



NATIONAL NEWSLETTER

MAY 2006

RL24 – It's YOUR kind of boat

**2007 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AT PAYNESVILLE
SUNDAY 31/12/06 TO 5/1/07**

GREETINGS.... and may the year 2006 excite you, stimulate you, challenge you and bring you peace.

Well, to quote Rudyard Kipling, "The tumult and the shouting dies, the captains and the kings depart...." And so it is with the 2005/06 RL24 National Championships held at the Gippsland Lakes Yacht Club, Paynesville during the very last week of 2005. The party is over and the circus moves on. But what a blast! What a great week! Ian Lane summed it up when he said at the Presentation Dinner that it was the best Championship series he could remember and he's been to a few (and come away from most of them as Swing Keel Champion!) For a change, the weather was nearly perfect for racing RL24s with wind velocities ranging from about 8kts to what some skippers said was about 25kts and with the exception of Day 1 (Heats 1 & 2) all racing was in bright sunshine. Not surprisingly, spirits were high but perhaps the most significant contributor to this phenomenon was the fact that we had an enthusiastic fleet of 17 boats -more than we've had for years. No one complained of missing out on their adrenalin rush at the starts! With that number of boats on the water, there was always going to be good racing around the fleet and it's a pity the results can't reflect the closeness of the various tussles that continued all week out on the track. The big fleet also had another up-side- with 17 of us on the water, the general public could not help but notice us especially when 14 hugely colourful spinnakers were hoisted on the downwind legs and at times there was quite a spectator fleet out on the course.

This particular Regatta was also important because it has confirmed that the Class and in particular, the Association, is still relevant and viable. Sadly, recent history has seen the demise of a number ofailable yacht class associations and in many ways this series was going to be seen as a litmus for our Association's future. Bernie, Trevor and Paul, our Class Executive, worked hard to provide us with a program that was innovative, met the time constraints of a number of potential competitors and fitted in with GLYC's obligations to other classes. This, of necessity, involved a clever juggling act and it is to the credit of both Association and GLYC officers that the regatta was contested over the full 7-heat series. Of course, there is always scope for further fine tuning to make the Championship even better and you can bet our boys will be giving lots of attention to doing just that. Already, Bernie has circulated a questionnaire to participating skippers seeking feed-back on the event just completed and canvassing suggestions for next year's. This material will form the planning basis of the next championship series and if you weren't at Paynesville but would like to participate in the process, give Bernie a call on (03) 51 56 76 06.

AND THE WINNER IS.....

Ian Lane and *This way Up* in the Swing Keel division thus reclaiming the title he temporarily surrendered last year to *Monkey See Monkey Do* (formerly *Almitra* and now *Spud Gun* - hasn't Bernie heard the rumours about lethal bad luck and the changing of boat names?) while in the Drop Keel division, Craig and Ian Rainey made it back-to-back titles with *Wings*. The Cruising division was won by *Splice* sailed by Adrian and Alison Cassar with their two daughters as crew. This was their first Nationals with the RL's and we look forward to a long association with them. A full set of results is available on the

Associations website at www.rl24.org.au. Congratulations to the winners and to all the participants who made the series so memorable.

ENCOUNTERS OF THE FAST KIND

Not many members will have heard of Doug Lee but the fact is he's been around RL's for many years and is one of our Class's strongest advocates. He is a lifelong sailor and has national and state championships to his credit in classes such as XY 16 catamarans and the Jack Holt designed Lazy E (that's *Lazy E*, Laney, not Easy Lay!) His connection with the Class goes back to the 1980's when he purchased his first RL, *La Mancha*, a Mk1 which he raced and cruised extensively including the mandatory run to the Whitsundays. Coming under a fair degree of domestic pressure for more creature comforts afloat, Doug ordered a Rob Legg-built Mk3 swing keeler and fitted it out and rigged it himself. That boat was named *Archina* to honor Arch Olney who, with husband Geoff was an original and long term stalwart of the RL Association. Together they became and remain the first Life Members of the Association. Unfortunately, *Archina* didn't stem the demand for more space coming from Headquarters so she was sold to a newcomer to the sport who renamed her *Shoreham Follies!* Her replacement was a Nolex 25 and with its arrival we bade farewell to the Lee family. In *Shoreham Follies* guise, *Archina* joined a party of us who cruised to Refuge Cove one Queens Birthday weekend and while the owners enjoyed themselves very much, they, too, began to yearn for something a little more commodious. In due course *Archina* was replaced yet again and by a Nolex, yet again. Here, her trail goes temporarily cold as the identity of her next owner is yet to be confirmed but the good news is that she again came on the market, this time in Tasmania. To Victoria's good fortune, Ian Cook purchased her and has brought her home albeit with another name, this time *Screamin' Blue Murder* Ian is a great supporter of our National Championships in the Swing Keel division and without fail presents *SBM* immaculately every time. But back to D. Lee Esq. The Nolex hung around for a while but following retirement, Doug cut it loose and for the first time for as long as he could remember he was boatless. Not that he left the sailing scene since he has been a keen and active member at McCrae Y.C. for many years. Well, given that you can take the boy out of the boat but you can't take the boat out of the boy, it was inevitable that sooner or later Doug's boatless status would be corrected. And so an encounter with *Encounter* led to the exchange of money for boat and Doug towed home his third RL. Back in the fold at last! *Encounter* is a Mk1 which was restored many years ago in Sale by Ron Wary. It was then purchased by Dennis Shelton who re-rigged it, fitted a drop keel and cruised and raced it extensively on the Gippsland Lakes but principally at Lake Wellington Y.C. - his home club. Dennis took it to the Nationals at Lake Cootharaba near Noosa in 1989/90 and did well. If memory serves me, a young topgun sailor at LWYC named Darren Dyer skippered her in a Marlay Point Overnight Race many years ago where she also did well. Dennis sold her to a Melbourne based owner who raced her sparingly but now, in Doug's hands she is racing again although under a new banner. She is now *Galeyre*, an amalgam of letters from the names of his children. Doug gave her an outing in the annual French Island Race held on the 2nd Feb. last and in the Trailable division was beaten across the line by just 2 boats, a Nolex 30 and a Magnum. He beat the next boat, a Castle 650, by more than 7 minutes and the boat which finished 5th, a Nolex 25, he beat by nearly 15 minutes. However, all that hard

work and the application of a lot of skill meant nothing in the face of a .760 CBH rating and *Galeyre* was relegated to 3rd place overall behind the Castle and the Noelex. That was the weekend Melbourne had about 50mm of rain accompanied by violent wind squalls, both of which arrived at Warneet just as the boys were unrigging! However, neither the violence of the elements or the savagery of the handicapping system could dampen the joy of Doug and his crew and they came away feeling very satisfied with their day's work. And it *was* a day – the race had started at 7.15AM!! Well done Doug. and it's great to have you and Deni back in the Association.

STOP THE PRESS, HOLD THE PHONES...!!!

Since this Newsletter was commenced, 2 months have slipped by –just disappeared without trace. Clearly, Ross writes Newsletters like he races RL24's –very slowly. However, the slothful attitude of your editor means that this first edition of the Newsletter for 2006 can announce our Committee's decision that the **2007 National Championship series will be held in Paynesville commencing with the Invitation Race on the afternoon of Sunday 31st December 2006.** The rest of the program will probably look something like this:

Monday 1 st Jan 2007.	Heat 1 starting during the afternoon.
Tuesday 2 nd Jan.	Heats 2 and 3 starting times to be advised.
Wednesday 3 rd Jan.	Heats 4 and 5 starting times to be advised.
Thursday 4 th Jan.	Heat 6 probably an afternoon start.
Friday 5 th Jan.	Heat 7 probably a morning start.
Friday evening 5 th Jan.	Presentation Night.

These dates are firm and if you are planning to participate it is imperative that you book your accommodation forthwith. The regatta will be conducted out of the Paynesville Motor Yacht Club and will probably be sailed on the waters of Lake King rather than Lake Victoria as in previous years. Full details will be provided in the Notice of Race (currently being prepared for approval by Yachting Victoria) which will be distributed to all members as soon as possible. If you have any queries about the next Nationals, phone either our President, Bernie Ryan (03 51 56 76 06) or our Sec. Paul Corben (03 51 52 58 42)

Post Script – Those of you who follow football may remember, depending on your generation, such footballers as Polly Farmer, Ron Barassi, and Greg Williams, all famous for their ability to “handball”. Add to that list one Ross Corben who, when it came down to a choice between sending out the newsletter and taking his first holiday in some years, selfishly chose the holiday and lumped the mailing on to his long suffering and overworked “mate” James Shannon. As Ross trundled up the Maroondah Highway, James promptly received notification of a compliance audit, a bit harsh since he'd only been in the job a month. Given James' preparation for such events is comparable to his boat preparation for Championships, you can only imagine the chaos that ensued, delaying by a few further weeks the posting of this newsletter. So sorry Ross and everyone else. PPS James somehow managed to survive the audit with little more damage than a few more grey hairs so if anyone needs financial advice.....

Post Post Script – News from Yachting Victoria

As the RL rep to Yachting Victoria, a couple of issues have come up recently which should probably be reported.

Affiliation Fees. On top of requiring all crew members in regattas to be paid up members of clubs, Yachting Victoria appear set to apply an affiliation fee to Class Associations. Now the form of the fee is unclear, with various reports saying \$15 per non club affiliated member, to a flat \$250 per Association. Now the former wouldn't affect us a great deal, but the latter certainly would and it's my view, and that of the majority of other Association representatives, that in the absence of a benefit to Association members that is not delivered through their club membership, there should not be an affiliation fee at all. A sub committee has been formed of the Association representatives to tackle the issue, and a strong letter has been drafted to Yachting Victoria, but I'm a bit pessimistic about the outcome. If indeed we are charged for our affiliation, it would be my suggestion that any payment be held off until our AGM at Christmas, at which time we can consider whether affiliation with Yachting Victoria holds any continuing value to us.

Paynesville Developments

The Council down Paynesville way have been holding discussions on developing the foreshore area down there. So far it seems as though the locals are pretty keen to retain the boating feel to the place, the traders do pretty well out of it, and representations have been made to ensure that the accessibility of the boat ramp etc remain as they are, but it's funny how often inappropriate developments seem to get through so we'll be keeping a pretty close eye on this issue also.