* and *Lukim Yu* from the local RMYC catamaran fleet. Corsair and Farrier trimarans will

ALL SMILES
Above: The spectacular Whitehaven Beach is just one very good reason to join Multihull Solutions' annual Whitsundays Rendezvous each September, which welcomes all multihull brands.

also be setting a hot pace against their catamaran rivals in the Blue Water Classic ocean race on Friday as well as racing in four exhilarating inshore races on the Saturday and Sunday, where the famed Pittwater wind shifts ensure everyone is kept on their toes.

Both racing and cruising entrants will enjoy an extensive social program that includes a welcome barbecue on Friday and a fun-filled themed party on the Saturday evening.

The weekend will close with a presentation D\ dinner on Sunday where winners of both divisions will receive prizes provided by the event sponsors. These, impressively include Quantum, Tactical Directions, Hood Sailmakers, Barracouta Sails, Contender/Selden, Summit Coatings, Geddes Optical, Mitre 10 and Two Rivers wines.

Trailerable multihulls have access to a launching ramp and parking, while berths and moorings can be organised by contacting the RMYC Broken Bay on 02 9997 5511. www.multihullsolutions.com.au

SEAWIND

'Local multihull hero' Seawind Catamarans has been running rallies since the company's inception over 30 years ago. However in recent years its Seawind Cruising Club Series has brought sailors and Seawind cats together all around the country as well as overseas. Rally locations include Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, the Whitsundays, California, Mexico and even the Bahamas. As the events are exclusive to Seawind cats, racing is always close and exciting, yet always fun and friendly.

Despite the changes brought about by the company's decision to cease production in Australia and

**GATEWAY TO THE REEF**

Above: Airlie Beach remains a popular destination for rally attendees to charter a boat.

Rally locations include Sydney, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, the Whitsundays, California, Mexico and even the Bahamas.



CATCHING THE WINDS
Seawind's 2012 Pittwater rally attracted a 27-boat fleet for the 14th annual event hosted at the Royal Motor Yacht Club Broken Bay.

move offshore to Vietnam, the local Sydney-based distributor Multihull Central continues to support the Seawind rally events through a national and international dealer network. The annual Seawind events calendar kicks off in March each year with Victoria's Martha Cove gathering. Next up is June's Whitsundays rally, followed by October's Moreton Bay event and the grand finale is held on Sydney's Pittwater during November, which I enjoyed sailing in last year, especially when we moored in the basin for the night's big party ashore. "The timing allows the really keen sailors to take part in several events," explained Multihull Central's Brent Vaughan.

The Seawind Whitsunday Rally last June attracted sailors from interstate and abroad. Many boats were chartered from Airlie Beach where sponsors Whitsunday Escape and Cumberland Charter Yachts are based, with a large selection of Seawind Catamarans available to hire. Attendees included the brand new Seawind 1250 *Wind of Change*, and as I found out for myself during my Seawind yard visit in Vietnam earlier this year, we should expect to see more of Seawind's flagship 1250s rolling off the production line in Ho Chi Minh City and making their way south to local waters.

Other Seawind cats sailed from as far south as Brisbane for the Whitsundays rally, before heading north for further cruising adventures. Activities at the rally included such silliness as the 'Blind Man's Dinghy Race', Hawaiian-themed parties and yes, even karaoke. More useful activities included Multihull Central team members providing coaching for Seawind owners who were new to catamaran sailing with local Airlie Beach representative Graeme Nolan on hand for navigation advice on sailing in the Whitsundays.

The 2013 Seawind Martha Cove Regatta in March was the second Seawind event sailed from Melbourne's Martha Cove. Situated in the new marina on the picturesque Mornington Peninsula at Safety Beach near Mount Martha, the marina and housing complex provides a protected harbour for boating on Port Phillip Bay and is ideally suited for staging such an event.

To get involved with the Seawind Cruising Club Series, visit www.seawindcats.com or contact your local Multihull Central team member on 1300 852 620 or visit the website. ⚓ www.multihullcentral.com

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 **MARINER**
BOATING HOLIDAYS

Since starting out from Antigua in the Caribbean last January, the inaugural Oyster World Rally fleet of bluewater cruising yachts has now sailed almost halfway around the world with its recent Queensland landfalls at Mackay, Hamilton Island and Cairns. For all yachts, the recent Hamilton Island stopover in particular proved a welcome opportunity to enjoy some firm-footed time on dry land, with the luxuries of the island resort well up to the measure of Oyster owners' expectations.

Every stopover ashore at a new destination is an occasion of camaraderie and celebration for the owners and crew of the near-30 Oyster yachts taking part in this inaugural circumnavigation, originally conceived and organised by Oyster Yachts to commemorate its 40th anniversary.

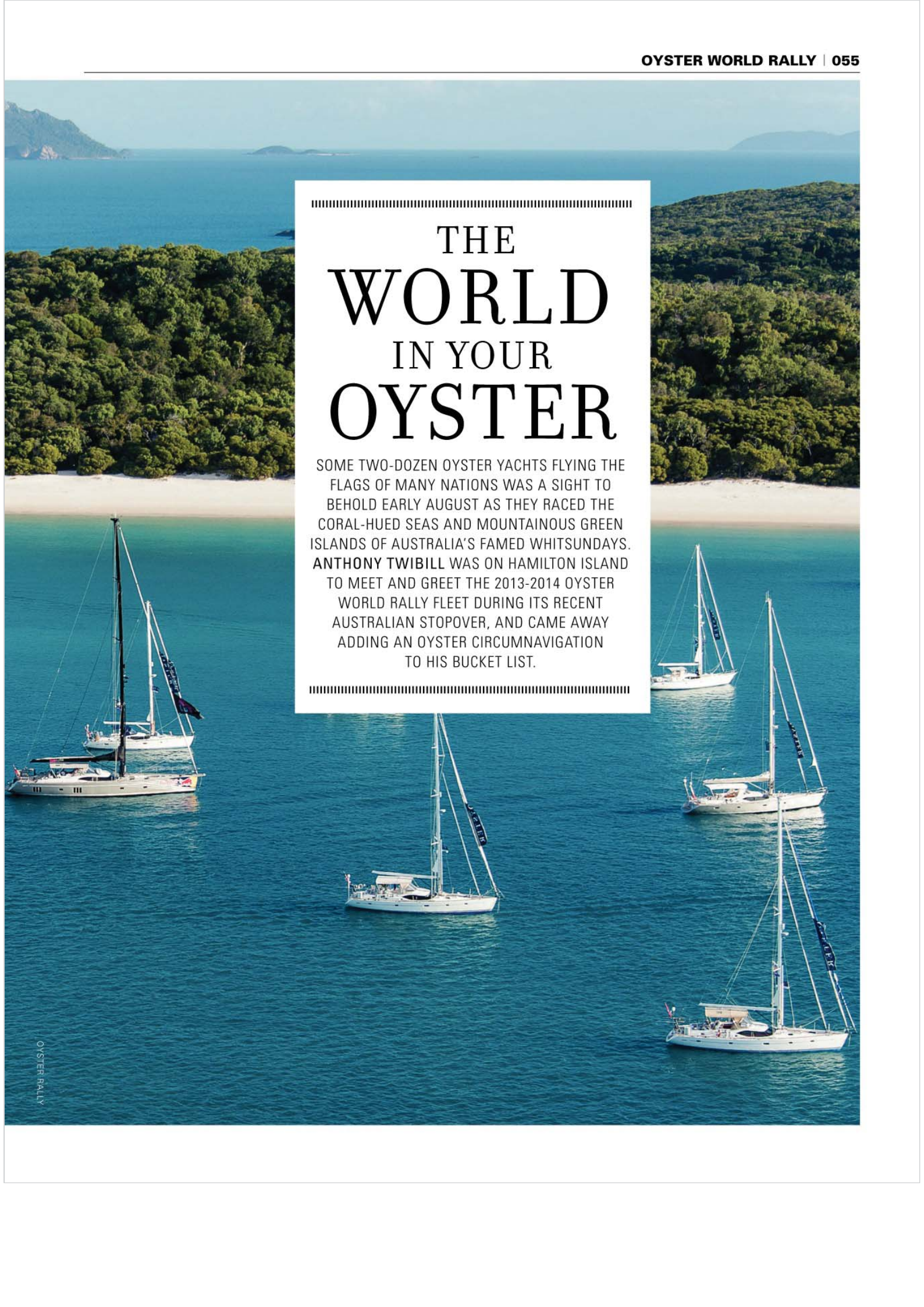
The Oyster World Rally, which is due to finish back in Antigua in May 2014, must surely rank as one of yachting's greatest pilgrimages around the globe, and a first for any one yacht brand. For this inaugural 2013-2014 rally fleet the calm coral seas protected by the Great Barrier Reef, stretching some 2,000 kilometres along Queensland's northeast coast, contrasting with the rough cut verdant green of the offshore Whitsundays, provided a welcome change from the endless ocean swells. The Hamilton Island stopover closes the fleet's long passage from Panama, sailing port to port, destination to destination across the vast Pacific; a feat, which in any yacht's log is a heady challenge of bluewater cruising.

Shortly after arriving at the island, Oyster rally organisers arranged welcome cocktails for the newly-docked fleet at the inspiring Hamilton Island Yacht Club, an architectural wonder crafted as though a giant sting ray swooping over the sandy bottom.

While spending some days of R&R at Hamilton Island, Oyster also ran the first official race for participating Oyster yachts during a rally stopover to date. The race was started in light tropical breeze in the still waters off the resort, which hosted the fleet in the safe harbour of its marina. Sailing to the nearby world-heritage listed Whitehaven Beach, judged by many as the best beach in the world, this shimmering crescent of the whitest pure silica sands framed by the azure blue of the sea, provided a heaven-sent overnight anchorage for a welcoming



DOZEN OYSTERS
Whitehaven Beach, regarded by many as the finest beach in the world, offered overnight anchorage, including a memorable barbecue and party.



THE
WORLD
IN YOUR
OYSTER

SOME TWO-DOZEN OYSTER YACHTS FLYING THE FLAGS OF MANY NATIONS WAS A SIGHT TO BEHOLD EARLY AUGUST AS THEY RACED THE CORAL-HUED SEAS AND MOUNTAINOUS GREEN ISLANDS OF AUSTRALIA'S FAMED WHITSUNDAYS. ANTHONY TWIBILL WAS ON HAMILTON ISLAND TO MEET AND GREET THE 2013-2014 OYSTER WORLD RALLY FLEET DURING ITS RECENT AUSTRALIAN STOPOVER, AND CAME AWAY ADDING AN OYSTER CIRCUMNAVIGATION TO HIS BUCKET LIST.

beach barbecue and party destined to be long remembered by the Oyster owners and crews, especially those on their first visit here.

Oyster Yachts CEO David Tydeman flew out from London to meet the fleet at this midpoint in their global voyage, hosting a Twilight Gala Dinner for the owners and their crews overlooking the resort's picturesque Catseye Beach. As the sun set, an eruption of fireworks set the scene as the island's wait staff attired completely in wetsuits, goggles and snorkels, delivered to tables a mouthwatering array of ocean delights of lobster, prawns, crabs and oysters, as though just harvested from the sea itself.

With so many magnificent Oyster cruising yachts in one place at the one time, I took the opportunity to walk the marina, hopping aboard many an Oyster to chat about the many



and varied paths that had brought so many clearly like-minded people to undertake a circumnavigation as part of this inaugural Oyster World Rally. The stories and circumstances were each their own but all shared as one the dream of a global voyage and evidently had the will to make it happen. To do so aboard the relative security of a bluewater-capable Oyster yacht, designed and built from the outset for such an undertaking, generally takes means of the financial kind. So, I was surprised to find such diversity of wealth among the owners, with not all participating yachts brand new 60, 70 and 80-footers. Some yachts were pre-owned Oysters crewed by 'family affairs' of Dad, Mum and the kids chasing the dream of circumnavigation and doing so together. Enlightening and endearing people all, the participants in this global adventure

are sharing above all an experience they will each never forget, making lifelong friends along the way, which in life is the true reward.

Here are some of their insights from the dock:

"I've been sailing most of my life but wouldn't really consider myself a sailor," said Ed, aboard *Crazy Daisy* as I chatted with him over a cup of English Breakfast on a sunny Whitsundays morning; his yacht berthed at Hamilton Island Marina just one of a vast flotilla of visiting Oysters, the like of which had never before been seen in our part of the world.

Crazy Daisy is an older Oyster 56 and is sailed by the Morgan family from the UK. I chatted with son Edward (Ed), whose father had dreamed of sailing the world. Together with the support of family and various friends crewing aboard the many legs of the

yachts' circumnavigation, he is now living his dream.

"I hope at the end of this [Oyster World Rally] I could get a skipper's ticket or something official, apart from having just sailed around the world, as I've certainly logged the sea miles," continues Ed nonchalantly. "What?" I ask with irony, "after only 25,000 miles?"

"Yes, that plus a bit more, as we don't always go in a straight line!" Ed quips back in reply.

The Morgan family set out on making their dream of joining the inaugural Oyster World Rally a reality when they recently purchased *Crazy Daisy*, which was conveniently lying in the Caribbean within a short sail of the Antigua start line for this global undertaking.

"Many [UK and Med-based] boats had to cross the North Atlantic, with some taking part in the ARC rally, just to get to the Caribbean start of the Oyster World Rally," said Ed. "The true sailors love the ocean sailing but the younger crowd don't seem to like the longer passages so much", he continued. "Galapagos to Tahiti was our longest so far and we sailed that leg in a 'buddy boat system' with *Dreams Come True* [another Oyster 56] where we were always in radio contact, even if sometimes sailing over the horizon from one another. Sometimes the buddy system worked, sometimes it didn't because although we're both similar 56s, we sailed a bit differently and at different angles, so it was an interesting experience sailing together over some 20 days and nights at sea.

DAISY'S DECK
Above: Edward Morgan on family-owned *Crazy Daisy*, an older Oyster 56. Above left: Shortly after arriving at the island, Oyster rally organisers arranged welcome cocktails for the newly-docked fleet at Hamilton Island Yacht Club, an extraordinary, sting ray-shaped building.

"It's certainly nice to talk with someone who isn't on your own boat."

The Oyster World Rally fleet typically makes evening and morning radio calls to update everyone nearby on their relative positions, weather, day's experiences and any issues or problems.

"We had left Galapagos after most of the fleet had already departed, hence our buddy sailing that leg with *Dreams*, so we were much behind the bulk of the two dozen plus fleet en route to the Marquesas, but both of our boats always stayed together close enough, within about 15 miles, to call each other on VHF throughout every day to stay in touch," said Ed.

This proved particularly important on that long ocean leg for the young family crew sailing sistership *Dreams Come True*. The owners/parents had pressing matters to attend to back home in the UK and so left the yacht in the Galapagos to be sailed on to the Marquesas in Tahiti by their children – Tim (26) and girlfriend Faye (20), Sarah (23) and Philip (16). Not wishing their Oyster 56 to remain behind in the Galapagos the, albeit mostly adult, offspring undertook the challenging 20-day Pacific leg to Tahiti, while Mum and Dad were back at Nottingham in England! They either had great confidence in 'the kids' or, according to elder son Tim, were "just plain crazy as none of the children were really seasoned sailors". That being said, they had together sailed *Dreams* all the way from Southampton to Galapagos, which is a darn sight more sea miles

than most of us typically sail in a decade or more.

In a similar vein to others, it was their Dad's dream to circumnavigate the globe; a dream not so much shared by Mum and the family who were by no means sailors. Their father, on the other hand, had spent years racing Dragons and 'eats, lives and breathes sailing', according to the family. But all were behind fulfilling his dream of circumnavigation and hearing of the Oyster World Rally, the entry fee to take part was paid in full before they even had an Oyster yacht (having previously owned and sailed a *Moody*)!

It wasn't long though before they had bought an Oyster 56 *Dreams Come True* in January of 2012. Every weekend was then spent preparing her for the global voyage of a lifetime, until departing Southampton September 2012 on a 'warm-up cruise' across the Atlantic, bound for Antigua and the start of the Rally in early January of this year.

Amazingly, in the spirit of adventure (and youthful exuberance) that portrays the essence of the Oyster World Rally, Tim's girlfriend Faye joined the family for their grand voyage around the world, with her own father hailing it "The trip of a lifetime. Go for it!" he said.

As the global event is a cruising rally, not in any way a race, with entries comprising some two-dozen Oyster yachts of a wide variety of lengths and sailing speeds, each departing and arriving at the planned rally destinations at very often



FAMILY AFFAIR
Above: The young family crew sailing *Dreams Come True* undertook the 20-day Pacific leg from the Galapagos to Tahiti. Below: The immediately recognisable hulls of an Oyster fleet.

different times, most of the yachts are always sailing out of sight of each other. This may sometimes amount to hundreds of nautical miles separation from the first boat to last, even when sailing the same ocean passage. That said, they are all far from alone with the rally regimen of twice-daily fleet radio calls (or sat-phone communication when necessary) with yachts never far from the assistance of a fellow Oyster boat nearby or the constant assistance of Oyster event organisers, so say all the participating yachts' owners and crews.

The support of yachts participating in the Oyster World Rally, particularly the aid provided by Oyster's Eddie Scougall – variously described by the yacht owners as "Mr Magic" and "Mr Fix-it", a man with a reputation for coming up with a fix for any Oyster problem anywhere – together with partner, the Oyster World Rally Event Manager Debbie Johnson, who shadow the yachts everywhere is considered quite extraordinary service.

"I think everyone is really lovely on this trip and it really changed my view of Oyster owners," said Tim of *Dreams Come True*. "We have definitely made friends for life," he continued. All owners are amazingly supportive of each other and you have help coming from all directions, from the other



yachts and from Oyster's Debbie and Eddie who play such a big part in it all."

"It's all a lovely mix", says Tim's mother. "Take me as an example... I'm a non-sailor and I love the Oyster parties at all the destinations, whereas my husband has salt in his blood and loves the sailing, so it all kind of works!"

Although most are undertaking their first circumnavigation, Alan and Jean du Toit - owners of *Legend IV*, an Oyster 575 - are going around for the second time and are doing so just two-up, as they did together

throughout the rally. "You're the captain of your own ship, but there's always somebody there to help," she said. Especially impressive is the comprehensive manual that Oyster has meticulously prepared for the use of all participating yachts in the rally.

"It's got everything you could possibly imagine in there - information on all the destinations en route, embassies and consulates at every stop, weather notes, key contacts, and so on for every stopover we're making around the world," said Jean.



nearly twenty five years ago sailing a small 35-footer from their home city of Cape Town, South Africa. Back then they set out alone, not as part of a fleet, navigating not with the convenience of today's GPS and chart plotters, but by old-world sextant and RDF nav-radio equipment.

This time around it's a world of difference sailing their luxurious, new Oyster 575 as one of the Oyster World Rally fleet. Although they've sailed most of the legs with just the two of them aboard, their children and some friends have joined them at various stages of the rally, especially when starting out from Antigua.

"When you first get on your new boat it's a big boat, but it kind of shrinks as you get used to it," said Alan. "I think this is the biggest Oyster you could sail by yourself (two-up as a cruising couple without any other crew) and I wouldn't want much more as this is perfect for us", he added.

Jean was impressed with Oyster's planning and the assistance available

I asked about their best experience or destination of the rally so far?

"Your boat is like a luxury waterfront apartment," responds Jean. "Wherever you go it's as nice as a luxury waterfront house but it's in a different spot every week!"

"But anywhere our kids are with us is just amazing," said Jean. "Overall Tonga and Fiji stood out I think," agreed Alan.

Jean added, "And then there's the Marquesas where I feel we didn't spend enough time, and the amazing Moorea and Bora Bora lagoons in Tahiti," Alan continued. "It's difficult to say really as they're all special in their own way.

"The most enjoyable places also depend on the company you have with you at the time I think," Jean added. "With guests aboard you go to that special effort to find a further anchorage that little bit better, you snorkel and explore just a little more, which adds to your appreciation. And then of course there's the weather!"

It's a different story again aboard some of the larger Oyster yachts with professional crew aiding the owners. One of two Oyster 655 yachts in the rally, *Sotto Vento* (meaning 'under the wind' in Italian), which shares the name of the owner Richard's house in Antigua, is sailing the rally with pro crew aiding the owner. Having only started sailing eight years ago at the age of 50, and with his first yachting experience no less than a North Atlantic crossing, Richard's sagely advice will ring true to many an ear.

"You get to a stage of life where you have to have other things to do, other aims. I was coming up to retire and the last thing I wanted to do was stay at home and do nothing. So when my friend suggested I should buy a yacht, even though I'm a relatively bad sailor as far as being seasick, I bought an Oyster 56 and sailed across the Atlantic as part of the 2005 ARC Rally with six of my friends and a pro skipper for safety," he said. "That really opened my eyes to yachting and I've sailed five ARC rallies since, so I've really enjoyed the fun of sailing. This 655 was bought primarily for charter business but that hasn't really turned out as hoped... so here I am sailing around the world with my crew," Richard says amiably.

"There are generally four crew sailing aboard *Sotto Vento* and we've been totally amazed at the Pacific crossing with such consistent winds exactly the same day after day, with running and reaching conditions almost all the time in calm seas. But we certainly have had some rough seas and 50 to 60-knot winds from Vanuatu [to Australia] with waves breaking into the cockpit from all sides," he exclaims. "This may be a 45-tonne, 65-foot yacht but that's quite small out there in the middle of the ocean!"

Your favourite spot so far? "Well, Fiji, for instance, is for yachties a totally different place. You are seeing spectacular islands everywhere and to do so from a boat is a different way of seeing things."

"When you come to retirement what else is there to do?" Richard asks himself.

"You can't take your money with you. It's just an entry on the ledger unless you spend it. Yachting is seen as expensive but once you've made the capital expense it's probably cheaper than living in a house!"

Sailing another magnificent Oyster 655 *Proteus of London*, owners Chris and Denise Ballard proudly and honestly say, "we are not so much

OLD-SCHOOL METHODS

Alan and Jean du Toit own an Oyster 575, *Legend IV*, on which they are using the most up-to-date chart plotter technology compared to the old-world sextant and RDF nav-radio equipment they used during their first circumnavigation 25 years ago.

sailing around the world by ourselves as being sailed around the world by our professional crew.”

With three to four crew aboard at all times, *Proteus* is lovingly and professionally cared for, hailing as they are from prior employment with Oyster commissioning new yachts. “So, our crew know our boat inside and out,” adds Denise.

Spending time between homes in Europe and the Caribbean, the owners have taken to sailing only in recent years with the 655 just their second yacht. Having spent seven years cruising the Med on their previous motor yacht, they decided to take up sailing, initially with a 56-foot production boat in the Caribbean to see if it suited them.

“As you know with something like sailing, let alone a circumnavigation, your wife’s got to really be with you, and Denise took to sailing like a duck to water,” said Chris.

Enjoying the sea change to sail, Chris and Denise noticed Oyster’s promotion of the upcoming World Rally and that clearly to participate there was one catch – you had to have an Oyster to sail in it! So, there and then, they decided to purchase one, discovering *Proteus* on the market, one of the most beautiful yachts in all of the Oyster fleet with her pearlescent silvery grey hull and highly optioned appointments. Now, here they are sailing the world with their crew, whom they consider as part of the family, and thoroughly

IN GOOD HANDS

Right: Owners of the magnificent Oyster 655 *Proteus* of London, Chris and Denise Ballard are being sailed round the world by a professional crew. Below: A professional crew are also aiding owner Richard Smith on the Oyster 655, *Sotto Vento*.



enjoying the Whitsundays region and waters of the Great Barrier Reef. “The really special thing’s the camaraderie,” say Chris and Denise. “You feel like part of the family going around the world like this.”

With shore time in the Whitsundays over for the Oyster fleet, most of the yachts departed Hamilton Island early August to sail north on to Cairns for more time ashore before turning west across Australia’s Torres Strait towards Bali. However, *Proteus* was the one solitary Oyster that remained behind to compete in the 30th anniversary of the Audi Hamilton Island Race Week sailed from August 17. What a week it was, raced under skies of crystalline blue though the coral-hued waters, with every mark

of the course one of a multitude of rugged offshore mountains.

It was an idyllic background to a stunning week of racing and one in which I was fortunate to take part (as I usually do), racing this year aboard the visiting *Proteus* with owners and crew. Competing in Cruising Spinnaker Division 1, *Proteus* raced a spectacular tactical campaign to claim 2nd overall in the 21-boat division, among some 160 competing yachts in this big week of racing and revelry. In so doing *Proteus* picked up two individual podium places – a second and a third – demonstrating pace with that sublime Oyster grace in the six-race regatta schedule; all the more remarkable for the 50-tonne yacht given the week was raced in the lightest airs of Hamilton Island Race Week’s 30-year history.

Proteus’ results surprised and impressed all at the regatta, with hearty congratulations all round for the gleaming Oyster yacht that had, without a doubt, travelled farther than any other entrant to line up for the start of Australia’s most well-known regatta week.

From Queensland’s Hamilton Island and Mackay stopovers in the Whitsundays region, the fleet sailed north to Cairns, across the top-end of Australia via Torres Strait on to Darwin, before sailing into the northwest towards the next stopover in Bali. From there, it’s across the Indian Ocean to Cape Town, across the Atlantic to Brazil, before sailing north into the Caribbean and the finish line once more in Antigua, where no doubt the rally party to end all shore parties will take place!

For more information on the next Oyster World Rally 2016-2017, visit the website. ⚓
www.oysteryachts.com/worldrally



A woman is lying on her back on a sailboat deck, reading a large open book. She is wearing a white sailor's cap and a white bikini top. Her legs are raised and bent at the knees. The book she is reading has "Chapter IV" printed on the right page. The background shows the blue sea and a clear blue sky. The text of the article is overlaid on a white rectangular box in the upper center of the image.

CRUISING COMMANDMENTS

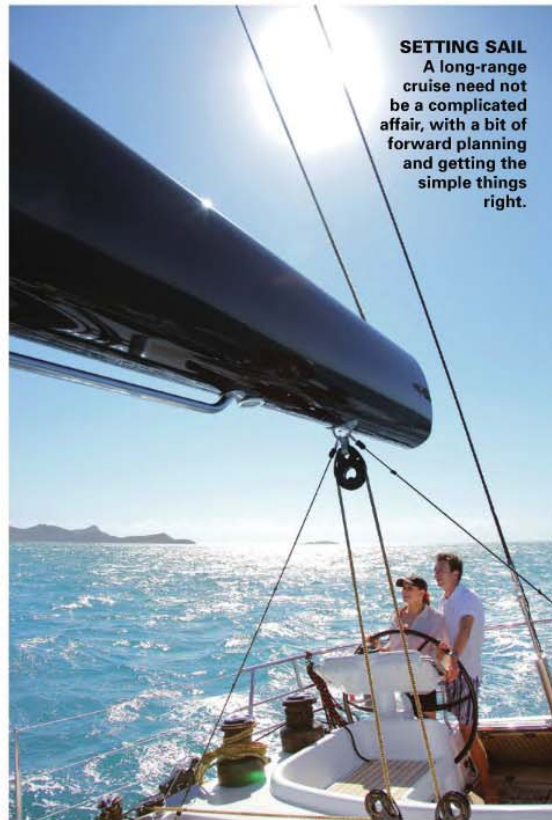
HOW CAN YOU TELL WHEN YOU ARE READY TO
QUIT YOUR CURRENT LIFE, THROW OFF THE DOCK
LINES AND, EVEN FOR JUST A SEASON, SAIL
OVER THE HORIZON? BY NANCY KNUDSEN.

My friend has been preparing to go long-range cruising for over 10 years. They dream of the Whitsundays, of Fiji, maybe Thailand or beyond. He and his partner continually upgrade their boat and it's a credit to them – sleek and cosy below, efficiently two-handed and hi-tech on deck. However, when they discuss their plans, there's always a new piece of equipment they want and always a new savings target they need to reach before sailing away. "Next year maybe," they say, "next year."

Something sad has occurred to me recently – they may never depart. Their boat is in much better condition than many who have circumnavigated the world successfully, and if they gave up work right now they would still have more annual income than most cruising couples.

I don't know how to tell them. I don't know how to tell them that they don't need the best, most gadget-filled boat and they don't need more income.

Cruising on a sailing boat can be, by far, the most economical yet luxurious way of seeing the world up



SETTING SAIL
A long-range cruise need not be a complicated affair, with a bit of forward planning and getting the simple things right.

close and personal from your own floating home. Where else can you have a multimillion-dollar view at a fraction of the cost? How else could you pull up anchor and change the view if it no longer suits you?

The danger is that lots of expensive gadgets hit the market every year, many of which tug at your 'need' to ensure safety or comfort at sea. Advertisements and commercials are brimming with suggestions that unless you have what they suggest you are risking your family or crew safety. "Is your GPS smart enough?" ... "The safety conscious skipper has a PLB for everyone on board" ... "This generator will change your life for the better" ... "This new chain counter for the anchor will make your life easy" ... "No modern sailor should go to sea without an AIS on board." How much should you believe?

It's true that only you can decide on what's best for you, but the more gear you have, the more can break down, the more maintenance will be necessary. Your cruising adventure may be enhanced by less gear, not more. As far as technology is concerned, particularly for remote

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region sailing, less definitely is more. One good rule here is: Try not to take anything on your boat that you can't fix yourself.

Having said that, if an AIS is within your budget, the ability to call a ship on a collision course by name – so that those on the bridge will be alerted to your call above the clatter of ship noise and radio chatter – is worth its weight in gold.

However, common sense is actually more important and contributes to safety more than buying more gear. For instance, electronic charting certainly makes the life of the cruising

how to fix yourself. The more gadgets, the more electricity, and the more fuel you will need, the more headaches you will have. As to the size of the boat, remember that the larger the boat, the greater the costs of replacing just about everything, the more you will pay in marina fees and the more difficulty you will have snuggling into small anchorages. The most important feature of a cruising boat is that it is strong and sturdy. A sleek, light, plastic fantastic might look great on the water on a Sunday afternoon, but could be tiring to sail when the wind is up and the way is long.

LIVING LOCAL
Clockwise from below left: The local Country Club on Palmerston Atoll in the South Pacific is an example of the local humour; A young local of the Louisiades gets to know a sailing yacht; The pristine waters off the Whitsunday Islands.

for the gear you have than to get more gear. Carry service manuals for the rest and make sure you understand how to follow the instructions before you leave, or, carry entire replacement pieces of equipment – a windlass, GPS or compass, for instance.

3. LEARN TO ANCHOR CONFIDENTLY

Invest in a new generation anchor and learn how to use it properly. Think about 50 knots in an anchorage and prepare. A high wind in deep water at sea may be significantly easier to deal with than the same wind when close to a rocky shore. Investigate anchor buddies, snubbers and riding sails. Being happy at anchor in most conditions will allow you to avoid expensive marinas – and exposure to shops that will tempt you to spend money.

4. KEEP SAILING

If you are cruising there is rarely a need to motor, so avoid it. You are on a sailing boat and wind is free. Wait out the calms if it's feasible and safe to do so. Carry extra provisions in case you are becalmed and you won't be tempted to start that engine. Row or sail your dinghy whenever possible – you'll get exercise and save on expensive fuel.

5. BETIME FLEXIBLE

To be safe, time should never be 'of the essence' when sailing. Never make agreements to meet in certain ports on certain days – you will either be venturing forth to make the deadline when conditions dictate against leaving, or arriving at the agreed point with too much time to spare. Remain easy going about your schedule and your 'needs'. How often do you need to fly home? Do your friends have to join you on specific dates? Aside from forcing you to have a schedule which can lead to rash decisions, it is often more expensive to motor to a schedule, stay in marinas, and so on.

6. SHED POSSESSIONS

The less stuff you have, the less money you spend, the less it costs to insure, and the less you have to worry about. The one thing not to skimp on is tools. When they start cruising most people bring too much clothing and not enough tools.

7. GET TO KNOW THE LOCALS

When cruising away from home, it's easy to spend all your available social time in the easy camaraderie of other cruising sailors. Certainly



sailor easier, but if you don't carry paper charts on board and know how to use them you are risking plenty, the obvious example of a risk being a lightning strike. Don't be fooled that a lightning protector is the answer. Even a short online investigation will disabuse you of that thought.

Then there is the question of marinas. Many people flock to the perceived safety of marinas and moorings, all of which add significant cost to the adventure. Swinging on an anchor is blissful as long as your anchoring gear and techniques are up to scratch and you have learned how stop yearning for 240 volts. A yacht in a marina is like a trussed bird, straining at the berthing lines. At anchor the breezes are better, the boat moves gracefully with the waves, the neighbours can't bother you and the scenery is definitely superior. Even the ride in the dinghy can be an enchanting experience. All this means you can reserve your marina stays for when you have a real maintenance need.

Here are ten suggestions for enhancing pleasure in cruising and at the same time lowering the cost:

1. KEEP IT SIMPLE

Start with a simple boat that you know

2. LEARN TO FIX THINGS THAT BREAK OR DO WITHOUT

When equipment breaks, and it always does, even on a very new boat, your options are to repair it, replace it, or do without. Make up a 'minimum equipment list' – a list of things you cannot do without – and carry multiple spares for all of them. Sourcing spares in remote places can be very expensive – if not impossible. You are better to carry more spares

do this, but also take time to get to know the locals. No matter where you are, the locals will open a window into the local happenings and treat you to rewarding experiences. If they like you, they may also show you how better to get around in their world. This will not only be more pleasurable, but you may also find how to get the best local supplies – marine parts, fuel and food – at the best prices.

8. TRY ALL REGIONAL FOODS

It's surprising how many people avoid foods they don't know and pay more and more as they travel to obtain familiar meals. Part of the fun of sailing away from your known environment is experiencing the flavours of local vegetables and unusual foods. Purchasing local will always pleasantly reward you, and it will inevitably be less expensive.

9. DRINK WHAT THE LOCALS ARE DRINKING

Think flexible. Your favourite red at home might be expensive once you sail away. Go with the local drinks, like beers and fresh fruit juices if you



don't like the wine. Cutting down your alcohol intake is sometimes one of the unrecognised rewards of living a less stressful lifestyle. Stock up in the places where alcohol is reasonably priced and at other times be prepared for new taste experiences.

10. LIVE NATURALLY.

Leave your previous life pleasures behind. Find and discover enjoyment in your new lifestyle. Relish the simple pleasures of swimming, snorkelling, hiking, reading a book, watching the sunset, identifying stars, and fishing for the evening meal. And keep a bicycle onboard for when visiting ashore.

Sailing away from your busy lifestyle can be the most amazing way to see other worlds while taking your home with you. You never have to unpack. You see everything slowly so you get to absorb it. The best times are the ones you didn't plan for, the ones that create lasting unexpected memories because you just let life happen and it took you to places you didn't even know existed. Those places in your heart are not usually bought with money. ⚓



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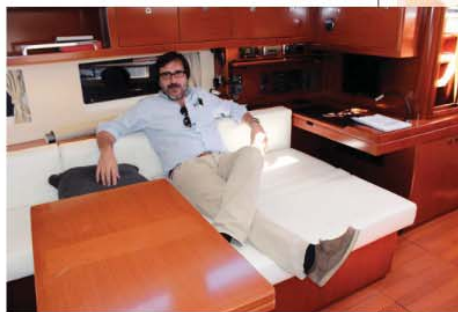
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The new-look Oceanis features pronounced hard chines, twin rudders and a more open deck plan, taking this large cruiser of the well-loved Oceanis brand to a whole new level of sailing chic, not dissimilar to Beneteau's wide-body deck saloon cruiser range, the Sense. However, this more bluewater-oriented Oceanis model comes with plenty of new credentials. These start with a more enclosed cockpit fitted with Harken deck gear, a GRP mainsail arch for the traveller and mainsheet keeping the cockpit clear of lines, plus twin composite helm wheels and an electrically-operated swim platform aft; so there's plenty to like about the new Oceanis 55.

Featuring a wide beam carried aft, the cockpit area is spacious to say the least, but isn't overly empty thanks to a large extendable table surrounded on both sides by vast lounges, while aft are enclosing helm binnacles that have primary Harken 60 winches inboard by the binnacles, while all halyards run neatly via jammers to twin Harken 46s fitted on the gunwales. Power controls are handily placed on the starboard binnacle including Beneteau's Dock&Go joystick manoeuvring system, with the thruster buttons positioned slightly unusually on the far side of the binnacle. Instrumentation on the review boat was a tad over-specified in my view with no less than four Simrad NSS8 plotters, with two on each binnacle.



Cockpit seating is wide and angled bulkheads on the coach roof enhance the comfort levels on deck allowing crew to recline when sailing, while sun pads under the spray hood offer yet more lounging space. There's plenty of locker storage aboard and there's even a dedicated lazarette for the life raft located under the stern section. The GRP arch above the cockpit supports a sturdy and large spray hood, something bluewater

sailors will really welcome at sea; though if it was extended some 30 centimetres further back it would also enclose the hatch and front of the cockpit as well. My only complaint in this area is the saloon-style doors on the main hatch of the 55, which ideally could be replaced with a more seaworthy sliding hatch on a ratchet, as on the current Oceanis 58.

DESIGNER INTERIOR

The Oceanis 55 on review was a three-cabin owner's version but up to five cabins can be available. For the inspection I was escorted by Nauta's Design's Massimo Gino who talked me through the radical changes below deck: the new 55 is the first Oceanis with large hull windows, with white bulkheads and cabinetry that has been elevated to the gunwales freeing up space around the settee level. The saloon is vast and six-foot-six-inches high in the old measure, so I'd welcome some handholds running along the ceiling centreline for moving about when at sea. The starboard dinette has a movable settee and cleverly, the main table is height adjustable, though not to become a bunk. "We feel this yacht is much less conventional than previous Oceanis models," explained Massimo who has



BREAKING NEW GROUND

The Oceanis 55 comes from a pedigreed line of cruising yachts, and it clearly shows in this highly modern version. Oceanis interior designer, Massimo Gino from Nauta, said the 55 was much less conventional than previous models.



NEPTUNE'S NEW CLOTHES

THE RADICALLY NEW OCEANIS 55 DEBUTED AT THE SYDNEY INTERNATIONAL BOAT SHOW IN EARLY AUGUST, WITH ITS ARRIVAL BRINGING AN ALL-NEW LOOK TO BENETEAU'S POPULAR CRUISING MARQUE, REPORTS KEVIN GREEN.



spent seven years designing for the Beneteau Oceanis range. He points out some of the design subtleties such as the dual-level mahogany veneered cabinetry around the galley, designed to make the area less imposing. Impressive was a U-shaped area that encloses the cook safely when at sea, with acres of work surface space provided, while above cabinetry storage is good and efficiently thought out. Cooking facilities aboard are fairly conventional, although the two-burner Emo stove/oven on the review boat should probably be a three/four burner on a boat of this cruising standard. The galley sinks are composite Kerrock material and a petite Electrolux dishwasher snugly fits in beneath while fridge space is

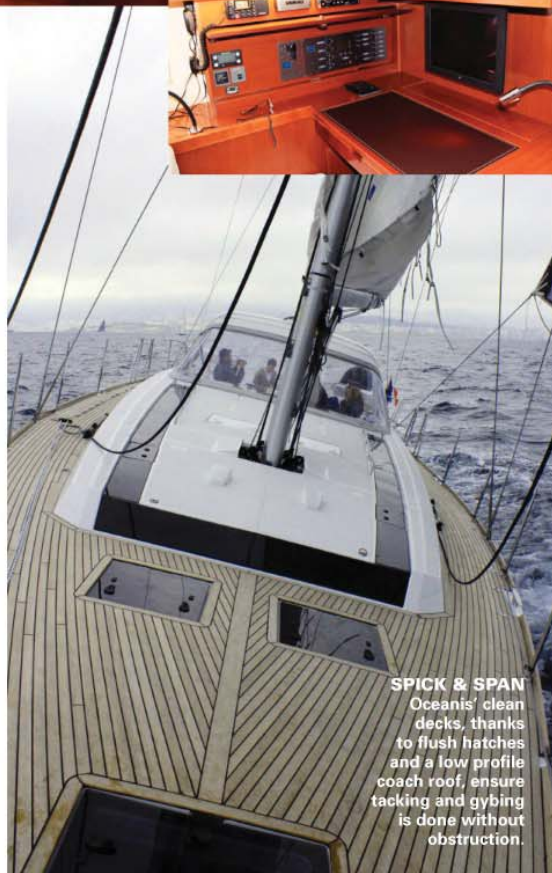
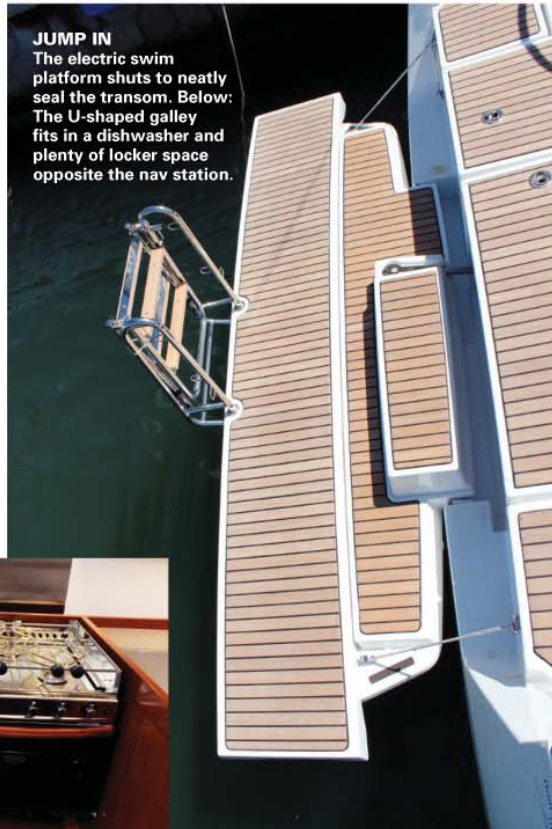


130 litres, and there's also an icebox chest. Opposite the galley, there's an aft-facing navigation table large enough to easily handle full-sized paper charts for extensive cruising, and there's abundant bulkhead space.

Other breaks with cruising yacht convention can be found with the owner's cabin located in the bow featuring discreet forward facing windows, and a French-styled separate toilet and Plexiglass shower area, which serves to enlarge the main cabin area and space around the virtually queen-sized bed. A washbasin beside the ensuite shower is complemented by a second in the separate head, which along with moulded benchtops creates a comprehensive ensuite for the owner, with even enough room for a sizeable vanity/desk with mirror. Natural light is also very good thanks to large flush hatches and rectangular portlights and for night time reading and ambience, I noticed plenty of strategically placed LED lights as well.

For the guests aboard, the stern cabins are fairly conventional but come with plenty of storage cupboards and headroom. A cockpit-facing window, along with a portlight, avoids

JUMP IN
The electric swim platform shuts to neatly seal the transom. Below: The U-shaped galley fits in a dishwasher and plenty of locker space opposite the nav station.



SPICK & SPAN
Oceanis' clean decks, thanks to flush hatches and a low profile coach roof, ensure tacking and gybing is done without obstruction.

that dreaded claustrophobic aft-cabin feel and the adjoining spacious ensuite comes with a manual head. There's also a hatch in the aft guest cabins for access to the Yanmar 75hp saildrive engine, which together with a lifting companionway in the saloon provides good access to the main service points of filters, oil and impeller. An 80 Ampere-hour alternator charges four 140 Ampere-hour service batteries and a 110 Ampere-hour starting battery but are located rather deep in the bilge; ideal for keeping weight low in the boat but also possibly susceptible to bilge water.

CLEAN DECKS

From the saloon it's an easy climb topside thanks to handrails and 45-degree angled steps, revealing a fairly conventional deck layout. Moving forward along wide teak-clad decks is easily done thanks to outboard shrouds and hand rails, giving the crew plenty of confidence as they move about decks or prepare to anchor. Beneteau has chosen a deck-mounted Lewmar 1500-watt vertical windlass with capstan that runs through a single roller on the stylish polished stainless bowsprit, though a second roller is an option and would be advisable for serious cruising. Sturdy teak toe rails are a commendable feature as are the oversize cleats all round deck including amidships for tethering spring lines when berthed. The bowsprit on our review boat came with a Selden Code Zero roller furler on the outside with a Facnor Genoa furler inside and this proved a good arrangement on the test sail thanks to enough space between the luff tubes. The Sparcraft mast on the new 55 is set further aft than previous Oceanis designs, which has several effects, notably increasing the 'J' or fore triangle allowing for a larger headsail with less overlap, and also serving to move the centre of effort nearer the keel. A standard slab-reefed mainsail can be optioned up to feature in-mast reefing, which is a good idea with a cruising boat of this size, and there's mouldings for a self-tacking headsail track, plus staysail tang should you choose, so plenty of short-handed cruising options are possible.

Berret Racoupeau's hull lines look very similar to his work on the Beneteau Sense 55 at first glance but there's subtle differences including the keel and deck. The changes from other Oceanis models include a deeper forefoot that increases the internal volume, particularly allowing



for greater space in the owner's cabin, which is also helped by the mast compression post being further aft in the saloon. Construction is strong with infused sandwich construction with polyester over a balsa wood core while a structural single skin moulding is bonded to the hull; similarly the deck is sandwich infused. The cast iron keel is available in shallow or deep draft options while twin spade rudders are connected by cable to the helm wheels.

MEDITERRANEAN TEST SAIL

Sailing on the waters off Palma the light breeze compelled the use of the Code Zero headsail, which unfurled easily and is an ideal option for this big hull in light airs. As we headed east along the rugged Majorcan coastline the hiss from the bow wave signalled the gathering sea breeze as the 16-tonne hull lifted her skirts to propel us to a boat speed of 6.9 knots in the 10.4 knots of wind. The only sound spoiling my reverie was the grind of the fixed three-bladed propeller, something I'd replace with a folding model to give an extra half a knot of priceless boat speed before undertaking any long distance sailing.

Trimming both sails is easy on the Oceanis 55. Using the outboard electrically-powered Harken winches for mainsheet trimming and the halyards took little effort from my perch on the gunwale, while headsail sheets ran to the inside Harken 60 winches via a double-deck block. As the pressure rose, the hard chined hull of the Oceanis 55 dug in as though on rails and the wide beam gave the extra form stability that minimised the heeling angle making for very comfortable sailing. Helm feedback was somewhat lacking though, perhaps hampered by the cable connections, but wheel pressure

was light – as the twin rudders shared the load – which bodes well for autopilot usage when bluewater cruising over long passages.

Gybing proved the easiest way of changing course with the large Code Zero flying and was easily only a two-person job (or just use the automatic Gybe feature on the Simrad autopilot). All went well as my host, Oceanis product manager Thomas Gaillard, guided the Hydronet Mylar sail around the forestay before we settled onto a new heading. Establishing our new point of sail I aimed the Oceanis 55 at Majorca's most famous landmark, the majestic Palma cathedral, for our run home. Luffing up outside the old stone quay, I unlocked the main halyard jammer to watch the mainsail collapse into the lazy jack boom bag, then gunned the motor noting 9.5 knots of boat speed under power as the revs peaked at 3,300 revolutions per minute.

EASY DOCKING

Returning to the busy quayside, the Beneteau Dock&Go saildrive joystick control was clicked into action and this is where I was glad of the large fixed blade propeller, which pushed us sideways with ease and only the occasional dab on the bowthruster buttons. Twisting the joystick increased the power as the tall topsides caught the wind but comfortably kept the hull parallel to the approaching berth. The optional \$20-30,000 for the Dock&Go kit is not to be taken lightly but the rewards are evident because the system gives precise control in very limited space and for short-handed sailors at the end of a long day's sail it keeps the drama level down, which all would agree is always a good thing for most of us sailing couples. ⚓

www.beneteau.com.au

ROOM TO MOVE

Left: The large cockpit accommodates a group of sailors and then some. Note the sturdy protective spray hood.



MODEL	Beneteau Oceanis 55
NAVAL ARCHITECT	Berret Racoupeau Yacht Design
INTERIOR DESIGNER	Nauta Design
LENGTH OVERALL	16.78m / 55'1"
HULL LENGTH	15.99m
LENGTH AT WATERLINE	15.16m
BEAM	4.96m
DRAFT	2.20m (deep) / 1.80m (shallow) / 1.45m (very shallow)
DISPLACEMENT	16,540kg
BALLAST	4,390 kg (deep) / 4,960 kg (shallow)
SAIL AREA	133m ² (67,00m ² , Genoa 66,00m ²)
ENGINE	SD 75 cv POD 120
FUEL CAPACITY	400 litres
WATER CAPACITY	364 litres
EC CERTIFICATION	A12/B14/C16
PRICE	\$729,000 (base boat)

French writer and philosopher, Andre Gide said tritely: “Man cannot discover new oceans unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore”. But all sailors, regardless of their seafaring hardiness, must eventually seek solace and safety on land. For that, you need a tender.

“And there’s no tender like a brand new tender!” says Brendan Hunt from Vicsail, who represents Beneteau, Lagoon, Nautor’s Swan and the Farr400 One Design, among other marques. “A second-hand tender is not a good idea, both from the wear and tear angle, but also because they’re evolving all the time and getting better and better in design, materials and features.”

Some of today’s larger cruising yachts are designed with an aft tender garage, which can be an excellent solution for storing the tender off deck, freeing up valuable deck or lazarette space, and for ease of deployment and retrieval of your tender at sea level. However, Hunt points out these designs do tend to limit the size of your tender, access and demands dedicated storage, which all affect the stern of your yacht and how the boat is finished.

“We’ve got around that when catering for the Beneteau yachts range,” he says, with insight gained from completing eight handovers already this year. “We recommend owners invest in a 2.7-metre to 3.4-metre tender, preferably hyperlon, with inflatable floor, accompanied with electric inflate-deflate device. That way, they can have the best quality inflatable bottom tender. This makes it as small as possible for stowage maintenance and convenience.”

The Lagoon range is generally paired with a Highfield tender. Hunt explains, a brand that is a combination of French, Chinese and Australian design and build. “They are the result of a partnership with Lagoon to create an ideal fit for their catamarans and they are specifically designed to fit the Lagoon davit. The Highfield tenders come with a solid bottom and as they get larger, there’s also a centre console.”

Scott Wilson, dealer at Swift Marine manufacturers of the Highfield range, says the brand is an excellent choice due to their quality fittings and aluminium hulls. “This makes them ideal for yachties cruising in remote

TENDER TALK

COME SPRING AND THOUGHTS TURN TO UPDATING YOUR GEAR, AND IMPORTANTLY, OUR MEANS OF GETTING FROM SHIP TO SHORE. JENI BONE EXPLORES SOME OF THE NEW GENERATION OF TENDERS, FROM HUMBLE INFLATABLE DINGHY TO HIGH-POWERED SPORTS BOAT.



areas, the tropics and elsewhere.”

Highfield Inflatables are a direct descendant of the Australian Swift range of aluminium hulled RIB’s (rigid-hulled, inflatable boats), which have been in service for over 20 years. “The Highfield range evolved from many years of development in some of the toughest conditions in the world, including the Great Barrier Reef of tropical Northern Australia. A main attraction of Highfield is the premium quality at an affordable price,” says Wilson, adding that the sailing yacht market is one Highfield is actively working with.

With two fabric options – German

HIGH AND MIGHTY
Above: A solid-bottomed Highfield CL260, which also features a centre console and quality fittings.



Mehler PVC and French Orca Hypalon tubes – the Highfield line is available in many countries, which Wilson says are becoming more and more popular.

“The PVC is welded at the seams and has a five-year guarantee, whereas the superior Hypalon fabric has a 10-year guarantee. Featuring powder-coated aluminium hulls means the boats are light and strong and it also gives them some distinct reliability advantages at places such as transom tops and hull to tube joins.”

Lightweight and sturdy, the Highfields ultralite range comes in 2.4-metre, 2.6-metre and 2.9-metre



models. "At the other end of the scale we have the Ocean Masters, currently up to 5.9 metres and we are now developing the Patrol series starting at 6.5 metres for more serious offshore work. Again both have aluminium hulls and either tube fabric," says Wilson.

One name that's been synonymous with the inflatable tender is Zodiac. For over 74 years since pioneering the concept, Zodiac tenders have evolved to meet the changing demands of the boating market.

"There are about 30 various RIBs and tenders in the Zodiac range," explains Dino Tantarò, national



TENDER CARE
 Left: The Zodiac Cadet Fastroller 325, one of 30 RIBs and tenders in the Zodiac range. Above: The Brig brand offers vessels that are bona fide day boats, rather than simple yacht tenders.

manager for Recreational Marine at Zodiac Group Australia. "Without alienating the broader boating market, many of our Zodiac tenders have been designed with the sailing segment in mind. They are designed to be easy to hoist on a davit, compact or foldable for stowage, and all are made of high-tech materials so they're lightweight and gentle on the teak."

Zodiac pioneered the 'boat in the bag' concept, which places prime priority on storage space as a premium. "There's no assembly required for Zodiac tenders and the boat packs away completely."

Over time Zodiac has refined its



THINKING BRIG
Left: Brig, based in Ukraine, have no less than 27 models available.

materials through concerted R&D, making their boats of neoprene, a form of rubber that is both light in weight and nearly indestructible. "They are highly UV resistant and are durable against wear and tear, salt and chemicals. The bulk of the range uses no glue in their construction at all. They use the Zodiac-patented thermo-welding process, which is heat bonding. For that reason, there's a five-year warranty on the tubes."

"The main point of the tender is to get people from ship to shore, but there's no doubt that people want to look good doing it too," says Zodiac, which has catered to the market with all-new styling and a range of accessories to customise their boats.

Since rebranding Zodiac last year, the company is now focusing on the larger models previously unseen in Australia, which Tantaró says "will position Zodiac as a primary boat, the alternative to a tinny, up to 7.6 metres long and powered by engines as large as 250hp".

Bob Abbot, of All Inflatable Boats, has seen the evolution of the yacht tender over five decades, having worked with inflatables since 1974. "There must be about 30 brands these days," he says. "The most prominent tender is still the inflatable because it's stable, doesn't do any damage to yachts and is much lighter than the average boat." Abbot says there's "not one most popular boat, because everybody has a different taste and need".

"The slatted floor or air floor models that will fold up and pack fully away, or the rigid hull models, are the basic choices to consider. Models of old with a full removable floor have become obsolete. The slat or air floor is a simplified version and the sailing

fraternity tends to want things that are basic without hassles," he says.

Expressing an aversion to the recent introduction of Chinese-made tenders, which Abbot says "don't last because of their glued seams", this veteran of inflatable boating currently stocks Southern Pacific from New Zealand, and Tiger from Europe, now constructed in Egypt. "The Avon brand has stopped coming into the country, since Zodiac's umbrella company owns that brand along with Bombard."

Abbot explains: "Southern Pacific uses a German Mehler haku fabric for their boats, which is of top quality with welded seams and providing a six-year warranty. Their main features are their rigid hulls, with eight models in that range. They are a premium product at a medium price. They were designed as tenders for yachting and other boating. They also produce a range of six fold-up models, which are popular with entry-level sailors."

The Tiger brand is newer to the market and has similar qualities to the Southern Pacific boats, using the Mehler haku fabric and welded seams. "They come with rigid fibreglass hulls, which are more suited to lifting onboard with a davit, rather than stowing away. The sailing catamarans like these because they're more of a general-purpose boat. The Tiger brand is also more economical than the Southern Pacific."

Another interesting tender choice is the Walker Bay brand of dinghies and inflatables, which has been serving the sailing market since 1996. Ross Brain, the Australian distributor for the US-made brand, began positioning them locally as "a great all-round dinghy" since starting

his business relationship with Walker Bay in 1998. "We exhibited at the Pittwater Sailing Expo about 10 years ago and also the Sydney Boat Show to reach the sailing market. It's the only injection-moulded dinghy in the world. It's a great rowing tender for sailing yachts, and you can motor it or you can even add a sail and sail it."

Brain says the Walker Bay range, which comprises the Odyssey, Genesis and Generation lines, is "neat, nimble and nice looking". They range in size from eight to 10-foot and in price from \$1,255 to \$2,750, plus accessories such as the optional sailing components.

When compared to full inflatables, Walker Bay boats have three designated seats "so you have a whole physical dinghy around those onboard".

"They are lightweight, can swing easily on the davit and they are very portable. You can transport them upside down on top of the car, which is ideal for parents and grandparents wanting to teach young kids how to sail," says Brain.

The single skin hulls are made of a high-impact marine composite Polypropylene. The outer tube surrounding the rigid hull is made of 1100 decitex hypalon.

"They require minimal maintenance and are made of the softest plastic, so they don't damage the boat", according to Walker Bay.

Of the alternative "tinnie", Brain enthuses "you're better off with fantastic plastic! With a tinnie, you get corrosion, whereas inflatables are clean, light and durable."

One of the biggest players in the tender game is Sirocco Marine, run by Neil Webster for some 12 years, specialising in RIBs under the Sirocco and Brig brands, and with dealers throughout Australia. The company has also more recently added the Williams Performance range of jet-powered tenders to their offering.

Webster says the type of tender you choose "depends entirely on the use and a person's taste".

"When it comes to choosing a tender, you should first ask yourself "What am I going to use it for?" and "How much do I want to spend?" says Webster. "Some people are very budget conscious, other more conscious of design and image, quality and features. The trend is for people to go bigger. In the case of the Brig brand, it's a day boat, not just a yacht tender. It offers glamorous design, it's extremely durable, we provide back-up service nationally and a warranty, plus the boats retain

their resale value remarkably.”

At the other extreme, there are “foldaways” – boats in a bag – as well as rigid inflatables.

“A lot depends on the size of your sailing boat and what you’re using it for,” continues Webster. “The rough rule of thumb is that smaller sailing boats up to 40-foot tend to buy ‘boats in a bag’ because they’re lightweight and can be easily stowed. Over that size, owners are buying small RIBs because they’re more stable, safe and for the ‘fender effect’.”

Some of the bigger sailing yachts today, of 50 feet-plus, have garages dedicated to RIB storage. “Some of these have been specifically designed for the Williams jet tenders, which you drive from the water straight into the garage. Some larger sailing yachts are also buying up to 7.8-metre Sirius RIBs to use as a tender, as a pursuit boat when the yacht is involved in racing and regattas, for the kids enjoyment or as a day boat,” says Webster.

The company’s Sirocco inflatable boats are manufactured in China and boast more than 20 models. The more

premium-orientated Brig brand, from the Ukraine, has 27 different models available, and the Williams jet-tender brand, which is made in the UK, has 18 models.

“So we can offer people more than 60 tender options,” says Webster. “Everybody’s needs are different. Some want a \$100,000 boat for exploring the Reef or islands, other people just want to get crew or supplies between the yacht and shore.”

Take Hamilton Island for example, Webster suggests. “Owners want a RIB or more substantial boat so they can get around and see the local sights. But for cruising Sydney Harbour, they just want to drop anchor at a beach and row in. For racing, they’re looking for something big but not stuck onboard. Obviously weight is critical, but they need a tender that they can use to follow the boat around and move crew efficiently.”

When it comes to materials, Webster advises all sailors looking for value for money to go with hypalon. “There are essentially two types of fabric, PVC and hypalon. All military and commercial boats are made of

“The rough rule of thumb is that smaller sailing boats up to 40-foot tend to buy ‘boats in a bag’ because they’re lightweight and can be easily stowed. Over that size, owners are buying small RIBs because they’re more stable, safe and for the ‘fender effect.’”

Neil Webster,
Sirocco Marine

hypalon. If you want it to last, you choose hypalon. It’s totally UV stable, has a 20-30-year life and it’s rugged. If you want cheap and cheerful, choose PVC.”

A new trend is engine manufacturers getting into the tenders market. Honwave is such an example with a revived concept in premium-quality PVC boats, which Honda is currently marketing, capitalising on the burgeoning market for inflatables worldwide. “There are four sizes in all,” explains Honda’s Robert Johnson. “From two metres to three metres, in three floor versions: slatted deck, aluminium deck, and a revolutionary air V-floor version – something to suit everybody – and are packaged with a Honda outboard, from BF2.3 to the BF15, with packages starting from around \$2,000, which is proving appealing with the sailing market.

So, if you’re on the lookout for a new tender for this summer, there’s no shortage of options out there ready and waiting for you – whether a boat in a bag or a high-performance chase boat. ⚓

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The current Safety and Sea Survival two-day, or one-day revalidation courses are informative for even experienced bluewater sailors, but for skippers it's an essential, as a duty of care is a key part of leadership aboard.

COURSE OF ACTION

HAVING COMPLETED THE YACHTING AUSTRALIA SAFETY AND SEA SURVIVAL COURSE MANY YEARS AGO, KEVIN GREEN SIGNED UP AT THE PACIFIC SAILING SCHOOL IN SYDNEY'S RUSHCUTTERS BAY TO DO THE COURSE AGAIN AND WAS SURPRISED TO FIND THAT A LOT HAS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS.

Our first morning would be spent in the classroom, with the afternoon spent practice firing flares followed by pool work. The second day would be more theory followed by the dreaded exam.

The first thing that struck me as we sat in the Adina Hotel in Surry Hills on the weekend morning of the course, was the significant differences from the original safety course material – that I'd swatted-up on the night before – and the latest material handed out by Terry Wise, principal of the Pacific Sailing School. The electronics and communications sections were markedly different (see breakout box). Course material comprised of a 50-page folder - the Australian Government Survival at Sea handbook - and I'd brought along my own copy of Yachting Australia's Blue Book (produced for YA by the publishers of this magazine). With reference to the sea survival course, the Blue Book states: "At least 50 per cent of crew including the skipper or sailing master shall have undertaken training and received a Certificate of Competence in both theory and practical sessions."

FLARE-UPS
Flare usage remains an essential part of the course, therefore practising firing them, as seen here at Rushcutters Bay, is vital.





Course details

Duration: 16 hours.

Cost: \$575.00 (includes 50-page course folder, theory, RYA Sea Survival Handbook, flare practical and liferaft exercises).

Prerequisite materials:

- *Sea Survival Handbook.*
- *Racing Rules of Sailing 2013-2016* (Yachting Australia Blue Book).
- *NSW Maritime Boating Handbook.*

Certificate valid for five years then must be re-examined.

For more information:

Pacific Sailing School,
Rushcutters Bay, Sydney.
Ph: 02 93262399
www.pacificsailingschool.com.au

My reasons for doing the course were numerous, with the first being the need to revalidate my certification (every five years) in order to take part in Category 1 ocean races such as the Lord Howe and the Sydney Hobart. But remembering that 'duty of care' when I work as a charter skipper on the harbour was another important reason as it had been 20 years since I completed my Yachtmaster qualification, so there was plenty of 'rust on my bulwarks', as it were.

CLASSROOM SESSION

Course instructor and former Hobart skipper John Gardiner opened the session by reminding us how basic training could very possibly save lives. Then there was the example of the 1979 Fastnet race in the UK, which uncovered the need for basic survival training by competing crews. During the busy classroom session we covered a wide range of topics including boat preparation, seamanship, heavy weather strategies, meteorology and the final topic of emergencies. Emergencies encompassed radio communications, flares, MOB procedures and abandonment.

Of particular interest was the life jacket session. Lifejackets are the core of personal survival so finding out about the latest Australian standards (introduced in 2010) whereby buoyancy is now measured on Newtons (N) with 100N the minimum requirement for offshore and 150N the best, was a worthy update. This session covered and demonstrated the importance of maintenance, prompting me to have my Burke PFD serviced by the manufacturer – as seals can and do wear out over time.

All and all it proved solid information for everyone, but especially for those who hadn't completed higher certificates of competency such as Yachtmaster. The first aid component was particularly welcome because dealing with the knocks and concussions of everyday sailing is fairly common. But so is learning to identify a crewman with the onset of seasickness or hypothermia. I realised my Senior First Aid Certificate had also lapsed, another essential course that the Pacific Sailing School can facilitate. Other facts learned included understanding the need to conserve warmth by not wasting energy and retaining heat in survival conditions; basic but possibly life-saving information.

Instructors John and Terry mixed up the theory part with real-life experiences of emergencies to illustrate the points. Such as the time an owner abandoned ship in panic upon finding the cabin sole awash, without first checking the cause. Sounds obvious, I know, but in emergency situations people can panic and lose rational thought. A central part of the course is instilling training to get the sailor over that panic hurdle.

FLARES ON THE WHARF

Early afternoon saw us down at the wharf ready to deploy orange flares, a pyrotechnic colour used for guiding helicopters to your position. Despite modern electronics, flare usage remains an essential part of the course so actually practising firing them is very important as we found out down on the jetty at Sydney's Rushcutters Bay. Again this was something never before done in emergencies by most students, so pulling the pin of the orange flare was exciting practice as the white hot tube glowed in our gloved hands.

INTO THE POOL

For the afternoon's practical session we gathered at the UNSW 50-metre pool and began donning all our cold weather gear. I took no chances with my slim 70-kilogram frame and pulled on thermal underwear, trackies, a hiking shirt, woollen jersey, topped off by my Burke offshore gear and deck boots with ski socks. I made sure the seals on the gear were tight and then donned my PFD lifejacket. Like most offshore sailors I'd opted for a manually inflatable jacket as the automatic version can inadvertently activate when hit by large swells of water washing aboard at sea. Our instructor for the three-hour pool session briefed us and ensured everyone had correctly fitted their equipment. Most of the group were wearing their own PFDs. After the signal to activate our PFDs we made some adjustments – with some inexperienced students missing crotch straps, which is a



requirement for Category 1 ocean racing. Unlike the Qantas pool session on my first SSSC course there was no jumping from heights, nor darkness or heavy-duty hosing, so I felt our group were getting off lightly.

Nevertheless the 23°C water soon had us all fairly chilled (hypothermia happens when the body's core temperature falls from 37°C to 35°C and by 30°C heart failure can occur) as we drifted around and when we were splashed I realised the importance of having a facemask integrated into your jacket. With only my woolly hat on, the hosed rain blinded me during our group huddle (to keep warm) so I couldn't see a thing and was unable to prevent a colleague from drifting away.

Among the important information that the instructor told us was nominating a number to everyone in the group and sticking to it when calling the roster at regular intervals.

When the group dispersed to swim several lengths of the 25-metre section of the pool the dragging bulk of my wet weather gear became apparent, but the real test of how incapacitating a fully clad sailor became was the inability of some in the group to simply climb out of the pool.

Another interesting test was attempting to put on the PFD while in the water. My Burke jacket proved easily accessible and the stainless toggle belt simple to operate. Some other crew had push button locks which our instructor pointed out was not the ideal choice as it could inadvertently release.

LIFERAFT DRILL

Our weightiness in the water was again evident when we tried climbing into the life rafts that we'd launched. Chucking them into the pool to inflate and then self-righting them was easy enough but boarding was a challenge for most. The instructor said that larger crewmembers invariably had

more trouble than smaller crew. This led me to consider if my 70-kilogram frame was better or worse, because thinner crew would suffer more from hypothermia but at least could board liferafts unaided.

Liferaft drill was the highlight of the course for many attending as they'd never used any before. Our groups used both types most likely to be encountered aboard vessels – the standard offshore model and the more highly specified international SOLAS model. As we huddled within the 10-man SOLAS model in pitch darkness with the sealed canopy being sprayed with water, I realised just how scary it would be if the inevitable capsized occurred out at sea.

The pool session was extremely educational and my only constructive comment was that the water temperature was a bit warm (at 23°C) to simulate true ocean conditions. This may approximate the temperature off Sydney Heads in late summer but it is a fair bit warmer than the waters of Bass Strait. As a cold weather windsurfer I can personally vouch that hands operate a lot less efficiently in lower temperatures and therefore a cooler pool would have greatly added to the learning experience.



SAFETY SCHOOL

Clockwise from top: With no facemasks most of us were blinded by the hosed spray, so best to have one fitted on your wet weather gear; Liferafts are your only salvation if the boat sinks so best learn how to properly use them; The best life-saving equipment in the world won't work unless it's fitted and deployed properly.

THE EXAM

On the second day the classroom work revised the pool learning and more theory before we attempted the open book exam. The 45 multiple-choice questions in the exam were fairly challenging and finding the right answer was not always plain sailing, so I was very relieved when Terry Wise told me I'd passed but, more importantly, I'd learnt a lot during this most valuable of courses that I'd strongly encourage all offshore sailors to attend. ⚓

www.pacificsailingschool.com.au

Emergency communications

Electronics are playing an increasingly important role in marine safety, with Kevin Green intrigued to learn what's changed since he last completed the Safety and Sea Survival Course (SSSC) in 2004, as preparation for a Sydney Hobart race.

Since then a whole raft of technologies has been incorporated aboard including AIS, DSC, GPS-EPIRBs and other acronyms such as MMSI. Tackling the first of these acronyms, AIS (Automatic Identification Systems) was initially developed back in 2002 so ships could identify one another via the VHF waveband (using their AIS Class A transponders). This AIS technology has improved significantly to incorporate some useful features for small craft, via Class B transponders. For instance, when I was sailing north, dodging the reefs of the Queensland coast last year, I was surprised by the large ships doing the same thing, so it was good to instantly view their course and heading on the plotter screen. But as I was reminded on the SSSC course run by the Pacific Sailing School, AIS can now be used in man over board (MOB) emergencies. As we all know, the best boat to recover someone lost at sea is the boat they fell from, so kitting out crew with an AIS beacon – such as the McMurdo S10 – is a sensible option. So, in the event of an MOB, the crewmember overboard is shown up on the screen as an AIS target; assuming he is able to activate the device. The S10 has a four-mile range and the signal will show on both the commercial Class A and non-commercial class B AIS systems. These sell locally for around \$380 from CH Smith.

Of course AIS is a separate rescue system from the satellite-enabled EPIRB system. The major change in EPIRBs since I last attended the SSSC course has been the introduction of GPS-enabled units, which provide much more accurate location information when activated – 120 metres accuracy as opposed to five kilometres for non-GPS EPIRBs, which may also take hours to attain a position fix. For Category 1 races such as the Sydney Hobart and Lord Howe Island race, all crew are required to carry personal versions, PLBs. With Personal Location Beacons, you can take them anywhere, but do remember to advise AMSA if you're going mountain biking that weekend rather than sailing up the coast!

Another new feature that has transformed the humble VHF radio is DSC (digital selective calling). This enhances a VHF radio's analogue output with a more powerful digital signal that includes the vessel's details. These details must include the registered MMSI (Maritime Mobile Service Identity) call sign that AMSA has issued to that particular device. In Australia Channel 70 should be used for DSC distress alerts only. Once an alert has been sent out, the party in distress should monitor Channel 16, the traditional distress and calling channel. Parties receiving the DSC distress alert should switch to Channel 16 and acknowledge the MAYDAY call by voice giving their identity and signalling 'Received MAYDAY'. One important limitation when using VHF for emergencies is that not all aircraft can receive marine frequencies, though helicopters can.

Other emergency devices we were reminded about on the course were SARTs – Search and Rescue Transponders, which send an emergency signal to marine and aviation radars. Traditionally a big ship device, smaller SART beacons are appearing and are also to be found in some liferafts. Finally, remembering the French sailor last year who dropped into the drink with only her waterproof mobile phone in her pocket, remember to dial 000 in Australia!



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We were slogging along in the middle of the fleet, which was our usual position and one that we found comfortable because we knew all the other middle-of-the-fleeters around us. The hotshots were out in front, of course, and we only saw them when we were launching and hauling out. The rest of the time they sailed their own race. But occasionally the gods need a good laugh.

We had just peeled away from the rest of the fleet because one of the hotshots had tacked on our wind out of what I can only attribute to pure spite and meanness, because there was no way that we could match him for boat speed.

And then it happened.

Out of nowhere there was first a darker spot on the water ahead and then, there it was, our own private breeze. It was a lift.

A big lift. A strong lift.

Suddenly, my crew and I were hiking as hard as we could and we were laying the weather mark easily. And no one else... no one in the fleet had our lift. Tee hee.

We rounded the weather mark eons ahead and after the chute was up and drawing, the first thing I did was check the course chart to make sure I wasn't doing something colossally stupid, which wouldn't exactly have been surprising. But, no, we were just out in front. Way. Out. Front.

I looked at the bulky back of my crew and asked rhetorically, "What the heck was that all about?" "That," he said, with the voice of Moses handing down the tablet, "was a Gift Shift."

THE GIFT SHIFT

WHEN YOU'RE STUCK IN NEVER NEVER LAND AND THE WIND GODS ARE LAUGHING.
CHRIS CASWELL REMINDS US THAT THE SECRET OF LIFE IS NEVER GIVING UP.

So it was. Somewhere the gods were laughing.

And thus I came to recognize that every so often, especially for those of us who sail in that Never Never Land between DFL and somewhere up toward the front, the gods toss down the occasional rosebud to keep us interested. To keep us believing that we really can beat the hot sailors.

We call it Never Never Land because we are Never going to get a trophy and we are Never going to get back to the dock before there is a long waiting line for the hoist. We really ought to call it Never-Never-Never Land because we're Never going to get to the showers while there is still hot water, either. So be it.

I would like to claim that we won that particular race through sheer boat speed combined with tactical brilliance, but I'm happy to just say that we won the race. The hotshots were carving our lead down at a great rate but, luckily for us, there was a mathematical absolute at work. The

rate at which they were diminishing our lead did not equal the distance to the finish line. And so we won.

Not only did we win but we were first to the hoist, first to the showers, and were awarded a daily first trophy, which quite clearly amazed everyone. Us included.

More important than any of those things, however, is that I learned a very important rule of sailing that isn't in any of the official rulebooks. In fact, it's actually a Rule of Life as well.

Don't give up too soon!

Seems simple, but it's something I often forget. Had I said, "Oh, what the hell, I'll just keep sailing in Mr. Hotshot's bad air, he'll be gone soon enough". Well, our monumental victory would never have been ours.

Looking back, I realised that there have been more than a few times when I've let my brain slip a few cogs from the gung-ho mode it was in before the starting gun. By the second beat, I'm not only in the middle of the fleet, but I'm hungry. Telling my crew to stop hiking long enough to grab me a peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwich is the same as shouting to the world, "I'm OK finishing 24th in a 35-boat fleet".

Helen of Troy may have been the face that launched a thousand ships, but giving up too soon is the attitude that didn't launch a thousand giant corporations, didn't get that perfect-but-hard-to-convince girl, and didn't fight for the deserved raise.

There is a sort of buffer in every sailboat fleet. It's that group of boats who are never in the front, but never in the tank, either. They would like to win, of course, and they would really hate to be DFL, too. So they work hard enough to stay safely in the middle. There is a fine line between giving up and just not trying hard, and that's who they are.

But here are some non-sailing case histories to consider before giving up: They were told by Decca Records that guitars were out. The Beatles. His teacher said he was too stupid to learn anything. Thomas Edison. And he was once fired for lack of imagination. Walt Disney.

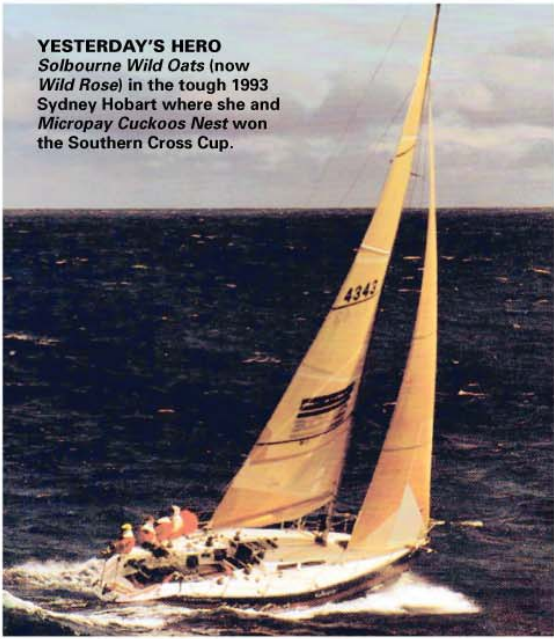
Did they give up? No. They just kept on pushing.

So the next time you start thinking about how hungry you are or about that little drizzle of water inside the neck of your foul weather jacket, it's time to slap yourself in the face, look around, and figure out how to attack the leaders from behind. Because you never know when the gods will need a good laugh, and decide to bestow upon you a Gift Shift. ⚓



With more than 40 years as an award-winning boating journalist, and as a former editor of both *Yachting* and *Sea* magazines, Chris Caswell is a well-known racing sailor in the USA with silverware in everything from Lasers to ocean racers. He is the author of six books on boating.

YESTERDAY'S HERO
Solbourne Wild Oats (now *Wild Rose*) in the tough 1993 Sydney Hobart where she and *Micropay Cuckoos Nest* won the Southern Cross Cup.



REVIVAL OF THE CROSS

THE CYCA IS TO BE CONGRATULATED ON RESURRECTING THE ONCE GREAT INTERNATIONAL TEAMS RACING SERIES, THE SOUTHERN CROSS CUP, WRITES PETER CAMPBELL.

Between 1967 and 2001, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia hosted one of the great events of ocean racing, the biennial Southern Cross Cup. In an innovative move, the CYCA has revived the Southern Cross Cup, albeit as a club team racing series within the 2013-2014 racing calendar.

Reintroduction of the Southern Cross Cup after a break of 12 years is one of several changes to the Club's ocean racing program for this season.

The Southern Cross Cup should attract competitive racing between teams representing the major Sydney clubs. Despite the time involved in having their boats in Sydney for most of December, the status of the Cup may well draw one or two interstate teams, perhaps even an overseas team from, say, the RORC in England.

The CYCA introduced the Southern Cross in 1967 following Australia's remarkable victory in the Admiral's Cup, the then well-established international team series

incorporating races at Cowes Week and finishing with famous Fastnet Race.

The Brits wanted immediate revenge and the Royal Ocean Racing Club encouraged the CYCA to introduce a similar team series, ending with the Sydney Hobart, a race of similar distance to the Fastnet.

Like the Admiral's Cup, the Southern Cross Cup quickly achieved an international status, attracting teams from overseas to compete in regatta racing off the New South Wales coast, usually with the often dramatic Sydney Hobart Race deciding the winners.

In its 1970s and 1980s heyday, the Admiral's Cup was the mecca of offshore yachtsmen, yacht designers, sail makers and equipment makers and magnificent competition on the Solent, the Channel and Irish Sea.

The presence of the Aussies, and later the Kiwis, at Cowes gave 'yachting down under' and, in particular the Sydney Hobart and the Southern Cross Cup, a great boost, drawing more and more individual entries from around the world and highly competitive teams from countries such as Great Britain, the USA, France, New Zealand and Hong Kong/China to compete against an Australian national team and several state teams.

Australia won the coveted Admiral's Cup, the so-called world championship of ocean racing, in 1967 with a team of *Mercedes III*, *Balandra* and *Caprice of Huon*, again in 1979 when *Police Car*, *Impetuous* and *Ragamuffin* battled through a massive storm in the Irish Sea to clinch victory.

The British got their first revenge when *Prospect of Whitty*, *Superstar* and *Quailo III* won the Southern Cross Cup in 1973. UK teams again winning in 1985 and 1989.

New Zealand quickly used the international competition of the Southern Cross Cup to prepare a challenge for the Admiral's Cup and also saw the advent of the light

displacement designs of Bruce Farr and others. In 1971 the Kiwis took flight with *Pathfinder*, *Runaway* and *Wai Aniwai* to not only win the Cup but also finish first, second and third overall in the Hobart Race.

Australian national teams have won the Southern Cross Cup three times, NSW team six times, the UK three times, New Zealand four, with Ireland and China each winning once.

I remember Southern Cross Cup series as classic contests decided by tactical racing around buoys, culminating with near-survival sailing in Sydney Hobarts. The NSW team won the 1993 Cup in a Sydney Hobart in which 66 yachts retired from the fleet of 104 as they sailed into gale-force winds created by an intense low off Gabo Island.

As their Southern Cross Cup team opponents fell by the wayside, *Micropay Cuckoos Nest*, the brand new Lyons 40, and the Farr 43, *Solbourne Wild Oats*, sailed through the stormy weather to a fine team victory and individual wins. *Micropay Cuckoos Nest* won IMS overall, with IOR overall going to *Solbourne Wild Oats*.

Unfortunately, the cost of competing, particular from countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Japan, saw the Admiral's Cup numbers slide from 19 national teams in 1979 to just eight club teams in 2003 when the new *Wild Oats* and *Aftershock*, sailing for the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht, won the Cup for what, so far, has been the final time.

The last Southern Cross Cup series, until its revival this year, was in 2001, again the victim of falling competition, particularly from overseas and even interstate. The winning NSW team comprised *Ragamuffin*, *Sting* and *Loki*.

When going to press, the CYCA had not published the Notice of Race for the Southern Cross Cup, but it will be open to club teams of three boats, with clubs allowed to enter multiple teams.

The Southern Cross Cup series will comprise four races: the Port Hacking Bird Island Race on December 7, a CYCA Trophy passage race on December 14, a CYCA passage race on December 15, and the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race on December 26.

CYCA Commodore Howard Piggott says he looks forward to some spirited inter-club competition with the re-introduction of the Southern Cross Cup, a sentiment I fully endorse having covered every previous Cup series, every one a great contest between some of the finest yachts and their crews in the world. ⚓

DREAM TEAM

The winning skippers of the 1969 Southern Cross Cup, below left to right: Vince Walsh (*Boambillee*), Syd Fischer (*Ragamuffin*) and Ted Kaufman (*Mercedes III*). They won a close fought series with the British team.



RACES AND REGATTAS

KEEP TRACK OF THIS SEASON'S IMPORTANT EVENTS
WITH *OFFSHORE YACHTING'S* CALENDAR.

INTERNATIONAL DATE COUNTRY

OCTOBER

China Coast Regatta	12-14 Oct	China
ISAF Sailing World Cup, Qingdao	12-19 Oct	China
Biennial Hong Kong to Vietnam Race	17 Oct	Hong Kong
Rolex Middle Sea Race	16-26 Oct	Malta
7th China Cup International Regatta	26-29 Oct	China

NOVEMBER

Nassau Cup Ocean Race	7-9 Nov	Bahamas, Florida
RHKYC Around the Island Race	10 Nov	Hong Kong
Raja Muda International Regatta, Selangor	15-23 Nov	Malaysia
27th Phuket King's Cup Regatta	30 Nov – 7 Dec	Thailand
ISAF Rolex World Sailor of the Year Awards	12 Nov	Oman

DECEMBER

Monsoon Cup Terengganu (final round of Alpari World Match Racing Tour)	2-7 Dec	Malaysia
Jaguar Cup Series – Piana Cup Regatta	7-8 Dec	Miami, Florida
Christmas Caribbean Rally	16 Dec – 11 Jan	Canary Islands

JANUARY

Royal Langkawi International Regatta	13-18 Jan	Malaysia
20th Singapore Straits Regatta	14-18 Jan	Singapore
27th Quantum Key West Race Week	19-24 Jan	Key West, Florida
Mount Gay Rum Round Barbados Race	21 Jan	Mt Michael, Barbados
Bay of Islands Sailing Week	22-24 Jan	New Zealand
ISAF Sailing World Cup Miami	27 Jan – 1 Feb	Florida, USA

FEBRUARY

17th Bay Regatta – Phuket, Phang Nga, Krabi	Early Feb	Thailand
Neptune Regatta (Equator Race)	2-8 Feb	Singapore
A2B – Auckland to Bluff ocean race	9 Feb	RAYC

MARCH

Subic to Boracay Race	1-2 Mar	Indonesia
Boracay Cup	4-7 Mar	Philippines
34th St. Maarten Heineken Regatta	6-9 Mar	St. Maarten
41st International Rolex Regatta, St Thomas	21-23 Mar	US Virgin Islands
St Barths Bucket Regatta	27-30 Mar	St. Barths
International Rolex Regatta	28-30 Mar	St. Thomas
BVI Spring Regatta	31 Mar – 6 Apr	BVI

APRIL

Sail Malaysia Langkawi to Sabah	Apr	Philippines
Biennial Rolex China Sea Race	Apr	Hong Kong
Charleston Race Week	10-13 Apr	BVI
Les Voiles de St. Barth	14-19 Apr	USA
Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta	17-22 Apr	St. Barths
7th Commodore's Cup	22-26 Apr	UK
Antigua Sailing Week	26 Apr – 2 May	Antigua

AUSTRALIA

DATE

CLUB

OCTOBER

Naval Fleet Review (Sydney Harbour)	4-11 Oct	RAN
Mooloolaba 200	5-6 Oct	MYC
Blue Water Pointscore Race – Bird Island Race	11 Oct	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Night Race	11 Oct	CYCA
Ocean Pointscore Race – Botany Bay	12 Oct	CYCA
Giant Steps for Autism	18 Oct	MHYC
Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race	19 Oct	MHYC
Financial & Media Markets Charity Regatta	25 Oct	MHYC
Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race – Gascoigne Cup	26 Oct	RSYS
Balmain Regatta	27 Oct	BSC

NOVEMBER

Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race	2 Nov	CYCA
Marine Safety Equipment & Demonstration Day	3 Nov	CYCA
Blue Water Pointscore Race – Cabbage Tree Is.	8 Nov	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Night Race	8 Nov	CYCA
Ocean Pointscore – Port Hacking Race	9 Nov	CYCA
Rotary Charity Regatta	15 Nov	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race – Morna Cup	16 Nov	RSYS
Beneteau Regatta	22 Nov	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Race Sydney to Pittwater	23 Nov	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Race Pittwater to Sydney	24 Nov	CYCA
Musto International Youth Match Racing Regatta	25-29 Nov	CYCA
MHYC SSORC 2013	30-1 Dec	MYYC

DECEMBER

Blue Water Pointscore Race, Port Hacking-Bird Island	7 Dec	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul & Short Ocean Race – David Burke Memorial Trophy	7 Dec	CYCA
SOLAS Big Boat Challenge	10 Dec	CYCA
CYCA Trophy Passage Series	14-15 Dec	CYCA
69th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race	26 Dec	CYCA

JANUARY

Pittwater Coffs Harbour Race	2 Jan	RPAYC
Farr 40 NSW State Championships	9-12 Jan	RSYS
Festival of Sails	24- 27 Jan	RGYC
178th Australia Day Regatta & City of Sydney Cup incorporating Grant Thornton Short Ocean & Ocean Pointscore Races	26 Jan	CYCA

FEBRUARY

Ocean Pointscore Race – Port Hacking	1 Feb	CYCA
Strata Management Services Regatta	7 Feb	MHYC
Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race – Milson Memorial Cup	8 Feb	RSYS
Spurious Challenge Regatta	14 Feb	MHYC
Ocean Pointscore Race – Sydney Newcastle Race	15 Feb	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Race Sydney to Pittwater	15 Feb	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Haul Race Pittwater to Sydney	16 Feb	CYCA
Ocean Pointscore – Newcastle Sydney (Non-Pointscore)	16 Feb	CYCA
Farr 40 Australian Championship	19-22 Feb	RYCT
Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAA) Regatta	21 Feb	CYCA
Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race	22 Feb	MHYC
RANSA Regatta	23 Feb	RANSA

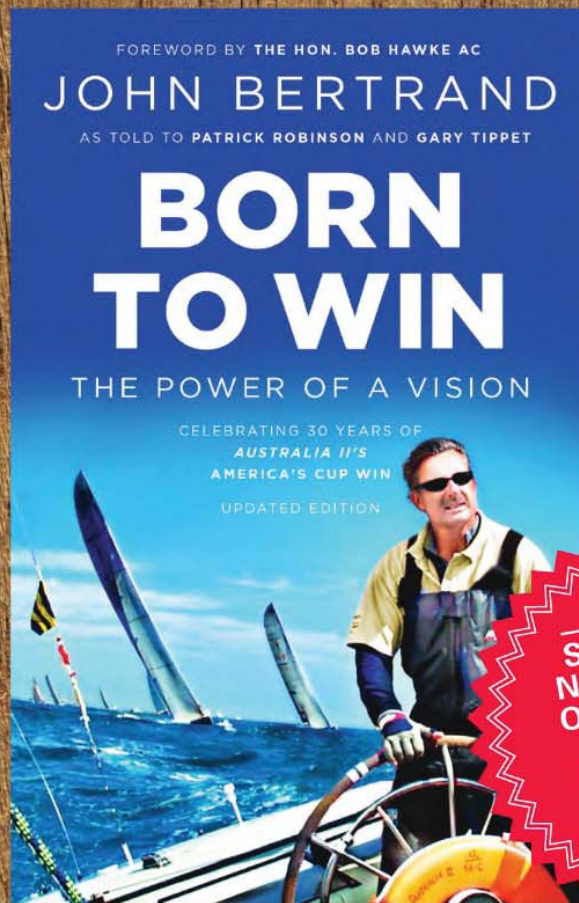
MARCH

Grant Thornton Short Ocean Race	1 Mar	CYCA
Marinassess Womens Match Racing Regatta	8-9 Mar	CYCA
Sydney Harbour Regatta	8-9 March	MHYC

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

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