

Sail Port Stephens Regatta 2022

Aye-Sea Red & Cathy & Garry on Coconut Duck left Lemon Tree Passage on dusk Fri 8th April just as Only Time radioed that the sea up the main channel was rough and windy, and that Only Time, Enchantress and Crosswind were on a mooring riding out the weather. So, Coconut Duck led the way, motoring in the dark to Fame Cove, which was perfectly sheltered!

Next morning in choppy & windy conditions all boats rendezvoused inside Nelson Bay Marina and caught up with shore based Blew by U Doug and Robyn, who were Officers of the Day from shore with Sooty the NHTYA Weekend Mascot.



The race briefing said the main fleet was heading out through the heads, so NHTYA headed west up the harbour, starting our race off the Anchorage Marina, around the Salamander Bay mark, up to and around Boandabah Island, repeat and back to Nelson Bay's d'Albora Marina.



Unfortunately for Aye-Sea Red, when I tried to raise the mainsail, I realised last night's jury-rigged masthead light had wrapped itself around the mast, the spreaders and itself - totally blocking the sail going up! So Tania & I had to retire,

only problem was we ended up in the middle of the Tasar OTB races! Kevin & his brother Glen on Only Time also retired and through the Tasars as well!

Graeme and Charmain on Crosswind felt guilty sending Peter & Jacquie on Enchantress around the wrong marker to dodge the Tasars, so they pretended to forget to go about Boandabah Island, only problem was Enchantress followed them thinking there had been a course change! Coconut Duck With Garry's cousin Rodney on board, took advantage of the chaos to keep on track. Did everyone find that outcrop with their centreboards?



Back in the marina I was hauling the boat hook up a halyard to untangle the mast head light as our fleet returned.

Just as Crosswind was lifting their centreboard, there was a big crash, their centre board connection had broken and smacked into the sandy shore!

A masthead halyard was passed to Only Time to tilt the boat, while Garry & Ken tried to dig out the CB. A RIB with a big 80hp was only able to swing

Crosswind around until the driver opened the throttle and dragged her into deeper water, to the cheering and clapping from the onlookers around the marina!



We all enjoyed the buzz at prize giving mixing with all the "Big Boat" crews. The Rear Admirals looked good in NHTYA polos collecting their prizes in front of the whole fleet. Then it was our traditional NHTYA Happy Hour at the picnic table with pizza for dinner, lots of laughs, jokes, stories and racing antidote to keep us all highly amused.

The next morning Doug drove Graeme to pick up his truck & trailer & Crosswind was hoisted out. Just as we were about to set off, I got a call from the race committee that due to



almost no wind the main fleet was going to race of the beach, in what had been going to be our course.



A quick discussion by radio ended up in a race back to Lemon Tree passage – when I say race, it got down to 1kt of wind! Tried everything, poled out foresail, mainsail, flapped shirt! Not saying drifted aimlessly, but...

Kevin & Gaylene on Only Time managed to draw away from Aye-Sea Red, with a big tussle between Coconut Duck & Enchantress. A big thanks to Robyn & Doug for coming up & being land based OOD!

