

RL24 OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

NEWSLETTER

APRIL/MAY 1976

Martin's Corner (or words from the President)

Taking over the reins from Rob & June Legg and the rest of the gang in Queensland has been quite a challenge. We are aiming to keep up with the growth of the class everywhere and by the end of our term we feel sure we can pass on an even better organisation.

Ross Corben, our Vice President is doubling up as Public Relations man. He will be publishing the newsletter this year as well as organising the RL24 stand in "Sailboat 76" and co-ordinating the activities of the Gippsland Lakes and Melbourne Groups. The news and information from far and wide which June has put into the newsletters has been a great stimulus within the class. June is still passing on everything of interest but if you have any contribution, large or small, to make to our National Newsletter please send it in to Ross at 161 O'Connor Road, KNOXFIELD, Vic. 3180.

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NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS - 1977

Lake Wellington Yacht Club is already working on details of this event. Further information will be published in the June/July Newsletter but it is planned to run a full seven race series, including some longer point to point heats. The Championship will start about the end of the first week in January so that people from all States can take part in both the Tripolis and the National Championships, possibly with some cruising on the Gippsland Lakes in between.

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YACHTS ON DISPLAY

Following the outstanding success of "Sailboat 75" the Victorian Yachting Council is again sponsoring an all-yacht boat show, this year called (would you believe?) "Sailboat 76". The show will be Australia's most comprehensive collection of yachts ever, with nearly 70 class associations participating to say nothing of the multitude of manufacturers, agents and dealers who will be exhibiting their products. The RL24 Association has been allocated stand No.100 and Neil Bourbaud has generously agreed to make "SAFARI" available for display. Anyone who knows Neil's boat will agree she is a most appropriate choice for the show which opens in Melbourne's Exhibition Buildings (Eastern & Western Annexes) on 26th May and closes at 6 p.m. on Sunday 30th May.

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MORETON BAY ADVENTURE

Alan Dick "Giselle" reports that he was cruising on Moreton Bay near the Sandhills in January when Cyclone David's influence made conditions somewhat "uncomfortable".

For 5 days he sheltered in Days Gutter while the south easterly blew up to 60 knots after which it dropped to a 15 knot north easter. Alan then sailed for Amity across the South Passage but he had not reckoned on strong currents, floating and not so floating trees and a very confused sea with waves around 3 - 4 metres high. A couple of 5 metre waves half filled the forward well but it emptied quickly. Despite the conditions Alan tells

us that "Giselle" handled beautifully with a well reefed main, storm jib and motor running and incidentally, towing a 12' dinghy. At the end of the trip the cockpit had only about half a pint of water in it which explains, perhaps, why the youngest crewman, James aged 3, slept throughout the crossing.

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MARLAY POINT OVERNIGHT RACE - 1976

The Lake Wellington Yacht Club conducted its annual "Marlay Point Overnight Race" on the 6th and 7th of March. Australia's top trailer-sailer event, this years race attracted 280 entrants in 3 divisions, including a total of 15 RL24's. For 1976 LWYC set a new course of approximately 82 kilometres over Lakes Wellington, Victoria and King, which comprise the major part of the magnificent Gippsland Lakes System. Starting with 89 other boats in A Division at 2300 hours the RL skippers made good use of the light conditions to catch some of the B Division boats before they entered McLennans Straits about 15 kilometres from the starting line. B Division competitors had started just 3 hours earlier! The usual airless frustrations of the Straits endured, the fleet emerged into Lake Victoria for a great "down-hill" ride all the way to the Tambo Bluff beacon where spinnakers were doused prior to the beat back to Paynesville and the finishing line. Mick Shannon (LOWANA III) had one of those moments rounding the beacon when his jib halyard parted dropping the genoa all of a mess on the foredeck. Undeterred but with appropriate remarks to the Almighty, Mick hoisted the sail again this time on the spinnaker halyard.

Line honours in the race, which incidentally was also the first heat of the 1976 Victorian RL24 Championships, went to what must be Australia's fastest T.S. bar none - a converted 18' Sydney skiff sailed by Merv. Howlett - First RL across the line was Neil Bourbaud's "SAFARI" (9th across the line) followed by Alby. McCracken sailing his recently launched "MR. CHRISTIAN" (13th overall) and Ken Hackett's "SASHA" (15th). The moderate following winds were very unkind to boats with high handicaps with the result that, on corrected times, Neil finished 37th, Alby 45th and Ken 47th. Before your sympathy for our boys overwhelms you, however, spare a thought for the skipper of an immaculate Etchells 22 who finished 2nd across the line but was relegated to 94th on handicap!

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MUCKIN' ABOUT IN BOATS -----

One of the great pleasures of owning a trailerable yacht is being able to move around and meet people in different places. Since they launched "ALMITRA" fourteen months ago, Roy and Anne Martin calculate that they have trailed her about 7,000 kilometres and have had at least 23 different people on board. This isn't claimed as any sort of record but it is certainly typical of a few boats we know of.

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NEWS FROM THE WEST

Mike Vandeleur who sails "BUSHRANGER", one of a growing fleet of RL24's in W.A. wrote us a thoroughly enjoyable account of his experience in the Geraldton to Port Denison Yacht Race. This event is held annually on the Australia Day weekend with competitors sailing the 40 nautical miles south of Port Denison on the Saturday and returning to Geraldton on the Monday.

This year "BUSHRANGER" skippered by John Fitzhardinge was delayed 10 minutes at the start of the first race by a jammed jib halyard.

M. J. ...

However, by drawing alongside a docked cargo vessel a crewman was able to climb its hawser and free the offending sheave. For most of the first leg the crew worked hard reaching before a 25-36 knot easterly but conditions moderated and at noon, 6 hours after the start "BUSHRANGER" crept over the line, 8th on time and 3rd on handicap.

The south-easterly gusting to 40 knots which confronted skippers in the return race was a by-product of Cyclone Vanessa and after 3 hours on a 3/4 reach "BUSHRANGER" had sailed through the entire fleet of 16. Unfortunately such a ride couldn't last and in a fierce squall a bolt securing the tiller sheared as the boat surfed down a steep sea at more than 15 knots. By the time repairs had been made (and nerves settled) "BUSHRANGER" had lost 3 places to finish 4th across the line (3rd on handicap) 12 minutes behind the 42' sloop "Seeker" which took line honours. The other RL24 "KOHIBITO" which carries a 700 lb. centre plate, 4" of extra freeboard and a stiff rig finished fourth on handicap.

Incidentally, Mike is seeking ways of making RL's go faster to windward (aren't we all?) If anyone can offer him advice his address is Box 100, P.O. MORAWA, 6623.

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A GENTLE REMINDER

With this newsletter some of you will receive your invoice for annual subscriptions to the RL24 Owners Association of Australia. Since you will no doubt be responding promptly to this reminder Geoff Olney our Treasurer, has asked me to let you know that his new address is P.O. Box 202, MT. EVELYN, 3796. I think it's a hint.

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FURLER OR FOILER?

One fitting which is frequently found on trailerable yachts and many RL24's in particular is the Ronstan jib furler (part No. RF76). In general service it has proved itself to be a most useful device but unfortunately its performance in heavy conditions leaves something to be desired. It is therefore essential that any furling system incorporating the RF76 be carefully maintained to ensure optimum performance and a number of skippers whose opinions were sought by Pat Mahon (MOKERA) have offered the following observations with this in mind.

- * It is important that friction in the systems various swivels be kept to a minimum. If frictional forces are high there is a real possibility that furling the jib can untwist either the luff wire or the halyard thus rendering their tensile strength suspect. A solution is to wind the furling cord on the drum so that should the system jam the lay of the wire will be tightened by pulling on the cord.
- * Stainless steel saddles or pulleys are much preferred to the simple nylon variety as guides for the cord. Even with a perfectly functioning system the friction of the cord will soon cut through nylon or plastic fittings.
- * The selection of a suitable cord size presents something of a dilemma. On the one hand it must be strong enough to withstand high tension while on the other it must be light enough to allow sufficient windings on the drum to fully furl the jib. The sail will furl more tightly in heavy weather than light and will require substantially more turns of the drum. Therefore sufficient cord must be allowed for wide variations in operating conditions.

It should be noted that in very heavy conditions there is a strong possibility that the furler will not be able to cope and this introduces the danger of the jib flogging its clew to destruction.

* A refinement currently being tried by Bruce Lewis (Sail No. 110) is to restrain the twisting of the jib halyard. Bruce has loosely shackled one end of a stainless steel strip to the forestay while the other is fitted to the pin which secures the halyard to the upper section of the top swivel. This arrangement results in very smooth operation of the furling system and as a bonus prevents accidental loss of the halyard end during sail changes.

If other skippers have knowledge of a furling system which is superior to the RF 76 or wish to add to the preceding comments we would be delighted to publish their views.

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At the conclusion of the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne Paul Elvstrom, who had convincingly won a gold medal, (his 3rd) was asked "to what do you attribute your victory?" Elvstrom answered "the others - they were too slowly".

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STOP PRESS

The remaining three heats of the Victorian Championships were sailed at Marlay Point on 27th/28th March. LWYC arranged good weather with a superb variety of wind strengths and the 16 competing crews enjoyed excellent racing. The three heats were won by Ken Hackett (SASHA) giving him a well earned victory in the series over Neil Bourbaud (SAFARI) with Martin Vandenberg (NERISSA II) third. Fourth place went to Colin Murray sailing "PAMPERO" - with an all girl crew - a great performance considering they did not have the advantage of a trapeze.

KNOXFIELD
APRIL 1976

STOP PRESS

The Lake Wellington Yacht Club has agreed to the following programme for the 1976/77 National Championships next January:

Friday	January	7th	pm	Championship Dinner
Saturday	"	8th	am	Registration
Saturday	"	8th	pm	Heat 1
Saturday	"	8th	pm	Bar-B-Q.
Sunday	"	9th	am	Heat 2.
Sunday	"	9th	pm	Heat 3.
Monday	"	10th		Lay Day
Monday	"	10th	pm	Annual General Meeting
Tuesday	"	11th	am/pm	Heat 4 (40 km Race)
Wednesday	"	12th	am	Re Sail (if necessary)
Wednesday	"	12th	pm	Heat 5
Thursday	"	13th	am	Heat 6
Thursday	"	13th	pm	Heat 7
Thursday	"	13th	pm	Presentation Dinner
Friday	"	14th		Reserved for resail if necessary and possible re-scheduling of Presentation Dinner

The series will be conducted under championship conditions. Seven heats sailed with six to count.

A weekend pleasure cruise on the Gippsland Lakes will be organised on Saturday/Sunday 15th & 16th January.

NOTE WELL

All competing yachts must hold a current measurement certificate. Measurement forms are presently being drafted and will soon be available to State Association official measurers. Contact your State Secretary if you are unsure of who is your measurer. Limited measurement facilities will be available at the host club prior to the series but this service is intended for competitors who do not have a State Association.

Owners are reminded that at the last Annual General Meeting at Dubbo a resolution was adopted to change the sail measurement method. Sails shall be measured in accordance with the AYF Prescriptions, Addendum E, Section III i.e. not by the multiple triangle method.

The normal notice of race and entry form will be posted to all Association members in due course. However this early announcement of the programme will enable everyone to schedule time off to attend the Championships and visit the beautiful Gippsland Lakes next summer.