

Bilgewater

March 2023



Some of the 15 strong Trailer Yacht fleet, just after the start of the Hooks Bay Race





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*Our first and foremost objective is to encourage and support
safe family sailing – both cruising and racing*

Commodore's Comment

It was great to see another big turn out for the Hooks Bay race. Fine weather always produces a good sized fleet and we have been very lucky with the weather this summer. Hugh was race officer and he set a very small start line. On 'Ghost Train' we managed to sneak in at the windward end of the line (the ideal spot) and were right on the line at the start. We then needed to balance speed versus pointing to ensure we were able to clear the headland on one tack, it was then an easy gennaker run up the outside of Ponui.

This is where things got interesting for us. Turning into the Ruthe Passage and we were no longer able to run the gennaker. The winds were getting really light and shifting all over the place. We tried sailing without a kite, but the fleet was catching us so we had no choice. I lost count of how many times we gybed, but it was getting very frustrating. Then we sailed into a patch of no wind and the current was pulling us towards a reef! Luckily this is when the new wind arrived from the North meaning a reasonably straightforward sail to the finish. We then had a very enjoyable beach gathering, before setting sail back to the boat ramp.

At last month's Nog 'n Natter we were lucky enough to have Daniel Fong come and speak to us about sail trim. His presentation was excellent and I felt there was something in it for everyone. I knew we were in for a lot of information, so I set a goal of learning three new things. My takeaways were tips on trimming my forestay tension, self-tacking jib trim, and the need to put more focus on my cunningham.

This weekend we have the Gulf Classic. Murray has been putting in an amazing amount of work in preparation for this years event. As it is a fundraising event (for Mercury Bay Boating Club's post cyclone clubhouse restoration) we have a number of new sponsors so the prize pool and list of items for auction is particularly impressive this year. At the time of writing we are looking to have one of the biggest fleets in over a decade, this along with a very promising weather forecast and we should be in for an epic event.

The topic for our next Nog 'n Natter is on outboard maintenance. I know many of us have experience with an unreliable outboard so this event should help answer some of your questions regarding outboard maintenance.

After the Gulf Classic we all deserve a bit of a break. Four weeks after the Gulf Classic we have our annual Easter sail to the Coromandel. It is worth reminding everyone that the sail over takes place on Good Friday. While over there we run a fishing competition before heading around the corner to visit Mercury Bay. We will be posting an event notification on Facebook for the Mercury Bay cruise. If you intend to join in on this event be sure to click going, if you are unsure please click interested. This really helps us with our planning.

To finish off the season we will be running our night race and round two of our Round the Buoys series. As we start to think about next season, it is probably a good time to start thinking of ways that you can help the Squadron. Going into next season we have some vacancies on the committee that will need to be filled. If you would like to help, let one of the committee know and we will help with the nomination process before the AGM in June. *James*

Upcoming Events

Weekend of 11 – 12 March 2023

Gulf Classic Open Endurance Race

At the time of publication of this edition of Bilgewater, our flagship Gulf Classic Endurance Race is just days away. At this stage, with the latest two tropical cyclones having headed east, the weather forecast is looking good! All profits from the event will go to help the Mercury Bay Boating Club relocate their clubhouse that was 'wiped out' in Cyclone Gabrielle. This includes all the proceeds from an auction of sponsors' goods at the Friday night briefing. Please support these sponsors who are listed on page 21 below. The course diagrams can be found on page 19.

Tuesday 28 March 2023

March Nog 'n Natter at Hamilton Yacht Club 7:30pm

Outboard Motors!!!

We will be running an evening of instruction on outboard motors (blessed things that they are!). This will focus on things that some members find straightforward to do, but are completely in la la land for non-tech people like me. We will have one or two motors there that can be worked on and/or used for demonstrations. The session is likely to include such things as replacing pull cords, impellers, filters, spark plugs and so on. It will also be a chance to ask questions. The evening is being organised by Committee member Andrew Jones.

Friday 7 April 2023 (Good Friday)

Coromandel Sailing Event and Race – Easter Weekend

The trailer yachts are scheduled to start at 1000 hours from Kawakawa Bay, the keelers starting from Pine Harbour at 1030 hours. The finish line is between the Cow and Calf Islands at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour. Officers of the Day are trailer yachts – Alan Macdonald (phone 021-279 5222), keelers – to be advised. Further details are provided in the Notice of Race on page 20 below.

Saturday 8 April 2023

Coromandel – Breakfast on the Beach Followed by Our Annual Fishing Competition

The breakfast will be at the bay we have anchored in for the night following the race to Coromandel, while the fishing competition weigh-in will be at a beach destination to be nominated on the day. The coordinator for the fishing competition is Tracey-Lee Perry.

9 – 16 April 2023

Mercury Bay Cruise for Trailer Yachts and Keelers

This cruise will leave from Coromandel on Easter Sunday, 9 April 2023. The event coordinator is Rodger Bonnett phone 021-423 457. If you are planning to come please let Rodger know. And if you haven't done so already, get your work leave application in now!

Around the Fleet

Well it seems **summer** finally arrived towards the end of February. Of course now it's March and therefore Autumn, but with continuing fine weather it's been great to see a lot of Squadron boats out cruising.

Our most recent event, the Hooks Bay Race on 18 February was well attended and the race report can be found on page 9. Although our keeler fleet numbers have been down, it is pleasing to see that so far this season we have had 27 boats sail at least one of our five trailer yacht races.

Greg Reeve on Joker 820 '**Aperitif**' is worthy of special mention. Having taken a couple of months off work, he seems to have spent the majority of that time out cruising - at times with Julie and the girls, other times introducing friends to sailing, and often sailing solo. Well done Greg!

Next most frequent on the water would I think be **Alex and Jenny Ross** on their McGregor 26x '**Amethyst**'. Alex and Jenny are quite new to sailing and have been taking every opportunity they can to be out cruising, often for a week at a time, including 2 weeks out at Great Barrier Island. They are also some of the most persevering sailors I know, at least as far as our race events are concerned. They are always determined to finish each race, no matter when! They have always stuck with it even when the tide was taking them backwards as in the Hooks Bay Race. They didn't anchor to stop the backwards drift in that race because at that time they didn't know anchoring was legal. I for one am impressed with their stickability. They have even been out learning how to use their gennaker as in the photo below.



How's this look? First time with the gennaker up on 'Amethyst'

Another of our new sailors that has impressed me with his keen attitude is **Andrew King** on Noelex 25 '**Portfolio**'. Andrew has missed a few events this season but only because he was overseas or sailing in the Noelex 25 Nationals at Rotoiti. He also sailed singlehanded on our Great Barrier trip which is no mean feat for a new sailor.

Determined to get out sailing for a weekend in the Gulf with Anne before his next overseas trip, Andrew phoned me recently to get advice on launching in the dark at Kawakawa Bay on a Friday night; something they would be doing as they had to attend an event in Hamilton earlier in the evening. Not only that, but they had to tow the boat up from Hamilton and rig her. I contacted Andrew the next day to see how it went and all was good. They had successfully launched and anchored up at Ammunition Bay at 3am. Now I thought I was keen, but that even surpasses me!

We had a great turnout at the **March Nog 'n Natter** with more than 50 people turning up to hear Yachting NZ's Kelly Mulcahy and Daniel Fong give us a masterclass on Sail Trimming. Kelly is our YNZ Regional Development Manager and has a background sailing keel boats, while Daniel is a professional keelboat sailor with an impressive record and is also a sail designer. The evening was very informative and included the opportunity for questions and answers, with a broad range of questions coming from our members. I certainly came away with increased knowledge on a variety of matters that I am looking forward to putting into practice out on the water. Hopefully I now have the secret weapon.



Another of our regular cruisers. Christine Lancaster recently helming Davidson 35 '*Passing Fancy*'



*Some of our keeler contingent at happy hour on the Woolerton's Hanse 415 'Ocean Lure'.
The O'Brien's Hanse 370e 'Audrey' in the background.*

Welcome to New Members

We warmly welcome the following new members this month.

Greg Morgan who hails from Gordonton is the owner of Young 6 trailer yacht 'Young Gem'. Greg and his crew are very experienced sailors/racers. Having sailed with us recently, and no doubt being encouraged by achieving a couple of wins, Greg has now joined the Squadron.

Karl and Mike McGaughran are also new members. Karl lives at Huntly and has recently purchased Noalex 25 'Orca'. Much as he has said they have only sailed 'Orca' a few times, it was readily apparent during the Hooks Bay race that this team are skilled sailors. On further investigation, it turns out that Karl has been sailing ever since he could walk! The Hooks Bay race report on page 9 has several photos of Orca.

Editor's Note: Go the Noalex 25 fleet – we now have 14 WYC Noalex 25s and another one coming!

Life Afloat – February/March

Nola says, “This month’s offering completes the story of our first year aboard Moody 419 ‘Masterplan’.”

There’s a First Time for Everything

This month it was sitting out a cyclone in a mooring field.

With the developing weather system still a week away and no marina berth available, it was tempting to move in with school friends in Kerikeri and leave ‘Masterplan’ on her mooring in the Waikare inlet near Opua while cyclone Gabrielle raged. Instead we opted to stock up and stay on board so that we could deal with any problems as they arose.

We prepared the boat as best we could; stripping, stowing and securing anything that might contribute to windage. On Friday 10th February we called in at Russell to get some fresh supplies before picking up our mooring and hunkering down. As forecast, the weather deteriorated over the next 36 hours and the constant movement and noise of the wind, rain and waves was uncomfortable but anticipated and bearable.

What we weren’t expecting, however, was the dreadful sound of a collision that had us up on deck immediately! To our horror the dark hull of an 18 metre steel ketch, which had broken free of her mooring further up the inlet, was making her way along our starboard side until the 50kg anchor on her bow snagged a spare halyard that we had attached to the toe rail. Thankfully, the other boat’s anchor chain began paying out as that allowed her to move away and also gave us time to grab a knife and cut the halyard, freeing her anchor to drop into the water beside us.



The line Dean and Nola cut in the midst of the cyclone to free ‘Masterplan’ from the 18 metre steel ketch that had crashed into them, so they wouldn’t be dragged through all the moorings

With the risk of being dragged down the mooring field averted, we were relieved not only that the anchor found a hold but also that the chain was well fixed to the ketch and stopped her about 50 metres behind us and only a few metres from the next boat.

Dean immediately made a *sécurité* call on the VHF and contacted the Harbour Master. As they were unable to come out in those conditions, we did 3 hour watches that night (Sunday 12th) but even a change in wind direction caused no further issues. The ketch's owner arrived the next morning, having driven all night, to retrieve his errant vessel. While still living on board we have 'pressed pause' on the sailing and remain in Opuā while we make sure that our boat is safe and sound. People often say to us "Your Moody will look after you". She certainly did.

Broken, Lost and Worn Out

Pulpit, lifelines and nav lights on the bow are being replaced.

An annoying fuel supply issue with the dinghy outboard motor has been resolved by Dean thoroughly cleaning the carburettor.

The water and wind speed indicators are reading much more truthfully after some attention.

Your Questions Answered

Question: What system are you using for internet connection?

We use data on cell phone sims with an aerial extender on the mast. We have stayed with 2 Degrees even though their coverage in the Bay of Islands isn't nearly as good as it is on Great Barrier! The boat is set up for Iridium Go but we haven't activated it yet.

Upgrades Under Consideration

- A holding tank for the forward head.
- An anchor chain washing system.
- A landing platform.

Quotable Quote

"When you have exhausted all possibilities, remember this; you haven't".

Thomas Edison



Farewell, Nola Herrmann ☺

Hooks Bay Trailer Yacht Race Report – 18 February 2023

Given all the storms we've had this summer, we have been fortunate to not have any races postponed this season (so far). In fact all this season's races have been sailed in light conditions and have predominantly been sailed as reaches.

15 trailer yachts contested Race 5 of the series, the Hooks Bay race, which was sailed on 18 February in very light conditions. There would have been one more trailer yacht, Monarch 17 'Hullabaloo' sailed by Zarak Reid and partner Jenna, but this being their first event they mistakenly towed the boat to Pine Harbour, before realising they should have been at Kawakawa Bay! A quick U-turn and they were launching at Kawakawa Bay just as the race was starting. However, they managed to catch up under motor so they could at least sail with some of the fleet and they joined in the beach gathering later in the day.

The Friday night before the race was a lovely starry evening that saw 12 of our yachts anchored at Ammunition Bay.



Some of the fleet at Ammunition Bay on race day morning – not much wind but it's sunny!

With light wind forecast for the entire day, the race course was shortened to finish at Pakatoa Wharf rather than Hooks Bay.

Hugh Beecroft in Elliott 7.4 'E Type 2' was the start boat. He set a very short line between a moored launch and a mooring buoy so that in his words "he could then sit back and watch all our boats crashing into each other". Of course there is an equal chance of someone hitting the start boat, so that's not necessarily an ideal plan.

Seriously though, a short line is a good way for us to test and hone our starting skills. And as our Commodore said, there probably wasn't enough room for all the boats to fit along the start line at once. Another challenge in the light conditions was an outgoing tide which meant if you were close to the line and ran out of what little wind there was, you risked being carried prematurely across the line, with potentially extreme difficulty to then get back behind the line while keeping clear of the oncoming fleet.

Of course, there was no 'argy-bargy' or even a single word yelled during the start, as we are a very well-mannered and friendly fleet. Well friendly at least!

James Hepburn on Ross 780 'Ghost Train' was the first to cross the line as the hooter went followed closely by Tim Hayward on Noelex 25 'Charley'. James was actually so close to the line that he radioed the start boat to confirm that he wasn't actually over the line, and indeed all was well. From there it was a tight reach from Kawakawa Bay to the southeastern headland of Ponui Island during which time the fleet gradually sorted itself out and spread out.

As we sailed up the east side of Ponui Island we were able to bear away enough to enable spinnakers to be hoisted during what turned out to be the windiest leg – perhaps 6 - 8 knots of breeze. I was sailing single-handed again and as I went to put the spinnaker pole out before hoisting the spinnaker, I had a new problem. The parrot beak at one end of the pole had seized and wouldn't budge. I should have checked it earlier on. So there was a made dash to find some pliers to prize it open – which worked. Perhaps that explains why I was so far behind 'Orca' in the photo below :)



Sailing up the east coast of Ponui Island with spinnakers flying.

Photo kindly submitted by Rodger Bonnett to prove that firstly Noelex 25 'Orca' had overtaken Noelex 25 'Charley', and more importantly that the photo was taken from Joker 820 'Fantasia' and proves that 'Fantasia' had also passed 'Charley'! (but not for long Rodger!)

By this stage Alan Macdonald's Young 77 'Signs of Life', flying a gennaker from a prod, had quickly moved through the fleet to be well ahead of the rest of us and to be sitting comfortably in second place behind 'Ghost Train'.

I was aware that, due to the light wind and usual wind shadow, the Ruthe Passage was going to be difficult to get through, but today would be exceedingly difficult as we would also be fighting an outgoing tide. I planned to sneak up one side in the least tide possible and then try to “quickly” cross the current to the other side, though there would be less wind over there. A dilemma to tax the mind for the next while.

Meanwhile ‘Signs of Life’ closing in on the Ruthe Passage and already further out in the tide was now facing a problem with her gennaker (asymmetrical spinnaker), endeavouring to sail directly downwind. They had in fact very kindly come to a stop which meant that both ‘Orca’ and ‘Charley’ were able to catch up, so the three of us entered the Ruthe Passage at almost the same time.



Still some breeze as Noelex 25 ‘Orca’ enters the Ruthe Passage

Important note: photo taken from ‘Charley’. Hint – ‘Charley’ is now back ahead of ‘Orca’

Not long after this it all turned to custard, wind-wise. The three of us, ‘Signs of Life’, ‘Orca’ and ‘Charley’ all lost our wind completely, with spinnakers flopping about on the foredeck. I was just pleased to not be going backwards in the tide (as far as I could tell - with my GPS reading 0.00 knots). Some boats later on said they were going backwards, which is time to put the anchor out.

The three of us were now somewhat perturbed to see Greg Morgan’s Young 6 ‘Young Gem’ and Chris and Ness Martin’s Noelex 25 ‘Suzie’, still with breeze in their sails, rapidly closing right up to us. That was until they finally ran into a wind hole, and with the tide both boats somehow spun around and ended up pointing the wrong way. Phew!! There is some justice in sailing after all!



Ruthe Passage near Rotorua Island. The breeze has gone and the three of us are side by side. Photo taken from 'Charley'. The top of 'Signs of Life's' sail can be seen just behind 'Orca'. At this stage 'Young Gem' and 'Suzie' were closing in fast, still in the breeze

Not long after this photo was taken, a jetski raced through between 'Orca' and me, doing at least 25 knots. What about the 5 knot rule when you are within 50 metres of another vessel?! I yelled out "five knots" (no doubt unheard) and put my hand up with five fingers spread to indicate five knots. The friendly jetski driver then gave me a high-five thinking I had given him a high-five. God help us out there!

'Young Gem' then passed the three of us no more than 20 metres away. Is there no justice in sailing?!

I thought I spotted some ripples on the water and lowered my spinnaker expecting a change of wind direction. It went from nothing to a couple of knots of headwind and somehow I managed to leave 'Young Gem', 'Orca' and 'Signs of Life' behind to finish second across the line behind 'Ghost Train' and third on corrected time. There is some justice in sailing after all!

Congratulations to 'Young Gem' taking first on both handicap and championship corrected time, and to 'Orca' sailing with us for the first time being third to finish, second on handicap and fourth on championship. The beach gathering and overnight anchorage were at the little bay just to the north of Shark Bay, where several boats were already anchored having withdrawn from the race earlier. We were joined by two of our keelers who had raced from Pine Harbour. A biased but possibly reliable source said that Bryan and June O'Brien's Hanse 370e 'Audrey' had smoked Jim Pasco's Farr 1020 'Audrey' to take that win! Full results are below.

Bilgewater Ed.

HOOKS BAY REGATTA TY HANDICAP RESULTS (Halsail handicap system)

Place	Boat Name	Design	Helm	Elapsed Time	Handicap	Handicap Time	Next Handicap
1	Young Gem	Young 6	G Morgan	3:48:20	0.826	3:08:36	0.860
2	Orca	Noelex 25	K McGaughran	3:45:45	0.845	3:10:46	0.876
3	Fantasia	Joker 820	R Bonnett	4:03:40	0.787	3:11:46	0.815
4	Ghost Train	Ross 780	J Hepburn	3:17:51	1.044	3:26:33	1.056
5	Charley	Noelex 25	T Hayward	3:41:34	0.962	3:33:09	0.963
6	Aperitif	Joker 820	G Reeve	4:21:02	0.825	3:35:21	0.824
7	Signs of Life	Young 77	A Macdonald	3:56:01	0.925	3:38:19	0.920
8	E Type 2	Elliott 7.4	H Beecroft	3:48:57	0.964	3:40:42	0.955
9	Suzie	Noelex 25	C Martin	3:59:55	0.950	3:47:55	0.933
10	Amethyst	MacGreg or 26X	A Ross	8:30:35	0.720	6:07:37	0.673
11=	Skywalker	Ross 780	P Klinkhamer	DNF	0.841	DNF	0.839
11=	Indulgence	Noelex 25	B Gordon	DNF	0.845	DNF	0.843
11=	Falkor	Joker 820	W Johnstone	DNF	0.796	DNF	0.794
11=	Farr Farr Away	Farr 6000	A Jones	DNF	0.717	DNF	0.716
11=	High Time	Noelex 25	N McCarter	DNF	0.824	DNF	0.822

HOOKS BAY REGATTA TY OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

(based on NZTYA boat design rating – less an allowance if towing a dinghy)

Place	Boat Name	Design	Helm	Towing Dinghy	Elapsed Time	Design Rate	Corrected Time
1	Young Gem	Young 6	G Morgan	No	3:48:20	0.792	3:00:50
2	Ghost Train	Ross 780	J Hepburn	No	3:17:51	0.933	3:04:36
3	Charley	Noelex 25	T Hayward	No	3:41:34	0.845	3:07:13
4	Orca	Noelex 25	K McGaughran	No	3:45:45	0.845	3:10:46
5	E Type 2	Elliott 7.4	H Beecroft	No	3:48:57	0.885	3:22:37
6	Suzie	Noelex 25	C Martin	No	3:59:55	0.845	3:22:44
7	Fantasia	Joker 820	R Bonnett	No	4:03:40	0.850	3:27:07
8	Signs of Life	Young 77	A Macdonald	No	3:56:01	0.880	3:27:42
9	Aperitif	Joker 820	G Reeve	Yes	4:21:02	0.816	3:33:00
10	Amethyst	MacGregor 26X	A Ross	No	8:30:35	0.820	6:58:41
11=	Skywalker	Ross 780	P Klinkhamer	Yes	DNF	0.896	DNF
11=	Indulgence	Noelex 25	B Gordon	Yes	DNF	0.811	DNF

11=	Falkor	Joker 820	W Johnstone	Yes	DNF	0.816	DNF
11=	Farr Farr Away	Farr 6000	A Jones	No	DNF	0.745	DNF
11=	High Time	Noelex 25	N McCarter	Yes	DNF	0.811	DNF



Sparkling sea at the beach gathering

HOOKS BAY REGATTA KEELER HANDICAP RESULTS (Halsail handicap system)

Place	Boat Name	Design	Helm	Elapsed Time	Handicap	Handicap Time	Next Handicap
1	Audrey	Hanse 370e	B O'Brien	6:16:30	0.763	4:47:16	0.763
2	Acushla	Farr 1020	J Pasco	6:40:00	0.781	5:12:24	0.781

HOOKS BAY REGATTA KEELER OPEN CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS (PHRF)

Place	Boat Name	Design	Helm	Elapsed Time	Design Rate	Corrected Time
1	Audrey	Hanse 370e	B O'Brien	6:16:30	0.780	4:53:40
2	Acushla	Farr 1020	J Pasco	6:40:00	0.742	4:56:48

THINKING OF BUYING A KEELER – A CAUTIONARY TALE

Conveyed to me by one of our members.

Here's a couple of things to be aware of if you are buying a keeler and dealing with owners, brokers and yacht surveyors. Not everyone is straight up – I guess that's no revelation.

The first case that was brought to my attention recently involved someone buying a keeler (a private sale). It was being sold for around \$200,000, so by all above-water appearances a pretty good boat. The last part of the process, was a haulout so a hull survey could be undertaken. This was prior to the boat being antifouled by the owner/vendor. A hull survey when an antifoul is due is no doubt the best time for a thorough inspection. The boat was duly hauled out and the hull surveyed by a qualified marine surveyor. Two significant issues were discovered.

One was the presence of reasonably small but widespread osmosis bubbles/blisters across the fibreglass hull. They had apparently only become evident at this haulout, despite the boat being nearly 20 years old. Osmosis and how to fix it is another whole topic, however to have it completely repaired so a repair warranty can be given is an extensive and very expensive undertaking. If it is not comprehensively repaired, by all accounts blisters will continue to appear.

The second issue that was discovered was horizontal fracturing across both sides of the keel at about two-thirds of its depth. The surveyor considered this was a major flaw and that, based on his yet to be written report, the boat would not be insurable until this was repaired. He called in an experienced boatbuilder for a second opinion and to determine repair options. When the boatbuilder examined the keel he said the only option was for it to come off for major repairs.

Based on these two items, the purchaser pulled out. A week later the owner said another "surveyor" had looked at the keel and said the fractures were only cosmetic, so based on this he had the cracks filled and it was painted over. At the same time the osmosis blisters were filled and the boat antifouled. That boat was then listed with a broker at the original price and advertised as "Antifouled March 2023, ready for the next owner". Someone will now buy that boat.

When he found out what had happened, the response from the original surveyor was this was fraudulent. Another broker who had seen the boat and the work done on it (as it was near his marina office) said he would have refused to list it for sale. The thing is that if you buy a boat that is freshly antifouled, how do you know what is, or was underneath the new antifoul!

The second example involves another boat being sold by a broker. A survey was being undertaken for the purchaser who said the invoice had to go to the broker. The broker would then invoice the bill partly to the vendor and partly to the purchaser. On digging a little deeper, the surveyor discovered that his invoice of around \$2,500 was going to be charged out at \$3,500 each to the vendor and purchaser, so a total of \$7,000 going to the broker.

So what are the lessons from these two examples. Put simply, choose your surveyor carefully and have your eyes open to opportunists in an industry that is largely unregulated. It is my understanding that anyone can call themselves a boat surveyor or can be a broker. There are very good qualified surveyors and very good brokers, but they aren't the only ones out there.

Where is This?

Two very different “where is this” photos for you to test yourself on.



What bay are these boats anchored in?

*Clues – note the location of the sun, it was the weekend of the Motuihe Regatta, and the two boats are ‘Charley’ and ‘Charis’. Photo taken by Alex Ross on ‘Amethyst’. **Answer on page 18***



What mountain/peak is this?

*Clue – you can just see a hut roof on the far right near the ridgeline. **Answer on page 18***

Reflecting on the 1985 Gulf Classic 100 Mile Race

With the 2023 Gulf Classic Race this coming weekend, Nigel Lancaster has provided these reflections on the 1985 event.

In mid-February 1985 I entered 'Sasha' our Coronet 20 for the third instalment of the Waikato TY Squadron's "Steinlager 100 Mile Gulf Classic" with my crew of Barrie Church and Peter Langley. The name sounded impressive, the sponsor's products are great and I can assure other crews it is a great race for Trailer Yachts. Plagued by predominantly light winds it was to be a frustrating event.

But firstly to set the scene, a look at the course. Start off Kawakawa Bay at 1200 hours Saturday, to the Cow Island Coromandel, Thumb Point, Rakino Passage, around Billy Goat Point to Rangitoto Channel, East past Browns Island to the Waiheke Channel, to Pakatoa Island, to the Sandspit Passage, back up the Waiheke Channel, again rounding Pakatoa Island and then south to finish off Kawakawa Bay. It can take from 20 - 30 hours and if you're lucky you can grab an hour or so kip after dark.

This year's start caught 90% of the fleet with kites up and a sudden wind swing from SW to NE. So began the slow slog to the Cow, with winds all around the compass. By about 1700 hours a good Sou'westerly kicked in and we had a grand run to round the Cow (at Coromandel) by 1800 hours in the company of Tasman 20 'T Bear' and two Aquarius', with the fleet spread across the Firth.

The wind continued to freshen for the tight reach across to Waiheke Island and we were soon down to our no 2 headsail, with the Tasman 20 on our tail and the two Aquarius' gaining on us. Somewhere coming across we broke out a cold can of beer and cold chicken, tomatoes and a cold spud for tea and prepared ourselves for a long haul to Rangitoto Light. Nav lights on soon after rounding Thumb Point and a constant check with torches on sails and woollies. It's obviously important to keep the boats performance up and with fairly constant wind it wasn't too bad. A wind indicator with reflectors was a great help.

Initial indications were that we wouldn't lay the Rakino Channel. In fact our course put us in the vicinity of D'Urville Rock, and the Maria Island light red sector confirmed this. Well on we pounded into the darkness, eyes looking forward, our hopes hanging on the silhouette against the lights of Auckland.....madness. But it did work and a tall pinnacle of rock passed to weather 30 metres away as we continued along on port tack. Only 10 minutes earlier we had heard over our CB radio that a competitor had hit Awash Rock south of Rakino Island and had withdrawn. Rakino Island loomed ahead an hour or so later and we passed through close to South Island.

It was now 2300 hours and we had a long way to go. We had averaged just over 4 knots since rounding Cow Island. We still had plenty of company as we all converged on Billy Goat Point but, curses, unfortunately someone had turned the wind off and we now had to battle the ebb tide coming from Rangitoto Channel in light winds.

A big tot of rum at midnight picked us up somewhat and we remorsefully tacked on with that big light blinking at us. By 0600 hours the tail enders, that's where we are, were leaving the Channel

area and heading for Browns Island light. As luck would have it the wind swings back easterly again which we are now having to contend with heading along the Tamaki Strait. By 1000 hours the larger boats are on the outside of Ponui Island and down the back we are drifting along in fairly light conditions.

Although, with a good number of boats around us, including some larger ones that should have been well ahead of us, we were going to be in for a good finish taking into account the trailer yacht Time Correction Factor (i.e. NZTYA rating). However, looking at the logistics of time on distance and a deadline of 1800 hours we did what many around us were doing and we pulled the pin and joined the growing list of DNF's. That's yacht racing! The irony is that we allowed for the event to be held with a full moon in mind and that means a high tide early evening, so many of us got slammed by the ebb tide in the Rangitoto Channel.

In closing, a reflection from the previous year when we also had light conditions and persevered to beat across Kawakawa Bay into a late SW breeze and finished after 29 hours and 55 minutes second place on corrected time to Coronet 20 'Sasha'.

A 21st century look back. 'Sasha' and company had sailed probably 60 odd miles (in the 1985 race) and approximately another 40 miles remained to be sailed in 8 hours.... that required an average speed of 5 knots. I would average 5 knots in Joker 820 'Hydrous' but not in a 20 foot trailer yacht in light conditions. Also, we had no navigation aids; only paper charts, a torch and common sense.

Nigel Lancaster

Answers to "Where is This?"

- The first photo is Omaru Bay, Waiheke Island, otherwise called Little Muddy Bay. You can see the Ruthe Passage in the background.
- The second photo is Mount Hobson (Hirakimata), the highest peak on Great Barrier Island that has an elevation of 627m. The hut on the right is the Mount Heale Hut.

A REMINDER: Recording Your Race Finish Time

For most of our passage races, each boat now takes its own finish time when passing through the nominated finish line. This has proven to be easier than having the first boat try to set up a finish line before any other boats arrive, and then having to stay on station to record all other boat's times.

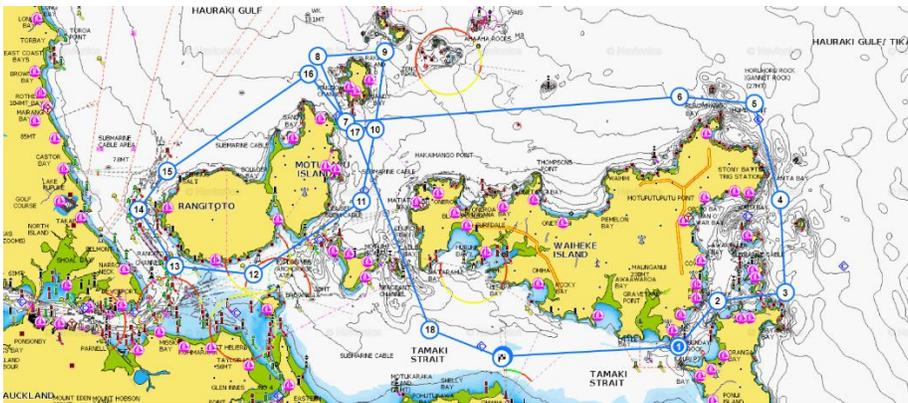
A reminder that the committee recently decided that the best way to convey your time will now be **by text (SMS) to the nominated Event Coordinator** whose phone number will be on the Notice of Race and of course in the handbook.

If your phone battery goes dead or you lose it overboard, then VHF will be the backup method. Having all results texted makes processing simpler and quicker for the Coordinator and also has the benefit of providing a written record.

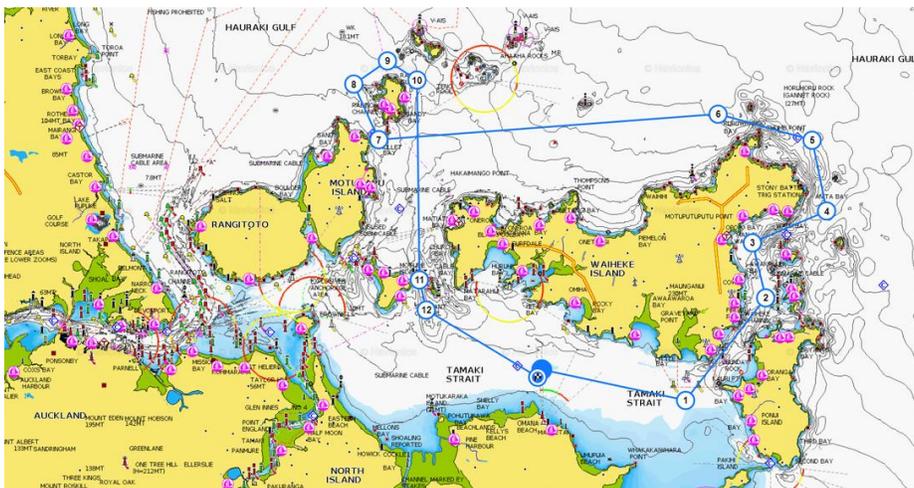
2023 Gulf Classic Endurance Race Courses



The 80 Mile Course



The 60 Mile Course



The 40 Mile Course

NOTICE OF RACE

COROMANDEL REGATTA – Keeler and Trailer Yacht Divisions

DATE: Friday 7 April 2023 (Good Friday).

START TIME: 1000 hours for trailer yachts, 1030 hours for keelers.

RACING INSTRUCTIONS: shall be in accordance with the “standard instructions for non-regatta races” except for those that are altered by these sailing instructions.

ENTRIES: To the Event Coordinator via VHF Channel 77 by 0930 hours for trailer yachts and 1000 hours for keelers, advising name of yacht and number of crew on board.

DIVISIONS: The race will consist of one trailer yacht division and one keeler division.

RACE BRIEFING: 0935 hours for trailer yachts and 1005 hours for keelers, by VHF radio channel 77 where the Event Coordinator will advise of any changes to the course or racing instructions.

COURSE: **Trailer Yachts** – From the start line at Kawakawa Bay - crossing the Firth of Thames – to the finish line at Coromandel Harbour.

Keelers – From the start line at Pine Harbour to and through the Waiheke Channel and Ruthe Passage keeping Ponui Island to STARBOARD – to the finish line at Coromandel Harbour.

Refer to **course 7** in the handbook.

START LINE: **Trailer Yachts** - Between the start boat at Kawakawa Bay and a position (i.e. moored boat or other marker) to be advised by the Event Coordinator.

Keelers - Will be off Pine Harbour, between the nominated start boat and the Dennis Rock cardinal mark to the northwest of Motukaraka Island.

FINISH LINE: **Trailer Yachts and Keelers** – The finish line will be between the Cow and Calf Islands at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour.

Skippers should record their own finish times in GPS hrs/min/sec, to be advised to the Event Coordinator by Text (SMS), or VHF if your phone battery is dead.

DINGHIES: Allowance will be made for towing dinghies (trailer yacht open championship only.)

EVENT COORDINATORS: Trailer Yachts – Alan Macdonald (phone 021-279 5222). Keelers – To be advised.

A beach gathering location at Coromandel will be advised at the race briefing. Yachts wanting to participate in the gathering, but not the race, are most welcome. There will also be the fishing competition on Saturday and the Mercury Bay cruise departing from Coromandel on the Sunday. Rodger Bonnett is the coordinator for the Mercury Bay cruise. Please let him know if you are intending to take part (phone 021-423 457).

Our Gulf Classic Sponsors



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