



The Bilge March - May 2026

Sail Port Stephens Edition.



Sail Port Stephens Race One – Start line Photo by Rob Buchanan

Commodore's Report.

As we move into the winter months, I wanted to take the opportunity to update members on some of the work currently underway and some exciting activities coming up at Port Stephens Yacht Club.

Since being appointed Commodore, one of my immediate priorities has been gaining a clear understanding of the Club's current position and working with the Board to plan for the future. Together with Rear Commodore David Simm, I have commenced discussions with Port Stephens Council regarding the Club's new leasing arrangements and have been reviewing opportunities to strengthen our long-term sustainability.

At the same time, the Board has been working through a detailed review of the Club's operations, finances, infrastructure, membership, and sailing activities. This work will form the basis of a new business plan designed to guide PSYC through its next phase of growth and development while preserving the welcoming and community-focused spirit that makes our Club special.

Membership growth remains a key priority. Over the coming months, we will be launching a new membership campaign focused on attracting new sailors, reconnecting with past members, and introducing more people to everything PSYC has to offer.

We also have some wonderful social events ahead.

On Sunday 21 June, we will be holding our **Winter Solstice Celebration**. This free event is an opportunity for members, family and friends to come together to mark the end of the shortest day of the year and look forward to the longer sailing days ahead. There will be music, sea shanties, stories, readings, an open microphone, and plenty of good company. I encourage everyone to come along and join in the fun.

For wine lovers, we are also launching a new initiative on Friday 26 June with **Beyond the Label**, hosted by acclaimed wine educator Virginia Jacobs. Guests will enjoy six carefully selected wines, tasting notes, and the opportunity to purchase Virginia's recommended seasonal selection of twelve wines. The evening will also mark the launch of the **PSYC Wine Club**, which will provide members with access to regular tasting events and curated seasonal wine selections throughout the year.

Participation in these events does far more than create enjoyable experiences. Every event strengthens connections between members, supports club activity, encourages new friendships, and helps build the vibrant club culture we all value.

We are also pleased to be working with **Invictus** on a new sailing initiative that will introduce new participants to our sport and our Club. In the coming months, we will welcome these new sailors to PSYC, and I know our members will make them feel part of our community both on the water and back at the clubhouse.

I would like to sincerely thank the Board for their support, guidance, and confidence in electing me as the first female Commodore in the Club's history. It is a privilege to serve in this role and to help lead the next chapter of Port Stephens Yacht Club.

I would also like to acknowledge the many volunteers whose dedication keeps the Club operating week after week. From race management and starters to maintenance, administration, bar operations, training, events, and countless tasks behind the scenes, your contribution is what makes PSYC possible.

Finally, thank you to John Grainger for his continued commitment to producing The Bilge. It remains an important part of our Club's culture, capturing our stories, achievements, and the people who make PSYC such a special place.

I look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming events and on the water over the months ahead.

Margaux Everett
Commodore

Vice Commodore's Report.

As we enter the cooler months, it's a good time to review the sailing season just past with the Autumn point-score, Wednesday and overall Club Championship all concluding on the 30th May. To say racing was close is an understatement with both championships going down to the last race.

In Division1, Chilli (Dave Simm) took out the Autumn Point-score series by the narrowest of margins, 0.2 of a point over She's The One (Michael Kirby) with Una Vita (Ken Peachy and Dave Rundle) only 3 points behind in 3rd. The winning margin was provided indirectly by Sail Port Stephens as all boats that competed in SPS received average points for Race 5 and Chilli had a lower aggregate for calculating the average.

Division 2 was more clear-cut with Adios (Graeme Ellis) a clear winner, followed by Yulunga (John Grainger) and Solander (Peter Ballard). All boats apart from Adios carried 2 or more DNC scores which accounted for the larger margin.

Although there is no prize for the combined Point-score series, it is interesting to note that Una Vita and She's The One were separated by a single point after 18 races run throughout the year. All other boats carried DNC scores.

The overall Club Championship combining both Point-score, Inshore/Offshore and Commodore's Trophy races (37 races over 9 months) was similarly close. Una Vita had an advantage going into the last race, but STO had a numerical possibility of pipping UV on the line so to speak. As it happened, UV beat STO by 2 places in the final race to secure the overall Club Championship. Chilli II came in 3rd.

The Wednesday Championship (36 races over 9 months) was a very narrow, 2-point win to STO over Adios. Note: they were tied with 2 races to go! Friends came in 3rd. Congrats to all skippers and crews.

Please note that all results are provisional while we check the details.

In club news, Vitesse, another Beneteau 31.7 owned by Ray Tolcher (former owner of Spirit) has arrived and looking for crew and we eagerly await Freya, a Yngling owned by Margaux Everett, to start sailing.

Sail Port Stephens has come and gone for another year with many sailors saying it was the best ever. Certainly, the weather was perfect and the racing, as usual, quite challenging at times. PSYC had 8 boats in the 5-race Passage series, with a representative in every division. Our prize for the best placed club boat goes to Wubaray (Dennis Hume) with Una Vita and STO once again close together (2 points!) in 2nd and 3rd respectively. Note that although 51st Project was the best performing club boat and sailed in every series, it has 'dual citizenship' and was registered under NCYC. Also of note was the first multi-hull event with both Chilli II and Evander participating.

PSYC welcomes guests from Invictus Australia:

Invictus Australia is a leading nonprofit organisation connecting current and former serving personnel and their families to sporting communities across Australia. PSYC has invited local Invictus members to participate in our Wednesday Afternoon races starting 1st July 2026. When numbers are confirmed, we will contact boat owners regarding placements for the races.

Finally, advanced notice of 2 meetings to be held for sailors; a deep dive on handicapping and examination of the results mentioned above and the Sailors Meeting to announce any changes made to Sailing Instructions, Notices of Race and of course discuss the major issues of the fleet. This year, we will focus on the future of Division 2 and the Offshore series as critical mass for those is running low.

Club and Wednesday Championship status as of 30th May 2026 (final, provisional):

Club Champion progress score		Points
Una Vita	Ken Peachy/Dave Rundle	81
She's The One	Michael Kirby	74
Chilli	Dave Simm	68

.....with Adios (49) in 4th

Wednesday Afternoon Champion progress score		Points
She's The One	Michael Kirby	93
Adios	Graeme Ellis	91
Friends	Saxon/Pacey/Kall/Lasky	74

.....with Chilli II (66) in 4th

Richard Kerr

Vice Commodore

Rear Commodore's Report.

PSYC Lease

Since coming on board as Rear Commodore, Margaux Everett, and I have been working with Council regarding the Club's lease renewal.

Discussions are ongoing and, at this stage, no agreement has been finalised. We have met with Council representatives and are awaiting further advice following recent correspondence.

We will keep members informed as matters progress.

David Simm. Rear Commodore

Club Captain's Report. Jake Wynne

Our new Club Captain is Jake Wynne.

Jake has been coming to Port Stephens since the early 1990's when he met his partner, who's family have had a holiday house at the Bay since the 1940's.

Having sold their IT business in 2015 to then cruise the eastern coast on their sailing catamaran Arion.

Jake later got involved in the marine industry, selling and sailing multihulls around Australia and the Pacific.



In 2024, the boat business was wound down, with 'Evander' recently purchased to increase the PSYC trimaran fleet – and give Dave's 'Chilli II' some company.

"It's great to be on board as the new Club Captain. I look forward to getting to know all the other members and contributing to the future of the club". Said Jake.

Hunter Moorings Special Interest group

Update on the joint Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group has now met on multiple of occasions and developed a strategy and recommended approach to help or assist the general issues around the application process and use of private moorings.

Meeting held on 22nd May 2026 in the Office of Jenny Aitchison
Minister for Roads

Minister for Regional Transport <https://www.jennyaitchison.com.au/>

Attendees:

Government Representatives

- Christine Boyd - Chief of Staff, Office of Jenny Aitchison
- Mark Scali - Regional Director, NSW Maritime
- Ruth Graham - Executive Director, Transport Policy, Environment and Regulation, Transport for NSW
- Lauren Fong - Policy Manager, Transport for NSW

Community Representatives

- Di Crosdale - representing Wangi Amateur Sailing Club
- Dr Tony Austion - representing LMYC
- Rick Pacey - Commodore, PSYC
- Greg Hodge

Discussion

The Group has jointly prepared briefing papers to support meetings with Kate Washington, Greg Piper and Yasmin Catley and that Kate Washington had been very supportive.

The aim has been to:

1. resolve the process barriers for mooring application approvals
2. highlight and raise the issues around removing mooring minders and vacant moorings
3. address the constraints around Reviews of Environment Factors to ensure moorings are appropriately located

NSW Maritime has since created the Mooring action plan based on the Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group above aims and feedback.

<https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/operations/roads-and-waterways/waterways/centre-for-maritime-safety/moorings-action-plan>

The Group met with the Minister for Roads and Regional Transport's Chief of Staff last Friday 22nd May 2026 to seek advice on the progress and intentions to address this long-standing situation. We were well received.

Key take aways:

1. It was acknowledged by the Govt reps that moorings is often a hot topic and that they do receive significant correspondence about moorings.
2. It was advised that a new mooring management approach (Mooring Action Plan) is expected to be released for public comment during the July–August period.

We can feedback that:

1. It also appeared that this work has been in progress for some time across the Department of Planning, the Department of Primary Industries, and NSW Maritime, with the Department of Planning leading the process.
2. Any resulting reforms are likely to be implemented in the mid 2027 timeframe.
3. We suggested that improved public communication would be beneficial in better informing stakeholders of progress and proposed reforms and may help “take the heat” out of what is often an emotional and contentious issue. This point was acknowledged and generally well received, although it remains unclear whether any specific communication initiatives will follow.
4. No follow-up processes emerged from the meeting - it was indicated that further engagement should occur primarily through the forthcoming public consultation process as it is now so close.
5. We are intending to prepare submissions for the consultation process and will share these to members.
6. We will continue to monitor and liaise with the respective members around progress and hope that communications are made available.

The Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group suggested that any member wishing to have the views heard should contact the following members directly as a private member of the community. An example template letter can be obtained for the PSYC for your reference.

Contacts: Kate Washington

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/Pages/member-details.aspx?pk=106>

Jennifer Aitchison

<https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/members/Pages/member-details.aspx?pk=120>

The PSYC will continue to progress this matter via the Hunter Moorings Special Interest Group and update members when updates become available.



WINTER SOLSTICE Event

CELEBRATE THE SHORTEST DAY
and the return of light



SEA SHANTIES



POEMS & READINGS



SONGS & OPEN MIC



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

FREE

EVENT!

21 JUNE

4.30PM - 7.30PM



BYO BBQ



PSYC BAR OPEN



DRESS UP FOR THE OCCASION!



Sail Port Stephens 13 April - 3 May 2026

Following the success of last year's racing by holding the Sail Port Stephens Regatta over three weeks, the regatta has now attracted more than 300 vessels, involving bigger than ever yachts over the first two weeks and catering for off-the-beach yachts in week three.

The initial organisers, the Corlette Point Yacht Club and now the Newcastle Cruising Yacht Club has built this event to be one of the premier yachting events in Australia and each year it gets bigger. It is truly a magnificent event and this year the weather was equally conducive for some fantastic sailing for all competitors.

Offshore keelboats visiting our waterway enjoyed the variety of conditions with offshore round Island races mixed with inshore passage races involving tidal conditions sand banks and changing breezes to keep even the experienced sailors on their mettle. The street parties at Nelson Bay also enhanced the carnival atmosphere.

The main event was the Commodore's Cup held over five races during the first week. Six vessels of the Port Stephens Yacht Club competed in their relevant divisions. So hotly contested with handicaps given to all entrants and each boat handling the changing conditions differently, that no boat came first in more than one race in four of the five divisions over the five race days of the Commodore's Cup.

Week One: Commodore's Cup Handicap Results.

Division 1, Jules Bell in his yacht 51st Project came second in a field with 28 entrants. A magnificent effort, and set the standard by being first over the start line in the first race. The fierceness of the competition was evident as 51st Project with 52 points was only one point ahead of the following three entrants which all achieved 53 points!

Division 2, also with 28 entries was contested by two of our club members Ken Peachey with "Una Vita" and their usual rival, Michael Kirby's "She's The One". Their rivalry in our weekly local races continued with "Una Vita" finishing only one point ahead of "She's The One"! The two boats came 20th and 21st respectively.

Division 3, with 25 entrants was contested by Dennis Hume skippering "Wubaray", his Melges 24 claiming a creditable 7th placing while Ross Kelly came 22nd in his Flying Tiger aptly named Shere Khan.

In **Division 4**, with 27 entrants, Rachael Wallbank's, Beneteau Sun Odyssey 350 "Argos" came 20th.

The **Non-Spinnaker Division** of the Commodore's Cup Regatta had a field of fourteen entries. It was contested locally by Graeme Ellis' Beneteau First 31.7 "Adios" in fourth place while Commodor Rick Pacey's Bavaria 41 "Elusive" came eighth.

Week Two: Performance Racing Yachts.

Dennis Hume, one of our Port Stephens Yacht Club Members and a competitor in week one and again in week three, sums up the racing below.

“Sail Port Stephens 2026 may well go down as the best edition yet. Glorious weather, slick race management, strong fleets, and a buzzing town atmosphere combined to deliver an unforgettable regatta — and having been involved since the very beginning, I don’t say that lightly”. Said Dennis.

Division 1 featured match racing for PT52 class yachts which attracted 14 yachts. This event over six races was dominated by two boats from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia. “Matador” dominated by winning all six races while “Smuggler” with two seconds and two third placings came second. Third was “Zon” on a countback.

In **Division 2** with eleven boats, First was “Beau Ideal“, with four firsts and two seconds. Second was “Don’t Panic“, with two firsts and three seconds. Third was “Ambition” with three third placings.

Division 3 with 14 entrants was dominated by “Celestial“, achieving five firsts and one second placing. Second placing was “Trex“, with two seconds and one third place, while “Game On” came third, with one second place and three third placings.

Performance Racing Series — Action on the Water and Online

The second weeks event saw **51st Project** back in the mix, finishing **5th on scratch in Division 3**.

The starts and selected races were broadcast live on YouTube, giving the wider sailing community a taste of the SPS atmosphere.

Super Racer Cruiser — Consistency and Spirit

51st Project completed the full SPS trifecta, placing **5th** in the Super Racer Cruiser event and earning well-deserved recognition for contesting **all 11 races** across the regatta. Their efforts were rewarded with the **Spirit of Port Stephens Award**, a testament to one of the tightest, most committed teams you’ll find on the water. Even local MP **Kate Washington** joined them for a sail

Week Three - Off the Beach — Local Talent Shines

The Off-The-Beach component, drew **12 local sailors**, with **10 competing**, mostly in the Laser ILCAs. Salamander Bay delivered spectacular conditions — though Day 1 proved a bit too lively for some. Two days of excellent racing had competitors buzzing, with several classes now eyeing Sail Port Stephens for future national championships.

Highlights included: **Peter Heywood** — top ILC and **Ross “Dinga” Bell** — 2nd ILCA on yardstick.

A mixed fleet of **seven 505s**, **three B14s**, and a growing ILCA/Laser presence ensures more interest.

Two new ILCA owners racing boats previously sailed by club members — a great sign for the Bay.



Julian Bell's 51st Project sailed well over the series.

**Marion Sampson's
view from the shore.**



**Oroton-Drumfire was the most
luxurious yacht.**

It was reported to have a chandelier
and coffee makers aboard.

When in racing trim she has twice won
on Performance handicap in the Sydney
to Hobart Race.



The Finn class and the Aero's were hotly contested in week three.



Our most competitive Captains.

Graeme Ellis, (Adios); Ken Peachey; (Una Vita)
Michael Kirby; (She's The One).

The race before the racing.

David Rundle aboard Una Vita in the lead-up race to the Sail Port Stephens Commodore's Cup

On The 12th April Una Vita represented the club in the annual lead in race for Sail Port Stephens. The race starts in the Harbour and ends at Fingal Lighthouse and had a fleet of over 40 boats. It was the usual 10 am start with a stiff tailwind pushing the fleet up the coast. The race was extremely quick with the Thompson 920 sports boat Road Runner winning the double with a ludicrously fast elapsed time of 1hr 41minutes. (Nelson Bay sailor Arty Bell was on board and I'm sure he enjoyed the ride).

Una vita had an excellent race holding our smaller blue spinnaker kite from just after the start of the race almost to the end' It pushed the boat at hull speed for an excellent 15th across the line and 22nd on Handicap. Maybe our handicap was probably a little tough as Co-Owner Ken Peachey has won this race and other similar course races previously. We were able to sustain 11 to 12 knots, speeding down waves and survived with only a couple of small round ups. We witnessed some impressive carnage in the fleet behind us with some nice round ups – one particularly interesting one was when Newcastle Yacht 'Trim' got into trouble with its spinnaker. As it rounded up someone said who's that and a reply called 'Trim' and I've never seen our Ken grind a winch like that on the spinnaker sheet winch: He thought it meant trim the sail! Nelson Bay local yacht 51st Project managed an excellent 6th across the line and 25th on handicap. The

toughest part of the race though was motoring from the heads to Soldiers Point into a stiff south westerly and outgoing tide which seemed to take longer than the race itself! David Rundle

The Afloat Magazine

David Simm's trimaran Chilli 11 was featured on the cover of the latest afloat magazine.

The caption read. Chilli passes Middle Island during Day 1 of the inaugural Cat Stephens Regatta at the Sail Port Stephens Super Series with the multihulls racing course 1B off Port Stephens Heads.

Jake Wynne also competed in the three-race series with his Evanda, another Corsair trimaran.

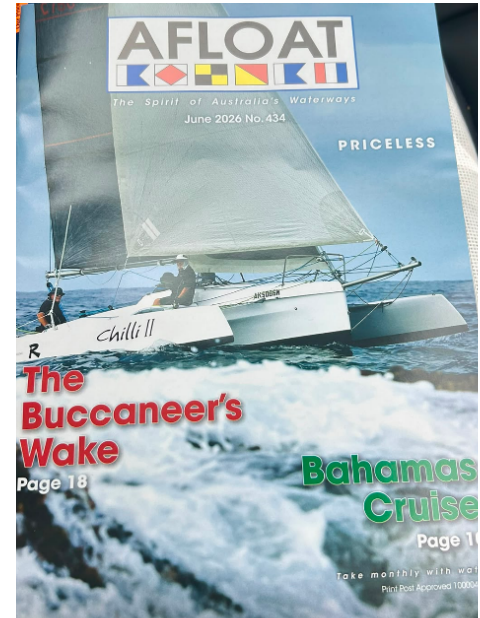


Photo Credit; Promocean Media.

Seagull Droppings.



The Blue Swimmer Prize — The Prestigious Prize That Matters

Day 1: Tim Peachey — after a boat from a previous start shut the door at the wing mark, Tim tangled with the mark and was forced to retire.

Day 2: Dennis Hume — a near-capsize at the same mark, entirely self-inflicted, and witnessed by absolutely everyone... naturally while sailing a good race.

A worthy pair of recipients.



RIVALRY: She's the One V Una Vita at Sail Port Stephens.

In the Commodore's Cup series, if the truth be told 'She's the One' had the wood on 'Una Vita' all week. STO was almost always ahead of us on "Una Vita" and when behind, they were catching us like a steam train. So, after a defeat in the second last race, the rumour is that one of our crew decided to push in front of STO's Skipper Michael in the queue for the Bar with the comment; "We haven't had a win all day, so I'm pushing in in front of you!"

Michael Kirby smiled with the best reply. "You mean you haven't had a win all week!" Fortunately, Una Vita managed a sizable win over STO on the very last day – enough to take "She's the One" in the series by a single place. Whilst we were both at the back of the pack this season, it's always a consolation to pip your favourite rival! – Yes Michael – I'm sure you will take revenge again next week and maybe the week after that – remember revenge is only another sail away!

Regards, David Rundle.

Trivia Night; a Sell Out

The first social event since the toilets were finished was the ever-popular trivia night. The night chosen was quite auspicious for some, being Friday the Thirteenth of April!

Some attendees turned up in black garb etc, in honour of the date. Most magnificent was the star organiser and director of questions, Philip Bendeich. Philip with his top hat and black coat and tie, looked entirely the part to conduct the program. Consequently, he won the best dressed prize for the Friday 13th night.

Philip's trivia nights are now so popular with the cohort of Trivia Tragic folk living around the Bay, that the venue was fully booked before the club was able to advertise it to the members. Many found that the questions were quite challenging.

There were 79 trivia night attendees with many more who would have liked to attend. Bar takings came to \$1,516.89 and ticket takings were \$395.



Top prize for the night was a generous \$200 which was won by the table "Drunken Sailors"



It is planned to have another Trivia night in late July this year.

Some of our club members dressed in black

PSYC Max and Edna Berman Trophy Race.

This year the Berman Trophy held each year to honour the founders of our club was held on Easter Monday. All the initial meetings to form the club were held in the Berman Household and Edna Berman was the secretary for 15 years. This race is traditionally sailed from Soldiers Point to Shoal Bay and back.

This year it was contested by seven skippers. (Many members were away because of the holiday)

First place across the finish line was Vice Commodore Richard Kerr in his Sports Boat aptly named Lickety Split in three hours ten minutes, followed by David Simm's Chilli 11 in three hours 20.38 and third to finish was Commodore Rick Pacey's Elusive in three hours 27.14. Then followed Michael Kirby's She's The One and Craig Tucker's Exalte, just ten minutes later and finally Jake Wynne in his new Corsair trimaran, Evander.

(Jack Miskowski in Eusemere did not finish the race.)

On **Handicap placings**, the order was 1st Lickety Split, 2nd Chilli 11, 3rd Exalte.

Women who sail Australia Annual Award

In March this year, the Women Who Sail Australia (WWSA) Gathering on the Bay was held over four days at the conference centre at Nelson Bay Golf Club. WWSA has 7000 members. The 70 women attendees came from all states of Australia and included women from NZ, US and Turkey.

Speakers included around the Antarctic solo sailor Lisa Blair, and other cruising, racing, and marine industry women.

At the meeting, Cherylle Stone, was presented with the inaugural Kim Revell Memorial Award.

Kim Revell was a key member of WWSA. She and her husband loved coastal sailing between Port Stephens and their property in the Manning River area of Northern NSW. Last year Kim succumbed to a sudden illness and her family established the trophy in her honour. The award acknowledges Cherylle's ten-year membership of WWSA and her 38 years as an active sailor and all-round promoter of Women in Sailing throughout her career.

Cherylle and PSYC Life Member John Townsend, devised the Women's Point-score category which had equal standing with the Club Point-score series with boats needing at least one female crew member

to be eligible. The structure meant that women were recognised for sailing on the water every Club Point score day rather than on just one-off special women's events.

Women Who Sail Australia (WWSA) Gathering on the Bay is an annual event. The aim is to increase the number of women sailing regularly.



Pictured; Kim's daughter Eleanor and child presenting the Kim Revell Memorial Award to Cherylle Stone.

Painting Class becoming popular.

A soulful painting experience was held on the 1 May at PSYC with Suzy Cooper and Jojo Smith. The event provided participants with a few hours of creative fun and laughter while painting whimsical goddess portraits on canvas with acrylic paints. Everyone had a great time and got to take home their masterpiece on a large canvas.



All art materials were provided including a complimentary drink and light refreshments.

A similar event is being held again on Friday 3 July. Limited places available.....book early. Please come along and join in the fun.

2026 Basic Watercolour & Mixed Media Painting Sessions are held each Monday and Tuesday 9am to 12pm

For more information please contact: Suzy Cooper. Mobile: 0422574715 Email: suz54cooper@yahoo.com.au

When things go BOOM by Alan Croft

The Break - "Madness" needed a Boom Replacement

Wednesday 11th March 2026 was an interesting day. Just a normal Wednesday afternoon race. Wind was ENE 15-20 knots, so I had rigged with a full main and the self-tacking jib. The course was W4, that is, Start-BM-WC-SAL-GR and so on. I was looking forward to some exciting sailing on the reaches from WC to SAL and then from SAL to GR. I just needed to do the hard work sailing to up to WC, then the fun could begin.

I started, the first of three boats, 4 minutes ahead of Yulunga and Gift Horse 12 minutes after Yulunga. I was still first at WC mark, then took off on the reach to SAL. It is a great leg in 20kn of ENE wind with the boat planning across waves like a surfboard, doing between 7 and 9 knots of boat speed. (Nominal hull speed for a 14ft waterline is 5.01 knots).



At the SAL mark, a gybe was required to head to the GR mark. This is not a difficult manoeuvre in Madness, especially as the self-tacking jib looks after itself. With a relatively small mainsail, I usually swing the tiller to initiate the turn, come to the centre on the boat, grab the boom with my free hand to get it past the eye of the wind, then let the boom go and move to the new windward side.

On this occasion, the boom went across very quickly and I headed to the new windward side and heard a loud crack behind me. I looked around to see the boom cracked and bent with the two parts about 90 degrees to each other. The two parts of the boom were still connected to each other by splintered wood and remnants of fibreglass tape used in its construction. That was the end of my race. No other damage was done and I was not injured. I withdrew and sailed back to the launching ramp.

Analysis of the Break

The old boom was constructed of 6mm plywood arranged as an I beam. The top flange was 75mm wide, the bottom flange 40mm wide, with the overall depth varying from 50mm to 100mm. This was glued together with WEST System epoxy glue and the joints taped with light fibreglass cloth tape set in WEST System epoxy resin. The top face of the top flange and the bottom face of the bottom flange were also taped.

This boom is nine years old and has been on three different boats, (Envy "FRED", Haze "Splinter" and now Gerry "Madness"). The arrangement of the mainsheet and the outhaul on the boats varied over the nine years, so there were several redundant bolt holes in the boom where fittings had been removed.

The bottom flange was cleanly broken across the flange about 300mm aft of the vang where a redundant bolt hole had created a weak spot in the flange. This break appears to have been a tension failure. Then the boom appears to have twisted and fractured the web and the top flange.

I assume the bottom flange failed in tension when the boom reached to end of its travel on the mainsheet, and the boom tried to rise but was prevented by the vang. A classic tension flange failure under bending load. It is worth noting that plywood, by its nature of construction, has half of its wood fibres orientated along the sheet, and half the fibres across the sheet. This means in the situation of my boom, only half of the wood fibres in the 6mm plywood bottom flange were orientated along the boom to resist tension loads.

New Boom Design

I received plenty of advice suggesting I could use aluminium tube or even carbon to make a new boom. (A carbon dinghy boom section from CST Composites is about \$2000 depending on fittings included). However, I am familiar with wood, fibreglass and WEST System epoxy, and have some stock of these, so a new boom in wood and fibreglass it was to be.

I purchased three sticks of 40x8mm Tasmanian Oak from Bunnings, (about \$70). I had a sheet of 5mm Fijian Mahogany marine ply in my wood rack. I decided to use the 5mm ply as the web, then put a 40x8 Tas Oak each side of the web as the top flange, and a single 40x8mm Tas Oak as the bottom flange.



This means the top flange becomes 85x8mm (was 75x6 ply) with all the Tas Oak wood fibres along the boom, and the bottom flange 40x8mm (was 40x6 ply) again with all the Tas Oak wood fibre along the boom. The overall maximum depth of the boom was increased to 110mm (was 100).

I lengthened the deepest section of the web, carrying it forward to the vang attachment point. I then added a plastic conduit to the underside on the bottom flange to carry the mainsheet along the boom to reduce any tendency of the mainsheet to sag and catch on my person during tacks.

I also resolved to re-arrange the outhaul so there were no fittings bolted to the bottom flange, so no stress-raising bolt holes.

I had enough 600gsm bi-axial fibreglass in stock to cover top and bottom flanges and both sides of the web. I added a layer of unidirectional carbon cloth to the bottom flange as some extra reinforcement.

So, the new design should be stronger. It has more wood, more fibreglass, all the wood fibres are in the right direction, and there are no bolt holes in the bottom flange. The downside is that the new boom has ended up 1kg heavier than the old one.

Construction

Construction was reasonably straightforward. The boom is 2650mm long, but the timber and ply stock is only 2400mm, so some scarfing of the Tas Oak to get the right length was the first step. Cut out the web shape. Glue the flanges to the web. Fibreglass the top, bottom and sides. Put stiffeners in each side between the flanges. Put wood blocks in place for boom hangers to take mainsheet and vang. Cut holes in the top flange for exit blocks for outhaul and reefs. Then coat with epoxy and paint. Lastly, attach the hardware for reefs, outhaul, mainsheet and vang.

I missed two Wednesdays-sailing whilst the new boom was being constructed.

Hopefully, Madness now has a boom which will last.

Bring on the next 20+kn northeaster.

Alan Croft (Owner, skipper, builder, designer of Madness).



Rules Corner — for Rules Geeks

The Leeward Mark Question

A boat from an earlier start has an inside overlap at the leeward mark. They want to exit on a beam reach to the finish, while you intend to round up to close-hauled for the next beat.

When does your obligation to give mark-room end? And what must you still avoid doing?

- Your obligation ends once the boat has been given the space needed to **sail to the mark and round it as required by her proper course**.
- After that point, normal right-of-way rules resume — but you must not **interfere with her ability to sail her proper course during the rounding**.

A situation that always sparks lively dock-talk.

The Brutal Tasman Sea

by Kevin Lepoidivan

At the time of writing, Kevin Lepoidivan is half way back from his Solo Trans-Tasman Challenge from Opau NZ to Southport Aust. His Roaring Forty yacht is battling high seas and gale-force squalls.

This is the story of getting to the start.

Kevin writes: "To compete first you need to get to NZ. I had already sailed a 5500nm qualifier from Japan, but I like doing the delivery as a warm-up/ shakedown, as the Tasman Sea is a brutal hostile place. Underwater canyons and mountains, clashing currents from every direction, ex tropical cyclones from the north and cold fronts from the south, random seamounts 90m below sea level in 2500m of open water. That's why it's called a Challenge. I departed Newcastle on the 09 May after prep work at Mid Coast Boatyard. The Predict Wind forecast looked good for a 7day tight beam reach to the Northern tip of NZ.

Yet another challenge lay ahead as Cape Reinga and North Cape at the tip of NZ are two very dangerous areas with strong tidal currents and big overfalls.

In reality the wind was on the nose until day 4, then we started getting knocked North toward Fiji so I turned south on course to New Plymouth; the original home of the race. Beating south into 30 knot easterlies is not fun. I tacked back to lay Cape Reinga and had a reasonable trip across the top.

With Starlink onboard, I checked the NZ Met Service rain radar. The entire N and E side of the island was smashed with squalls...as in big 50 knot squalls! I kept wide to avoid the overfalls and the southerly tacks were okay, the easterly tack into a short steep sea was not!

However, I managed to lay Opua in 3 more tacks and we arrived at Bay of Islands Marina 9 days later.

Now the real work starts to prepare for the Solo Trans-Tasman Challenge.

Standby for the guts and no-glory-story of my race back in the next edition of The Bilge.



Breaking News

Pictured is Kevin's yacht Roaring 40 with the compulsory storm sail demonstrated before starting off in the Trans-Tasman Challenge from Opua NZ.

Unfortunately, Kevin had to retire when nearing Lord Howe Island.

A full report will be in next Bilge.

Boat Register PSYC 2026

Boat Name	Surname	Name	Boat Type
51st PROJECT	Bell	Julian	Beneteau First 50
ADIOS	Ellis	Graeme	Beneteau First 31.7
AJA	McManus	David	Northshore 340MK11
AQUANIMITY	Norvill	Michael	Beneteau Oceanis 30.1
ARGOS	Wallbank	Rachael	Jeanneau Sun Odyssey 350
CHILLI 11	Simm	David	Corsair 760R
CINTRA	Kettle	Jeff	Northshore 33
ELUSIVE	Pacey	Rick	Bavaria Match
EUSEMERE	Miaskowski	Jack	Jeanneau 11
EVANDER	Wynne	Jake	Corsair 880
EXALTE	Tucker	Craig	X-Yacht 332
FRIENDS	Saxon-Williams	Peter	Etchell
GIFT HORSE	Parsons	Andrew	Beneteau 18
HERON	Jory	Steven	Hood 23
LA SONRISA	Eguchi	Riko	Mottle 820
LICKETY SPLIT	Kerr	Richard	Fareast 23R
MADNESS	Croft	Alan	Gerry 14
ROARING FORTY	Le Poidevin	Kevin	Lutra BOC Open 40
SHE'S THE ONE	Kirby	Michael	NSX 38
SHERE KHAN	Kelly	Ross	Flying Tiger
SOLANDA	Ballard	Peter	Santana 22
STEVIE NICS	Willis	Stephen	Hanse 400e
TANGIER	Cross	Doug	Noelx 30
THIEF of TIME	Corbett	Bernard	S80
UNA VITA	Peachey	Ken	NorthShore 11.2
VITESSE	Tolcher	Ray	Beneteau First 31.7
WIND KISS	Schneider	Michael	NorthShore 31
WUBARAY	Hume	Dennis	Melges 24
YULUNGA	Grainger	John	Spacesailer 27

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