

Bilgewater

March 2021





Bilgewater March 2021



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Bilgewater March 2021



Commodore's Report

Welcome to this special Gulf Classic edition of the Bilgewater.

I write this comment after returning from a successful Tarahiki Island race. It was great to see a sizable fleet of Trailer Yachts. With a favourable looking forecast, a good portion of our members decided to get out for a sail. 13 of them joined our race with a couple more joining the club in the evening and a few more just out for a sail on the Hauraki. I got back to the ramp a bit earlier than everyone else and was impressed with the lack of yachts in the compound. Unfortunately, the race was run in very inconsistent wind direction and strength. While this was, at times, frustrating, it was still a good opportunity for us to practice our sail trimming and patience.

I was especially impressed with the way our fleet sailed. Sails were well trimmed and the boats were going very well despite the lack of wind.

A full race report will be included in the next edition of the Bilgewater.

Thanks to Penny for this great shot of the TY start



Of course the other sailing news from our club was the running of our annual Gulf Classic. This year saw an increase in numbers from last year and it was great to see so many boats with WYS written next to their entry.

This event was the first time my new boat (Ross 780 'Ghost Train') had touched sea water in close to 30 years. We had a bit of a shaky start (once we caught up with the start boat) and found ourselves mid pack as we approached the Waiheke channel. As we entered the channel we were hit by a squall the Ross started to show what it was capable of. We found ourselves in a close contest with Signs of Life, but they



Bilgewater March 2021



were over canvased for the conditions and were starting to struggle. Finally they decided to switch their genoa for a smaller jib and we were able to get around them. A wind shift to the south as we exited the Ruthe Passage and we were able to get our spinnaker up and power away and by the time we reached Hooks bay we had pulled out a decent lead. We knew, however, that the rest of the fleet had a handicap advantage over us so we needed to keep pushing to try and build our lead.

The wind now shifted to an easterly, making the leg from Hooks bay to Rakino dead down wind. We struggled with this and were not able to get the boat working correctly which meant the lead wasn't growing as much as it needed to. As we approached Rakino we heard the message to shorten the course. Passing Awash Rock the wind shifted to the North and we found ourselves close hauled around the back of the island. Then it was a light wind run down to the Motuihe channel before a tight reach to the finish.

The race was now finished and we were happy to be the first TY60 boat home.

Coming through the breakwater our motor cut out!!! So it was up with the jib to sail to the pontoon (need to do more motor maintenance). Luckily the crew from Aqua flyte were already there and were able to catch us!



Now we needed to wait for the other results to see how we placed. Unfortunately for us, we hadn't pulled out enough of a lead over the fleet and had to settle for 4th place. Still a very respectable position in a strong fleet of boats.

After the race we settled down in the club rooms to enjoy dinner and stories. Half way through our meal someone looked at the news and it became apparent that Auckland was going back into lockdown. So it was back to the boat to pack up and get home. Prizegiving was postponed and the weekend was over. I look forward to seeing many of you this Tuesday for our delayed prizegiving.

Congratulations to the crew of Sweet Surrender for their victory in TY60 and for Waikato boat Signs of Life for a very close 2nd.

James



Bilgewater March 2021



Upcoming Events

Sailing Events

Coromandel Race - Friday 2nd April 2021 (Easter)

Fishing contest - Saturday 3rd April 2021

Mercury Bay cruise - Sunday 4th April 2021

Trailer Yacht night race - Friday 30th April 2021

Saltwater Series - Saturday 1st May 2021




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Nog n Nater

Nog-n-natter - Gulf Classic Prize Giving - Tuesday 23rd March 7:30pm



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Bilgewater March 2021



Gulf Classic 2021

Well, another great event for the squadron on the weekend of 27th February. With 23 yachts split across the 3 divisions, a fair weather outlook, and a bit of concern in the organising committee, if our political leaders were going to leave Auckland Covid lockdown free, the regatta proceeded as planned.



Friday night briefing in the Maraetai sports bar went off well, and many thanks to RO Bart for his input. Briefing is always a great chance to catch up with sailors from other clubs and this was done with much enthusiasm.

Saturday racing got underway from 1000 hrs, albeit across a very biased start line (with many thanks to Bart Rolly and Roy!). Keelers away first followed by TY60 then TY40, in a

steady 10 knot easterly.

For Keelers, a good tacking duel out the Waiheke channel, before a mainly off the wind run all the way up to Whangaparoa Navy buoy. A few dead spots slowed the quicker boats down, allowing the fleet to close up into an almost match race. The reach back down to Rakino was a blast, and then the shorten course message came to round Motuihe, tack back up to Rakino, round to STB, then the run down through Sergeants channel to the finish line at Maraetai.





Bilgewater March 2021



Ding-a-ling-ding-a-ling went the mobile phone. TSUNAMI warning??? NO – RANGITOTO is erupting??? -NO – COVID 19 loose in Auckland??? YES - Lockdown on from 0600 next morning.

With that everyone headed back to marinas and home before the traffic snarl-ups, the next morning – except for AFTERGUARD who celebrated their great race, then spent 2 hours clearing the Mercer roadblock the following morning!!



Unfortunately, we were unable to hold prizegiving at Maraetai on Sunday.....SO

GULF CLASSIC PRIZEGIVING

Will be held at our next Nog N Natter on Tuesday 23rd March at the Hamilton Yacht Club from 7.30pm.

An invite has gone out to all skippers and crew to join us to celebrate this great Gulf Classic sailing event.
We might even have a few celebratory drinks to acknowledge Pete Burling and his AC team.

See you all there!

Murray

On behalf of the GC committee.



Bilgewater March 2021



Aparatife and the Gulf Classic

The race started off ok except the start boat seemed to be motoring away from us and missing the current running on the start line which saw us behind the pack. We held our own until Passage rock when an isolated squall came through forcing us to bear off and put a reef in. 10 minutes later it had passed and with the field having pretty much disappeared we shook the reef out and entered the Waiheke channel. The wind was light but we had a good run up and through the Ruthe passage.

With the wind from behind it was time to break out the kite. Up ahead we could see the field so all was not lost. Kite up line set now we are starting to move.

Wind dies.

We sit.

The GPS tells us we are making 1.2 knots – It lies!.

We slowly sail/drift up past Rotoroa.

Slowly we surveyed the coastline of Pakatoa until we reached the entrance to the Waiheke Channel where nothing changed.

Onward at a ripping 0.8 knots we stormed, up to Garden bay at the east end of Waiheke where we made the startling discovery that rather than heading north we were actually being carried back south by the current. Discussion was held about maybe throwing the anchor out after hearing at the Nog n Nater that this was legal. But a check of the depth sounder convinced us that we would sooner go backwards than pull the anchor up later.

We then heard the call that the race had been shortened - great our estimated time of finish has now dropped from late evening Sunday to mid-afternoon Sunday.

Scotty decided that it was his watch below and he would make up for the sleep he didn't get the night before due to Greg hogging the earplugs so he wouldn't hear himself snore.

Relief from the hot sun came as somehow without wind a torrential downpour appeared soaking us and transforming the spinnaker from a limp flag to a wet limp flag.





Bilgewater March 2021



But all good things must end and 4 hours after exiting the Ruthe Passage a northerly change came with some wind and it was time to douse the spinnaker and break out the jib.

After several minutes it became apparent that the wind had swung back south so we broke out the kite again and set off for Awash Rock only for it to swing back north, oh well at least the spinnaker was now dry.

From this point on things went ok, though from the radio calls it seemed everyone else had rounded Rakino before we made Awash rock. Up between Motutapu and Rakino Greg disappeared below, then reappeared with a fully cooked meal of meat and 2 veg. I immediately signed up to next year's crew.

Rounding Rakino we headed towards Motuihi and the turn to the finish with the sun setting. As with last year on High Time the wind died as night fell and we were soon back to 2 - 3 knots. We spotted the lights of the finish line but it seemed to take ages to get there. About now we got a call to say Auckland was going back into lockdown, Not much we could do about it so we carried on. But we were in good company, a couple of the keelers came up to pass us and finish just ahead of us.

Across the line and a hard turn to port towards Rocky bay and a good sleep,

One last incident saw us having to dodge a larger keeler motoring through from our port, Shining a torch on them and on our sails elicited no response and I chicken out and altered course to pass behind them. No sign of crew or response to our "good natured" hails. (If any one knows who was motoring a large Keeler in the Tamaki strait headed for the Waiheke channel at 10:30pm that night drop me a line I would like to have a word)

Next morning we headed home wondering if we would be allowed out or would have to sail around for a week. But one look at Scotty's Chiefs cap and the cop told us to bugger off back where we belonged .

All and all a great weekend .



Bilgewater March 2021



NOTICE OF RACE

COROMANDEL REGATTA

Date Friday 2nd April 2021

Sailing instructions. Shall be in accordance with the "Standard racing instructions for non-regatta races" except as those that are altered by these sailing instructions.

Entries. To the race co-ordinators by VHF channel 77 by 0930hrs advising name of boat, number of crew, and if towing a dinghy. (Trailer Yachts).

Briefing: The race officer will give a briefing at 1000 hrs advising any changes to this NOR.

Start time. Mark Foy start from 1030 hours. You will be advised of your individual start time by the race officer.

For those unfamiliar with the Mark Foy start – you will all be given an individual start time based on boat and personal handicap. The fleet will start with slowest boats first and fastest last so that in theory we should all finish in a close finish. First over the line wins on handicap.

Course:

Trailer yacht: From Start line in Kawakawa Bay to finish line between the Cow and Calf islands at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour

Keeler: From the start line at Pine Harbour through the Waiheke Channel and the Ruthe Passage to the finish line between the Cow and Calf islands at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour.

Divisions. Two trailer yacht divisions and one keel yacht division

Start lines.

Trailer yacht: Between start boat and prominent marker boat in Kawakawa Bay as advised by race officer on VHF 77.

Keelers: From a line between the start boat and the starboard Pine Harbour entrance markers.

Finish line. Between the Cow and Calf island at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour. Skippers will need to record their own finish times as they cross the line in GPS hrs/mins/secs. All skippers should activate the RACEQs app on their mobile phone prior to race start as a backup to establish a finishing time.

Race Officers:

Trailer Yacht: Alan MacDonald – Signs of Life

Keelers: Nigel Lancaster – Passing Fancy

NOTE: Following the race a beach gathering will happen at Woolshed Bay in the Coromandel Harbour. If this bay is an unsuitable anchorage, please listen on CH 77 for alternate bay.

Anyone not wishing to race across is welcome to cruise and join the squadron activities.



Bilgewater March 2021



Notice of Event

Mercury Bay Cruise

This year's cruise will follow on from the Coromandel Race scheduled for easter Friday. The plan is to depart the Coromandel Harbour on Sunday morning 4th April, by 0900 hours and proceed to the top of the Coromandel Peninsula and if conditions dictate, on to Mercury Cove, Great Mercury Island, that evening. If conditions do not allow a direct sail to Mercury Cove, we will overnight in Port Charles on the eastern side of the Coromandel peninsula.

For the rest of the week we will plan trips out of our base in Mercury Cove, either as a group, or as individual skippers wish.

It would be helpful to know who is intending to go, in the week prior to our departure. So, could everyone Text to 0274 951 223, if you have not previously advised the cruise coordinator.

Bring plenty of fishing gear!!

Murray – Afterguard

Great Mercury Island Cruise Coordinator.



Championship Points Update

Boat name	Skipper	Division	Kawau		Ponui		Hooks Bay		Motuihe		Tarahiki		Coromandel		Saltwater		Total	
			H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open	H'Cap	Open
Afterguard	Pearce	K	1	2	4	4			1	1							6	7
Audrey	O'Brien	K	2	1	1	1			3	3							6	5
Passing Fancy	Lancaster	K	4	4	2	2			2	2							8	8
Ocean Lure	Woolerton	K	3	4	4	4			4	4							11	12
Acushla	Pasco	K	5	5	3	3			4	4							12	12
Southern Oracle	Douglas	K	6	6	4	4			4	4							14	14
Charley	Hayward	TY 1	3	3	1	1	1	1	2	2							7	7
Signs of Life	MacDonald	TY 1	2	2	3	3	6	6	1	1							12	12
E Type 2	Beecroft	TY 1	5	5	2	2	3	3	3	3							13	13
Barometer Soup	Reffin	TY 1	1	1	7	7	6	6	11	11							25	25
Suzie	Martin	TY 1	9	9	6	6	2	2	4	4							21	21
Aperitif	Reeve	TY 1	9	9	5	5	6	6	5	6							25	26
Jurys Rig	Herrmann	TY 1	4	4	6	6	6	6	7	5							23	21
Fantasia	Bonnett	TY 1	0	0	9	9	5	5	6	7							20	21
Charis	Arbuckle	TY 1	7	7	4	4	6	6	10	10							27	27
High Time	McCarter	TY 1	6	6	6	6	6	6	8	8							26	26
Falkor	Johnstone	TY 1	8	8	6	6	4	4	9	9							27	27
Joker	Guest	TY 2	3	3	1	1			1	1							5	5
Kittiwake	Hepburn	TY 2	1	1	2	2			2	2							5	5
Escargot	Rayner	TY 2	2	2	2	2			2	2							6	6



Bilgewater March 2021



Notice of Event

Fishing Contest

This year we do not have the vast experience of Paul and Dustin to run our fishing comp. So, a group of old salts will run it on Easter Saturday following the race to Coromandel on the 2nd April.

We will start the day with breakfast on the beach, at our overnight bay, followed by a summary of the fishing competition rules. Prizes will be on offer for many categories of fish caught.

Weigh in will be from 1500 to 1600 hrs followed by a BBQ beach party and cook up.

The Committee will be on hand to run the event, but any extra help is always appreciated.

February cruising at Gt Barrier.

We had decided on a summer cruise to Barrier this year rather than further afield up north but as we prepared to leave we were cognisant of the depression heading our way and to what extent this would interrupt proceedings, but as it panned out a day cabin bound with a book was all that happened and plenty of fresh water in the tank.

A few days round Waiheke channel including some time in North Harbour in view of the cell phone tower and watched the Prada cup proceedings via our tablet and later settled on Apuapu Bay as a good place to see out this blow which would be predominantly NE. We certainly were affected by some strong wind gusts coming of the hills but something we must all prepare for. As the low travelled away from NZ we had a day of fresh SE winds for a trip across to TeKouma for a night and on to Deep cove on Whanganui Island passing enroute the Spirit Of NZ with crews all involved in various tasks aboard. Endured a very windy night here but as the day dawned was easing and we prepared for our trip to the Barrier. It's a 35nm trip from Deep Cove to Whangaparapara and once clear of the overfalls off Cape Colville a good sea and steady 15-18kt SE ensured good sailing all the way. Only a few boats at anchor in Graveyard bay and we found out next morning that there was no water on the wharf, but we have plenty so not a big issue and set off for a short trip north to Fitzroy.

As a big high persisted over the country the mornings were usually notable for light winds and our routine was for a bush walk somewhere for some exercise or some drift fishing out of the harbour and late in the afternoon more Prada cup racing, dull and predictable as it is we continued to watch. A day in a hire car seemed a good plan so left P/F at Fitzroy wharf and headed off on a road trip which I have to say for any would be cruising hopeful is certainly a worthwhile expense given the great scenery to be seen particularly the eastern side with long expansive white sandy beaches by contrast to the western harbours and predominant lack of sandy beaches. My Fat Puku in the bustling village of Claris was a pit stop for a flat white and on over the hills again to Tryphena for lunch but first a drive out to the southern extent of the road, Cape Barrier Road is one of the few non sealed roads around and 4WD warnings didn't bode well but hey the roads are dry. A turning point on this narrow winding road was located at a lookout with good views south towards the Coro peninsula. Our return along the same stretch of road proved to be a challenge when we met a car coming towards us around a bend, we both instinctively moved left, for us driving slowly on the grassy berm and the other car on its side in the drain unseen and hidden by vegetation. The young



Bilgewater March 2021



couple clamber out none the worse for the minor roll, oh we are on our honeymoon she happily tells and we discuss a retrieval plan. Contact made to hire company via my trusty cell phone and we left them to the bush and scenery of southern Gt Barrier. We did meet the guy involved in the planned retrieval operation, more messages passed between us and I considered as he drove off, that ute aint going to cut it as a tow vehicle, might be a long night for the honeymoon couple. Returning to Tryphena we find the café without staff so kitchen closed oh well back to Claris to My Fat Puku and find the foods running out, oh well may be a pie at the Fitzroy shop. No Fat Puku today it would seem. The day is but young what else can go wrong? We had a slow and uneventful drive back to FitzRoy Harbour as we took in the lovely scenery of the mountains, the healthy bush and white sandy beaches. P/F remain at anchor in the bay but as we anchored in Forestry Bay we had a visit from pleasant French guy called Francis from a 60ft ketch who pointed out the plight of a 29ft Whiting on the far shore about to go bump bump & would I assist? When we arrived on scene there were only metres to the southern rocky shore and we quickly found a tow line but heaving up the many metres of chain and anchor was indeed a challenging exercise, we are in 15m or so and probably why this small craft is dragging. Getting on board an unfamiliar yacht is strange to say the least but there wasn't time to work out an engine starting procedure.

Any way it's a long story but towing a yacht in gusty conditions with a lightweight dinghy is indeed not a simple exercise but another cruising skipper also came to the rescue party with more dinghy hp and after combined energy and effort we set down the anchor in a good safe spot and awaited the owners return. By all accounts "barging" with powered dinghy tied to one side is the go!

The owners were mortified by events and although I declined a box of beers as our reward we did accept their offer of recently smoked snapper and hinted about finding abandoned boats in local harbours but assured them I didn't need another yacht. The smoked snapper was divine.

This couple of similar age to the others we had left with their Rav4 on its side south of Tryphena but this young girl was indeed grateful for our rescue as their yacht all 29ft of it was where they were currently living. What comes out of these events is the contact one has with other sailors who tell you about there sailing and or life experiences. People from the other side of the world some who have been sailing the high seas for years. Their adventures are a treasure to listen to. Francis who sailed out from Europe on his ketch after many years working with Shell Oil as a drilling engineer in Brunei. He had many tales about life in the strict Muslim Sultanate as well as life on board his ketch. What a contrast from Brunei to Barrier! The other guy who looked like he had been to that café in Claris, had sailed their 50ft Lagoon Cat out from Europe and also had many tales to tell but unfortunately not the time to share with us but did share briefly his experience of the challenges of the transit of the Panama canal. A peaceful night after enjoying the smoked fish.

Kiwiriki bay is another good sheltered bay in easterlies although when it really blows sheltered bays can be a problem with squalls and williwaws and sometimes taking it on the nose literally in a bay like Kaiaraara with plenty of warp out is the go. Any way today it is very sheltered and by sunset there were about 20 odd craft taking their allotted spot drifting about on their moorings as the pleasant evening settled over the island. Next day Feb25th and we gave a thought for John Pollard as we tramped up the valley for an hour to a good high vantage point for some great views.

Another night before departing round in Katherine Bay in a cove known as Nimaru bay, lovely white sandy beach and one large dead whale buried in the sand. By all accounts a Grays Beaked Whale!! So not huge



Bilgewater March 2021



as whales go but very common in the southern oceans. We've now had over a week of easterlies so time to put the island behind us and head for Kawau. Drat! today the wind didn't play ball and after a couple of hours of good sailing we are rocking and rolling with banging of boom so iron horse cranked up to get us around the southern side of little barrier. A short rain shower followed by some good tale winds had us on track again. We tacked down wind thru North Chl passing close by to Maori Rock and on round to Bon Accord harbour to anchor amidst numerous yachts & launches, many of whom are returning from the Route66 race; Westhaven to Whangarei. A text alarm early Saturday evening shared by all of NZ had us rethinking some plans but staying at sea seemed one good option. Another leisurely day drift fishing and lunch in Bosanquet Bay before returning to Dispute Cove with the tall brick chimney of the once active copper mine close at hand.

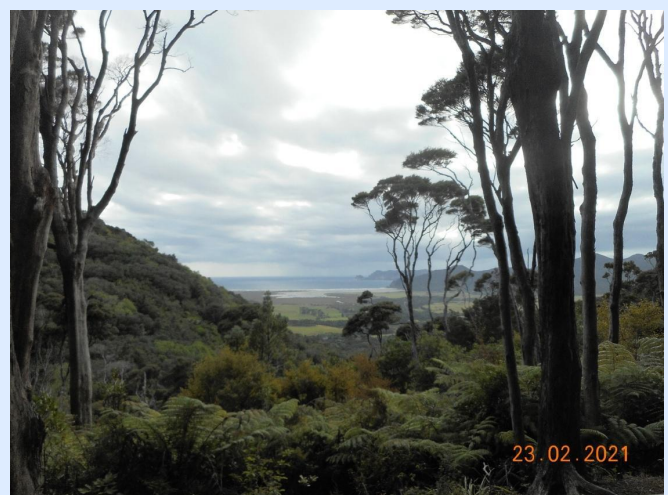
The easterlies continued and we headed south under full sail in 12-15kt winds on the beam but as we emerged from the shelter of Tiri Tiri island more cloud brought an increase of wind to 18-20kts necessitating we roll up half the head sail to take some stress out of the journey. Always a quick remedy as it is easier to dump wind off the main than the big genoa with wind just ahead of the beam. A night in West bay Rakino with many boats and our final day sailing along the northern coast of Rangitoto passing the tall red & white Rangi light but noticeably in the company of only one other yacht sailing in our direction. We thought they were probably heading towards their home moorings as were we, although one more night in Issy Bay prior to heading to Pine Harbour on the rising tide. Wednesday 3rd had ominous reports of rain and thunderstorms so we sorted the boat out and just as we shut the hatches & with a trolley laden with our gear the heavens opened up, a very heavy 20 minutes of rain. Only one more barrier: the southern covid19 lockdown border control on the Kaiaua coast where as the only car in sight we had a simple transit thru to the Hauraki District and home.

Nigel

Passing Fancy



Pa Beach GBI.



Whangapoua Beach eastern Gt Barrier