The Cutlass

Lowry Bay Yacht Club Quarterly Newsletter

November 2020

From the Commodore

Max Meyers

Thank you for entrusting me as your Commodore for a third and final year. Taking on the role in 2018 three years seemed a long, long time. Much has happened already, and we are now quickly moving to a period of change where work must be done to prepare for the future.

Our planning group is well into its task of gathering feedback from members and stakeholders with an interest in the club. Many of you have given feedback on what you consider to be a vibrant and sustainable club. The team's findings will guide us on possible directions that fit with members' views, and I am expecting an update for members this month.

Opening Day was surprisingly well attended despite the weather not playing its part and sailing being cancelled on the day. I believe this last occurred around 15 years ago. Guests and members once again witnessed the firing of the cannon and the partaking of food and drinks and it was a good chance to linger and connect with members and visitors.

The new season has got off to a good start with the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, enabling a full programme of on and off-the-water events.

I am pleased to report that the club finances to date are tracking to budget and this has been the result of new members joining the club, increased interest in hiring the clubrooms for events, and a grant from Sport Wellington Resilience Fund. The Lowry Bay Yacht Club has shown its strength and resilience through an awkward year due to the continued support from its members and it is hoped this will hold us in good stead for
the future.

For those members who are new to the club, I wish you a warm welcome and encourage you to ask and share your stories and projects with other members as this can be very helpful and an enjoyable part of club membership. For me, this has been a special part of the club and the memories have endured for Mary and I, as well as our family.

Happy and safe summer boating everyone.

Max

In this issue

From the Executive Committee

The people

At the AGM in August members elected an Executive Committee that consists of the following people:

Max Meyers	Commodore
Jamie Reid	Vice-Commodore
Keith Murray	Treasurer
Lynn Porter	Rear Commodore - House
Guenter Wabnitz	Rear Commodore - Cruising
Ingrid Harder	Planning Team Lead
Brent Porter	
Mary Meyers	

A little bit about the Committee

The Committee meets on the second Thursday of each month at the clubrooms. The meetings usually run for two hours and looks at matters to be considered under the various areas of club operations and other items that arise. These are finance, management of the club, Commodore's report, membership, sailing, cruising, house/social, planning, spring chickens, communications, and any other business.

The Committee welcomes submissions from members and other stakeholders. For example, Alan McLellan from Seaview Marina and Theo Muller, Director, 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race.

This ensures the Committee is aware of developments and expectations that impact on the club and its activities.

Management of the club

The club does not have a dedicated manager and the management of the club is carried out by volunteers (mainly executive committee members). The day to day running of the club is largely
an administrative role that involves hiring of clubrooms, paying bills, raising invoices, purchasing stock, paying wages, bar management, compliance with local authorities, membership, building maintenance, website and other miscellaneous items.

Brief update from meetings to date

August meeting

- ✓ Six new membership applications were accepted.
- ✓ Seven resignations received.
- ✓ Ray Flaws was engaged to fit timber trim to tables in the Seaview Room.
- ✓ A planning group was formed lead by Ingrid Harder and comprises Geoff Thorn, Philip Orchard, Jennie Darby, Daniel Benton, and Barbara Mavor.
- ✓ The club's insurance was renewed.
- ✓ Jennie Darby was confirmed to manage venue hire bookings.
- ✓ Fujitsu agreed to continue to support the club.
- ✓ Catering options were considered.
- ✓ Almanac content and sponsorship on track.
- ✓ Application made to Sport Wellington Resilience Fund for $5K.
- ✓ Covid-19 alert levels compliance being monitored.

Changes to membership

New members:

Ross Williams
Suzi Grice
Scott Barker
Laurie Hargreave
Jamie Meyer
Tony Patterson
Mark Greig
Mandy Britnell
Adam Nathanson
Brent Clark
Anton Ognyev
Caswal Parker
Abbie McLean
Huub Weijers
Stephen Barlow
Claire Barlow
Brian Hanaray
Thomas Craven
Andrew Miller
Eleanor Miller
Wendi Isaac
Irene Kennedy
Paul Wavish
Iain Bain

A very warm welcome to you all.

September meeting

- ✓ Three new membership applications were accepted.
- ✓ One resignation received.
- ✓ Preparations for Opening Day.
- ✓ Decided no spirits allowed for BYO for venue hiring and more scrutiny over wedding and 21st birthday events.
- ✓ What's On now taken over by Ann Dormer.
- ✓ Discussed the need to review the Health and Safety Policy at a future meeting.
- ✓ The timing of RPNYC events with respect to the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race were discussed.
- ✓ Upcoming club events were reviewed.
- ✓ The Waikawa Boating Club wine race is not coming to Seaview this year due to marina maintenance.
- ✓ A note to volunteer bar staff was discussed with respect to drinking on duty.
- ✓ A $5k grant was approved and received from Sport Wellington Resilience Fund.

October meeting

- ✓ Eight new membership applications were accepted.
- ✓ Seven resignations received.
- ✓ The annual fee for use of the clubrooms by The Wellington Radio Yacht Club for its meetings was reduced to $200 pa (previously $500 pa) as its membership has decreased substantially over recent years.
- ✓ A range of pre-prepared meals will be offered to members served by volunteers and other options will be considered.
- ✓ The financial results for the three months are positive. The club has a surplus of $13,000 and that is $15,000 better than budget. It must be recognised that this is only the first quarter of the financial year and that the bulk of the annual revenue has been received.
- ✓ Two new microwave ovens have been purchased.
- ✓ Thanks to Julie Naylor for refurbishing the bar stools.
- ✓ Spring Chickens considering removing upright posts in Seaview Room – structural engineer being consulted (at no cost).

The monthly update is not a comprehensive list but covers the main items aside from the day to day running of the club. If members would like clarification on any of the items covered please email the Commodore directly on commodore@lbyc.org.nz.

Next meeting of the Executive Committee

Have your say ….

Members are welcome to send their comments and suggestions to commodore@lbyc.org.nz for consideration at a Committee meeting.

What's the Plan? Planning Update

Article by Ingrid Harder.

One thing we all agree on is that we love our cool little club. Over the past few months, the planning team has listened to members talk about what they like about LBYC. We have heard that we're fun, friendly, not snobby, open to everyone, family friendly, helpful to each other, and we have the best patch on the harbour for racing. The list goes on.

So far, we have talked to many members and stakeholders, including Sailability, Seaview Marina and the Hutt City Council. We have held 3 member workshops and have received many emails with your thoughts and views.
We have been amazed by how much our members care about our club. We have heard suggestions about how we can be better and there are a lot of different views about how we can grow our membership. We have talked about the clubhouse and how that fits into the club's future, and what might need to change. We are now pulling together all of what we have heard and will share it with all members before we start the next process of engaging with you to think about our options for the future.

We want to get a clear picture of what kind of club our members want before we can think about how we are going to get there. Theo said it best after one of our workshops: *The most important and pre-eminent question is what we want to be when we look into the future.* Once we have answered that question, the actions the Club will need to take, to get the outcomes we want, will be relatively easily defined.

Thanks to all of you who have contributed your views so far. We look forward to continuing the conversation over the next few months.

The planning team consists of Ingrid Harder, Barbie Mavor, Jennie Darby, Geoff Thorn, Philip Orchard and Dan Benton. If you want to find out more about what we've been doing or if you want to share your thoughts about the future of the club, please email ingrid.harder@gmail.com or talk to any of the other members when you see them around the marina.

Racing

The 2020/21 race season kicked off on 27 September with our opening day race being cancelled due to weather. Spring has bought rain, overcast days and lots and lots of wind. Friday night sailing continues to be the most popular race day and it has been great to see so many new boats and new people out on the water.

In the last 3 months the following series have been contested and completed:
Interclub series – Quetzalli 1st online non spinnaker
Two handed series – 1st Minika, 2nd Sika II, 3rd Kaea
Pursuit A series – 1st Amnesty, 2nd Ross Child, 3rd Sika II
Spring series – Combined: 1st Stunned Mullet, 2nd True Blue, 3rd Shardik
Cruising: 1st Chickadee, 2nd Crewcut, 3rd Opportunity

Full results for all racing is available on the LBYC website: https://www.lbyc.org.nz/results-20-21

Quetzalli doing well in the Interclub Series
Winners 2 years in a row now

Overview of changes to racing rules

From January we will switch to using the Racing Rules of Sailing 2021 - 24. ***Paul Clarke*** *has been through them to see what is different.*

The short answer is 'not much'. The changes are pretty much all clarifications and tidy ups. The longer answer is: here is my take away list of items that potentially affect us at Lowry Bay. In case of doubt, the Protest Committee's decision is final. Well, nearly final, Rule 70.3 still allows appeal to the National Authority...

Rules
All World Sailing Regulations now have the status of rules. This brings in the anti-doping regulations.

Racing
Orange and blue flags mark the end of the start and finish lines respectively. This is now provided in the rules and so applies even if not in the sailing instructions.

You can hail in other than English provided that it is reasonable for it to be understood by all boats affected.

Starting and finishing are now based solely on a boat's hull. 'Crew or equipment in normal position' no longer count so no more easing spinnaker sheets at the finishing line to pip the opposition.

An object intentionally attached to a mark is part of the mark. So when Bob attaches a buoy to the committee boat, that is now part of the mark (regardless of whether the sailing instructions say so or not).

If race management wants to replace Part 2 (When Boats Meet, the right of way rules) by the IRPCAS or government right-of-way rules for the hours of darkness, this now has to be specified in the NoR. Night race and 24 Hour race management take note.

The detail of rule 16.2 (which places restrictions on responding to a boat that is keeping clear) has changed and it now applies only on a beat to windward. It now applies while racing (ie from the 4-minute gun) rather than the starting signal. Basically, if a port tack boat is keeping clear of you on starboard by sailing to leeward, you can't bear away to bugger them up.

If conditions mean that a hail for room to tack can't be heard, other signals are OK - though what this means in practice is not specified.

The definitions and wording around sailing the course have changed and the string rule is no longer a rule as such - it is part of the definitions. A practical effect is that if a boat does not correctly sail the course, the sailing committee no longer has to hold a hearing to penalize her. In the past, there have been cases of LBYC boats not sailing the course, though in my experience this has always been resolved without holding a hearing.

The rule on the use of outriggers has been relabelled as being about the sheeting of sails. The changes are mainly to achieve alignment with the equipment rules of sailing. But those in no-spinnaker races should note that they still don't support the idea that you can pole out a headsail by holding onto a boathook.

Safety
If the Race Committee displays the V flag with sound, you should monitor the radio for search and rescue instructions.

The requirement to wear personal flotation devices can be specified in the NoR or SIs (ie in that case no flag Y is required). If it wasn't clear before, Flag Y displayed from the committee boat (or presumably start box) applies

to *that race,* so if it comes down you can take the device off (subject to the sailing instructions - LBYC SIs require flotation devices to be worn unless the skipper expressly allows otherwise).

Penalties and protests
The NoR or SIs can change the two-turns penalty (previously only the SIs could do this).

The pro-forma protest form has been replaced by two forms: a hearing request form and a hearing decision form. However, the RRS don't actually require the use of a particular form.

In addition to protesting and/or requesting redress, a boat can report to the protest committee requesting action on misconduct.

If the race committee or protest committee intends to protest a boat for something the committee saw in the racing area, the committee doesn't have to tell the boat in person: it can meet the time limit through a notice on the official notice board.

When two or more hearings result from the same or very closely connected incidents, they can be held together in one hearing. This did happen before, but the footing for it is now clearer.

The treatment of hearsay evidence in hearings has been clarified. The protest committee should hear the hearsay evidence and then decide how to treat it - rather than consider whether to hear it or not. This is on the basis that some hearsay evidence may be appropriate - eg a mark rounding list written by someone not present. This doesn't stop the committee excluding evidence it considers irrelevant or unduly repetitive.

It is now clearly specified that protest committee decisions shall be made on the balance of probabilities. The committee can also consider whether redress is appropriate even if that was not requested in the hearing request form.

Get organised, get ready.

The planning for next year's 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race is in full swing. Put these dates in your diary:
27 and 28 March 2021.
The organising team consists of Race Officer Bob Rowell, Operations Coordinator Brent Porter, and myself as Race Director. Most of our loyal sponsors have again 'signed up' with us, so we can plan with confidence.

The success of a race like the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race depends to a large extent on the effective forward planning. The organising team has already met a couple of times and we are addressing issues that need improvement. VHF radio communication from the club rooms let us down this year and Bob and Brent are looking into this. Some tests have already been carried out. Further trials on the PredictWind tracking App are also under way.

Forward planning is also a big must for skippers and crew. Do not leave this till the last moment. Skippers make sure that you have your crew committed EARLY. It's no good assuming that your regular crew will be available. Find out early and fill any likely vacancy without delay. The racing rules dictate that there must be a minimum of four crew, including the skipper, on any competing yacht and one of them (additional to the skipper) has to be an experienced helmsperson.

Is your boat up to scratch? Race Officer Bob Rowell and his team will commence safety checks during February and early-March 2021. Take the stress out of your planning by completing a safety check early and present your completed safety check form without unnecessary delay. If there are things to fix, fix them. Enter the race with confidence in the knowledge that everything works as it should work. It's no good during the race worrying about things holding together. Take responsibility. As skipper you are responsible for the safety of your crew and vessel.

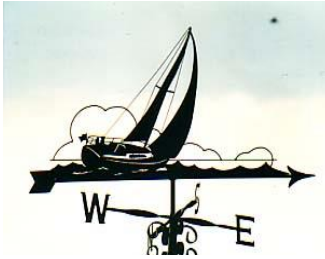
What to do if you have never sailed during the hours of darkness, let alone being in charge of the yacht? The club will be organising a Night Race on Friday 29 January 2021. Use that opportunity to get some practice in. Alternatively, take your crew out a couple of times at dusk and sail around Matiu/Somes Island to return to the marina after dark. You will discover that Wellington Harbour looks quite different at night surrounded by thousands of lights on all corners of the compass.

Those of you who have already competed in the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race in the past four years, you will agree that the race is a challenge and a test of your ability, whether you are a skipper or crew, to keep the yacht going at optimal speed for all of the 24 hours available to you. You will also agree that, having finished the race, it's been a whole lot of fun – an event to remember. So… get organised, get ready!

Theo Muller
Race Director 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race

Sponsors of the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race in 2020

How accurate are our weather forecasts?



Article by Geoff Thorn.

October and November is not a good time to be looking at weather forecasts to try to sail a 12-metre yacht 500nm down the East Coast of the North Island: I know, as I helped on two delivery trips recently, on one experiencing the horrors of when the forecasting was badly wrong. October and November are soon after the equinox and the change in seasons. And as we all know; spring is when we get very unsettled weather with strong winds. This weather seems to last all the way through to Christmas. We do have some wonderful days, but these are book-ended by wild weather fluctuating between strong Northerlies and Southerlies.

Consequently, weather windows can be very brief, and often slam shut before they really open. By definition, a weather window is a period of weather which will provide favourable conditions to transit from one point to another. And we need to be able to forecast the window far enough ahead to deal with all of the logistics of getting to the boat, bunkering it, storing food and sorting out the sailing systems. This preparation is even more important when the boat has recently been purchased and the delivery trip will be the owner's first real trip.

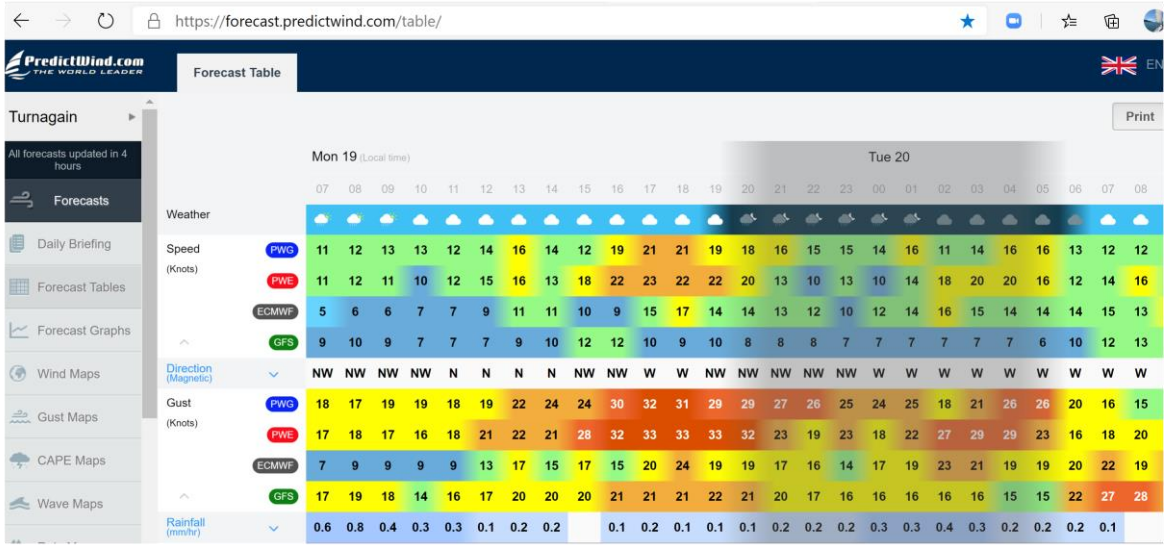
I use four sources for weather forecasting. For looking out into the future I go to https://app.metoceanview.com/forecast. This website provides a view of the GFS weather model up to 14 days out. That far in the future the forecast is not particularly accurate, but it does give an indication of the systems coming from the West and when they might arrive. The model will tell you when a window might open so that you can work out when to start looking more closely. The other source is the PredictWind Offshore app. A bit more knowledge is required to use this app effectively, as the boat related data used by the app for planning a route is entered via the PredictWind (PW) website: https://www.predictwind.com. The Offshore app will also show weather systems 14 days out and it has four different models available. The PW website also has a routing tool which allows the user to enter a start and finish point and then run the model to get forecasts and routing for the period of the trip. When we are two weeks out from a possible window, I will sometimes set a start point at Wellington, a waypoint out in the middle of the Tasman and the finish back at Wellington. The purpose is not to get routing information, but to give the model a course to run which is long enough to give me the time period I am interested in, and see what systems are coming through.

Having identified a possible window, about a week out I will put some forecast points into PW at logical places on the route. For example, I have points at East Cape, Cape Kidnappers, Cape Turnagain and Cape Palliser. I can put each location into the website and get data for each site in the table format as shown in **Figure 1**. This table will be very familiar to most boaties. The real issue is how to interpret it. The more the models line up and are consistent, the more likely it is that the weather being forecast will eventuate. The models tend to under-predict wind strength, so I tend to look more at the gust lines for an indication of likely actual weather. Of course, gusts are going to be higher still.

Of equal value is the observations tab on PW which allows the user to see what the actual conditions are at MetService sites around the Coast. This information includes graphs of the last 48 hours at the sites so that I can check that what I thought would happen, matches what is happening.

And of course, there is the MetService marine forecast. I have a perception that MetService really only does one forecast per day; the forecast issued around the middle of the day (delivered at 1330 hrs on Maritime Radio VHF channels). The forecasts for the rest of the day are simply updated by chopping off what has already been and gone.

Figure 1. Predictwind Forecast for Cape Turnagain



The first delivery trip worked well and, three days out, I was able to suggest that if we leave Tauranga about 2200 hrs, we would have a great trip across the Bay of Plenty, favourable conditions around East Cape and down to Napier. I was recommending Napier as a stop because I could see a system coming through which would hit Cook Strait about the time we would be there. But it wouldn't last long and if we spent 18 hours in Napier before continuing, we would be fine. And so it proved. Great sailing and motor sailing to Napier, a fantastic overnight stop, and we carried on the next day with a good run around Cape Palliser and up Cook St, exactly as planned.

The second trip, however, proved problematic. I was limited by when I could get to the boat. The owners would be there waiting, but had to be in Wellington before the school holidays finished, preferably with their new boat. A brief window was opening up before I could get to the boat, so I encouraged them to set off on their own for Napier. They ran into some short seas and head winds as they approached East Cape, but nothing too horrendous. They arrived in Napier in good time and had a few days to relax over the weekend. I could see a very small window opening up on the Tuesday, but I didn't like it: it was too small. A bigger and more favourable window was available later in the week. But if that closed, it was all over and the boat would be stuck in Napier.

I travelled to Napier planning on having a crack at the Tuesday window. Late Monday evening we sat down and looked at the models and found significantly different forecasts on PW and the MetService. The four PW models were all consistently showing a difficult patch in the area of Cape Turnagain: they indicated the wind would be 40-50 knots from the West on Tuesday evening, easing in the early hours of Wednesday morning. But MetService was saying it would be 35 knots NW, easing to 25 Tuesday evening. The PW Offshore App predicted that if we left around midday, we would see about 25 knots as we went past Cape Turnagain. Cook Strait was looking ok as it was due to turn Southerly 20 knots when we arrived in that area. The only question was whether we could get to Palliser before that happened, as a 20 knot Southerly would bring a reasonable swell with it. If we were still travelling South down the Coast, we could be beating into the Southerly for quite a long time. But it wouldn't be too bad.

On Tuesday morning, we knew that another boat had already departed Napier for Cook Strait about 0600, and a second boat had left about 0800. My preference was to leave later in the day to allow the weather to settle at Cape Turnagain. We did another run of the models, but they remained the same. The observations were showing 50 knots actual, gusting 60 at Cape Turnagain and also at Castlepoint which was consistent(ish) with the PW models, but definitely contrary to the MetService's 35 knots. All forecasts were pointing to the wind

dropping overnight at Cape Turnagain. The only question was when. We just needed not to be there too early. But if we left it too late, we would run into the Southerly well before Palliser which MetService was now forecasting to come through at 35 knots. Thursday or Friday was looking ideal!

We left at 10.00 knowing that we could get the MetService forecast at 1333 hrs over the radio and we could turn back if it had changed dramatically. We motor sailed out of Napier and around Cape Kidnapper. The wind was light and moved around a lot. The forecast came through over the VHF and it was unchanged: 35 knot NW easing to 25 in the evening for Castlepoint, changing Southerly 35 the next morning, when we should be 50 nm North of Palliser. We would be at Cape Turnagain (the Northern boundary of the Castlepoint forecast area) about midnight, so that sounded fine. But the PW models were still suggesting NW 40-50 until the early hours of the next morning at Turnagain and Castlepoint.

Later that afternoon, as we trucked down the East coast towards Turnagain, the wind started building from the West and we put the first reef in the main. A couple of hours later, the second reef went in. We didn't know what the wind strength was, because the anemometer seemed to be reading very low – we just knew it was a lot more than the reading. The swell from the West was building, despite us being quite close to the coast. The dinghy was sliding around the foredeck as it had been secured by a single line from the bow, but not to each of the side cleats on the deck. I went forward with the owner to sort it out. I was lying on the deck with my foot wedged against the toe rail cleating a rope to the side deck from the bow of the dinghy. Waves were breaking over me, and just as we secured the dinghy my life jacket went off. I have been on the foredeck in pretty nasty conditions before, but this was the first time this had happened. We secured the dinghy and I made my inflated way to the cockpit to change life jackets.

The next task was to drop the main completely. The wind was too strong for two reefs and this would leave too much rag up. The main had a stack pack which made it really difficult to secure it. Eventually this was achieved with a long rope wrapped around the main and stack pack.

We settled into our watches with two people in the cockpit, and two in sea berths on a three-hour rotation. It was pitch black with no moon or stars. The only light was the ambient light from the stern light. This showed water being blown horizontally past the stern of the boat. I could also see the water being atomised off the back of the boom. It was not dripping; it was a constant dark cloud. I had never seen this before and it was mesmerising. Waves were breaking over the boat; but we never got wet. The wind was howling and as the waves broke over the boat the airborne water was snatched away from the boat before it could get to the cockpit. The sea state was difficult to work out. All I could see in the glow of the stern light was a mass of thrashing, swirling white water around the boat. The waves appeared to be about three metres but they weren't breaking; they couldn't, the wind was removing the tops as they curled over. The waves and wind were both coming from our starboard side and we had the motor running at half throttle just to keep us moving forward. We were on a constant lean of about 25 degrees with further lurches in the waves. My concern was that we could not keep the motor running if the boat was heeling more than about 30 degrees.

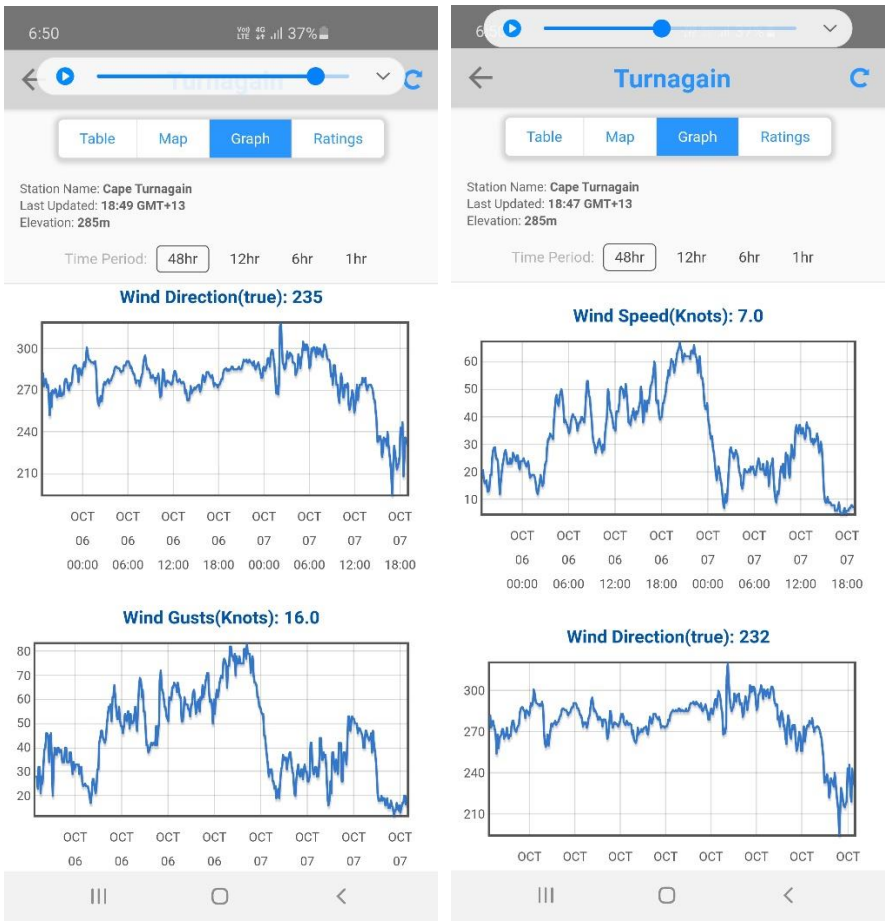
We had no sense of wind strength and gusts. It was so strong that we couldn't differentiate. I sat in the cockpit wondering if it would get worse and monitoring what was happening. The yacht's wind instruments told me the wind was coming from the side, and the speed was reading a constant 13 knots, which clearly was not correct. I constantly checked the compass to make sure the auto helm was holding; it was. And the engine purred without missing a beat.

We sat there holding on, making small talk to distract us from the noise of the wind and the waves. All I could see of the waves was that we were surrounded by thrashing white water. I sat there fascinated by the extreme noise and conditions mentally going through a range of what-if scenarios. None of which were appealing, and I was struggling to come up with solutions given the conditions and where we were, far from any safe harbour. The conditions dropped soon after midnight and in the early morning we could see the sea state. We were still surrounded by white, but at least now it was the cresting tops of waves rather than seething white water. The wind had eased, and I felt it was somewhere in the 30s. Still too much for a double reefed main, and I didn't feel that a partial genoa would add a lot of value. But it was a lot more comfortable than we had experienced most of the night.

The wind continued to drop as we motored down the coast. We elected not to pull out any sails on the basis that we were doing nicely under motor and we needed to get some rest. We got around Palliser about mid-day in very calm conditions and motored up the strait towards Wellington.

The sceenshot(**figure 2**) I took of the observations at Cape Turnagain showed that we had been though a bout of 60 gusting 80 knots for a period of about 6 hours. We were passing Cape Turnagain about midnight which was the worst of the weather.

Figure 2. Screenshot of MetService Wind Readings at Cape Turnagain



So how did the forecasts work out? The MetService forecast at 35 knots was clearly a long way out: less than half of what it actually was. The PW models were better, although they also were well short of actual conditions. 80 knots is actually off the Beaufort scale, which lists 64 plus knots as hurricane force, and describes it as “devastation”. (The next lowest is 56-63 knots, which is ‘violent storm, very rarely experienced, accompanied by widespread damage.)

In hindsight we might have missed the sustained 60-80 knots had we left 6 hours later. The problem was the forecast 35 knot Southerly we would have been beating into to get around Palliser if we had left later. I have been there before, beating into 35 knots for 36 hours down the East Coast. It was not pleasant and I had no wish to repeat it. As it turned out, the Southerly was actually quite benign (as forecast by PW) and would have been the better option. This experience shows how it’s really tricky to forecast coastal marine weather during spring. It is notoriously difficult, because as in this case the forecasts don’t always agree. You just have to collect as much information as you can, weigh it up against your personal experience, and make a call that you’re comfortable with. In this particular case, the PW model was more accurate – but that’s not a hard and fast rule. You’re also balancing competing weather windows along the route, and at your point of arrival, which, in spring, have a fairly predictable habit of slamming shut at short notice.

(ex) Club Member update

Olivia Meyers (Commodore's Daughter, ex LBYC member and Cruising Captain), Mike Thomson (ex RPYC member) and their son Elton (9 1/2 months) have brought a Sunburst named *'The Kraken'*.

We brought her off a very good mate and well-known Sailor Scott Beavis. Scott towed *The Kraken* from Auckland to Wellington. Mike, Olivia, and Elton live in Dunedin and had to get to Wellington to collect the boat, so we tied it in with competing in the North Island Sunburst Championship where Mike and Scott's son Jack sailed to finish 4th overall. Got a few 1st place finishes which is not a bad effort for its first appearance on the water with new owners. Was great to see Ray and Sheryl Manning as Race Officers, they set excellent courses and ran a successful regatta.

Now, *The Kraken* is home in MacAndrew Bay, Dunedin, planning to set sail at the nationals this coming January in Christchurch. Elton is a bit little to compete but planting the sailing seeds and building water confidence at every chance we get.

Buoy Zone – an app for setting yacht racing courses, and more

Article by Ray Manning

This article should interest people who want to know what goes on behind the scenes of yacht race management. Below I will detail the process, as it has been done traditionally. I then want to share with readers the marvellous new tool (app) which we now have to use for setting up courses on the water.
The app is several years old but has only recently become something that is really exciting, easy and reliable to use by Race Officers (RO). *Buoy Zone* has been developed by Murrays Bay Sailing Club in Auckland, by Rob Cleghorn, Alex Amsler (and I am sure many other Murrays Bay members have had substantial input). Others of us are forever emailing them with suggested improvements and they are doing their best to keep up. They can be contacted at support@buoy.zone.
First off how it has all worked up until now:
One of the more interesting tasks for a RO is the art of quickly setting up a course for the Races of the day. While this is not a big issue for normal club racing around fixed marks, the process gets more complex when more accuracy is required, as in a Regatta. It is also a task which:-

- Requires two, or often more, people to act in a closely co-ordinated way, and
- All this must be completed in a tight timeframe, so that racing can start on time.

Sailors, having prepared for the advertised start time, don't really like to see the AP flag flying.
A number of things need to be calculated in the days before the course setting process begins, being:-

- Determining the course configuration, i.e. Trapezoid, Triangle, Windward-Leeward etc.
- Setting the timeline for the day to complete all scheduled races by out-of-time (Rum O'clock)
- Collating fleet VMGs around the course for various wind and sea condition, and then,
- Determining race length target times, to fit the schedule, allowing for slower finishers etc.
- Decide on class starting order to ensure the race process flows with minimal waiting around.

Even with the pre-work done the RO really needs to be on station at least a full hour before the start time to turn all the planning into the reality for the day. This starts even before the start boat anchors by making wind & sea observations to ensure that the proposed course is going to fit surrounding where they drop the pick. Not all sailors may be aware that wind speed & direction, to be accurate for the "sailing wind", must be taken from a boat which is not-on-anchor. This is why ROs call for regular wind readings from mark boats and don't rely solely on what they are observing when on anchor.

All's good, we are on anchor and now (traditionally) the RO determines:-

- The course reference point which in simplest terms is mid the start line, but more often in the middle of a course gate, which is normally set 0.05 NM ahead of the start line, and then
- The reference point is uploaded into the mark layer's GPSs who are sent off to lay marks, including start pin, at specific bearings and distances as determined by the RO.

Hopefully that is all complete prior to advertised time for the 1st class flag. Meanwhile others on the start boat are checking off entry lists, setting up clocks to GPS time, and getting flags ready.
And speaking of flags there is a whole bunch of them which may be required including:-

- Orange, Blue, L, AP, N, A, H, Y, class flags, P, U, black, X, first substitute, M, C, S and sometimes O, R and W (the latter 3 depending on the class and what might be in the SIs).

Hopefully all skippers will know exactly what each of those flags means!

A good Race Management Team is like a good boat crew. It needs function like a well-oiled machine to ensure everything flows smoothly for the day's racing.

And now to show you the Buoy Zone app

This example is from Day 2 Race 1 from the Optimist Nationals at Worser Bay 6-9 November 2020.

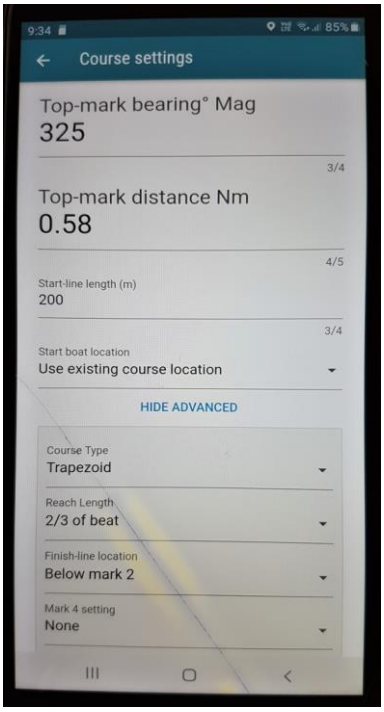
As the start boat motors out an approximate course is set up in the app which is going to quickly show the RO how the course, from any given position, is going to fit within the designated course area. Once on anchor and having agreed the wind direction and the beat length, the RO “shares” the course, and all mark, and other support boats, log into the app and observe their current positions relative to the proposed course. Mark and support boats then select which mark they are to lay and they are guided using the app directly to those positions, ready to lay the marks when requested to do so by the RO.

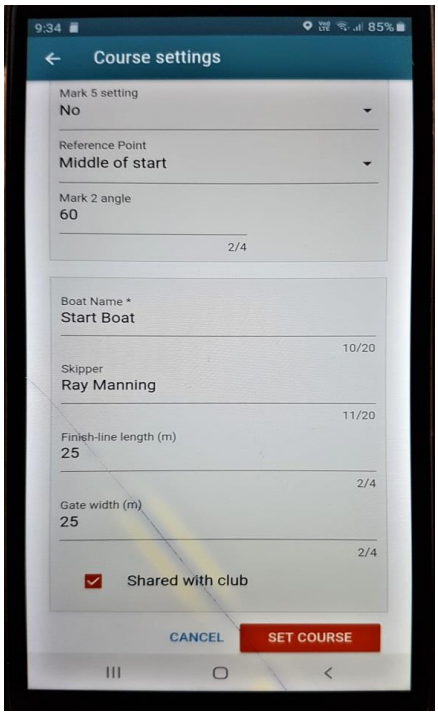
In the app users can zoom right in on the required mark and two lines appear as 5 metre and 10 metre circles. Thus mark laying accuracy can be near perfect. Other support boats, as we used at the Optimist Nationals, such as start pin boat, finish boat & finish pin boat can also just as easily see where they currently are so they can navigate to their course positions. During the process the RO can also see where the mark and support boats are, and this confirms to the RO when those boats are on station.

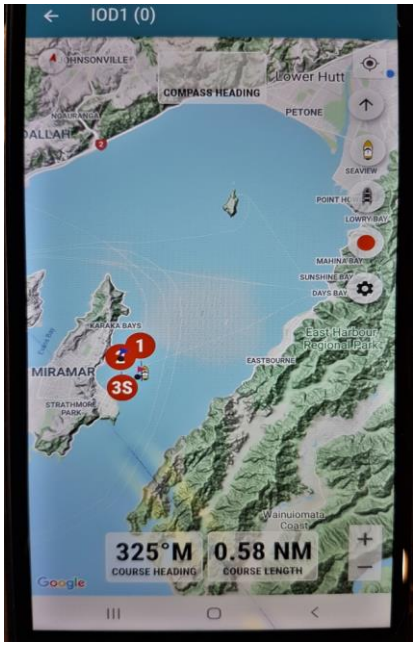
If/when a change of course is required during, or between races, the RO just updates the app and the mark and support boats refresh the app and can see where to move marks to. Use of the app is easy!

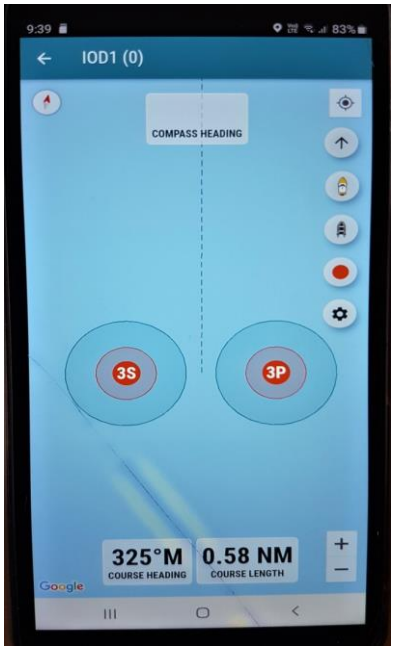
Below are some screen prints from Buoy Zone. While viewing the course the user can zoom in and out at will, and, as you will see in one of the pictures I have expanded out to show most of the harbour, and another just showing the mark surround circles!

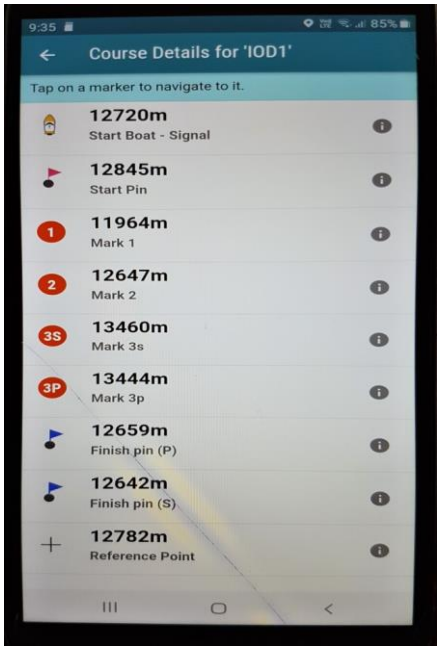
This brings us to the possible future uses for Buoy Zone.
Hopefully soon we will be able to set bespoke mark positions in the app by latitude & longitude, and then it would useful for races such as the LBYC 24 Hour Endurance Race. The marks could be set and competitors could sign in and be visible to Race Control and to each other (as long as they keep the app open and refreshed). It would also be useful for competitors to find the marks in the dark, and competitors would also know their distance to, and be able to navigate to, the next mark of the course.











For sale: Ex-tension

36ft Davidson design – professionally built 1986 in Christchurch, grp/kevlar sandwich, 20hp Bukh diesel, 8 berth, toilet, holding tank, water tank, gas oven, icebox, Furuno chart plotter, wind gear, depth sounder, fully kitted up and ready to race again. Fractional rigged with running backstays for additional tuning on the racetrack.

Well-appointed racer in need of a new owner and crew, Ex-tension is equally suited and decked out for cruising the Marlborough Sounds.

Ex-tension has a pedigree to boot. Winner of the 1986 Sydney to Hobart, additional Sydney-Hobart & Sydney-Gold Coast races undertaken, sailed back from Sydney in 2012, raced in Nelson before moving to Wellington. Inaugural & 2nd time winner of the LBYC 24hr Endurance race.
Contact Carl 021 431494 for more details

Gun Metal Delivery Trip Report

Article by Keith Murray

In 2020 Gavin Sharpe enjoyed a summer holiday aboard Gun Metal cruising the Bay of Islands, Great Barrier and the Mercury Islands. Holidays come to an end and finding a weather window for the return that suited possible crew meant a month went by. By the week commencing 16 March, Jan Braddock and I were available. Then Jan had to pull out so on Thursday it was with Meah Taylor that I was driven north to Whangamata. That was a nine-hour car journey including rest stops with a concern that the Government had declared the country to be at Level 2 lockdown because of Covid19. Only essential travel was supposed to happen.

Gun Metal, a Lotus yacht, was sitting at the maintenance berth adjacent to the travel lift at the Whangamata marina. Gavin had experienced an engine problem a couple of days earlier and had been towed there by Coastguard. Two mechanics had declared the engine in working order and the stoppage at sea was a mystery.

As usual before setting off on other yachts I inspected the running rigging so as to try and remember where all the ropes were cleated. I also peered at the engine. It was the same model Volvo as in Rose and that gave me comfort despite the lack of knowledge as to the problem. What did concern me was the sea water pump that was encrusted in salt crystals. I put my fingers underneath and felt the dampness. “The pump seals are worn and need replacing.” “Well it is not going to happen here,” was Gavin’s reply. I acknowledged the sense in that and knew the pump would keep trying but that its shaft might end up damaged. In all other respects the 9.5 metre yacht was ready to sail and at 0600 Friday morning 20 March the mooring lines were cast off and the yacht motored out of the harbour.

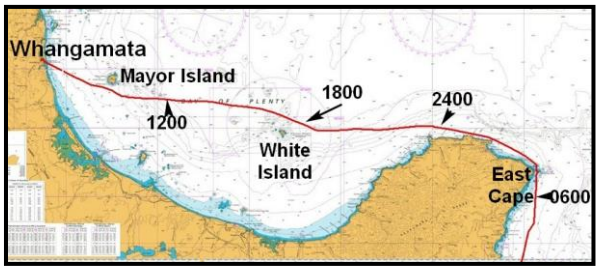
There was only a hint of wind, the sea was flat, and it was dark. A very small sliver of the waning moon rose into the sky and then the sun. Meah was delighted to have seen both moon and sunrise at sea. Half an hour later the sails were set to provide some assistance, but it was 0835 before the engine was stopped and we were on course making close to seven knots. The wind was a precursor of some light rain and as the rhyme says it, “was soon fine again.” We had a fine sail until 1100 when the wind became light and the motor was again pushing us across the Bay of Plenty at over 6 knots. Lunch came and was consumed, and the day became warmer. Ahead was a great view of White Island. The volcanic activity was much reduced from a month previously.

By 1400 the motor was off, the genoa poled out to starboard and mainsail guyed to port. Setting the spinnaker pole was a problem because it was underneath lashings for dinghy and safety lines and there were no cleats on the mast for the topping lift. That line had originally been taken to the cockpit, but the jammer had been used for the luff reefing lines of the mainsail.

Gun Metal liked the balanced sail plan and sped across the building waves for the rest of the afternoon and early evening. The sea was empty of shipping until near dark when a container ship went by to seaward.

Our lovely sail lasted until 2133. By then we were 12 miles from Cape Runaway and the small sea was messy. As it was just before New Moon it was very dark. It had been a fast sail across the Bay of Plenty and from Cape Runaway the speed was assisted by the tide. Dolphins played around us and mostly kept their antics to swerving about the bow rather than any leaps in the air. The dolphins stayed with us until at East Cape.

As Gun Metal progressed along the coast towards East Cape the wind eased and then came gently off the land. The tidal current added one and a half knots so at times our speed over the ground exceeded seven knots. As we went by Te Araroa the wind strengthened and we had half an hour of peace from the motor.



By 0300 the wind had faded and what little there was headed us as well as the tide. We were in the gap between East Cape and East Island by 0500 where the sea was calm. The motor then pushed us down to Tolaga Bay. During that leg of the journey we could see all of the outlying reefs as the swell was breaking over them.The forecast had indicated there would be

northerly winds but they did not arrive until after lunch. We had been reviewing the weather forecasts and had decided that there would be a pause in the trip. Our present rate of progress would get us to Cape Palliser early Monday in time for fresh to strong northwest wind followed by a screaming southerly. It seemed wiser to dawdle for bit and stay at Napier until after the southerly passed.
There had been an intermittent resonant clonking sound as we had approached East Cape that I finally located in the daylight. “Gavin, have you always had a gimballed radar reflector?” I asked. We peered up the port main side stay and could see that the reflector had come adrift at the bottom end. “We can fix that at Tolaga Bay,” was Gavin’s reply.

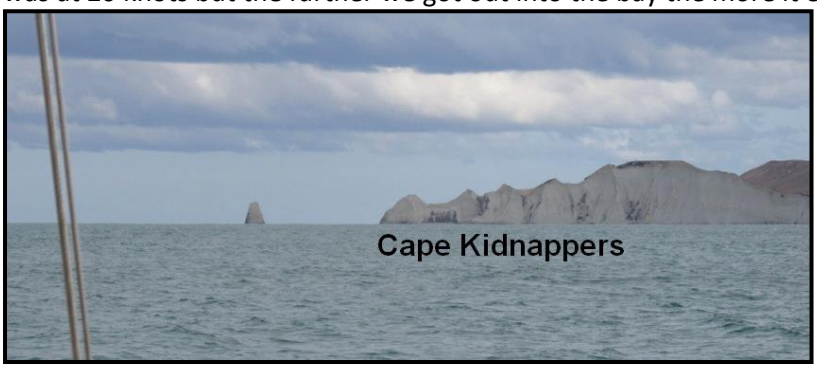
At 1238 we had the anchor down in Cooks Cove, Tolaga Bay. The first requirement was to top up the fuel tank from the on-board fuel containers, then a swim and wash, followed by lunch and a check for any shipboard jobs. There was some sea movement in the cove and we decided the radar reflector could be fixed in Napier.

We left Cooks Cove at 1400 and by then a light easterly wind had arrived and slowly freshened. The engine was off by 1600 and we had fast sailing as the wind slowly drew aft. When I went off watch at 2100 we were about eight miles northwest from Table Cape and the wind was easing. The sea had smoothed after being rough and steep for a while just before dark. I suggested taking the short cut between Mahia and Portland Island but Gavin did not like that idea. During Meah’s watch the wind died and the motor was again working. Half an hour after midnight Gun Metal was due west of the southern end of Portland Island, the wind had returned so Gavin raised the mainsail, unrolled part of the genoa and stopped the motor.
At 0100 we turned to starboard to cross Hawke Bay and the sea conditions improved hugely. The swell was left behind, and the wind eased to a fine sailing breeze. With one reef in the mainsail and about half of the genoa we charged across the bay. The wind from the north gave us easy fast sailing for hours on end. During my watch after 0300 the wind freshened, and I pulled down the second reef. Gun Metal was happier with the reduced sail, stood upright and continued her charge across the bay. It was a wonderful way to end the first part of the cruise. In the dark night the starboard navigation light was brightly lighting up the sea. Each shower of spray reflected the light back over the yacht. The wind started to ease at daybreak and then freshened as we arrived at Napier.

Despite it being low tide, we had nearly 4 metres of water in the entrance channel and were moored at the pontoon in front of the yacht club at 0950. The 298 miles covered had taken fifty hours and 46 minutes. After tidying sails and the ship, it was time for rest. The yacht club was not open but other yacht people gave us access to the toilet block and showers. Later we could see that there was work in progress on the pontoon and that it was not connected to any piles. Only two ropes held it to the shore. Meah decided to take the bus back to her family in Wellington and left a little before midday. Gavin and I devoted the afternoon to snoozing and listened with concern to the increasingly bad news from the world reports about the Covid9 virus. The weather did exactly as predicted. It was hot. The wind was fresh from the north and died away in the evening.

Monday was calm in the morning and we first went to the fuel wharf for 53 litres of diesel and then into a marina berth as the workmen arrived to properly affix the pontoon. The radar reflector was removed from the side stay, the engine checked, the salt stalactites removed from the saltwater pump and then we had a walk to buy a few stores. The marina had an interesting collection of boats, but the most noticeable thing was that despite the long entrance channel there was constant surge causing movement of boats and pontoons. An 18-metre launch called Yasawa arrived Monday afternoon along with three yachts that were seeking shelter from the coming southerly blast. The yachts Distraction and Satellite Spy were returning from the Two Handed around the North Island race. A trimaran was also due but did not arrive until the Tuesday morning. They had engine problems and had stayed at sea until the problem was fixed rather than try to enter the harbour. All the boats were intending to head south.

There was light rain Tuesday morning. At 0400 I had been woken by huge wind gusts from the west. They eased and around 0600 I heard Yasawa put out to sea. She returned at 1000. We waited until mid-afternoon for departure. By then the wind in Hawke Bay had reduced to 15 knots, the sea was flat but we were nervous about the height of the sea once around Cape Kidnappers. The predictions were for swells up to four metres. The wind about the harbour was at 20 knots but the further we got out into the bay the more it eased. Whereas we had started with two reefs and partly furled genoa by dusk the genoa was fully out and only one reef kept in the mainsail.

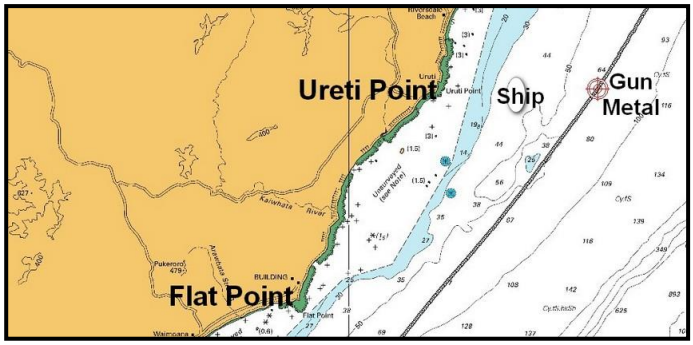


At 1630 we had rounded Cape Kidnappers and as there was no significant swell and a reasonable sailing wind, we continued. I had set a course close to the shore as all the predictions were that wind and swell would be worse further offshore. Thus we had a good view of the passing shoreline until it got dark.

The sky was clear and full of stars but at times there were strange horizontal flashes of light. The weird effect made me think my eyes were going funny. A little later I could see out to sea the glow of lights from fishing boats, probably over the North Madden Bank. Then I realised there was another vessel to the north with a very powerful pulsing strobe light. The boats were well below the horizon but the light show was impressive.

We were abeam of Cape Turnagain by 0200 and that put us a little ahead of our hoped-for schedule. The engine had been running from 2200 and remained the driving force until 0530. By then we were halfway between Turnagain and Castle Point and the wind as always in that area tried harder so the Volvo rested for an hour. During my watch dolphins had spent about half an hour playing with the yacht. The navigation lights provided light to see them charging at the bow.

Gun Metal was abeam of Castle Point at 0730 and making seven knots as a result of the efforts of engine and sails. Half an hour later the engine was resting and then the dolphins returned whilst I was below sleeping. When I came on deck just before 1000 I was surprised to see a large container ship inshore of ourselves. We were only five miles from the shore and three miles clear of the unsurveyed rock-strewn waters. The big ships usually travel 10 to 15 miles from the shore. The wind had eased by then and the motor was running. The motor stayed running for the next 14 hours. Gavin pointed out that there was a large yacht to seaward of us. It was flying full mainsail and a small jib but not moving fast. We soon overtook them and left them well astern. At afternoon teatime there was another large container ship heading north. This time it was comfortably offshore. Our sails had been furled by then, as they were slatting and not doing any useful work. The size of the swells had increased and that was to be expected as we were running along the area where the continental shelf ends, and the sea bottom drops to over 1000 metres.



We were also running as fast as we could to get to Wellington before the expected strong wind from the north. As long as the wind direction remained Northeast to North we would be able to easily cross Palliser Bay. If the wind went to the Northwest we would have a tacking battle that cruising boats and old sailors prefer to avoid. There was another problem. The Cook Strait forecast was for a strong southerly Thursday afternoon. The Wellington Harbour forecast said the wind change would be on Friday afternoon. The significant southerly swell indicated southerly winds would arrive but I felt that Friday would be the day.

We were at our most southern point at 1815 and were very glad to be heading north for Wellington harbour. The genoa was set and using the easterly wind to help us fight the last of the contrary tidal current. While setting the sail the launch Yasawa came by pushing at the bow a large amount of water aside. She was not moving at much more than 12 knots.

By 1900 we had cleared the dangers and could at last turn to a course of 304 degrees true, set the mainsail and charge across Palliser Bay. The easterly wind only lasted until 2100 but by then we could see the light on Bearing Head and the black shape of Turakirae Head. The tide was giving us a knot of progress and that increased to two knots once we passed Turakirae Head. Then the wind returned with a bang from the northeast. Just the reefed mainsail was more than enough sail area and by Bearing Head two reefs were required.

A little before we got to Pencarrow we turned to starboard to follow the leading lights. That brought the wind dead ahead so the mainsail was furled and the engine did the work to take us to the marina. By the time we had passed Steeple Rock the wind strength had dropped considerably making it an easy motor in smooth water. We were in the marina berth at 0015 Thursday 25 March and had travelled 202 nautical miles in 35 hours 25 minutes and 23 of those hours under motor.

Photo Gallery

Celebrity Crew – 2019/20 Season Champions Line and Handicap

Celebrity leaving for her new home

Watch this space…..

Tom Trapp with his new yacht Kinja