

# Jib Sheet



An Avalon Sailing Club Publication

February 2011



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[www.avalonsailingclub.com.au](http://www.avalonsailingclub.com.au)



# From the Tiller

Dear members,

Welcome to 2011 and the second half of the sailing season.

It's certainly been a busy time since the last Jibsheet with January being the month for national championships, some other members venturing offshore in the Hobart and Coff's Harbour events and the cruisers exploring ports far afield.

A full round up of the various national championships appears further on but here's a summary of how active our sailors have been:-

## **F11 Nationals**

These were conducted at Belmont with thirteen boats travelling from Avalon.

## **MJ Nationals**

At Cronulla with five boats from Avalon competing. Well done to all our young sailors and please see Sally's report further on in the Jibsheet for the fantastic result of this regatta.

## **Spiral Nationals**

Held at Jervis Bay with two boats making the trip south.

(Simon Hill is making a welcome return back to the water after a bit of time off with a brand new boat and a very tricky looking sail)

## **29r Nationals**

Four 29's made the trip to Belmont to race under the Avalon flag.

## **Optimist Australian & Open Championship**

Four of our sailors made the jump into this hotly contested class which was held on Pittwater.

With 110 boats in the main fleet and 59 even in the Green Fleet, this was a major regatta for our young sailors to be involved in.

Congratulations to all our sailors in these regattas and congratulations also to the parents who make it all possible with high levels of support and commitment that these regattas require.

## **The Australia Day Regatta**

Avalon was again the host club for this event on Pittwater with a small, but enthusiastic fleet of keelboats and centreboarders

from Avalon as well as other clubs.

Congratulations to all who competed in this regatta. The first place getters get to go to Sydney Town Hall for the presentation of their prizes.

## **Coming Events**

### **Challenger Head Race**

The not-to-be-missed Challenger Head race is on Saturday 5th March. This is your chance to win a race regardless of your actual boat speed or finish position.

The handicapping method for this event is a complicated algorithm, however towing a dinghy is generally regarded as beneficial. There will be the presentation of the much coveted "Bitter End" trophy again this year for the boat that actually sails all the way to Akuna Bay (and gets there first).

Dinner will be at the marina on Saturday night and breakfast is normally at the crack of 10:00am on the Sunday.

### **Pittwater Regatta**

26th/27th March-Notice of Race coming soon.

### **Club Picnic**

The club picnic will take place 3rd April. Specially designed not to clash with school holidays, Easter or any other event that we can think of.

So no excuses, we can transport any number of people over in Lucinda. The BBQ will be on the beach and no doubt the rather large Goanna will again be down for his annual cholesterol fix. I might also remind members that we need to avenge our loss in the tug-of-war to BYRA last year, so we really need as many people as possible!!

### **Commodores Ball**

The Commodores Ball is on the 30th of April so whether you're a yacht racer, cruiser or centreboard parent from blue, red or gold, please come along. The theme will be "all that glitters" so let your imagination run wild with that one!!

Finally, by now you should have a copy of the summer roster.

If you are unable to attend on your rostered duty day, could you please arrange a replacement and advise the OOD of the change. This step is vital to ensure we know who's done what



when we are drawing up the next roster.

The latest roster information is also available on the website.

The club requires 18 volunteers to run every Sunday, so it's vital for everyone to help. We are only as strong as our volunteer base.

On the subject of volunteers, our longtime Jibsheet editor Claudie Moffatt, has decided to step down as editor for the time being. I would like to thank Claudie for all the work she has put into creating the Jibsheet and we look forward to her speedy return in the very near future.

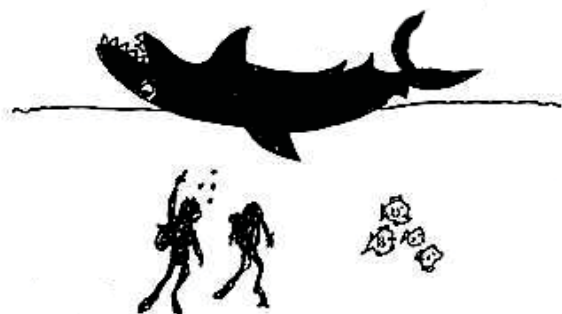
In the meantime Michael Maher has put his hand up to fill

in as relief editor. So thank you Mike for taking on this not insignificant task.

So that's it for the moment.

Good sailing,

Brett Stapleton



"HERE WE ARE, BACK SAFE AND SOUND.  
I RECOGNISE THE KEEL OF OUR BOAT..."

## ***The History of Avalon Sailing Club***

***by Norm Field***

***Available at  
the canteen  
only \$10.***

***A great read  
with wonderful  
historical  
photographs.***



## **CLUB HOUSE PROPERTY**

Over the Christmas period it was observed that many tables and chairs belonging to Avalon Sailing Club disappeared from the Clubhouse. Obviously to assist members with family/friends visiting extending their normal family seating arrangements.

It needs to be understood that no property of Avalon Sailing Club is to be taken from the Clubhouse without prior permission. Should you have a need to hire the Clubhouse (conditions apply) or have a special request for borrowing something from ASC you must put in a written request via [secretary@avalonsailingclub.com.au](mailto:secretary@avalonsailingclub.com.au) which will be submitted to a Committee meeting. Charges will apply as they would from any hiring company.

**To see the JibSheet in glorious colour go to our website  
[www.avalonsailingclub.com.au](http://www.avalonsailingclub.com.au)**

# Guess Who - Don't Sue!

Who happened to be in Athens in November en route to a family freezing Christmas in Suffolk and decided to have lunch on the Greek Island of Aegina, just off the port of Piraeus. Two return day tickets to Aegina, please (in Greek of course, efkhareesto) "Sorry mate (in Greek) the ferries have just gone on strike". No problem, get the Metro back to the city. "Sorry mate, the trains have just gone out".. No problem, we had our Avalon Sailing Club and R.P.A.Y.C. memberships and wandered up the hill to the Royal Hellenic Yacht Club which overlooks the port, for lunch. A table for two please and a couple of beers. Sorry mate (getting sick of being a mate in Greek) your partner can come in because she is properly dressed, but shorts are not allowed. The irony of the situation was that the "Royal" had been chiselled out of the brass plaque so it was now just the Hellenic Yacht Club. Just got back to the city, before the buses went out as well. So much for the bloody Common Market!

Norm Field

Norm drew my attention to copy from a 1990 edition of the Jib Sheet concerning the up and coming event opposite, namely the Challenger Head Race. Or, as it was then known, the Hallets Beach Race. Unfortunately we don't have sufficient space in this issue to re-print but maybe we should do so in a later edition. It was significant for two reasons. Firstly, the party after the race was held aboard a 2 deck ferry hired especially for the event and anchored in Hallets Beach and secondly because a very well known member sometime near midnight fell off the ferry. It lives long in the memory of those of us lucky enough to be there Roger...Some say that alcohol was involved, I can't believe that myself. (Acting Ed)

The not-to-be-missed  
**CHALLENGER HEAD**  
**RACE**  
SCRATCH START FIRST SIGNAL AT  
1300 (1.00PM) OFF THE CLUBHOUSE

Saturday 5th March  
Dine at "All Senses Cafe" Akuna Bay  
BYO Drinks and Pre-Dinner Nibbles  
\$25 per head

Come by boat or come by car  
all welcome for this gala weekend  
Please contact Peter Kidner – [pkbuild@tpg.com.au](mailto:pkbuild@tpg.com.au)  
9918 0469 or 0412 109 469

# 175th Australia Day Regatta

This is the oldest continuously conducted sailing regatta in the world, and Avalon Sailing Club was proud to be once again the host for the Pittwater area. The day was characterised by a persistent



and not often seen, sea fog. It was also characterized by an equally not often seen ENE breeze that barely got over 5 knots.

One of our F11's flew "the flag", actually 11 flags in total. Good work Nicola and Alicia

Avalon boats were joined by a variety of other yachts ranging from three magnificent Couta boats, a Yachting World Diamond plus two Finns and a couple of B14's.

We were also pleased to welcome Rob Stokes, MP for Pittwater, as our guest for the afternoon.

Rob presented the prizes for the regatta and also found himself on the receiving end when he was presented with an ASC Cruising Burgee.

Rob assures us he is now on the hunt for a suitable boat to attach

his new burgee too!!

Thanks to all the competitors who took part, and also thanks to the volunteers, both on and off the water, who made the whole day possible. In particular Kingsley Forbes-Smith, Richard Rasdall, and Meredith Rasdall, for running both races.



Luke also "flew the flag" for our boat boy section



Race results bottom page 5

# Marking and Tackling

No, it's not about Aussie Rules (the only real footy). This is to help you understand the racing marks and ground tackle you sail around every Sunday.

All the sets of ground tackle are identical (well, some are a bit more rusty than others, but the principle applies):

- \* The smallest lightest sand anchor we can buy, attached to five metres of 10 mm gal chain - no dragging with that lot holding the anchor down.

- \* 20m of 10 mm silver rope - long enough all over Pittwater, though an extension is needed for the O mark off Lion Island if it's over half tide, and 20m is too long for the K mark near Barrenjoey. But overall, 20m works fine.

- \* It's all held together with 10mm gal shackles locked with cable ties, and everything is stored in a plastic crate.

So you never need to decide which crate and tackle to grab in a hurry, they are all the same.

We have two types of racing marks: large yellow or red(ish) inflatables, and smaller spherical ones which once were dayglo



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## Australia Day Regatta

### Results

**Wooden Boat Division** – 1st Scratch – Wyargine – Malcolm Bradford - Woody Point Yacht Club  
1st Handicap – Cariad – Mick Morris – Woody Point Yacht Club

#### Open Division

1st Scratch – Sequel – Michael Doherty – Woody Point Yacht Club  
1st Handicap – Iluka – Neil Mattes – Avalon Sailing Club

**Manly Junior** 1st Scratch – Vincent Van Go - Margot Mason & Max Oughtred – ASC

orange. Every mark has a two or three metre tail and a large stainless clip - clip the weight and anchor line to the end of the tail, and the weight pulls the tail straight down, well clear of fins and rudders. Don't over-inflate the big marks, they get hot in the sun and expand anyway. There is a pressure relief valve on top, use it to deflate them a bit if necessary.

There are two types of weights - 16 kg and 10 kg, both types fitted with large stainless clips (same shackles and cable ties as above). It's a simple rule: big marks - big weights; small marks - small weights. On board, ALWAYS put the weights inside a plastic crate, otherwise you break toes. NEVER leave weights loose in the boat. Don't use the tiny grey weights with sister clips on them, they are only used with coolite training floats, not on the inflatable or spherical racing marks.

So, clip the anchor line to the end of the tail, clip the right size weight to the end of the tail, and lower the anchor over the side (never throw an anchor, it will tangle in the chain for sure). When the line is all out, lower the weight carefully over the side. The weight will then pull the mark over the side with a rush, and you too if you're not careful. Place the mark in the water beside the boat. Motor a little way away and watch for a while to make sure it's not dragging, and you're done - at least till the start boat asks you to move it - again, and again, and again . . .

Glenn Sanders

Glenn says "...taken with my phone so it's not great quality. Taken on Laura, 2.30 pm Sunday 6 Feb, looking from near the Juno mark, east towards Barrenjoey Head. We'd just got the sails off and the motor on."

So, by the look of those clouds, its important to put those marks down properly. (Acting Ed)

**F11 1st Scratch** – Sparta – Jim Colley & Tom Colley – ASC

**Spiral 1st Scratch** – Shane Conley – ASC

**Laser – Full Rig 1st Scratch** – Martin Langden – RPAYC

**Laser Radial 1st Scratch** – Max Vos – ASC

**Open 1st scratch** – Josie Roper & Daniel Watson - WSC

# DALIAN TO QINGDAO RACE



*Crew from left to right are: Aaron Terry, Grant Crawford, Christophe Vanec, Mark Griffith, Jan Scholten, Ben Gordon (back), kars Meyboom (front) and Lindsay Whitton.*

After a certain amount of carnage caused by one team barging, we started the Dalian to Qingdao race in a very light north easterly. Struggling for clear air and anticipating that the breeze was due to clock left as it built, we decided to drive off low for pace, concentrating on sailing at best speed. Only one of the fleet of 10 brand new Benetau First Forties was lower on the course. In a fading breeze, that seemed to favour the right, the rest of the fleet soon fell in behind us then slowly disappeared into the strange mist that seems to be a constant in the yellow sea at that time of the year. It was a strangely eerie feeling having less than 300m visibility in any direction sailing on a mirror smooth sea with the mist muffling any sound, the French team were in sight below and slowly edging ahead as the wind swung while an unknown boat could just be made out in the mist directly astern.

Having had a tense but ultimately comfortable win in the first short course race, we were feeling pretty confident, so were content for the time being to not take any risks but to follow the French team up to Chengshan Jiao, where the real strategic decisions had to be made. Having an adverse 3 knot tide against us out wide on the delivery from Qingdao to Dalian, and then encountering similar strength back eddies near the coast, we were favouring an offshore course, though mindful that our weather predictions showed better pressure inshore at times, all in all the tide, wind and the fact that we had to cross the main shipping channel made for some interesting tactical choices.

As predicted as the afternoon bore on, the breeze slowly clocked

north and strengthened to around 14 knots, but not the 20 to 25 forecast, we were only just getting our masthead asymmetric on deck when the French team set theirs, giving them a jump of about a 100m. The increased pressure seemed to dissipate the mist and with the sun setting we could see two sets of navigation lights behind, we lost sight of the French and suspected that they did not have their navigation lights on, but could not be certain as an increasing amount of traffic could be seen ahead, the rest of the fleet was lost in the dark behind.

With a very experienced crew onboard who could count a substantial amount of off shore racing under their belt, and having gelled quickly on the delivery up to Dalian, we quickly fell into the watch routine. By 12.00 pm, we were two sail reaching at around 8 knots through substantial traffic going in all directions, included fishing boats, container vessels and having seen a few earlier in the day, and north Korea only 100 miles away, no doubt a few Chinese navel vessels.

None of the fishing boats had navigation or trawling lights and we were quite concerned to stay clear, thinking that they might be trolling or long line fishing. We had managed to thread our way through the traffic with minimal course adjustment until around 1230, when we sighted two fishing boats to leeward on what appeared to be a converging course.

We were uncertain whether we could cross them, or in fact what heading they were on until they were very close. As soon as it was clear that they would cut across our bow, and unable to

determine whether they were trolling, to be safe, we bore away 90 deg to allow them to pass in front. Our new course had us travelling parallel to but in opposite directions at a distance of around 200m.

Even at this distance, we were unable to identify any cables or nets out the back of the boats, however to play it safe, we continued on until we were approximately 300m astern before we decided it was safe to resume our original course.

We then slowly commenced changing course; we had turned through 45 deg, when less than one boat length away, a net was sighted on our starboard quarter, cutting through the water toward us, the speed of its passage dragging the buoys under. Before we had any opportunity to take avoiding action, we all held on as we were hit by the net. We were immediately swung around and heeled violently as the net caught our keel and rudder.

Our shouts had raised the off watch, who well drilled, had their life jackets and harnesses on become coming on deck. We immediately shone our spot light on our sails and toward the fishing boats to alert the crew of the fishing boats that they had entangled us in their nets. At the same time our navigator attempted to contact them on channel 16, but to no avail.

We were still hopeful at this time that if the boats stopped we would be able to sail out of the net, however rather than stop or open up the net the fishing boats accelerated and closed together, we were now being dragged through the water at speeds up to 9 knots causing our yacht to heel violently, worse we had now been spun around and were being dragged backwards by the rudder. We had grave concerns that the force of the wire cables in the net could damage the keel, rudder or sail drive, breaching the hull or the sideways motion swamp the yacht, should the fishing boats accelerate further, and we were very conscious that though all clipped on, it would be very difficult if not impossible to get free if someone was to fall into the net.

We were under no illusions as to the situation we were in and quickly brought the life raft, flares and our safety grab bag into the cockpit; it's amazing what a shot of adrenalin can do, the life raft was on deck within seconds.

The fishing boats did not stop or respond to either our radio or spot light signalling, alarmingly they appeared to think they could free us if they sped up, luckily they tried just a brief burst of power before slowing to their original speed. Increasingly concerned for the safety of our yacht and crew if another attempt was made to shake us free, to alert both the fishing boats and any other yachts or ships in the vicinity of our peril we sent off a red parachute flare. There was no apparent reaction from the fishing boats, and we continued to be dragged over on our side. A second flare was sent up, this time fired directly toward the fishing boats and our navigator sent out a Pan, Pan, Pan Distress call on the VHF.

The flares had the desired effect and shortly after sending off the second flare, the fishing boats closed together and slowed until they were almost stopped. The net was transferred to one fishing vessel only, closing the net and eliminating any possibility that we would be able to get free. The fishing boat commenced reeling us and the net in. When we had been reeled to the stern

of the fishing boat, the crew who could speak no word of English, alternately by their actions told us to cut the net and then not cut, judging by the number and volume of the excited Chinese voices, the fisherman were more apprehensive than we were, finally they seemed to reach a consensus that we should cut the net, which was comforting as we had previously come to the conclusion that this was the only way we would get out and had been quietly cutting away. This was no small task as there were multiple poly lines of up to one inch diameter supporting a 6mm net, worse of all was the presence of a one inch steel cable. We successfully cut most of the rope and nylon netting but were struggling with the main steel cable, this was not helped by the occasional surges of power from the fishing boat to keep them heading into the swell. The fishing boat crew eventually managed to cut the steel cable themselves using a hammer and chisel and what looked like a substantial meat cleaver.

As soon as we were free, both fishing boats took off at full speed and were not sighted again, leaving us disabled, wrapped in net and cable surrounded by fishing boats, but thankfully just outside the main shipping channel. Though free from the fishing boat, we still had net and cables wrapped around the keel and rudder, jamming the rudder and preventing us from starting the engine. We were eventually able to partly free the rudder and began sailing under jib toward land.

We estimate that we were caught in the net for 2 hours and towed for three miles before being freed. Throughout this time our navigator had done a tremendous job recording our position and liaising with the other competitors that came to our aid, our flares and distress call drew a number of vessels to our vicinity on standby this included the Hong Kong, Australia/Queensland and Japanese teams, and at least one cargo vessel. With the lack of communication with the Chinese, we were very grateful for the presence of the other teams, and felt particularly bad when the Hong Kong team got entangled in the net as well, it was a great relief to see them subsequently free themselves.

Having discussed the available options and anxious to get under way in case we encountered more fishing vessels, we decided our best course was to head for Hailvdao, a small island off Chengshan Jiao which we had sighted on the delivery and which we knew had a sheltered anchorage. Whilst sailing in this manner we were approached by the Race Committee support catamaran who having only Chinese speakers on board, had been contacted by the Hong Kong team on our behalf.

Following a large amount of hand signalling we were able to determine that they wanted us to drop our jib. A line was thrown over and a certain amount of consternation caused when a man was sighted in the water before we determined that a diver had dropped overboard unseen from the cat.

As we had about 120 feet of net wrapped around the hull, we were greatly concerned for the divers safety, and all breathed a sigh of relief when he surfaced and indicated that we should pull in the cables, we were able to do so the netting and cables filling the cockpit.

We were not willing to risk putting the sail drive into gear until we had a chance to inspect the hull ourselves in daylight, but with

the rudder and keel free we raised our sails and headed toward Qingdao.

With dawn and a light northerly breeze, we set a kite and worked our way slowly past Chengshan Jiao toward Qingdao, about 120 miles away. With good weather, the rain that had kept us constantly wet gone and good progress being made our spirits were lifted until mid afternoon when two fishing boats were sighted heading straight at us, it would be an understatement to say that we were by this stage wary of fishing vessels or any vessel for that matter, so giving them quite a wide berth we hardened up, still under kite, our speed increased and the fishermen passed in front of us. With a load bang we broached and heeled down below but having heard the discussions about the fishing boats, my first thought was not again! Quickly on deck it was apparent that the fishing boats, at around 120 ft, bigger than the ones encountered in the night were not trolling and that our problem was with the rudder. Dragging in a flogging kite and getting the main down, the skipper dove over the back on a line to inspect the hull, sure enough, the rudder had delaminated. An attempt to bind the laminates was unsuccessful, and realising that we could easily lose the remaining laminate, we rigged a jury rudder based on the spinnaker pole, before slowly sailing and motor sailing the remaining 100 miles to Qingdao, making sure our boat speed stayed below 6 knots and that the rudder never loaded up.

By relay through the local Benetau agent, we were able to advise race control of our position and condition and as we were running short of fuel arranged for a RIB to meet us as we got close to Qingdao.

The sight of a coast guard vessel, which looked ominously like a destroyer, coming to meet us raised our levels of paranoia of the Chinese authorities. Unsure of local regulations regarding fishing vessels and at that stage unaware that they were fishing illegally, we feared an extended questioning by the authorities or worse a claim by the fishermen for replacement of their nets that would be difficult and more importantly time consuming to refute.

As it soon became apparent the coast guard were there to escort us in, not arrest us, we relaxed and enjoyed the sail in and the view of Qingdao from the water, the city being shrouded in smog on the way out.

With plenty of time on the sail home, we were able to reflect on



how we managed to get caught in the net, despite taking what we thought were more than adequate precautions.

On reconstruction, it was apparent that a number of factors conspired to entrap us, firstly but unknown to us at the time, fishing in that area is banned until 1 September each year, it is understandable then why none of the fishing boats displayed navigation or trolling lights (if they did when not running illegal) making it difficult to judge their course and to be certain what if anything they were towing, the boats seem to be arranged with a net boat who carries the net and a towing boat to which one end of the net is transferred for trolling, we approached the net from the side of the towing boat, which appeared not to have buoys on the net for a couple of hundred meters making it almost impossible to see in time to avoid, we came upon the net before we were astern of the closest boat, making us think that, possibly endeavouring to avoid us, they were altering course to starboard and away from us, but the most puzzling issue was how we managed to get inside the net at all, the Benetau First 40 we were sailing has a substantial bulb projecting in front of the keel, making it simply impossible for us to have hit the net and sailed over it, the only explanation we can suggest is that at just the time we came to the net, it had gone slack allowing us to sail over it rather than bounce off as would have been the case normally.

Retrospectively, the incident raised some significant issues for sailing in foreign waters, first is the communication problems, the fishermen encountered spoke not one word of English, and we no Chinese, making all but the simplest communication impossible.

When sending of the flares it was apparent that practice on a dock in daylight during a survival course isn't sufficient preparation for use at night on a pitching boat, we had had a safety brief prior to departing Qingdao, including the location of the safety gear, night time procedures and the man overboard procedure, in hindsight this should have been extended to familiarisation with the operation of the flares.

Despite this incident all of the crew want to return next year, the event was well organised, the Benetau agent could not have been more helpful, the people of Qingdao and Dalian friendly, the weather and water warm and though we did not come home with a trophy, we certainly have some interesting tales.

*Mark Griffith*



# ASC SAILORS TAKE ON 49ER NATIONALS

Peter Kendall and Thomas Koerner have just competed at the 2010 49er Nationals being held at Wangi Wangi, Lake Macquarie.

This was the first time they have sailed together and with Pete's work and Thomas' HSC commitments they only had enough time to fit in one training session prior to racing. It is also Thomas' first time crewing on a 49er and while experienced on a 29er, the 49er has a much larger sail area, which was evident on the first day of racing. With winds consistently 25knots unfortunately they didn't manage to finish either of the 2 races held. However, they weren't alone, only 4 of the 14 entrants did finish!

Conditions for day 2 were less windy, although shifty. They sailed well and finished the day in 8th position overall.

With day 3 bringing similar shifty conditions the boys sailed well

claiming a WIN in Race 8. The win saw them going into the final day in 6th place overall. Winning a race was a huge boost for Pete and Thomas as they were competing against the likes of World 49er Champions Nathan Outteridge and his crew Iain Jensen, as well as other experienced world-class 49er sailors.

The final day arrived with the same shifty conditions, however they weren't going to settle for 6th place and aimed for a top 5 finish. At the end of Race 13 and completion of the Regatta, Pete and Thomas did finish in 5th place overall – a great achievement – CONGRATULATIONS!

Results: [www.yachting.org.au/site/yachting/results/wangirslasc/2010/events/49er2010/series.htm](http://www.yachting.org.au/site/yachting/results/wangirslasc/2010/events/49er2010/series.htm)

## FLYING 11 STATES ROUND 1

Last weekend 89 Flying 11's headed to Middle Harbour 16ft Skiff Club to contest the first round of the State Championships for 2010-2011 season.

With Saturday's nor'easterly consistently gusting through Sydney Heads at around 25knots, the fleet had a tough time navigating the course let alone the yacht and ferry traffic the harbour is renowned for.

With spectators gathering on the many vantage points at Grotto, Middle Head and Dobroyd the sailors below had little time to enjoy the scenery, all their attention was focused on keeping upright and just trying their best to finish the race.

With many of ASC's F11 crews sailing together for the first time this season it was great to see so many smiles at personal best results

across the weekend. With Saturday's conditions testing everyone it was good to see them move up the leader board following Sunday's races.

We have 3 boats currently sitting in the top 20 with Will Dargaville and Sean Watt in 9th, Michael Koerner and Joshua Ponton in 10th and Malcolm and Harry Parker in 16th. Nicola Forbes-Smith and Alicia Watt are in 3rd place in the All Girl crew.

Round 2 will be held at Avalon Sailing Club in February and with the hometown advantage I'm sure all our F11 sailors will be out to stake their claim in Pittwater.



# MJ NATIONALS



The 2010-2011 Manly Junior National Titles were hosted by Cronulla Sailing Club from December 27th to the 31st. We had two open boats & three novice boats competing. An invitation race and 10 championship races were completed in a 5 day series, with fantastic sailing weather that tested sailors in all wind strengths. Monday 27th December saw an 18 knot southerly.

The waterway is sheltered from the south and the sailors enjoyed flat water with a strong but shifting breeze. A new format windward leeward course was successfully tried for the invitation race, which was followed immediately by race one. There were some fun kite rides had by all.

Day 2 had softer easterly breezes that were shifting and challenging. This was a more frustrating day with gains & loses easily made as the wind came & went in patches. Our kids handled them very well no doubt due to all their sailing in Pittwater.

Day 3 offered sailors a 15 - 22 kt north east breeze. The course was set at the eastern end of Port Hacking which is open to the sea, so the strong breeze with large chop over small waves provided spectacular kite rides, with some of the leading boats achieving some stunning speeds!

Heat 4 was the race of the series with the lead changing six times. It was finally won by Jim and Tom by just 5 seconds. I was so impressed by the performance of our novices though who handled the challenging conditions with considerable skill. Margot & Max won heat 7 novice on handicap. Day 4 had light southerly winds.

The water was very flat but the breezes were shifting through 20 degrees and gradually fading. Racing was very tactical. The 3rd race of the day was started but abandoned shortly after as wind almost disappeared.

Day 5 had fresh north-east winds with the course set further west into Port Hacking which reduced the chop. It was an absolutely perfect day for sailing and 3 heats were completed back to back. The shorter course was very successful, keeping the racing close & the novices in touch with the main fleet. Well done to Juliet & Logan for winning heat 10 novice on handicap.

Our Avalon sailors performed brilliantly with Trick or Treat 2716 Juliet & Logan sailing consistently to come 4th in the novice fleet, Vincent Van Go 2737 Margo & Max came 7th & won the novice division on handicap and Good Thing 2725 Annika & Heidi came in 12th.

All our novice sailors improved enormously & learned much about sailing in swell & chop, conditions they're not use to in Pittwater. Harley & Tavish in Bad Fish 2721 sailed consistently to come in tenth in the open fleet & Jim & Tom in Bullet 2755 are to be congratulated for winning the National title. Their team work was amazing & the result well deserved.

Many thanks to Cronulla for running such a professional and successful event. The kids had fun on & off the water & we enjoyed exploring another part of Sydney.

Sally Colley

# NEW YEAR CRUISE 2011 BROUGHTON ISLAND AND LAURIETON

Just back from 2 months in the frozen wastes of the UK, the enthusiasm to head north sailing within 10 days and immediately after Christmas did not appeal to at least one of our crew. But we could not believe our luck: a good strong southerly forecast for late Boxing Day and continuing for several days. What better opportunity to head north, so on the 27th we rafted up with our good friends Paul and Bev Sinclair on Hagar II at the Basin and at 06:00 the next morning headed off for Newcastle. We had 20 knot SSE winds all day and sailed on one reach all the way, in pleasantly cool and cloudy conditions, making great time and all tied up alongside at Newcastle marina by 15:00. We had to dodge a few massive ships manoeuvring at the entrance to the harbour but no worries. A leisurely drink or 2 in the club's pleasant bar overlooking the marina, followed by dinner with Paul and Bev in the famous Albion pub and a refreshing shower and we were ready for the next leg.



We set off for Broughton Island at 10:00 the next morning, still with the wind SSE and a bigish swell of 2/3m. Once again sailing on a reach along the coast. At lunchtime the wind died and with the swells producing a confused sea off Morna Point, we did reluctantly resort to some motor sailing, turning the engine off again as the wind increased just as we caught up with Paul and Bev, who had left before us. They were wondering how we managed to catch up with them so fast, but we did confess later! The wind amazingly turned NE just as we crossed Providence Bay and neared Broughton, so we sailed straight into an empty Coal Shaft Bay and picked the best anchorage spots for protection from the swell and nor'easterlies. The rest of the regular Broughton fleet had been anchored the other side for protection from the southerlies and motored round only to find Kate Kelly and HagarII sitting pretty in the best spots. There was some friendly banter as we greeted our friends from previous New Year's Eves on the islands. This was our 7th visit to Broughton and we have formed some firm friendships with other regular visitors. Each year we have a bonfire on the beach to see in the New Year. We also get together for beach games – boules, badminton, beer drinking etc and also head off on bush walks and snorkelling expeditions together. We had a fabulous snorkel with the grey nurse sharks in the clefts on Looking Glass Island. The water was crystal clear in the sunlight and it was wonderful to see the sharks gently drifting in the swells below us. One of the yachts served as "mother ship" for the dive and we had a

lovely sail back under headsail followed by coffee and Christmas cake on board. We always enjoy relaxing on Broughton, although one has to be aware that it is an ocean anchorage, so gear has to be stowed securely at night just in case and sometimes the swell can make for a rather rolly night despite the protection of the reef.

After several days at Broughton we decided to take advantage of the re-established southerly winds and make for Camden Haven up the coast. We had long wanted to get there and conditions were looking promising, windwise and for the timing of the crossing of the bar. We left Broughton at 17:00 for a night passage to make the 08:30 high tide to cross the bar. We had no sooner set off when the southerly died and we were left motoring on a glass-like sea. Jim was muttering about the lousy forecast, but lived to regret his words about having to motor all night. We were delighted to see a whale repeatedly breaching in a most dramatic way very close to Hagar. There were also hundreds of dolphins dashing around the two yachts, most entertainingly. As darkness fell, we were just getting some supper organised as we neared Seal Rocks when, out of nowhere, a totally unforecast storm front from the west roared in. We had full sails up and were knocked flat. We hove to, which was quite scary in the wild seas and oncoming dark as Jim wrestled the main down onto the deck. As we did this we crossed Paul's path and he had a struggle to helm Hagar round us in the maelstrom, fortunately succeeding! It was wild out there and we were charging along at just over 10 knots under jib alone – not a speed where we were particularly comfortable! We didn't attempt to reset the main until daylight arrived. The Coffs Harbour race fleet was all around us that night and we could see nav lights everywhere. I was helming when I saw what I thought was a yacht carrying conflicting high and low nav lights. As I was trying to work out what was going on, I heard the "crack" of a spinnaker filling and had to change course as what I think might have been Wild Oats gybed round another yacht and screamed past only about a boat's length behind us. The rest of the fleet passed us about 4 hours later off Crowdy Head, so that boat was really moving! But why so close to a humble cruising yacht I wonder? The southerly picked up again in the morning and we made good progress to Camden Haven. The bar crossing was non-eventful, with little swell and the tide behind us. The Coastal Cruising Club had planned a big event with 20 odd boats to go to Laurieton in October, but the whole event failed because of big easterly swells which rendered the bar crossing impossible. We were lucky with our visit. You just have to be able to be flexible with such locations and also prepared to get stuck sometimes waiting for the right conditions to leave. Camden is an "easy" bar, but don't rely on that advice. Go if it's good or otherwise stay out at sea/on your anchor.



Sue Flaye

For your Diary...

Saturday 5th March

Not to be missed

## **Challenger Head Race Weekend**

Sunday 3rd April

## **Club Picnic**

Saturday 30th April

## **Commodore's Ball**

The theme: "All that Glitters"

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Printed by Pymble Office Supplies phone 9988 3566