

# BILGEWATER

March 2024



2024 Gulf Classic winners on-line  
FRIDA (Keelers) – AQUAFLYTE (TY40) – DEEP PURPLE (TY60)



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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's Monday. Closed out the Gulf Classic yesterday and should still be in my bunk!! However, duty calls, so let me tell you about a fantastic Gulf Classic event for this year.

Thirty-three boats lined up this year spread across Keelers (11); TY60 (12); and TY40 (10). Race control ran a STB course this year, so an on-the-wind start-and a lot of mayhem ensued. Did you all not learn anything from Nigel's talk on race starts? They all got away with no protest nonsense, thank goodness.

It was a quick race with ideal sea conditions, and a steady breeze ranging mainly in the 10-20 knot range. Line honours went to AQUAFLYTE (TY40), DEEP PURPLE (TY60), and FRIDA (keeler). Handicap honours for those divisions went to YOUNG GEM; DEEP PURPLE; and La CAMARGUE. Club champions were PINE HARBOUR CC for keeler division and BOPTYS for TY divisions.

A great social occasion at the Friday night briefing and Sunday morning breakfast and prizegiving confirms the popularity of this event – a lot of happy sailors were about all weekend.

We are getting to the end of our season with a couple of great events to go. Tracy-Lee and Vanessa are organising a winery cruise to Man-O-War Bay on the 23rd, with a pirate theme, so get out there, dress up, and give them plenty of support. On the following weekend it is the easter weekend race to Coromandel Harbour on the Friday, followed by a fishing competition on the Saturday. This is a great weekend to explore the Coromandel and Te Kouma area, so hope to see a great turnout.

(Commodore) Murray

## **Upcoming Events**

- Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> March – Man-O-War Winery Cruise AKA Pirates of the Gulf Pursuit.
- Nog 'n Natter – Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> March, 7.30pm
- Friday 29<sup>th</sup> March – Passage race 6 – Coromandel
- Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March – Fishing competition off the Coromandel Harbour.

## 23rd - 24th March - Man o War Winery Cruise aka Pirates of the Gulf Pursuit!

Aaaarrrggghhhh me maties!

**Theme: Pirates** - Dress up as a pirate or something in theme and if you are keen, dress up your boat as well (As much or as little as you would like. Your local \$2 shop will be able to help)



**PRIZES: Booty and Bounty up for grabs for adults and lassies (kids) on the beach.**

**Shiver me timbers it going to be fun with prizes and games including Walk the Plank!**

**GROG (Cocktail) Competition (Voluntary):** Design your own RUM cocktail or mocktail (pretend Rum Cocktail). Bring the ingredients and whatever you need to make your cocktail. Be ready to make it on the



beach in front of our Pirates who will “Aaaarrrgh!” to vote for a winner. (We will supply shot glasses if you would like to provide a Clap of Thunder (pirate words for 'shot') for the audience.) Our MC will collect entries on the day.

Blimey we hope there are not too many pirates three sheets to the wind hehehe.

Yo ho ho. See you there!

## Nog n Natter – Tuesday March 26th

Our guest speakers are Philip Hart and Mike McGaughan and the topic is the AVIEMORE classic.

Phil took his Shaw 750 “DEEP PURPLE” down to Lake Aviemore last October and we hear he was a very competitive finisher. Come along and hear their story.

**NOTICE OF RACE**  
**COROMANDEL**

**Keeler and Trailer Yacht Divisions**

**DATE:** Friday 29th March 2024.

**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 Race Officer 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 keeler division and one trailer yacht division.

**RACE BRIEFING:** 0935 hours for trailer yachts and 1005 hours for keelers, by VHF radio channel 77 where the respective Race Officer 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 the Waiheke Channel – to the Ruthe Passage keeping Ponui to STB – to the finish line at Coromandel Harbour.

**START LINE:** **Trailer Yachts** - Between the start boat in Kawakawa Bay and a position (i.e. moored boat or another marker) to be advised by the Race Officer.

**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** – Between the Cow and Calf Islands at the entrance to Coromandel Harbour. Please record your own finish times in GPS time hrs/min/sec.

All skippers, to advise their respective Race Officer of finish time at the completion of the race. The preferred method of advising your finish time is via WhatsApp, or by VHF channel 77 or text.

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

**RACE OFFICERS:** Trailer Yachts – Alan Macdonald (021-279 5222). Keelers – Tim Hayward (027 444 5902)

**A beach gathering location will be advised at the race briefing. The Squadron BBQ will be in attendance.**

**Yachts wanting to participate in the gathering, but not the race, are most welcome.**

## **Gulf Classic TY60**

by Philip Hart on the Shaw 750 *Deep Purple*

Arrived at the start area to a nice sou-sou-westerly but just before the start it built from the west throwing our initial set up plan out. Started the race with the square-top main and #1 jib and had great pace once in the clear air of an interesting start-line. Quickly reeled off all the other trailer yachts and catching the keelboats that started 5 minutes earlier by Park Point. Beared away for Billy Goat Point and peeled to the Fractional Zero and overtook the leading keelboats heading for Rakino with the other trailer yachts falling well behind. Breeze had built quite a bit so in the lee of the Rakino Channel, Mike went up on the bow and we changed to the #2 Jib.



A solid beat to Rangī Light had us short tacking inshore on the shifts and keeping out of the rougher stuff. Still at an amazing pace, the boat felt so in the groove and Rangī Light was pretty much the last we saw of our fleet other than when we crossed on different legs at Rakino.

Blasting 2 sail reach to Rangī Wharf where life got interesting. Initially we set up for the 3/4 gennaker but after an aborted hoist the skipper went up to sort things out. The end effect of this was the loss of the 3/4 halyard up the mast and the skipper banished to the back of the boat. Okay, masthead gear only from here in..... we got this!

The masthead gennaker went up and after initially struggling to make the Motuihe Channel and a few anxious moments we shot through there like a cork out of a bottle and gybed our way down to an anticlockwise loop of



*Suzie, Aperitif and E-boat making a good start in the TY60*

Rakino. Back on the wind through a nasty wind-against-the-tide bash around Rakino and a big bear away at Awash Rock and the moment of truth. Can we carry the masthead to Thumb Point, Waiheke? When it first set, we were heading for Colville, and I wasn't confident, but as we settled into the groove and with the wind coming out of the Motuihe Channel, turning to run down the back of Waiheke, we found ourselves pointing mostly at Gannet Rock with the odd bear away needed in the gusts. Happy with this. Sitting on 14-15 knots "almost" the whole way with a peak of 17.

Then almost off Oneroa with a gust on us, the tiller extension parted company with the tiller, and we spun out and laid flat at 15 knots. The 300kg ballast hanging off the 2 metre keel stood us up straight away and I was able to grab the tiller and bear us away. Since breaking our tiller at Aviemore we keep a spare extension on board and within a few minutes we were back on course at full noise mainly over but often through the waves.

Around Kauri Point Waiheke we settled into the long bash home through a nasty wind-against-the-tide Waiheke Channel. A mate at North Harbour Ponui captured us going through the Ruthe Passage and later messaged that

Elevation had gone through an hour later. A little confusion trying to spot the finish boat in the glare of the late afternoon sun as we slightly overlaid but at least the slight bear away made for a good action finish at 5:30, 7:30 hours after starting and an average speed of around 7.5 knots.

As we tacked after the finish, we discovered the port jib sheet had parted company from the jib. Phew, glad it didn't happen earlier. Quickly dropped all the sails and motored in while I checked RaceQS on my phone looking for the other boats. Elevation was indeed an hour behind and the rest back from that. Some quick maths on NZTYA handicaps and I was pretty sure we had done the double which turned out to be the case.

An amazing race with a great team aboard. A course and breeze that played right into our strengths. If only Bay Week had been like this!! The boat was a gem, so easy to sail fast, so much control, so forgiving when we screw up, she makes us look like rock-stars. Pick up a new spare tiller extension on Monday and we are good to go.

Thanks to the Waikato Yacht Squadron team for putting on a great event and the Maraetai Beach Boating Club for the excellent facilities.



*Endurance and Suzie rounding Rakino Island, as captured from the foredeck of Escargot*



## **Gulf Classic TY40 – View from the front...ish**

**by Aaron Lowe** on the Noelex 22 *Spasmodic* from Manukau MBYC

Saturday March 9, 2024 dawned fresh and bright, but with just enough cloud cover to keep things pleasant.

I had agreed to sail on *Spasmodic*, a modified Marten Noelex 22, although I was scheduled to work the weekend, and only got confirmation that I was free on Friday afternoon.

It took a bit over an hour from home to Maraetai Beach, where Rob and Murray had the boat rigged and almost afloat, alongside a bunch of other assorted trailer yachts.

We quickly left the launching area and headed out to the starting area, in gentle 5 knot variable breezes from a westerly direction, with the forecast promising a building breeze, gusting up to 25 knots.

The big boats got away first, heading out on an 80 mile trek. Next went the medium sized boats, which included a few Noelex 25 class yachts, going for a 60 mile jaunt.



*Blue Denim, Sugar Shack and Aqua Flyte jostling at the start of the TY40*

Then it was our turn, and first over the start was a Catalina 7, followed by a Noelex 25 and ourselves. Just behind us were two Young 6's and two Noelex 22's, with a few other boats.

The first leg was a very tight reach along the Tamaki channel heading for Rakino Island, via the top end of Waiheke. Predictably, the N25 made use of its extra waterline length and sail area, and slowly eked out a tiny lead over the rest of the fleet. We were sitting in second, just ahead of the other 4 trailer yachts, having left the Catalina and rest of the fleet astern.

Passing Waiheke, we were able to ease sheets enough that spinnakers were hoisted all around.

Disaster struck, as during the rush to get rigged, somehow our spinnaker halyard had been wrapped around the forestay, meaning we couldn't get it up. A quick drop went slightly wrong, and by the time we were sorted out, we were sitting in about fourth or fifth. The breeze was building by this stage, probably up to around 15 knots, although the water was still very flat, so speeds were still quite low.



*And they're off!*

With lots of crazy hard work we managed to get back to third briefly before the fleet got caught in the wind shadow of the island, and we all changed positions multiple times.

Once we hit the breeze it was close to 20 knots, and once we got around the island, it was time for a 15 mile reach to the southern end of Waiheke.

*Aqua-Flyte* (N22) were first to go for a kite, and promptly got luffed by *Pure Magic* (N22). *Young Gem* (Y6) was next to hoist, and both boats went a long way to leeward of the rest. Ten minutes later, with a bit more separation and the wind swinging a bit further to the right, we hoisted ours, as *Pure Magic*, 100m upwind of us, did the same. We then had another minor gear failure, and tore a small hole in the spinnaker, so down it came. Something happened on *Pure Magic*, as they also dropped their kite. *Winsome 2* (Y6) saved their kite until the end of the leg, when the seas were a bit flatter.

Broad reaching in 20 knots with some now bigger waves, we were frequently hitting 8+ knots, the top speed we achieved was 9.8 knots surfing down a wave. We found out later that the eventual winner hit 9.3, so we can take that as a little win 😊

As was expected, the planning hull shape and bigger spinnaker of the *Young 6's* pulled them to the front of the fleet, although *Aqua-Flyte* was able to just hold the lead, with the *Noelex 25* battling for second.

Turning for home, we had wind against tide, which made for a very exhilarating, wet, but tiring, ride. Beating into 20+ knots, with short, steep waves up to 6 feet high was tough on the *Youngs*, and the *Noelex 25*, and there was nothing they could do as the *Noelex 22* trio found itself in its element, and the three of us just knifed upwind through the chop, leaving clear water back to the others.

*Aqua-Flyte* was just far enough ahead to feel un-threatened, but the battle for second was hot, with *Pure Magic* and *Spasmodic* swapping the "lead" many times, until yours truly made a slight tactical error, and we overlaid Passage Rock in a slight wind shift, which allowed *Pure Magic* to pull ahead

slightly. From there it was a few miles of tight two-sail reaching to the finish line, and once again the long waterline of the Noelex 25 helped him out, as they slowly closed the gap on us, but the racetrack ran out before he caught us.

*Aqua-Flyte* took the gun, with *Pure Magic* second, and *Spasmodic* third. Handicap results will be interesting, but we think that *Young Gem* will take the honours, eventually finishing around ten minutes after us, following a seven hour race. *[Editor - turns out your assessment was correct!]*



*Aqua Flyte, eventual TY40 line winner*

## **Gulf Classic TY...7.5???**

**by Phoebe Feldman** on the *Catalina 7 Hue & Cry*

The perfect weather conditions aligned as the Gulf Classic 2024 was about to start. The 40 mile race was due to get under way at 1010 hours with a lot of competition in the category. With the stress of avoiding collisions with other boats and a last minute sail change to a smaller head sail, there was no time to ponder why everyone else was approaching the start line on a starboard tack.

With no time to think and ignorance being bliss, we approached the line from the buoy end on a port tack sailing up towards the race control boat. Barely staying inside the line with 10 seconds to go before the start, 20 metres away from the race control boat, and competitors yelling “Starboard!” at us, we soon realised we would have to abort our start or incur a penalty if other competitors had to alter course. But with confidence we would be clear of the other boats we held our nerve. The start sounded and no sooner was the relief felt of being first off the line without needing a tack. With ignorance being bliss and unfortunately now being all the wiser about starts, it is unlikely that approach to a start line will be risked again.

Now travelling at 6-7 knots with *Sugar Shack* and *Scimitar* in tow entering Sergeants Channel, the Noelex 22’s were just starting to edge ahead. After carefully dodging a few charter boats and fishing lines, spinnakers started to fly. We hoisted ours and managed to achieve a comfortable 8.8 knots as we started to pass the north-west point of Waiheke Island and make the sail over to Rakino Island. As the swell was pushing and the spinnaker was pulling, a few clunks were felt on the rudder. So I asked myself, “Is this a new clunk ... or an old clunk??” Old clunks are somewhat reassuring on a boat built in 1984, while new clunks..... terrifying. Unfortunately..... this clunk was new. I pre-emptively asked Luke “What happens if the rudder breaks?” He replied “Well ..... that would be the end of the race I guess.”

Not more than 2 minutes later, following an unprovoked round-up I looked down to see the rudder floating on the water. A small meltdown happened while Luke was busy ensuring we didn't wrap the spinnaker around halyards and get dragged over. Sails were quickly dropped and the motor started while we assessed the situation. Unfortunately the boat was not big enough to carry all the spare parts it required to keep it going at that point so a quick call was made to the Coastguard informing them of our withdrawal from the race. We then made the 3 hour outboard motor trip back to Kawakawa Bay boat ramp. Driving home our rudder's new-found theme song eerily playing in the background... 'Queen – I want to Break Free' ...



[Our commiserations Luke and Phoebe, and hoping you have better luck next year!]

## Official Race Results for the 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Gulf Classic 2024

42nd Gulf Classic Race Date: Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th March 2024										
KEELER DIVISION - 80 NM				Start :	9/03/2024 10:00:00		Finish			
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	Design	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLACE	CORRECTED TIME	PLACE
La Camargue	8979	Jeaneau 12	Pine Harbour CC	0.755	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:07:19	10:07:19	3	07:38:31	1
Frida	9393	Dehler 38	Pine Harbour CC	0.796	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 19:50:50	09:50:50	1	07:50:18	2
Louisa	9120	Hanse 350	Waikato YS	0.720	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:57:01	10:57:01	8	07:53:03	3
Audrey	9898	Hanse 370E	Waikato YS	0.780	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:10:58	10:10:58	4	07:56:33	4
Acushla	6590	Farr 1020	Waikato YS	0.745	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:43:38	10:43:38	6	07:59:30	5
Second Nature	8147	Elliot 1050	Mercury Bay BC	0.812	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 19:53:28	09:53:28	2	08:01:54	6
Sunbeam	3309	Townson 32	Lake Taupo YC	0.738	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:56:49	10:56:49	7	08:04:44	7
Sea of Tranquility	4108	Lotus 950	Pine Harbour CC	0.692	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 21:42:10	11:42:10	9	08:05:54	8
Smokey	5664	Young 88	Pine Harbour CC	0.764	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 20:41:56	10:41:56	5	08:10:26	9
Space Station	10033	SR 26	Pine Harbour CC	0.700	9/03/2024 10:00:00	9/03/2024 21:50:35	11:50:35	10	08:17:24	10
St Julienne		Lotus 9.2	Waikato YS	0.692	9/03/2024 10:00:00	DNF				
TY 60 DIVISION - 60 NM				Start :	9/03/2024 10:05:00		Finish			
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	CLASS	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLACE	CORRECTED TIME	PLACE
Deep Purple	T9255	Shaw 750	Mercury Bay BC	1.040	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 17:29:26	07:24:26	1	07:42:13	1
E Boat	T3743	Elliot 7.4	Taupo YC	0.885	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 19:21:18	09:16:18	5	08:12:20	2
Elevation	T4047	Elliot 7	BOPTYS	0.961	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 18:37:32	08:32:32	2	08:12:33	3
Sweet Surrender	T3279	Noelex 25	BOPTYS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 19:52:45	09:47:45	6	08:16:39	4
Escargot	T3247	Gazelle Mk 1 Mod	Waikato YS	0.820	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 20:12:57	10:07:57	8	08:18:31	5
NoReMorse	T4052	Elliot 780	Taupo YC	0.973	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 18:44:59	08:39:59	3	08:25:57	6
Night Nurse	T3353	Ross 780	BOPTYS	0.933	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 19:08:07	09:03:07	4	08:26:44	7
Suzie	T1065	Noelex 25	Waikato YS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 20:11:45	10:06:45	7	08:32:42	8
Endurance	T3637	Noelex 25	BOPTYS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 20:42:59	10:37:59	9	08:59:06	9
Portfolio	T3613	Noelex 25	Waikato YS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 21:05:53	11:00:53	11	09:18:27	10
Aperitif	T3983	Joker 820	Waikato YS	0.850	9/03/2024 10:05:00	9/03/2024 21:04:26	10:59:26	10	09:20:31	11
Ghost Train	T3429	Ross 780	Waikato YS	0.933	9/03/2024 10:05:00	DNF				
TY 40 DIVISION - 40 NM				Start :	9/03/2024 10:10:00		Finish			
BOAT NAME	SAIL NO	CLASS	CLUB	RATING	START	FINISH TIME	ELAPSED TIME	PLACE	CORRECTED TIME	PLACE
Young Gem	T3992	Young 6 WB	Ngaroto YC	0.792	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 17:01:07	06:51:07	5	05:25:36	1
Aqua Flyte	T861	Noelex 22	Manukau YMBC	0.811	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 16:51:32	06:41:32	1	05:25:39	2
Pure Magic II	T3100	Noelex 22	Manukau YMBC	0.811	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 16:53:47	06:43:47	2	05:27:28	3
Spasmodic	T1409	Noelex 22	Manukau YMBC	0.811	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 16:55:27	06:45:27	3	05:28:49	4
Winsome II	T3352	Young 6 WB	Hamilton YC	0.800	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 17:10:19	07:00:19	6	05:36:15	5
Blue Denim	T631	Noelex 25	BOPTYS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 16:56:09	06:46:09	4	05:43:12	6
Clearwater	T2963	Merlin 6.1	Waikato YS	0.703	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 18:33:10	08:23:10	9	05:53:44	7
Scimitar	T719	Noelex 25	Waikato YS	0.845	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 17:21:21	07:11:21	7	06:04:29	8
SugarShack	T1137	Joker 6.7	Waikato YS	0.812	9/03/2024 10:10:00	9/03/2024 18:08:59	07:58:59	8	06:28:56	9
Hue and Cry	T579	Catalina 7	Waikato YS	0.795	9/03/2024 10:10:00	DNF				

## **Northland 2024 on *Passing Fancy*, Part 1**

**by Nigel Lancaster**

Departing late January after a refurbishment of our fridge/freezer we cruised over to the north side of Motuihe Island late Tuesday afternoon. Not a busy place but always some ferry wash to disturb the peace. Next stop, Harris Bay at Kawau Island and prepare for a long sail north. 60nm approx., from Bon Accord to Tutukaka and if there's a good tail wind it's a good day. Well, we had a good SE to begin our voyage, but it was fading as we approached Sail Rock & big neighbour Taranga Island.

There was quite a disturbed sea, making sailing downwind difficult in light winds so we gybed over to have what breeze there is on our beam, and continued to the east of Taranga Island and further on to Coppermine island. We searched the landscape for the light as we passed the end of the island and eventually found it!

That plan with beam winds did make sailing ok, but from Coppermine Island to Tutukaka was to be flat off again with a poled out jib. 20nm and a fading breeze this didn't go so well. Motoring in through the heads of Tutukaka Harbour, there was a big sea running and whilst the anchorage was ok the swell did affect the peaceful anchorage that it is.





Little wind in the morning and another 17nm to Mimiwhangata, a good 3 hour motor along the coast passing Matapouri Bay, Elizabeth Reef not far to leeward, Whananaki Harbour further west, and on round Rimariki Islands at the SE extreme of Whangaruru Harbour and run west into Mimiwhangata Bay. This area, despite being only DOC farmland behind, is one of the most stunning beaches in Northland, other than Spirits Bay and not everyone cruises up there. The sand runs for 1.3 nm with a small climb over the hill on the western end to the camp on the next beach. We walked the entire beach from end to end in the company of feeding oyster catchers & other wading birds.



Light winds continued and we had a night up near Whangaruru North. Went for another long walk on the Bland Bay beach dodging beach motocross riders as we did so. And as we left the beach to find access to the Whangaruru harbour we passed by a small gathering of local whanau preparing for a feast. Two small pigs on a spit, and other assorted condiments. A very still night here in the upper waters of Whangaruru harbour. As a destination this harbour has much to recommend it as a cruising area, particularly Trailer Yachts. From the mangroves in the upper reaches to Mimiwhangata Beach 15nm away.

Next day forecast for fresh NW which was welcome news for a sail to Whangamumu. We had stowed on board a SUP & my preferred spot was outside the stanchions forward of the beam. Deflating it would have been a grand idea, but re-inflating is such a mission.

Its ok if we are reaching in average conditions, but today we were getting a stiff NW breeze late in the day and the leeward wash was throwing the board about in its lashing and eventually the forward strap broke and all broke loose. It was however fortunate that I had attached a safety line and after

untying the aft strop, as we charged on in the afternoon breeze towing said board along with the dinghy, the Whangamumu entrance not far away.

Although very light we did have some issues as its not designed to be towed backwards in a choppy sea. We always enjoy staying in Whangamumu Harbour and found a suitable spot amongst the other boats here and settled down to enjoy the location, which is such a big sheltered area, so plenty of space amongst all the boats. Up behind the remains of the old whaling station the small stream provides good fresh water for the shower bags.

Next day dawned a pleasant day and we made lunch and plans for the walk over the ranges to the Rawhiti Road, a 2 hour tramp. Great views from the top of the grassy area overlooking the harbour. A few light showers came and went during the journey & we made it to the road uneventfully, consumed a nice sandwich in the shade and commenced our return journey. Somewhere in all this the weather deteriorated to intermittent heavy showers and down in the harbour one severe rain squall. The return journey completed and as we putter out to *Passing Fancy* we observe our vessel appeared to have moved, strange as it may be. On passing our neighbours they told of the heavy squall they had had, and *Passing Fancy* had relocated a further 50m down wind!

Within a short time, we were hit by another heavy rain shower. A lucky break. The weather improved and a quiet night ensued.



*A Wet Whangamumu Harbour View*

Cape Brett was our next destination with a good breeze and into the cruising waters of the Bay of Islands, with the paddle board stowed inboard on the side rail. Another pleasant night in Oke Bay, with many other cruising boats, big & small, old & new. The next few days in light winds travelling under motor we observe & take stock of the fact that the Bay O Islands is littered with reefs and rocky outcrops in all kinds of unsuspecting locations. Be observant and keep an eye out & on the chart whatever form it may come in.

Oh!! and the other added local activity is the ever presence of fast tourist boats and helicopters, both of which head to Piercey Island. Another calm night on offer in the Moturua Channel, between Moturua & Motukiekie Islands,



The round Moturua island walk is recommended for some good exercise along a good trail, great views, it's not a long tramp...1.5hrs approx. and a beach walk at all four corners of the island. A weather change was forecast for freshening Nor-westerlies & going SW so some planning was involved for our next couple of days.



*Northwest Beach, Moturua Island*

We anchored in the lee, south side of the Orokawa Peninsula near Opunga Cove, with many other boats gathering for shelter rather confirming the location, but close to a low saddle, and during the night severe squalls across the saddle ensuring an interrupted sleep. A move next day to Paroa Bay before the SW swing and another gathering of boats. We cast our eyes around the coast with the aid of binoculars to take a good look at the real estate. Some wonderful homes. Another morning with light wind and a long motor around to Russell. It's not too busy and by sunset we are anchored up in Pomare Bay near the Russell Boat Club. Tomorrow is rubbish disposal, water & restocking – a simple activity, but it all takes time.

The plan was this.... we had found the local transfer station on the online map, in the hills not far from the Russell Boat Club, so a good uphill walk with our boxes of recycling and landfill items. We couldn't find any alternatives so keep it in mind if you're cruising the Bay.

*To be continued...*

## **The 2024 Noelex National Championships – Lake Taupo**

**by Chris Martin on *Suzie***

The Noelex 25 Nationals were held 2-5 February 2024, at Lake Taupo. I decided to enter *Suzie*. Flip Rayner and Tim Hayward (fellow WYS members) agreed to crew, although we had never sailed together.

On arrival at Taupo Yacht Club things were being taken seriously. Sail measuring and boat weight certificates were required. A professional Yachting New Zealand representative attended to run the event with a large launch and supporting RIB (provided by Taupo Yacht Club). To my surprise, a protest adjudicator attended.

A lot of commitment to attend was shown by both of my crew, Flip traveling up from the Marlborough Sounds and Tim from a holiday in Tauranga. Thanks again to you both.



*Just After the Start in Race One*

Despite plans to stay onboard *Suzie*, Andrew King (WYS member) kindly offered accommodation at his brother's temporarily vacant house. This was gratefully accepted and turned out to be a brilliant social opportunity and a great way to learn from Andrew and his Bay of Plenty Trailer Yacht crew.

On Saturday morning we rushed to launch *Suzie*. Everything was set up until I could not find my car keys, causing a frantic search. These were eventually found hidden underneath Tim's car seat. Lost keys were the last thing we needed!

On day one the weather forecast was for 40+ knots but we were only experiencing around 15 knots with periods of sunshine. While attempting to practice, our mainsheet shackle fell off leaving the boat momentarily out of control. Quick teamwork had a new shackle attached, but this was unsettling.

As the start hooter loomed, the wind began picking-up and radio transmissions became incoherent. Someone's hand-held was then pressed to transmit emitting a static sound. The start was going to be completely initiated only using flags! The start line only provided enough room for 17 boats side-by-side, the wind was increasing, and crews were beginning to lose control in a total melee of shouting and near misses. A black flag was in operation so we could not go course side during the starting sequence without suffering disqualification.

After crossing the start line, I heard multiple cracks as boats collided. Gasps came from Tim and Flip – followed by comments such as “just focus on going fast” and “don't look!”.

We were well off the pace at this stage, but we had an intact boat. Unfortunately, we were struggling to work out the course with an array of buoys. More shouting happened at the top mark and a full T-bone was witnessed.

The course was a windward leeward design, and I soon discovered this type of racing is about getting a good start and finding a lane with clear air. Making the boat go fast off the line was also a key component. This is very different to WYS events.

On our first downwind leg several boats opted not to fly spinnakers while we flew ours. This resulted in the sail blowing out at the bottom mark. We did have a very old spare spinnaker and it worked well despite the suspicion that someone had fired a shotgun at it and then repaired it.



*Suzie's Spinnaker Ripping as a 40 Knot Squall Hunts us in the Background*

Two races were sailed on the first day with the second race seeing a period of around 40 knots with hail (snow fell on the mountains). Our faces were stinging with bits of ice flying at high velocity into them. We continued with full sails and picked up several places. We later discovered that our goose neck ended up being bent at a 45-degree angle.



*Battling Up Wind on Day 1*

The top mark offered a slight reprieve in wind strength, and we hoisted our spinnaker only to immediately launch onto a plane. I decided to attempt to reef. Working as a team, we dropped the main onto the bull horns like professionals. It was then, I realised I had forgotten to re-attach my reefing line! We managed to get everything sorted with a seamless drop just in time for the bottom mark. Something we were all proud of.

Rounding the bottom mark, we lost our Spinnaker pole overboard. I managed to grab the pole but also pulled a stanchion half out of the deck in the process. This channelled water directly into my forward cupboard where the electrical switchboard is!

As we popped back up, the boat then rounded up into the bottom mark. Meaning we had to both struggle up-wind in atrocious conditions and complete a 360-degree penalty turn. We could not see anything around us, but we could hear multiple garbled retirements being radioed in.

We finished and were just happy to have survived the day.



The next day the fleet was treated to brilliant sunshine and snowcapped mountains. Was this February and the height of summer?



*Snow in February*



*No Room Available on the Start Line*

Day 2 went smoothly with 4 races being held in light conditions and 3 races being held on the final day in very light conditions. On the Monday, the final day, we managed to get close to the front for brief times with our crew work coming together.

It was so hot on Monday that most of the boats had crew members swimming between races.

The boat did not feel good at all on the last day, and after finishing, we realized we had sailed with our keel half down! We had raised the keel to avoid a shallow river exit and suffered a miscommunication of responsibilities as we learnt to sail together. We were competitive at times – so there was solace in that!

Suzie ended up finishing 14th out of 17 boats with our best result being 10th. *Portfolio* and Andrew King, who is a registered WYS boat, sailed under BOPTYS and did extremely well with 4th place overall. *Outnumbered*, from Naval Point, won the event.

It was a massive learning curve, and I could list pages of learnings. As Tim Hayward commented “at least we did not hit anyone or come last!”

## **Summer Sailing 2023 – 2024**

by Andrew King on *Portfolio*

### **...and the things we don't talk about...**

Anne and I sailed in the WYS Hauraki cruise for a week at the beginning of Oct 2023. Had a great time. We were going to the Aviemore Classic two weeks later so packed down *Portfolio*, our Noelex 25, to bring it home to get it ready for the South Island trip. Heading over the hill from Kawakawa Bay to Kaiaua late at night on a wet road. With the weight of the yacht and having no weight in the ute, we jackknifed at 20 kph just after a sharp corner with the nose of the yacht sticking into a clay bank and causing the winch eye and the tie downs between the boat and the trailer to be torn out leaving *Portfolio* sitting nicely on the side of the road without a trailer under it. By 2am the volunteer fire brigade had a crane lift the yacht back onto its trailer with minor grazing on the bottom of the yacht needing repairs so the Aviemore Classic will have to wait for another year.

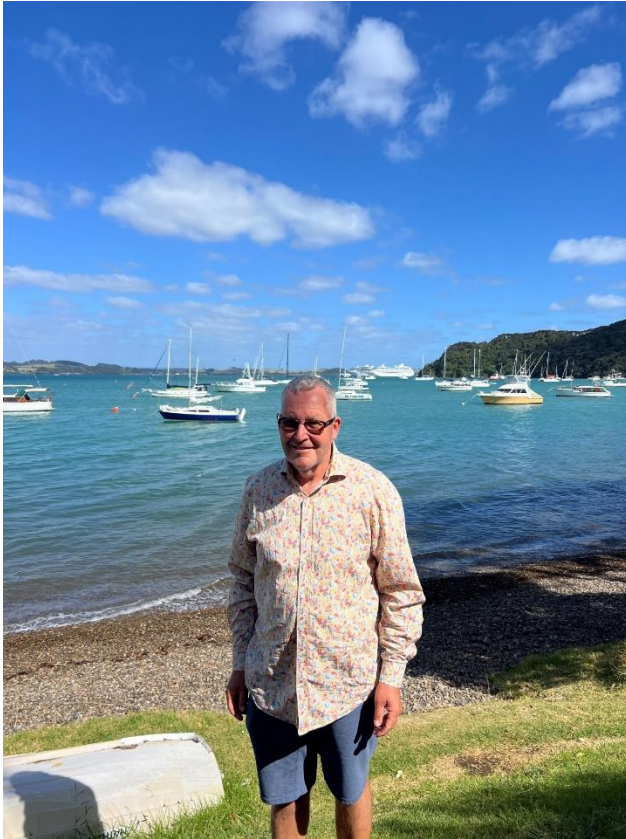
No one was hurt and I now tie the yacht to the trailer across the cockpit with a 2500 kg tie down. I took the mud tires off the ute, and replaced them with road tires which may have made the difference had I done this earlier.

Meanwhile an opportunity came to deliver a Sydney 38 Yacht from Rockhampton to Sydney which I wouldn't have been able to do had I gone to the South Island.

We had *Portfolio* back with a new paint job for the WYS Barrier cruise at the beginning of November which Anne & I thoroughly enjoyed.

Meanwhile I was racing every second Wednesday night with BOPTYS on their WASP series with two of their very good sailors Daryl and Steve, with the idea of entering the Noelex 25 Nationals in Taupo on Waitangi weekend at the beginning of February. On the first day of the Nationals, we were sailing in winds of up to 40 knot gusts and we won one of these races on that day.

Very exciting sailing but very controlled with Daryl on the Helm, and Steve as Tactician. Great weekend, coming 4th overall.



Straight after this I sailed with my Australian friend Lyall from Kawakawa Bay to the Bay of Islands. On the way trailering my yacht fully loaded for cruising from Hamilton to Kawakawa Bay, it felt unstable and on checking I found a bulge in the sidewall of one of the tires. I called into the nearest tire shop – Bridgestone Truck Stop Pokeno. I pointed out the tires had good tread and I had just checked all the pressures. The tire technician explained that although they were 8 ply tires, they were 10 years old. (the tires are branded

on the side walls with the date of manufacture), and that clipping a curb was likely the cause. I ended up putting 4 new tires on to give me comfort as I tow the trailer yacht a lot.

Leaving Kawakawa Bay late we arrived at Owhanake Bay at the north end of Waiheke at nightfall – motoring for the first hour then sailing once the wind came up.

The next morning, we were heading for Leigh and with favourable southerly wind we had the Spinnaker up doing 5-7 knots. We decided to continue that day for Whangarei. We got caught out after Leigh when the wind dropped to nothing and the sea was like glass but after an hour the southerly wind kicked back in and we arrived at Urquhart’s, Whangarei Heads at 11pm.

We passed Nigel Lancaster the next morning as he was heading South but didn't end up in the same bay on the same night. The next morning, Friday 9 February, we left Urquhart's Bay early as the forecast was for the southerly wind to last another day and we arrived at Deep Water Cove, Bay of Islands at 6pm with a 10-15 knot southerly and a spinnaker run all the way to Cape Brett.

Deep Water Cove is a fish sanctuary. We saw schools of fish near the surface of the water, which was spectacular.

At the Cape we had a 2m swell but it was running with us so was quite pleasant. A couple of perfect sailing days. I won't dwell too much on the Bay of Islands as you are all sailors and know how fantastic it is there – a boater's paradise! We had perfect weather for the two and a half weeks we were there with Anne coming up with the ute and trailer for the last week, parking at Kerikeri Cruising Club.



My friend Lyall had his sister's H28 keeler in the Bay of Islands which we used for a couple of days. One day we moored at Waitangi too close to the shore as the yacht's depth sounder wasn't working. In saying that, it's still no excuse and after coming back the yacht was gently lying on its side. Fortunately, there was no wind and no swell so on the change of tide the yacht gently righted itself with no damage done.



On another day at Army Bay/Waiwhapuku Bay, we tried to anchor at sail without starting the motor. Long story short, with an unexpected jibe, Lyall got knocked overboard. He wasn't hurt other than his pride with another couple of moored yachts anchored nearby watching us while they drunk their G and T's. On another day in this bay, you could clearly see to the bottom with two 1.5m mako sharks and a stingray swimming around. People were swimming off their yachts in the bay and the sharks just ignored them.

Walking around the island and looking at the WWII ruins, we ended up somehow getting off the main track following pink ribbons and pink triangles which ended up being a DOC pest track going up a stream to the top of the island and back down the other side. We ended up on our hands and knees at times on steep slopes being dressed in shorts and jandals, and the walk took 3 hours instead of half an hour!

Another afternoon at Urupukapuka Island, Otehei Bay we rafted up the two yachts together while we were enjoying an early dinner at the onshore café. On coming back to the yacht one of the mooring ropes had come undone. All was good as my yacht was still attached but swinging backwards being held by the 2nd mooring rope.

It made me realize how important tying up is when you don't have your anchor down and should always check other people's knots when your yacht is relying on them.



Coming into Kerikeri one day there was an approximately 40 foot yacht up on a reef. Making enquires I understand it was a doctor and his family who came in under spinnaker and didn't realize he was so close to the reef. On hitting the reef his wife fell from the cockpit down into the cabin and his son ended up getting cut hands, both in hospital. The yacht had been prepared for sale and was on its last family outing. It got towed off that night on the full tide and I am unsure if it was repairable.

In the harbour between Russell and Paihia there were one to two different cruise ships in, nearly every day.

Heading back into the Kerikeri Cruising Club I had a small place to squeeze in on the breakwater between two very flash yachts. I pulled into the gap beautifully but on stepping onto the breakwater the yacht drifted off and I ended up in the water. At this point the crew from both yachts on either side of me who were watching came to my rescue.

I got the yacht hull cleaned by a professional diver before trailering it. After just 2 and a half weeks it had barnacles growing on the hull and weed starting to form on the barnacles. Cost \$60.

If I was doing the trip again, I wouldn't take 50 litres of fuel, 20 would have been plenty as I only used 10 and there are plenty of places to fuel up if required. Similar with the water. I took 100 litres, but 40 would have been

plenty and a hose so that I could fill up at the many taps that are provided on the wharfs.

Coming back down with the yacht on the trailer I clipped one of the many road cones and it caused us to lose the trailer grease cap on a tire. We got a new one fitted in Whangarei no problems.

It has been a thoroughly enjoyable season sailing so far. I am new to sailing with this being my 3rd season, but this is the first season that we haven't been interrupted by covid or the weather.

Sailing is relaxing but does have its dangers. Sailors who have sailed all their lives have far more knowledge. There is no substitute for learning to sail than time on the water.



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