

Commodore's comment

Unlike most other sailing clubs, DBYC doesn't have any paid staff — everything is done by volunteers in their spare time. I think we are all the better for that.

When race buoys need setting, it is members that get their hands wet. When all the admin needed for organising a race needs doing, it is a regular club member who negotiates with Mardep, pumps up the buoys, and sacrifices his fun time on the water to blow the horn and hold the stop watch.



But when a member's boat is in trouble there are no boat boys to call for rescue. Again, our members step up and apply their knowledge, skills and experience to help each other out. In one case it was Nik von der Leuhe and Andy Pickles who saved the day, so a big thank you to them for demonstrating the spirit of camaraderie that a self-help club generates.

My point is, there is a whole other dimension to being involved in a members club that can be very rewarding and satisfying. Volunteer, and help the club run smoothly, you will enjoy it!

RICHARD CARREY

Commodore, Discovery Bay Yacht Club

Dead, flat calm burned across the bay as first the Peng Chau *kaito* and then the Mui Wo Interislander meandered their respective routes between Discovery Bay and Mui Wo on the evening of Friday, the 10th of March 2017.

Burning a hole in my brain.

Flashbacks of deadly drifters in 2015 and 2014 when we could hardly get a race started.

Race officer's nightmares followed



DISCOVERY BAY YACHT CLUB

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Then the birds chorus and it's time to crash gears on the trusty Merida and try not to miss the 7:45 Mui Wo to DB.

Around the corner from Silvermine Bay, a sight to behold! White caps coming in thick and fast from the southeast. Saved by an early monsoon pressure gradient coming in from the east!

Windguru was spot on with a forecast of 14-16 knots 0500-1100 ... but had it dying away to 7-8 knots after that. Thank goodness even they can get it wrong.

Yet another briefing, albeit a bit briefer, on the folly of attempting barging starts and sailing out to the lay line all fell on deaf ears as the adrenaline kicked in and the bloodthirsty competitiveness and dogged determination to get to the mark first obliterated any sense of calculated tactics or cultured strategy.

That journalistic licence may be somewhat harsh and over the top but what followed was one of the most exciting and certainly one of the best fought Drag Races we have had over the past eight years, thanks to the sporting vigour and determination of the participants.

Two attempts at laying marks had previously tested out the RO and his henchmen — Brendan Roscoe on *Little Emperor* and Johnny Phillips & Steve Bruce in *FishnShip*. They had their work cut out, trying to reposition the committee boat and start line after a 25-degree shift from southeast to east just minutes before the first start at 1130.

With some embarrassing timing on AP dropping, the crazy schedule of five races somehow got underway and the tempo went up from there.

Of course the first race was rusty. First boat across was at least 20 seconds late, with successive yachts crossing at 20+ second intervals. An apparently leisurely start to proceedings belayed what would come next.



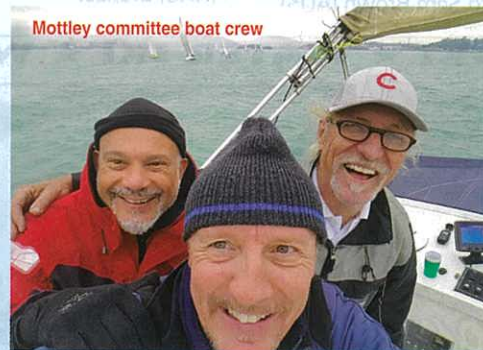
Better start to Race 2

With the late withdrawal of *Allegro* and *Speedy Gonzales* we were sadly down to eight boats on the water but the remainers made up for the loss with intensity. Five 40-footers of similar size and potential capability pitched a tight bunch of competitive boats at the start line followed by three smaller, but similarly matched, sports boats in *Shockwave*, *Nervous Breakdown* and *Yellow Bolero*.

The second race exploded into action on the start line with *Aegean* setting the scene coming in to the line 20 seconds early and having to run down. This brought in three others with *Xakanaxa*, *Illusion* and *Sapphire*, hot on her heels within two or three seconds of each other, but with the advantage of the big gap she had left

at the committee boat end. *Sapphire* took full advantage of her superior pointing ability, pushing up and over *Legs eleven* and *Xakanaxa* to get windward position out to the port lay line along Peng Chau.

The third race was even better with four large boats all neck-and-neck right on



Mottley committee boat crew

the gun at the start, albeit it with a bit of niggles between *Xakanaxa* and *Illusion*, but it all looked pretty straight and fair from up on the committee boat.

The smaller boats were still struggling to get to the line on time due mainly to their apprehension of getting caught in the way of the bigger boats but this is something they will have to overcome for the future. They actually have the advantage of manoeuvrability and need to put themselves on the start line early and hold their position using the rights of starboard tack and luffing capability.

With wind speeds increasing from an initial 12 to a steady 17 knots for the fourth and fifth races, many boats had to reef. A brief respite of five minutes extra was generously given by the race officer to achieve this.

Fourth and fifth races were equally hard-fought affairs with fortunes mixed and the lead changing several times as *Sapphire* made the mistake of getting too far away from the committee boat in the pre-start, and *Aegean* and *Legs eleven* perhaps guilty of sailing too far to the lay line. Many boats sailed too wide looking for 'hot' angles on the downhill run back where a deeper strategy would most certainly have paid off.

Both *Xakanaxa* and *Nervous Breakdown* benefitted from taking earlier tacks and deeper gybes downhill.

Both *Yellow Bolero* and *Shockwave* deserve medals for distance sailed in arduous conditions especially the latter with just Matthias and daughter handling a very lively sports boat in challenging conditions. They sailed hard and hung in to the end, certainly having sailed further and longer than most of the big boat crews.

So, hats off to Matthias and daughter for bravery

and courage under fire when they had previously decided not to race. Well done!



Yellow Bolero also showed great determination and consistency in completing a full round of races, sailing even further than *Shockwave* in doing so! They must have been enjoying it out there!

With such hard-fought and close finishes on the water, it was interesting to see how the HKPN results came out. Most would agree that the results actually



reinforced what happened on the water given the way boats were sailed. Certainly *Legs eleven* was a bit rusty and will need more practice with her new crew.

Aegean sailed very well as usual but was up against the superior speed and much improved crew work on *Sapphire*. However, it was *Xakanaxa*'s turn to show her true capability with consistent starts and thoughtful tactics, helped no doubt by ringers Garry Smith and Steve, who have a bit of experience!



So very well done to all. Another great day out Drag Racing! Perhaps we should do it again sometime soon!

— by Ken Wiltshire, Race Officer

If you keep your boat on a floating mooring, there is always a worry at the back of your mind about how safe it is.

For one of our members recently, the nightmare came true and he woke to see his boat on the rocks.

What to do???

He tried kedging off — taking the anchor as far away as possible in a dinghy, dropping it, then trying to pull the boat forward on the windlass. It didn't really work, since it is hard to get the anchor to set like that.

Fortunately, two nearby sailors came to help. They took a halyard, as long as it would go, and then pulled the yacht sideways with their dinghy. The boat heeled over to an alarming angle, then swivelled around and came free of the rocks.



Success!

Fortunately there was no serious damage to the hull, and no leaks could be found. The culprit turned

out to be a rusted shackle that held the mooring buoy to the chain — something that can't easily be seen with a casual look-over.

The lesson for all of us is to get your underwater mooring tackle checked frequently. Discovery Bay Marina Services offer annual checks, with a professional diver inspecting the full length of your chain and block and, where necessary, making repairs.

Book now (kenw@dbmarinaservices.com), so you can sleep soundly at night!