

Bilgewater

March 2020



Falkor having a great day



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Commodore's Report

After all the planning and preparation, meetings and schedules, phone calls and emails.....

The Gulf Classic roared into life on Friday.

Of course there were last minute dramas and things to pick up from the compound... "Who's got the laptop?" - "I thought you had the prizes?" - "We need how many flags!!?"

An event like this has many moving parts and only because of the hard work and dedication of our Squadron members are we able to pull it off.

On my way to MBBC I had a scheduled stop to pick up some marker buoys and anchors from the compound and when I reached Kawakawa bay there was a sight to behold.

I don't think I've ever witnessed that much last minute maintenance by so many squadron members before. One was busy upgrading his navigation lights to LED, Another was trying to fit a reefing horn and shouting "has anyone got an angle grinder?"

Eventually everyone made it to MBBC and for something different we had a BBQ dinner and the briefing in the downstairs sports bar. The alternate venue went down well and I suspect will be the location of preference for next year.

We had our Race Officer, Bart, take the competitors through the rules and procedures and if anyone had a question the answer was nearly always "It's in the Race Instructions".

The next morning the fleet launched on time and all hovered around the committee boat like bees to honey, completing their call in and confirmation of life jackets and RACEQ's activation.

We got away cleanly (I haven't heard of any protests yet) and spent the next 15 hours in a variety of conditions... We had spinnaker runs to Rakino, bashing to windward around Rangitoto and a nasty case of being becalmed off thumbs point.

Sunday morning everyone came together over breakfast to discuss results and claim some silverware. The results should be published further on in this edition.

I think this year we saw the most generous swag of prizes ever, including a brand new mercury outboard!! (Well done James) This shows a real commitment from our sponsors to support this event and we can't thank them enough.

Cheers,

Paul Weaver



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Upcoming Events

- 14th Mar** Club Fishing Contest and Beach BBQ
- 21st Mar** Lay-by weekend to re run any postponed Regatta
- 22-29th Mar** Great Mercury Island Cruise for TY and Keeler

Alpha Electrical
WHEN QUALITY COUNTS

HAMILTON: 07 8480073
TE AWAMUTU: 07 8701080
RAGLAN: 07 8256575

EMAIL: INFO@ALPHA ELECTRICAL.CO.NZ
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A black rectangular advertisement for Alpha Electrical. The top part features the company name "Alpha Electrical" in a white script font, with the tagline "WHEN QUALITY COUNTS" in a smaller, red, sans-serif font below it. The middle section lists contact information for three locations: Hamilton (07 8480073), Te Awamutu (07 8701080), and Raglan (07 8256575). Below this, the email address "INFO@ALPHA ELECTRICAL.CO.NZ" and website "WWW.ALPHA ELECTRICAL.CO.NZ" are provided. At the bottom, in small white text, it states "AUTHORISED PANASONIC A/C CONDITIONING DEALER, SERVICE CENTRE AND INSTALLERS."



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Gulf Classic 2020 Recap Edition

High Time for the Gulf Classic

There were times in the 60 miler, when the sails were flapping, the boom crashing, and the rest of the fleet were sailing away into the distance, that I did wonder if I should have stuck to my original choice to sail the TY40. But no, being easily persuaded, and having my arm twisted by the commodore who told me that all the other Noelex 25s were sailing 60, and don't be a woos, and besides which, Kittiwake needed company at the back of the fleet, so I changed my mind and entered the TY60.

What do you mean the back of the fleet. Well we had a good breeze into the wind from the start, and High Time kept in touch with the leaders up the Waiheke channel, when the wind began to die. Once through the Ruthe Passage though, the half a dozen boats in front hauled up their spinnakers.

A fleet of yachts under spinnaker is very pretty. I never fly a spinnaker, but since everyone else was disappearing into the distance, I thought I'd have a go. Alas, it doesn't matter how many YouTube videos you watch, you've still got to work out the practicality of hooking one end of the pole onto rope which is always just out of reach, whilst trying to balance on the fore deck, then remember which side the pole goes, and how to stop the windward leech collapsing. It's a bit much for my addled brain to hold on to. I wondered if a spinnaker really is any faster than a whisker pole and goose wing.

Despite the 10 minutes or so it took me to work out what to clip to what, I thought we were doing quite well, until we sailed into a hole, and watched the rest of the fleet sail away in the dying breeze, whilst Kittiwake and the TY40s caught a new easterly from astern.

Bugger. So we waved at Sweet Surrender and Endurance who were rounding Rakino and heading south as we entered the channel, drifted slowly past Islington and Motuihe, until north of Rangitoto, the wind changed northerly, and wave height suddenly increased to a metre or so.

Now that was more to our liking. At first we could see Kittiwake's lights, banging in the waves about a km or so in front, then after two tacks, we were past and powering on. In those conditions, a Noelex climbs higher and faster through the waves. So by the time we reached the Rakino channel for the second time, we were back in front.

It is intriguing how the different designs fared. Kittiwake, (Joker 6.7) clearly overhauled the Noelex downwind in light airs, but didn't (and from my experiences with Taiko) cope with bouncing seas in the latter part of the race. The Elliots simply disappeared from our view, with the line honours winner finishing



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a full four hours before us. On the other hand I bet they didn't have ginger biscuits and bacon and egg pie off Motutapu.

Will I be persuaded into another TY60 next year. Possibly. But I don't like spinnakers, and I might just leave HighTime's in the bag until then.

Nigel McCarter



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From the perspective of Team Kittiwake (Joker 6.7)

Being the smallest boat to enter TY60 we always knew we were in for a long day.

Off the start we knew we had to keep in touch with the Noalex 25s during the upwind leg to have a shot at them on the downwind run across the top of Waiheke. Unfortunately, this wasn't to be. Lumpy seas and head winds are not the favoured conditions for a Joker 6.7, so by the time we had reached Ruthe passage we had fallen off the back of the fleet. To compound this we then sailed into a rather large hole off Hooks bay. Over an hour watching the fleet sail away was depressing and ended any chance against the bulk of the fleet.

Fortunately we weren't the only TY60 boat stuck in that hole and once the wind filled in we found ourselves in a drag race with High Time. Jokers love the downwind stuff and there is nothing more enjoyable than a good Spinnaker run. In quick order we found ourselves approaching Awash Rocks. We quickly rounded Rakino island and had another downwind run around Rangitoto island towards the light house.

By this point we had developed a decent lead over High Time, but things were about to change. As we passed the lighthouse we once again found ourselves in a Jokers least favoured conditions, and now it was getting dark. Slogging away against the swell we became aware of another sail boat catching up with us. "Is that High Time?" we asked. "Can't be, it's going much too quickly. It must be one of the Keelers". By now it was fully dark and with no other navigation lights in sight, the realisation finally dawned on us, that is High Time!!! Damn they've passed us. By this time we had found our groove in the dark and were able to keep pace with them, but was it too late?

Around the top of Motutapu we headed off in pursuit. But, as the wind shifted and died (as predicted) we eventually resigned ourselves to the fact that we were going to be the last boat home.

Finally at a little past midnight we drifted across the line and headed back to the boat ramp exhausted, but with a real sense of achievement.

Bring on next year!

James Hepburn



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From the Committee Boat.....

Royle Flush was on station by 0900 to set the start line for the 2020 Gulf Classic. Alongside Roy (skipper) was Bart (Race Officer), Roland (assistant RO), Roland's grandson Eli (crew), Kobus and Lizzette (photography, flag wavers), and me (comms). The line was set, and we got ourselves organised to verify entries with the sail past, VHF comms check, and RACEQs validation. Everyone got it well right, although the odd boat advising sail by when over 500m away caused some angst. We didn't see anyone on RACEQs.

"BANG" went the 5 minute mark for the keeler division at 0955 hr. Bart had his shotgun in action (it's OK Jacinda it wasn't semi-auto!!). Keelers away at 1000 hrs except for a radio call from Winedown that couldn't get motor going in Marina and would be late for start.

"BANG" – the TY60 were right on the start line to start their race in a steady 15knot easterly – an on the wind start down to the Waiheke channel.

"BANG" went the 4 minute mark for the TY40 and no boats in proximity. Observed Falkor and Aperitif taking the advice to keep well clear of the start box to extreme proportions.

"BANG" went the start for the TY40 and no boats anywhere near start line. Five minutes later most had crossed and were underway.

Suddenly comms saw boats pop up on the RACEQs screen. Only saw them after their set start times had passed. Interesting observation is when boats all very close together we only saw one or two on our screens. However, as boats spread out, we saw more details.

Liz was flat out on the camera checking the start line for early starting boats and overall general photography. Roland, Kobus, and Eli handling the flag hoisting, while Roy and I tried to stay well out of the way.

Once the fleets were away, we relaxed and told tall stories for most of the day. There was a slight moment of panic when we heard a Securitee call from coastguard advising a strong wind advisory for later in the day. A quick check on PredictWind showed a completely different forecast of light winds dying out in the evening. Luckily the Securitee message was withdrawn 2 hours later. They must have confused us with Wellington.

The fleets raced around the courses in a steady easterly to NE wind strength probably 10-15knots most of the daylight time. VHF call ins were recorded as boats passed their designated positions. The first boats home was in the TY40 division and lo and behold we had two Waikato boats vying for line honours. FALKOR crossed first in 9hr16.4min followed closely by Aperitif who was sailing their first Gulf Classic.



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Before long we had "ELEVATION" (from BOPTYs) the first of the TY60, coming through the Rakino channel and flying down the Tamaki Strait to finish in elapsed time of 9hr52.06min- a record time for this racecourse. They were followed by Floyd Boy and Signs of Life from Waikato.

Shortly after these came the first of the keelers – ZEN (from Pine Harbour) in 11hr10.54mins. They were followed by DIRTY HARRY (Pine Harbour), then the first of the Waikato boats, AUDREY.

Only two boats finished after midnight, being KITTIWAKE, who seemed to find all the places where there was no wind. The other boat being WINEDOWN, the boat with no motor who was 50 minutes late to the start line.

Overall a brilliant well managed race. Always helps to have the weather gods on your side and they were camped right alongside everyone all day!

It was a great feeling to up anchor before 00.30 hrs, collect the pin end buoy and motor back into Maraetai for a relatively settled night sleep.

Thanks to all involved being the committee led by Brett and his team, the committee boat led by Bart and his team, and of course all you competitors who made this years Gulf Classic the success it was.

Murray Pearce

RACEQs and VHF comms



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38th Gulf Classic

Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th March 2020

KEELER DIVISION - 80 NM					Start :	7/03/2020 10:00:00					
							Finish				
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	CLASS	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLA CE	CORRECT-ED TIME	PLA CE	
Sunbeam	3309	Townson 32	Lake Taupo	0.712	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 22:35:41	12:35:41	6	08:58:03	1	
Arrogant Frog	5894	Farr 1020	Pine Harbour CC	0.750	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 22:13:18	12:13:18	4	09:09:59	2	
Zen	10003	Titan 36	Pine Harbour CC	0.823	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 21:10:54	11:10:54	1	09:12:09	3	
Wright One	6657	Lotus 9.5	Thames YC	0.702	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 23:06:43	13:06:43	8	09:12:17	4	
Dirty Harry	8963	Dehler 38	Pine Harbour CC	0.815	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 21:29:37	11:29:37	2	09:22:02	5	
Audrey	9898	Hanse 370E	Waikato YS	0.790	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 21:52:21	11:52:21	3	09:22:45	6	
La Camargue	8979	Jeanneau 11.75	Pine Harbour CC	0.770	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 22:20:13	12:20:13	5	09:29:58	7	
Acushla	6590	Farr 1020	Waikato YS	0.742	7/03/2020 10:00:00	7/03/2020 22:50:35	12:50:35	7	09:31:46	8	
Winedown	6971	Humphries MG38	Pine Harbour CC	0.770	7/03/2020 10:00:00	8/03/2020 0:08:38	14:08:38	9	10:53:27	9	
					Start :	7/03/2020 10:05:00					
							Finish				
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	CLASS	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLA CE	CORRECT-ED TIME	PLA CE	
Elevation	T4047	Elliot 7	BOPTYS	0.975	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 19:57:06	09:52:06	1	09:37:18	1	
Sweet Surrender	T3279	Noelex 25	BOPTYS	0.845	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 21:59:28	11:54:28	4	10:03:43	2	
Endurance	T3637	Noelex 25	BOPTYS	0.845	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 22:06:00	12:01:00	5	10:09:15	3	
Signs of Life	T3885	Young 7.7	Waikato YS	0.880	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 21:40:37	11:35:37	3	10:12:09	4	
Floydy Boy	T4078	Ross 780	Waikato YS	0.933	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 21:02:16	10:57:16	2	10:13:14	5	
Entrée	T1010	Noelex 25	Waikato YS	0.845	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 22:25:33	12:15:33	6	10:21:32	6	
Kittiwake	T1057	Joker 670	Waikato YS	0.812	7/03/2020 10:05:00	8/03/2020 0:23:35	14:18:35	8	11:37:10	7	



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High Time	T3546	Noelex 25	Waikato YS	0.845	7/03/2020 10:05:00	7/03/2020 23:58:23	13:48:23	7	11:39:59	8
TRAILER YACHT DIVISION C - 40 NM					Start :	7/03/2020 10:10:00				
						Finish				
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	CLASS	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLA CE	CORRECT- ED TIME	PLA CE
Falkor	T820	Joker 820	Waikato YS	0.855	7/03/2020 10:10:00	7/03/2020 19:26:40	09:16:40	1	07:55:57	1
Aperitif	T3983	Joker 820	WYS	0.855	7/03/2020 10:10:00	7/03/2020 19:36:33	09:26:33	2	08:04:24	2
Sea Star	T2336	Sabre 20	WYS	0.700	7/03/2020 10:10:00	7/03/2020 22:01:54	11:51:54	4	08:18:20	3
Fulmar	T101	Farr 6000	Raglan YS	0.765	7/03/2020 10:10:00	7/03/2020 21:16:40	11:06:40	3	08:30:00	4
Freya	T1462	Merlin 6.1		0.703	7/03/2020 10:10:00	DNF				



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Northland 2020 on Passing Fancy

So after a week of light conditions and numerous wonderful anchorages here we are anchored off this northland gem..... the Cavalli islands. Waiiti Bay on Motukawanui Island. We will have a quiet day at anchor and tomorrow early, before the day heats up we will do the walk to the eastern end. In the meantime back to our journey. Kawau to Tutukaka is a long 12 hour day of 60odd nm. 5 of those completed under power with light winds and late in the day the regular northerly breeze kicked in, a welcome respite albeit, on the nose for the remaining hour to the harbour entrance. The only detracting part of staying here is boat wash from early morning as charter boats and others leave for the day and once clear of the marina increase their speed and hence wash effecting the anchorage. This was an issue where ever we anchored, boaties with no regard for the law!

The coastline north of Tutukaka is a mix of white sandy beaches & coves, high bold headlands interspersed with lovely lifestyle houses nestled away in the bush on their chosen piece of northland paradise some of them hardly recognizable from the sea. The only reason to stand well off the coast north of Matapouri Bay is the existence of Elizabeth Reef a nasty rocky area just off the Whananaki headland and the other hazard to watch out for is other craft heading south but a friendly wave and we carry on towards Rimariki Island and numerous other islets. Mimiwhangata Bay just round the corner is situated to the SE of Whangaruru Hbr. It is a very long sandy beach and backed by a DoC farm and always worth stopping here for a night and get some exercise along the beach. It is a very scenic anchorage and so few enjoying the location. As we returned along the beach we observed many varieties sea birds and wading birds making the beach their feeding ground and then suddenly another strange sound of the farmer/doc ranger galloping past on his horse, later to enjoy a swim for horse and rider. Whangaruru harbor would be a great place to spend a few days in a trailer yacht exploring the sheltered bays and estuaries.



Oyster catchers on Mimiwhangata Beach



Mimiwhangata Beach

Little wind the next day for our trip to Whangamumu Harbour, another good overnight stop and an opportunity for another hike up the track to the top of the bush clad ranges with good views of the harbor. It's a very sheltered anchorage here and other than a direct northerly which would send in a swell is good



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in most winds although we haven't yet sat out a good blow inside to date. We took the opportunity to pick up some water for general use on board from the stream at the old whaling station and we were surprised how low the water level was. Small water bottles are a must on board for these occasions and extremely clear water I have to say! We are always in need of an hours motoring for the fridge so a visit to the bays on the north side in the morning, Te Toroa Bay and Outu Bay both affording good anchoring and more sandy beaches tucked away in the bush clad coastline. By early afternoon a good NW was sweeping over the Cape Brett range as we made our way out to Piercy Island although on rounding we found the wind more easy going and we in the end had to motor for the last hour into Oke Bay, on the SE side of the Rawhiti peninsula. It's about 12 nautical miles from Cape Brett to Tapeka point to the north of Russell so the Bay Of Islands isn't a large area to cruise in but sandy beaches and numerous safe anchorages abound and probably the only issue we note and remember each and every time we come here, rocky reefs and rocky points are very numerous so keeping a chart handy and a look out for the isolated danger mark is the rule of thumb.

The weather was becoming somewhat predictable, early morning SW as per a normal anticyclone followed by fresh northerly sea breezes by afternoon as the land heated up. By early afternoon the following day we were heading further up the coast, heading NW in a building Northerly. I flattened the main and preparing for a long slog up the coast to the Cavalli islands over 20 miles away. Not a big sea but the wind was building. By 1700 we gave the battle away and opted to anchor in a cove just short of the Cavalli passage, although calm we were effected by a big easterly swell, if you get my drift. A good night here in shouting distance from Kauri Cliffs Lodge where the rich and famous stay and only Cape Brett light a distant 22nm away flashing every 15secs.

The clear warm weather continued next day and our next anchorage Waiiti Bay on the SW end of the main island of Motukawanui with numerous other yachts and large craft for company. History reveals that this island was extensively farmed many decades ago although today is largely covered in Kanuka, ferns and in the middle area other native trees struggling in the dry conditions. The walk across the island isn't a difficult one and completed in an hour and half and down on the beach we found some shade to sit and consume some water and our megre supplies and ponder the scenery We noticed about 5 boats gathering above the Rainbow Warrior site a mile away to the north presumably for a dive. It's a steep climb up the open grassy ridge to start the return leg but soon enough we are back in the bush and another 1.5 hrs return. After a welcome swim remaining a further night seemed a good option there's always a breeze to keep the boat cool but a late sundown due to low westerly hills.



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Easter end of Motukawanui island



Towards Bay of Islands

It's a run of about 10nm to the Whangaroa entrance under motor passing Kingfisher Lodge to port and a further turn into the eastern arm to make for the Coast Guard water buoy where we came across a local problem. The local water taxi owner decided today would be a good day to wash his boat, not once, not twice, just keep the hose running as we continued our ever closing circle of the location. Given the continuing drought we considered this activity a bit extravagant however hint eventually taken finally and the Houseboat and Taxi take their leave and we tie up, pick up the long 25mm hose and add some paper money in the honesty box. This wouldn't be easy in any wind or sea but we took on our required 120L plus extra bottles and in the settled weather anchoring anywhere that suits your outlook is the order of the day so headed up the Pekapeka Inlet to anchor near the Lane Cove Hut. We were approaching high water so took the opportunity to take the dinghy on an exploratory trip up the near by estuary of the Wharakau River.

The recent visit here a few years back we weathered the first of a number of tropical storms in the nearby bay that passed by during February, however this year anchoring to seek late afternoon shade was the priority. The area is surrounded by very high cliffs and volcanic peaks and I thought we had a good spot picked to have the sun sink behind but alas at about 2000hrs the sun passed the high knoll and slid on down the side for another 30minutes or so.

Those familiar with the area will know the Lane Cove hut lies in the bay and is the start of both the Wharakau Valley walk and the track up Dukes Nose always a good walk to take in the views. We chose the longer tramp up the valley to the saddle high above Totara North. Another very very hot day and completed in about 3-4 hours. Its thirsty work!! A swim and a cold ale awaits.

We found Whangaroa village somewhat changed since our last visit 2 years previous, the pub and café are both closed as is the general store. Although we did find a cool ale at the game fishing club and observed a 263kg Blue Marlin being hoisted on to the scales. It was some big fish!

Next day we hitched a ride on the fresh northerly breeze for the sail back to the Bay. Back to tourist boats, boat wash, helicopters overhead and more busy anchorages. Feb 6th is an important date in our countries



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history whatever your ethnic background and we anchored off Waitangi beach north of Paihia and other than observing numerous passing boats a flotilla of waka came past. Later we ventured ashore amongst the crowds to the cool of the Countdown supermarket, what a mad idea one might think but whatever the day it's very handy to the beach and inside the people numbers as well as temperatures were quite low. Outside the roads were packed, no parking, food stalls along the roadside, everyone in festive mood. We all should celebrate! Of note are the other cruising yachts we see in our travels around the gulf and Gt Barrier.



Whangamumu harbour



Oke bay Bay of Islands

Our second week was drawing out and we had made arrangements for some freezer work in Opuia and a visit from family so booked into the marina where evidence of a recent hull clean & insurance cover is required so I had come prepared with this information on a draft email and later headed out for dinner out at the Opuia Cruising Club where we watched Friday night racing amongst the moored boats just off the clubhouse. Some seriously big cruising boats on the work pier where we were moored and a busy hardstand sanding and painting, not a hot summer's day job.

More from Passing Fancy next month.

Nigel Lancaster



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