

APC Logistics
2015 Brisbane to Gladstone
Special Edition

MYCQ
Multinews

MULTIHULL YACHT CLUB QUEENSLAND: PO BOX 178, WYNNUM. Q. 4178

Volume 50

Number 4

*OMR, Performance Handicap and Line Honours winner of the
APC Logistics 2015 Brisbane to Gladstone - Photo Julie Geldard*

Commodore's Comment

By Bruce Wieland



Congratulations to the crew of *Morticia* who won the rare treble of Line Honours, first OMR and first PCF. They become the 5th yacht in the history of the race to do this. Previous yachts to win the treble include *Shotover* (H Raven—1990), *XL2* (P Nudd—1993), *Flat Chat* (J Morris—2002) and *Bulletproof* (S Gralow—2009). Congratulations also to the place getters in all categories.

MYCQ is grateful for the support from all competitors who made the commitment of time and money to race this year, particularly by those yachts not based locally. The Brisbane to Gladstone Multihull Race remains the most prestigious multihull race in Australia, and as Commodore, I am very aware of its historical place in the yachting world. The MYCQ Race Committee is committed to keeping this race at the forefront of multihull racing. Exciting events such as the last America's Cup, and the Extreme Sailing Circuit have increased awareness of multihulls generally, and with such innovations as the trackers, and live video streaming, the Brisbane to Gladstone race has now become a spectator sport.

The following reports from the yachts makes interesting reading, and the race analysis provided by the trackers no doubt will be absorbed by the navigators for future Brisbane to Gladstone Races. There will be videos and fun reports at the next general meeting to be held at the clubhouse on Thursday 7th May. All are welcome!

The Brisbane to Gladstone ran smoothly this year due to the dedication and hard work of the Race Committee, the Gladstone Race Office staff, the Social Committee who organised the Briefing and Presentation functions, and the many other volunteers who contributed.

Thank you to our Sponsor/Partners for your continued support. Please give your support to our sponsors where possible.

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From the Editor

By Chris Dewar

This is a Brisbane to Gladstone special edition of the MYCQ Multinews which will be made available to members, Brisbane to Gladstone participants and the general public. It contains race reports from nine of the entrants and aerial photos by Julie Geldard. To see more photos visit www.vidpicpro.com. Thankyou to everyone that contributed a race report, this has made it possible to produce this special edition.

Note that this edition does not contain all the notice of races that the regular monthly newsletter includes, but they will be in the May edition. It does include, as a bonus to all advertisers, an extra free month of advertising.

This year I was able to be much more than a spectator and thanks to Mike Hodges and the crew on board *Renaissance* I was able to participate and experience the race first hand.

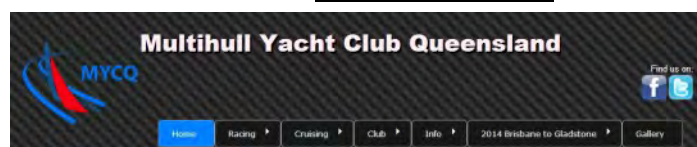
The live video streaming from *Renaissance* and *Fantasia* seemed popular with thousands of people watching them. Hopefully next year we can improve this experience for spectators of the race.

Thankyou to all the organisers of this year's race. They did a fantastic job as usual and it gets better every year.

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Website: www.mycq.org.au



APC Logistics

2015 Brisbane to Gladstone Results

	LINE HONOURS		OMR			PRS			
	ET	Place	Rating	CT	Place	Rating	CT	Place	PRnew
Morticia	31:05:12	1	0.9850	30:37:13	1	1.0000	31:05:12	1	1.0512
Chillpill	35:44:45	2	0.8820	31:31:40	2	0.9700	34:40:24	3	0.9859
Fantasia	39:07:25	3	0.8350	32:40:06	4	0.9750	38:08:44	8	0.9599
J'Ouvert	39:54:28	4	0.8050	32:07:33	3	0.9100	36:18:58	6	0.9105
Attitude	41:31:37	5	0.8270	34:20:34	6	0.8500	35:17:52	4	0.8587
Renaissance	43:31:39	6	0.7880	34:17:59	5	0.8700	37:52:08	7	0.8586
No Problem	46:46:27	7	0.7630	35:41:19	7	0.7400	34:36:46	2	0.7526
Rushour	47:40:00	8	0.8160	38:53:46	9	0.8600	40:59:36	9	0.8288
Hasta La Vista	50:00:00	9	0.8210	41:03:00	10	0.9200	46:00:00	10	0.8867
Catalina	53:00:00	10	0.7310	38:44:35	8	0.6800	36:02:24	5	0.6821
Boss Racing	DNF		1.0050			1.0000			1.0000
Captain Silver	DNF					0.6500			0.6500
Cut Snake	DNF		0.8430			0.9600			0.9600
Earthling	DNF		0.9780			0.9800			0.9800
The Boat Works	DNF		0.9400			0.9900			0.9900
Top Gun	DNF		0.9640			1.0000			1.0000



**2015 APC Logistics Brisbane to Gladstone Multihull
Yacht Race
The Winners**



OMR Winner (Major Prize)

2nd OMR

3rd OMR

Morticia

Chillpill

J'Ouvert

Performance Handicap Winner

2nd PRS

3rd PRS

Morticia

No Problem

Chillpill

Line Honours

Winner of the Start

Morticia

Hast La Vista

Philatelic Trophy

Best Friday Night Meal

Best Crew Member

No Problem

J'Ouvert

Geoff Cruse

MYCQ THANKS

Cr Gail Sellers (Mayor of Gladstone)
Port Curtis Yacht Club
Queensland Cruising Yacht Club
Gladstone Marina
Gladstone VMR
Mooloolaba Coast Guard
Gladstone Philatelic Society





OMR Winner - Morticia



2nd OMR - Chillpill



3rd OMR - J'Ouvert



Performance Handicap Winner - Morticia



2nd PRS - No Problem



3rd PRS - Chillpill



Mail for the Philatelic Society delivered by Catalina



Best Friday Night Meal - J'Ouvert



Winner of the Start - Hasta La Vista



No Problem - Philatelic Trophy



Geoff Cruse - Best Crew Member



Boat Name: **Morticia**

Design/Club: Seacart 30 (RMYC)
Owner/Skipper: Shaun Carroll
Length/Beam: 9.2m / 6.9m
Cat/Tri: Tri
Elapsed Time: 31hrs 5mins 12 secs
Place/OMR/PRS: 1st/1st/1st
Comments: *Morticia* took the lead shortly after the start and led the entire race. The said that staying close to Pancake Creek gave them an advantage over following yachts.



Boat Name: **Chillpill**

Design/Club: Schionning G-Force 1550 (MYCQ)
Owner/Skipper: Wayne Bloomer
Length/Beam: 15.8m / 7.4m
Cat/Tri: Cat
Elapsed Time: 35 hrs 44 mins 45 secs
Place/OMR/PRS: 2nd/2nd/3rd
Comments: *Chillpill* kept in touch with *Morticia* until the tide turned in Gladstone harbour. The lighter winds on Saturday also gave the advantage to *Morticia*.



Boat Name: **Fantasia**

Design/Club: Seven Oceans 50 (MYCQ)
Owner/Skipper: Andrew Stransky
Length/Beam: 15.6m / 8.5m
Cat/Tri: Cat
Elapsed Time: 39 hrs 7 mins 25 secs
Place/OMR/PRS: 3rd/4th/8th
Comments: *Fantasia* were in the leading pack but the lighter winds on Saturday gave the advantage to the lighter yachts such as *Morticia* and *Chillpill*, however they manage to overhaul *Boss Racing* and were happy to cross the line 3rd.



Boat Name: **J'Ouvert**

Design/Club: Pescott Whitehaven
Owner/Skipper: Stephen Barton
Length/Beam: 11.9m / 6.5m
Cat/Tri: Cat
Elapsed Time: 39 hrs 54 min 28 secs
Place/OMR/PRS: 4th/3rd/6th
Comments: *J'Ouvert* performed exceptionally well and outperformed some of the larger yachts.



Boat Name: Attitude

Design/Club: Schionning G-Force 1600 (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Allan Larkin

Length/Beam: 16m / 7.8m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Elapsed Time: 41 hrs 31 mins 37 secs

Place/OMR/PRS: 5th/6th/4th

Comments: Good performance from *Attitude* but unfortunately hit an out-going tide in Gladstone Harbour.



Boat Name: Renaissance

Design/Club: Schionning Waterline 1480 (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Mike Hodges

Length/Beam: 15.3m / 8m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Elapsed Time: 43 hrs 31 mins 39 secs

Place/OMR/PRS: 6th/5th/7th

Comments: *Renaissance* were well positioned after Friday night but the light winds on Saturday did not suit this yacht.



Boat Name: No Problem

Design/Club: Schionning Waterline (PCSC)

Owner/Skipper: Ray Hobbs

Length/Beam: 11.6m / 6.5m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Elapsed Time: 46 hrs 46 mins 27 secs

Place/OMR/PRS: 7th/7th/2nd

Comments: Consistent performer and finished with a 2nd on Performance handicap.



Boat Name: Rushour

Design/Club: Modified Rogers (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Drew Carruthers

Length/Beam: 12m / 5.5m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Elapsed Time: 47 hrs 40 mins

Place/OMR/PRS: 8th/9th/9th

Comments: After rounding Lady Elliot in a good position and level with *J'Ouvert*, *Rushour* struggled in the light winds and dropped several places.



Boat Name: Hasta La Vista

Design/Club: Crowther Hemlock (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Jim Fern/Lyle Stanaway

Length/Beam: 10.97m / 9.15m

Cat/Tri: Tri

Elapsed Time: 50 hrs

Place/OMR/PRS: 9th/10th/10th

Comments: After breaking their prodder at the bottom of Fraser Island, they did well to maintain their position until the downwind leg across to Gladstone when they could not compete without a spinnaker.

**Boat Name: Catalina**

Design/Club: Rogers North Reef (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Dale Low

Length/Beam: 11.3m / 6.7m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Elapsed Time: 53 hrs

Place/OMR/PRS: 10th/8th/5th

Comments: This was the 21st race for this veteran of the event. Dale also delivered the mail for the Philatelic Society which was handed over at the presentation.

**Boat Name: Boss Racing**

Design/Club: Saxby Special (QCYC)

Owner/Skipper: Gary Saxby

Length/Beam: 11.5m / 7.2m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not finish

Comments: The light winds, competing tide and a tight schedule for her crew saw this yacht retire in Gladstone Harbour.

**Boat Name: The Boat Works**

Design/Club: Modified Grainger Raider

Owner/Skipper: Julian Griffiths & Tony Longhurst

Length/Beam: 9.5m / 6m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not finish

Comments: *The Boat Works* were up there with the leaders until they retired off Mooloolaba after stripping the port front beam bolt.



Boat Name: Captain Silver

Design/Club: Simpson Cloud 12 (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Kim Fulton

Length/Beam: 12m / 6.2m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not finish

Comments: *Captain Silver* was going well until she wrapped her spinnaker around the forebeam in the shipping channel and with a ship heading their way had to retire and get out of its way.



Boat Name: Cut Snake

Design/Club: Carwardine Special (MYCQ)

Owner/Skipper: Rob Dean

Length/Beam: 12m / 6.0m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not finish

Comments: *Cut Snake* and *Fantasia* were battling for 4th place early on Friday night when the water pressure liberated *Cut Snake's* rudders from her transom.



Boat Name: Earthling

Design/Club: Young 57

Owner/Skipper: Glen Rutherford

Length/Beam: 17m / 9.1m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not finish

Comments: *Earthling* was in 5th place at 1400 Saturday, with *Attitude* about to overtake her, when they turned on her motors and headed for Gladstone. Unsure why she retired, but it may have just run out of time.



Boat Name: Top Gun

Design/Club: Crowther

Owner/Skipper: Darren Drew

Length/Beam: 15.3m / 9.1m

Cat/Tri: Cat

Place: Did not Finish

Comments: *Top Gun* and *Chillpill* were battling for second place just north of Caloundra when *Top Gun's* main blew out due to a manufacturing issue. Glue on a seam had failed.



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Photos from the Race Office



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Fantasia Report

By Andrew Stransky

Firstly, what a excellent fleet for this year's B2G, and the quality of the the boats was the best we have even competed against. This of course says a lot for the slow but sure development of multihulls.

Fantasia got off to a fair start at the committee boat end, in a great spot to see an overly keen *Cut Snake* over early. Having the slick *Morticia* ducking under our lee should have seen us accelerating a bit earlier, but we did have front row seats to see *Boatworks* power up and set off after *Morticia* looking hot.

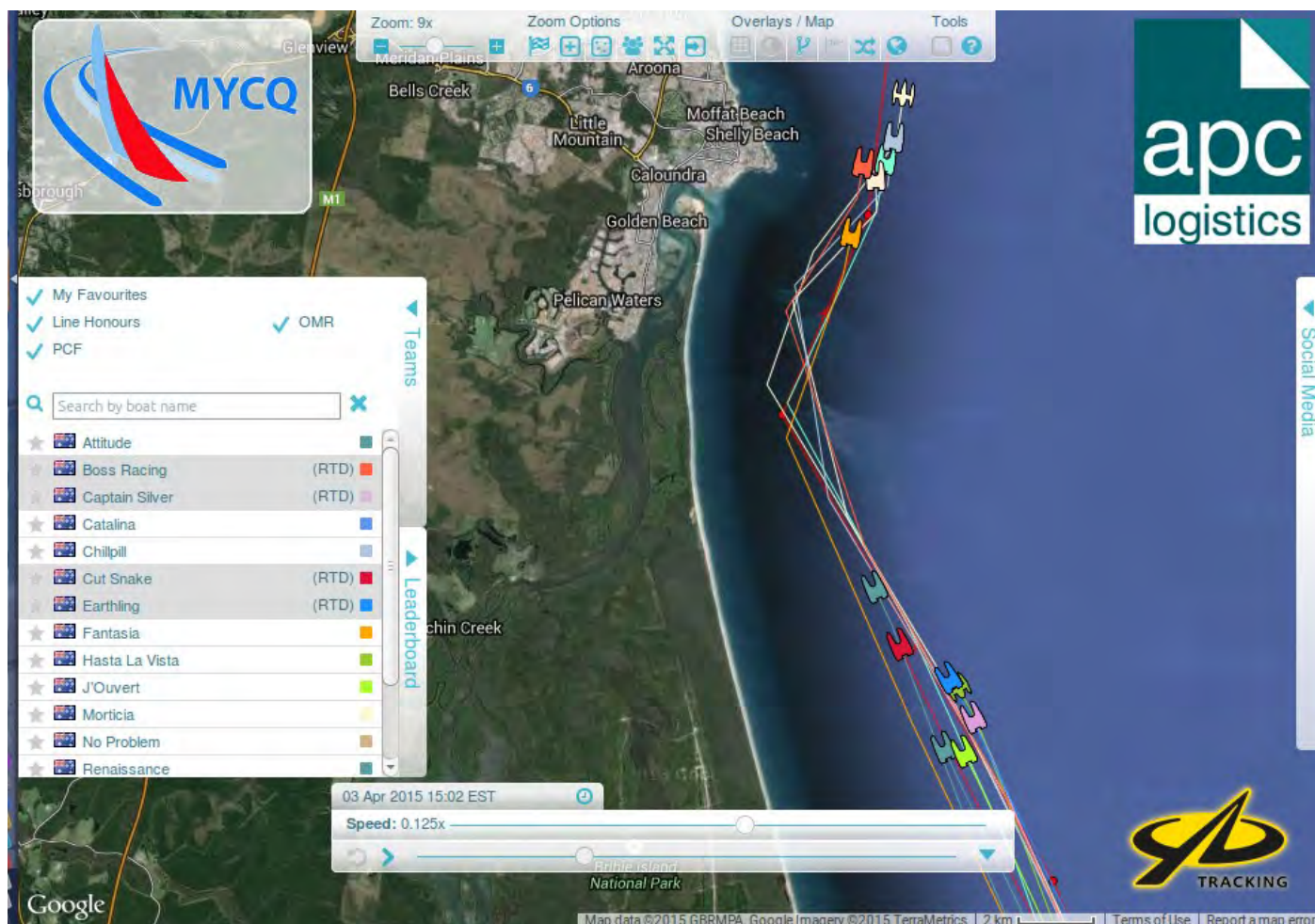
Chillpill also got the better start and being down to leeward they controlled us all along the Redcliffe Peninsula, as any footing off put us in there lee. On the beat towards Tangalooma, I was guilty of pinching to much and we fell back a bit on the front pack, while looking back and seeing *Attitude* doing well. Ultimately we rounded not far

behind *Boss Racing*, and then it was time for our new UK Halsey screecher to be rolled out.

Unfortunately the Saxbies had done too good a job and the power of the thing fairly scared me. It being new and me being



Fantasia positioned between Morticia and The Boat Works just before the start - Photo: Chris Dewar



At Caloundra Morticia led followed by Chillpill, Top Gun, Boss Racing, The Boat Works and then Fantasia.



Fantasia with their new screecher
Photo: Julie Geldard

unsure of the cloth luff tension and prodder etc, I was loath to have it carry away on its first use in anger. Already sitting on 20 knots but still 15 degrees down on the next mark, we rolled it up and went back to the jib for awhile, much to Geoff Cruses dismay.

Fortunately we could carry this magnificent sail right down the channel from the next mark which pulled *Fantasia* right back onto the heels of the leading pack. As we turned up onto the wind making for the Fairway buoy we were right with *Top Gun*, who had had problems with their screecher. While we were able to lay the buoy, the other front runners had been knocked way down so

suddenly we where right up with the front pack.

Now the sea was confused off Caloundra headland and I continued my tendency to nurse *Fantasia*, driven by a combination of frayed nerves from all the pre-race organisation and the fact the machine under us is also my house and livelihood. Soon a cry came from the crew that *The Boat Works* had problems, main was down things looking sad. Next, one of the crew noticed a strange line across *Top Gun's* main and then it blew. Two of the great stars of the fleet lost within minutes, a very sad blow.

Now began the close reach up the coast. Unfortunately our screecher was too big to be carried into this breeze, although Crusey thought otherwise. Later, seeing *Cut Snake* mowing us down we unrolled it and ripped below the course to Double Island point. Here the breeze seemed to freshen and we felt powered up under plain sail alone, although Crusey still thought we could go the screecher.

Personally I was finding it all a bit alarming, blast reaching along. Phil Thompson was valiant in hotting up dinner, but I was in no mood for food as *Fantasia* stormed along, even throwing the odd wave back at the helmsman, a thing it never does (excepting last years Fairway Challenge). I was just hanging on and wishing for Indian Head and or even better Breaksea Spit where the breeze was predicted to ease. Meanwhile the crew were having a wonderful time and the esteemed Peter Baker was calmly sitting at the table editing his video, much to my amazement.

Taking a peek at the tracker I was instantly impressed with how well all the boats were doing, with a tight pack hot on our heels. *Attitude*, *Rushour*, *Hasta La Vista*, *Renassiance*, *Jouvert* all showing 15 knots and more. Approaching Indian Head, we had

Meteorological Information

<http://www.marine.csiro.au>

for Sea Surface temperatures, eddies and ocean surface winds

<http://www.bom.gov.au>

Earthling gaining on us steadily, beginning to show her offshore speed. As we bore away and rolled out the Saxby screecher, it showed just how good a sail it is as we tore away from *Earthling* and remarkably soon we could not even make out her navigation lights.

Having survived the drag race, now came the real race, the bit I was glad to begin, but also the bit I know is not *Fantasia's* strong point of sail, downwind in lighter breezes. Initially the breeze was good and we made handsome speed, but with dawn the wind eased and we had to sail higher to keep up speed and fill our only kite the heavy 1.5 ounce. Going north of Musgrave seemed a bit alarming, but we could not see the profit in taking the other gybe with its unsavoury VMG.

A lighter kite or code zero would have been awesome, but we race with what we can afford, and manage to get to the start of a fair number of races doing the best with what we have. Admittedly this year we have the fancy shirts and screecher, but I digress, because while we lamented our sail wardrobe, this was not where the race was lost.

I felt the breeze would shift to the SE as this is what I had seen the BOM suggest on last Internet connection. So although the reef

and islands were enchanting, we were desperate to see the last of them and get back towards the rhumb-line without too much loss. Finally we had to gybe and things did not look so good. It seemed the only other multi with an AIS was *Renaissance*, who to our amazement were holding a steady course down the rhumb-line. Although we were 22 miles ahead, the AIS suggested we would only cross them by 4 miles. Things felt uncomfortable!

Fortunately a gentle rain cloud provided a bit more breeze and we laid a nice course back towards the rhumb-line feeling golden. Here perhaps lies our mistake, as we saw ahead *Chillpill*, close enough to see her sponsors name on the main, but a past track was mistaken for the rhumb-line and we decided to go back on the other gybe, rather than continue in towards the coast, which ultimately proved the better option.

Before long we began to realise our error, finding ourselves too far north again, with the breeze not going SE, but persisting from North of East. Now we had to endure the pain of working downwind in light air, while all who were below us could power up on a head reach. Meanwhile we knew the tide was turning against us. Suddenly a much awaited Internet connection came on and we brought up the tracker to see what was



really going on. Our first glance was towards *Earthling* who had been shadowing us further south on the horizon. To our horror she was making 10.5 knots bang down the rhumb-line, and then we spied *Cut Snake* also past us seeming to be enjoying a lovely land breeze.

Now our hopes really dropped away as we laboured in our 4/5 knots, trying to bear down to the S2, but still so far north. Eventually we had to swallow our medicine and take the nasty gybe, devoid of VMG. While struggling on, eating our dinner in a subdued manner and addressing our hopes with tales of the Gods choosing others, an SMS from Carolyn shocked us into alert once more.

"*Earthling* and *Cut Snake* have retired," came the message and suddenly the penny dropped. We still had a chance for an OMR win. Painfully we paid our dues and excitedly welcomed coming back on *Boss Racing* in the wind up Gladstone harbour. Now our mighty screecher put us back in the money. Even though the tide had begun to flow against us, and only a gentle 4/5 knot breeze blew, *Fantasia*, after a few tacks settled to power along the bank edge at 6/8 knots. Mara did the math and saw that we needed to average 4 knots for the last 12 miles.

Creaming up to the first shipping wharf with only 4 miles to go, our confused hopes had barely begun to realise they had a reason, when the breeze dropped away in a daunting fashion. I turned to Geoff Cruse, who had so confidently given our arrival time as 12.30, nicely in time to take the honours. Sadly he did not give me hope that



the breeze would penetrate these city limits. Now it was time for us to taste the tides sting, like *Morticia* had done the previous year, allowing us to pip them for a fortunate 2nd placing.

Strangely we quite enjoyed fighting the tide with so little wind. Soon we spotted *Boss Racing*, fighting a losing battle. Later Carolyn heard, and who would have guessed, that aboard the spartan *Boss*, they were merrily sipping champagne! We were quite excited at the challenge of tackling *Boss Racing* over the final miles in the race for 3rd, and were disappointed to observe them fire up the motor and call it quits so close to the line. It could have been the champagne but I suspect more likely it was Gary seeing us flying to windward in the still air with his masterpiece of a screecher, looking lethal. For all her comfortable wheelhouse, built in an unfashionable but practical style, and for her solid build and live aboard weight, she is remarkably quick

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upwind in light airs.

Even before *Boss* retired we had overtaken them by sailing over in the other channel, which was a dead end, but at least had a little wind, while the main channel looked very calm and the tide was fairly racing there. Even though we were making up to 5/6 knots our track could not stem the tide. There was talk of anchoring, but our battered hopes proved resilient and we finally manoeuvred ourselves over the bank shallows, hampered by a ship and tugs in the main channel and managed to lay a course towards the finish.

Now the breeze filled in a bit and the tide began to ease, not the sort of equation one desires to finish on, but to claim 3rd over the line in such a prestigious fleet felt pretty satisfying. To be one of the lower rating boats on OMR with one of the highest performance handicaps certainly shows *Fantasia* is a design with a lot of exceptional elements. Ultimately the race was something of a lottery, most would perhaps agree, yet it was the drag race to Breaksea that looked a fascinating race on its own.

The exceptional performance of all the boats that held together meant that everyone would have been close on an OMR result for that leg. Certainly Wayne Bloomer on *Chillpill* showed impressive daring, driving the G-force hard and even giving *Morticia* a hurry on.

Happily this year we finally got to enjoy a festive Sunday morning in Gladstone, our head space vacant from lack of sleep, our drive burnt out and everyone satisfied to be simply wharfed up, enjoying the odd drink and friendly banter. It is a true pleasure to be a member of the MYCQ and to be part of the excellent competitive spirit which is currently driving the multihull scene along so nicely. I hope that many boats will be able to continue this excellent season and enjoy the regatta racing up north in the warm tropics. Hopefully everyone enjoyed the live streaming attempts ventured by our cameraman Peter Baker. Technically there is still lots to perfect, but with the growing stature of the race, it would be cool to see it televised like our big brother the Sydney to Hobart in the not too distant future.



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J'Ouvert's Brisbane to Gladstone 2015

By Stephen Barton On behalf of J'Ouvert's crew: Sarah Joy Price, Libby Fox, Mark Pescott, Ross Blair, Phil Day

Before the Race:

Having only recently taken possession of this 'new' Pescott designed/Blair built Whitehaven 11.7 bridge-deck cruising cat after getting some mods done such as fitment of a hard top over the cockpit, the moving of the escape hatch, getting the bottom re-antifouled etc. Just before Christmas the realisation that I needed to upgrade the boat from its inshore Pittwater race and picnic boat and short offshore racer status to a long distance delivery cruiser and Brisbane to Gladstone race contender kind of snuck up on me rather quickly.

That meant my ever growing long list of desires for the boat had to be finished and the boat ready to go north in just a few weeks. This was going to be a push and as a 10-15 knot southerly was predicted to arrive sooner rather than later come mid March, push turned to shove, not much of the list

was completed and so I loaded the boat with tools, and resin, and fiberglass, sanding tools, jigsaws, extra fittings and more tools. The new name decal was stuck on at the last minute and all sorts of gear, extra anchor chain, petrol and food and water were hurriedly placed on board and off we went.

What we actually got was a rather rainy and boisterous 30+ knots and bumpy seas which found the boat rather wanting in some areas of practicality and safety. For example; no hand holds inside, cupboard doors not fitted strongly enough to take the, ahem, weight of a person falling onto them and the grip on the inside was akin to an ice skating rink.

Never-the-less we arrived at Manly in 51 hours which wasn't bad since we had travelled half the trip with only half a jib set and no main. This quick trip meant I would have nearly two weeks to get the boat sorted out prior to the race so there was no



J'Ouvert - Phot Julie Geldard

need to panic...yet. It took me a day or two to recover from the big push before leaving Sydney and the trip up and to get my brain into gear and move all the cushions etc. out of the bridge-deck, bring out all the tools and turn the place into a workshop, make a list and to get stuck into it.

These preparations included renting a car for the many trips to Bunnings, the chandlery etc. (It also included the purchase of a beautiful, old classic Moto Guzzi but that's another story.) All the planning, construction, oversize drilling, back filling with bog, required paper work and Cat. 2 preparations came together on the last day before the race as all the crew turned up and with all hands on deck incredibly, miraculously and fortuitously turned all my dreams into reality. Not all painted and glossy but structurally sound and functional. All the tools and timber, excess fittings, etc. joined the Guzzi in self-storage while the

dinghy, outboard, cruising anchor chain, standup paddle boards etc. were packed on Phil's trailer ready to meet us in Gladstone.

The Race:

I felt so organised and relaxed with all this wonderful help at hand that I shocked my self (and probably a few others) by being one of the first multis out of the marina and heading towards the start line which is a couple of hours away.

I was only just finishing the rather arduous but necessary job of punching the mark coordinates into the plotter when the 5 minute signal went off. I hurriedly finished up doing that promising that I would check all those numbers later (I never did) and popped out of the cabin, jumped up on the pilot's chair, stole the steering wheel back, and amongst the mayhem that I could see all around with helicopters, and spectator boats and a whole bunch of very flashy multihulls

FOR SALE — This Simpson Inspiration 11 was launched in 2013 and fitted with a new mast, rigging and mainsail in 2014.



The sail plan features a Tasker Dacron fully battened Mainsail, Tasker Dacron furling Genoa, Tasker nylon MPS, Boombag and Lazy Jacks. She is easily sailed short-handed with all sheets and winches leading back to the cockpit and features a GPS and Coursemaster autopilot. She is powered by twin Yanmar 29hp diesel saildrives which offer great reliability, fuel economy and makes her easy to manoeuvre in and out of the marina.

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sailing circles around each other I asked a few pertinent questions such as "Where are we?", "What's happening?", "Where's the start line?" "Which way are we going?" "What's to eat?"

I lined up the start line with a minute to go and promptly found myself in the wind shadow of about a dozen multihull yachts, mostly significantly larger than *J'Ouvert*. Acceleration was thus a little less than what I needed and so a rather 'conservative' (read: late) start was made.

I could feel the ire of the crew as we crept forward and as they glared at me and stared at the transoms of most of the fleet I checked out the slots of most of the fleet's main and jibs. Still, we beat the couple of boats that had broken the line and had to go back and 30 seconds (two f...ing minutes according to some on board) wasn't going to make that much difference, Shirley. Besides, we were rated as the 4th slowest boat so



J'Ouvert (left), Captain Silver (centre) and Earthling (right) shortly after the start
Photo Chris Dewar

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there was no need to start "above our station", was there?

Anyway, we eventually got some clear air and headed off up wind towards the first mark. With *J'Ouvert* full of enthusiastic skippers it's amazing the boat didn't split into pieces and sail off in different directions as we all individually and expertly knew best which way to go, how to make the boat go fast, when to tack, where to position the crew, how much sheet tension to pull on, when to deploy the screecher etc.

One thing we all did agree on was that boat speed was hopelessly slow as boats we should be with had left us in their wake. We fiddled around with the jib track sheeting angles and found one to our liking on this 'racing' jib that I hadn't used before. That correct setting made a big difference and we



J'Ouvert from on-board Renaissance
Photo Chris Dewar

started to claw back some time on our competitors.

As we approached Tangalooma we were in about 12th place on the water but within sight of *Rushour*, *Cut Snake*, *Hasta la Vista*, *Renaissance*, *Earthling* and *Catalina*. *Morticia*, *The Boss*, *The Boat Works* (previously *Indian Chief*), *Top Gun*, *Chill Pill* and *Fantasia* were already too far forward for me to see what they were up to.

The breeze was in the 15+ range from the unusual angle of east and as we approached the mark I wrestled back the steering wheel into my possession as I had been relieved of steering duties not long after the start, and we unrolled the screecher and ran the jib inside it, cutter style. As the boat spluttered into life and accelerated a ton of water squirted over the bow and as the steering wheel I had been able to get hold of was on the leeward side I got a good old drenching. I called out for everyone to "get down the back of the bus" and as we powered through the chop we started to make some healthy gains. Yay, we were back in the game.

After Caloundra, it was a boisterous time on board as the wind was around 18 knots and right on the beam. This period of sailing along in the high teens next to *Renaissance* with the setting sun dropping behind the hills in the distance will stick in my mind for a long time.



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On board two of us started to feel a bit ordinary, and after dinner (a very nice but rather spicy curry) I had a yak with Chuck Berry, and after a little sleep, I woke feeling refreshed and "all good to go". I was, thus, able to appreciate this memorable and mesmerising period of sitting in awe watching the wake speeding off the transom in the full moon light as we sped through the night and this, I realised, pretty much was as good as it gets. Great boat, great crew, foot flat to the floor with a rotation of gun skippers with our healthy VMG equaling our high boat speed. Great fun and fast, with lots of spray and plenty of waves climbing over the cabin roof and cascading into the cockpit or down ones neck!

In retrospect, I can only just imagine what it was like on the smaller trailerables such as *Morticia*, *The Boss* and *The Boat Works* and out of those three it was only the incredibly competent and tough guys on that amazing lightweight trimaran, *Morticia*, who made it through the punishing conditions with boat and crew in tact and by their own admission it had been "fresh and frightening". Apparently they might be going for helmets with visors next time as the time to clear the blinding salt water out of their eyes as yet another wave punched them in the face left the skipper wondering whether he was bearing away or heading up. Scary.

As the night became day, the wind had eased significantly but then later in the morning as we approached Lady Elliot Island the boats that we had overhauled during the night rushed up to us from behind and delivered more wind. Not a huge amount but very welcome all the same.

It was a long day grinding out miles with our fingers crossed as the now very light conditions with a fair old slop was threatening to turn into completely nothing. Later in the day, as the seas grew smoother and the wind strength seemed to steady it became obvious that we would get across the Paddock and arrive at the Pearly Gates

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of the 20 odd miles of Gladstone Harbour left of the course and expect no favours from the tide.

And as if scripted by Murphy and his sidekick Huey, we arrived at the first channel mark right on high tide. That is right on Easter full moon high tide! Bugger!

Memories of last year's fiasco when I had resorted to throwing the anchor over the side on Phil's Whitehaven *Rhythmic* with us (and many others) in sight of the finishing line loomed large.

But like determined sperm swimming as hard as they can to reach the egg we wriggled our way upstream and crawled around the mud banks for the entire period of the 6 hours of the outgoing tide and dying breeze to arrive at the finish line right on the bottom of the tide just after 3am. Sigh!

Still, we had fared better than poor *Attitude*. They had beaten us into the harbour approaches and as we were both trying to make some headway against the water flowing at 2-3 knots in the wrong direction and we had been risking our luck in the shallows I saw the hand of God reach down from a silvery full moonlit cloud grab that big beautiful catamaran and literally just throw it down stream... backwards! Apparently, they then deployed the anchor to stop their negative progress and we carried on with inching our way around the mud banks, at times making good at less than one knot.

Meanwhile, *Morticia* and then *Chillpill* had arrived with more breeze and an incoming tide and thus both of those boats smashed us on corrected time. *Fantasia*, got held up

in the same conditions as us but still got in an hour or two before us.

After the race;

As we had finally crept over the line before the last zephyr of breeze died out completely I was so extremely happy to see the mayor greet us in the police boat that had to restrain myself from giving her hug and a big kiss and settled for the more traditional greeting of a handshake, a medallion, her welcome to Gladstone and a case of cold XXXX beers.

With about a third of our fleet retired for a variety of reasons I was rather pleased to finish, to finish with no damage, to finish 4th over the line and finish 3rd overall, to finish with only two monos in front of us and to finish with the crew still talking to me. Success!

A couple of days later, after the presentation and a bit of drinking, eating and sleeping, our cruising gear turned up and all the crew bar one drove back south and we went for a nice little 5 day cruise to Pancake Creek, Lady Musgrave, Cape Capricorn and ending up with a nice spinnaker run to Yepoon with new to sailing Sarah steering on the curl of the kite in the high teens on nice flat water for a couple of hours as the sun sunk into the mist. The next morning we left the boat in Rosslyn Bay and flew home. Game Over.

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Gladstone 2015, Attitude

By Allan Larkin

With light winds forecast for the race again this year, it was a pleasant surprise feeling the slight pressure build, as we headed across Moreton Bay to the start of this year's race. Being one of the heavier boats in the fleet, the light winds of the past few Gladstone races certainly wasn't on our wish list this year. The challenge this year was now to utilise the bit of wind we had, before it was forecast to drop out further north on Saturday.

With a couple of new crew this year in Bruce Dickson off *The Cats Whiskers*, and Chris

(Sir) Wren off *Frequent Flyer*, these two fine sailors soon accustomed themselves to the bigger boat, and certainly were instrumental in instigating some fine tuning techniques.

Making the most of the early wind, we just nudged past Noosa in daylight hours, and though we blew our screecher to pieces on Friday night, we stuck very much to the rhumb-line, had a close haul past the Breaksea Spit marker by 50 metres, & managed Lady Elliot by 07.00 Saturday morning.

At this stage, it looked like a late lunch in



Attitude - Phot Julie Geldard

Aspect

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Gladstone, but all hope of that faded quickly, as the wind dropped off, and we were faced the challenging task of chasing rain clouds for gusts of breeze. We were fortunate enough to launch off one at 17 knots, but that was it. The slow arduous task of sailing across the paddock in light winds was with us, as we witnessed a couple of multihulls pull out the iron jib, as they motored off to Gladstone.

Constantly working what light breeze we could find, it was a slow and arduous day. Thinking patience may eventually pay off, we were delighted to get a slight puff as we entered Gladstone Harbour, only for it to cruelly drop off, just as the tide took it's outward bound turn for the next 6 hours. Hearing a multitude of stories over the years about anchoring in this Harbour to hold

against the tide, I thought it was our turn this year, as our VMG read -3 knots after multiple tacks.

For two and a half hours we stayed put, watching the numerous smoke stacks of Gladstone list vertically to the sky. Around 3.00am there was the slightest of change in angle in the smoke stacks, enough to build the slightest of pressure to partially fill the sails. The painful journey against the tide in little wind saw us finally cross that line just before 5.00 am on Sunday morning.

240 miles in the first 21 hours, then 85 miles in the next 21 hours.....maybe next year.....I think there's an echo somewhere around Gladstone.....

Thanks to crew in Deb, Dave, Simon, Darren, Kriss, Bruce & Chris.

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Map 105, pg 150 Beacon to Beacon
153° 18'E, 27° 34'S

Renaissance Report

By Chris Dewar

Weather forecasts for Good Friday were for light winds and rain but come Friday morning the weather was going to be better than expected with good winds and slightly overcast with no rain.

On the way to the start line we put up the new spinnaker from Quantum Sails. Unfortunately there was a little incident with the tack line clutch not locked in and as the spinnaker floated high above the boat the sheet took out the port side navigation instruments. Fortunately these were fixed shortly after the start. We were live streaming video from the boat and it was all captured for viewers to see.

There were lots of spectator boats out to watch the start of the race and the fleet started on time at 1120. We were about 30 seconds late to the line just ahead of *J'Ouvert* and just behind *The Boat Works*. The video of the start taken from *Renaissance* is still available on the website for those who want to watch it.

At the first mark we tacked and split from the rest of the fleet. It seemed to pay dividends as we made ground on a number of yachts that were ahead of us. Lunch was prepared by John and it was a spectacular Ham and Pea Soup followed by Prawns, sweet chilli and rice (sorry, I don't describe the meals as well as Phil Day did at the

presentation).

We went around the second mark just in front of *J'Ouvert* and *Hasta La Vista* but some distance behind *Attitude* and *Earthling*. We maintained those positions until we rounded NW12 where *Earthling* was returning to round that mark.

With the screecher up we headed up the Spitfire Channel and *Earthling*, *Cut Snake*, *Hasta La Vista*, *Rushour* and *J'Ouvert* all passed us. As we rounded the Fairway mark *Top Gun* was heading back to Brisbane. We also managed to overhaul *J'Ouvert* but they passed us again as we headed for Mooloolaba. As we passed Mooloolaba still under screecher we were making ground on *Attitude* and *Rushour* but *J'Ouvert* and *Hasta La Vista* were getting away from us. We checked the weather report and with 18 knot ENE winds predicted we were happy with our position. As the wind increased to the predicted speed we continued to catch *Attitude* and *J'Ouvert* and passed *Rushour*. Given the wind conditions to sea seemed surprisingly lumpy and the planned meal for that night was postponed due to the difficult conditions in the galley.

As we approached Double Island Point we passed *J'Ouvert* and *Attitude* was visible off our starboard bow. Through the night we had some good speeds but unfortunately



Renaissance - Photo Julie Geldard

had to slow down several times with the propeller unfolding, possibly due to it coming out of the water in the lumpy conditions. This let *Attitude* extend its lead. As we approached Indian Head the sun was rising, the wind was dropping and yachts we had passed during the night were making ground on us. *J'Ouvert* passed us for the last time. The lighter yacht seemed better suited to the lighter conditions. *Rushour* also passed us and they rounded Breaksea Spit and Lady Elliot Island just in front of us.

With the new spinnaker up we headed across the paddock in very light conditions. There was a rain squall directly in front of us and after much discussion it was decided that we would gybe back onto the rhumb-line. In hindsight this was probably not the best decision as we needed to gybe back again to get on the next mark. With the other yachts passing us to the north where the squall had headed we wondered what could have been.

Lunch was a spectacular salmon (I think) and pasta. As we continued just south of the rhumb-line *Rushour* passed in front of our bow heading southwest. We passed Bustard Head just north of the Outer Rocks. With an outgoing tide we stayed close to the shore in the light winds. Just north of Ethel Rocks the wind changed and we tacked northwest towards the anchored ships. The tide impacted on our next couple of tacks which saw us make very little ground. In hindsight it may have been better to do some short tacks closer to the shore. The tide changed as we approached S2 we then had a good run into the harbour. As we approached the finish line the wind died and we were at the mercy of the tide.

We were concerned we might cross the line facing backwards but Bruce was determined that would not happen.

A few XXXX Gold were consumed before breakfast and then continued into the day through until after the presentation. It was another great race and if only the Friday night winds had continued through Saturday there would have been a much different result.



Mick and Steve packing the spinnaker



Jeff & Bruce in light winds on Saturday

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Rushour Report

By Drew Carruthers

Rushour performs best in stronger winds so we were never optimistic of great results this year.

The bigger boats have the advantage offshore due to being able to handle the chop better.

The start was average, but we wanted the boat end so set up behind *Renaissance* and crossed after them then rolled them straight away so we could be the windward boat.

Got to the Redcliffe turning mark at about the right spot on handicap then a beat to Tangalooma. *Renaissance* and *Earthling* sailed past on this leg. The 10 to 12 knots of breeze is not the best for *Rushour*.

Rounded at Tangalooma in close company with *J'ouvert*, *Hasta La Vista* and *Cut Snake* with *Renaissance*, *Earthling* and *Attitude* ahead.

Screecher run along Moreton Island had a couple of bullets of good pressure. We saw a glimpse of 20 knots and also saw *J'ouvert's*

rudders which prompted them to bear away and slow down for a couple of minutes.

We soon realised that the average wind speed left us underpowered with our small 40m2 screecher and the rest of the pack moved ahead.

After a while the course freed up to Caloundra and we were able to run our fractional kite which was much better. We pulled away from the surrounding boats on this leg and saw some good speeds in the gusts. The photos that Jules photography took were in such a gust and we were doing 18 at the time.

The boat was balanced and trimmed nose up doing it easily. *Rushour* loves that type of sailing with the windward hull skimming.

The reach along Fraser confirmed our fear that we were underpowered. In the gusts we were flying but most of the time we were slow. The pack did not pull away except *Cut Snake* that with its big screecher powered up to pass *Attitude* and would have passed



Rushour at the start - Photo taken on-board Renaissance by Chris Dewar



Rushour - Photo: Julie Geldard

Fantasia by Indian head if they had not broken a rudder. *Hasta La Vista* were also flying before breaking their prodger.

We did have one problem on board though. Our original plan was to run up the rhumb-line which we did then deploy the fractional kite and run in to the beach about 8 miles before Indian Head to avoid the current. However the kite got washed out of the bag down between the tramp lashings and turned into a sea drogue!!!

This manoeuvre also tore the kite so we had to stay on the rum line as it was too slow to run deep with the screecher. Kite is repairable though.

Wind dropped out at Indian Head giving a light run to Lady Elliott. We rounded Lady Elliott right next to *J'ouvert* after slowly catching them all night, with *Renaissance* about a mile behind.

With the BOM showing no systems breeze we jibed in towards the coast looking for the beginnings of a seabreeze and ended up near Bustard Head becalmed while the boats that stayed out wide did well.

This was all a lottery. I notice on the tracker that the opposite occurred with *Boss Racing* and *Morticia*.

Sunday morning saw us finally entering the

harbour with the current for a change. *No Problem* appeared from behind to also pass us with their bigger overlapping screecher.

We finished at 10.54am.

One bonus of the slow night at sea was we were well rested when we arrived for a change and avoided a night in the marina with the Gladstone mosquitos.

We left Monday morning and motor sailed to Pancake Creek, caught a big queenfish on the way.

Then had a great spinnaker run on a soft sea breeze anchoring at Kingfisher resort for the night. Had breakfast there then headed up the channel motor sailing a fair bit, to arrive at Manly at midnight.

Bonus was we did WAGS on Wednesday and the week of sailing the boat showed and we won comfortably in a nice cool south-westerly breeze.



No Problem - Pleasant Race

By Ray Robbs

It was good to have the variety throughout the race. The first half of the race was record speeds and around Breaksea in the dawn, then to have the calmer conditions for the second half made the race full of variety. A lot of light wind and slow speeds but very little time becalmed. It was great to pass all the monos on Friday night and to have so few finish before us.

Unfortunately we had too much power rounding the Caloundra Fairway buoy so we are now repairing the broken centre board.

It was the luck of the draw at the finish, with us getting the run in tide while others missed out. In the light conditions this makes big difference.

Great organising (MYCQ). It makes the entry relatively easy going. Add to that a very pleasant delivery for us from Gladstone to Brisbane in northerlies over 4 days, and it was ideal.

Thanks for the race.



No Problem at the Start

Photo: Chris Dewar



No Problem - Photo: Julie Geldard

The 2015 Adventures of Hasta La Vista

By Jim Fern

With one minute to go *Hasta* was positioned well to start at the boat end. *Cut Snake* sailed onto *Hasta's* hip attempting to luff us up so we bore away and accelerated across her bow to harden up for the start mid line a smidge behind *Cut Snake* and a poofteenth in front of *Boss Racing*. It was a good start. Whoa! *Cut Snake* was over early so now it's a great start.

There was no time to gloat, as all we could do was admire the astonishing acceleration of *Morticia* as she burned holes in the water in pursuit of the monos. There is no substitute for waterline length in windward work so we had to look at the sterns of the big cat part of our fleet until we were in a position to retaliate.

The screecher was unfurled on rounding the M9 and the odds swung in our favour at last. It was a very wet but fast ride to the Spitfire Channel where the masthead spinnaker was launched not knowing that we wouldn't be able to fly this weapon again. We had passed *Renaissance* by the NW Channel and

that always feels good. The screecher ensured that our wet weather gear was tested but nothing could keep the water out at the pace we were maintaining. North of Caloundra the fierce pace continued with the only concern being a nasty sea that seemed to be less predictable the further north we went.

We were in new territory at Double Island Point. Not one on board *Hasta la Vista* had ever been past this lighthouse earlier than 7pm before. We were starting to dream of breakfast in Gladstone. Travelling at 20 knots with bursts to 25+ when bearing away in the gusts was taking its toll on the boat. The leeward aft beam was being pounded such that our rope tidy bags on the leeward trampoline decided it would be safer for them if they swam ashore. Our portside steering position seat was swept away by a high-powered wall of water. That's ok because it is tethered to the boat – Wrong. The tether lasted about one nano-second. At this time I should have remembered the



Hasta La Vista after the start
Photo by Chris Dewar



Hasta La Vista
Photo by Julie Geldard

wise words that Jeff Owen, (builder of *Kiska* and B2G winner in 1989), said to me on how to drive a fast trimaran " Jim, it's just like riding a motorbike, you have to know when to back off".

We were abeam of Eurong on Fraser Island at around 8.30pm when the bang up front and a slowdown told us clearly that our race was effectively over. Our prodder pole was now only a foot long with a significant air gap between it and the boat. The dual owners had discussed the need to depower the boat about 10 minutes before this but didn't. With the headsail up, *Hasta* skimmed along comfortably at 17 knots under cracked sheets. The easing sea state and lightening winds as we neared Indian Head allowed our valiant crew to shimmy out along the floats to jury rig a possible means of getting our damaged screecher up again or flying one our spinnakers as the angle opened up past Waddy Point. Despite

their efforts, trying to fly sails that no longer fitted only slowed us down. Our 22 sqm genoa was the biggest sail we had left that worked.

Last year *Rhythmic* and *Hasta La Vista* spent all of Sunday at Lady Elliott and we feared we were in for a repeat when we sneaked past this blob on the chart in a very light easterly. At least it was Saturday this time but we still were looking back at it for a very long time. The first half of the race was fast and fun; neither of these descriptions applies to the second half. After finally crossing the finish, the beer was like food of the gods and for a near exclusive rum drinker, that's a big call.

The B2G presentation and post race party was one of the best run and enjoyable we have had in recent years. Well done to the committee and sponsors and they are to be commended for their great team effort.



Hasta La Vista - Photo by Julie Geldard

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Brisbane to Happy Rock 2015

By Rob Dean - Cutsnake

Good Friday's weather report light upwind beat to the Windward mark then increasing south east to east stronger off shore and dropping out by late Saturday. That turned out to be close but the wind died out much earlier.

Our start was looking good however our prodder was over the line so a restart for *Cutsnake*. Our work to the Windward Mark at the east end of the spit fire channel, although we had a good tussle with *J'Ouvert*, Mark Prescott's own 45 footer but otherwise the leg was unspectacular.



Cutsnake crossing the Start Line

Photo: Chris Dewar

Hasta La Vista, *Rush Hour*, *J'Ouvert* and us all rounded within a couple of minutes of each other. Now it was screecher time, our beautiful 80sqm north works a treat. Hitting 23.8 knots along Moreton in smoothish water. We passed the nearby opposition and off Caloundra we passed *Renaissance* and *Earthling*.

We had a wild old ride carrying the screecher all the way to Indian Head. We were up to 5 nautical miles off shore in good wind pushing tide of approximately 1 knot but reaching speeds approx. 20 – 23 knots. My new crew member Dean Thornton formally a dyed-in-the-wool monohull sailor, later said it was the most exciting sailing he has ever experienced and he's done two Hobart Yacht races. He has just bought his own 13 mtr

catamaran to be named *Live Louder*.

Off Indian Head we saw *Fantasia* in closer to shore in lighter air, we had the better angle and at that point looked in good shape for a podium finish. Sometime later after sundown our leeward rudder detached from the transom, the lower rudder gudgeon having failed, so down with the screecher and up with the jib and reef in the main we carried on in 15 knots of wind doing approximately 13 knots. The breeze gradually lightened off to about 8 knots through the night and down to 6 knots by the morning. There was no improvement with the wind getting lighter through Saturday morning and by midday practically non-existent. As we still had 90 nautical miles to travel we decided to motor sail into Gladstone so we could catch the incoming tide at the river. At that point



Cutsnake

Photo: Julie Geldard

J'Ouvert and *Earthling* were both near us, *Earthling* decided to join us motoring in as well. We arrived at the Marina at 8pm. We had good had fun with the *Morticia* and *Black Jack* boys at the yacht club that night. The team spent Sunday repairing the boat with the assistance of my good mate Murray Courtman, who happened to be in Gladstone at that time.

Photo Right: Aussie ingenuity at it's best.....how to get your rudders out of the water, without taking the boat out.... Photo Allan Larkin



Cutsnake - Photo: Julie Geldard

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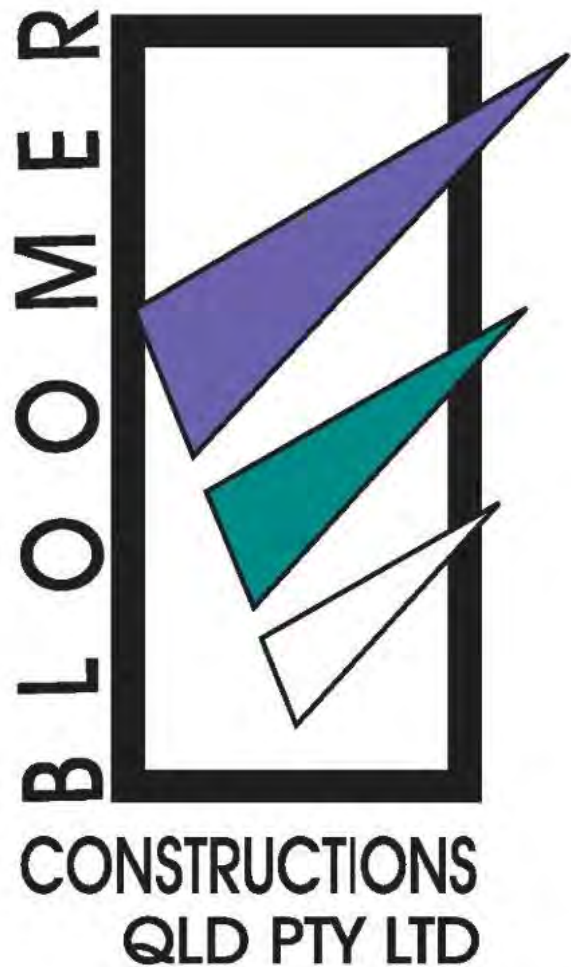
Brisbane to Gladstone from the Cockpit of Top Gun

By Darren Drew

Having purchased *Top Gun* and bringing her home to Pittwater from Cairns back in early December, our Gladstone campaign really started at that point. *Top Gun* hadn't been raced for some time and most of the gear including sails, running rigging, blocks, sheets, deck hardware, etc, etc, etc was not up to hard racing standard. When I bought the boat I knew it needed pretty much everything replaced.

Top Gun had been a favourite of mine since it was launched back in 1987. She is a fantastic cat and fitted my needs perfectly. Her structure is excellent, you would never think she is getting towards 30 years old, goes to show the longevity of foam, eglass and kevlar for strong lightweight boat building. Since 1987 *Top Gun* has done more than 150,000 ocean miles and at least half of that racing in Asian and North Queensland waters. With my intro waffle aside, I was totally committed to having *Top Gun* ready for this years Gladstone so all measures were taken to get all the work done that I felt was required to be race ready.

Having spent all of December, January and February having all the work done on the



boat, including a full wardrobe of new Quantum sails, with my normal Pittwater crew of Chris Flanagan, Doug Cuming and Tim Shipton we set sail for the Gold Coast early March to deliver the boat to Craig



Humphries of Signature Yachts. Craig has a wonderful shed big enough to house *Top Gun* in at The Boatworks facility at Coomera. Craig is a part owner of my of my old boat, *Indian Chief* – now *The Boat Works*. Craig completed a number of out of water jobs including building a new dagger board to replace the one we broke during the delivery trip, in readiness for the Gladstone race.

On March 30th I flew to the Gold Coast and *Top Gun* was put back in the water. The next day Lee Randal and myself took the boat to RQYC for the start of the Gladstone race. Whilst we had *Top Gun* in the marina we had a number of visitors who have had some history with *Top Gun* over the years including the original builders Bob Shanks and Ross Blair. It was great to share the stories of the boat's background including its only other Gladstone race which it was awarded line honours for in 1988. Although for some reason the clubs records show



Shotover 2 being the line honours winner that year the guys that sailed her in that race assure me they were in first, as does an old article that was written in Cat Sailor magazine. According to the article, *Top Gun* finished some 10 minutes behind *Bullfrog* but was awarded line honours after *Bullfrog* failed to round a mark in Moreton Bay.

We enjoyed the time on the marina doing a few last minute jobs and preparing for the race. My crew of Doug Cuming, Tim Shipton, Joe Finch and Shane Dickson arrived during the week and on Friday morning we left the marina as ready as we could be to take on the fleet in a bid for line honours as the forecast was looking mostly to favour our big Crowther 50. With 5 minutes to go before the gun we got ourselves into a reasonable position without being too risky. We worked our way just in behind a couple of other boats one back from the line which took us a bit of time to find clear air and get the boat wound up. The gun went and we were off out chasing the 4 or 5 boats in front of us. Morticia had a great start and was quickly out in clear air, *The Boat Works* and *Boss* not far behind. We speed along right beside *Boss* and hauling in *The Boat Works*. We arrived at the first mark with *Boss* and *The Boat Works* with *Morticia* in sight. We decided to take a long port tack across the bay. This proved favourable as the wind increased. All the time we were getting away from *Boss* and *The Boat Works*. However with the stronger wind we started to see *Chillpill* moving very well and joining us in the top group. By the time we tacked we were right beside *Morticia*, she was now only a few hundred metres above us. Things were

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looking good as we had left *The Boat Works* and *Boss* behind and *Chillpill* was just below us. As we entered the channel we unloaded the screecher and then things got going.

However, before too long our screecher halyard slipped and came loose. We looked up and couldn't see any issues so ground on the halyard. It slipped again and we realised there was a problem with the halyard, it had jumped off the mast exit sheave and jammed between the sheave and the mast. We couldn't move the halyard. We decided to furl the sail as best we could with a loose luff and Doug Cuming at 55 years old volunteered to go up the mast and fire off the halyard clip so we could get the screecher down. We ran off downwind, up Doug went. The conditions at this stage were very rough. We winched Doug to the hounds, the idea was he'd tie a line to the screecher head and lower the sail. However, he was struggling to hang on so we opted to just fire off the snap clip and let the sail fall. Of course the head of the sail crashed to the hull deck rather than landing on the tramp, the 25mm foam Kevlar deck didn't even get a mark in it. We lowered Doug, sorted out the mess and

got back to sailing in the right direction. By this time *The Boat Works*, *Boss* and *Chillpill* had all gone past us and *Fantasia* was now just behind us. We quickly got the boat going and headed toward the fairway mark. To our surprise by the time we got near the mark we had passed *Boss*, levelled with *The Boat Works* and were right behind *Chillpill* with *Morticia* only a few hundred metres in front. I had a smile from ear to ear having recovered after the screecher issue. It was super rough with waves and wind against tide. We were taking a lot of water over the boat and into the cockpit but still honking along at 14 – 16 knots upwind. *Morticia* looked to be awash at times and had put a reef in. We were faster than all the boats at this point and as we were passing *Chill Pill* and looking at *Morticia's* 3 sterns I looked up and saw the leech of our main falling away significantly, then I saw the first seam from the top of the sail opening up and before I could do or say anything zip, the main split in two and also tore up the luff. Game Over!

Dejected!!!!!! I couldn't believe it. Our Gladstone race was done. After all the months of reshaping the boat to being the best she's ever been, the very thing I'd

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never considered being a problem had let us down. I gathered my thoughts after sitting quietly for sometime and decided to head back to RQ where the sailmakers were. I jumped into the bunk and had some chocolate to get over it!!!

We got back to RQ around 9pm under jib and towards the end motoring. I called Ben Kelly my sailmaker with the news. Ben couldn't believe it and was gutted for us. Ben knew how much effort we had put into getting the boat to the start line. We packed up the boat and checked into the motel and flew home to Sydney the next morning. Ben and Quantum were on the boat first thing to get the main off to find out what the cause was. After Quantum looked over the sail it was clear the glue on the seam had failed. The COO of Quantum USA called me to express his apologies and offer his willingness to make good. Ben and

his team have totally remade the sail without question and did it as quickly as possible.

As much as I was gutted about what happened, I can't speak highly enough about the way Ben and Quantum went about looking after the fix up. Ben took all the sails off the boat and checked them. Ben asked to sail back on *Top Gun* to Sydney with us so he could make sure all his sails on *Top Gun* were the very best they could be.

We had a great trip home and are already excited about coming back up next year for the B2G. Thanks to everyone who helped get *Top Gun* in the fine shape she is now in and to those who helped with deliveries and racing.

Good Sailing to all

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From “The Boat Works”

By Julian Griffiths

Not a bad start, on the boat end of the line, clear air, only problem was *Fantasia* sitting right in front. Once we sailed over them and cracked sheets a little we soon took off up into second. We stayed that way past the first mark, where the beat across the bay hurt the short length of 9.5m. *Top Gun* was the first to pass then *Chillpill*, then *Boss*.

We managed to jag a lift before the third mark and get *Boss* back by a considerable amount. Off to the third still on the breeze, so nothing exciting, then around four and off! Cracked sheets two sail reaching, spray every where, up to 20 knots. We could see *Boss* gaining with their screecher up and as we got closer to the next mark, with the wind swinging around we furled out our screecher and took off.

The dog leg before the Spitfire Channel saw *Boss* pop their mast head and pass us, we are getting our breath back and calming our

nerves, then it was on. The chase to Caloundra, what a ride. We pulled in *Boss* and left them, then next was *Top Gun* who looked as though they were having problems with their screecher. The *Pill* was not far in front and we could see loads of spray flying from their leeward hull, they were pushing. Top speed 22 knots, flying hull, the boat felt great, full control, never did we feel pressed or on the edge.

As we neared the last mark to turn towards the Fairway a small rain squall came over as we were furling, dropping the screecher and after the wind died out and bent north meaning we were not going to lay the mark. Tack out into a large sloppy sea with not much breeze, bouncing around. The two in front had the same problem, but *Top Gun* had the new breeze and laid the mark, we passed in front of them on port by about half a boat length, I think Darren wanted to



The Boat Works - Photo: Julie Geldard

check out his old boat again!

We had cleared away from *Boss* and gained on the *Pill*. Finally the Fairway was rounded in third place and sheets cracked a little and on course to Indian Head. Smoking along back up to 18 knots, pulling in the *Pill*, with *Top Gun* on our side, feeling pretty comfy for the arvo, settling into the night we hear a bang! We have a quick look around and can't see much and then notice the bows walking around a bit and see the port front beam bolt sticking up in the air, ease sheets and shifter out to tighten, but no go. Stripped nut, game over, sails down. I went forward and tied a rope around the bow over the beam just in case the only one left couldn't handle the loads. The ocean was confused and pretty bumpy.

We hoisted the jib, cracked open our sunset drinks and drifted into Mooloolaba. Boat packed up and home by 5.30. Short day at the office. For the next 24hrs I was glued to the tracker refreshing every 10 minutes, just



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thinking where we would be. Saturday down to the boat, 5 minutes later, new bolt and nut and ready to go. All and all a good time was had in the lead up and race day and hopefully we will be back ready to roll next year.



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