

OFFSHORE

NUMBER 40

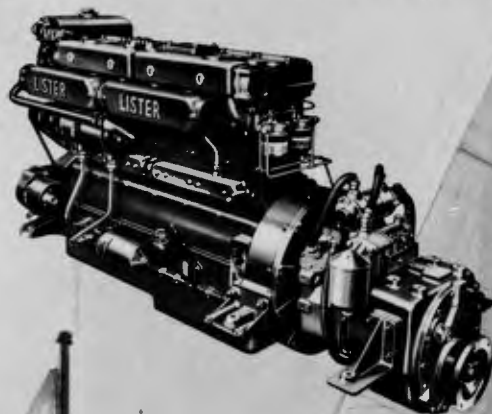
FEBRUARY/MARCH 1978

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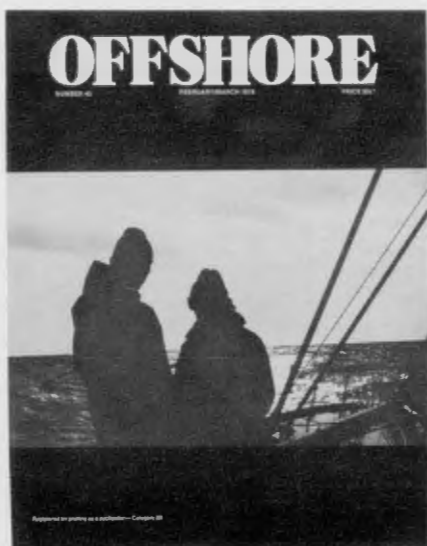
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February/March 1978



*Late Afternoon watch down the Tassie coast
Hobart 1977.*

Photo by Rob Stirling

FEATURES

Who said it wasn't the roughest-ever Hobart Slowbart '77	2
'The Roughest Race on Record'—What Bull!	8
Sydney to Eden	11
Mia Mia's Hobart	13
Radio Sked Disqualifications	15
Biggles' Column	22
C.Y.C. Cruise/Race to Port Stephens	29
N.Z. Wins World Half-Tons	32
	38

TECHNICAL

Watson's Knavi-guessing Know-how	36
I.O.R. Rule Changes	37

OFFSHORE SIGNALS	39
------------------	----

BOOK REVIEWS	41
--------------	----

CLUB NOTES	42
------------	----

MARINA NEWS	44
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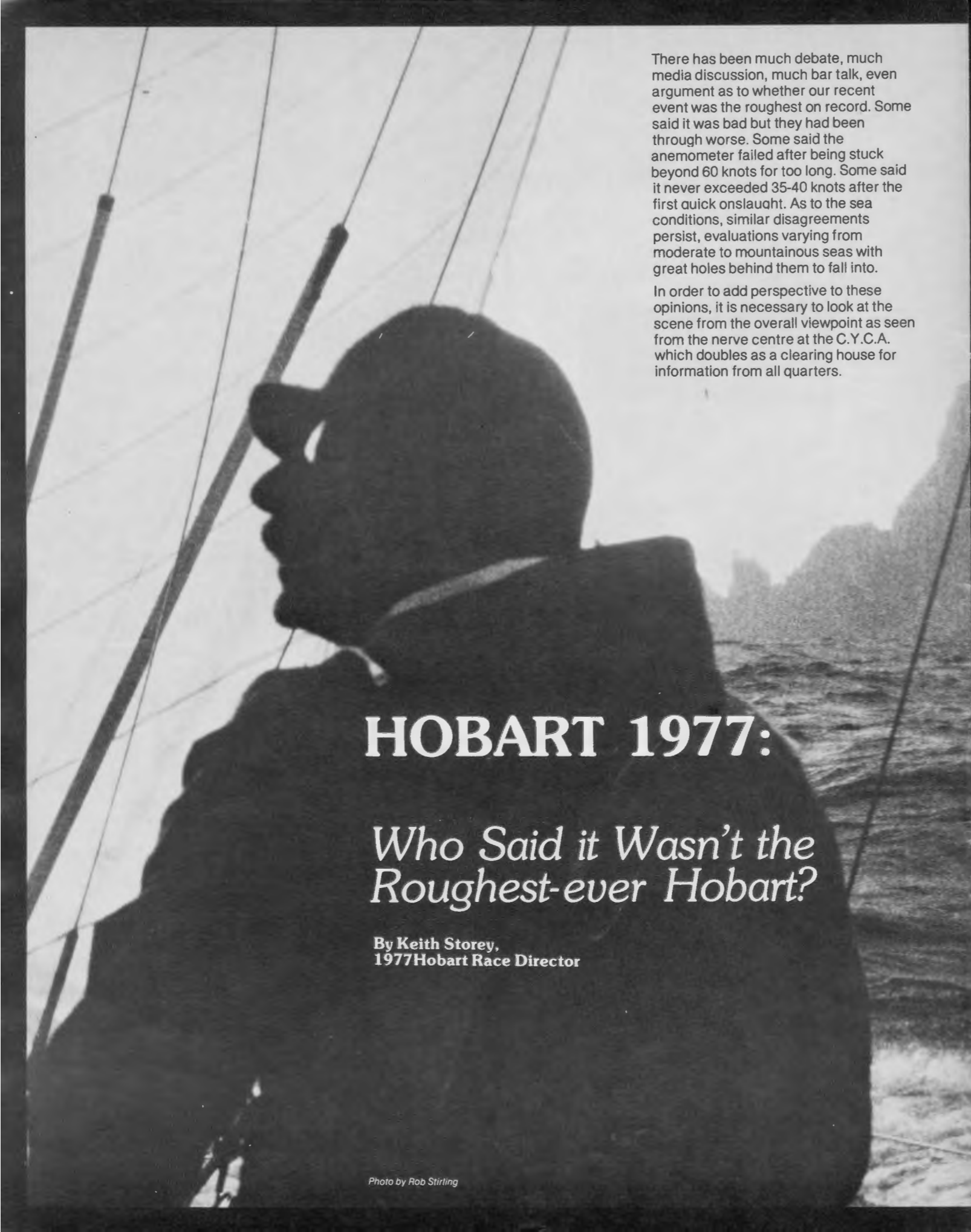
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There has been much debate, much media discussion, much bar talk, even argument as to whether our recent event was the roughest on record. Some said it was bad but they had been through worse. Some said the anemometer failed after being stuck beyond 60 knots for too long. Some said it never exceeded 35-40 knots after the first quick onslaught. As to the sea conditions, similar disagreements persist, evaluations varying from moderate to mountainous seas with great holes behind them to fall into.

In order to add perspective to these opinions, it is necessary to look at the scene from the overall viewpoint as seen from the nerve centre at the C.Y.C.A. which doubles as a clearing house for information from all quarters.

HOBART 1977:

Who Said it Wasn't the Roughest-ever Hobart?

By Keith Storey,
1977 Hobart Race Director

After the start at 1200 Monday 26th December, the initiating activities included a police enquiry into the serious collision between maxi yacht *Helsal* and spectator ferry *Lady Cutler*, which is alleged to have been occupying out-of-bounds space in the yacht manoeuvring area just before the start. Indeed the same ferry apparently obstructed the path of the yacht *Winston Churchill* near the Heads after the start.

Helsal's Crew advised that after reaching away from the starting line they tacked onto starboard near Shark Is. and headed for the line with about 1 1/2 minutes to go, electing to sail to leeward of the ferry ahead of them. Shortly afterwards *Mercedes V* tacked onto

starboard in the lee of the ferry, leaving insufficient room for *Helsal* who hailed for room. *Mercedes V* responded immediately by pulling away but in doing so her transom momentarily closed the gap even more. *Helsal's* choice was to collide with *Mercedes V* or the ferry and, choosing the latter, suffered severe topside damage and punctures from the ferry's sponson, the seriousness only becoming evident later when she tacked onto port to clear Sydney Heads and commenced to make water.

Following this enquiry was another by the Maritime Services Board, a visit from a police officer regarding the lost passport of a visiting crewman and yet another police officer discussing the

problems of recovering money from a Kings Cross working girl who had apparently accepted it from a visiting crewman in advance of nocturnal entertainment, whereupon she disappeared without delivering the goods. Despite avid study there was no guidance to be found in the *Handbook for Yacht Race Administrators* for this sort of situation, so we went back to plotting yacht positions and feeding the Honeywell computer. As you can see from the first few hours of activity, this Race was shaping up to be a rough one.



In the Communications Centre at C.Y.C.A., the atmosphere became electrified at 1440 on Tuesday, a mere 26 hours 40 minutes after the start, when radio relay ship *Mia Mia* came up on sked to report positions and the first spate of retirements following the onslaught of the first of several cold fronts to sweep the fleet during the next 24 hours or so.

Immediate action was taken to contact good friends down the coast to seek their assistance for up-to-date information of yacht arrivals and request berthing assistance as necessary. Graham White in Eden, Hon. Social Secretary of the Twofold Bay Yacht Club and owner of the ocean-going tug *E. B. Cane*, was a tower of strength and came up many times each day by landline to report arrivals and sightings until, finally, twenty-eight yachts were enjoying the haven of Twofold Bay and Graham's hospitality, with hot showers and all manner of other very kind assistance to the crews.

Fisherman John Jubb and Fisherman's Co-op Manager Daryl Goodyer kept us informed about the thirteen yachts to seek refuge in Bermagui, and part-time Harbour Master Keith Thorpe was up early and to bed late monitoring the movements at Ulladulla. Indeed his normal work pattern was punctuated by visits to the harbour, where three yachts skurried for shelter including the distressed New Zealand yacht *Penando*.

It was on Wednesday, day 3, when unscheduled traffic from Radio Relay Ship *Mia Mia* at 0840 relayed the 0830 MAYDAY call from *Penando* following her initial PAN call at 0725. *Penando* reported that she was taking water faster than the crew could cope with it. Weather conditions at the time were separately reported as being wind from SSW., force 6 to 7, seas rough with a heavy swell.

Marine Operations Centre at Canberra was immediately contacted and a search and rescue operation mounted with an R.A.A.F. Hercules aircraft, a Grumman Tracker aircraft from the Naval Air Station, two chartered civilian aircraft later increased in number and two oil tankers, the *Robert Miller* and *Arthur Philip*, which were diverted into a search pattern. In addition, other ships bound north and south were tracked through the area at 5-mile spacings, a Naval helicopter at Nowra and a Naval Patrol Boat at Jervis Bay were placed on stand-by, and two yachts, *Margaret Rintoul* and *Aztec* were diverted to *Penando*'s reported position. The yachts had retired from the Race and, being in the vicinity, responded to the Sydney Coast Radio Station 0903 sked MAYDAY announcement. M.O.C. figured it would

be easier to take people aboard a yacht than a ship in those rough conditions.

Penando reported her position as 50 miles east of Jervis Bay, subsequently amending the distance-off to 40 miles. In the Communications Room, Duty Officer Campbell Scott laid out the 6-metre-long expanded chart of the Race course and plotted *Penando*'s reported positions since the start.

Her previous reported position at 1900 Tuesday put her 8 miles east of Bateman's Bay, and our deliberations as to her possible movements during the night clearly indicated that she was likely to be on a latitude just north of Batemans Bay, some 45 miles or so south of her MAYDAY position report. This we conveyed to Marine Operations Centre which took the decision to move the search south from the original area of Wollongong to Batemans Bay and 60 miles seaward.

As it transpired, *Penando* reached Ulladulla at about 1640 under own sail and power and confirmed that her stated position was in error, advising that they had seen a light Gp. Fl. (4) and identified it as Kiama from the list of lights included in the Race Navigator's Log Book. The light they saw was actually Burrewarra Pt. light about 70 miles further south (just south of Batemans Bay) which also displays a Gp. Fl. (4) characteristic, although of 16 secs. period and 8M range in contrast with Kiama of 20 secs. period and 17M range.

The Burrewarra light, being of secondary importance, was not included in the Navigator's Log Book list (which incidentally included several more lights than previously); however, it is shown on all copies of Chart AUS807, Montagu Is. to Jervis Bay and others sold since 23rd May 1974 when the light was established. It seems that *Penando*'s charts must have been of even earlier vintage, remaining uncorrected. Obviously the intended guide for navigators in the Log Book must be filled out in future to include the remaining five secondary lights along the course: however, this does not alter the fact that *Penando*'s navigation exhibited grave shortcomings which could have had adverse consequences.

When Keith Thorpe in Ulladulla phoned to report *Penando*'s safe arrival in port under her own power, we insisted on having her skipper brought to the phone to verify that it was he who put out the MAYDAY call at 0830—it could have been tragic to call off a search if a different yacht happened to be the one in distress. Happily, all was well, the search was called off, and aircraft awaiting nightfall, when they could

commence a green flare search pattern, were stood down.

Needless to say, the atmosphere in the Communications Centre all day approached sheer bedlam, being packed with journalists of the press gallery, TV reporters, camera gear and lights, together with many who were interested in the continuing spate of retirements which, by that evening, had reached 52 in number. The volunteer telephonists were working non-stop as all inward lines had been running hot for 30 hours, except from 0200 to 0630 when we went off watch for a spell.

Thursday, day 4, brought about the need to conduct an audit of the coast to try to locate yacht *Cordon Bleu* which had failed to come up on any of the four radio skeds since Tuesday evening. The Maritime Services Board deputed John Hilder of the N.S.W. State Boating Service to assist us, but no sighting was made in any of the ports and boat havens on the coast south of Sydney. At the same time, M.O.C. had assisted by arranging for coast and aircraft radio stations to send out XXX-CQ calls, being calls at 2-hour intervals for sightings.

Yacht *Mulberry* efficiently reported to *Mia Mia* her sighting of a yacht in an unplotted position, whereupon she was asked to start her engine and close for positive identification, which she did. Regrettably, the yacht sighted was not *Cordon Bleu*, the same result coming from all of the other efforts that day. *Mulberry* was invited to claim time allowance for her excursion off-course, to which she responded in the negative saying she neither lost nor gained by the exercise.

Two yachts reported to *Mia Mia* that they had sighted *Cordon Bleu* on Tuesday evening south of Montagu Island when she was well reefed, heading south and looking snug although not displaying navigation lights.

Four more retirements during the day brought the tally to 56, one of which being the dismasted yacht *Casablanca*, the last of four dismastings during the Race. *Casablanca*'s call for towing assistance was received by Adelaide Radio and relayed to M.O.C. Canberra from which contact with *Casablanca* was made through Melbourne Radio. M.O.C. arranged with Tasmania Police Inspector Massey to have his police officer at Whitemark on Flinders Island drive across to Lady Barron and seek the assistance of fisherman Graeme Holloway, Master of the M.F.V. *Telaka*.

These men were on the job from 0620 until 2245 when the rescue ended, having firstly flown out over Bass Strait to verify *Casablanca*'s position. When they put to sea and closed with



Photo by Rob Stirling

Casablanca they learned that although her split fuel tanks had caused a shortage of fuel, *Casablanca* had decided that a tow was not necessary. Graeme Holloway guided her into Lady Barron that night through the very difficult, narrow, unlit "gutter" through the shoals and clear of the Pot Boil, without doubt the only man who could have done so. He then arranged a mooring for the yacht to enable the crew to proceed to Hobart for the festivities. What a man!

Even a relatively straightforward rescue such as this involves a whole lot of people, and their work does not end when the yacht reaches port. Reports have to be prepared, de-briefings have to be held which require the attendance of a whole lot of people representing the various groups involved, and the Race Committee's involvement continues until the files are finally closed.

A new situation arose in the Communications Centre when it was necessary to tender advice to relief crews scheduled to sail yachts back to their home ports from Hobart—should they go to Hobart, Twofold Bay, Bermagui, Ulladulla, somewhere else or stay in Sydney? In addition, much of the baggage flown to Hobart by T.A.A. for the crews had now to be returned to Sydney. This probably wasn't as bad as *Kialoa* having to call at Auckland to recover some gear before proceeding to Hong Kong for the China Sea Race.

The one happy event this day was the return to the Club of *Xaviera* who had failed to make position reports by radio since the start and had not made a test call with *Mia Mia* before the start. She had suffered hull damage and was nursed back after making temporary repairs at sea. On being questioned as to why she failed to keep the skeds, the

skipper stated that the radio failed before the start and that he had so advised the Race Committee at the starting line. Certainly something was shouted, but *Xaviera* was under tow and it was assumed that the virtually inaudible shout must have referred to engine trouble which turned out not to be the case, the reason for the tow being that her propeller had been taped. There would have been little virtue in her completing the race course as, not having started with a serviceable radio, there is no doubt she would have been disqualified, and that wins no team points.

Friday, day 5, brought yet another retirement bringing the number to 57 and still no sighting of *Cordon Bleu*. Arrangements were made with M.O.C. to continue the CQ calls and to seek the assistance of N.S.W., Victoria and Tasmania Police in scouring the appro-

riate coastlines of all three States. Much publicity was bringing increased interest and pressure from relatives, friends, the Newcastle Press, radio and TV, also from the Lake Macquarie Yacht Club. Even though our "gut feeling" suggested that such a well-found yacht and capable crew were unlikely to be in difficulty, it was becoming obvious that a search would need to be mounted fairly soon.

Three other yachts now joined the "No Radio Report" list as regulars, these being *Meltemi*, *Humdinger* and *Vanessa*. *Zilvergeest* had suffered radio problems all Wednesday but had taken the initiative to open up the set and put it in the sun to dry out and so managed to get themselves back on the air.

M.O.C. came up with negative reports from the coastal search for *Cordon Bleu* so, once again, the expanded chart was set up and a very careful study made by Rear Commodore Gordon Marshall and Campbell Scott. With one exception, all of the yachts in the vicinity of *Cordon Bleu* at her last reported position had retired. However, there were still three yachts in the Race with roughly equivalent sailing abilities, and all of their reported positions since the start were plotted, together with the reported positions of the whole fleet as at 1900 hours Friday.

This produced a most interesting pattern whereby a circular area of ocean about 40 miles in diameter off St. Patricks Head, about half-way down the east coast of Tasmania, contained none of the Race yachts but it did have one of our "equivalent yachts" to the north and the other two to the south. It was a reasonable assumption that *Cordon Bleu* would be somewhere in that circle.

This was conveyed to *Mia Mia* by means of unscheduled distress traffic at 2300 hours, together with the request that at her sked with yachts commencing 0700 Saturday she put out a CQ call, requesting each yacht to perform a plot of all reported positions and to report sightings of any yacht in an un-plotted position and also to close with any unidentified yacht for positive identification, in which event time allowance would be granted.

Nothing more could be done except await the outcome and reflect upon a continuation of such effort for several days yet as, after five days, we still had on our hands a 400-mile yacht race, the tail-enders having just entered Bass Strait.

The Communications Centre had been buzzing with activity for over three days since the first cold front appeared, and now a new storm had emerged when an American crew member stepped ashore

in Hobart to give expression to hasty, unkind and critical remarks about the calibre of many yachts and crews in the Race, together with untrue allegations as to the C.Y.C.'s screening of entries and crews, regarding which he seemed to have no knowledge. His statements were given wide publicity and had to the subject of rebuttal by means of TV and radio interviews along with other comments. Such an unnecessary incident contributes nothing to the sport, it merely brings unjustifiable discredit to it. The fact of the American's subsequent withdrawal of most of his criticism could well be overlooked by zealous bureaucrats anxious to introduce regulatory measures, which ocean racing does not need—this we have proved in 33 years of safe ocean racing without loss of life or vessel. There's no doubt about it, this certainly is a rough Race.

Saturday, day 6, brought a negative response from the fleet as to *Cordon Bleu*'s whereabouts except a 15-mile-distant sighting by *Thundercloud* who advised against starting her engine as she was already sailing at hull speed under spinnaker and expected to close with the yacht at Tasman Island within a few hours.

We received a report from Margate Radio advising that a runabout off Visscher Island, about 7 miles south of Maria Is., had monitored what seemed

to be a distress call from a Hobart Race yacht on a C.B. set on 27.88 MHz. There was mention of some bay and 44 degrees and wind of 25-30 knots from the ENE. but the remainder was unreadable. We later spoke to the fisherman but he could give no further information.

We again called upon M.O.C. to assist with an aerial search, advising that a small float plane was available in Hobart and of course conveying the results of our deliberations as to the yacht's position, projected south for the overnight distance sailed. Shortly afterwards the float plane took off with well-known yachting journalist Peter Campbell aboard as observer and in short order made a positive identification of *Cordon Bleu* off Eaglehawk Neck, right at the southern end of our position circle.

That called for some self-starter refreshment and a bracket of phone calls to all concerned, followed by one more sked from *Mia Mia* before she concluded her radio relay ship operations during late afternoon and proceeded to port. At that time there were only sixteen yachts still at sea beyond visual range of Tasman Island, a couple of which were cruising south having earlier retired, together with some of the fourteen who failed to report their positions at the 1400 sked, many of whom we knew to be in the river or in

'Windward Passage'



Photo by David Collett

Storm Bay. Certainly those who could should have come up on sked, but no doubt they considered it unnecessary when they had already come up to station VH7AM at the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. The yachts still at sea were well within the reach of Hobart Coast Radio Station, especially with its remote antenna on the coast.

What a marvellous job *Mia Mia* did! Apart from a few hours in Bermagui repairing a mechanical problem, which was too difficult with the ship doing everything but loop-the-loop, *Mia Mia* was at sea for the whole Race, and quietly took her time across the notorious Bass Strait to ensure she stayed about middle of the fleet. What is more she missed not one radio sked. There were 59 of them in all, as set down on her pre-prepared traffic list, so despite angry atmospherics and the need to route via Melbourne and Hobart on occasions in addition to Sydney, her traffic always came up and always on schedule. What a marvellous ship, what a marvellous skipper and what a great crew! Thank you Geoff Hammond and all who were aboard.

Thanks also to the radio relay yachts *Meltemi*, *Rum Runner*, *Rogue*, *Moonbird*, *Lollipop* and *Chauvinist*. Two yachts stepped into the breach and Two assisted *Mia Mia* immensely, these being *Rogue* and *Anna Drie*, with their radio operators Anne Wilson and Hans

Krop. For a wonderful job thank you Anne and thank you Hans.

Phone enquiries were still coming in by the hundred from anxious wives, sweethearts and relatives, one of whom wanted to know if Johnny would still be able to take the 5.30 p.m. flight out of Hobart to be home for his New Year's Eve party. Well, it would have helped if she had remembered what yacht he was on, but that gave us the cue to up-anchor and take the TAA flight to Hobart to carry on the Race from there.

Standing at the front steps of the Wrest Point Hotel in Hobart from 2355 until 0010 on what then became New Year's day was a wonderful experience, as not one distress pyrotechnic was fired from the yachts assembled in Constitution Dock to signal in the New Year. How pleasant to welcome the New Year in the knowledge that the wrath of the Marine Board would not be brought down upon us the following day.

During the next two days every yacht was accounted for with the exception of *Vanessa*, who had not come up on radio since the 0700 sked on Friday, and *Nirimba* who, although not lost, did not finish until Tuesday, the eighth day of the Race. As with *Cordon Bleu*, *Vanessa* is a well-found yacht and competently crewed, as observed in the Half Ton Cup and Southern Cross Cup Series. However, by Monday morning it was time to act, so once again we called

upon our friends at M.O.C. for an aerial search of the coast. They sent up a Carabou from Canberra to overfly the coast from Flinders Is. to Storm Bay and 50 miles seaward, promising an Orion aircraft for a green flare search that night. Inspector Massey of Tasmania Police climbed into a light aircraft and set off down the river and out into Storm Bay following M.O.C. advice that the ship *Zinc Master* had sighted a yacht close in under Tasman Island but she was not close enough for positive identification.

Despite subsequent press reports to the contrary, we manned the Communications Centre at R.Y.C.T. all that day, consoling the skipper's wife and the wife of another crew member and, of course, performing the plots on our 6-metre chart even though, in this case, it was more academic than useful. However, good news arrived at about 1640 that a sighting and positive identification had been made, whereupon the ladies weeping with joy, climbed into a taxi to await *Vanessa's* arrival at Constitution Dock.

During all this drama, an anxious mother in England phoned through to enquire if her son, crewing on one of the "missing" yachts as reported in the English press, was safe and well, imploring at the same time that we don't divulge to the young man in question as boys don't like that sort of thing. It was pleasing to be able to report that he was safe and sound in Constitution Dock, indeed that we had seen him there the day before. And so another three ladies went their way relieved and content, two weeping and one joyfully gay.

So there it is. Fifty-eight retirements, that's about 45% of the fleet, one MAYDAY, four aerial searches, coastal searches, sixteen full plots, sixteen Press Bulletins, eight days of continuous effort, wind storms, verbal storms, frantic relatives, the press, TV and utter bedlam. Was it the cacaphony of chaos or the symphony of success?

Well, that doesn't matter now. Whatever it was, there is categorically no doubt about it—in the Communications Centre this really was the roughest Hobart ever!

'Phantom', a handsome American maxi-sloop, failed to make the distance in the '77 Hobart



Photo by David Collett

SLOWBART 1977

by John Hawley

1977

PLACE	YACHT	OWNER/CHARTERER	ELAPSED TIME	T.C.F	CORRECTED TIME
1	KIALOA	J.B. Kilroy	3-10-14.09	1.0454	3-13-58.10
2	RAGAMUFFIN	S. Fischer	4-06-29.42	.8596	3-16-06.17
3	WINDWARD PASSAGE	F. Johnson	3-12-39.00	1.0435	3-16-19.56
4	LOLLIPOP	P. Kline & I. Miller	5-15-39.10	.6931	3-22-01.15
5	NATELLE II	N.S. Girdis	4-19-26.52	.8162	3-22-13.43
6	BRER FOX	R.W. Jackman	5-02-35.06	.7711	3-22-31.31
7	JENNY H	Jenny H Syndicate	5-01-48.48	.7774	3-22-41.52
8	ANTAGONIST	R.F. Hickman	5-02-40.47	.7732	3-22-51.21
9	PICCOLO	J. Pickles	5-02-06.18	.7774	3-22-55.28
10	APOLLO	J. Rooklyn	4-05-33.04	.9391	3-23-22.00
11	PINTA	W. Ilbruck	4-20-17.54	.8218	3-23-34.27
12	ZILVERGEEST III	A.J. Murray	5-13-06.04	.7193	3-23-44.23
13	DYNAMITE 2	P.S. Smith	4-20-32.05	.8236	3-23-45.30
14	DAMEL	W.A. Currie	5-02-21.29	.7846	4-00-00.08
15	RAMPAGE	E.N. Fuller	5-02-11.47	.7860	4-00-02.47
16	WINSOME 77	D.D. May	4-20-54.25	.8218	4-00-04.27
17	FARRAWA	B.G. Campbell	4-20-31.21	.8246	4-00-05.04
18	AQUILA	B. Edmunds & J. Aitken	5-14-39.02	.7136	4-00-05.12
19	SWEENEY TODD	D. W. Blainey	5-16-58.58	.7016	4-00-06.26
20	NYAMBA	J.G. Hardy	4-21-35.45	.8181	4-00-12.19
21	NITRO	G. & R. Edgerton	4-21-04.12	.8236	4-00-25.08
22	LOVE AND WAR	P. Kurts	4-20-02.10	.8333	4-00-41.34
23	VITTORIA	L.J. Abrahams	5-02-22.23	.7933	4-01-04.43
24	HUMDINGER	W.B. Northam	5-20-08.31	.6933	4-01-08.14
25	BARNACLE BILL	J. & D. Dirksen	5-01-05.52	.8045	4-01-25.23
26	APOLLO II	R. & J. Thurston	4-20-29.29	.8375	4-01-33.42
27	DYNAMITE	R.E. Walters	5-00-29.16	.8114	4-01-45.50
28	PERIE BANOU	J. & C. Sanders	5-14-43.33	.7281	4-02-05.38
29	WHISPERS OF WELLINGTON	G.R. Stagg	5-02-13.19	.8027	4-02-06.27
30	DANCING MOUSE	C. McGarry	5-13-19.37	.7353	4-02-07.09
31	BACARDI	J. Gould	5-03-55.21	.7933	4-02-18.28
32	GOLDEN EAGLE	J.W. Granger	5-06-28.35	.7774	4-02-19.22
33	KESTRAL	R.H. Fidock	5-07-03.27	.7752	4-02-29.42
34	CONCUBINE	J. Mc. Taylor	5-12-31.30	.7442	4-02-37.30
35	MERINDA	A.G. Taylor	5-21-47.23	.6962	4-02-42.50
36	MERCEDES III	A.T. Clutton	5-07-57.27	.7730	4-02-54.40
37	MARTINE	P.K. Gourlay	5-23-49.55	.6877	4-02-54.47
38	FARR OUT	E. Vidor	5-07-30.51	.7763	4-02-59.21
39	KNOCKOUT	Sir Max Aitken	5-01-19.04	.8181	4-03-15.00
40	BRUMBY	P. & R. Robinson	5-22-48.43	.6990	4-03-49.31
41	PANDORA II	M.W.D. Phillips	5-02-19.01	.8179	4-04-02.35
42	VARIAG	M. Herion	5-16-24.18	.7380	4-04-04.01
43	BILLAGONG	P.N. Joubert	5-14-55.21	.7465	4-04-43.10
44	BLUE MOON	W. Anderson	5-12-32.47	.7628	4-05-06.23
45	BRAYURA	I. Loube	4-19-20.03	.8768	4-05-07.30
46	*PATRICE III	R.J. Kirby	4-16-22.29	.8554	4-00-07.31
47	MULBERRY	M. Lovett	6-04-53.02	.6987	4-05-40.22
48	STREAKER	R. H. Cawse	5-12-23.45	.7681	4-05-41.36
49	WAINUNU IV	J. Garner & D. Strong	5-07-00.13	.8041	4-06-07.25
50	POLARIS	L.H. Savage	5-06-27.55	.8086	4-06-15.35
51	MIKO	D. Burfitt	6-03-14.59	.6959	4-06-28.16
52	THUNDER CLOUD	D. Hogg & A. Stewart	5-13-10.32	.7731	4-06-57.29
53	CHAOS	R.T. Spence	5-12-27.55	.7774	4-06-58.43
54	SHENANDOAH	J.R. Charody	6-05-10.30	.6959	4-07-48.39
55	BANG BANG	D.W. Baxter	5-13-09.51	.7815	4-08-04.04
56	APOLLO III	A. Bond	4-20-26.58	.8965	4-08-23.49
57	LOTS WIFE	R.S. Montgomery	6-08-45.15	.6933	4-09-54.16
58	LEDA	N. Gosson	4-20-59.00	.9121	4-10-42.02
59	MANU KAT	J.W.B. Barry	5-20-08.32	.7628	4-10-54.02
60	ROGUE	V. D'Emilio	5-20-24.15	.7681	4-11-50.40
61	ANNA DRIE	H.J. Kropp	5-15-37.01	.8031	4-12-54.50
62	ANACONDA II	Aust. Army Sailing Assoc.	4-10-03.27	1.0291	4-13-08.38
63	MELTEMI	B.C. Psaltis	5-17-46.55	.8154	4-16-20.51
64	THYLACINE	J.W. Burton	6-08-36.00	.7364	4-16-22.29
65	SECOND LADY	G. Scherwinski	6-08-44.25	.7477	4-18-12.14
66	FIREBALL II	M. Bayliss	5-17-43.35	.8537	4-21-34.37
67	FREANDA	J.A. Carr	5-15-13.57	.9051	5-02-23.56
68	*BREADFRUIT	R. Sill	5-14-42.38	.7442	4-04-15.06
69	NIRIMBA	Royal Aust. Navy	7-23-05.09	.7186	5-17-18.51
70	*QUEEQUEG	G.R. Young	5-01-19.04	.8375	4-05-27.51

Retired: Apalie, Aphrodite, Aries, Assegai, Avalon, Aztec, B-One-Nine-Five, Bellman, Betula, Binda, Casablanca, Chauvinist, Dorado, FairDinkum, Farr Fetched, Geronimo, Gidgee, Gumblossom, Hecate, Helsal, Hercules, Hi-Jaque, Imogene, Jisuma, Lowana II, Margaret Rintoul II, Matika II, Mekim Save, Mercedes V, Meriki, Moonbird, Mulloka, Mystic Seven, Ndumsky, Nire Lowa, Pandora Two, Penando, Phantom, Quest, Rhythm, Rum Runner, Ruthless, Silver Shamrock III, Smir-Noff-Agen, Southern Comfort II, Spanker, Sunburst, Superstar, Swuzzlebubble, Taurus, The Hum, The Sting, Thunderbolt, Wainunu V, White pointer, Willi Willi, Wimaway, Winston Churchill, Xaviera.

*Patrice III, Breadfruit and Queequeg penalised 26 places for failing to answer recall at the start.

Disqualified: Cordon Bleu, Vanessa.

With 137 starters in the 1977 Hitachi Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race, a dramatic start was expected. No one dreamed of the dramas which were to unfold over the next eight days, some even before the gun was fired.

Playing for safety, *Helsal*, the 1973 line honours winner, was winding herself up for a flying start a mile behind the starting line and in good clear air whilst the 100 or so closing the line with seconds to go were pushing and shoving, fending off dozens of collisions. With 50 seconds to go, a spectator ferry, *The Lady Cutler*, a quarter of a mile inside the yacht manoeuvring area, drifted slowly north whilst *Mercedes V* went about to head for the line. The gap closed between them and *Helsal* became the meat in the sandwich. The heavy steel sponsons of the ferry gouged a 9-foot-long hole in the side of *Helsal*, and Australia's chances for line honours plummeted. The extent of the damage became apparent when *Helsal* went on port tack at the heads. Water poured in leaving no alternative but to withdraw from the Race.

Meanwhile at the starting line, some 20 boats broke the start and a second roar from the starter's gun announced a limited recall. Seven numbers were taken, two of which returned to restart whilst five sailed on, unaware that they were to suffer a 20% penalty which, in effect, meant they would be relegated 26 places. Two of the five subsequently withdrew from the Race but *Patrice III*, *Queequeg* and *Breadfruit* completed the course to suffer this penalty. With all yachts now carrying sophisticated radio equipment, there seems to be no apparent reason why recalled numbers could not be announced on the working frequency and avoid this misfortune. In addition, there is fair evidence that the buoy marking the northwest end of the starting line was moved shortly before the start.

A flurry of protest flags were flown during the first hour of the Race but in the quieter atmosphere of Hobart, no protests were forthcoming except from the Race Committee. But more of that later.

The weather bureau had forecast 15-20 knot nor'easterlies turning southerly in the late afternoon—a fair guess at a typical Sydney summer day. A pity, however, they were wrong. Light and variable all day and half way through the night. *Windward Passage* won the battle for first out of the harbour after a brilliant

HOBART 1977:

start closely pursued by *Dynamite II*, but too early a tack put them in a hole off South Head and they were compelled to tack out to sea again, a mistake not made by David Kilponen (Fang) on *Kialoa II*. Thus the two giants were neck and neck, a situation which was to exist all the way to Storm Bay.

On 27th December, a dramatic change in the weather scattered the fleet over 500 square miles of ocean. The southerly had arrived with boats reporting 70 knots from the south-west. It is interesting in retrospect to try to get some perspective on the actual conditions. Some of the more experienced navigators on well-known boats such as *Apollo*, *Love and War* and *Patrice* are adamant that 40 knots with occasional 45 knots was the maximum and that this year's Hobart was no harder than most others. "About average—but rough earlier" was a pretty general comment. So, why did 58 yachts retire?

Elsewhere in this issue, the reasons are examined in more detail, but a description of the Race would be incomplete without mention that the harbours of Eden, Ulladulla and Bermagui were full yachts whilst Hobart, for twenty hours, had only *Kialoa* and *Windward Passage* to entertain.

Kialoa crossed the finishing line in dying winds a few minutes after 10 p.m. on Thursday 29th December, half a day outside her record time of 2 days 14 hours 36 minutes set two years ago. The last agonising 330 yards under the brilliant television lighting took a quarter of an hour with sails hanging limply, the cannon for line honours winner being almost drowned by the roar from the 10,000 crowd which had assembled to greet them.

Windward Passage, which had stood a little further offshore had a slight lead over *Kialoa* whilst she was becalmed off Maria Island. "Stay out to sea" was not the order for this Race, and the inshore breeze favoured the boats which sailed closer to the Tasmanian coast. The final slow drift up the Derwent placed the *Passage* 2 hours 24 minutes 51 seconds behind *Kialoa*.

Apollo was third home nineteen hours behind *Kialoa* with *Ragamuffin* fourth over the line to take second place on corrected time.

It had been an anxious day for Jim Kilroy; *Ragamuffin* had to finish before 6 p.m. to beat him for the handicap victory and rob him of the double. As

6 p.m. passed without sight of *Rags*, only *Lollipop*, the bright pink ½-tonner from RPAYC on her sixth Hobart, was in any position to challenge for victory. Another day of suspense had to pass before this gallant little yacht sailed in to take fourth position on handicap and first in Half Ton Division.

A great double for Jim Kilroy, for only the third time in the history of the Race has this honour been carried away. John Illingworth did it in the first-ever Hobart, and Ted Turner did it in *American Eagle* in 1972.

Of the six controversial centreboarders which started, only *Jenny H* finished to win the Southern Cross Cup and be placed 5th in this testing Hobart. In the four races of the Southern Cross Cup, *Jenny H* was placed First, First, Fourth and Sixth.

For much of the Race, an interesting challenge for third place over the line existed between *Apollo* and *Casablanca*, the latter a new 49½ foot yacht designed by owner John Biddlecombe. She was leading *Apollo* for half the race

This year's winner of line honours and overall, 'Kialoa'.



when 90 miles east of Cape Barren Island she was dismasted. Under jury rig, she sailed the 90 miles to Flinders Island and reports have it that *Dynamite II* and *Nyamba* both altered course to offer assistance while *Queequeg* apparently sailed by without making any effort to see whether assistance was required.

The rough weather early in the Race produced the expected crop of radio failures and a number of yachts were called before the race committee to explain their failure to report. Two of these, *Cordon Bleu* and *Vanessa*, were disqualified. The 35 foot *Cordon Bleu*

from Lake Macquarie sailed out of Constitution Dock immediately they were informed, vowing never to return.

I cannot but question behaviour which seems to me impulsive over-reaction when boats fail to report. Well set-up boats with experienced crews out in average conditions should not produce the many situations which occurred in this race, with aeroplanes and ships of the armed forces deployed on search and rescue operations, the panic headlines in the press and in radio newscasts.

Only one boat relayed a distress message, this was *Penando*, one of the oldest boats in the fleet with a fairly inexperienced crew. In the event, she sailed into port, surprised that she had been the subject of concern.

The lightweight centreboarders which developed serious hull failures were all sailed carefully into ports at the first sign of structural damage by their experienced crews. It is surprising that the excellent reporting of A.B.C.'s Gordon Bray from the Radio Relay Vessel *Mia Mia* became translated to the panic press headlines which caused so much worry to families of men going about their sailing in just another Sydney to Hobart Race.



Passing the Hyppalites aboard 'Windward Passage', wearing two sets of foul weather gear!

Currie Chegwyn the yacht insurance professionals

Currie Chegwyn Pty. Limited have been insurance consultants to the New South Wales yachting fraternity for nearly 20 years. For obligation-free counsel telephone Konrad Szymanski on 231 2455 or call at 28-34 O'Connell St., Sydney.

HOBART 1977:

'The Roughest Race on Record' ... What Bull!

By Tony Cable

The Editor has successfully locked me into doing at least two articles a year, one which predicts both the weather and the winner of the Hobart Race, and a following one devoted to explaining why the forecasts were wrong or, alternatively, gloating over the accuracy of them. This year I have my tail between my legs. I picked neither the weather nor the winner!

Readers will recall that I chose one of nine 1-tonners to win. Of these *Southern Comfort* and *Rockie* didn't even start, while *B195*, *The Sting*, *Smir-Noff-Agen*, *Variag* and *White Pointer* all blew up in various ways before they got down there. *Streaker* at least made it (some achievement in this Race) but only managed a 48th. The only one to save me from a complete loss of credibility was the outstandingly successful N.Z. Southern Cross Team member, *Jenny H*, which came 7th.

I must be now truthful and declare that I am just no good at picking maxis to win on handicap. Nor have I sufficient knowledge of naval architecture to be able to foresee that lightweight boats will start to unzip at 30-40 knots to windward after less than a day. But I suppose this lack of technical ability has also been somewhat lacking with people more professionally qualified than I.

To look very briefly over some of the other placings, Jim Kilroy's win, while unexpected, was nevertheless a very popular one. *Ragamuffin* at 2nd was, as so often before, only a bridesmaid, but no doubt one day Hewey will finally stop tantalising Syd and let him have a win. In view of what has been said about the weather conditions, it is both significant and creditable that one of the smallest yachts in the fleet, *Lollipop*, the 30' Joubert Currawong, came 4th. That fine Peterson 2-tonner, *Natelle II*, with 5th, improved her 1976 performance by a place. *Brer Fox* coincidentally repeated her 1976 position of 6th. *Antagonist* in next position gave another high placing to Tasmania (along with *Brer Fox*). *Piccolo* at 9th was in no way disgraced after her '76 win. *Apollo*, 3rd over the line after *Windward Passage*, just

managed to secure 10th slot. Following these came other good boats, the West German *Pinta*, *Zilvergeest III*, *Dynamite II*, *Damel*, previous winner *Rampage*, and the U.K. entry *Winsome '77*.

This listing was not done for the sake of filling space but to set up an analysis of the assertion that as usual there was no 'luck' in this race. Only good boats that were invested with experienced crews did well, while numerous boatloads of the inexperienced pulled out days earlier.

'Twee' Thomas, navigator on 'Pandora II', here navigating his way around a side of beef at the New Year's Day barbecue.



So much for a brief scan of the placings. Next I must say something of the weather. In December's article I predicted that "we will have the second heavy Race in a row. Just imagine the total retirements in a fleet of 140! Taking this heavy weather into consideration, we can immediately eliminate a few score boats that are not noted for heavy weather performance and/or do not have crews able to sail them hard in a real blow."

In retrospect many would feel that these words were somewhat prophetic, but the trouble is that I do not consider that a day, or less, of 30-40 knots (with, for some, an hour or two of 50 knots) anything like a blow. By 'blow' I was thinking of a not-unusual, two-day-or-more stint of 50-60 knots plus. Such a pleasure is thus still in store for us (maybe this year!).

This opinion on the real lack of severity of the so-called 'rugged' conditions is shared by a number of experienced competitors. Who better to quote than Peter Green, who has just notched up his 27th Hobart, on *Patrice III* "We were easily handling the 40 to 45 knot southerly with three reefs in the main and a No. 5 headsail. There was nothing that a well founded boat with a competent crew could not handle." (*Financial Review* 27/1/78, p. 21).

On having a look at Peter's ship's log, there is no record of any breeze over 35 knots. For them the 'blow' came in at 1200 on the 27th, at 30 knots. It held at 35 knots from 1300-0240, then 30 knots 0240-1015, thereafter various recordings ranged from 18-22 knots. In this section I am therefore setting down some evidence to contradict those widespread and distorted reports that this was a 'hard' race.

In support of the *Patrice* story, on *Apollo* we had only 30-40 knots with an odd puff of 50 knots for a maximum of only 18 hours. We got down to 3 reefs and a spitfire and were tramping. The only things we busted were breakfast sausages, they out of their skins!

As a final piece of evidence take the log of *Farr Out*, whose navigator won the Navigator's Prize. They too had 30 knots at 1300 on the 27th; they then had two hours of 40 knots and two hours of 50 knots, easing to 20-25 knots late that night and the next day three hours of 40 knots and 8 hours of 30 knots, thereafter easier winds.

Do the above facts indicate a tough race? If not, why then the widespread public belief that it was?

I believe that the first point which started to disseminate this incorrect description was our own Hitachi Press Centre (in using our sponsor's name here as part of a critical comment, I'm sure I know their veteran Hobart racer, and Managing Director, Ken Caldecott, well enough to know that I am not offending). On studying the sked reports from the relay ship *Mia Mia*, it was noted that by the evening sked on the 27th, just after the weather had come in, there were 18 retirements, followed by some 15 more by the sked the next morning. At this time *Mia Mia* reported that she was 10 miles east of Green Cape "wind 190 at 20 knots, mod. seas low swell". But following this information from this Official source, a C.Y.C. journalist then wrote in bulletin No. 6 from the Press Centre, "[the Race] has now been in progress for 43 hours and indeed it goes down as the roughest race on record. . .".

Further, in several of the reports, he described the seas as "mountainous" — what with winds only reported at max. 50 knots! So I think many wild press reports emanated from a source where, of all places, they shouldn't have—the C.Y.C.A. A false picture was thus generated which perhaps provided unfavourable publicity and may have well caused concern as to the safety of loved ones.

What then can one assess about the difficulty of the Race when a spectacular 59 boats pulled out? Well, apart from the distorted reports of the weather it is natural to assume that this record total automatically indicated severe conditions. The situation had, in fact, to be different from this, for as has been shown, there was no weather to really speak of. How then was this vast total accumulated?

Firstly, there was the inevitable group of failures, those which lost masts, stays and enough vital sails to prevent them

going further. For example, *Geronimo* broke her forestay, and this experienced crew were out. Next, there was a whole bunch of the 'lightweights', centreboarders etc., who as a 'class' were devastated by these relatively easy conditions. Their failure will be subject of much international debate. I don't have the talent to comment in that technical dialogue, other than to give an opinion on purely logical grounds. Henceforth which designer, boatbuilder and owner, having seen this massacre, would present such a flimsy craft at the start of another Hobart? It would be silly not to think that this type of boat will not now be considerably strengthened. If not, who will take responsibility for what happens to such a craft when they have to race for, say two days in 60 knots with no nearby shelter?

The next group of retirements consisted of those boats that had no significant gear failures but pulled out through factors or combinations of factors including prudence, inexperience, seasickness and, as one of the wags described, "deflated egos" or the need to "conduct urgent business in Ulladulla". One wise sailor counselled me not to take any unkind shots at some of these crews, and he cited a few who recognised that the situation at the time, with forecasts for it to continue, made them err on the side of caution, recognise that they were not up to it and be better prepared for next time.

One result that could well transpire as a result of such a great retirement list in the "no damage" category might be the call for some yachting bureaucratic solution to the problem. I have heard calls for a form of minimum initial screening of qualifications before crewing, e.g., so many ocean races. But in this we could overlook, say, the lad on his first race who may have been the cook on a North Sea trawler and a fine seaman to boot. We would also disregard some of the fourth-rate sailors



Patty Kendall, wife of the skipper of 'Kialoa', Bruce Kendall, wearing the side's colours on her beautiful sides.

of some year's standing who in several cases are skippers but who should be eliminated with a screening.

Other solutions that have been mentioned are biannual Hobarts; limitations on the fleet size; entry by invitation only; prevention of newly launched yachts from entering and more aggressive safety inspections. All these add up to a lot more bureaucracy, notwithstanding the merit of some of the suggestions. Thus the many boats that pulled out in relatively easy conditions have had the result of bringing out the advocates of much stricter limitations.

But when all the analysis of this Race fades, there will be one aspect that will remain as it ever has, the need for *seamanship*. We need to recognise that the winds and seas have not abated after 33 years, and if anyone wants to get his boat to Hobart, it must be strong enough for the worst that turns up regularly and he must have aboard a crew that physically and mentally can take these conditions. It is a traditional formula and one that is the prerequisite for success. If good sense on behalf of skippers and crews does not recognise this, then regulations will be brought in to overcome their negligence.

Contemplating the New Year in Hobart; happy 1978!



SYDNEY TO EDEN

by John Dawson

As the South Coast Express train slowly chugged up the hill from Stanwell park towards Sydney I gazed out over the vast expanse of water. It was early morning and a leaden sky to the east melted at the horizon into a beautiful grey sea that hardly had a ripple on it. Only a day or so ago the same piece of water, a little further south, had terminated my 1977 Hobart at Eden.

Boxing Day was a really great morning with everything fresh after the much-needed heavy rain the previous evening. On my way down to Middle Harbour I heard over the radio that a southwest change was expected to hit Sydney after lunch and cursed the thought of anything from that direction so early in the Race. In my own mind I also doubted the accurateness of this forecast as I felt so much rain during the night would have settled the weather which had been all over the place of late.

On board the brand new one tonner *White Pointer* last minute food stowage was taking place. Tactics were also being discussed and I voiced my opinion on the forecast southerly and plugged for getting to sea regardless of what the weatherman had said.

White Pointer is a Scott Kaufman designed vessel owned by Keith Le Compte, who supervised the building of her in laminated oregon. She is strong and beautifully finished. Strangely enough, my only query in regard to her construction when I first sailed on board was the fairly large distance between frames, particularly forward. On the other hand most of my racing in recent years had been on aluminium vessels of different design and shape, and it was

these new lightweights such as *Pointer* that were now cleaning up overseas. Anyhow, after all, I am not a boatbuilder, just a sailor.

The gun boomed and we had made a good start being right on the line. However, our skipper was a little worried that it may have been too good, but a number of boats were in front of us and perhaps these were the villains for which the second 'bang' was needed. The light easterly breeze gave the huge fleet a much needed starboard leg to the heads. It then came in fits and starts and, along with the spectator joggle and a large easterly ground swell, made life difficult in getting around South Reef to head south. Gradually the fleet split up with most climbing to sea at a sharper angle to the breeze as well as benefiting from the set. We stayed in to get the right side of the southwest change that did not eventuate that day.

As night fell the light east-sou'-easterly petered out and boats inshore learnt the repeated lesson while their competitors at sea held good wind, better in both direction and force, as well as running downhill with a set of up to two knots. The morning radio report confirmed our position with the boats east way out in front. Still a long way to go.

The second day was very hot and gradually a nor-easter crept in. As the temperature increased the breeze went to the norwest and then came out of the west at about 25 knots and we romped down the coast. The wind slowly moderated and then bang, the second forecast sou'-wester had arrived at about 35 to 40 knots. It was 1400 hours.

HOBART 1977:



In order to get the boat off her side we dropped the main completely and simultaneously put five reefs in. We knocked our headsail and went for our No. 5. Gradually we had gear and rig tuned for a good 'bash' which seemed likely to last for a day or so. *White Pointer* felt good at 6 knots plus.

I was at the tiller at the time of the change, and with my old mate Road Runner (Roger Howlett), we steered through the initial part of the blow until about 1800 hours, trying to give the balance of the crew plenty of rest for what could be an interesting night. By 6 p.m. we were closing Montagu Island and the seas were becoming nasty. Like most of us, having been in a seaway before, you try to relate similar circumstances, and my thoughts went to the Montagu race about 2 years earlier when only 11 boats out of 44 finished in weather of a similar nature.

However, although most conditions were the same there were a few differences. These seas had risen very quickly in a few hours. Looking back I feel it was mostly attributable to the sou'-wester hitting the large easterly groundswell and, as someone else suggested, being complicated by the strong set running against the change. As most people agree the seas were not that large but I found them steep and close together which did not allow much water in the back of a lot of them, something similar to a dumper on a beach. They were also confused which meant that when a set of, say, three large ones came through together, their direction to the ship's bow could vary greatly, and although it was possible to



Photo by Rob Stirling

pull away and nurse the boat through the first wave, the second and/or third one would catch you without boatspeed and/or direction and you would crash straight through the crest to the trough underneath. The sound created below deck could probably describe how the boat felt and reacted under such circumstances better than the writer.

Another thing that definitely sticks in my mind was the cold. To me Hobart is a three-jumper race—one for the lower mainland coast, two for Bass Strait and three for the Tassie coast. However, as I stumbled about below in the seaway preparing for my next stint on deck, I felt so cold that I nearly went for number three (jumper). Common sense prevailed. "If it is going to be this cold now, what will it be like at Tasman Island?"

Supported by a keen captain, a good crew and a vessel of immeasurable heart we made the first night without any damage. Along with most other vessels in the fleet we certainly fell off our share of waves. Just like being in the middle of a cement mixer!

The third day out remained much the same, between 35 to 45 knots over the deck gusting a few times to 50. The seas had still not settled into much of a pattern and this was probably a result of us being close in to the coast as well as near to the corner of the mainland and Bass Strait. The weather forecast was for the same conditions for another 24 hours, so wet, cold and uncomfortable (as any good ocean racing man should be) we prepared for the "paddock".

Just before 4 p.m. when I was looking forward to finishing my spell at the helm and getting below, a garbled message came via the companionway to nurse the boat a little more. (I missed the last part of the story.) However, judging by the strained look on young Mike's face, the news from down below was not good. Two consecutive frames out of the three and a half forward of the forward bulkhead had been found broken as well as a split in the Bulkhead.

Fate is an unusual thing. Only earlier on the last radio report we had heard that 30 boats had retired and this had cheered us because if we could keep

going we would automatically improve that many places. We pulled away and headed for the nearest piece of land and then ran up the coast to Eden.

Eden was like a mini Hobart with some twenty-five entries eventually finishing there. After a pleasant night at the Fishermen's Club next day, Thursday, found me hitch-hiking back to Sydney. All planes were booked out for days, and as there was no rail on that part of the coast, the thumb was the only means of transport. It was a bad time of the year to get a lift, as commercial traffic was just about nil. Ten rides later I arrived in Nowra, about 7 p.m. that evening.

I stayed with friends there, and 6.30 a.m. Friday saw me on the South Coast Express. Not a real good way to finish a Hobart. That's ocean racing.

MIA MIA'S HOBART

Aboard the Radio Relay Vessel

by Peter Rysdyk

It is 1150 hours and we're away, nine of us lined up navy-style on the starboard deck of *Mia Mia* facing the Royal Navy Patrol vessel, 'H.M.A.S. Buccaneer', which is acting as the Starter's Boat for the 1977 Hitachi Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race.

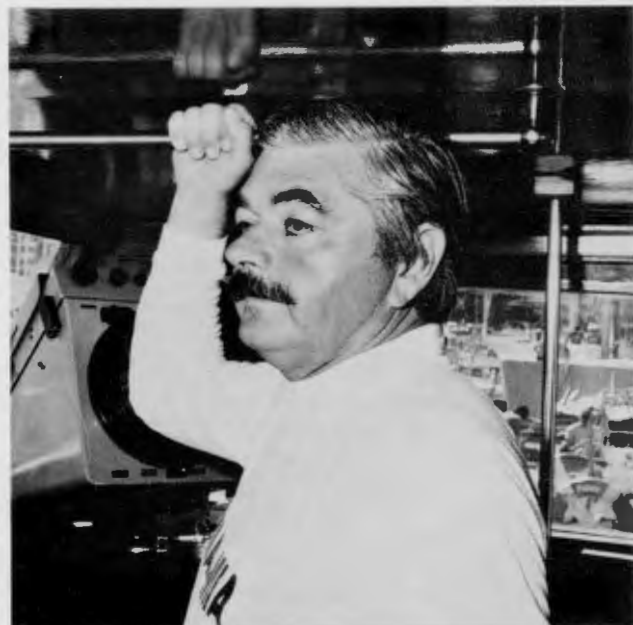
As we come up to the navy patrol boat we strike our C.Y.C. defaced ensign, promptly answered by 'Buccaneer'. We are the seventy-five foot *Mia Mia* acting this year for the fifth time as Official Radio Relay Vessel for a Race which will be reported over more than 200 Radio stations, 50 TV stations, and in hundreds of newspapers and magazines throughout the world.

It is moments like this that one feels all the hard work, all the arguments, all the criticisms have been worth it, and together with Race Director, Keith Storey, all of us who organised this massive event sigh with relief when the Royal Australian Navy shoots the fleet away.

But there is the realisation "Now, we have to get them there, and **you**, fellow, have the responsibility if anything goes wrong with radio skeds, relay or the reporting system at sea."

At the same time I presume Race Director Keith Storey, having the overall burden of responsibility, is having similar thoughts, and that we both are unconsciously thinking of good old George Barton, who did all of this in his stride. Quite a man that George of ours, who, together with a few other half-forgotten members, made the C.Y.C. what it is today.

Anyway back to our story! *Mia Mia*, by the way, means in Aboriginal 'hut', 'camp' or 'home'. To many yachtsmen, including myself, *Mia Mia* has just been "the boat that came with the fleet to Hobart, whose crew lived in presumed luxury and comfort and camped each night somewhere near his a local pub." We didn't even know the owner/skipper,



Geoff Hammond, skipper of the Radio Relay Vessel, 'Mia Mia'.

who generously gave his valuable vessel to the Club for the Race, permitted it to be stuffed full of radio gear and aerials.

Let me first of all tell you that *Mia Mia* was at all times in the middle of the so-called terrible weather and at sea, with exception of three hours when she sheltered for engine adjustments off the South Coast.

Mia Mia is a robust steel auxilliary ketch, built in Melbourne by her owner and Bega grazier, Geoffery Hammond, a C.Y.C. Member since the early sixties.

Mia Mia is 75' x 17'10" x 7'6", has a working sail area of 1500 sq. ft. of "lowers", sleeps eight (eleven during the Race), has a 150 H.P. Gardener diesel packed away in the most beautifully-laid-out-and-kept engine room by permanent hand Silverio Flamenia, 'Silver' for short, whom Geoff took on while in Manila, seven years ago.

Mia Mia is sixty tons and has travelled more than—hang on to your mainsheet you round-the-buoys-racers—200,000 ocean miles, including the Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Ceylon, Japan, Guam, Taiwan, Hong Kong, much of the continent of Africa, the Pacific Islands,

the Indian Ocean. By now we can say Geoff is a reasonable seaman and *Mia Mia* has given proof to her floating abilities. This obviously is the understatement of this article, and I'd like to add that Geoff Hammond is one of the finest human beings I've sailed with, with a (non-skipper's) even temper, the best bloody seacook who's food I have eaten, who handles his boat as if it were a dinghy and, just for laughs, who turned the big monster around in the filled-up Constitution dock in its own length. His crew adore him and his boat is in the same condition.

In spite of the rather miserable conditions this year (and you yachtsmen who think you 'copped it', try a crossing to Hobart in a motorised vessel, working in a saloon some twenty hours a day, hanging over a plotting chart, flying from one side to the other, and during your time off, take Radio watches. I have only done eight 'Hobarts' but give me a sailing craft anytime). The crew ticked like a clock. Probably a lot was due to the magic meals Geoff conjured up in the galley, half the time standing on his ear. In spite of the hectic schedules *Mia Mia* was blessed with a marvellous atmosphere.

The crew consisted of 'The Boss'; his

number one, Frank Parsons, a retired builder from Melbourne who sailed eleven years on *Mia Mia* and is, like Geoff himself, a competent navigator; Stan Ball, electrical specialist, who has sailed for a similar period with Geoff; John (Nicko) Nixon, who has a masters ticket and is an electronic expert, owns a marine electronic business in Gladstone and although a young man, is an old timer on *Mia Mia*; Ross (Rosko) Heller, an engineer from Melbourne who also has seen many countries from the deck of *Mia Mia*; then, of course, Silver, good-for-everything, always-smiling, always-ready Silver. So much for the crew who drove the ship. The C.Y.C. crew consisted of Bert Oliver, hardworking, always-on-the-radio Bert, who is Federal Sporting Co-ordinator for A.B.C. Radio and T.V. with 18 Hobarts under his belt, and who did his first yacht race report laying in the nose of an R.A.A.F. bomber in 1949 over Freemantle. Gordon Bray, smooth-talking sporting commentator of A.B.C. fame, whose ten-minute Race reports went out three times daily over 157 radio stations and relay stations across the nation from *Mia Mia*; Keith Wakefield, Technical Officer from Telecom Australia having his first ocean blooding but, in spite of everything, who kept the airways open, the radios working, and who drove O.T.C. and Telecom bases up the wall by being never satisfied with the signal and who accordingly hopped from one frequency to the other to improve them; from our Hobart host Club, the R.T.Y.C., we had Rod Barren, a former Rear Commodore and also the Managing Director of a Hobart electrical firm; then yours truly who, with Rod, kept track of all the yachts, plotting their positions and giving this information to Gordon Bray, writing the news reports for 2CH which Bert sent out five times daily; and last but by no means least 'Herbie' the rat, our stowaway, who came on board via the gangplank at the C.Y.C. marina, beautiful, fat and black, long-tailed and speedy, who escaped all catching equipment and only gave us the doubtful pleasure of occasional glimpses of her/him/it.

The story of this memorable Race will without doubt stream from many pens written by many amateur and professional journalists and experts. However, let me state here and now that the weather was unpleasant, close to bad, but by no means as stated by many as "Unbelievable, forty-foot seas, the worst storm ever in Bass Strait", etc. We yachtsmen have an expression for this sort of poppycock and it isn't 'poppycock'. Compared with really bad weather, as five C.Y.C. yachts, including my own, experienced in Cyclone Emily, Gladstone Race '72, where the official

Mia Mia's crew:
Geoff Hammond
Frank Parsons
Stan Ball
John Nixon
Ross Heller
Silverio Flamenia



Communications gear installed on 'Mia Mia' by A.W.A. especially for the Hobart Race included a C.A.I. CA-35 Ms Mark II 150 watt SSB transceiver; two A.W.A. Teleradio SS 120A 100 watt SSB transceivers as back-up equipment; two A.W.A. Pilotphone 25 watt VHF transceivers.

Photo by Keith Storey

record was wind 112 knots, seas 42', visibility zero, this year's weather was at worst unpleasant with short seasick-making seas and strong winds. Why so many good yachts retired, God knows. I think that the psychological effect of the first spate of (more or less expected) pullouts had a lot to do with it. There are of course the bad-luck damages, but I know for sure that seasickness was a major contributing factor. This Race proves once more my point made in a recent article: we *have* to look at the proficiency of our skippers and navigators. New Zealand is doing this already. In this Hobart many skippers took their yachts and crew to sea without proper knowledge of what they were in for and, in many proven instances, without qualified navigators.

I have personally experienced the enormous problem and worry of a radio breakdown and missing radio position 'skeds'. This year some appeared not to be overly concerned and did *not* make contact by closing with nearby yachts or, for that matter, making a landfall and claiming time later. No doubt the disqualification of two yachts so guilty, while able to listen in but not able to transmit, will put the fear of God into everybody, knowing that the Club means business.

If only skippers knew the problems, the involvement of requesting or commencing a search, missing a 'sked' would not be taken so lightly. Several instances of completely untrue or irresponsible statements during media interviews shows the lack of understanding of the problem on the part of some.

The C.Y.C. can do no more than apply the rules and work by the book. As a safety inspector I am convinced that the C.Y.C safety inspections before the Race are the toughest imaginable. However there are no guidelines or rules to test skippers or navigators. Anybody, yes anybody, can buy a yacht and sail the next week in the Hobart, which, in my opinion, is a crazy state of affairs. Granted, the Club has the right to refuse any entry without giving a reason. But I assure you from experience that all hell breaks loose when somebody *is* refused; they pull all the strings possible from politicians to church leaders and Club Officers' Aunties.

What more is there to tell you of our 1977 Hitachi Sydney Hobart Yacht Race on *Mia Mia*? It was an interesting experience and exercise with, in my opinion, too many radio skeds. I think as for the Noumea Race two skeds daily should suffice. Three is too hard on yacht navigators and relay personnel

alike.

Would I sail on *Mia Mia* again? Yes, with that lot I would sail anywhere. And as Geoff is heading for Hong Kong in a few months, I have already placed my unworthy name on the crew list from elderly cabin boy to navigator, whatever is available! Geoff Hammond, you, your crew and your ship will do me.



The Wheelhouse of 'Mia Mia'.



Plotting yacht positions—a never-ending job.



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Whitsunday Yachting World

BAREBOAT YACHT CHARTERS

WHAT IS BAREBOAT CHARTERING?

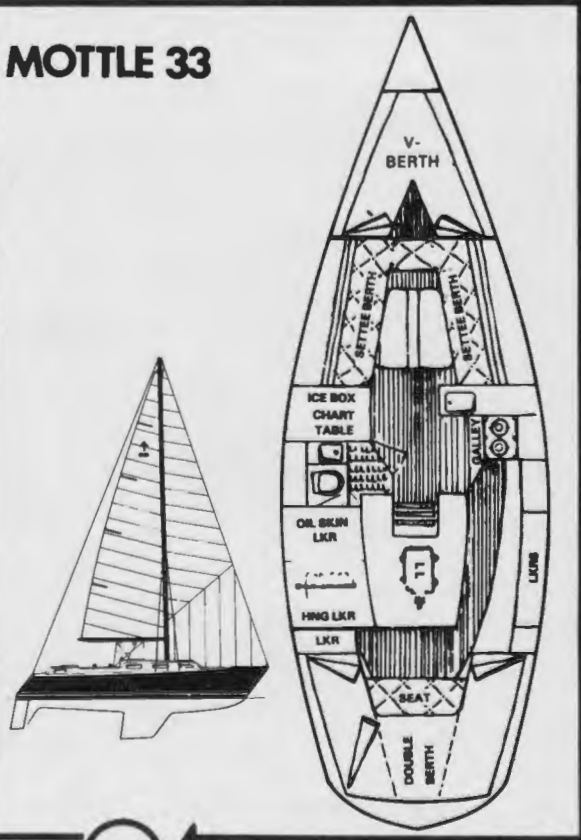
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RADIO SKED DISQUALIFICATIONS

by Keith Storey, Race Director

Two yachts were disqualified by the Protest Committee in the recent Sydney-Hobart Race for failing to report their positions at each radio schedule in accordance with Rule 27 of the Sailing Instructions. Yachts have been disqualified from previous Hobart Races but never before on account of radio failure.

Radio communications have become an integral, indeed inescapable, part of the Race and an essential ingredient of every long off-shore race conducted by our Club. The radio is a prime piece of safety equipment which enables a yacht to seek assistance when in distress. But its use in position reporting has now assumed such importance as to make reliable radio communications indispensable to the conduct of a long ocean race. This has been a process of development influenced by a number of factors.

Our international events continue to increase in number, in popularity, in importance and in complexity. Every Sydney-Hobart Race now attracts foreign entries. The media and other interested parties abroad demand to know how their countrymen are faring. Twelve months ago nobody forecast more than fifteen or so entries for the 1977 Sydney-Noumea Race. On the day, thirty-four yachts crossed the starting line including many foreign entries. We now look forward to regular large fleets to Noumea and new on the calendar are races to Tonga and Tahiti, all of which demand improving standards of radio communications.

Perhaps most important of all is that smaller yachts down to half-ton size are now entering long ocean races in large numbers, so creating the need for the Club to keep watch over the yachts' positions and progress since many of the skippers and crews are less than highly-experienced, seasoned offshore seamen and navigators. This brings in train the need for relatives, friends and loved ones, who are also relatively new to the situation, to be kept abreast of the yachts' progress by published reports and upon request.

Another new development is the 1978 Easter Festival of Yachting, being a race, a cruise and a family event to Port Stephens. Even though Port Stephens is only 90 miles up the coast many would not participate unless good radio coverage were available to boost their own and their family's confidence sufficiently to set out on such a passage, which includes sailing through the night.

Finally, the public interest in our races, particularly the Hobart, could not have developed, nor could it be sustained at present levels, without satisfactory radio communications. The same applies to the value of the races to the Club in relation to the degree of international esteem and support, local importance and sponsor attraction.

Let's be frank, the future development of our Club House and yachting facilities depend upon sponsor support.

Reverting now to the Hobart race, we had all the ingredients to create an action-packed scenario, and action packed it was whether we liked it or not. We had a record fleet ranging from maxi giants to a large assembly of small yachts, many of which were light-displacement flyers of controversial and well publicised designs and problems. Top this off with an accurate forecast of two or three southerly cold fronts and it is no wonder we created an intensely interested audience for the daily front page spreads, radio newscasts and T.V. film shots which persisted for a week and travelled right across the world.

When the first cold front hit the fleet the tough conditions began to tell on the crews, the gear and, in the case of the light displacement yachts, on the hulls. For about 45 per cent of the field the sea prevailed and massive retirements were the result. From then on we had a situation whereby if a yacht failed to come up on radio schedule for more than a day, people began to worry and the news-worthiness of the radio silence fortified everybody's concern.

In these circumstances the absence of radio contact inevitably causes a search to be called for through sheer weight of

pressure. Likewise the search and rescue authorities feel obliged to mount a big operation given a request for assistance.

The responsibility for preventing this must be laid fairly and squarely upon the yachtsmen concerned. It is their responsibility to remain on the air regardless of the difficulty, even to the extent of being equipped with two transceivers and a separate radio battery up out of the bilge. Alternatively the yachtsmen must succeed in having messages passed daily to dispel all possible expressions of concern and all pressures to mount a search, even to the extent of:

- Closing with plotted yachts (for which purpose a transistor receiver should be carried). If engine is used time adjustment should be arranged after the finish.
- signalling pre-prepared morse messages to ships.
- displaying flares or employing a heliograph to attract attention.
- seeking out professional and private fishing boats, cruisers etc., closing the coast if necessary.
- transmitting on CB channels by walkie talkie when near the coast or private vessels.
- starting engine and proceeding into a port or harbour to arrange, from the waterfront, a reverse-charge 'phone call to be made (claiming time allowance later).
- firing a red parachute, when other pyrotechnics fail (and apologising later), if there is somebody around to see it.
- doing anything else that will achieve the desired result.

If these measures seem to be extreme they pale into insignificance alongside the measures taken in the search for *Penando* which involved much hardware and the time of a large number of people, and the ever-present possibility of loss of life.

Avoidance of all of this drama is achieved by radios remaining serviceable. Radio failure can spoil your whole race.

It was not by accident that Geoff Hammond arrived in Hobart with his radio relay ship *Mia Mia* in perfect condition with all systems working, and like all such vessels, she is a complex floating powerhouse. Geoff's crew consisted of a superb No. 1, a mechanical engineer, an electrician, an electronics technician, and his permanent crewman, who is a good shipwright. All are good seamen and capable of standing watch. Geoff, a fine seaman in every sense of the world, undertook the functions of navigator and cook. The communications crew, which was quite separate as to its functions, included a radio technician from the O.T.C. Overseas Radio Terminal who, like his crewmates, was a good seaman.

There is no reason why racing yachts could not similarly select crew members for their technical skills even if time has to be allowed for the development of their yachting skills. Indeed the top offshore yachtsmen do so, and this enables them to exert all of their efforts towards winning the race.

Merely the addition of electronics skills would enhance the serviceability of radios, instruments and much electrical gear. We all know that this sort of equipment does fail and that a bath in salt water is not a pre-requisite to failure, although it helps. A small bag of spares, a few tools, a multimeter and some one who knows what to do with them will afford the yacht and the Club a much needed boost in communications reliability.

This will not only keep the bureaucratic regulators at bay but will restore our prestige by no longer having to call for expensive, unnecessary aerial searches.

Given all of this expertise aboard, there is still no substitute for having two of everything. The weight of an extra radio would not have a measureable adverse effect upon performance. As to cost, well, if it is a toss up between a radio and a sail, maybe it is better to accept second prize than to be first in for disqualification because of radio failure.

None of the foregoing is to be construed to be a threat nor is it bureaucratic attitude on the part of the Club. It is merely recognition of the fact that we

HOBART 1977:



are now in a different ball park brought about largely by an upsurge in the popularity of ocean racing, by the large number of small yachts participating with the attendant increased numbers of less experienced crews and, more recently, by designs resulting from dynamic exploitation of the rules. None of these developments needs be regarded as bad, but they are different and pose new problems in the conduct of ocean races. The Club would be doing the sport a disservice if it did not keep pace with changing conditions.

Already being studied are concepts for varying our procedures for the purpose of easing the workload afloat and

A record 130 yachts started in this year's Hobart, one of them knowing that her radio wasn't working.

Photo by John Storey





*'Windward Passage' plunges down a wave on the way to Hobart 1977,
her vast deck like a deserted city street on a rainy Sunday morning.*

Photo by Rob Stirling



Radio Sked Disqualifications

ashore, to facilitate efficient communications with the inevitably larger fleets of the future and without jeopardising safety. The concept propounded by Rear Commodore Gordon Marshall is to adopt two position report schedules per day, twelve hours apart, together with two scheduled "open line" periods of short duration in between times for the purpose of relaying weather reports, exchanging messages, passing emergency calls and the like.

Referring now to recent incidents, it was during the Southern Cross Cup Series before Christmas when the Race Committee protested yacht *B195* for failing to report her position at any of the four skeds during the 180-mile race. The objective was not to disqualify the yacht but to serve notice upon the fleet that the radio rules had to be observed during the Hobart Race. Wide publicity was given to this and the Club was obliged to press for accurately and fully reporting the incident and the admonishment dealt out by the Race Committee. It was believed that the exercise had served its purpose.

Despite this, the British yacht *Xaviera* took the decision to ignore the rules and crossed the Hobart Race starting line fully aware that her radio was inoperative. That was an unwise decision. We could have arranged a radio technician that morning, even on Christmas Day, given advice of the need. We did just that for *Apalie* borrowing a brand new set on Christmas Eve and having it installed on Christmas Day.

Subsequently five yachts which finished the course at Hobart were protested on the evidence of having failed to report on three or more occasions. In three cases the protests were dismissed when the Protest Committee found that the yachts had taken proper and responsible action in the circumstances. In the cases of *Meltemi* and *Humdinger*, both had deliberately closed with other yachts (*Lowana II* and *Fireball*) and arranged for them to report their position, the problem, and to advise that no emergency existed.

In the case of *Zilvergeest*, her crew had taken the initiative to disconnect the transceiver and expose the circuitry to the sun to dry out. Upon re-installation they were back on the air and did not miss a sked during the remaining days to the finish. What a fine effort and what a worthy reward for their initiative!

Yacht *Vanessa* ceased transmitting after the 0700 sked on Friday 30 and failed to report again until crossing the finishing line at 1911 on Monday 2nd

January. She suffered complete loss of power and was unable to recharge the batteries. Making a landfall at Eddystone Point Light she made no attempt to signal. She passed a ship off Eddystone Point but did not attempt to signal. On her way south she sailed close inshore at St. Helens Pt. light and illuminated her sail in the hope of being seen and identified. Reference to sailing instruction 28 would have reminded the crew that Eddystone Pt. light is manned but St. Helens light is not. *Vanessa* remained in sight of land until the finish, passing another ship off Tasman Island, but she did not attempt to signal. A transistor radio receiver was on board and *Mia Mia*'s skeds were monitored.

The Protest Committee's decision was "That insufficient effort was made to report her position and as opportunity had been available, *Vanessa* is disqualified".

Cordon Bleu suffered radio failure due to water entry after the 1900 sked on Tuesday 27th December and failed to report again until crossing the finishing line in Hobart early a.m. on Sunday 1st January. She had on board a serviceable radio receiver and used it to monitor *Mia Mia*'s skeds and distress traffic.

Shipping was encountered which the yacht crew knew had been alerted to report any sighting of the yacht, but no signals were made by the yacht. The crew knew that CQ calls from Coast Radio Stations for sightings had been instituted and were operative from Thursday 29th, also that *Mia Mia* had engaged the fleet in a visual search on Saturday at 0700. *Cordon Bleu* received the instruction to display two flares at one minute interval and acted accordingly, but they were not sighted. The crew knew that an aerial search began shortly afterwards.

The Protest Committee decision was "That *Cordon Bleu* be disqualified for failing to take adequate steps to report her position".

The penalties of disqualification for these yachts were severe. However the Protest Committees, made up of R.Y.C.T and C.Y.C.A yachtsmen were unanimous in their decisions. They decided that the complete absence of any responsible attempt to make contact and have their positions reported required such a penalty. The Committee found that the yachts were responsible for search and rescue authorities mounting unnecessary searches including aerial search operations.

The Protest Committee decisions to disqualify the yachts hopefully will alert future competitors to their responsibility to ensure that they do not cause search operations to commence for them, when

in fact they are in no danger. If yachtsmen continue to cause false searches the whole sport of ocean racing will become discredited in the eyes of the rescue organisations to the degree that help may not be forthcoming when it is really needed.

A most disheartening note was sounded on January 20th when one of the disqualified yachts crossed the starting line of a long ocean race in the full knowledge that the radio was still operative. Once again disqualification was the result, together with a Sailing Committee directive that the Radio Communications Officer certify the serviceability of the installation, by test, before the yacht's entry would be validated for the next long race three weeks later. Should it happen again there can be little doubt that a more severe penalty will have to be imposed.

During the recent Hobart Race we were afforded immediate distress assistance, on request, by Marine Operations Centre, Tasmania Police, Victoria Police, N.S.W. Police, Maritime Services Board of N.S.W., N.S.W. State Boating Service, the R.A.A.F., the R.A.N., Civilian Aircraft Operators, Merchant Marine, professional fishermen and, of course, the Coast Radio Stations. Indeed, there just isn't anybody else with jurisdiction along the 630 mile race course, except in the Derwent River.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to the dedicated, expert officers of these services. May we never again occasion them unnecessary effort nor diversion from more worthy endeavours.

The Club has been summoned to attend a de-briefing meeting to be held on 16th February at the instigation of the Tasmanian Police, the meeting to be attended also by representatives of Marine Operations Centre, N.S.W. Police, O.T.C. Coast Radio and Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania. The purpose of the meeting is to inform us of their concern in respect of search and rescue aspects of the recent Sydney-Hobart Race and to discuss these with a view to improving the situation for the next event.

It will be recalled that the Tasmania Police were involved in searches for us on four occasions—the coastal and aerial searches for *Cordon Bleu*, the *Casablanca* rescue and the aerial search for *Vanessa*. Three of these should not have happened. The Tasmania Police are justified in lodging a protest.

On 1st January, communications in the Maritime Mobile bands above 3 MHz in the double sideband mode became

OFFSHORE — February/March 1978

susperceded. All such traffic should be in the single sideband mode. Accordingly, yachts not fitted with S.S.B. equipment will be ineligible to enter the 1978 Sydney-Hobart Race.

There will be many position reports to transmit between now and the end of the year, so it would be doubly advantageous to have regard to inflation and buy now. The existing D.S.B. set will still give sterling service on 2MHz frequencies for another four years. Every other yachtsman fronting up with a dual installation will be doing the sport, and himself, a great service also. How about if fellows?

IT 'S BEEN SAID BEFORE

In 1970 a gale lasting only 50 hours caused most of the record number of 14 retirements out of 61 entrants! In 1950 the fleet was in a southerly gale for four out of five and a half days. If this year's fleet leaves in a gale and it carries down to Tasmania, the retirements could easily beat the record. A foretaste of this situation occurred on last October's Montagu Island Race when some 30 of the fleet of 45 pulled out (or were knocked out) when the wind was blowing at only about 35 knots!

Several hundred men (and the occasional women) compete in the race—journalists sometimes describe them in such terms as "the cream of blue water yachtsmen" In reality, if a big blow comes, this myth will be shattered as scores of them will fail—fear, seasickness and lack of stamina will lay low scores of them. It will be the hardened, experienced seamen in the fleet who will carry many short-handed yachts in.

—T. Cable, Hobart Program 1975

Who Said the Retirements were Excessive

With all the present hullabaloo about the excessively high retirement rate in the recent Sydney-Hobart Race, how good are the memories of the old salts around the bar?

The stories I've been hearing suggest that the current breed of yachtsmen are pansies: "... In the good old days when ships were wood and men were iron. . .", that's how the conversations seem to run.

Well, here are a couple of facts which I remember. In the 1960 Montagu Is. Race, 18 boats faced up to the starter, but only two finished.

Joanne Brodie, a fine old Tasman Seabird from the board of Alan Payne, (she was not old then) beat *Solo*, the steel wonderboat, by over an hour. The retirement rate in that race, crewed with the hairy-chested salts of the day, was a massive 89%. In our last Sydney-Hobart, with all the pansies onboard, the percentage was 45.

We didn't run questionnaires in those days, so I can't quote how many got seasick, or how many lost gear, but I wouldn't be surprised if the situation was very similar then to what it is now.

Of one thing you can be sure: ocean racing will always be an adventure, with yachtsmen pitted against the sea. Who would wish it otherwise?

Occasionally the sea decides it's time for us to pay her the respect that is due to her. When that happens, a lot of boats finish up at Eden and Ulladulla, and wherever else, the yachtsmen can sit out the storm in shelter, cogitating the wonders of their sport.

— Gordon Marshall

"Every so often the ocean becomes very wild and giant seas develop which will overturn the most stable vessel". He [Joubert] doubts whether some of the modern lightweights would have the capacity to self right when upside down, especially the centreboarders with internal ballast. He also considers that some of these yachts lack sufficient structural strength to withstand a hard race.

—Hobart Program 1977, comments of Prof. Peter Joubert.

HOBART 1977:



Sea conditions can change so very quickly. I think the problem for the not-so-experienced racing man, whether he be the skipper or crew, is handling heavy conditions for the first time. For example if you have only experienced a 25 knot breeze on the nose, then you are inclined to think that a 35 knot wind is only 10 knots worse. Arithmetically this is correct, but the actual physical condition of the sea changes much more greatly than one envisages. That is where the trouble is. For those less experienced they just cannot imagine a seaway until they face say 35 knots or more.

Then, depending on the individual's make-up, he overcomes the fear of a seaway, going forward in the dark or being swept down the lee gunwale while changing a sheet position for a smaller headsail. As conditions get worse he might have to fight off seasickness, and even if he goes below he still has to hang on and put up with all the commotion the hull and rigging make as the yacht plunges through each wave. Then there is the inexplicable time when a yacht has leapt out of a sea and you wait as it crashes down into the next sea; the noise is like being in a cement mixer. As the seas continue to mount, on most boats down below it becomes wetter and wetter. Water trickles in through hatches, runs down the mast or just comes off the crew in wet gear coming up or down the companionway. After a few hours of this weather the closed up boat gets that stench from the stale air, wet jumpers, a half bucket of 'spew', cooking smells and even the 'heads' may have contributed too. About this time experienced crew think about the nice clean dry lounge room at home; even with the worse show on T.V. it would leave this for dead, and they may also think that it's time to retire. They never do. They always come back.

The inexperienced perhaps get into a bunk, and they might not come on deck again until the blow is over. They have no doubt that it is the time to retire from ocean racing and sometimes they do.

—John Dawson, 'Offshore' Dec. '75

IT'S TOUGH AT THE TOP

so let's
get the
records
straight!

Results speak for themselves, and in these days of ever-increasing competition, the value of a first place win in a major race cannot be overestimated by any sail manufacturer. However, North Sails, like some of our competitors, is an international organisation and each loft throughout the world can count on some major achievement throughout the course of a season. We can certainly boast of our overseas lofts' successes but what we're really concerned with is success with sails made here, in Australia, by North Sails, the sails that are readily available to Australian yachtsmen. Facts below tell the story and underline the quality and performance we can offer you.

FACT 1 America's Cup Challenger — 12 metre AUSTRALIA

AUSTRALIA had all Australian made North Sails which were stated by Bob Bavier to be "the finest I've seen on a challenger." AUSTRALIA beat GRETTEL II (Hood Australia Sails), FRANCE and SVERIGE and lost to COURAGEOUS which carried U.S. made sails.

FACT 2 1-Ton Australian Championships
1st — B195 — with mainsails and headsails manufactured by North Sails Australia.

FACT 3 ½-Ton Australian Championships
1st — 2269 — Headsails and spinnakers by Norths Australia. 3 out of the first 5 yachts in this series used mainly North Sails, made in Australia.

FACT 4 ½-Ton World Championships
2nd — SILVER SHAMROCK — carried North Headsails.
3rd — 2269 — All North Sails (Australia).

FACT 5 The Sydney to Hobart
Official results:

Overall — 4 out of 1st 6 yachts used North Sails, made in Australia.

1. KIALOA — U.S. made sails.
2. RAGAMUFFIN — Main and genoas by Norths Australia.
3. WINDWARD PASSAGE — U.S. made sails.
4. LOLLIPOP — Headsails by Norths Australia.
5. NATELLE II — Main, headsails and spinnakers by Norths Australia.
6. BRER FOX — Headsails by Norths Australia.

Divisions

- (A) Placings — 2nd (main and headsails by Norths Australia), 4th (Main, headsails and spinnakers by Norths Australia), 6th — All sails Norths Australia.
- (B) 1st — BRER FOX — Headsails Norths Australia.
- (C) 1st — ZILVERGEEST III — All sails by Norths Australia.
- (D) 1st — LOLLIPOP — Headsails Norths Australia.

2 Ton Trophy

1st NATELLE II — Main, headsails and spinnakers by Norths Australia.
2nd PINTA — All North Sails.

FACT 6 The international computer link up between all Norths Sails lofts is a distinct advantage to all Australian yachtsmen. Any winning North sail throughout the world can be identically reproduced in Australia through the North's computer facility.



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BIGGLES' COLUMN

(by John Brooks)

Do you remember when you were south-east of Gabo getting your brains scrambled, wet, miserable and still two, or three days to go to Hobart? Did you occasionally dream about warm seas, blue skies, trade winds and balmy tropical nights, maybe the occasional Mai Tai before the evening meal? Well the Waikiki Yacht Club wants to make it more than just a dream. They want to expand their biannual Royal Hawaiian Cup into a full scale series, in fact, an Admiral's Cup of the Pacific, as their contribution to Hawaii's bi-centenary celebrations of Captain Cook's discovery of the 'Sandwich Isles'.

They have found an enthusiastic sponsor in Pan Am and a project director in M.H.Y.C. Member, Dick Gooch, who has been the inspiration behind Middle Harbour's involvement in the Round-Hawaii Race for the last seven years. In a promotional sweep around the Pacific Dick has generated keen interest on the U.S. West Coast, Canada, Japan, Hong Kong, Tahiti and New Zealand.

The series will consist of three offshore 30-mile olympic triangle races, a 100-mile race around the Island of Oahu and the 800 mile Around-the-State Race

which, from this year, counts in the World Ocean Racing Championship.

The series will start August 5th this year, and there is a proposal for an Australian team to be selected by point score from regular C.Y.C.A. races. As yet there is no formal committee, but skippers interested in sending their boats include Syd Fischer, Neville Gosson, Peter Hill, Stan Edwards, Peter Kurts, Keith Farfor, Dick Thurston, Tommy Stephenson and Alan Bond. Anyone desiring more information should contact Alan Brown (51 5013, 546 4758 A.H.).

* * *

The latest *Seahorse* magazine (the R.O.R.C. house magazine) includes a review of some interesting developments in one-design offshore racers, a concept which is becoming increasingly popular in the U.K. and has some momentum in the U.S. In England an organisation called the Offshore One-design Conference has been formed consisting of delegates from the R.O.R.C., the armed forces and various club officials, owners, boat builders and interested yachties. The conference called for designs for offshore one-designs in various categories and from 26 submissions selected three which the conference is going to promote as part of the push towards one design ocean racing.

The yachts include the OOD 34, a fairly conventional looking Peterson design but trending away from extreme light displacement; the Aphrodite 101, a Scandinavian design by Paul Elvstrom and Jan Kjaerulff that owes a lot to Square and International Metre classes, being long and narrow but sporting a fin keel; the Impala 28, a good-looking little cruiser-racer type designed by David Thomas over 20 of which have already been ordered. All of them apparently fare reasonably well under the I.O.R., and the Aphrodite 101 is proving very competitive in I.O.R. races in Europe with one design fleets there and also in, of all places, Seattle. In my opinion one-design represents the future of ocean racing and it is only a matter of time before we get around to it here in Australia.

* * *

I guess that by now everyone and his dog has had plenty to say about the Sydney-Hobart Race so I can have a go in this column without fear of being Robinson Crusoe. As usual there are wildly differing opinions on the severity of the blow. Reports of maximum sustained wind strength vary from 35 to 70 knots depending, I suspect, on how long the observer has been in the Club

bar. However, the general consensus amongst the old hands who were actually in the Race is that at 35-50 knots it was by no means the worst blow ever and lasted for less than a day at that.

One thing about a decent blow, however short, is that it gives the newspapers something to write about which, in turn, keeps the sponsors happy, so we should not quibble about a little poetic licence here and there. It is a classic case of "it's an ill wind . . ." etc. However, if it was mostly all talk, why then so many retirements? Looking at the list of non-finishers they are pretty representative of the fleet in size, type, age or construction with the exception that 5 out of 6 centreboarders retired, most with hull damage.

Pity poor *Helsal*, holed and put out even before the start, a bizarre anti-climax for a very keen crew. The *Helsal* crew wish to make public their appreciation for T.A.A.'s generosity in flying them down to Hobart to join in the post-race celebrations. I have heard of no precedent for this spontaneous gesture on the part of an airline anywhere in the world.

There were a number of retirements directly or indirectly attributable to seasickness, which invites comment. If entire crews were seasick, or enough to make the boat unworkable, as did happen, then the skipper was at fault when he took on so many inexperienced hands or crewmen prone to seasickness whatever their experience. It also indicates that crews were starting the Hobart Race with little or no previous race practice together or the seasickness problem would have already arisen and been resolved; this too, indicates neglect on the part of the skipper. That a N.S.W. team representative should retire because of it is something less than disgraceful.

Responsibility in this area also rests with the yachting himself; if you know that you regularly get seasick in ocean races and that you are incapable of continuing to work on deck when you do, then you are displaying selfish disregard for your shipmates and the competitiveness of the yacht by going to sea with them. You, they and the boat would be better off if you stayed out of ocean racing altogether.

One good suggestion that has been going the rounds is that all starters except foreign entries be required to complete three ocean races on the Australian calendar in the three months preceding the start of the Sydney-Hobart. To this I would add the qualification that the crew for those races be the same crew that is going to Hobart.

(continued next page)

Another point is one that is peculiar to the sport of ocean racing. The men with the money to finance the modern ocean racer all too rarely have solid background sailing experience when they first start in the sport. Nevertheless these men are the skippers and whether they are playing at "make believe I'm Captain Cook" or not, when the chips are down they are probably the least qualified person on board to be making decisions affecting the safety vessel and crew, but sometimes they do.

These are of course the exception, let me hastily add before Syd Fischer hits me with one of his office blocks, and in the past it has not been a real problem. But with the advent of relatively cheap production yachts it has become more noticeable. It demands that everyone on board insist that yacht, skipper and crew are in all respects ready to race. The safety inspection does not cover stupidity or lack of seamanship.

Another suggestion is that Hobart Race skippers and crews be scrutinised before the entry is accepted and the total number of entries limited with the cut presumably going to the least well prepared and inexperienced owners. To me this seems to be a cure worse than the disease because we then have to form yet another committee (runaway bureaucracy someone said?) or find

someone who is qualified to judge and whom we all respect in that capacity, and last I heard God wasn't checked out on ocean racers.

Limiting the number of starters by itself does not provide any real safety benefits, and growth in entries is germane to the development and promotion of the Sydney-Hobart Race in particular and ocean racing in general. The moment that we, as a club, start saying to people "No, you can't come and play with us because it is our ball" for other than clear, hard, safety reasons, then we might as well wind up the Race and take up knitting.

However it is clear after the event that some of the starters in the 1977 Sydney-Hobart should not have been there at all, and some of the retirements were for the wrong reasons. It is all very well to say that it is good seamanship to retire when the going gets rough and there is doubt that the crew can handle the conditions. I'd describe it more as prudently admitting poor seamanship. To quote 'Boy' Messenger: "You'll soon find the ones that went along for the ride; they'll be in Eden or Ulladulla", along with a few genuine retirements, of course.

Whatever happened to the toughness and seamanship that was legendary in the early Australian Admiral's Cup Teams and inherently part of local

standards? What the 1977 Sydney-Hobart Race embarrassingly revealed is poor seamanship and lack of stomach for hard ocean racing in the local fleet. Until we correct this our ocean racing will remain polarised with a pitifully small handful of good crews at the top and a dismayingly poor general standard, and if this remains the rule we can kiss the Southern Cross Cup goodbye and have a long wait for another Admiral's Cup Team like *Balandra*, *Caprice of Huon* and *Mercedes III*.



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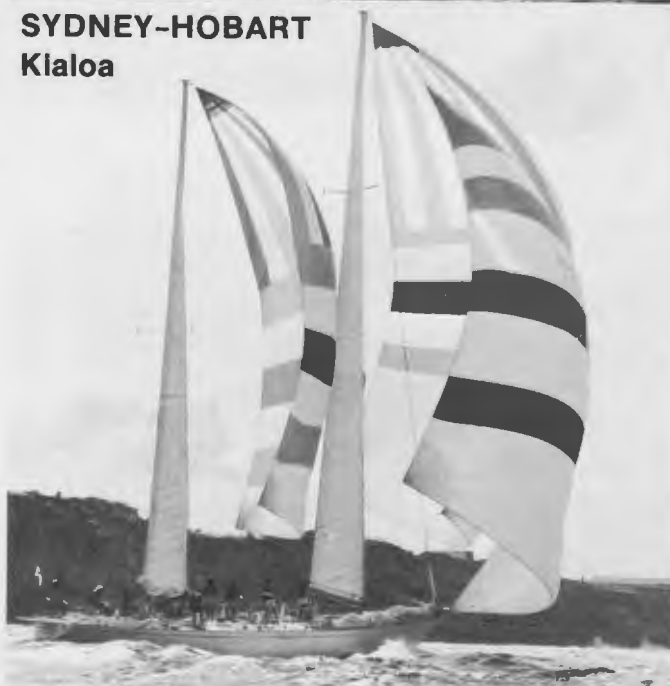
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Looking south from the summit of Toomere Head, which guards the south side of the entrance to Port Stephens.

Photo by David Colfelt

Easter Passage Race/Cruise to Port Stephens

By Peter Rysdyk.

When on Thursday 23rd March, 2100 hours, the starting gun is fired by David Goode, it will not only signal the start of an expected very large fleet but also the revival of passage racing for the C.Y.C.A.

The Sailing Committee has for a long time felt that many of our Members who prefer pottering about with their families or those browned off with continuous racing, were too much neglected. This was more than obvious with our motor cruiser Members, who although frequently called upon to assist in mark laying, were not catered for in any way. Well, there is a welcome change and our

first event for these pleasure boaters will be the C.Y.C. Port Stephens Easter Festival of Yachting for both the pleasure boaters and our racing fleet.

Whither Port Stephens?

To quote a travel pamphlet:

"Credit for the discovery of Port Stephens has been given to Captain James Cook, who in May 1770 sighted the entrance to the Port. In the ship's log Cook described it as "an opening forming a bay," and named the harbour in honour of Sir Philip Stephens, Secretary to the Admiralty.

"Another early visitor was Governor

Lachlan Macquarie. Concerned with the need for a settlement north of Newcastle, Macquarie entered Port Stephens in 1812 in the brig Lady Nelson to assess its potential. However, although Macquarie considered the harbour 'good, safe and capacious,' little was done at the time to establish a settlement.

"From about 1816 onwards Port Stephens became a centre of activity for cedar-getters. The industry prospered for many years, declined, and eventually died out with the cedar.

"With little commercial or other

development Port Stephens for many years browsed in the sun and remained a quiet, unspoiled backwater with fish, lobsters and oysters its only source of income.

"Today Port Stephens faces a future of development and expansion as holidaymakers in increasing numbers discover its wonderful attractions. The building rate of new flats and holiday cottages to cater for tourist needs is increasing year by year."

How to get to Port Stephens

By Road: From Newcastle via Stockton Bridge. Alternate route leave Pacific Highway at Charlestown and proceed via New Lambton Heights, Jesmond, Shortland and regain the highway at Sandgate. Leave highway 1½ km past Hexham Bridge. Continue to Williamstown, then turn left. Sealed road.

By Rail: Intercity Express from Sydney to Newcastle, where connecting buses leave the station for various Port Stephens centres. The buses carry all luggage, and the journey takes little more than one hour. Timetable and information available from the Tourist Organisation of Port Stephens, Nelson Bay 2315, or your local travel agent.

By Air: Masling and TAA run regular air service to Williamstown in Fokker Friendships (TAA) and Beachcraft or Twin Otter (Masling) equipment (\$19.90 each way). The 40 minute flight leaves from Mascot and goes to Williamstown,

which is 31 km (about 25 minutes by taxi) to Port Stephens (taxi hire about \$10 for the trip). Ring TAA for complete flight details.

The Start

The start will be March 23rd, the Thursday before Good Friday, at 9 p.m. This evening start will give all participants ample time to get ready. The fleet will be split into four sections: I.O.R. yachts, Arbitrary yachts, Cruising yachts and Motor Cruisers.

Escort and Radio Vessel

Following the Club's continuing strong bid for safety, Keith Storey's beautiful motor yacht *Marabou* will escort the fleet and handle the Radio Relay for those vessels equipped with radio transceivers, ensuring an efficient watchdog system for all entrants. *Marabou* is equipped with the most powerful and sophisticated radio gear available, including CB in readiness for the mammoth task of acting as Radio Relay Ship for our next Noumea Race.

All vessels will start at around 9 p.m. with short intervals for the various divisions. However, this will all be clearly set out in the special sailing instructions. To assist in the organisation it is obvious that we would appreciate early entries, for which entry forms are available at the C.Y.C. office from 1st February—entries close Wednesday 8th March.

Port Stephens

The finishing line for all entrants will be at Port Stephen's Salamander Bay where a special welcome will be arranged by the Port Stephens Yacht Club. From there all vessels will proceed to the prepared berthing or anchoring areas, location depending on the weather.

For the cruising yachts and motor cruisers who want competition, we are organising a "predicted log", separate for yachts and cruisers.

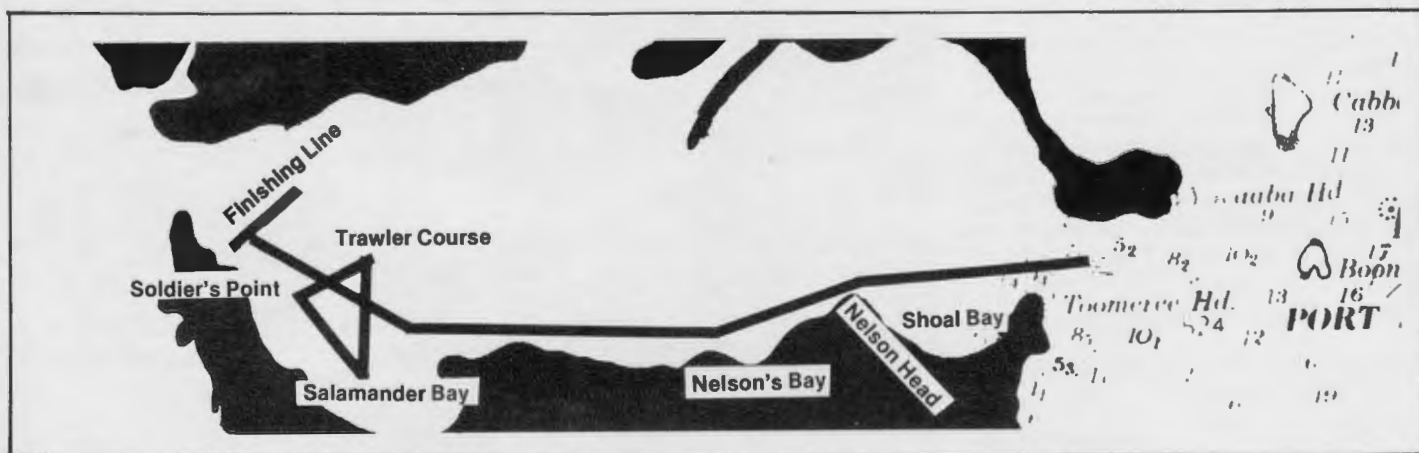
Saturday will see a world first in a fishing trawler round-the-buoys race, with each trawler having a yachtsman on board as 'no foul play inspector' (bribes will be permissible). Over 20 trawlers will take part, some of which have installed new engines for the event.

The trawlers will be led to slaughter by the C.Y.C. fleet, fully dressed and decorated, who will bring them to the arena in convoy from Nelsons Bay.

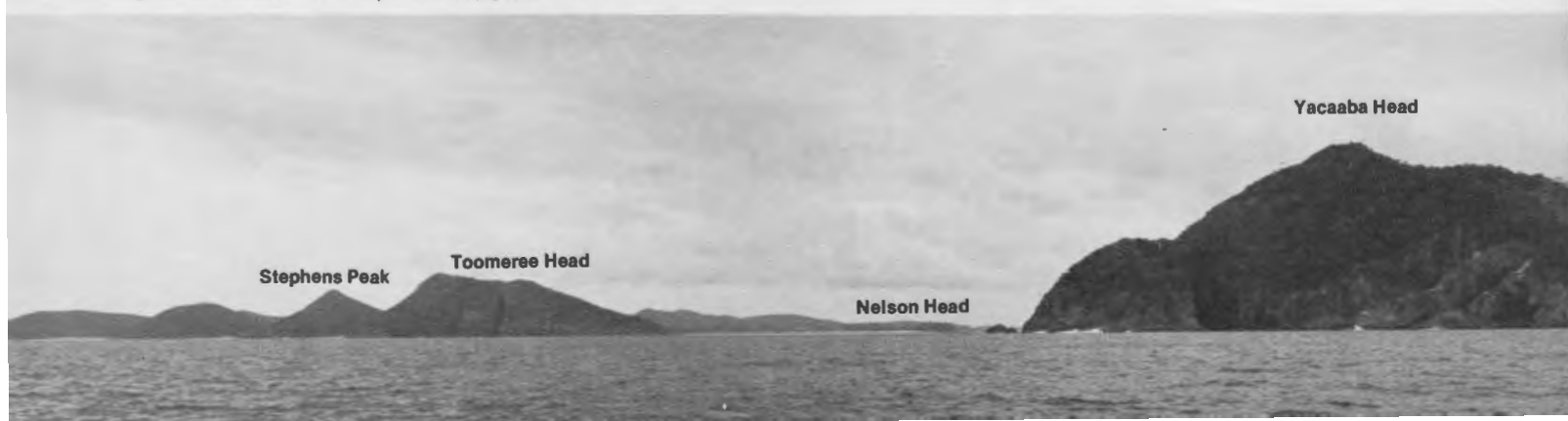
On Saturday, there will be a bus tour to the wineries for those interested.

Trophy Presentation

This will be the daddy of them all, taking place in the beautiful garden of the modern Salamander Hotel on Saturday night. It will be an open-air feast of barbeque, fish, oysters and wine, dancing both in and outside, presentation of trophies including one of our trawler friends to receive the C.Y.C.



Above: The C.Y.C. course to the finish line, off Soldier's Point in Salamander Bay. Looking into the entrance of Port Stephens from the NE.



"Cock of the Port" Trophy. Entry will be free; you pay for food and drinks.

We have arranged: joy flights by floatplane; water skiing; both towns will be decorated in the C.Y.C. colours by the Chamber of Commerce; fresh bread, milk and newspapers will be delivered each morning to our wharf.

Myall Lakes Cruise

On Sunday, a day tour up the Myall River to the fabulous Myall lakes—picturesque, unspoiled water paradise—in the 100 seat *Tamboi Queen* will be led by C.Y.C. Member Norm Milne and his attractive wife, Patty, who run the "Myall Tours". Bring your own lunch.

We will not divulge all the exciting details of this promising event. From the entries already received, some twenty five, it is evident that a strong interest exists. We expect many families to go by car as well as by water, and we are booking special stopovers, if possible, for this motorcade to make the trip as pleasant as possible. The road via Stockton Bridge is clearly marked, has beautiful scenery and is a good 'expressway' road. Owners who would like to leave their vessels for a week or so will be catered for, and our host Club will look after them; for this, advance bookings are advisable.

We hope this event will contribute to Clubmanship in our C.Y.C. which is obviously entering a new period of prosperity and activity.

Yours truly will be the Race Director and will organise the show, and our past Commodore, Bill Psaltis, has been appointed Cruise Captain. The escort and radio arrangements, as mentioned before, will be in the capable hands of Keith Storey, and our own David Goode will be your starter and finishing Official. We feel that a new and promising event is on the Club's agenda.

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This New Zealand designed yacht by Alan Warwick has similar race winning lines to the latest level rating world champions. With the retractable fin she is a down wind flyer yet very close winded on the wind. In light weather the fin can be partially raised for extra windward performance.

With all its racing attributes the 750 is ideal for the family cruising man.

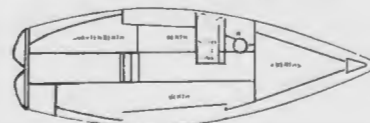
It has comfortable sleeping accommodation for 5 adults with 6' vee berths in the forward cabin, and head room in the saloon. Of particular appeal to the ladies is the separate toilet cubicle — unusual in a boat of this size, while the galley area is on the port side aft of the toilet.

In high tidal areas and for those who like a still, quiet night on board, the 750 will lie unsupported on mud or sand with only a 15° list.

The 750 is built to the high standard of finish that all Compass Yachts are renowned for, and for its moderate price it must be one of the best value yachts around.

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These lines are being written during the Australia Day holiday after a brief visit to Sydney. The main impression that I gained from the trip was one of the growing strength of the sailing scene, not just in Sydney, but all along the east coast.

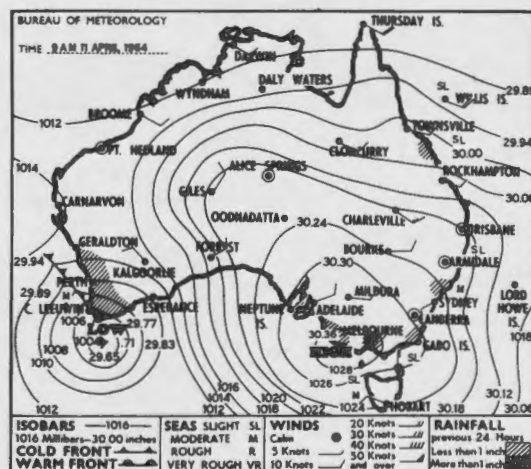
In Sydney, of course, the numbers are most evident. Everyone I spoke to was full of enthusiasm, particularly regarding the numbers of newcomers entering the sport. By sport, I don't just mean ocean racing or even competitive sailing, but just getting afloat in sailing yachts.

This, being a 'knowhow' article, is leading up to the need for the development of knowhow. Know how to sail, know the rules, know how to read the weather, how to navigate, general seamanship. Elsewhere in this edition, I'm sure, the record number of Hobart retirements is being discussed ad nauseam. For my twopennyworth, a great number of those retirements would have been due not to the existing weather conditions but to the skippers' apprehensions regarding the worsening of those conditions.

A great deal, possibly all, of education is merely a substitute for experience. It condenses the experience of others for our benefit. In any field where we are engaged, education is a must to increase our knowledge in those areas where experience is lacking.

It must, for instance, be obvious that it takes a great number of Hobart Races to gain that knowledge of local conditions which is possessed by a fisherman on the east coast of Tasmania—he has the experience. It behoves us, therefore, to look for the knowledge elsewhere. How many of us can read a synoptic chart properly? 10%? How many of us can construct one from the information sent over the radio? 5%?

Weather knowledge is a good example of what is needed for successful ocean racing, which is the only sphere of seagoing where vessels, gear and men are DELIBERATELY stretched to the limit of endurance.



In this country today, the facilities for nautical education are keeping pace with the ever increasing demand. The demand, however, is mainly for coastal and celestial navigation. To meet this, we have the club courses of Gordon Marshall and Jeff Toghill, the technical college courses, one or two private schools (including my own—let's not forget me!), and more recently the advent of excellent tape recorded and correspondence courses for those people who cannot attend regular sessions.

All these are excellent. The main thing is to get into the area of study—gaining knowledge becomes a habit. The senior executives on a boat—skipper, navigator, tactician—should be of high competence in all fields. Indeed, they should be able to substitute for each other at will. Every other crewman, however, should have some knowledge of the various aspects of the art, so that they may appreciate and understand the reasons for the decisions that are made. We've all sailed with argumentative crews. Usually they are the guys with the least knowledge and are unaware of their ignorance.

Have you assessed your level of ignorance? How much have you forgotten? When was the last time you read a book on a subject related to your sport? Do you instruct your crew, or expect them to arrive ready-made?

Someone said to me today that small boat sailors are the last of the adventurers, but that our days are numbered. We will be legislated out of existence. I hope he's wrong, but we may have to defend ourselves. The soaring and gliding clubs have enviable safety records and are left alone by government because of that. To achieve that, however, the clubs themselves enforce their own very strict rules. As it's almost impossible to get a glider off the ground without club assistance, the clubs are in a good position for that. As far as racing is concerned, so are we, but let's keep the same standards for our cruising as well, and spread the gospel of seamanship.

My personal effort in that direction will be to try and give some guidance, through these columns, as to the extent of the knowledge we should possess, and where to get it. We'll look at a few books and publications, and try to recommend a library of good reading and reference. So, good sailing for 1978! See you next time,

Rule Changes

The following 'Forecast of Forthcoming Rule Changes' (published by the O.R.C. after its November 12, 1977 meeting) and O.R.C. Bulletin No. 21 of 18/1/78 will be of interest to all racing yachtsmen.

Forecast of Forthcoming Rule Changes

1301. This section contains outline forecasts of proposed Rule changes that have been approved in principle by the Offshore Racing Council.

It is the intention of the Council that these changes, modified if found necessary and in the light of comments received, should be brought in with effect from 1 January 1979 after ratification by the council in November 1978.

1302. It is intended to add to 609.3A the statement:—

However, a propeller installation having an essentially horizontal shaft extending aft from the fin or keel shall be classified as "Out of Aperture—Other". In a case of doubt over "essentially horizontal", a drive unit mounted in the keel will confirm the installation as being "Out of Aperture—Other"

1303. It is intended to revise the MR Formula at 105.5A with a view to correcting the tendency of the Rule to over-encourage beam and under-encourage depth at the extreme. It is intended that in the MR Formula the value of B, in the term $\sqrt{B \times D}$, shall not be taken at a greater value than $\frac{K}{3} \times (MDI + CMDI + OMDI)$. The value of K to be the order of 12 but modified by a scale factor. There is no intention of grandfathering this rule.

1304. It is the intention to legislate against bumps and hollows on the hull surface. The proposals to be examined are:

A. Hollows in transverse sections amidships outside the primary inflection point working into the center line, and hollows within a radius of 0.1 B from FDI should be prohibited.

B. The separation of the aft girth stations should be assured by incorporating a required GSDA of 0.15B + 0.1GD. The formula for AGSL to be:—
formula for AGSL to be:—

$$AGSL = \frac{GSDA}{0.5GLAI - (0.375B + .5GD) - 0.2BAI + 0.2BA + FA - GLAI}$$

GLAI is the girth length measured at AIGS. FAI

C. Hollows in the way of aft girth stations would be bridged by a straight line of length 0.5B, centred on the aft girth stations, neither end of this line to be inboard of the 4%B buttock lines. The depth of any hollows found would be measured and the largest such depth would be recorded as DH. A value of the order of $2 \times DH$ would then be added to VHA or VHA1 whichever gave the greater value to L.

1305. It is intended to modify the measurement instructions for jibs by changing rules 203, 812.1, 813 so that:—

1. The measurement points at the corners of jibs shall be to the bearing surfaces of the cringles.
2. The check for proportional girth lengths shall not be required to apply nearer to the head of the sail than 5% of the foot length.
3. The luff tape shall be included in the measurement of LPG but, if the tape is parallel, it would be excluded from the girth measurements of 812.1.

1306. It is intended to limit the variation of rake permitted to the mast. This will be effected by limiting the length of adjustment permitted to forestays and backstays. The current proposal is the limit the overall movement of the mast head to 5% of (I or P + BAD) whichever is the greater.

O.R.C. Bulletin No. 21 (18/1/78)

1. This bulletin does not include any rule changes. It is an interim report on the recent work of the International Technical Committee and the proposals that it will be making to the next meeting of the Offshore Racing Council in November 1978.

2. The most far reaching proposal of the I.T.C. is to strengthen and expand the scope of the Mark III A concept. The means to achieve this will be attained by attaching a separate age date to the hull and the rig of a yacht. Age date, hull date, and rig date could be used to limit the application of parts of the rule to yachts having certain stipulated dates.

3. The I.T.C. will propose a substantial reduction in rating for boats which have a small sail area relative to their displacement. There will also be an age allowance built in to the rule for all boats over three years old. There is a further proposal to change the Forward Depth Immersed calculation in D in a way that will provide a benefit for older boats and a penalty for newer yachts.

4. At its meeting on the 12th November 1977 the Offshore Racing Council re-affirmed its belief that the rule must encourage a dual purpose boat. Future changes in the rule will be directed towards discouraging the all-out racer which is unsuitable for cruising purposes. The remainder of the I.T.C.'s proposals are directed towards curbing developments in the rule which are now directed towards curbing developments in the rule which are now apparent and which are tending to produce either boats which are unsuitable as cruisers or racing boats with an unfairly low rating relative to their speed.

5. Further to paragraph 1.3.4. of Bulletin No. 19 the I.T.C. will propose that mast head adjustment shall be limited by permitting tensioning devices of limited movement either on the forestay or the back-stay(s) but not on both. An inner forestay and an intermediate backstay with unlimited movement are to be allowed. There are special provisions for fractional rigs. Control of additional devices in this field will be by penalty and not banning.

(cont. next page)

6. The I.T.C. is working on mast scantlings with a minimum limit of diameter or circumference and limit to the number of spreaders. A percentage penalty will be applied to those masts not complying.

7. The I.T.C. now has the benefit of a complete computer print-out of the United States and United Kingdom rated fleets. Detailed statistics prepared from these print-outs have shown the recent trends in the fleet. Pursuant to the Council's policy that the rule cannot be expected equitably to rate all types of yacht, the I.T.C. is proposing further measures to reduce the gap between extreme boats and the rest of the fleet. One approach is to limit the sail area relative to length and the midsection. It is also developing the limits on Beam/Depth ratios as previously announced. The I.T.C. will propose limits which will not be exclusive but will be progressive. The object is to limit further development of extreme rigs and hull shapes.

8. Reports from Australia indicating a substantial number of retirements from the Sydney/Hobart race have caused concern to the Committee and a detailed report is being sought

from the C.Y.C.A. Pending the introduction of more detailed scantling requirements in the rule, the I.T.C. is working on a development of the existing C.G.F. formulae which is intended to identify ultra-light boats which are using light construction to obtain a minimum CGF. This will be as a bonus to heavy old yachts and as a penalty to newer light yachts.

9. The I.T.C. will recommend to the Council that at its November meeting it adopts a provision that in level rating events a boat which has to retire from any race due to structural failure of hull or rig shall be considered to have retired from the rest of the series.

10. The I.T.C. will meet again in Newport, Rhode Island in early April to review progress with the detailed study of the fleets which is now being undertaken. The Committee will also consider representations which have been made to National Authorities by 1st March 1978 and forwarded by the National Authorities to the Offshore Racing Council by 10th March 1978. Representations must be made through National Authorities only.

N.Z. Wins World Half Ton Series

By John Hawley

For the first time ever, the 1977 Half Ton World Championships were held in Sydney. Possibly for the last time.

Almost ignored by the rest of the world, the series had little international flavour with teams from Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea. Only the presence of lively Irishman Harold Cudmore, 1976 World Champion and here to defend his title, gave sparkle to an occasion which was marred by a multiplicity of protests against a Race Committee which appeared to be trying to protest the leading competitors out of the running.

A month before the world series Graham Oborn had won the Australian titles in a serious organised by the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and was representing Australia as Australian Half Ton Champion. Yet this same Club protested him in the world series for being a New Zealander, a protest which they fortunately lost, as Oborn went on to take third place in the series—well ahead of any other Australian competitor.

The stability of centreboarders controversy was of course raging hard at the time, but the results showed that under the I.Y.R. Rules as they existed, centreboarders were fastest.

In the first race, the Ron Holland centre-boarder *Silver Shamrock III*, from Ireland, skippered by Harold Cudmore, took first place with the New Zealand team of centreboarders *Waverider*, *Swuzzlebubble* and *Rangiriri* taking 2nd, 3rd and 5th places, Graham Oborn in the nameless (ex. *That's Life*) 2269, taking 4th place.

The second race in the series started two and a half hours late due to the light and variable winds which would not allow a course to be set earlier. In this race, another 22 miler, the New Zealanders took the first three places with Cudmore fourth.

The third race of 128 miles was dominated by Harold Cudmore who was so far ahead in *Silver Shamrock III* that when his mast broke about half a mile from the finishing line, he and his crew had time to clear up the mess and, standing on deck holding up sails, were able to finish 3rd. The New Zealanders took first, second and fifth places, and again Oborn was fourth.

When the Kiwis took the first three places in the fourth race, a 22 miler, it clinched the team prize and placed them so that any of them could become champion.

The final race of 246 miles was won convincingly by Harold Cudmore in *Silver Shamrock III* who had time to down half a dozen bottles of Guinness before *Rangiriri* sailed in to take second place, closely followed by Graham Oborn. Had Oborn finished second, Cudmore would have retained his title. Many believe that his chances were prejudiced in the third race when he was caught on the wrong side of a windshift after the course was changed on the second leg, a move which was hotly protested by Cudmore but dismissed by the Race Committee.

Race organisation should be impeccable in a series which carries World Titles. This year has demonstrated how easy it is for a small error of judgement to influence the outcome of a world title, and the importance of committee discipline.

Final Placings

Team	
1. New Zealand	321.38
2. Australia	249.
3. Papua N.G.	95

Individual

1. Rangiriri	115.75
2. Silver Shamrock III	115.75
3. 2269 (Oborn)	104.5
4. Waverider	102.38
5. Swuzzlebubble	102.25
6. Industries	94.5
7. Banercek	83
8. Fact 1	74.75
9. Casablanca	67.75
10. Magic Dragon	63.5
11. Newspaper Taxi	62.5
12. Springloaded	62
13. Liquidator	61.5
14. Mekim Save	61
15. Nantucket	60
16. Avanganda	45
17. Incredible	37
18. The Hum	25
19. Xaviera	21.5
20. Plaba IV	19.5
21. Vanessa	17.5
22. Bulldog	16.5

CELESTIAL NAVIGATION COURSE

Gordon Marshall has postponed his 1978 Celestial Classes at the C.Y.C.A. until Tuesday, 4 April 1978.

For interested Members an enrolment form is included in this issue (it was unfortunately not included in the Dec.-Jan. 1978 edition of *Offshore*. Intending students will need to move quickly to catch the closing date for enrolment.

Gordon has been conducting celestial courses for the past six years, and many Club Members are familiar with the visits to the cliffs at Bondi for their first sextant lessons, taking sun sights, those early dawns to get star sights, the final trip to sea to test students in practical position finding. Keith Storey has again kindly said he will make his magnificent M.V. *Marabou* available for this essential part of the course.

The first lecture will be Tuesday, 4 April 1978 from 1930-2230 hours; it will run for 8 consecutive weeks. Because the course is 'crash' in nature, it is essential that students attend every lecture. Intending students who do not confidently anticipate meeting this requirement should not enrol.

A prerequisite is that students have a general understanding of coastal navigation, including the ability to read charts, understand latitude and longitude terminology, be able to take and plot compass bearings, know the difference between variation and deviation.

In addition to the eight nights of lectures, students will be given instruction on a Saturday or Sunday morning with a sextant, and each will be conducted through a dawn set of star sights. A trip to sea at the end of the course rounds out the instruction. It follows that intending students must have their dedication and discipline to see these practical exercise through if they are to profit from the unique aspects of this course.

Each student will need to spend approximately \$40 on the equipment required (details will be supplied after application), but expensive items such as sextants and stop watches will be supplied.

The fee for the course is \$40 for Club Members, otherwise \$70, which should be sent to the Club together with the application form included with this copy of *Offshore*.

Enrolment will be on a first come, first served basis and additional forms will be available from the Club office or bar.

Successful applicants will be advised by mail and supplied with the list of requirements together with sources of supply.

[Editor's Note:— Interested students will note the requirement of previous knowledge of coastal navigation before attempting this celestial course. If this proves to be your stumbling block, be advised that Gordon intends to run a 'Coastal' course immediately after this celestial one, and it will be followed by another celestial course for which you would then be prepared. Offshore will carry details of this next coastal course, together with an application form, in its next issue.

OFFSHORE SIGNALS



Gordon Marshall instructs students of celestial navigation on the cliffs at Bondi in one of the many practical exercises that are part of his course.

THE C. Y. C. (Centreboard Yacht Club)

By Kevin Shephard

Can you imagine some of the situations that could occur if the Farr-type centreboarders had evolved before the heavy displacement keel yacht?

*This is what **may** have been heard at a meeting of the Safety Committee of the C. Y. C (Centreboard Yacht Club).*

1st Committee Man: Gentlemen I have convened this meeting as a matter of urgency as we have several new yachts entering for our races which disturb me very much from a safety point of view.

2nd Committee Man: If these new types catch on it will mean the death of ocean racing as we know it.

3rd Committee Man: They have to stopped!!!

1st Committee Man: The thing that worries me the most is the enormous amount of lead ballast in the fixed keel—over 50% of the yacht's weight. I believe. *(This statement met with startled looks from one to the other.)*

2nd Committee Man: But doesn't that put an enormous strain on the hull and keel bolts?

3rd Committee Man: Not to mention the spar and rigging.

1st Committee Man: They tell me they are real bitches to handle downwind in any decent breeze. They roll their guts out and do their best to dip the boom or pole into the water.

2nd Committee Man: Shocking!

3rd Committee Man: I know of several cases overseas where yachts have actually lost their rig through this unseamanlike tendency, not to mention the wear and tear on the crew and the helmsman's hands.

1st Committee Man: But what about the cost? These boats would cost about three times what our current boats do. Just the winches alone are worth a king's ransom, not to mention hydraulics everywhere.

2nd Committee Man: How would you sell it when its racing life is over? No sensible cruising man would have anything to with it. Going to windward it's like a half tide rock and you need a team of gorillas to work the headsail winches. Downwind the handling

characteristics are so bad even the most experienced helmsman would have trouble keeping her straight for more than a few seconds at a time.

3rd Committee Man: Imagine trying to slip the thing in out-of-the-way places.

1st Committee Man: This trend would be a very bad thing for the sport; only the rich and foolhardy could afford to compete.

2nd Committee Man: It's up to us to devise tests which will check the safety of these vessels as well as discouraging even more extreme types before its too late.

All in Unison: Here here!

3rd Committee Man: One thing I would like to know. What happens if the boat is hove down horizontally? Will the keel break off or will it fill up and sink?

1st Committee man: Probably the best way to go is not to worry about the keel boats or hull construction but alter the rule to penalize yachts with unusually high righting moments.

They all muttered agreement to this and went off to pen a telex to the international offshore rating council.

Restoration of the 'James Craig'

On February 1st, a milestone will be reached in the million dollar restoration of the 103 year old barque *James Craig*.

Eighteen months after work was re-started on restoring her hull, the *James Craig* was slipped in Hobart in early February for final treatment and

inspection prior to her last voyage to Sydney in September, 1978. Restoration will be completed in Sydney and she will be opened to the public at Birkenhead Point.

The ambitious restoration scheme is probably the last existing opportunity to provide Sydney with a tall ship of its own and will ensure part of Australia's maritime heritage is retained.

Built in England in 1874, the 640 ton barque traded throughout the world until the turn of the century. She was originally named *Clan Mcleod*, the first of Thomas Dunlop's famous line of 'Clan' ships, and became *James Craig* when she was in 1900 sold to the New Zealand shipowners, J.J. Craig, for whom she plied the trans-Tasman route between Australia and New Zealand ports.

Finally cut down to a hulk in 1911 she seemed destined to end her days in New Guinea. But the demand for shipping after World War I led Henry Jones and Company Ltd. of Tasmania to buy and re-rig her.

The hull of the *James Craig* (built of iron), is in remarkable condition for its age and the museum plans to completely restore the hull, deck and lower masts prior to her long tow to Sydney in 1978. The remaining restoration will then be completed at Birkenhead Point where she will be placed on permanent public display.

The 'James Craig', New York before 1900, will look like this again at the Sydney Maritime Museum





'Nerida' 35 Maitland Terrace,
Seacliffe, S.A. 5049

The Editor,
1977 Hitachi Sydney-Hobart
Yacht Race Program,
C.Y.C.A.
New Beach Road,
Darling Point, N.S.W. 2027

Dear Sir,

May I point out a small error on page 26 of the above fine publication in case it should be perpetuated elsewhere. This is in the table of Sydney-Hobart winners and their designers. I refer to *Nerida* which I owned at the time she was handicap winner and third overall, in 1950.

Her designer was Alfred Mylne, not Nicholson as stated, and she is 45' over all, not 43'.

As you probably know, she has been reconverted to her original gaff cutter rig (I converted her to Bermudian yawl with a rig of my own design with sails by Crawfield and Carter of Burnham-on-Crouch) and she is a familiar sight on Sydney Harbour, again belonging to the Hardy Family. Mr. Tom Hardy, of Adelaide, who was killed in the 'Kyeema' air crash of 1938, had her built as his 'dream ship' by R.T. Searles & Sons of Port Adelaide. She was launched in 1933. I became her fourth owner in 1948 and there were two more owners in Melbourne before she was re-purchased by the Hardy family and turned into virtually a 'vintage' yacht.

I first took her to Sydney from Adelaide for the 1948 Sydney-Hobart Race with Bill Fesq, Present Commodore of the

Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, as navigator. We finished a creditable fifth on handicap and learnt a lot about racing in hard weather in Bass Strait and down the Tasmanian coast, which stood us in good stead in 1950.

Trust these remarks are of some interest.

Yours sincerely,
C.P. Haselgrove.

Thanks to Mr Haselgrove for this correction. The author of the article referred to, Tony Cable, did considerable research on his 'Table of Hobart winners and their designs', and he was the victim of a commonly held myth about 'Nerida's' designer, which Jim Hardy brought to his attention while in Hobart this year.

'Nerida' has naturally-grown blue gum frames, stem post and keel, her bottom is planked with W.A. jarrah, and her topsides are N.Z. kauri, with laid teak deck, for those who may be interested. Ed.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Complete Illustrated Encyclopaedia of Boating

by Alan Lucas

272 pages. Published in Hong Kong by
Horwitz \$9.98*

One of the problems in producing an encyclopaedia is coping with the letters X and Z. Alan Lucas has saved the embarrassing blanks by heading each letter with the appropriate International Code Flag together with its meaning. He is also an experienced navigator and includes Zenith. But that is starting at the end.

Generally speaking, encyclopaedias are boring things which one buys as a fount of knowledge but would not dream of reading. As soon as one is specialised and the subject is one which is of interest, it becomes a volume which can be read through. A great deal of the contents are already known, which makes one happy to be so bright, or there are new words which are found to be the correct descriptions of bits of boats whose name may have been previously unknown.

This is a book which can be strongly recommended to boat owners who sometimes find difficulty in describing things which they may require. This is particularly necessary when ordering parts by mail or telephone when one correct term can save a great deal of description.

How could one describe a stuffing box if one did not know the term, or a gudgeon, pintle or hawse pipe?

It is not easy to produce a book which is flawless, and this book has a few errors. Alan Lucas's description of a spinnaker pole reads: "A spar to spread the foot of a spinnaker. It clips onto the mast a little above the deck at one end, the other clipping onto one of the clews". Let us hope that foredeck hands do not take this to heart; it would make gybing very difficult.

Carping of this sort, however, is a reviewer's method of assuring his readers that he has read the book carefully and is himself full of erudition. Here is a book which is well worth owning and reading carefully, and the excellent illustrations add to the descriptive abilities of the author, who will already be respected by most yachtsmen for his excellent pilot books *Cruising the Coral Coast* and *Cruising the New South Wales Coast*.

J.H.

Yachtmaster Offshore the Art of Seamanship

by John Russell

Published by the R.Y.A. in association
with David & Charles, 136 pages,
hardback, \$11.50.

The blurb of this volume carries the recommendation of the Royal Yachting Association, and little wonder, for it is a pithy little gem.

In 136 small pages (5½" x 8½") of well-spaced, readable type, John Russell boils down the essence of a competent skipper. With an unusual economy of words and clarity of thought and expression (and with a generous amount of true wit), Russell imparts his considerable wisdom and experience on subjects such as living afloat, deckwork, handling, watchkeeping, navigating, preparing for heavy weather, cooking at sea, keeping out of trouble and emergency repairs.

It is a book of philosophy, or approach, more than instruction by the numbers (as indeed it would have to be to cover so much in such a small space, although there is some 'by the numbers' as well, such as picking up a man overboard).

Whilst this book may be familiar territory to 'old salts', none could help but admire the author's ability to say what has oft been said but rarely so well or succinctly expressed. Readers who don't quite come up to the 'old salt' status will probably learn a lot, and skippers who arrived at their station largely by dint of

their pocket book rather than sea apprenticeship possibly should run out and buy this book before they set out on another ocean race or passage. The sections on watchkeeping, navigating, cooking at sea, preparing for heavy weather, are full of simple but profound advice to keep a crew working harmoniously and effectively and also to get the ship where you want it to be. Even 'experienced' skippers may find a page or two to take (if some of the stories told by crew around the bar have any truth to them).

The amateur skipper, the author says, being his own master, has the time to experiment and practise, to arrange things so that he can make mistakes and learn from them without penalty, becoming wiser without being saddened in the process—to avoid the “... searing experience of discovering, in a crowded harbour and force six, that he has lost way too soon, his fenders are bunched too much amidships and the throttle is up his trouser leg.”

This book may provide one of the less painful opportunities to become wiser whilst, perhaps, being gladdened in the process. If you read no more than the 9-page introduction, which is beautifully-written essay on the responsibilities of the skipper, particularly to his crew, you will have had several good laughs and a lot of questions to ponder before turning in. The book offers quite a lot for crew members, too.

— D. Colfelt

CLUB NOTES

Commodore's Message

Dear Member,
Our Club is just as interesting, as active and, in some respects, as controversial as it ever was.

We have had the drama of the light-displacement boats, a record entry for the Hobart and record withdrawals plus a MAYDAY and missing boats.

We have the Port Stephens race-cruise plus a most entertaining long weekend organised for March.

As ever we have a record loss in the dining room and most divided opinions as to what we should do about it.

In fact, it is situation normal.

The significant change is that because of sponsorship we are not desperately short of funds.

This Southern Cross Sydney Hobart Series, because of sheer number of entries, taxed us severely. We came out of it very well.

I can assure you that the praise I received on your behalf, as to our organisation and expertise, from all competitors, was fulsome and genuine.

We do a pretty good job.

Thanks are due to many people that to mention some runs the risk of offending some who are overlooked.

However for sheer effort we must thank our Race Director, Keith Storey, the Chairman of the Sailing Committee, Gordon Marshall, and our Press Centre Officer, Campbell Scott.

Our General Manager, Michele LeBars, held our organisation together under great pressure, and our Office Staff performed most efficiently, so far as I can remember, without tears.

Mrs Georgie Fraser ran a most efficient House and worked almost around the clock.

Geoff Long again slipped a record number of boats.

The Ladies Auxiliary did their usual superb job on the desk and are great ambassadors for the Club.

As I said earlier, situation normal. I'm proud to be a Member.

J.P. Diamond
Commodore.

1977 Hobart Program another success.

For the third year running the Publications Committee produced the Hitachi Sydney Hobart Yacht Race Program. This one we felt was the best so far, as it represented still a further development of the group's experience gained over the years. The financial result, while not yet available, should also represent a record, again at the 5-figure level representing a significant part of the Clubs total net profit.

The Committee has as its overriding objective the production of a program of excellence whilst attaining this high return. At the same time we have the continuing responsibility of *Offshore*, where we are providing a 'House' magazine of a standard that must be the highest in this country. Like all honorary groups the Committee members work many hours with little thought of recognition, their rewards coming from the satisfaction of seeing the results of their (and the printer's) work.

However, as our publications year finishes with the publication of the Program, I would like to thank, on behalf

of the Board and Members, David Colfelt, our Editor, and the several members of the group. I won't run through the names of these save one, Nookie Bennetts, who is leaving the Committee despite our refusing his resignation on many previous occasions. It should be placed on record that as our principal Advertising man he was responsible for having ads placed in the Club magazines totalling well over \$50,000

Thanks

Tony Cable

Safety Inspections

A completely new and streamlined system of inspections for club yachts will be developed for the coming season. Last year's revised forms and instruction sheet by Peter Rysdyk improved our previous erratic system somewhat, but it still gave our office staff excessive work around Hobart time.

It is anticipated that during August all yachts will be inspected over consecutive weekends, in alphabetical order.

Owners will be notified giving day, date, Inspector's name and the approximate time for inspections, at which time **all items should be complete**, laid out in order of inspection, with two responsible crewmembers, one preferably the owner, in attendance. This will become a once-annual event.

Obviously the first inspection will be free of charge, but any subsequent inspections or part inspection will require a fee paid to the Club as very few owners in the past have had all safety gear complete on first inspection. Inspectors, who give their time free, have been known to return five times to the same vessel because of the laxity of some owners.

The next *Offshore* issue will carry full particulars and information. During the month preceding August, all owners will receive individual notifications and full information as to when, where, and how. Our new C.Y.C. Safety Inspections Procedure will be worked out in conjunction with The Middle Harbour Yacht Club, with which we have a reciprocal arrangement.

The Club is also looking at a more economical Life Raft Inspection Procedure, preferably mass inspections in the Club grounds, as was arranged for fire extinguishers.

Members (male or female) interested in becoming Safety Inspectors should contact the Club c/o Chief Safety

Inspector. The work is interesting and your Club needs you.

Inspectors in future will work in pairs, one of which will be a "probationary inspector".

Farewell Mr. Sam

Sam Rollo ('Mr. Sam') has worked in Rushcutters Bay for the past 30-or-so years and at the Cruising Yacht Club for about the last nine. He retired in January, and the Club gave a small farewell party in the Blue Water Room for Sam and some of his old friends (see photos).

Mr. Sam has been described by Geoff Long, C.Y.C.A. Yard Manager, as a 'tradesman without a trade' meaning a tradesman virtually without limitation to his trade's skills. Sam's ability is admired by all who know him and is apparent to even the casual observer who might have, for example, watched him at one time of another stripping varnish back to smooth wood with a single, sure stroke of his triangular scraper. Underneath a boat on the slips, this writer has watched Mr. Sam on quite a number of occasions, working on the next boat, and never once saw him stop work. He must have, but I never saw him.

Mr. Sam hasn't been home to his native Italy since World War II, and he may go back for a visit shortly. We will all miss you and hope to see you soon again—farewell, but not good-bye—Mr. Sam



Argonaut's Award

Dear Ed.,

re: "Argonauts Award"

There appears to be some misunderstanding about the identity of the buildings pictured in Oct./Nov. 'Offshore'.

It is a photograph of an old home situated on a point of land between Brays Bay and Yaralla Bay, Parramatta River, which is identified on Australian chart AUS 203 as being the *Thomas Walker Convalescent Home*.

The same chart shows the *Dame Edith Walker Home* to be approximately half a mile away on a point of land between Yaralla Bay and Majors Bay. Very little of this one can be seen from the river.

The photograph in the Dec./Jan. issue of is of Searle's Monument, also on the Parramatta River. It marks a small reef jutting out from the northern bank at Henley.

Yours faithfully,

Reg Lange

Reg Lange is correct about the *Thomas Walker home* (as he is about the *Searle Monument*). In our last-minute haste to incorporate in the December issue the answers of Jenny May (and the mystery contestant from Computer Technology, who still hasn't identified himself/herself) the distinction of gender was overlooked. There can be no doubt that the previous respondents meant to say *Thomas Walker*, as this building is unique. Reg Lange gets a point for both correct answers and becomes the current leader for the Argonaut award. Ed.

This month we move offshore to a landmark that should be familiar to many members. Can you identify it?

Send your answers on the back of an envelope to The Editor, 'Offshore'; the entry with the earliest postmark wins a point towards the Annual 'Offshore' Argonaut's Award.

How a Race Director Unwinds





MARINA NEWS

by Jack North

The Race to Hobart provided plenty of drama this year, and it's been pretty well written up. An excellent film which appeared on the A.B.C. wins my unofficial Oscar for the best Hobart Race documentary to date. But nobody ever seems to film, or write of, the journey home to Sydney. This is just as long, and just as stormy, as the passage south.

Of course, there's no dishonour in creeping into some quiet haven for a bit of a rest, a leisurely meal and, maybe, a real wild party; the whole thing is a lot better than racing.

So how about a few yachting scribes getting stuck into it? We're always looking for copy for *Offshore*.

* *

Not all boats from the marina went to Hobart. Several found their way to Broken Bay and Port Stephens instead. Among those sighted at Port Stephens were Bill Smith's *Fair Winds*, Keith Storey's *Marabou* and our editor's *Chubasco*. They all seemed to be having a good time.

Bill Smith did a run out to Broughton Island and got there just in time to be kicked out again by a southerly. So he went back to Port Stephens after spending a night at sea. Nobody else seemed to have any wild adventures, and that's the way a cruise ought to be.

* * *

A fair number of cruising yachts have been into the marina over the last few weeks, among them being *Conquistador II*. She is a ferro-cement sloop, 39' by 11'6" by 6' and powered by a 40 horse B.M.C. diesel.

Built in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1973, she left Auckland on the 10th of June last. From there she sailed for Raratonga and Tahiti, and cruised French Polynesia in general before returning to Raratonga. Her next stages were Niue, Tonga, Suva and Sydney, where she arrived at the end of November, 1977.

The crew, Renfred Meese and Helen King, propose to head for the Barrier Reef and Singapore. After that, well it's too far ahead to make plans.

* * *

Conquistador II has had a good passage in all respects, including the weather. Only off Lord Howe Island did it turn nasty, and her guardrail stanchions were bent in at 90 degrees across the deck.

* * *

Emma Peel, built at Napier, New Zealand, is a heavy steel yacht with a keel of 1" plate. Double skinned for some 60% of her length, she displaces 33 tons on a length of 52 feet. She draws 5'6" on a beam of 14'6" and has the short overhangs favoured by her designer, Woolacott of Auckland. Launched as a schooner in 1970, her after mast was shortened in 1972. But although it can be argued that this changed her to a ketch, her crew maintain she is still a schooner. *Offshore* will venture no opinion on this.

Her 76 horse Foden diesel has a fuel range of 1200 miles at seven knots and can push her at nine knots if necessary. She carries 350 gallons of fresh water which, if you try to visualise it, is equivalent to eight 44 gallon drums. Everything about her seems solid—all her portholes have deadlights of steel for heavy weather. But the two square sails on her foremast are her most striking feature.

She has a most unusual porthole below the waterline. This, in the after cabin, is made of heavy glass and covered by another solid deadlight. When the deadlight is opened you can sit on the very comfortable locker seats around the the inside of the after cabin, sip your beer and watch the fishes, eels, mermaids, scuba divers and other forms of marine life. It's as good as T.V.

The yacht is not named after that Avenger woman; her namesake was an American sailing ship of the mid-nineteenth century.

The foregoing is an unashamed steal from *Offshore* of April, 1974, but I'm not worried by any copyright repercussions. After all, I wrote it myself. It just so happens that *Emma Peel* arrived back very recently, from New Zealand, after a lot of extensive cruising in the Pacific.

* * *

Nostalgia Nook. From the *Daily Telegraph* of 13th January, 1947.

"The 34 ft sloop *Saga* is the first yacht to return to Sydney after the Sydney-Hobart Race.

Saga left Hobart last Sunday and anchored in Neutral Bay at 1.15 p.m. yesterday. The smallest boat in the race, *Saga* was placed second. Her actual time for the race was 6 days 9 hours 52 minutes 22 seconds. *Christina* won the race by about two hours and a half.

Mr Trygve Halvorsen, skipper of *Saga*, said yesterday that the crew had hot meals every day during the race and the return voyage. They all gained weight.

Saga's crew is; Colin Jew of Bellevue Hill, Thor Gauslaa of North Sydney, Frederik Svensen of Neutral Bay, Magnus Halvorsen, the skippers brother, of Neutral Bay."

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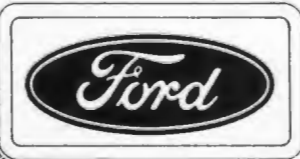
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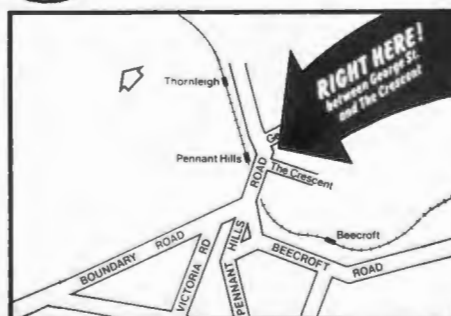


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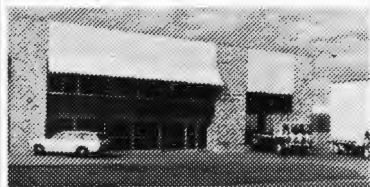


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