



MAIN SHEET

Life's a reach .. and then you jibe !

August/September 2003

**We're on the Web at
www.pcc.org.au**

- *Sail a Hobie from Sydney to Brisbane
— these guys are crazy!*
- *Trophies Awarded for past Season*
- *Reports* *Polar Bare Regatta*
 Christmas in July/AGM Night
- *Taipan State Titles* *to be run by PBSC at Sand Point*

and more

A PUBLICATION OF
PALM BEACH SAILING CLUB
(SAILING AS PITTWATER CATAMARAN CLUB)

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FOR SALE:

Ronstan 3 sheave main
sheet ratchet block,
repaired (better than before)
\$ 50 save nearly \$ 200.
Contact Jan Jensen
9905 4869

LOST:

Sail Bag for Number 23 at Sand
Point approx May 03. Contact
John McCormick 9999 4990

NEXT ISSUE

Classified Ads

Buy/Swap/Sell

Deadline

Place you ad by 25 Sept 2003

Cost :

Negotiable.

Through winter a few hardy members are still turning up at Sand Point on Saturday afternoons to take advantage of the sunny winter days and fresh NW/SW winds. If the wind is too light or too strong, they adjourn to the Rescue Boat facility to help raise funds for the club through the 'Esky' and a barbeque. If you would like to join in please just turn up on Saturday at mid day.

Speaking of social activities, didn't we have a great time at the Presentation night! Check out the pictures on page 4 .

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Race Secretary	Upu Kila	9401 7292
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Commodore's Report

The AGM and Prize Giving Dinner held at the Newport SLSC was an outstanding success. There was a lot happening, with good food, great companionship and an excellent Father Xmas! Thank you to all the members who put in the effort to make it such a success. Please get your thinking caps on for a theme for next years Dinner! Elsewhere in this Mainsheet you will find the text of the Commodore's address. Please read it to remind you about the direction in which we are roughly headed.

The Dinner event was notable for support of the membership in the project to replace the rescue boat. The ballot was approved by a large margin. Especially heartening was the subsequent support from the floor. David Bonallo, representing the Mobil Fuel Northern Beaches Distributorship, offered \$1000 per year to support the boat while the lease arrangement is in operation. Kerli Corlett, representing Sailing Scene, will donate \$1000 into the fund established to accumulate the capital to complete the purchase process. On behalf of the members of PBSC I want to record our appreciation right up front in the Mainsheet.

In the week after the dinner I was in Perth. On the return flight I took the opportunity of being trapped for four hours to study the Waterways Boating Handbook. I read through it carefully a few times then did the self test at the end. Then did another trial test the next day on the Waterways website, prior to sitting the actual test later that morning at The Quays marina at Bayview.

The test takes about half an hour, but does require those wishing to do the test to make an appointment. Pleasingly, the Commodore now holds a General Boating Licence current for three years, after very little effort.

The Club is now heading down the path of acquiring a new rescue boat. Accordingly, we need more members to get a General Boating Licence to improve the flexibility of our on water operations. Waterways at Bayview is open Fridays and Saturdays for testing. Why not make a booking for a test on Saturday morning en route to sailing??? The telephone number is 9979-8055.

John Goldsmith, Commodore

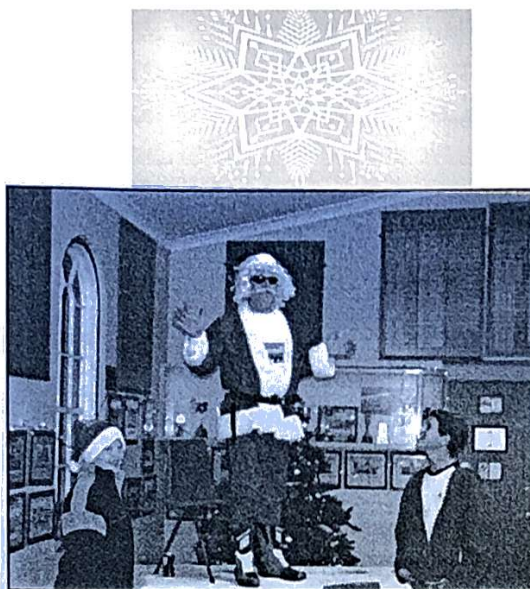
regatta

1. *Organized sailing competition that pits your skills against your opponents' luck.*

From sail-ing—a lubber's dictionary by Henry Beard and Ron McKie

Christmas in July/AGM/Presentation Night

The best ever turnout of club members and their partners attended our first 'themed' AGM/Club Presentation night held upstairs in the fabulous Newport Surf Lifesaving Club premises on the sands of Newport Beach. Thanks to the hard work of a handful of members earlier in the day the room was decorated expertly in the Christmas in July theme complete with a wonderful festive Christmas tree. A sumptuous Christmas buffet was provided by a local Newport caterer and as you can see, Kerli Corlett provided a touch of authenticity by dressing as Santa and distributing presents. The business end of the night was conducted in record time with the major resolution for the purchase

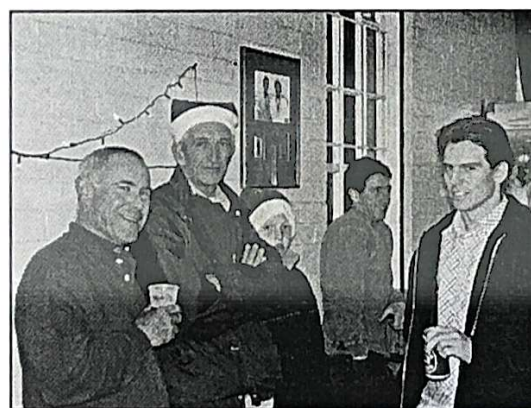


Santa (Kerli Corlett) and his helpers dispense Xmas cheer and the AGM

of a new rescue boat being passed by a huge majority. We also welcomed a new committee member, Tracy Gowen, who becomes the club secretary, taking on the task Felicity Peters has performed so commendably over the past years. Sam Miller organised the hire of a juke box which really kept the party rolling until we headed home around midnight. For those members who were unable to attend, thank you for sending in your proxy votes and also please check the list of trophy winners as your trophy could be sitting in the Rescue Boat facility waiting for collection. A complete list of all members places for the past Spring and Summer series will be on the notice board in the shed.



Festive decorations set the mood, and note the A Class sail loaned by Geoff Watson attached to the ceiling!



Members get into the spirit of the evening



Mike Warren collecting fines as directed by Sam 'the policewoman' Miller, overseen by the Commodore.



Sam Miller and Steve Kiely share a joke.



Santa (Kerli) and Simon Taylor

Photographs by Glenn Brown



South Pacific Games, Suva, Fiji

30 June 2003—11 July 2003

The South Pacific Games Sailing competition were held over 10 days from Tuesday 1 July to Friday 11 July 2003 at Lau-cala Bay, Suva.

Gender Neutral Hobie 16 - 12 Races

Men

Laser 12 Races

Board Sailing (Mistral - 1 Design) 12 Races

Women

Laser 10 Races

Board Sailing (Mistral - 1 Design) 10 Races

Upu Kila from PBSC was representing PNG sailing with a PNG crew person, Maragaret Frank (Margaret sailed with Upu at the QLD Hobie State Titles in Jan 03). For the most part the wind was light and variable with a few heavy days.

Dangerous and windy conditions prevailed over the sailing forcing the postponement of the Hobie Cat and the Men's Laser Competitions on the second to last day with racing starting at 10.30am on Thursday 10th July with the Hobie 16 and Laser Mens classes making up for a race postponed the previous day. Final medal tally is as follows:

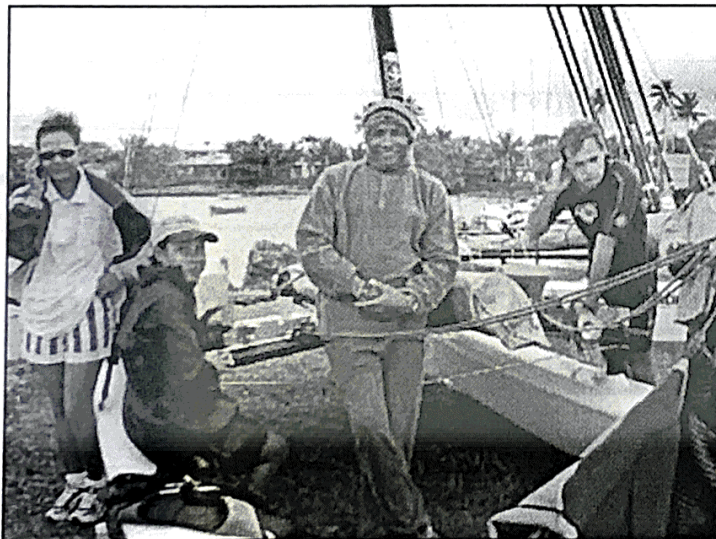
Sailing - Hobie 16

Gold - New Caledonia, Christophe Renaud & Alban Rossolin

Silver - New Caledonia, Jerome Le Gall & Lauren Pelen

Bronze - Fiji, Shayne Brodie & Loren Gough

4th place went to the PNG team of Upu Kila and Margaret Frank only 5 points behind 3rd place.



Congratulations Upu and Margaret



Palm Beach Sailing Club 2002/2003 Season Results
Trophies awarded as detailed below

2003 SPRING SERIES UPU KILA - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 16	2003 SPRING SERIES MICHAEL WARREN - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 16	2003 SPRING SERIES SAM WOOD - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 16
2003 SPRING SERIES AINSLIE GORDON - CREW 1st HOBIE 16	2003 SPRING SERIES SAM MILLER - CREW 2nd HOBIE 16	2003 SPRING SERIES DARIEN SEALY - CREW 3rd HOBIE 16
2003 SPRING SERIES FRANK COSTANZO - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 17	2003 SPRING SERIES TONY HODSON - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 17	2003 SPRING SERIES RUSSELL SHEPPARD - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 17
2003 SPRING SERIES DAVID BONALLO - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 18	2003 SPRING SERIES ANDREW NELSON - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 18	2003 SPRING SERIES STEVE KIELY - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 18
2003 SPRING SERIES CLAUDIA RAYMOND - CREW 1st HOBIE 18	No Crew Member	2003 SPRING SERIES LESLEY KIELY - CREW 3rd HOBIE 18
2003 SPRING SERIES GRAHAM ALLEN - SKIPPER 1st MISCELLANEOUS	2003 SPRING SERIES DAVID GRIFFITHS - SKIPPER 2nd MISCELLANEOUS	2003 SPRING SERIES GEOFF WATSON - SKIPPER 3rd MISCELLANEOUS
No Crew Member	2003 SPRING SERIES JOSH HAMILL - CREW 2nd MISCELLANEOUS	No Crew Member
2003 CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP UPU KILA - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 16		
2003 CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP AINSLIE GORDON - CREW 1st HOBIE 16		

2003 CLUB CHAMPIONSHIP UPU KILA - SKIPPER AINSLIE GORDON - CREW 1st ONLINE	2003 MOST CAPSIZES NIGEL HEXTALL - SKIPPER HOBIE 16	2003 SMASHES AWARD GUY MACHAN HOBIE 17
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2003 SUMMER SERIES SIMON TAYLOR - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 16	2003 SUMMER SERIES UPU KILA - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 16	2003 SUMMER SERIES JOHN McCORMICK - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 16
2003 SUMMER SERIES FELICITY PETERS - CREW 1st HOBIE 16	2003 SUMMER SERIES AINSLIE GORDON - CREW 2nd HOBIE 16	2003 SUMMER SERIES MICHAEL McCORMICK - CREW 3rd HOBIE 16
2003 SUMMER SERIES JAN JANSEN - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 17	2003 SUMMER SERIES TONY HODSON - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 17	2003 SUMMER SERIES GUY MACHAN - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 17

2003 SUMMER SERIES DAVID LAWRENCE - SKIPPER 1st HOBIE 18	2003 SUMMER SERIES STEVE KIELY - SKIPPER 2nd HOBIE 18	2003 SUMMER SERIES DAVID BONALLO - SKIPPER 3rd HOBIE 18
2003 SUMMER SERIES SOPHIE TEBBUTT - CREW 1st HOBIE 18	2003 SUMMER SERIES LESLEY KIELY - CREW 2nd HOBIE 18	2003 SUMMER SERIES CLAUDIA RAYMOND - CREW 3rd HOBIE 18
2003 SUMMER SERIES GLENN BROWN - SKIPPER 1st MISCELLANEOUS	2003 SUMMER SERIES JOHN GOLDSMITH - SKIPPER 2nd MISCELLANEOUS	2003 SUMMER SERIES DAVID GRIFFITHS - SKIPPER 3rd MISCELLANEOUS
		2003 SUMMER SERIES JOSH HAMILL - CREW 3rd MISCELLANEOUS

Calendar of Events 2003/4

Aug 23 2003	Winter Warm Up	Gosford Sailing Club
Sept 06 2003	Heartstarter Regatta	PBSC , Pittwater
Sept 20 2003	Coffs Harbour	Coffs Harbour
Oct 04-06 2003	Foster Wildcat Regatta	timothy@haffner.fam.aust.com
Oct 25-26 2003	Speers Point Regatta	Alan Pitts elermore@hotmail.net.au
Oct 25 2003	Canberra Cat Champs	Canberra
Noc 01 2003	Top Gun Regatta	Kurnell
Nov 15-16 2003	Tanilba Bay Regatta (Traveller's Series)	Alan Pitts elermore@hotmail.net.au
Nov 21-23	A Class Go For Gold	Melbourne
Nov 22 2003	Port Kembla	Port Kembla
Nov 29/30 2003	Beware the Bullets/Taipan State Titles	PBSC, Sand Point Pittwater
Dec 06-07 2003	Wangi Regatta	Steve Watt (02) 4948 5799
Dec 13-14 2003	Woollhara Sailing Club	Tim.Shuwalow@au.ey.com
December/Jan	Taipans	Rivoli Bay, SA
Dec 28—Jan04	A Class Nationals	Port Stephens YC
Dec 28-31 2003	Hobie Nationals Series 1	RQYS, QLD All except Series 2
Jan 02-07 2004	Hobie Nationals Series 2	RQYS QLD Open+Masters
Jan 24 2004	Hobie NSW State Titles	TBA
Jan 29—Feb 04	A Class Worlds	New Plymouth YC, New Zealand
Feb 14 2004	ACT & SZ Titles	Eden
Feb 28 2004	Grand Prix	Melbourne
Mar 06 2004	Hobie VIC State Titles	TBA
Mar 27-28 2004	Coffs Harbour Regatta (Traveller's Series)	
May 04-14 2004	HOBIE 16 Worlds	
May 05—07	Youths, Women's and Masters	Barceló Maya Beach Resort approximately
May 08-09	Open Qualifying	75 kilometres from the Cancun Airport Mexico
May 10-14	Racing	

Rescue Boat News — please take note....

A new Rescue Boat has been purchased and will be delivered in September.
The old Rescue boat has been sold. Racing will be run off the beach until the arrival and commissioning of the new boat.
All drivers of the new Rescue Boat MUST have a current Boat Drivers License.

Thanks to all members for the show of support by overwhelmingly voting to purchase the new boat.

New Rescue Boat

2003 BOAT ROSTER

NOTE: The new boat is due in September. There will be a new set of instructions for operating the new boat and they MUST be followed

REMEMBER WHEN YOU ARE ON BOAT DUTY:

1. Pick up keys from Mike Warren at 34 Binburra Rd, Avalon. (99187024) Sandstock double storey.
Go down left side of house, on wall above tap.
2. Put in bungs!!!! Before you reverse onto the beach.
4. Check oil level in motor.
5. Back trailer to just inside gate, flush out motor and thoroughly wash down boat/remove bungs, ensure trailer is back far enough not to hit roller door.

		DATE	ON DUTY
HeartStarter	September	06	S. Taylor, F. Peters / Russell Sheppard
		13	Chris & S. Crook / Andrew Nelson
		20	Michael & Peter Salter / Glenn Brown
		27	M. Warren, S. Miller / Mark Uren
	October	04	OPS, A. Gordon / Kerry Richardson
		11	D. Fisher, T. Gowen / John Goldsmith
		18	F. Costanz, Crew / D. Griffiths, J. Hamill
	November	25	K. Ardern, M. Ardern / John Forbes
		01	K. Moffett, Crew / Tony Hodson
		08	C. de Veyrac, Lyn / Mark Jonson
Bullets Regatta	December	15	John & Robyn McCormick / Jan Jensen
		22	D. Miller & A. Tuite / Graham Allen
		29/30	(P. Burnes, R. Wood, R. Forbes)
		06	Steve & Lesley Kiely / John Blackburn
		13	Kyle & Peter Amadio / G. Machan
		20	Christmas Break
		27	Christmas Break

PLEASE REMEMBER IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ORGANISE A REPLACEMENT IF YOU ARE UNAVAILABLE
DONT LEAVE IT UNTIL FRIDAY NIGHT - Upu Kila 9401 7292/0412047501 IF ALL ELSE FAILS
REMEMBER HOW PISSED OFF YOU GET WHEN YOUR READY TO RACE AND THE START BOAT DOESN'T TURN
UP PLEASE WASH OUT MOTOR AND THE BOAT INSIDE AND OUT, CLEAN OUT THE RUBBISH BEFORE YOU
RUSH UP TO THE PARK TO HAVE YOUR FREE BEER.

Note:

Make sure you write your name and the date on the Race Scoring Sheet, and also use the Point Scoring Abbreviations. It will make things easy for me when I enter the race results in the program.



PALM BEACH SAILING CLUB

**Sand Point Regatta—Beware the
Bullets**

**In combination with
Taipan
State Championships**

SAND POINT off ILUKA ROAD, PALM BEACH

BLUE WATER CLASSIC

29/30 November 2003

BRIEFING 10.30 a.m.

OPEN TO ALL CATAMARAN CLASSES

*RACE FEES
to be advised*

*SATURDAY NIGHT AT THE CLUBHOUSE
Barbeque, drinks and videos*

ENQUIRIES for RACING UPU KILA (02) 9401 7292



Wanted

If anyone has, or knows some who can help us with the following items
please

contact John Goldsmith

- New/Used marker bouys
- Filling cabinet for Club records
- Pump to inflate marker bouys
- Historical Information about the Club
(contact Jan Jensen)



Palm Beach Sailing Club (formerly Pittwater Catamaran Club, has been around for some time now. Before any more time passes we thought it important to put out a plea for any memorabilia—photos, trophies, memories etc to ensure that we don't loose track of the club's history.

Jan Jensen heads a sub-committee charged with history acquisition and preservation.

If you have or know the whereabouts of anything you consider interesting and relevant to the club's history please contact Jan.Jensen

COMMODORES ADDRESS, 2003 AGM

My first year as Commodore seems to have been a bit quiet. This can be partly attributed to my departure for the A Class cat US and World Championship the morning after my election. Nevertheless it seems to me that plenty has had to be done since my return. So I would like to make some observations about the way forward that I see for the Club that derive from my involvement to date.

This Club is a community organisation that, typically, has two resources that keep it going: the funds that support the activities and the energy applied by the members. In the case of the money we can always do with more, and in the case of the members there is always something that can be done if someone puts their hand up.

Money comes from three sources: members subscriptions, earnings from Club activities, and grants and sponsorship. The Treasurer will say more about the Club finances later. It seems to me though if we aim to keep subscriptions at a level that will promote members staying and newcomers joining, then we will have to earn more funds or get people to give us more.

Sponsorship by external sources requires the PBSC to give something in return for that sponsorship. I am not sure we have figured out what we can give yet, and this will require consideration in the coming year. Grants and the like require detective work and development of requests that is time consuming.

Earnings are a more likely and immediate source. There is a mood in the Club at present that perhaps we can get more income by running State or National Championships for particular classes. This is likely to be rewarding but requires the Club to develop its race support infrastructure and race management skills. I refer you to the ISAF Race Management Manual, available from the ISAF website, to see the scope of such activities. But this source of funds is longer term, and we need development money sooner.

One source of funds is the Rotary Club of Narrabeen lakes Community Service Appeal for the 2003-2004 season. The essence of this is the Rotary Club buys the prize, in this case a Toyota Echo Hatch, and organises Clubs like ours to sell the tickets.

The return to the Club is set at 80% of the sales of tickets by the Club. For example, if 60 Club members sell 100 tickets each at \$2 per ticket, then we get \$9600. This is a handy shot in the arm. Rotary has invited us to participate, the Committee is considering this, and I suggest we go for it.

In relation to members we definitely need more! And more to sail more often! So we have to consider what we offer to people that will attract them to join. In my view that Club should try to attract other catamaran fleets, and to do that we have to make sure the sailing offered at Pittwater is as good as, if not better than, that elsewhere. Glenn Brown has provided some useful suggestions in relation to increasing the membership, and I wish to assure him these are not forgotten.

The Club constitution provides for a Sailing Committee by appointment, and I propose to go ahead and establish this. We need to look at the courses we sail and should sail, the resources needed to expand our racing capability, the kinds of events we can run (for example, sprint series, marathons, championships, time trials like the Bacardi Blasts, team racing and so on). You do not have to be a Committee member to be on the Sailing Sub committee. We have a lot to do, so please feel free to volunteer to assist.

One of the matters to consider urgently is the Beware the Bullets Regatta. The regatta last year did not go as well as hoped, with few attendees from outside the Club. Work is needed to turn the Regatta around and entice visitors to the Club for the weekend.

The Committees of the Club have put in their time and energy, and I thank them very much. The Rescue Boat Subcommittee (Kyle Amadio, John McCormick, Mike Warren, Simon Taylor) has spent a considerable time addressing the issue to come up with the proposal in the ballot. Thanks a lot guys for your combined sagacity and energy.

The main Committee (Guy Machin, Kyle Amadio, Felicity Peters, Robyn McCormick) has worked hard this year, and again thank you all on behalf of myself and the membership. Felicity Peters is standing down after two years as Secretary. She has done very well for us bringing our communication of information to a high level, allowing the club to get its message to the members in a timely, reliable and effective manner. We now have at least 90% of the membership contactable by email, which makes the Secretary's job much easier. So thank you very much Felicity for all you have done.

I will close on the note of encouraging the membership to help the Committee move the Club forward, and paraphrase President John Kennedy: Ask not what the Club can do for you, but what can you do for the Club.

John Goldsmith, Commodore

WHAT THE?

The following is a story sent to Ali Corlett at Sailing Scene by Nigel Littlewood who recently bought a Hobie Tiger.

Thanks Nigel for a great read.

WHY SAIL A 18FT HOBIE CAT FROM SYDNEY TO BRISBANE?

My friend Darren Nicholson and I had been looking forward to going to the USA to compete in the legendary catamaran, 11 day staged ocean marathon known as the Worrell 1000. We were extremely disappointed when the event was cancelled at the last minute leaving us very frustrated and out of pocket. We looked at our options for an alternative adventure and came up with the idea of sailing our own 18ft Hobie Tiger the 400 odd nautical miles from Sydney to Brisbane. In a previous race we had sailed 1000 miles from Surfers Paradise to Cairns (in a staged event) and were keen to find something a bit more exciting. Being in the open ocean this plan had all the makings of an epic. Our decision to complete the trip without a break would ensure that it would be as tough as it would be exciting. Just picture sitting on a trampoline about 2m by 2m with a floating pontoon on either side, and no shelter, power, and far too much sail area for completing a course that is usually completed by large 40ft + yachts with full crews and shelter.

"Why sail a small beach catamaran 400 miles through the Pacific Ocean?", I hear you ask! Well, that is an interesting question and there have been several theories put forward by numerous beloved friends. One of the more amusing conclusions by my friend Catie Dowling was that some men suffer from *Birth Envy*: While woman gain ultimate esteem, confidence and purpose through motherhood, men don't have exclusive rights to a male-only experience which ensures the sanctity and recititude of male confidence and manhood.

So is it birth envy? I don't know.

Another potential reason is for the satisfaction that only comes with completing a very arduous and life threatening experience. For those with a rather de-sensitized view of the world, such experiences are much closer to living than the rather prosaic state that tends to prevail during everyday life. I have often said that I only really feel alive when I can see death. Perhaps this is another contributing factor.

Having said all that, I am going with Jerry Seinfeld's interpretation of men's behavior. *Men do it for chicks*. The primary motivation behind just about all male pursuits is to impress girls. That seems to be the simplest explanation and while I except it probably does not impress most girls at all, it still seems to be the best reason I can give.

We spent several weeks waiting for the ideal weather conditions to start our trip. We were waiting for Westerly winds which would provide smooth seas and a good angle to sail to and we wanted a fairly full moon that would be around most, if not all of the nights.

We did not have a lot of time to move once the conditions fell into place. We wanted to go a little earlier but external forces slowed our departure.

On the day before we were scheduled to go, during final preparations, our good friend and advisor, Warwick Rooklyn suggested we set up a reefing system on the boat to give us the ability to reduce the mainsail size in the event the wind increased above the boat's designed wind range. This advice would later turn out to be very, very valuable, potentially life saving.

At lunchtime on Sunday 8th of June 2003 we left Woollahra sailing club in Rose Bay destined for Brisbane. I had hoped, given ideal conditions, we could do the trip in 40 hours. This would prove to be very optimistic especially given our late departure.

We sailed into the harbour, had a practice of the reefing system, and headed North. We left the Sydney heads at 2pm and were immediately met by a sloppy two metre swell which had picked up due to the westerly wind turning Southerly then South Westerly. The Westerly we were hoping for would not show its head again. We had missed the ideal weather window but were dead keen to get on our way.

Despite taking Stugeron for several days, I was seasick within the first hour. It will always be a

problem for me it seems. I battled through the mental torture that comes with seasickness as well as the physical pain of continuous vomiting. I gave up my recently consumed lunch which proved to be my last meal for three days. Despite my illness and the massive amount of water coming over the front of the boat Darren asked me to clean up my *errrr* lunch....good mate that! So there I was scooping spew up with my hands and throwing it over the side in the middle of the ocean... rather surreal.

With about 15knots of South Westerly we made good speed up the coast despite the sloppy seaway...at least it was from behind us and not from in front, that would have been impossible.

We sailed through a fleet of merchant ships anchored off Newcastle at sunset. Feeling cold and still pretty sick, I was dreading the night. The moon was up early in the afternoon so I knew it would set just after midnight and leave us with no light at all after that. We forced down a piece of baked potato and a sausage but neither of us could stomach much. We put on our remaining thermals that we had left off earlier. I ended up with two pairs of thermal pants and five thermal tops under my borrowed dry suit.

The breeze increased in strength as the sun went down and we found ourselves sailing on the edge of control with the spinnaker straining and the bows continuously threatening to nose dive. Darren likened it to driving down an unlit country road with no headlights. By about 9pm we were sailing at over 15knots (25km/h) in bumpy seas and strengthening winds, feeling fatigued and unsure as to what the weather would do. (we subsequently found out that a strong wind warning had been issued for the area)

Taking the more conservative approach we rounded into the breeze to reef the mainsail.

This really showed us how much wind there actually was. As we turned into the South Westerly the boat was smashed by the breeze and seaway. My seasickness quickly became visible again with the violence of the stalling, as I threw up the last of my stomach's contents, which by this stage was mainly water. We managed to reef the main and started North again. The wind continued to build but with only the headsail and reefed main up we could handle very strong winds and stay upright and in control....we thought.

The battle from here on was to be against cold, sleep deprivation and fatigue.

The wind peaked at around 25knots and the swell at about 2m to 3m.

At about 3am I was steering in what was about 20 knots still out of the South West. Darren had to lay down in order to rest his eyes. We discovered that sleep was impossible due to the fire-hose like drenching to which we were constantly subjected but closing our eyes just for fifteen minutes made us feel better. Despite the dry suit and thermals I was shivering all the time and not helped by a very low blood sugar level but I suddenly found myself in the groove. The swell was right behind us as we powered up the New South Wales coast and the wind was just at the right angle for us to sail with the swell and run parallel to the coast...at least for a while. Up until this point I had really hated the trip but suddenly I fell into a zone, the boat sailed easily and I no longer felt super tired. The stars were bright and I saw shooting stars regularly. I was thinking about why I needed to do these types of things. Why I need to do tough, simple adventures?, why I need to test myself?. I don't know why, I just know that I need to. I felt at peace.

We used a GPS and compass to navigate. We stayed several miles off the coast to avoid small islands and reefs and used the occasional town or lighthouse to navigate. Generally speaking the navigation is easy enough, the coast is fairly straight and hazards are few. Having said that, I would not like to do such a trip without a compass and GPS. (you've got to hand it to the early explorers!)

The last few hours of the night dragged by until we saw the first signs of soft light in the East... its amazing how long it takes for the sun to rise when you have been waiting all night.

The first sights were of the coast line at Crowdy Head just North of Forster.

The wind started to die giving us a little rest but also forcing us into sailing angles that required us to tack downwind. This meant that we were not sailing the rhumb line (the shortest route) and would have to cover many more miles than we hoped. We called Warwick by mobile phone, and he then contacted the coastal patrol to let them know where we were. At sunrise we had taken the reefs out of the main and put the spinnaker back up. We had a couple of candy snakes for breakfast which I could barely eat but I knew I needed some sugar.

By mid morning we sailed past Port Macquarie but there was little time for sightseeing. We were on a mission to sail as fast as possible. We were lucky with the breeze. As the day progressed, the breeze built, and brought with it very ominous looking storm clouds. While we had lightning and rain, the wind (thankfully) stayed up and we continued to average over 10kts VMG.

The day went by quite quickly and before we knew it we were dreading another long, cold, rough night. The storm fronts kept coming so we reefed the main, which would prove again to be the smart decision. The last town we saw was Nambucca Heads before the night again enveloped us in its cloak of isolation.

We dodged the Solitary islands off Coffs Harbor and continued our trip North. The angle of the breeze was not perfect so every hour we were forced to gibe and sail out to sea for awhile getting smashed by the swell and southerly set. Again we chose to stay well away from the coast in order to avoid hitting anything. Darren became very concerned about hitting something. He was more cautious than I

expected but fatigue had set in and it affected each of us differently. Early on the second night I started hearing music playing. It was like somebody was holding a radio right behind me. I heard music...much of which I don't believe I have ever heard before. Darren later told me that he kept hearing his mobile ringing all the time. That was just the start of things for me. I started seeing things in the dark that affected my ability to steer properly...at least it seemed that way to me. Darren could not steer all the time so I tried to do my share but had to keep asking him if I was going the right way because an alien had kept moving the light I was sailing towards. All that night I was surrounded by a huge imaginary forest, which I could see very clearly even though, I knew it was not really there. It did scare me a bit that I could not steer straight as nothing seemed to stay still enough for me to steer towards it. I ended up using the wind as it was changing very little and that was the easiest way. While hallucinating was a little scary, it was not as scary as running into a rather large sea creature in the middle of the night a long way from any land.

I was steering through the phosphorescence-rich ocean somewhere around Clarence River when an enormous plume of glowing ocean erupted right in front of us. I thought it was a whale but it moved too quickly, tearing out of our way and circling around behind us. I moved in off the gunwale very quickly and Darren started pulling in the ropes that were dragging out the back of the boat. He thought that if any large fish was tempted by the dragging ropes and latched onto them, we might be in real trouble.

As we sailed through the remains of the plume where our friend had been, we ran into something in the water. This just served to heighten our alarm. Darren's immediate assessment was that we had scared a large shark while feeding. Having spooked it away from its meal we then collided with its feast.

Darren then asked me if I thought it was as scared of us as we were of it..."not f&%

likely" I responded. I have never been afraid of sea monsters but sitting 20cm above the ocean on a Hobie Cat, in the middle of the night, having had no sleep for two nights, I have to admit it gave me a scare.

But there was no time to dilly-dally. There were aliens, forests and robots to avoid.

I resorted to a Red Bull energy drink which was horrible but did help me keep my eyes open... even if they were seeing things.

Darren did not suffer from my hallucinations but at one stage I asked him if he wanted to know what I was seeing. He didn't.

The night dragged on again and seemed to take forever especially as we were sailing past some large national parks that had absolutely no lights we could use to keep our course. We reverted to using the ambient light of Ballina, shining off the sky. We could see it from about 50km away so apart from the fact that it kept moving around and changing into aliens and robots, it was our major navigation device. I think if things had really gone wrong at this time, our sleep deprivation really had the capacity to hinder our ability to cope with crisis but adrenalin can be amazing when it is needed.

The GPS died late in the night and it was just too rough to change the batteries. I could not get the backup GPS to operate but we knew where we were by that stage.

At last we passed Ballina in the rain at sunrise, fortunately the wind kept blowing and we took the reefs out again, only to have the wind build to over 20kts as we rocketed towards the lighthouse at Byron Bay. We had both really looked forward to passing Byron Bay where we would turn left and shortly pass into Queensland. It was a stormy morning but we received a great reception from dolphins and warmer water. The knowledge that we had made it through our last night gave us strength and confidence. The wind got very strong and we had a couple of very hairy hours sailing with the spinnaker which had started to fall apart. Darren had tied a huge knot in the clew to stop the spinnaker totally blowing

apart. The kite made it through to mid morning when it finally gave up. The wind was strong enough to keep us sailing at about 15kts and making good time.

The tall buildings of Surfers Paradise never looked so good. It was tempting to just pull in at Surfers but we both knew that we would never stop before our final destination.

About 1pm we headed into the rather dangerous passage into Moreton Bay. We did not realise at the time that we were actually taking the wrong entrance between North Stradbroke and South Stradbroke. We had planned to enter the bay North of North Stradbroke Island. I steered surfing the five foot breakers over the bank toward the deep channel on the other side of the pass. Darren stood on the tramp navigating our way through what is a very dangerous exercise.

We eventually made it through the surf to the entrance of Moreton Bay. While we had reached our destination, there were further adventures before a hot shower and bed could be enjoyed.

We took the wrong entry into the bay and therefore, took the wrong channel leading us into the maze of islands at the South end of Moreton Bay. The current was so strong dragging us south towards Russell Island, that we could not turn round once we had realised we had made a mistake. We ended up having to go with the tide and follow the channel around for hours until it eventually spat us out at sunset into Moreton Bay proper and for the first time the wind died away.

We reverted to paddling before the wind picked up again after sunset. The challenge was now to find the Royal Queensland yacht club in the dark. I was so tired and Darren was so confident of finding it that I did not put fresh batteries in the GPS but it soon turned out that Manly was still a long way from where we were.

Three hours later we eventually sailed into the massive marina and looked for somewhere to tie up our mighty ship and step on to dry ground. After preparing our boat for the night, a friendly and rather curious local drove us to the nearby pub to get a bed for the night. Darren's shore clothes had got lost in the hull so he caught a taxi to the local shopping centre (it was about 9pm by this time) to try and buy some clothes. He must have looked very funny walking around the grocery store looking for clothes in his space-like suit and his eyes hanging out of his head.

I, on the other hand, went into the bar and booked a couple of rooms and found a friendly local to unzip my dry suit.

After a hot shower I had every intention of finding some food with Darren. I never got past the bed.

The next day, after photos with the Newcastle Herald and unpacking the boat, I flew back to Sydney to get the car and trailer only to drive them back to Queensland to pick up the boat. By the time I got back to Brisbane, I felt like I had been on the go for a week, which, wasn't far from the truth but doing something like this certainly makes one realise how tough the solo round-the-world sailors are.

I won't be rushing back to do this again but I must say that doing hard, challenging things that push you to the limit provides a sense of satisfaction and experience that can't be acquired easily.

As I like to say, the important things in life are the hard things. The easy things are quickly forgotten.

Nigel Littlewood



Polar Bare Regatta Wangi - 7th- 9th June 03

Day 1

The fleet comprised of 67 boats from Wagga, Canberra, Vincenta, Newcastle, Sydney and Port Macquarie. It was great to see the enthusiasm shown by all at the weekend, apart from a small incident between a Tiger (Cat) and a Snake (Taipan) with the taipan yielding to massive injuries due to punishing blows by the Tiger. A little gaffer tape and the tiger was back in business. All reports were that the taipan was sick and failed to continue racing.

With registration and briefing at 11:00 am with 15 knots and with a forecast of 20-30 knots. Three divisions were allocated and the first of six races was under way at 1:30, with a possible three races set down for the afternoon. Hobie 16's were there in force. One of the biggest fleets for some years with a total of 17 greeting the starter with the wind building to 20-25 knots. For something new I was crewing for Tim Shuwalow who started well and was first to the top mark. By the second mark we had our tail up with a spectacular nose dive giving Rod Waterhouse and Kerri the lead and Watty and Kaz were close behind them. Upu and Sam were third.

With the breeze in excess of 30 knots capsize were the order of the day. Racing was eventually called off and it was back to the beach for the usual post mortem and plenty of rum and beer. The 18 fleet were well represented with Grant Rogers taking race 1, Steve and Lesley Kiely second and Quinny third.

The F18's were also well represented with a mixed bag of Tigers and Nacras. Race 1 went to the Nacra and Andrew Mackenzie on a Tiger came second. It seemed as though the Tiger was out manoeuvred and the end result was the Nacra First and the Tigers a close 2nd

Day 2

With a light breeze early and an expected forecast similar to Saturday the races were delayed with lack of breeze. Eventually racing started at 12:30 with three races completed and the old fellas showed the young ones how it is done. Kerli and Ally were up the front with two 1st's and a 5th for the day. Team Waterhouse were runners up. The breeze never reached the expected forecast and it was a race to the beach before it gave up and darkness was upon us. The barbecue and wine tasting went

down well, with DRAYTON'S Wines once again coming to the party for the regatta and the social get together. It was excellent to cap off two solid day's of sailing.

Day 3

It was very quiet on Monday morning... was it the night before? (all that wine or just the plain old bundy bear that got everyones tongues?) but it was all about sailing and the show got under way around 11:00 with two races for the day.

The weather was shaping up to be like Saturday. The breeze had swung to the SSW and was constant at around 10-12 knots. To prove it was no fluke Kerli bolted to take race 1 off Rod and Kerri for 2nd and decided enough was enough and bolted in the last race of the series. A contingent of four boats (youth sailors) competed from various areas of NSW. The racing was closely contested between them. This is a promising sign as there is continued interest and it is on the increase. The increased numbers in the various classes is an indication that this summer should show larger fleet sizes and I wish all those that competed at this regatta all the best and will see you in September for another excitement packed season. We look forward to your continued support, bring your wife, kids, girlfriend's and even the Mother-In-law and let's have a Hobie day. Thank's also goes once again to Hobie Cat Australia and Hobie Sports for their support. Maybe the other Class Manufacturers can get involved too.

Pittsy

Race Results

Hobie 16 & 18 <<http://www.hobiecat.asn.au/nsw/polarbare.html>>

F18 and other <<http://www.hobiecat.asn.au/nsw/polarbare2.html>> <http://www.hobiecat.asn.au/nsw/news.html>>

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