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EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS & ADVERTISING INQUIRIES

Dana Jolliffe | sportsmedia@rpyc.com.au
 Angela Sebastian | socials@rpyc.com.au

RPYC TEAM

OFFICE CONTACT RECEPTIONIST Tracy Williams | 08 9389 1555 | reception@rpyc.com.au

GENERAL MANAGER
 Rick Coate | genman@rpyc.com.au
OPERATIONS MANAGER
 Estelle Bradley | operations@rpyc.com.au
FINANCIAL CONTROLLER
 Neil Smith | finance@rpyc.com.au
MARINA & MEMBERSHIP MANAGER
 Gillian Tosh | membership@rpyc.com.au
BOATING OPERATIONS MANAGER
 Travis Burtenshaw | boatingoperations@rpyc.com.au
ACCOUNTS OFFICER
 Louise Satterthwaite | accounts@rpyc.com.au

FOOD AND BEVERAGE MANAGER
 Cathal Grealish | cathal@rpyc.com.au
HEAD CHEF
 Clinton Fox | headchef@rpyc.com.au
EVENTS MANAGER
 Joanne Walsh | events@rpyc.com.au
MARKETING & EVENTS OFFICER
 Angela Sebastian | socials@rpyc.com.au
SPORTS ADMINISTRATION MANAGER
 Premo Jacniacki | sportsadmin@rpyc.com.au
BOATING COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER
 Dana Jolliffe | sportsmedia@rpyc.com.au

BOATING ADMINISTRATOR
 Anna Klyne | boatingadmin@rpyc.com.au
MARINA SUPERVISOR – FREMANTLE
 Casey Skinner | annexe@rpyc.com.au
FACILITIES COORDINATOR
 Byron Vik-Smith | yard@rpyc.com.au
BOSUN
 Daniel Hacket | bosun@rpyc.com.au
BOATLIFT OPERATOR
 David Correia | boatlifter@rpyc.com.au

GENERAL COMMITTEE

Contact your General Committee at club@rpyc.com.au

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MATT WEARN
Going for back-to-back gold at the Paris Games.



COVER IMAGE
FOCUS Matt Wearn
PHOTO Sailing Energy

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REPORT



WORDS
JANET HORNBUCKLE,
COMMODORE

Back to the Future

FROM AN OLYMPIAN TO WORLD CHAMPIONS AND THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE CLOCKED UP 25 TO 50 YEARS WITH US, THE DEPTH OF TALENT IN OUR CLUB IS SOMETHING TO CELEBRATE.

Welcome to our new-look *In the Wind*. Thank you to RPYC member Anna Flanders for bringing her magazine editing talents and expertise to our club magazine and to everyone who contributed their stories.

It's been a busy time at the club since the inaugural Change of Season event. We celebrated the Closing of the Summer Keelboat and Off the Beach (OTB) seasons, and the Opening of the Power Boat Season, bringing together all sections of the club to celebrate. Thank you to those who joined in the Sail Past, although the extremely light winds meant that no sailors finished the race!

For those of you who joined the Change of Season Hoedown in the evening, I'm sure you will all agree it was a fantastic event. We all shared a great night of fun, with the theming, F&B and entertainment on the night hitting the spot perfectly. Thank you to the RPYC Team for pulling this together.

Since then we have had our Keelboat and OTB presentation evenings, handing out the

coveted trophies and celebrating everyone's Summer Season successes. We also had one of my favourite events of the year, the 25- and 50-year member luncheon. We dined with 78 members who represented 3276 years of membership at the club. You can imagine there were lots of stories to share!

It's great to hear about their boating activities and achievements as club members, while acknowledging their commitment and contribution to the club by presenting the special RPYC lapel pins. In addition to 21 new 25-year members, we welcomed 11 new 50-year members this year, meaning that we now have more than 100 current members who joined on or before 1974.

While there is concern about the aging demographic of the club, we must remember the important part these members have played in our proud history and the benefits to themselves of being part of and belonging to the club. On the flipside, I also attended the Ron Tough Yachting Foundation Award Night where several of our junior and youth members received grants to support their



"It will be 20 years since I emigrated from the UK to start my new life in Perth ... Within three weeks of arriving, a then-new colleague and RPYC member, Peter Hugo, invited me to sail on his co-owned Farr 9.2 ..."

PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

travels to international events this year. Good luck to all those grant recipients travelling overseas who are representing RPYC. We look forward to celebrating your achievements.

I'm looking forward to celebrating a personal anniversary in August this year. It will be 20 years since I emigrated from the UK to start my new life in Perth, beginning as a specialist obstetrician at King Edward Memorial Hospital. Within three weeks of arriving, a then-new colleague and RPYC member, Peter Hugo, invited me to sail on his co-owned Farr 9.2 *Farrari* (now *Dragon Heart*) and I have been sailing on Wednesday afternoons ever since!

Over that time, I have been privileged to care for many women through their pregnancies, far too many to count, and including some with the most complex of problems. I was delighted to receive a letter via the club recently from a former patient, Amanda, who I had cared for some 18 years ago. She proudly shared that her son Taj, who was born prematurely with multiple medical issues and who wasn't expected to walk or talk, was a regular sailor with Sailability. He is thoroughly enjoying his weekly sail at the club.

We took the opportunity to catch up, with Taj showing me the boats he sailed on and joining me for a photo opportunity (see image above). Thank you to our members who are Sailability volunteers who support those with varied disabilities to enjoy their time on the water and to those who support Sailability in their fundraising endeavours.

As you are aware, Sailability also supports high-performance sailors. World champion blind sailor Kylie Forth, with club members Erin McGlew (jib trim) and Eric Seery (main sheet), trained hard in a Sonar in preparation for the

Main image: The 25- and 50-year member luncheon attendees. **Below:** Janet with Sailability member Taj, who she looked after as a newborn. "... he was born prematurely with multiple medical issues and ... wasn't expected to walk or talk," reveals Janet. Inspirational!



World Blind Match Racing Championships in Sciez, France. It was Eric's first competitive event and a World Championship, no less! He has transitioned rapidly from a regular twilight sailor on *Heaven Can Wait!*

This world championship event didn't include sighted sailors onboard, but instead utilised audio signals, including audio buoys in the water and audio on the boats, to assist the sailors in navigating the course and avoiding collisions with other competitors. The support given to the Lost at See team by RPYC volunteers – including craning the Sonar in and out of the water for training sessions, the laying of audio marks, the resurrection of Sailability's set of audio buoys and through members supporting the Lost at See sell-out fundraising dinner – cannot be understated. It truly recognises the spirit of inclusivity, diversity and opportunity that runs through our club.

Finally, please join me in wishing Matt Wearn every success in the upcoming Olympic Games. Matt, we will be cheering you all the way! (Read our story about Matt's training in the lead-up to the Games from p24.) ●



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REPORT



WORDS
RICK COATE,
GENERAL MANAGER

Service is key

MEMBERSHIP AND OUR CLUB OFFERING ARE THE FOCUS MOVING INTO THE FINANCIAL YEAR AS WE TAKE A MORE AGGRESSIVE MARKETING APPROACH.



Rick Coate and Helen Baker going 'cowboy' for the Hoedown event.

Winter has arrived suddenly with some much-needed rain and unwanted high winds. After a busy summer on and off the water, it was a fitting celebration at the Change of Season Hoedown Party in April to transition into winter sailing and Power Time Trialling.

The operational shine of 2024 continues, and I am pleased with how the service levels are improving. The RPYC team is trying to find ways to say: 'Yes, we can make that happen!' Our forward focus at this time is very much on membership value-adds and unique value propositions (UVPs).

While still retaining Boating and Social themes, we are exploring other activities, events and approaches for members. The Fremantle Annexe, F&B, Youth and Women are also priorities. Our marketing and comms plan is now more aggressive than before.

Our decision trees are simple

- Is it safe?
- Is it of benefit to members?
- Does it align with our values?
- Do we have the resources and capabilities to deliver?
- Is it breakeven, profit or loss?

Our collective enthusiasm was somewhat dampened by a string of breakdowns and infrastructure fails of over \$400k in three months. This has impacted our operations and cashflow, but has reinforced the need for our 10-year Capital Maintenance Plans to be enacted to ensure not only safety and service, but also, importantly, to produce income to sustain us.

The formation of a Marina & Hardstand Subcommittee has been set (including five engineers!) and is initially focused on assessing and addressing safety, infrastructure and capital works for the club.

Safety: See Something, Say Something

While we are in the happiness business, we also operate in a sometimes high-risk environment on the water, along with boat lifting, refuelling, hardstanding and even responsible service of alcohol. If you have a near-miss incident, are injured or see something that may cause an injury and become a hazard, please report it to a team member.

2024 Annual General Meeting

A Member Town Hall session will be held at 18.30 on Thursday, July 25, to review the past year and foreshadow the FY 2024/25 budget before the AGM on Thursday, August 29. ●

Talk to Us! I have very much enjoyed engaging with members, listening and learning what we are doing well, where we can improve and what advice you have for me as GM. It's the members' club, and the team and I are here to add value and constantly improve facilities and service. So, please talk to us anytime for any reason by phone, email or in person. We are at your service.

PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

REPORT



WORDS
ANDREW McAULLAY,
VICE COMMODORE

Packed Calendar



Main image: Read our interview with Matt Wearn from p24. Inset: members competed offshore on RPYC and other WA club boats during the season.

“Matt Wearn will begin his gold medal defence from August 1, with the Medal Race on August 6. Best of luck to Matt”

Read Andrew’s International Report in News, from p13.

WE ROUND UP OUR FINISH TO THE SUMMER SEASON AND APPLAUD WINS ON LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL WATERS.

The storm in early-May inflicted a bit of damage around the jetties. It’s a timely reminder to ensure that your pen lines are in good condition and correctly attached at both boat and jetty ends. As winter is here, be sure to double-check them and that they are secured properly, particularly if you haven’t been on your boat for some time.

60th Cape Naturaliste Return Race

Crush again broke the record of the fastest Cape Naturaliste Return Race overall time, finishing in 15hrs 15mins 34sec. This beats its own record of 15hrs 33mins 38sec last year. During this race, Fremantle Sailing Club yacht *Baci* began taking on water and subsequently sunk. Swift response from the RPYC Crisis Management Team, Water Police and Mandurah Volunteer Marine Rescue ensured all onboard were rescued and returned to shore at Mandurah. *Baci* was recovered in the following days.

2024 RPYC Island Race

Eleven boats took part in the Island race on April 6 this year and our own *Wyuna* (Hilary Arthure) scored 3rd position (Div 2 IRC). The full results are: Div 1 PFH – 1st *Obsession*, 2nd *Secret Weapon* and 3rd *Sirene*; Div 1 IRC – 1st *Obsession*, 2nd *Enterprise*, 3rd *Secret Weapon*; Div 2 PFH – 1st *The Edge*, 2nd *King Kanute*, 3rd *Salacia II*; Div 2 IRC – 1st *Salacia II*, 2nd *The Edge*, 3rd *Wyuna*.

2024 WAIODA Optimist State Championships

The event was held at RPYC’s Fremantle Annexe over the weekend of March 9 and 10. RPYC’s Orlando Ligovich finished 4th, and congratulations must go to all the sailors who competed. I spent the Saturday helping out with onshore logistics, and experienced a great bunch of kids who all sailed in the spirit of the sport and were appreciative of the support they received at the event. Thanks to all the RPYC members who helped out over that weekend. Your support for junior sailing is fantastic.

2024 WA Club Marine Keelboat Championships

The 2024 WA Club Marine Keelboat Championships experienced three days of wind, a bit of rain and some choppy waters. Twenty-three boats across three fleets – S80, S97 and Farr 9.2 – all had tight racing and enjoyed the conditions. A number of S80s again travelled up from Bunbury. Thanks to all our club volunteers – your support for this event ensures its continued success.

2024 Etchells Worlds

The Etchells Worlds were co-hosted by Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club and RPYC, and were held at Fremantle Sailing Club in mid-March. Forty-one boats took part, with RPYC represented by Chris Pratt and team and

Mark Crier and team. The Bill Steele regatta was the warm-up event, which gave the visiting crews a chance to familiarise themselves with waters off Fremantle. The Bill Steele was won by Graeme Taylor (AUS), who carried his form into the Worlds winning by 10 points from Andy Beadsworth (USA) and Graham Vials (GBR). Team Pratt finished 23rd and Team Crier 29th. It was an extremely well run regatta – massive thanks to all volunteers and to the cooperation of the three clubs involved.

Anzac Day and Diggers Cup

This event started with our traditional ANZAC ceremony with fine words this year from Graeme White (*Ragnar*). The Diggers capped off the summer season racing and included an OTB Course for the first time, which was great to see. The Keelboat winner was from RFBYC – *The Cadillac*, skippered by Peter Chappell. Congratulations to Peter, crew and all sailors out on the day. It was a fantastic race for all. The OTB winner was *The Butterfly Effect* – Kate Best and Geoff Munt. Thank you to our

volunteers and race management team who, as always, do a fantastic job. Full results are: Keelboats – 1st & fastest *The Cadillac* (Peter Chappell, RFBYC); 2nd *Blackbird* (Liam Pabbuwe, RFBYC); 3rd *Pi* (Derek Shellabear, RPYC). Off The Beach – 1st *The Butterfly Effect* (Kate Best & Geoff Munt, RPYC); 2nd *The Wombat* (Lawson McAullay, RPYC); 3rd *Meltemi* (Peach & Andrew Sanders, RPYC). ●

Hoedown

CHANGE OF SEASON

Did you attend?
If not, you missed out. I can’t remember too much, which attests to how much fun I was having. However, one tip I can give is: never follow Graeme White’s lead on the dancefloor when doing the ‘Nutbush’ – you will just end up tripping others over.



PHOTO FREMANTLE SAILING CLUB

#RPYCEVENTS



KEEP UP TO DATE

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REPORT



WORDS
ROB SCHARNELL,
REAR COMMODORE

Smooth Move

OUR NEW REAR COMMODORE IS TAKING CLUB CHALLENGES IN HIS STRIDE AND PROVIDING SOLID SOLUTIONS FOR CHAMPAGNE SAILING INTO THE FUTURE.

I would like to express that I am honoured to represent the membership as Rear Commodore. My appreciation goes to the Flags, General Committee, General Management and, especially, Mark Busio for the support and smooth transition into my new role. We appreciate Mark's service to the club, especially his focus on bringing the club's sail and power communities closer together. The establishment of the Captain Power Regatta role is a great initiative and just one example of Mark's creativity and passion.

As most members would be aware, the Club has had some challenges come up this year with the travel lift, water leaks (both ground and roof) and jetty electrical distribution failures. I sat down with the Commodore and the General Manager early in my transition to review the areas of focus of the House Committee. During the discussion, it was decided to create a Marina & Hardstand

Subcommittee to improve our technical understanding and efforts on these and other issues. The club is fortunate to have a number of members with engineering and construction backgrounds to volunteer their time for this new subcommittee.

The House Committee, which I chair, focusses on safety, sustainability, membership, Crawley grounds and clubhouse, Fremantle Annexe grounds and clubhouse, member events and F&B operations. Due to the already broad agenda, the General Committee decided to place the Marina & Hardstand Subcommittee under the Finance & Risk Committee. More information will be shared as this new committee gets underway.

"We appreciate Mark's service to the club... The establishment of the Captain Power Regatta role is a great initiative and just one example of Mark's creativity and passion"



Rob sailing with a friend off the coast of Sicily. Inset: the RPYC burgee flies high in Europe.

Your House Committee is made up by Tony Strickland, Mike O'Loughlin, John Guhl, Lorraine Bennett, Kim Short, Anna Flanders, General Manager Rick Coate and Operations Manager Estelle Bradley. Mike serves as Chair of the Membership Subcommittee. Please feel free to reach out to any of the committee members to provide your feedback and suggestions. (Also see our list of committees and their members on p1 to make identifying and reaching out to committee members easier.)

I hope everyone enjoyed the Change of Season Hoedown. We paid tribute to Keelboat, Off The Beach and Power seasons with a Sail Past followed by a country Hoedown Party. It was an amazing event that was well attended. Our club management and staff have set a high bar to build on for the years ahead.

Finally, I would like to welcome our new Head Chef Clinton Fox to the food and beverage team. Clinton has broad experience ranging from cafes to production kitchens and even a charter boat in the Med. Welcome Clinton! ●



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CLUB

NEWS

Insider.

All Eyes On **MARSEILLE MARINA** FRANCE

MATT WEARN is the name on everyone's lips at the club, and around the world, this month as he readies himself to take to the waters of Marseille from the Marseille Marina (Roucas-Blanc Marina) for the 2024 Paris Olympics. Matt will be defending his 2020 Tokyo Olympic Gold. If he wins, Australia will have dominated the event since Tom Slingsby won gold at the 2012 London Olympics and Tom Burton took out gold at the 2016 Rio Games. We spoke to him last month on his physical, food and psych prep in the lead up to rigging up on August 1 for his gold medal defence and the Medal Race on August 6. See our story on Matt from p24.

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PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN SAILING, SAILING ENERGY





While Kylie (pictured) and Erin are seasoned racers, Eric (pictured) made his racing debut.

BLIND AMBITION

World champion Kylie Forth and her team Erin McGlew and Eric Seery, with coach Adam Brenz-Verca, are back from the World Blind Match-Racing Championships in Sciez, France. With Kylie on helm, Erin on jib trim and Eric on mainsheet, the team recorded several wins, including against Italy and the United States. They recorded a fifth place overall against eight countries. "A heartfelt thank you to all those who supported our challenge for the World Blind Match-Racing event," says Kylie. "We are a new team and I feel we sailed well, so are excited to work together more and continue to evolve as a competitive force on the international circuit." While Kylie and Erin are veterans at high-level events, it was Eric's first move into this level of racing after stepping off twilighting on *Heaven Can Wait* and into the *Lost at Sea* team only one year ago. RPYC Women's Squad member Kiara Parkinson joined Kylie and team at the eleventh hour to carry jackets and boost the cheering on land. This competition gives the newly formed team much-needed international experience for future events.



Genevieve and Grant are leading the world in inclusive sailing.

INTERNATIONAL REPORT

WORDS ANDREW MCAULLAY

Our Vice Commodore brings us up to date with our sailors on the world circuit.



BACK-TO-BACK AGENDA

World champion inclusive sailing team Genevieve Wickham (RPYC) and Grant Alderson (RFBYC) will be back on the lake at Rutland, in the UK, from September 30 to defend their 2023 RS Venture Connect Class World Championship gold medal win.

Their win last year placed the pair at the forefront of inclusive sailing globally. "As we step forward into a new World Sailing strategy that focusses on inclusivity, it is positive to see classes like this RS Venture Connect embracing the change, and putting in fantastic efforts to support and grow Para and Inclusive sailing," said Hannah Stodel, Para World Sailing manager at World Sailing. We wish Grant and Genevieve all the best!

INSIDER NEWS

Catch up on the latest.

PORSCHE
Destination
Charging



SUSTAINABILITY KEEPING IT CLEAN

Our operations team and Porsche struck a deal for two RPYC EV charging stations at the Club. As a celebration, charging is free to members until August 31. The charging stations are located next to the GM's office and opposite the bike racks near OTB. Sustainability is a key focus for the club as it continues to look at ways to lessen its environmental impact. Keep in mind that these charging stations are in these two locations when looking for that cheeky park on a packed sailing day.

NEXT GEN CHAMPION

Orlando Ligovich was the recipient of a 2024 Ron Tough Yachting Foundation grant in May this year. Why? This young gun qualified for the Australian Optimist Sailing Team in the Optimist Asian & Oceanian Championship in November this year. Orlando is one of 10 sailors representing Australia at the Asians. Coached by eastern states-based Jack Lewis, he attended a special training camp with other AOST sailors at Adelaide Sailing Club recently. "We were supported by some fantastic coaches, it was also great training alongside the Worlds and Euros teams," says Orlando. He has been enjoying supplementing his training with some transitional sailing in an ILCA 4, which he says he is really enjoying.

NUMBER CALL

40,053

The number of plastic water bottles our water-filling station (located near the Catalina Bar) has saved from potential use at the time of going to print.



PHOTO AUSTRALIAN SAILING, WORLD BLIND MATCH-RACING EVENT, PORSCHE



--- HOEDOWN ---
LOWDOWN

Royal Perth Yacht Club event coordinator Joanne takes us into the Change of Season event.

"As an event coordinator, there's nothing more satisfying than seeing all the moving parts of an event come together just as envisioned. Our recent Change of Season Hoedown was no exception. The atmosphere was electric, thanks to the amazing Scarlett's Way Duo and The Sheds Band. The bucking bull was a crowd favourite, as were the roving fire performers and new head chef Clinton's BBQ skills. Free gelato and an American-style BBQ had everyone coming back for more. See our full gallery of images and story on our RPYC Facebook.

SPAIN & FRANCE

Matt Wearn and Ethan McAullay (pictured above) competed in the Princesa Sofia Regatta (Palma, Spain), with Matt placing 5th and Ethan placing his best yet in a world cup: 7th. It's the first time we have had two RPYC sailors in a Medal Race at an event at this level. Both sailors competed in the French Olympic week event at Hyeres, with Matt placing 2nd and Ethan placing 6th (there was no Medal Race due to winds). Read what Ethan has to say about the event, p23.

THAILAND

Ailee Milne represented RPYC in Pattaya, Thailand, at the IWCA's Songkran Open. She placed 2nd (female) and 13th (overall).

SPAIN

Lawson McAullay competed at the ILCA U21 Europeans, Port De Pollensa, Mallorca Spain, finishing 26th. He also competed in the Spanish leg of the ILCA Europa Cup in Pollensa, Majorca, which is a lead-in to the European U21 Championships. In a generally windy event, he placed 1st (U21) and 3rd (overall).

PORTUGAL

ILCA 4 sailor Addison Heatley was selected to represent Australia at the ILCA 4 Youth Worlds in Viana Do Castelo Portugal. Competing against 150 sailors, her best result was 28th. Congratulations!



Sixty-five boats hit the start line in the DIGGERS CUP. Congratulations to those who took part, and thank you Graeme White for the Anzac Day speech.

MEMBERSHIP

WELCOME ABOARD

Our Commodore, Flag Officers and members of the General Committee extend their warmest welcome to those who have decided to make Royal Perth home to their onwater life.

New members include: Mikayla Kostecki, Kane Morphett, Isaac Cooper and Megan Depiazzi, John and Gail Dodd, Tom Hill, Dean Kalweit, Jason Madalena, Callum McCracken, Murray Tegart, Penny and Dr Paul Young and their children Lucy, Abigail and Henry, Ken Wilson, Tymen Brom, Paul Daly, Jessica Stokes, Gustavo Togeiro De Alckmin, Camille Vissouarn, Gabrielle Foster, Sarah Knight, Steve Lionello and Jill Rundle, Paul Muscat, Daniel Rodrigues, Hannah Cornwell, Matthew Daly, Naomi Philipse, and William Parsons.

Returning We are also delighted to welcome back Mark de San Miguel, Don Rechichi and Robert and Rebecca Osborn.

RPYC BURGEE GOES GLOBAL



Where in the WORLD

COMPETITION

WIN A BOTTLE OF WINE IN OUR FIRST RPYC 'WHERE IN THE WORLD' IMAGE COMPETITION.

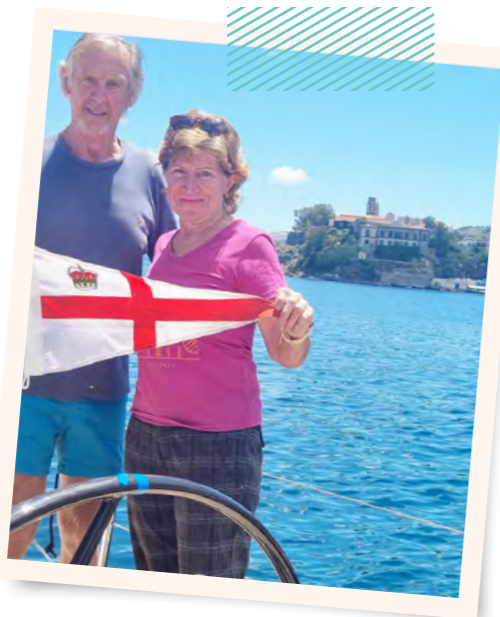
Here we ask you to guess 'Where in the World?' our burgee is in the image. Your accuracy could win you a bottle of wine (and we've wrangled one from the high-end section of the wine list). So put on your thinking head and tell us where our burgee is located in the image (right).

WE WANT TO KNOW: Country and city.

HERE'S A TIP:

The image is thanks to our Rear Commodore Rob Scharnell.

SEND IN YOUR ANSWER TO: reception@rpyc.com.au with the subject line 'Where in the World' by August 20. Best of luck!



RPYC MEMBERLING

Among the new members welcomed into the club in June, there was one who was carried up to the podium for their welcome pack. It wasn't due to the house red, but rather Past Commodore Shawn Offer and his wife Annabelle signing up 20-month-old daughter Florence (pictured above with our Commodore). She's the youngest member of RPYC. Congratulations and welcome!

PHOTO RPYC MEDIA



SOCIAL MEMBERSHIP

ROYAL PERTH YACHT CLUB

FROM JUST \$12.25 / WEEK

- 24 / 7 GYM
- RESTAURANT
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- FUNCTIONS
- ACTIVITES
- & MORE!

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

Discover the Royal Perth Yacht Club's Social Membership, with exclusive access to premier function rooms by the river, vibrant social events, Members bar and restaurant, and the chance to embark on sailing adventures.

Come and join the fun today!



SCAN HERE FOR MORE INFORMATION



Make the most of your

MEMBERSHIP



RIVER CRUISE TO THE ANNEXE AND A NIGHT AT THE THEATRE + MORE!

PLEASE COMPLETE OUR SHORT SURVEY.

We are committed to enhancing your Membership experience and are excited to present our 'Membership Value Add Initiatives'. We want to hear from you!



PEOPLE & PROVENANCE

Our archivist brings you up to date on the rich history of our club – from members to moments and facts to folly.

WORDS JON READHEAD, ARCHIVIST

25- & 50-YEAR Reunion Luncheon

Another successful luncheon was held on May 8 with 84 attendees consisting of five members receiving their 50-year pins and eight members receiving their 25-year pins. There were six 50-year and 12 25-year recipients who were not in attendance. The total membership on the day was a staggering 3579 years, not bad for a bunch of old blokes. The food was great, as were the stories told, many, of course, highly exaggerated and with little truth. A wonderful afternoon with old friends.

NATURALISTE Display

This display was a success with several unseen historical artifacts on display from past Naturalist races, including an original Mouse Trap Mail device, and we have been requested to repeat the display again in 2025.

DIGGERS CUP & Anzac Day

Again, your Archive Department was able to collect items relevant to the day and arrange a suitable display, which was well received. Several items were on loan, including some from the Hale School Archives, to which we are indebted, particularly to the school's Archivist Emma Withers. In next year's display, we will be featuring one of our own past members, a WW1 veteran AP (Phips) Turnball who lost his life at Gallipoli.

COMMODORES BURNSIDE,

Forbes & the yacht Genesta

By the time you are reading this magazine, a new display featuring the above commodores and the yacht *Genesta* will be in place. There will be many interesting objects on loan from the Burnside and Forbes families on display, so call down to the club and have a look. ●



“Among national assets, archives are the most precious; they are the gift of one generation to another and the extent of our care of them marks the extent of our civilization”

**ARTHUR DOUGHTY,
JULY 1916, DURING THE
BATTLE OF THE SOMME**

NEW DONATIONS

We would like to thank the following members and friends of RPYC for their support and gifting to the RPYC archives.

Frank Rennie Large selection of America's Cup and general sailing books.

Ian Lunt Collection of WW2 Artifacts.

RFBYC Collection of yachting books associated with Royal Perth Yacht Club.

Richard Hullahen (America) Set of rare America's Cup towels.

Andy White A Macmillan Marine Atlas, showing the America's Cup courses in the New England, Newport area.

DROP IN TO THE ARCHIVE ROOM

Just a reminder to members and particularly new members that we have a permanent display of historical records and documents in the Archive Room, so please call in and have a browse and a yarn with your friendly archivist. Contact archivist Jon Readhead on 0408 945 611 or email clubarchivist@rpyc.com.au.

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE How well do you know your Club's history? Put your knowledge to the test in our Archives Quiz to win a bottle of wine.

QUIZ NO 80 Name the explorer whose voyages in 1492, 1493, 1498 and 1502 changed the world. First correct entry drawn wins. Please email your entry to clubarchivist@rpyc.com.au.

Quiz No 79 Kevin Farrell, you are again a winner. Please collect your fine bottle of red from the Archives Room. Last issue's question: What was the smallest yacht to participate in the 1957 Cape Naturaliste and Return Ocean Race? For a clue, check out the Naturaliste Display on the Wardroom landing. The answer: the 22-foot yacht Flamingo.

PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

'Hansa Up' for our Donors

WORDS KYLLIE WHITEHEAD

Have you noticed some bright sails out on the water? That's our new Hansas on our Wednesday sailing days thanks to generous donors and the Rob Carter Foundation.

We ran 33 midweek supported sailing days throughout the 2023/24 Summer Season. Only hot weather and strong winds prevented us from the 44 possible sailing days. Our participants found the onwater experiences fun and formed relationships between themselves, support workers, skippers and crews in our supported programs, which included the Hansa State Championships and our weekend 'Social Sailing' activities.

Thanks to the successful fundraising and generous donations received at the 2023 Finding Freedom luncheon, our two new Hansa 303 dinghies arrived from the eastern states early in the year. The Rob Carter-named Hansa Liberty has been on the water several times since the start of the season. In the past few months, however, it has been undergoing technical development to be an accessible boat for sailors with high-support needs.

Alan Perkins, a former windsurfer and Sailability WA member, has been keen to try out solo sailing with our assistance. We have been working closely with Alan on a seating assessment, installing trunk stability in the seat, as well as technical development work with a port-side hand controller to trim and steer the boat with the servos installed in the boat. We are happy to report success: Alan sailed Rob Carter solo three times during March with a support boat for onwater assistance.

Thank you to the immense support from the Rob Carter Foundation for the purchase of Rob Carter in 2023. Also a big shout out to Graham Brown (volunteer) for his ongoing time and technical skill to develop a hand control that Alan can use independently. It is truly awesome to see Alan sailing solo on the water with us.

At our Volunteer Morning Tea held on May 8, the Rob Dare Memorial Trophy was awarded to Graeme Brown for his time and dedication to develop a single-handed servo control to enable Alan to sail solo. Our Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to Bruce Meakins, for his assistance on shore support (even after sustaining a shoulder injury mid-season). Congratulations to you both. ●

"Alan Perkins, a former windsurfer and Sailability WA member, has been keen to try out solo sailing with our assistance ... We are happy to report success"

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Contact program coordinator Rachael Cox on 0404 145 499 or office@sailabilitywa.org.au; or administration coordinator Kylie Whitehead at admin@sailabilitywa.org.au. Visit www.sailabilitywa.org.au.



IN THE KNOW
PUBLIC RELATIONS
British-Australian actress Miriam Margoyles was in Perth during 2023 filming *Miriam Margoyles Almost Australian*. During her trip she sailed onboard *Heaven Can Wait*, captained by Commodore Dr Janet Hornbuckle, with Kylie Forth and myself. Watch the episode on ABC iView.
FUNDRAISING
We're busy organising our 2024 Finding Freedom luncheon to be held at RPYC on Friday, August 16. Put it in the diary.

Above Past Commodore Gary Griffith with Graeme Brown (top) and Bruce Meakins (above). Below Alan Perkins on Rob Carter.



PHOTO RPYC MEDIA



JOANNE WALSH
EVENTS MANAGER
EVENTS@RPYC.COM.AU

As your Events Manager, I handle all aspects of event planning and execution. I believe that every event is unique, and I'm committed to tailoring each one as best we can to meet your specific needs and exceed your expectations. Our Club offers a diverse range of events to suit every occasion, including corporate conference, weddings, private events, and festive celebrations.

No matter the size or type of event, I'm here to provide a full-rounded approach to make it spectacular.

In addition to private events, I also have the pleasure of planning our Club events and functions. Be sure to attend our next Club event – it's a fantastic way to connect with fellow members and experience the vibrant community here at RPYC. Feel free to reach out to me for any event-related enquiries. You can contact me via email at events@rpyc.com.au or drop by my office at the Club.

P.S. If you see me around the Club, please say hello! I'm always up for a chat!



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WITH ROYAL PERTH YACHT CLUB



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boats, burgers

& Time Trialling

SATURDAY 10TH AUGUST | RPYC CRAWLEY

TIME TRIALLING FROM 1400 | DINNER FROM 1800

WARDROOM BURGER SPECIALS FROM \$15!

**CPYA COURSE #9 | REGISTRATIONS CLOSE WEDNESDAY
7TH AUGUST AT 1700**



TIME TRIAL REGISTER HERE **MORE INFO HERE**



HEAVEN

Seventh

Australian Sailing Team member, Western Australian Institute of Sport athlete and our own Royal Perth club member, Ethan McAullay, takes us onto his international circuit and a seventh place in a World Cup event.

WORDS ETHAN MCAULLAY



Ethan recorded solid results in Palma and Hyeres.

Before leaving for my next European round of training and racing, I sailed in the Etchells Worlds 2024 off Fremantle. Our crew of three included the owner and skipper of Azure, Chris Pratt, and my father, Michael. As experienced Etchell sailors, Chris and Dad offered some great insights into a different style of tactical racing.

This experience definitely gave me a new perspective on ILCA 7 racing, which undoubtedly helped my performances in both the Trofeo SAR Princesa Sofia World Cup Series (ILCA 7 Men) event in Palma and the Semaine Olympique Francaise De Voile (ILCA 7 Men) event in Hyeres (an Olympic week regatta).

The Etchells Worlds meant I arrived in Palma, Spain, a little late and fatigued as I flew out the last night of racing. Luckily, on my arrival, Palma was experiencing some large southerly storms, which meant it was almost impossible to beach launch and I was able to take advantage of that and get some well-needed rest pre-event.

“For the first time in Palma, I sailed with much more consistency and wrapped up the week in 7th place – my highest World Cup result to date and my first Medal Race”

PRINCESA SOFIA World Cup Series, Palma

It is here that I recorded my highest World Cup result to date and my first Medal Race. This regatta provided a wide range of conditions. We had a fresh southerly breeze on day one, followed by four days of lighter sea breezes. In the past, Palma hasn't been my strongest venue. Gold fleet ILCA racing with a sea breeze in Palma Bay would have to be one of the hardest, tightest races going around. The most difficult thing is the ability to be consistent. For the first time in Palma, I sailed with much more consistency and wrapped up the week in 7th place – my highest World Cup result to date and my first Medal Race.

SEMAINE OLYMPIQUE Francaise De Voile, Hyeres

This French Olympic week event commenced in Hyeres, France, just two weeks after Palma. It was different to previous years as it was the final Olympic qualifier for Paris. This meant we had two regattas running simultaneously, one event for those nations trying to qualify and another for the qualified countries. The qualified nations regatta was essentially the ILCA gold fleet from Palma the week prior combined into the one 70-boat fleet, making for some excellent tough, tight racing.

The event was definitely the windiest and coldest in which I've ever competed. We raced in the famous mistral wind over four days, then experienced an easterly with pouring rain on one day. Here, I sailed another really consistent week and was able to discard a

score of 24. I wrapped up in 6th place, another result of which I'm extremely proud. Unfortunately, the Medal Race was cancelled due to strong winds on the last day.

Next up for me was a two-week break before heading to Marseille to train with (fellow RPYC member and Olympic team member) Matt Wearn for his Olympics preparation, then on to racing in the Kieler Woche in Germany in mid-June. ●

**HEARTFELT THANKS
GO OUT TO ALL THE
PEOPLE WHO HAVE MADE
THE TRIP POSSIBLE:**
The Australian Sailing Team,
Royal Perth Yacht Club, my
incredible sponsor Joest and
the Ron Tough Yachting
Foundation for its continued
support of my campaign.

Laser FOCUS

On the eve of the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, we speak with our homegrown champion Matt Wearn on how he's preparing for a potential back-to-back gold.

AS TOLD TO ANNA FLANDERS

Our Olympic champion Matt Wearn will take to the water off Marseille in France in an ILCA 7 on August 1 to defend not only his 2020 Tokyo Olympic title, but also Australia's winning streak of this event since 2012. He's going into the event after a strong performance last year in Marseille at the Paris 2024 Olympic Test Event where he won convincingly. More than 12,000 people will be on the ground at the Marseille Marina (Roucas-Blanc) to watch him compete, while a global audience of more than three billion is expected to watch on the small screen (not to mention a large contingent of RPYC members). We chat with Matt on the eve of the Games to ask how he's feeling heading into the event and what he's doing to get himself in the best position to bring home that gold.



ITW It's only two weeks away, so how are you feeling right now in yourself about the approaching 2024 Paris Olympic Games?

MW I am feeling good at this point. Our preparation is going well and we are meeting all our targets in training and at the regattas leading up to this point. As always, it feels like we could do with more time. However, we would also be happy if the Games were to start tomorrow. ▶

"I was told at a young age that pressure is a privilege and I have learned to love it. If anything, it is a positive for me"



PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN SAILING SAILING ENERGY



“I AM A FIRM BELIEVER THAT IT’S IMPOSSIBLE TO SAIL THE PERFECT RACE, so I am constantly trying to get as close to that as I possibly can every time I am on the water. This moving target makes it easy to push harder each day and to continue to try to get the best out of myself”

► **ITW Is it daunting heading into the Games as the defending Olympic and World champion in your class?**

MW It is certainly a challenge at times, but I am in a very privileged position. In Tokyo, it was the same situation when you consider the success we had as a class at the previous Olympics in London and Rio, so I feel I am prepared to deal with this pressure and expectation. This is a position in which I find myself at any event, so I’ve had plenty of practice. I was told at a young age that pressure is a privilege and I have learned to love it. If anything, it is a positive for me.

ITW In terms of getting yourself ready for the Olympics, what are you doing right now?

MW I am solely focused on the Olympics. Training is in full swing and there is rarely a moment that I am not doing something that positively impacts my build up to the Games. A typical week is getting up at 7am and back to bed by 9pm, with double training sessions in between. I typically try to have four to

five hours between each session to recover as much as possible. Without disclosing the specifics, the program includes:

- 3 x 1hr gym sessions (1 x lower body focus, 1 x upper body focus, 1 x mixed session)
- 2 x 1-1.5hr high-intensity bike sessions
- 1 x 2-3hr low-intensity bike ride
- 5 x on-water sessions (usually each between 2.5-3hr)
- 1 x complete day off.

ITW Do you need to be eating anything specific, and will that change in the week of the Games?

MW To fuel myself throughout the day, I am usually eating up to three main meals and two smaller meals to help the recovery straight after a session. For every hour I am on the water, I am also eating energy bars and sports drink to help fuel the sessions. My diet changes depending on the conditions we expect for the following day. If we know we are going to have lighter breezes, we try to keep the meals on the lighter side; if we expect a

stronger breeze, it’s heavier. This can range from chicken and salad to a big heavy pasta. We can save up to a kilo of body weight and not store any unneeded energy through doing this.

Science in Sport (SIS) is my go-to nutrition company and from where I get my supplements. I eat its Go Energy Bars and usually will have one per race on the water. This is usually accompanied with some form of simple jam, peanut butter or Nutella sandwich to get some ‘normal’ food in my stomach on the longer days. On the windy days, I will also usually have a gel before each race as an easy-to-absorb form of nutrition. For hydration, it depends on the heat, etc, but I will usually drink three litres of fluid while out sailing. This is in the form of the SIS Go Electrolyte Powders, which have the carbohydrates and sugars in it, as well as the SIS Hydro Tablets, which are pure electrolytes with no sugar or carbs.

ITW What sort of team do you have around you?

MW I have a team that is looking after my physical program, which they track daily and make adjustments when needed. We also meet weekly to get a better understanding of how I am feeling and tracking with the program. My physical team consists of four main people – they are: Dan Tilley, who looks after my strength program; Julia Casadio, who looks after the general physical program, sets my sessions, tracks the data and is usually the one to tell me if I need a day off or need to work harder in certain areas; Samantha Lewis, who is the dietitian who writes my meal plans and makes sure I am meeting weight targets and fuelling properly; and a physio (I have a handful of physios available depending on my location in the world, but we always have at least one at any event to help with recovery and any injuries that may pop up over time).

I also track my sleep through an Oura Ring to make sure I am getting the quality of rest that is needed to perform each day. This is also a way for my physiologist to get a heads up if I am about to get sick or injured. The Oura collects data and if certain numbers are outside of a baseline area, we can put in place what’s needed to ensure I don’t lose too many training days.

Whenever I am on the water, I have my coach Rafa (Trujillo) with me. We have a great relationship and have put in plenty of time working on the areas we need to focus on the most when out sailing.

ITW What about your mental health?

MW Mental recovery is just as important as the physical recovery, so when I have my weekly day off it is usually filled with doing something enjoyable, but also not too strenuous. This usually means a walk to the nearest coffee shop, going for a quick swim and enjoying a little treat from a bakery. You’ve got to have something to look forward to each week! Otherwise, it’s just laying down and watching a movie to make the most of the rest day and to prepare for the next big week of training.

ITW How does this program change as time moves closer to the Olympics?

MW As we get closer to the Olympics, we will start to back off on the long, hard sessions and start to become more specific with the on-land training. All the work should be nearly done, so it becomes about topping things off and getting as fresh as possible before racing starts.

ITW When the world’s top sailors all converge on Marseille Marina, I’m sure you’re seeing friends and competitors you’ve known for many years – how do you keep yourself focused?

MW Luckily, I spend a lot of my time training with the majority of other countries that will be at the Olympics, so it won’t feel that different. The coaches put on plenty of organised racing in the months leading up to the Games, so we get a great chance to race each other quite a lot. Even though most of us are good friends, when the Olympics start everyone gets a little bit more distant. Not a lot of chatting goes on in the boat park and everyone gets a bit serious.

ITW ... and your accommodation?

MW The Australian Team makes us feel like we are at home and makes sure the accommodation is the best it can be. We won’t be spending much time with the other countries outside of the boat park.

ITW How do you need to prepare your boat prior to racing?

MW Our boat is supplied to make the competition as fair as possible. We show up with only our ropes and get about a week to get to know the boat. We aren’t allowed to change any piece of equipment on the boat we are given, so fingers crossed for a good one.

ITW What happens on the morning of your first race?

MW The first day of racing is pretty similar to any other for me. I am usually in a good rhythm with my sleep by this point, so I wake up at the same time every morning and prepare for the day. Getting food and drinks sorted, and a small warm up, usually fills in the morning quite quickly. Before you know it, you are rigging and getting on the water. I have spent years learning how to switch on and off mentally. So, if there is any waiting for wind or other fleets to finish racing, I can usually do this quite quickly to make sure I am not fatiguing myself mentally for no reason.

ITW Once you are on the water, how do you stay focused? And what sailing conditions do you expect on the course?

MW Sometimes it’s more about calming down at the Olympics. It’s very easy to get caught up in the helicopters and TV cameras following you around on the water, so it’s important to stay relaxed and not let it excite you too much. Usually my coach Rafa and I have set jobs and information gathering about the wind and tides that we need to do when we first get to the racecourse, so that usually keeps me distracted and in the right frame of mind. We have spent quite a lot of time in Marseille getting used to the conditions, which are usually light to moderate winds with a choppy sea state.

ITW When you walk out with the Australian team at the start of the Games, what will you be thinking and how will you be feeling? It must be quite overwhelming...

MW This is a very emotional time. It’s an honour to represent Australia, and it puts all the hard work you’ve done up until this point into context. This Games, we won’t be able to attend the opening ceremony due to how close it is to the start of our competitions (sailing starts on July 28), but the Australian Team usually puts on a nice viewing party for the athletes to attend. It’s a nice last moment to spend with everyone before having to get into the racing.

ITW This is your second Olympics and you have been competing at a high level for a decade – how do you get to the top and stay at the top?

MW To get to the top and stay at the top of anything takes a lot of dedication and discipline. However, I am also a firm believer that it’s impossible to sail the perfect race, so

I am constantly trying to get as close to that as I possibly can every time I am on the water. This moving target makes it easy to push harder each day and to continue to try to get the best out of myself.

ITW Your foundation years of sailing were at RPYC – does knowing the whole club is behind you and incredibly proud of you ever pass your mind or help in any way?

MW It’s amazing knowing the support I have back home from everyone at RPYC. It’s also an honour to represent the club that has been such a big part of my life from the beginning of my career. I quite often think back to those early days of sailing my optimist on Matilda Bay or being in a Pacer for the club teams racing, and I smile at the opportunities that gave me and also the enjoyment I got from being a part of the club.

ITW We hear that dealing with the post-Olympics period is something that’s important – can you explain this?

MW The plan post-Olympics can be just as important as the plan leading up to the Olympics. You need to have something in place for the weeks and months after it is all over. This can be as simple as a holiday or just spending time at home. If you have nothing planned, it can quite often affect your mindset while you are racing. The distraction of having no plan can quite easily be what occupies the mind at some inopportune times.

ITW When will you be back in Perth?

MW I will be heading back to Perth straight after the Olympics to spend some time with family and friends as I have been in Europe since February. After the Tokyo Games, I missed all the celebrations post-Olympics back home as I had to take the opportunity to stay overseas. I am hoping I can make amends for that this time and share my experience with everyone while it is still fresh.

ITW Good luck, Matt! We wish you great racing and look forward to a celebration back at the club – drinks on us! Except, of course, if you bring home gold: then you will need to ring the bell and shout the bar... it’s tradition. ●

Matt will be taking to the waters off Marseille to defend his title from August 1. We will be following his Olympic journey and posting updates on our social media.

THE

PIRATE



PHIL SOMERVILLE-RYAN IS AN INSTITUTION... HE'S GOT MAJOR OFFSHORE SAILING CRED, MORE SEA MILES UNDER HIS BELT THAN WE CAN COUNT AND IS UNIVERSALLY KNOWN AS ONE OF THE GOOD GUYS ON THE WATER. HE ALSO HAPPENS TO BE OURS. WE TIP OUR CAP TO THIS LEGEND AND HIS LOYAL STEAD HUCKLEBERRY - R131.

WORDS ANNA FLANDERS PHOTOGRAPHY ANITA WYNTJE, RPYC MEDIA, SHOOT THE BREEZE

FIRST UP, LET'S MAKE IT CLEAR. YOU CAN'T BECOME A PIRATE. YOU ARE BORN A PIRATE, OR YOU'RE NOT.

THAT'S PASSED ON *from the downward tilted head and under the thick grey eyebrows and twinkling eyes of the legend himself: PHIL SOMERVILLE-RYAN. And it's delivered in such a way that you're not entirely sure if he has access to some ancient wisdom or he's just simply pulling your leg.*

X

PHIL, OUR LEGENDARY PIRATE,

and his ride-or-die S&S34 Huckleberry, have been a much-loved duo on the river and offshore racing circuits for the past 10 years. You can tell when he's near from the buccaneer call of 'Arrrrr' on the water, on the land or when Phil is taking the podium. While, around the club, it's shared in hushed tones that he's rumoured to have an authentic Spanish silver piece of 8.

So let's clear that up. Is he a pirate? His great-great-grandfather William Ryan, a trading captain, was renowned as a seafaring "scoundrel", who later dropped the French-Scottish 'Somerville' in front of the Irish 'Ryan' to create a more respectable hyphenated surname for what Phil describes as a "dodgy land deal". So his pirate provenance seems legit.

Does he have a piece of 8? He does indeed. It was the payment from a diver for some boat work he carried out in the West Indies. It was in the late 70s, Phil was in his early-20s and he was sailing around the world on *Riot 8* - a 10m Van de Stadt (built by Laurie Millman) - with two mates from Geraldton (Noel Drage and Henry Truschell, who in Phil's words, "have now passed over the bar").

Today, Phil is an institution in the West Australian sailing community. However, like Russell Crowe, Phar Lap and Pavlova, he actually originates from New Zealand. Born and raised in Tauranga, which is on the North Island's Bay of

Plenty, he moved to Perth as a 20-year-old in 1976 to find work. Now 68 years of age, he doesn't remember a time when he didn't sail.

Phil started out on the Tauranga P Class. This seven-footer was designed in 1919 (by a friend of Phil's step-father, a civil engineer named Harry Hight) for single-handed junior sail training. Entering the New Zealand waters en masse in 1924, then with quarter-inch planks and gunter-rigged cotton sails, it's credited with being behind the world-renowned skills of NZ's sailors not because it's good for learners, but because it's difficult to sail. It's been quoted that "if you can master the P Class, you can sail almost any boat". And that grounding has paid Phil (who remembers sailing with those cotton sails) in good stead.

"We sailed around the world for two years, between 1977 and 1979, leaving from the Raffles Hotel. It was fantastic, but it was back in the days before GPS and the other instruments people have now. We just had one rule: keep sailing west. We did run into trouble, but it was nothing we couldn't handle," says Phil.

One such 'trouble' was in North Yemen, when he and his two mates ran aground after mistaking a search light for a beacon. It took them three days to remove themselves from a sandbar while the Yemenite War was being fought on a nearby sand dune. "We could hear the gunshots and see the fighting," laughs Phil. "But we weren't involved in the war, so they didn't take any notice of us. We were fine."

This devil-may-care attitude on the exterior belies an incredibly kind man on the inside who goes above and beyond to help fellow sailors. Everyone is equal as crew ▶

“PEOPLE HAVE NO IDEA HOW MUCH HE HELPS PEOPLE – he exemplifies what a good club member should be”

HILARY ARTHURE

under his eyes, no matter if you can see, hear or walk; he’s encouraging to newcomers; and he has fixed more motors and boats for fellow members than we have space to mention.

Few will know that he called fellow RPYC member Hilary Arthure, of *Wyuna*, on the morning of her departure in the Sydney to Hobart last Boxing Day, then checked in on her several times over the course of the race. Similarly, Anita Wyntje (former Vice Commodore of Fremantle Sailing Club) says he called her and followed her on her journey up and down the WA coastline in the 2023 Fremantle to Exmouth Race and Rally. And they aren’t one-offs or definitive of his generosity of time and skills. “Well, wouldn’t you like to know that someone’s got your back,” says Phil when asked about his calls.

“Underneath a crusty exterior, he’s a true gentleman,” says Anita, “And a true sportsman who strives for excellence and achieves it ‘old school.’” Hilary describes him as “an incredibly kind man”. “People have no idea how much he helps people – he exemplifies what a good club member should be,” she says. Perhaps that altruistic trait comes from his mother, who received an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) for her contribution to education, the women’s equality movement and community service. Quite a trail-blazer.

“The offshore sailing community owes a huge debt to Phil,” adds Hilary. “He is very special to us and we hold him in the highest regard.” It was Phil who was intimately involved in the rescue of four *Finistere* crew in the devastating, and fatal for two crew members, accident off the WA coast near Mandurah in the 70th Bunbury and Return Ocean Race in 2018. The search team had been looking in the wrong area due to a false signal. “I knew it wasn’t right because the boat was upside-down with the sails set, so it would be in the direction of the tide,” says Phil. “The tide had pushed it further to the north.”

He used his ‘old school’ skill to quickly find the likely position of the boat, and he and his crew helped in the rescue. “It was just after midnight and we saw the rudder through the silhouette of the search helicopter lights,” shares Phil. “It was pitch black and the rudder was ▶



**Q&A:
THE
QUICK
SIX**

THOUGHTS ON SAILING?

“It’s a great leveller, particularly ocean sailing. The fact that very wealthy people are going to such lengths to keep the poor people out of it tells you that it’s a great leveller. It’s not like riding a pushbike. The wind can swing around and even the worst sailor can have a good day and beat the best.”

HOW TO FIX MEMBERSHIP?

“There seems to be a breakdown between the junior sailors moving on to become club members at a senior level. Everyone has a crew shortage problem. Everywhere clubs are struggling for members and financials. We are seeing a rush of masts disappearing out of the pens and the clubs are starting to go downhill. But the camaraderie and social side of the club is the yachties.”

DESCRIBE WEDNESDAY RACING...

“There are still a few Farris and things to keep you honest. Then you turn around and there’s a bloody S80 right behind you.”

WHAT PRICE SPORTSMANSHIP?

“If you can help someone, it’s the best thing to do. I’ve always believed in that. It comes from a working background. Likewise, if you can avoid a major collision you should do so. And that’s actually written in the COLREGs.”

WEST VS EAST SAILORS?

“There are a lot of very good sailors in Perth. If you sail a bit on the East Coast, they look at 25 knots as a strong wind warning. We’re looking at 25 knots and putting up our big spinnakers. Perth has bred some very good sailors.”

EVOLUTION OF OFFSHORE RACING?

“It’s been dumbed it down. Honestly, the new boats are favoured. The bigger boats go around imaginary marks. Well, that imaginary mark takes them clear of all the rocks. With our smaller draughts, we used to be able to go inside the rocks and gain four or five miles. So we could keep them honest. But, nowadays, progress has dumbed it down.”



“Phil himself, and Huckleberry, are much missed from the ‘scene’... Phil was one of the few remaining sailors that ‘kept the bastards honest’.

ANITA WYNTJE

black, we could have easily missed them; it was 35 knots when we were pulling in the three people off the back of the boat.” He says he and his crew and those they pulled from the water do catch up, but not as often as they should. “It’s affected everyone dramatically,” he says.

While he has sailed all his life on various boats, it’s his union with the S&S34 *Huckleberry* that was destined. Phil bought *Huckleberry* from Steve Humphries, who was the second owner. And while most boats throughout the world are female, this writer was told resolutely by Hilary, Anita and Phil that *Huckleberry* is a ‘him’. “He’s not a West Wind or an East Wind, or anything else. He’s a ‘Huckleberry’. He had to be a ‘Huckleberry’ as he was built by Merv and Mike Finn. A ‘Huckleberry’ is not female. Underneath the stripes, he’s blue,” says Phil.

Non-politically correct gendering aside, it does feel right that his pronoun is ‘he’. He was designed in 1963 and birthed from the moulds here in Perth in 1982. Two hundred were made; *Huckleberry* was number 106. And his “claim to fame” is that he has a “slightly bigger rudder”. Masculine ego, perhaps? “He’s won everything offshore on this coast at least twice,” says Phil. “One year, he won 19 races off 21 starts, which is pretty incredible. I’ve had great success.”

It’s been said that Phil and *Huckleberry* are one of the toughest competitors in the Cockburn Sound Regatta, and some of the great races were between *Huckleberry* and Andrew Walby’s S&S34 *Swagman*. Phil had sailed on the latter for three years before buying *Huckleberry*, and that perhaps fuelled a rivalry. *Huckleberry* still holds the title for the Fremantle Harbour Race (2020) in which the two S&S34s battled it out like their own match racing regatta.

Above: It seems destined that Phil would end up on the helm of *Huckleberry*. “... he’s a true gentleman... and a true sportsman.”

“We didn’t worry about the rest of the fleet, we were just racing each other, but we got way out the front of the other boats,” he says with a laugh.

Another race Phil remembers is a Bunbury and Return Ocean Race in which *Huckleberry* came second. “We lost by 12 seconds. We were coming in to finish in the middle of the night. We were all tired, so decided not to put up the spinnaker. We coasted through the line and lost by 12 seconds. It goes to show that you should never, ever stop trying.”

In recent times, *Huckleberry* was one of the smallest boats to persist with offshore with a heavy displacement hull. “On paper, little competition for the modern boats; in reality, hard to beat on handicap because of persistently, and consistently, fine sailing,” says Anita. “He can take out a boat – and bring her home – in any conditions without fancy gear or instruments, just fine seamanship. He is a great navigator, tactician, helmsman and captain. He and his boat are tough – not stupid, but tough.

“Phil himself, and *Huckleberry*, are much missed from the ‘scene,’” she says of his retirement from offshore racing. “However, more than that, Phil was one of the few remaining sailors that ‘kept the bastards honest’. It has been great to see King Canute wear those shoes this year – hopefully others will be encouraged to join in again, so we see a bigger range of boats and the sort of competition that isn’t dominated by big budgets.”

Phil is continuing to race on the river, but he hasn’t said goodbye to nights spent on the boat. “When you’ve sailed around the bar a little too much and you sleep on *Huckleberry*, then look out and see the sun come up, it’s very pleasant,” laughs Phil. His sleepovers extend further

up and down the coastline, too, one recently for four months up the coast. He’s installed a lithium battery for his toaster and sets sail with partner Leonie (coincidentally a niece of Drake Sparkman – one half of the S&S) and his whippet Lucky (who was stillborn, but survived, hence the name).

Looking back, what are some of the most memorable experiences on the water? “When we came out of the Panama Canal (in the 70s) and headed to the Pacific Ocean, we motored for a week and a half, but didn’t have much fuel left. So we sat there, in the Pacific Ocean, and waited for about two weeks for wind,” shares Phil. “We spent that time swimming around the boat. But, when the wind finally arrived, the boat started to move off while we were in the water, and it was moving almost quicker than I could swim. No-one was going to come out and save us from the middle of the Pacific Ocean back then! Now I have a rule: don’t leave the boat.”

He also points to a time when sailing down south with his young daughter Simone (now in her 30s). A humpback whale swam alongside the boat. It was so close that Phil could hold out his daughter over the side while she stroked the enormous whale’s head as it looked at her. “It was so aware of where it was in the water. It never touched the boat and stayed within an arm’s length from us,” says Phil.

So, how does sailing in Western Australia stand up to the rest of country? “Here teaches you a lot about sailing. The coastline is unforgiving. There’s nowhere to run and hide.” Phil, however, doesn’t intend to get himself into any big, dangerous seas. “That’s for Jon Sanders. I look at the weather and avoid that type of stuff. It’s a lot better to be tied off in a safe marina and sitting in a coffee shop or pub when a storm hits. Yes, the boat would be okay and I could go through it, but why bother?”

And that sums up Phil. He’s a man who is as comfortable on land as he is on the sea. Sailing is as natural as breathing for him, and he doesn’t need to prove himself: he’s already done it and won it a couple of times over. “I’ve enjoyed it. It’s been an absolute ball,” he says. And there is no plan to stop. ●



PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN SAILING

Below: Phil (centre) and his *Huckleberry* crew were awarded the 2018 Australian Sailing CYCA SOLAS Trust Bravery Award.

SAGE ADVICE

So what are the top five skills or knowledge a sailor should have?

1 NAVIGATION.
You have got to have a practical understanding.

2 MECHANICS.
No matter how much you prepare your boat, something will go wrong.

3 PROBLEM-SOLVING.
Don’t panic: think everything through. Don’t let your first thought be ‘oh, we’re on the bottom’; it should be, ‘how do we get off the bottom’.

4 EMERGENCIES.
Step up into a life raft, don’t step down.

5 SELF-PRESERVATION.
Stay on the boat at all times.

OUR DOYENNE OF RACING

WORDS ANNA FLANDERS

**WHO WILL BE HITCHHIKER'S NEW
CUSTODIAN? THE FASTEST IN THE
WORLD DURING THE EARLY 80S AND
ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S MOST LEGENDARY
YACHTS, WE CELEBRATE THE RED AND
WHITE BOAT AS SHE'S PUT UP FOR SALE.**

HITCHHIKER.

SHE'S WRITTEN INTO AUSTRALIAN SAILING LEGEND.

She's also considered a rockstar on the international stage. However, to those who have crewed her over the past 43 years, she's remembered as a dream upwind, and (there's no polite way of putting this) an utter bitch on the downwind runs. ▶

We needed two people on the helm sailing downwind," laughs Sam Ainsworth, who is the Sailing Master for *Hitchhiker*. He's the son of former crew member, UK Olympian Peter

Ainsworth, and has been on *Hitchhiker* since he was 16 years of age. He is now 42. "When we'd turn to head downwind, we'd ready ourselves for the broaches or a Chinese gybe. She also enjoyed a nosedive."

It doesn't need to be said, but we'll say it anyway: during her career, *Hitchhiker* was the darling of the Australian Admiral's Cup Trials in 1981 and went on to represent Australia at both the 1981 and 1983 Admiral's Cups in Cowes, United Kingdom. She then went on to win line honours in the 1981 World Two Tonne Cup in Sardinia, Italy. This made her the fastest boat in the world at that time, and the once much-coveted Cup is still here in Perth as the race hasn't been contested since.

Hiker, as the original crew called her, went on to almost win the Sydney to Hobart in the same year (1981), win more ocean racing regattas throughout Europe over the next two years, compete in the 1982 Clipper Cup (later named Kenwood Cup) in Hawaii and win the 1982 Southern Cross Cup in New South Wales. Her striking red and white hull and crew uniforms were regulars on the front pages of news media internationally. Those in the global ocean racing scene then, and those who know their history now, remember her well and hold her in high esteem. ▶





On her return to Australia in 1984, *Hiker* took out the inaugural 1984 Hamilton Island Race Week and blew the competition out of the water in the first West Coast Series here in Perth (1984). She also blew out all her sails in the first race almost right on the finish line. The *Hitchhiker* legend, however, is not only her wins, but in the passion of dedicated RPYC member, owner and, it must be said, trailblazer – the late Peter Briggs.

Peter was branding his boat in the early-80s well before brand identity even became a marketing strategy. That happened much later in the mid-90s. He was looking internationally at a time when most Perth skippers weren't even travelling from Perth to the east coast. Peter, Alan Bond, Rolly Tasker and (later) Lawson Klopper were the top names in ocean racing in the 80s. He instilled a mentoring mindset in his elite crew for young sailors on his return to Perth before the mentoring model was widely adopted (even in business). And his inclusive management of the boat, before the term had even been coined, saw sailing legend, and partial quadriplegic, Noel Robins skipper *Hitchhiker* to her international and local wins.

Now up for sale for the first time in her history, the big question on everyone's lips is: who will be *Hitchhiker's* next custodian? We say custodian because, together with Peter, she really belongs to West Australian sailing history. She's bigger than simply a boat. Some would like to see her in the WA Maritime Museum, taking her place alongside *Australia II* and *Parry Endeavour* as one of our three most legendary boats. We hear that Robin Briggs, Peter's wife, would like that, too. However, former crew have raised the idea of her going down in an offshore race and remaining at the bottom of the ocean. That, they say, would be the perfect ending. A rather dramatic, but poetic, full stop.

So what would it mean to buy *Hitchhiker*? "They're buying offshore racing history; they're buying an icon," says Barry Johnson, who

has been sailing on the boat for more than 30 years. "What that boat achieved will never be repeated. She was one in a million. She was unbelievable. Between Peter and *Hitchhiker*, they did so much to encourage the sport in WA. I wonder if that, sadly, has been forgotten."

The legend was born from a Soling. Peter and sailing legend and original *Hiker* helm Noel Robins sailed together on this former Olympic design. It was the boat to be on in the 70s. However, Peter had ocean racing in his sights. He bought a Swarwick 111. It wasn't dynamic enough. So, in true Peter style, he declared: "I want the fastest boat in the world."

Noel arranged lunch with fellow sailing legend Skip Lissiman, who had been sailing the European and US circuits; Skip said German Frers from Argentina was the world-leading guru in naval architecture for offshore racing and SORC winners; and Noel brought in UK sailor Bill Edgerton to manage the boat build in Sydney. The rest is illustrious history.

Frers built on the successful design of his SORC winner *Acadia* and Two Tonne champion *Gitana* to create *Hitchhiker*. She was one of the first ocean racing yachts built using a lightweight Kevlar/foam composite construction. We could get more technical, but you get the idea that she was a high-tech, high-performing boat then and for many years to come.

Hitchhiker was based in Sydney for the start of her career. This meant the majority of crew came from Sydney, such as legend sailor Iain Murray. However, Skip Lissiman, Don McCracken, Jack Baxter and Peter Gilmour were some of the locals. "While Skip was already on the international scene, Don and Peter were kids back then. Peter was 19 when he first went on the boat. Now they are two of the best sailors in the world," says Barry.

During her time on the water, hundreds of sailors have been over her rails. Many of these crew still keep in touch. Sam

(Ainsworth) says it's a mix of her hairy downwind exploits and Peter's ability to bring people together that created a feeling of camaraderie among the *Hiker* crew. That camaraderie still exists today. At a wake at Royal Perth Yacht Club in 2022 after Peter's funeral all the old crew came dressed in their red jackets. It was once controversial for the red and white to be worn within the hallowed walls of the RPYC clubhouse, but the colour combination is now part of club rules.

Back in the 80s, ocean racing was the realm of big bank balances and even bigger egos. You only have the look at the main players – Alan Bond and Peter. But as much as ego was at play, Peter had a sentimental side. While his family was his first big love, his boat was his "pride and joy" and his cars were up there, too. But it was with *Hiker* that he wanted to make a difference.

Peter wanted to give something back to sailing in WA. On her return to his home state, he was adamant to not only race *Hiker* regularly in RPYC club races and offshore, but also "bring some young ones in". He felt he had been fortunate to have achieved what he had in offshore racing overseas, so he needed to give back. It was an opportunity for the young sailors to gain experience on a high-performance, high-tech boat. The likes of Chris Sherlock, John Foster, Mark Thomas, Grant Alderson, Dean McAullay and Murray Smith, to name a few, all stepped across her rails.

"We say custodian because, together with Peter, she really belongs to West Australian sailing history. She's bigger than simply a boat. Some would like to see her in the WA Maritime Museum, taking her place alongside Australia II and Parry Endeavour as one of our three most legendary boats"

Grant, a world champion himself, remembers sailing on her to Geraldton and back as a teen. "We didn't have GPS back then, and I remember we ended up in the reefs. I was helming and I had Nils (Blumann) on the foredeck yelling back to me to go up or down," laughs Grant. "We didn't even get a scratch." He said it was exciting to get the call to be asked onto *Hitchhiker*. "She is absolutely legendary," reiterates Grant. "There was something special about her when you saw her on the river."

Peter remained passionate and, according to Sam, no expense was spared on the boat. "She always looked immaculate," he laughs. "I remember times when we had a crash or something broke and we would do anything and everything to have it fixed in time for racing the next day or week. Everyone just did what they had to do, and money talks, so things just got fixed no matter what."

While Peter was the skipper, he rarely touched the tiller. When he did, however, his starts were the stuff of legend. "It's hard to say if he knew the rules. He definitely knew port and starboard. But he was always optimistic he would get through. I said to him many times, 'Pete, give them room', but he'd just take out a boat," says Barry. *Hiker* was bulletproof, the others not so much. "He'd just ask us to find out the damage and sort it. That was Pete," says Barry.

Sam remembers his upwind runs with Peter on the tiller and himself sitting nearby waiting to grab it. "We were always nervous when he was on the tiller," laughs Sam. But he never touched it sailing downwind. "He'd sit on the rail at the back of the boat and everyone used to think 'Christ, Briggsy, if we roll, you're going over the side,'" laughs Barry. "But, you know, he just used to sit there and he never yelled at the crew. He never told the crew what they'd done wrong. He just loved it. And he loved to see other people having fun, even though he was paying the bills."

And it was fun. There are memories of getting the boat ready to cross the Nullarbor; booking a seat on a plane for a new foil to jet from Sydney to Brisbane for the Hamilton Island Race Week; fixing a hole in her hull and giving her a new paint job overnight to make her race-ready the next day; the red-and-white-themed parties at Peter's house; and the get-togethers post-race with the 'Shore Things', which was the name emblazoned onto the backs of the wives' and girlfriends' *Hitchhiker*-t-shirts. They'd be termed a more politically correct 'WAGs' if ocean racing were still featured on the back of *The West* as regularly as it did back in the 80s.

But sailing on *Hitchhiker* also had its moments. "My wife can remember me coming home from ocean racing in the early hours of the morning, stepping into the shower and groaning 'I'm never going back'," says Barry. The cause being that notorious downwind run. Barry would sit on the leeward side pushing the tiller as the boat was heading into a broach, while Noel was on the windward side pulling it. "We would round up and over, and I'd spend most of my time with my neck just out of the water," remembers Barry. But, like the others, he always went back.

"She had a real quirk about her," laughs Barry. However, as he and Sam both say, Peter loved her, and the crew idolised Peter. "The young ones of today wouldn't know how to sail her. That's one of the biggest issues we've got with any boat that's got runners and a masthead rig like that. They are difficult boats to sail. They're incredible to sail, but they are difficult. But she's certainly an icon." So, the question remains: who will be the next custodian? ●



PETER BRIGGS

Remembering Hitchhikers' former custodian...

"We had a marvellous time on *Hitchhiker*, and she served us well. My wish now is that she goes to a good home. I hope someone will enjoy her as much as we did" – ROBIN

Hitchhiker was Peter's love and joy. "It didn't matter if you went to a regatta at Rockingham or whether you went to a regatta in Hawaii. It was exactly the same – *Hiker* had to be in the best condition possible. Peter was pedantic about that" – BARRY

Hitchhiker is only 40ft "... but she is powerful and a big boat in structure. She is heavy and strong: bulletproof. So we didn't suffer the damage that some other boats would have got in similar circumstances" – BARRY

Peter was renowned for being wonderful with the crew. "He was absolutely fantastic. I never had a cross word with him in the 30 years I sailed on the boat. While Pete was Pete, he would listen. It didn't matter who spoke. He would listen" – BARRY

New gear went up all the time. "And Peter had a lot of gear. In fact, you may see some of his gear still on the water. He would often get wind that someone had blown a spinnaker, track them down and hand them an old *Hitchhiker* spare. That was the sort of person he was" – BARRY

"If something went amiss during a race, we'd forget about the bar and stay with the boat to fix her. Peter didn't demand that we did that, we wanted to do that for him and the boat" – BARRY

"*Hitchhiker* is known around the world and it will never, ever lose that identity. That boat is a one in a million to be honest with you. I feel really good that I've sailed on the boat. When it does get sold, I just hope it stays in Perth" – BARRY

"The downwind runs. I will never forget them because they were so hairy. But, at the same time, everyone had confidence in everybody on the boat. No-one ever felt as though they were in any danger. Even though, as I said, they were very hairy. And we had as many issues on the river as on the ocean" – BARRY

Below: 'Shore Things', ... the name emblazoned onto the backs of the wives' and girlfriends' *Hitchhiker* t-shirts.



PHOTO COURTESY SAM AINSWORTH

Homecoming

All hail the delivery crew... Sailing royalty Trevor Taylor and long-standing crew Murray Buchan returned Wyuna from Tasmania to her season of blue water competition on the West Coast.

WORDS HILARY ARTHURE

It is July. And here I am only now getting around to the third episode of *Wyuna's* 2023 east coast adventure: the trip home to the Fremantle Annexe. Space precluded me writing more previously. We have now reached the end of the current Ocean Racing season, so for *Wyuna*, the next stop is the hard stand as there is still some wreckage to be repaired and some planned maintenance and updating.

I would, however, be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank her delivery crew. These people are linchpins in the whole operation. Trevor Taylor and Murray Buchan are central to our delivery back to West Australian waters.

Trevor Taylor (TT) is West Australian ocean-racing royalty. He has done it all. He is a Past Commodore of CYC in Rockingham (on two occasions). He has owned and sailed many yachts, the most recent being his Martens 49 *Optimus Prime*, which won everything in Western Australia, did a Rolex Sydney to Hobart, and a Melbourne to Osaka race with his son.

In addition, Trevor has done a complete Clipper Race as a watch leader. Trevor is amazing and, having had a shoulder reconstruction in October 2023, was quick to reassure me that he was going to be well enough for another trip 'across the bottom'.

Murray Buchan (Muz) is one of my long-suffering crew on *Wyuna*. Now almost 21, he has sailed on board *Wyuna* since he was 14. He could not be considered for this Hobart campaign because he had not clocked up enough blue water ocean miles. He is a man of few words. However, my crew know, if he speaks, listen, as it is worth hearing. Muz and Trevor also know each other from dinghy sailing days in Rockingham.

Trevor and Muz arrived in Hobart on December 31. After joining in the New Year's celebrations on the dock, we set about preparing *Wyuna* for the journey ahead. I had to get a new car fridge; the boat fridge had killed itself during our race. Once the new fridge was installed on the floor at the base of the mast, I went shopping to fill it. The guys requested cereal, fresh bread, milk, cheese, tomatoes and apples. Trevor likes his cereal and toasties. They were also the recipients of our left-over survival meals. Lots of water, tea, milo and heaps of snacks were loaded onboard. Then delivery sails were installed, and the others folded and bricked and put downstairs, too.

Wyuna departed Constitution Dock on January 3. I went with them to the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania for fuel (75L in the tank, 100L in jerry cans). Waving from the shore, I watched them head off down the Derwent.

The original plan had been to sail in company with *Atomic Blonde* (AB). However, the crew of AB intended to be tourists on the west coast of Tasmania, whereas Trevor intended going along the east coast to Portland in Victoria. This they did.

Wyuna arrived in Portland three days later. All was well except it was noticed that there was a problem with the steering cables, which had started to fray. They are wire cables and luckily there was a spare set onboard. Muz changed both, using his mechanical knowledge, and under the guidance of TT. He is certainly a useful crew to have on board. A third-year biomedical science student at the University of Western Australia, he might invent new devices, yet.

Wyuna waited in Portland for *Atomic Blonde* to arrive. They got together to plan what the next move would be. Trevor could see a weather window in coming days and AB was needing to go to Port Lincoln for some repairs, so *Wyuna* set off alone across the Southern Ocean and AB headed to South Australia.

Trevor is an excellent navigator, as well as competent at operating Expedition. He was battling some electronic issues onboard because of there being water everywhere in the electronics before getting to Hobart. He would ring on the satellite phone to report progress, before ringing Steve Humphries on AB for electronic advice. This triangle of calls was a great way of staying connected to them all. Trevor set a course pretty far south and managed to find a following breeze... for seven days. It was not until they turned the corner at Leeuwin that the breeze went around to the nose.

Meanwhile, some housekeeping was in order: I returned to Sydney, gathered what we had left there and packed my car (I keep a car in Brisbane... long story...), and drove to Brisbane. From there, I delivered a very large pile to Pack & Send. Then, I booked a flight to Perth. Gradually



“Trevor is an exceptional leader and the skills Muz has acquired by having such an experience with a fantastic teacher are priceless. I owe them both a huge debt of gratitude”

all the gear that had been littered across four states was being consolidated into two. I arrived back in Perth late at night to hear that *Wyuna* had arrived in Busselton a day early. I was in the car at 0500 the next morning to go and meet Trevor and Muz at Geographe Bay marina.

We had planned to bring *Wyuna* to Busselton so that we could participate in the Geographe Bay Race Week (GBRW). It was emotional to see Trevor and Murray and witness the excellent care they had taken of *Wyuna*. Trevor is an

exceptional leader and the skills Muz has acquired by having such an experience with a fantastic teacher are priceless. I owe them both a huge debt of gratitude.

We had a wonderful time playing at GBRW. A crew of friends, but all with knowledge and expertise, we knew we were lucky to be there. The final leg of *Wyuna's* journey was organised by them. Leaving the marina on the Friday evening after the regatta finished, Kingsley Piesse, Dave Davenport and Charley Riley motor sailed *Wyuna* the last 100nm to her pen at the Fremantle Annexe. This was enabled by Jenny and Dave Spearman driving an extra car to Perth. What wonderfully kind friends and crew.

At 0800 on Saturday, February 10, *Wyuna* tied up in her pen. I owe so many people an enormous debt of gratitude. Kindness, expertise, friendship and know-how made so much happen. I am filled with gratitude towards every single one of them. What an odyssey! *Wyuna* is home... for now.



PHOTO IRONBARK PHOTOS

Cruising



THAILAND

WORDS JANE AND MARK HANNAFORD, 9 LIVES

From dive locations to great mooring tips, Mark and Jane Hannaford take us around the islands and share how to beat the crowds.

We enjoyed summer shore leave in Perth for a few months, then returned to our cruising catamaran *9 Lives* in Langkawi, Malaysia, early in the year. Here, Mark spent a hot and sweaty month on the hard in Rebak Marina to keep an eye over the repainting and antifouling of our hull, servicing of motors and other maintenance. The cost came in at around two-thirds of what it would have cost in Australia. This work made us ready to escape to sea and the islands.

April 2024 was spent cruising off the west coast of Thailand, exploring Phuket and the islands of Phang Nga Bay. The Thai border is just 10 miles north of Langkawi and a 30-day visa is available on entry. We checked in at Chalong on the south coast of Phuket. Immigration, customs and the Harbour Master are all next to one another, which makes the process quick and efficient.

We have been told that some other locations are not as well set up for yachts, and the few days extra allowed for sailing between the border and check in/out are not always allowed by some authorities.

Phuket is 'tourism central' and the bays and islands close by are frequently filled with longtail boats and their noisy 'tuk tuk' motors, fast day-tripper boats with three or four motors at 100-300hp, jet skis and parasailing activities. This area seems a real mecca for Russians, with many businesses Russian-owned. ▶



PHOTO: MARK AND JANE HANNAFORD

“Authorities in this area do a fantastic job of keeping the beaches and waters clean ... when the fast day-tripper boats leave around 4pm, they are wonderfully quiet”

Phi Phi Lei is similarly commercialised and has fully recovered from the tsunami that devastated the area 20 years ago. Big international food chains are present, as are cannabis stores (it's now legalised in Thailand).

Between Phuket and Krabi there are hundreds of limestone islands to be explored in Phang Nga Bay, with caves and swim throughs, but we chose not to get tied up in too many tourist-filled spots. We did, however, notice that wherever there were lots of day-tour operators, they were extremely organised and kept the boats moving in a structured way. We also found many moorings provided for private boats on a first come, first served basis.

Our favourite places along this route were the Similan Islands Marine National Park, which is situated north-west of Phuket (towards the Myanmar border). Boat and visitor numbers are restricted, so passes must be purchased on the mainland prior to arrival. These granite islands, which are renowned for diving, have crystal-clear water with a visibility of at least 20m, plus sandy beaches and tropical forests.

Authorities in this area do a fantastic job of keeping the beaches and waters clean with basic facilities on shore. Most of the islands don't have onshore accommodation, so when the fast day-tripper boats leave around 4pm, they are wonderfully quiet.

The Surin Islands were similar, but with low-key accommodation. The snorkelling is said to be the best in Thailand here, and we did see a fantastic, wide variety of corals and fish, including lionfish, moray eels and, occasionally, a small shark.

Richelieu Rock, which is 15 miles from the Surin Islands, is a lone 40m pinnacle of rock that barely breaks the surface, yet attracts all the dive boats. Diving and snorkelling on this spot was like being in an aquarium, with big schools of various fish swimming by.

We enjoyed our sailing through this area, which was pretty cruisy with flat seas. Like Perth, a land breeze would come in at night, while in the afternoon we experienced five to 10 knot southwest winds. Passages between islands were generally easy day sails with the screecher either at sunrise or late afternoon. The negatives of the trip were large tourist numbers and developments, rubbish and very large jellyfish in coastal areas close to Phuket. However, further offshore we were rewarded with less crowds, clean water and better snorkelling.

We appreciated the ease of finding moorings in the majority of locations, good Thai food, fabulous tropical fruit smoothies and cheap massages. There are several yacht charter companies operating out of Phuket, so it is easy to charter a boat and explore the area (between November and April). Better still, get your own yacht or join a friend and explore the more distant destinations. ●



CRUISING TIPS

WHERE

Phuket and the islands of Phang Nga Bay

WHEN April 2024

CONDITIONS Flat seas with land breezes at night and five to 10 knot south-west winds in the afternoons.

KNOW CHALONG ...

it's the best place to obtain a 30-day visa for Thailand.

AVOID PHI PHI LEI ... it's extremely commercialised.

THUMBS UP to day-tour operators who are extremely organised and the many moorings available for private boats throughout the area.

FAVOURITE Similan Islands Marine National Park (north-west of Phuket, near the Myanmar border) – great diving with visibility up to 20m.

Tip: purchase passes on the mainland (there are restrictions on boat and visitor numbers).

FACT The Surin Islands are said to have the best diving in Thailand.

WE LOVED... diving and snorkelling at Richelieu Rock, which is 15 miles from the Surin Islands; tropical fruit smoothies, Thai food; and cheap massages.

PHOTO MARK AND JANE HANNAFORD



Wedding Open Day

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DRINK

Salty Sommelier

Is it good quaffing? Perhaps more a Friday night fine dining sip with the sup? Or maybe it's pure pleasure on the palate. Our team of four 'salty somms' take us into our wine list.



MICHAEL O'LOUGHLIN
Membership Chair



VERDICT If you are looking for a wine that complements, rather than overpowers, your Wardroom Tuesday roast or pizza from the Catalina Bar, then look to this Tempranillo. Its approachable, savoury profile, also goes well with regional Spanish cuisine, including roasted vegetables and cured meats. Also pour with lasagna, pizza and dishes with tomato-based sauces and barbecue grilled meats and smoky dishes.

TASTING NOTES Tempranillo (pronounced temp-ran-ee-oh) is an early ripening varietal that forms the backbone of the famous wines of Rioja and Ribera del Duero in Spain. The Mazza Tempranillo 2020 has mulberry and blueberry fruit backed by a herbal note and fine full tannins. Superb freshness balances the full body. The 2020 vintage celebrates the 20th anniversary of the owners buying their property. Instead of using European oak, as usual, they aged the wine in American oak. That gives the wine a hint of vanilla, coconut and sweet spices.

PROVENANCE The Mazza Tempranillo by Anne and David Mazza has an interesting backstory. David worked in the resources sector and, while working in London in the 90s, Anne and he travelled to Spain and Portugal. They both loved the wines of the region, so on returning to Australia they bought a small property near Donnybrook in the Geographe region and went into winemaking. In 2002, they planted six red grape varieties - Bastardo, Graciano, Tempranillo, Tinta Cão, Touriga Nacional and Sousão. Their wines have received awards at the London International Wine Fair and The Australian Alternative Varieties Wine Show and are also highly rated by renowned Australian wine critic James Halliday.

CATALINA pizza

MAZZA
Tempranillo, 2020

REGION
Geographe, Western Australia



MIKE KILKULLEN
Past Commodore,
Melee Owner



SKIPPER'S cellar

CREDARO FAMILY ESTATE
5 Tales Cabernet Sauvignon, 2022

REGION
Margaret River, Western Australia

VERDICT I've sampled libations from the shores of five of the seven seas, and the 2022 Credaro Five Tales Cabernet Sauvignon is a true captain's shout, worthy of any skipper's cellar. It's a full-bodied vessel of flavour, navigating the headwinds of your taste buds like a sports boat stuck in a fleet of caravans. Jib up, and set a course for your nearest wine merchant! On the count of 4!

TASTING NOTE The first sip of this fine drop will have ye as giddy as a S80 sailor at the States! A vibrant crimson in the glass, it's as striking as a sunset over the Indian Ocean. The nose is awash with blackcurrant, plum and a hint of mint, as refreshing as a sea breeze. On the palate, you'll find a treasure trove of dark berries, complemented by notes of chocolate and a whisper of oak. With tannins as smooth as a well-weathered deck, the finish is as long and satisfying as the Parmelia Night Race.

PROVENANCE The Credaro Family Estate, nestled in the idyllic region of Yallingup, boasts a rich history. The familia first set sail for these shores in the 1920s. They've been crafting wines for over a century on the country of the Wandandi (saltwater) people, whose deep connection to the region infuses each vine with the spirit of the earth and sea.



CATHAL GREALISH
Club Wine Buyer



TUESDAY NIGHT Quaffer

SWINGS & ROUNDABOUTS
Cabernet Merlot

REGION
Margaret River, Western Australia

VERDICT If I were in front of the bar, instead of behind it, I'd be pouring the Swings & Roundabouts Cabernet Merlot with a Tuesday Night roast beef in the Wardroom. Alas, I am not, so can only pour you a glass. As a side note, it has a lovely, deep, purple-reddish hue and looks great in our new glassware!

TASTING NOTES The aroma is dominated by dark and red fruits, particularly raspberry for me, with slight notes of French oak. It offers generous flavours of plum alongside raspberry and spice, which lead to a satisfying middle palate, supported by fine-grained tannins that help add to the finish. A reasonable amount of time in oak barrels lends it that spice, as well as depth, and perfectly complements the wine.

PROVENANCE Swings & Roundabouts' vineyards are located at the northern end of the Margaret River wine region on Caves Road, Yallingup. This region has a temperate, maritime climate combined with unique soils and wet and cold winters. It's ideal growing conditions for wine grapes that are both elegant and robust. Simply put, it is grape heaven and why Margaret River is so well known across the world.



PETER HUGO
Equalizer Tactician



FRIDGE Dweller

SINGLEFILE
Great Southern Semillon Sauvignon Blanc, 2023

REGION
Great Southern, Western Australia

VERDICT For me drinking wine is for the effects associated with it: the food, people I am with, ambience and, in younger years, the social bravery associated with its chemistry. The wine in question is a bottle of Singlefile Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2023, half of which is getting old, not maturing, in my fridge. My opinion doesn't mean it is not a fine example of its type or appellation, it just doesn't appeal to me, and will remain in my fridge till the next spring clean.

TASTING NOTES I like Sauvignon Blanc or Sancerre when I am out with friends, but it must be smooth, gentle and definitely without an explosive component. This Singlefile was a shock to my senses, I am afraid. The temperature was right - six degrees. Fruity! My goodness, yes. Never sure why wine should be likened to multiple fruits, such as guava, which no-one has ever heard of, or musty fresh French loaf, which one hopes one never needs to try. This wine was fruity to a fault, I'm afraid, like a tin of mixed fruits from Goulbourn Valley.

PROVENANCE As the name suggests, this wine hails from the Great Southern. The provenance of the family behind the wine rests in South Africa, from where I returned to taste this drop. Minimal intervention is their credo. ●

PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK

THE WARDROOM

Enjoy a whole new selection of starters, main courses, desserts, and more - with our newly crafted Wardroom Menu by Chef Clinton. Paired with our newly curated selection of spritz, cocktails, and wines from our Food and Beverage Manager, Cathal.

Book your table now, or just head on down to the Club, to try our new Menu.

LUNCH AVAILABLE TUESDAY TO SATURDAY.
ROAST NIGHT EVERY TUESDAY.
FINE DINING EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT.
ALL DAY BRUNCH EVERY SUNDAY.



Our new Head Chef is all about seasonal eating – here he brings us his favourite way with apples.

WARDROOM

In Season

WORDS CLINTON FOX, HEAD CHEF

ALL-ABOUT-THE-APPLE APPLE PIE Serves 8

1kg Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored & thinly sliced
200g caster sugar
1 lemon, zested

PASTRY

500g plain flour
350g cold butter, diced
150g caster sugar
40ml water
1 egg
50g caster sugar

CHEF TIP

I prefer my pie straight-up to taste the apple, but you can add spices into the mix, such as cinnamon, nutmeg, all spice and/or vanilla.

Mix apple, sugar and lemon zest in a bowl. Allow the mix to sit for at least one hour. During this time, the apple slices should become soft and liquid will be drawn out. Separate the liquid into another bowl and reserve.

FOR THE PASTRY Put flour, butter and caster sugar (150g) into a food processor and pulse until it resembles breadcrumbs. Add water and mix until combined. Divide the pastry into balls: one-third into one ball and two-thirds into one ball. Flatten out, wrap and refrigerate for 10-15 mins.

Remove the pastry balls from the fridge and roll out the two-third ball of pastry to fit your cake tin. Take your time to get the pastry even (I use an 18cm diameter tin) and ensure there are no holes. Add the apple mixture and push it into the sides to cover the pastry. Add a little of the reserved apple liquid, but not too much as too much will prevent the pastry from cooking properly.

Roll out the one-third pastry ball and use it to top the pie. Crimp the edges with a fork, then brush the top with egg and sprinkle over 50g sugar. Bake at 160°C for 1hr 20 mins. Turn down and cook for longer, if required. Serve warm with ice cream and/or thick cream. ●

PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK





ROYAL PERTH YACHT CLUB | TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

WINTER 2024

RACING SKILLS PROGRAM

DEVELOP A TEAM | TRAIN FOR A GOAL | ACHIEVE AN OUTCOME



SYMMETRICAL PROGRAM DATES

TRAINING

10th August, 17th August, 24th August, 31st August, 7th September, 14th September.

REGATTA DAY

21st September

7 WEEKS
including
1 REGATTA

SATURDAY MORNINGS

COACHED BY COLIN HARRISON

\$150 PER PROGRAM
including Regatta entry fees.

SCAN HERE TO REGISTER OR FOR MORE INFORMATION



PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

WRAP-UP

REPORTS

OnWater.

For the History **SPOTLIGHT** BOOKS

From world titles to state championships and the Diggers Cup, there was plenty of action on the water for the 2023/24 Summer Season across all fleets. Highlights were almost 65 boats under spinnaker on the run down to Day Bouy Two in the Diggers Cup to The Fox's continued success as a force in the BW8 fleet and the S97 State Championships being taken out for the first time in the the history of the event by a female helm. See over for more.

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► COOL SEASON

Sailing

WORDS

ALAN THOMAS,
CAPTAIN SAIL

WINTER IS THE PERFECT TIME TO HONE YOUR SAILING SKILLS THROUGH OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ON THE ELLIOTT 7s.



Main image: The spinnakers were a wonderful sight on the water during the Diggers Cup. Inset left: *The Cadillac* (RFBYC), winners of the Diggers Cup. Inset right: Will McAullay helming his youth team in the Diggers Cup.

The 50th year of the Diggers Cup was the last major race conducted at Royal Perth Yacht Club for the Summer Season. A large fleet of boats from various clubs on the river joined in the race vying for the coveted cup. A great spectacle during the race was (almost) the entire fleet of 65 boats under spinnaker while on the last run down the river to Day Bouy Two, located just off Dome Spit. The gusty east to north-east wind provided plenty of passing lanes during the race on the day. Congratulations to the crew on *The Cadillac* (RFBYC), sailing through the entire fleet to win the Diggers Cup.

The Hoedown Change of Season Celebration capped off a successful Summer Season of sailing at our great club. Now in our Winter Season, it may be time to consider joining in the Club Skills Training or Teams Racing Squad to broaden your sailing skills over the cooler months. The Club Elliott 7s are utilised in these development programs and are a fun boat, perfect for the light conditions we usually experience over winter. The coaching available at the club is designed to help you improve your boat handling, knowledge and enjoyment from sailing at RPYC.

The club continues to strive to grow both the Youth and Women's squads. Both squads are also continuing to train



“A great spectacle during the race was (almost) the entire fleet of 65 boats under spinnaker while on the last run down the river to Day Bouy Two...”

over the winter months. I encourage members to contact the Boating Office (boatingoperations@rpyc.com.au) to learn more about what's on offer over winter within the squads. The dates for Winter Season programs and pre-season races have been set so keep an eye on our weekly emails for details regarding dates and start times.

Meanwhile, in Europe, we have two of the world's best ILCA 7 sailors. Matt Wearn has been honing his skills in Europe for a few months now in preparation to win back-to-back

Olympic Gold. Matt has been showing consistent form in the lead-up events to the Olympics, finishing on the podium regularly. His training partner and fellow RPYC member Ethan McAullay has been steadily moving up the ranks. At the recent Hyeres regatta in France, Matt was 2nd and Ethan 7th. Great to see RPYC sailor's showing the rest of world how it is done. (Read more about Matt on p24 and Ethan on p23.)



PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

WORDS
MARK B FITZHARDINGE,
PAST COMMODORE



WHILE ALAN THOMAS TOOK OUT HIS SEVENTH STATE CHAMPIONSHIP, THE ENTIRE FLEET WAS A WINNER ON THE WATER IN RACING, PARTICIPATION AND FUN.

▶ FLEET

Outfoxed

PHOTO: MARK FITZHARDINGE, RPYC, ANDREW CRISP

Well, what a Summer Season we had: great racing, great participation and great fun. The season has been well supported by the fleets at Royal Perth and Royal Freshwater Bay, and we ended up with an average participation of over nine boats through the season's races lead by *Vitalstatisx II* sailing 28 and *Hydrate 27* of our races. We are looking forward to very strong fleet numbers in 2024/25. Thanks to both the Royal Perth and Royal Freshwater Bay yacht clubs for providing the program – very much appreciated!

We finished the season with 12 boats sailing our normal 'Passage Race' from the RPYC mid-river start line to RFBYC Club line finish where we hold an annual end-of-season Dock Party. Well, it's becoming anything but normal with this year's being a big step up in the costumes being worn. Among the crews there were the plundering pirates, gallant Gauls, festive French hens, moustached Marios and furtive football supporters.

There was no requirement to wear costumes and no prizes, but there seems to be no stopping the BW8s in this quest-less quest. In the end, this year we did judge the dressed-up crews with winners being the Gauls of *Vitalstatisx II* – a scary bunch indeed! We all gathered on the dock to celebrate the end of the great season with lots of fun, frivolity and 'freshments. Such a beautiful day.

The final BW8 State Heats, 9&10, were held on a very light morning in late February. Sadly, only one race was able to be completed as the breeze fell to flat calm. Over the series, we had an average participation average of just

over 12 of the total of 14 boats – an impressive result in any fleet. The competition within the heats was strong, with Geoff Lansell on *Prim8s* fighting Alan Thomas on the *The Fox* for the title. *The Fox* ended up prevailing and well done to Alan Thomas and his crew. The win was Alan's seventh BW8 State Championship. Though the Championships had been held since the 2008/09 season, a suitable trophy has just been fashioned and was presented to Alan at the Club in May.

Alan Thomas and *The Fox* also took out both Royal Perth's BW8 Club Championship and BW8 Consistency Championship – I think we call that the trifecta – well done to our Captain Sail!

The BW8s are also enjoying the Wednesday Afternoon sailing with its generally lighter winds and close racing. On the very light days we give thanks to those vessels with motors to get us safely back before dark! What a lovely way to spend the middle of the week. Happy sailing. ●

"Sailors, with their built-in sense of order, service and discipline, should really be running the world"

NICHOLAS MONSARRAT



Main image: Alan Thomas of *The Fox*, winner of the BW8 State Championship. Left: BW8s coming off the start line. Above: The crews from the BW8 Passage Race. Top: Alan Thomas receiving the BW8 State Championship Trophy.

WORDS
JEREMY KERR,
FLEET REPRESENTATIVE

FARR-BULOUS Summer Season

FIND PLENTY OF FARR 9.2 NEWS FROM THE FINAL PARTS OF THE SUMMER SEASON, NEWS FROM OUR RECENT PRIZE NIGHT AND SOME PLANS FOR SAILING OVER WINTER – READ ON FOR DETAILS!

Continuing on with the Farr 9.2 Metro Series, heat six saw a new format to the racing this year, with a marathon race that took the fleet down Blackwall Reach, past East Fremantle Yacht Club and back home to a Crawley finish. This was also a significant race for the fleet, with recent new owners Juan Roman and Pedro Araujo bringing *Seahawk* back into the series. Getting an early lead on their way south, *Farrlap* (Andrew Hossen) finished both first and fastest, with *Lionheart* (Warren Westaway) a close second and *Eufarria* (Peter Cook) third. Well done to the winners and welcome to racing Juan and Pedro!

The next heat of the Metro Series brought the fleet over to Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club (RFBYC) as guests in the club's Saturday race series. A light and variable afternoon breeze made for a tricky start, but *Elusive* (Richard Brisbane-Cohen) picked the shifts well for an early lead, with the rest of the fleet swapping places behind. A late seabreeze kicked in, but *Elusive* maintained its lead over the line (third on handicap), *The Black Smoke* (Jeremy Kerr) finished first and *Lionheart* second. We had a great representation of the fleet at RFBYC's results presentation, and even managed to extract some post-race local knowledge from members, which should turn out handy for future finishes in Freshwater Bay...!

Main image: *Farrlap* took out the Metro Series and State Championship consistency titles. Below: presentations at the Dutch Trading Company.



Next on the racing calendar, on a sunny long weekend in March, seven of the 9.2 fleet made their way out of the confines of the Swan for their State Championships event, hosted as part of RPYC's Club Marine WA Keelboat State Championships out of the Fremantle Annex. With an expert race management team and a brilliant set of volunteers – both on water and off – the racing was first-class, and the crews were kept sustained through a decent post-race sausage sizzle.

The regatta had us out for eight races over two-and-a-half days, under all sorts of winds. In particular, Saturday brought some strong easterlies, building over the day. A few of the fleet decided to keep their spinnakers packed, dry and intact in the gustier winds, a few of the others risked it with varying levels of success, including one unintended journey beyond the bottom gate and off towards Carnac Island. Fortunately, we did see team *Itinerant* (Mark Hansen) back at the bar after

racing, so we can assume that they did eventually manage to douse the kite.

Despite its sojourn westwards, *Itinerant* – as defending championship winner – sailed well over the regatta, with three firsts over the weekend. However, *Eufarria* – new entrants this year – stole the show with four, taking out the overall championship trophy. The remaining race win went to *The Black Smoke*, ending up third in championship regatta results. Consistency results for the State Championships had *Farrlap* in first, *Lionheart* second and *Frenzy* (Murray Rowe) third. Well done to all teams for a fantastic weekend of racing, and for our contemporaries in the S80 and S97 fleets for a great combined event. Of course, the stars of the show were the staff and dedicated volunteers for such a smoothly run weekend of racing. Thank you all!

The later parts of the Summer Season's race calendar certainly kept our fleet on its toes – after a (generous!) two weeks' rest, the fleet was back racing at RPYC Crawley for ▶

▶ heat eight of the Metro Series, then the heat nine three weeks following. As is tradition, heat nine had the fleet racing for the prestigious Alan Coutts Memorial trophy, commemorating Alan as a prominent supporter, enthusiastic promoter and valued friend of the 9.2 class. Chasing the trophy for a number of years now, *Elusive*'s stars fell into alignment to finish fastest (second on handicap). Further handicap results had *Farrlap* making its way into first and *Eufarria* third. With the fleet back in its pens after heat nine, the Metro Series was complete for the season, with final results formally announced at the upcoming prize night.

In boat movement news, Kevin Shroeder and Tarla Elward have sold *Dragonheart* to new owners Chris Maines, Amanda Bailey and Anna Bailey, based at EFYC after having arrived in Perth in 2019. They plan to start off with some cruising, and we may be able to convince them for an occasional race in the future. Welcome to the fleet Chris, Amanda and Anna!

To wrap up the Summer Season, the Farr 9.2 Association Prize night is our annual ceremony for distributing the trophies (and, of course, prizes) to their rightful owners. After a

great event last year, this year was also held at the Dutch Trading Company in Victoria Park, over a tasty cocktail-style dinner, and tasty beverages of all kinds. Some particular highlights for the results were: (see inset).

Full results are up on the Farr 9.2 Association's website, farr92.asn.au. Well done to the winners for a great season.

Prizes for the season were generously provided by our prize night sponsors: UK Sailmakers, Doyle Sails, Yacht Grot, Bay Marine Maintenance and Yahava Coffee. We are very grateful for their support, and encourage our members to check out their offerings.

Of course, even with the summer season over, sailing will continue just as enthusiastically over winter, with regular Wednesday afternoon sailing, and a few of the fleet sailing in the Winter Frostbites series. We're also helping out the S80 fleet in its Sailor Development Program, hosting some spinnaker training sessions on a Farr 9.2.

Contact Jeremy Kerr (0417 095 745) if you're interested in participating in any of the above. ●

"A few of the fleet decided to keep their spinnakers packed, dry and intact in the gustier winds, a few of the others risked it with varying levels of success, including one unintended journey beyond the bottom gate and off towards Carnac Island"

PHOTOS RPYC MEDIA

FARR 9.2 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, CHAMPIONSHIP:

- 1st: Eufarria (Peter Cook)
- 2nd: Itinerant (Mark Hansen)
- 3rd: The Black Smoke (Jeremy Kerr)

FARR 9.2 STATE CHAMPIONSHIPS, CONSISTENCY:

- 1st: Farrlap (Andrew Hossen)
- 2nd: Lionheart (Warren Westaway)
- 3rd: Frenzy (Murray Rowe)

FARR 9.2 METRO SERIES, CHAMPIONSHIP:

- 1st: Elusive (Richard Brisbane-Cohen)
- 2nd: Itinerant (Mark Hansen)
- 3rd: Lionheart (Warren Westaway)

FARR 9.2 METRO SERIES, CONSISTENCY:

- 1st: Farrlap (Andrew Hossen)
- 2nd: Eufarria (Peter Cook)
- 3rd: The Black Smoke (Jeremy Kerr)

FARR 9.2 CREW SKIPPER TROPHY:

Kevin Ferguson – Farrlap

FARR 9.2 LADIES SKIPPER TROPHY:

Tiffani Tong – Farrlap

S80

▶ CONVIVIAL YET
Competitive

OUR S80 FLEET PUT IN SOME TIGHT RACING ACROSS SOUTHWEST, STATE CHAMPIONSHIP AND MATCH RACING EVENTS, MAKING FOR THRILLING SUMMER SEASON SAILING.

WORDS

ANDRE LINTHORNE,
S80 ASSOCIATION
PRESIDENT



“... big thanks to all the S80 skippers and crew who continue to make the fleet a welcoming and supportive group off the water, but a highly competitive group on the water”

The S80 skippers and crew attempt to sink *Rum Runner* at their annual end-of-season jetty party.

When I last put together this write-up, the S80s had concluded yet another thrilling Southwest Sailing Championships weekend hosted by the Koombana Bay Sailing Club. We were also eagerly anticipating the upcoming Club Marine WA Keelboat State Championship at Fremantle.

“It’s chaos out there!”

The opening day of the 2024 Club Marine WA Keelboat State Championship, which sees our S80 fleet joined by the Farr 9.2 and S97 fleets, was marked by an intense baptism of fire in the form of some testing winds, which reached up to 30 knots. Boats were battered and tales emerged of daring rescues, with individuals plucked from the tumultuous waters attributing their survival to what some described as a guardian angel, supposedly resembling none other than our esteemed boating operations head Travis Burtenshaw. But who knows for sure...

The next two days were much kinder and produced some very competitive sailing across the fleet. With 10 boats hitting the starting line, the result was up for grabs right up to the final race. Mark Gooding and the *Shadowfax* crew clinched the championship title, effectively breaking Phil Slee’s four-time winning streak aboard *Miss Behavin*. Making an impressive debut in the fleet this season, Anna Flanders’ *Rebel* (helmed by Nicholas Challenor) sailed exceptionally well to secure the consistency trophy. Congratulations to both victorious boats and their dedicated crews, and a huge shout out to the organising committee, volunteers and RPYC staff who continue to build this event each year.

Summer Season Wrap-up

Following a well-deserved weekend respite, we returned to the river as competitors vied for coveted positions in the Summer Season standings. Some excellent weather saw out the rest of the season, providing an opportunity to hold a barbecue on the lawns of SoPYC and the traditional jetty party wind-up at RPYC.

Through winter we have had the Ron Tough Match Racing regatta, followed by the Frostbite series. The match racing day is always a fleet favorite as it gives crews the opportunity to test their skills, and each other’s, in an environment that is becoming somewhat unique to us. Ron Tough, a stalwart of WA sailing and founder of the Ron Tough Yachting Foundation, donated the trophy for the inaugural S80 match racing series in 1988. *Frakka* was defending her 2023 title, but 2024 went to SopyC’s *Shadowfax*.

In signing off, a big thanks to all the S80 skippers and crew who continue to make the fleet a welcoming and supportive group off the water, but a highly competitive group on the water. It’s often said, if there are two S80s on the water – we’ve got a race! Wishing all a rejuvenating winter break. ●

S97

▶ RACING
into History

OUR S97 FLEET SAILED THROUGH A PACKED CALENDAR OF EVENTS TO THE END OF THE SUMMER SEASON WITH COMPETITIVE SAILING AND A HISTORIC WIN

WORDS

SHANDEL & MAXY
D’ALESIO, FLEET
REPRESENTATIVES



“Congratulations to Fiona (McCabe, Skallagrigg) who will go down in the history books of the S97 class as the first woman to win the WA State Championships”

Three S97s from Royal Perth Yacht Club (*Silver Fern*, *Terra* and *Jolie Breeze*) attended the Geographe Bay Race Week in February for a great week of sailing and fun. The S97 fleet was composed of six boats, including three local yachts (*Ocean Cowboy*, *Skyrider* and *Low Flying Duck*). Alastair McMichael on *Silver Fern* won the S97 division over the line, while David Hepburn on *Jolie Breeze* won the consistency series for the class.

The 2024 Club Marine WA Keelboat Championships was held in Fremantle’s Owen Anchorage waters during the Labour Day long weekend in March with strong wind conditions for two of the three days. The S97 fleet, composed of seven boats, was hosted at the RPYC Annexe in Fremantle and the whole program of eight races was completed between Saturday, March 2 and Monday, March 4.

Alastair McMichael on *Silver Fern* and Fiona McCabe on *Skallagrigg* (MBSK) had identical results with both yachts winning four races, scoring three seconds and dropping a third place. In this unusual situation, because the countback awards the team which prevailed in the last race, Fiona won the gold medal and Alastair the silver. Watching the fierce battle between these two boats was incredibly

exciting and it ended literally on the last metre of the last downwind of the last race. Congratulations to Fiona who will go down in the history books of the S97 class as the first woman to win the WA State Championships. This is in addition to her being the first female skipper to win the S80 WA State Championship a few years ago. It is worth noting that this was the fourth consecutive state title won by the *Skallagrigg* team using a different skipper each year. The bronze medal went to the class president David Hepburn on *Jolie Breeze*. Also in order are congratulations to Bill Quinn on *Déjà vu*, who won the WA State Consistency title.

The S97 Royal Perth Yacht Club Championship, composed of seven races, finished in early April. Maxy D’Alesio on *Total Recall* won the title with one race to spare (1, 2, 1, 1, 2, 2, [4]) while Steve Cowle on *Hornet’s Nest* finished in second place and Grant Cullen on *Second Wind* was third. It was a very competitive series. In fact, five different yachts won at least one heat.

On Saturday, March 23, Bill Quinn on *Déjà vu* won the prestigious Bricklanding Trophy by recording the best elapsed time among the RPYC keelboats. The season ended on Anzac Day with 65 boats finishing the traditional Diggers Cup pursuit race. Bill Quinn on *Déjà vu* was fourth overall and first of the S97s. ●

PHOTOS COURTESY OF IRONBARK PHOTOS, RPYC MEDIA

Main image: S97 fleet mark rounding during 2024 WA State Championships. Inset: 2024 WA State Championship winner: *Skallagrigg*.



WORDS
ROBIN WILKINSON,
FLEET REPRESENTATIVE

▶ THE MISTRAL *Win(d)*

TRICKY, LIGHT CONDITIONS
ENCOURAGED SOME IMPRESSIVE
RACING DURING THE STATE
2024 CHAMPIONSHIPS.



“Mistral cleaned up in the second race. The middle of the pack fought it out for second and third, with England Expects finding an enviable pocket of breeze to claim second place ahead of Little Tiger”

Main image: It was tricky racing in light winds for the State Championships.

The 54th Endeavour State Championships were held earlier this year on April 20 and saw five and a half Endeavours compete for bragging rights and epic prizes in a not-so-fast-paced three-race championship series.

There was some delay getting started as we attempted to make it a six-boat race, but with light winds and vagabond sailing/drift (I was unsure as to which) away from the start, we decided to get things underway.

The conditions were light and tricky. In the first race, despite the challenging conditions, *Mistral* and *England Expects* managed to find enough breeze to cross the finish line, albeit after

several attempts. The rest of the fleet had to be content with not-finishing rankings. *Mistral* cleaned up in the second race. The middle of the pack fought it out for second and third, with *England Expects* finding an enviable pocket of breeze to claim second place ahead of *Little Tiger*.

The third race saw *Mistral* maintaining its dominance, crossing the line first. However, *England Expects* nearly upset the expected outcome, showcasing impressive sailing skills, and briefly leading the race. Unfortunately, its chosen course did not align with the course outlined in the Sailing Instructions, allowing *Little Tiger* and *Breeze* to slip past and claim second and third place, respectively. ●

FINAL PLACINGS:
1ST MISTRAL
2ND ENGLAND EXPECTS
3RD LITTLE TIGER

SPECIAL THANKS
to RPYC for its continued support of these events, with particular appreciation extended to Boating Operations' Anna Klyne and Travis Burtenshaw for their dedicated efforts. Overall, it was a fantastic day of sailing, and participants are eagerly anticipating the upcoming 54th Winter Regatta.

WORDS
JAMIE MERCER,
FLEET REPRESENTATIVE

▶ CREWED *to Win*

MELEE WAS THE BIG WINNER IN THE SUMMER SEASON RACING, TAKING OUT TWO SEASON WINS AND A SECOND – SEE FULL RESULTS BELOW.

The 2023/24 Summer Season at Royal Perth Yacht Club has been concluded and, after some close competition across the various Division 2 fleets, here are the results for this year's trophies:

Division 2 Combined

Lionheart: skippered by Warren Westaway, *Lionheart* took first place with 36 points.
Melee: Mike and Del Kilcullen's *Melee* finished a close second with 38.1 points.
Farrlap: Kevin Ferguson and his crew on *Farrlap* secured third place with 40 points.

Division 2

Melee: the dynamic duo of Mike and Del Kilcullen sailed *Melee* to victory with 14.5 points.
Perie Banou III: Colin Sanders and Cameron Biddle brought *Perie Banou III* to second place with 16 points.
Big Diamond: Jamie Mercer's *Big Diamond* finished strong in third place with 19.5 points.

AMS

Perie Banou III: Colin Saunders and Cameron Biddle's *Perie Banou III* dominated with 9 points.
Itinerant: Mark Hansen's *Itinerant* secured second place with 14 points.
Big Diamond: Jamie Mercer's *Big Diamond* also earned 14 points, tying for second, but taking third on a countback.

Sports Boats

Melee: once again, Mike and Del Kilcullen's *Melee* excelled, finishing first with 11 points.
Ragnar: Graham White's *Ragnar* earned second place with 36 points.
Apparition: Peter King's *Apparition* rounded out the top three with 38 points.

Congratulations to all the skippers and crew of the winning boats. It takes a lot of organisation and a keen reliable crew to consistently sail for a whole season and those who have managed this have reaped the rewards. ●

FOR THOSE STAYING LOCAL

instead of heading to Europe for the summer, the Frostbite series is an excellent way to keep your crew in practice. There will certainly be some races with weather as good as the Northern Hemisphere, even if we don't see the traditional summer sea breezes. See you on the water.

“Congratulations to all the skippers and crew of the winning boats. It takes a lot of organisation and a keen reliable crew to consistently sail for a whole season...”

Main image: Del Kilcullen helming *Melee* with Sophia Pracilio and Kylie Forth.
Inset: Sailing on the Bay.



PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

PHOTO RPYC MEDIA

REPORT



The purple spinnaker flies high on *Wyuna's* return to the west.

Oceans Four

WORDS HILARY ARTHURE

OFFSHORE FINISHED UP ITS SERIES OF FOUR RACES WITH OUR OWN WYUNA PLACING WELL ON THE PODIUM THROUGHOUT THE SUMMER SEASON.

The Naturaliste and Return Race saw *Wyuna* return to West Australian competition after racing on the east coast. The race started off Port Beach on the evening of March 23. The breeze was stronger than expected (17 knots), which was fantastic, and the fleet disappeared west into a magnificent sunset. RPYC was the organising authority for this event. RPYC was represented by *Wyuna* in Division 2. This year it was a quick race – easterlies most of the way, there and back. *Crush*, the TP52, was the fastest in Division 1 and was back in her pen for breakfast on Saturday morning. *Wyuna* had a great race in favourable conditions and was home in the early evening of Saturday (scoring an unexpected night in bed!). *Wyuna* won Div 2 IRC and was second to *The Edge* on PHS.

Two weeks later, the RPYC Island Race, which sails a popular course around Rottnest Island, took place. The breeze built from light airs at the start to a light sea breeze by the time we had go around the island and set off for the finish at South Mole. In Div 1 *Crush* and

Enterprise NG were fastest, but *Obsession* won on IRC. *Salacia ii* was the Div 2 winner from *The Edge* with *Wyuna* third.

The penultimate race of the season was RFBYC's Roland Smith Race. We set off in a dying breeze, with little whiffs of wind coming out of the northeast. The course took the fleet out past the ships to the 11m isolated danger buoy. With a two-knot current running from north to south, many found it hard to make the mark and were swept past it. This resulted in a fleet 'park-up' and, as the breeze built a little, they all restarted. *Wyuna* benefited from this and was able to get away from the 11m mark to Campbell Buoy in a whisper of wind. We managed to maintain our effort all the way to the finish later in the afternoon to finish fastest in Division 2. However, we were not far enough ahead to avoid being relegated to third on IRC by *The Edge* and *Salacia ii*. *Crush* was fastest in Div 1, but *Obsession* was the winner on IRC.

The season finished with the FSC Gage Roads Ocean Race, which is a 40nm turn around Gage Roads with the top turn being at

"Wyuna led the Div 2 fleet. She was aided by her pole (put on for the Rolex Sydney to Hobart, but never used), which allowed us to run 20 degrees deeper on the long downwind leg"

James Point Buoy in Cockburn Sound. Once again, *Wyuna* was your representative in Div 2. *Crush* shot away from the fleet and was closely followed by the two Fast 40s, *Enterprise NG* and *Secret Weapon*. However, it was once again *Obsession* which was declared the winner on IRC. *Wyuna* led the Div 2 fleet. She was aided by her pole (put on for the Rolex Sydney to Hobart, but never used), which allowed us to run 20 degrees deeper on the long downwind leg. However, once again, the 48-foot *Salacia ii* won on IRC, followed by Ian Holder's *Bad Habits*, a Whiting 28, from HYC. So ends the ocean-racing season for 2023-24. ●

PHOTO IRONBARK PHOTOS

"Recently, Joe Kilcullen (Melee) has joined us and is currently exploring the mysteries of the foredeck. It is a privilege to have him onboard and watch him learn. He also brings his youthful exuberance and strength to the crew"

INTERESTED IN OFFSHORE?

Offshore is a branch of sailing that needs certain skill sets: bloody mindedness and tenacity are two of them!

Currently at RPYC there are two yachts sailing in the ocean – *Atomic Blonde* and *Wyuna*. However, anybody who would like to try this branch of sailing is welcome. Feel free to chat to Hilary (*Wyuna*) or Simon Torvaldsen (*Atomic Blonde*).

Several events next season will be Category 4. This is not too onerous a level of safety to get to, and there is always a place at the Fremantle Annexe to use in the days before or after racing. Casey Skinner, the marina supervisor, is extremely helpful. Winter is a great time to come under the bridges and participate in FSCs Valmadre and Performance series. I personally have loved having some of the youth sailors onboard for several years. Recently, Joe Kilcullen (*Melee*) has joined us and is currently exploring the mysteries of the foredeck. It is a privilege to have him onboard and watch him learn. He also brings his youthful exuberance and strength to the crew.

Ocean racing crews bring many different skillsets to their team, all working towards a common goal. It is always great to see Will McAullay on *Obsession*. He loves it; they love him. My crew and I have enjoyed Andy and Murray Buchan, Rebecca Pal and Antun and JJ Janekovic onboard *Wyuna* over the years.

Keelboat racing on the ocean is a viable option for the youth in our club. The Elliott 7s have helped them build skills that are transferrable. Older sailors bring experience and knowledge, and are happy to teach the young sailors (if willing to listen). A blend of age and experience can lead to a brilliant team, and that's what you find on many ocean racing yachts in WA.

REPORT



WORDS
CASEY SKINNER,
MARINA SUPERVISOR

Ocean Facing

OUR FREMANTLE ANNEXE HAS TAKEN STATE AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ITS STRIDE WITH NEW MARINA SUPERVISOR CASEY SKINNER AT THE HELM.

The past few months have flown by. I am now settled into my new position here at The Royal Perth Yacht Club Fremantle Annexe. I can confidently say that everyone has been extremely welcoming and extremely helpful while I find my feet.

I still find myself constantly in awe of the beautiful waterways we have around Fremantle and consider myself extremely fortunate to work in such a beautiful location, surrounded by a great bunch of people.

This summer was a busy one. With several regattas being held out of the Fremantle Annexe. The visitor jetty was fully booked most weekends, with members from Crawley and other visiting guests and, of course, the constant traffic in and out of the marina. Everyone was wanting to make the most of the amazing boating weather we have had over the past couple of months.

Etchells Events

February saw the Etchells 2024 State Championship being held in collaboration with the Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club out of the Fremantle Annexe. Eighteen yachts entered the regatta and were given a good taste of what they could expect for the upcoming Etchells Worlds held the following month out of the Fremantle Sailing Club. The winds were light during the regatta with the AP flag flying most of the morning on the final day, while the start team waited for the seabreeze to arrive. A crew from NSW was eventually crowned the victor and would go on to win the world championship title, as well. Well done to all teams who competed.

Rottnest Swim

The Annual Rottnest Channel Swim was held on February 24, and the Annexe hosted a total of 21 support vessels on the night of the 23rd in preparation for their early departure the

following morning. The swim was held in very difficult conditions. Many swimmers pulled out before the race organisers made the call to cancel the race completely after the weather continued to deteriorate and the wind speeds reached around 20 knots. I think a big 'well done' is due to all members who attempted the swim or offered their vessel as a support boat, and let's keep our fingers crossed for nicer conditions next year.

Keelboat States

The 2024 Club Marine WA Keelboat Championships were held on the March long weekend and the fleet was comprised of S80s, S97s and Farr 9.2s from various clubs around the river, and even one vessel making its way up from Bunbury. The regatta wasn't exactly smooth sailing for the competitors, very strong easterlies created plenty of carnage out on the water with a few torn sails, collisions, broken spars and the odd man overboard. The only thing that wouldn't break was the competitors' spirits and it was great to be able to meet them at the jetties at the end of each day and hear all about the racing in the Defence Bar afterward. Well done to all sailors for tackling the tricky conditions off Freo.

WAIODA States

On March 9 and 10, the Fremantle Annexe hosted the 2024 WAIODA Optimist State Championship. Strong seabreezes proved to be too difficult for the junior sailors, so the race committee moved the event into the protection of Bathers Bay, which provided great spectating for the parents during the regatta. They could seat themselves in Bathers Beach House and enjoy a drink while keeping their eye on the action-packed sailing.

Operations Update & Containers for Change

On the operation side of things at the Annexe, I am now happy to advise that a complete sight-specific emergency plan has been created, and new signage has been installed around the jetties and clubhouse displaying all firefighting equipment, muster points and first aid kits, etc. Next time you are at the Fremantle Annexe, please familiarise yourself with all of the marked emergency equipment and muster locations.

There is also a new visitor jetty booking diary, which has been made accessible to members on the website. If you are planning to come and stay at the Annexe and are not sure if there will be space available or not,

February and March were all about top Etchells racing from the Freo Annexe.



"If you are looking for a new permanent berth for your vessel and are considering a change of scenery, the Annexe currently has four available berths to suit vessels of various sizes"

As winter is now well and truly here, and traffic at the Annexe has slowed down, it's a great time to start ticking off some bigger jobs on the list. One of those big jobs is a roof restoration to the clubhouse. We have arranged for a contractor to come in between June and July to remove large sections of rust from the structural steel beams on the outside perimeter of the building, as well as remove and repaint all fascia panels on the eaves. Sections of the clubhouse will be cordoned off for everyone's safety while this takes place. So I ask that you stay clear of the sections being worked on for the duration of time the contractor is on site.

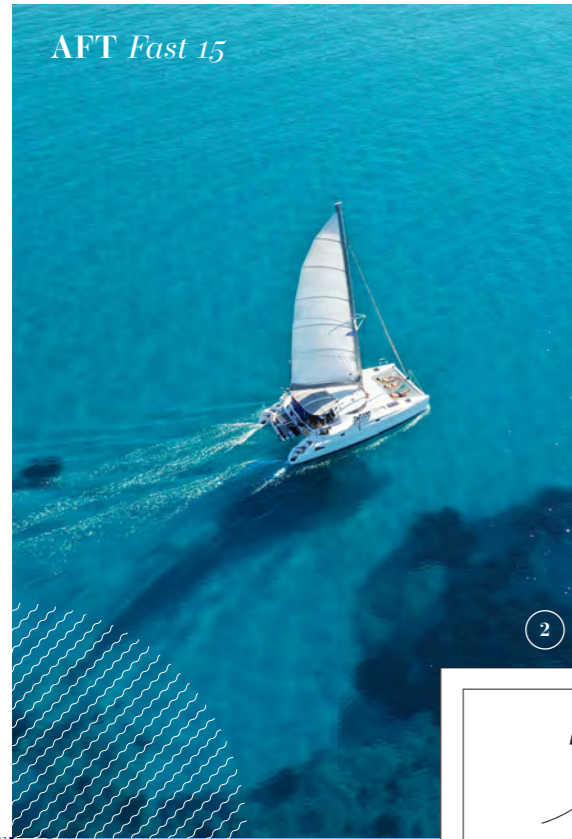
Check Your Pen Lines

With the changing of seasons and those big winter storms starting to roll in, now is a better time than ever to check up on your vessels and make sure all pen lines, weights and chains are up to standard and won't become a problem later on down the track. I have had to re-secure a few vessels in the middle of pouring rain and howling winds and, believe me, it is not an easy task. As they say, preventative maintenance is a lot easier and cheaper than reactive maintenance, so get on to it now before it becomes an issue and you're up for costly hull repairs. If you are unable to do this yourself, give me a call and I can get you the details of our club-approved contractor to get this one done for you.

Four Berths Available

If you are looking for a new permanent berth for your vessel and are considering a change of scenery, the Annexe has four berths to suit vessels of various sizes. Contact me (08 9430 4590, annexe@rpyc.com.au) to discuss if one of these pens is suitable for your needs. Whether you are after a permanent berth or you just want to come for a casual visit, come say g'day and we can discuss options for you.

Freo is a top spot with no shortage of restaurants, bars and cafes. If you're after a nice breakfast or coffee, one of my favourites is Moore & Moore on Henry Street. A bit of a hidden gem, and only a short walk from the Annexe, the coffee there is good and the food is even better, using locally sourced, organic and ethical ingredients. Otherwise, if you're looking for a spot to treat the other half to a night out, Vin Populi (High Street) is a relatively new bar/restaurant with a wide variety of wines on offer and a menu to die for. I recommend a booking as it can get busy. That is all from me, and I hope to see you soon. Happy boating! ●



PROFILE
 Name: Mark Crier
 Class: Etchells sailor
 Boat: Forte, AUS 1433
 Crew Position: Helm/owner
 Years at Club: 20
 Years Sailing: 35
 Highest Accolade:
 Wooden spoons

FAST 15.

We get up close and personal with Etchells sailor Mark Crier.



- 1. Biggest learning from sailing?**
Self-belief, teamwork integration (according to skill levels aboard), and resolving personality conflicts via clear communication.
- 2. Best experience on the water?**
Circumnavigation of Australia over one year on a cat I built myself.
- 3. Won't leave jetty without?**
My bucket hat and a sense of humour.
- 4. Sailing hero/mentor?**
My mates and occasional crew Andy Fethers and Robbie Gibbs.
- 5. Most underrated sailing skill?**
Hiking and weight dynamics aboard.
- 6. Go-to shop – online or IRL?**
Monkey Fist (monkeyfist.com.au) in North Fremantle generally gets the job done for me.
- 7. I get my sailing news/info/tips from...**
Sailing Anarchy (sailinganarchy.com), Club gossip and Google.
- 8. Wish I'd learned earlier...** not to shout insults at my crew while onwater.
- 9. Favourite Racing Rule to call?**
No overlap or overlap.

- 10. The first Foam rounding makes me...**
nervous in a strong north-west breeze on a Wednesday arvo.
- 11. Preferred post-sail tittle?** Shiraz.
- 12. I wish someone had told me...**
to start sailing earlier (started in my 20s).
- 13. Winter or summer sailing?**
All year round in various events. I prefer windward-leeward one-design racing for the fun of the close racing, the exercise, mind yoga, comradery and, of course, the beer afterwards.
- 14. Describe your skipper style.**
Relaxed helming, allowing my competent crew the space to trim as they see fit. It's crazy when crewing to try to obtain the most for a skipper who micro-manages.
- 15. Last word:** Sailing is my greatest pleasure in life. My personal growth and the people I have met have been so rewarding on many levels. Sailing is more than a sport, as we all know: it's a lifestyle. I love to see the old guys and girls knocking around the club; being actively involved; and living sailing on the many levels it offers. I see my future years as having the same involvement. Sailing is a healthy mind/healthy life sport. ●

PHOTO MONKEYFIST, NIC DOUGLASS, /SALORGIRL HQ, SHUTTERSTOCK

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