

PLAIN SAILING

JUNE 2026



RICHMOND
YACHT CLUB



FROM THE FLAG

BY JACKY BUSH
RYC COMMODORE

The Committee and Club have been keeping busy, so here's a quick round-up of what's been happening.

Over recent meetings, the Committee has been focused on a mix of practical projects and future planning:

- **Upstairs renovation:** A huge thank-you to our volunteers who've taken this on entirely themselves. The space is looking great, and we're still on the lookout for a new tenant. If you know anyone who might be interested, please let them and the office know.
- **Events:** Planning is well underway for upcoming sailing events and the ever-popular Quiz Night later in the year.
- **Sponsorships:** Formal acknowledgement of their support has been sent to all sponsors, with each sponsor getting a certificate to provide formal recognition of their support.
- **Club signage:** You might have noticed the fresh new look external signage. It was great to replace the sun bleached signage.
- **Future Westhaven Planning:** We're continuing to work closely with neighbouring clubs to develop a shared pathway for the future.
- **The new T-shirts** are now available for purchase. We're also exploring what other merchandise members would like — so if you've got ideas, we'd love to hear them.

The 2025/26 Winter Series is off to a strong start! Thanks to Propspeed, we're offering a Small Kit as a spot



prize for the series. Skippers, don't forget to drop your name into the bucket after each race — the draw will take place after the final winter race.

Meanwhile, the Sailing Committee is already hard at work shaping the 2026/27 Racing Calendar, and our Sponsorship Coordinator is securing sponsorship partnerships for the year ahead.

Our Annual General Meeting takes place at the end of June — a great opportunity to hear an overview of the 2025/26 season, vote on Flags and Committee members, and learn about the next steps for the RYC Endowment Fund. If you're keen to get more involved in club operations, nomination forms are available via the AGM notice and in the clubrooms. Please also feel free to chat to any Committee member about this opportunity.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the AGM, or out on the water, and around the clubhouse for that well-earned post-sailing debrief over a drink. ▶



THIS ISSUE

BY DERYN WILLIAMS
EDITOR

Welcome to the June 2026 issue of Plain Sailing.

In this issue we have several reports from longer races: Steve from *Belle* reflects on Route66 navigational woes, *Akonga* has an exhilarating offshore race around Three Kings, and two fascinating accounts of the Round North Island race from *Indis* and *Perfect Storm*.

Damon wraps up the Single-handed series - congratulations to the top 3.

As a way to get to know people in the club, we will begin introducing the different skippers, starting with Richard on *Cool Change*.

Don't forget to join us at the AGM & Prizegiving, as well as the Quiz Night!

Please submit articles and photos to magazine@richmondyc.org.nz ▶

WELCOME

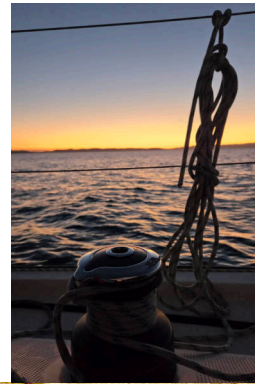


New Members

Bruce Gabites
General
Calypso V (Beale 33)

Dave and Kim Church
General Family
Questa (Beneteau Sense 55)

Lee Cahill (Crew)



Wahoo!
It's quiz night!

Join us for a night of fun and wide-ranging questions!

**Friday 28th
August 2026**

bar open 1730
dinner 1800
quiz 1900

\$35 for:
dinner (Mexican!),
dessert and quiz

Get your teams of 6
together now!

UPCOMING CALENDAR & EVENTS



June 2026

- 3rd Pot Luck Lunch
- 7th Winter Series - Race 3
- 21st Winter Series - Race 4
- 26th RYC AGM & Prize Winners Dinner

July 2026

- 1st Pot Luck Lunch
- 5th Winter Series - Race 5
- 19th Winter Series - Race 6

August 2026

- 2nd Winter Series - Race 7
(Flap Martinengo Memorial)
- 5th Pot Luck Lunch
- 16th Winter Series - Race 8
(Motuihe Race)
- 28th RYC Quiz Night
- 30th Winter Series - Race 9 (Final)



RICHMOND
YACHT CLUB

THE AGM & PRIZEGIVING DINNER

OF THE RICHMOND YACHT CLUB
FRIDAY 26ST JUNE 2026

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 18:30 HOURS

Attend the AGM and be in to win
your membership for the new season!

DINNER SERVED 20:00 HOURS

Buy your \$40 ticket to the
Prizegiving Dinner at:

<https://richmondyc.org.nz/ryc-dinner/>



PRIZEGIVING CEREMONY 20:30 HOURS

Bring your crewmates and celebrate a fantastic season.
Who will be Club Champion and winner of the Noel Cole
Trophy? All will be revealed!



SERIES SUMMARY: SINGLE-HANDED

BY DAMON PALING
ORO ROSA

Single-Handed Series: One hand, one mind, and plenty of sailing

There is something uniquely humbling about single-handed sailing. No one to blame, no one to bail you out, and no one to witness the occasional muttered conversation with yourself when things go sideways. The Coolstore Construction Single-Handed Series delivered all of that and more — ten races that tested not just boats and sailors, but patience, judgement, and the occasional sense of humour.

Contested across a varied sailing programme — from short, tactical island races through to longer passages and a couple of character-building night races — the series demanded a full spectrum of skills. Navigation decisions mattered. Sail handling had to be sharp (and preferably untangled). Boat speed counted. But above all, it was mental and emotional fortitude that drove the fleet forward.

Light-air drifters tested patience to its limits. Breezier days demanded precise handling. Night races saw navigation lights and instinct take over from visual cues. And always, there was the quiet satisfaction of crossing the finish line knowing you had done it all yourself.

The broader fleet — including the likes of *Chico Too*, *Urban Escape*, and *Wave* — showed plenty of promise, even if consistency across all races remained just out of reach. The series also had one final twist, with Cyclone Vaianu

scuppering Race 9 - as ever in sailing, not all variables are within human control.

Third place went to Richard on *Cool Change*, a seasoned campaigner racing the smallest yacht in the fleet and proud gold card holder who put together a strong and consistent season. and his podium finish was well earned.

Second place went to defending champion Michael aboard *Penury*, and arguably the award for ingenuity. His most memorable moment came in Race 5 just off the Westhaven wall. With the wind having vanished and the tide doing all the talking, he drifted agonisingly close to the finish line before being carried past on the tide. Undeterred (and still very much within the rules), he calmly dropped anchor, waited for the breeze to return, then raised anchor and sailed back around the Westhaven yellow mark to complete his finish. It was seamanship at its finest, or at least its most creative.

Consistency proved king and it was Tony skippering *Monotone* who delivered a standout series to take overall honours. Quietly efficient in his sail choices and relentlessly steady in his tactics, with few mistakes, Tony demonstrated that all the incremental tweaks and modifications to *Monotone* have paid off.

A final thank you goes to our series sponsor, Coolstore Construction, for their continued support of this uniquely demanding format of racing, as well as to Andrew Burr, our dedicated and reliable Race Officer.

Next season will mark 10 years of Richmond hosting the Single-Handed Series. Expect to see a refined and refreshed programme — building on a decade of hard-earned experience and a strong foundation within the club. ■

ROUTE 66 REPORT

BY STEVE MORRISS

BELLE

Two Miles Off Course: A night of assumption

There are races you remember for the trophies—and then there are the ones that stay with you for entirely different reasons. This year's R66 aboard *Belle* firmly falls into the latter category.

We've had our share of unfinished R66 campaigns in the past, usually dictated by weather. This year's forecast was shaping up with light, settled conditions under a dominant high crossing the Tasman Sea. If anything, it looked like a race of patience rather than survival. And while we were indeed beaten in the end, it wasn't by wind or sea—but by something far less tangible: confirmation bias, mixed with a dash of fatigue and an avoidable oversight. The result? A retirement just two nautical miles from the finish line.

The build-up: optimism and good food

Preparation followed a familiar and well-loved pattern. Crew sorted early, WhatsApp group humming, and—most importantly—menus debated with due seriousness. Racing aboard *Belle* is as

much about cuisine as it is about sail trim. With an extra passenger planned for the return leg, provisions were suitably regal.

The race briefing the week prior confirmed what the forecasts were already hinting at: light easterlies at the start and a potential southwesterly change later on. In response to the expected conditions, the race committee issued an amendment—relocating the finish to a new mark off the Ruakaka River mouth. I plotted the new waypoint on the chartplotter, satisfied everything was squared away. Or so I thought.

A gentle start turns tactical

Race day dawned with barely a breath of wind, and the start was shifted to Narrow Neck. Around thirty boats gathered, drifting more than charging across the line.

We hoisted the Code Zero and slipped away cleanly, tracking past Rangitoto Lighthouse and hugging the coast in search of pressure. The fleet quickly fractured—some heading wide, others gambling closer to Whangaparāoa.

By mid-afternoon, progress remained painfully slow. Sail changes came and went across the fleet as crews hunted elusive breeze lines and anticipated the approaching southwesterly.

Eventually, the change arrived. We bore away towards the Tiri Channel, set the gennaker, and began to claw our way back into contention. Running deep isn't *Belle's* strongest angle, but morale remained high. The oven came into its own—bacon and egg pie, then pizza—fuel for both body and spirit.

Night sailing and momentum

As we rounded Kawau and pressed on past Cape Rodney, daylight gave way to a spectacular moonrise—huge, luminous, and casting a silver path across the sea. It was one of those



moments that makes offshore racing unforgettable.

With the Code Zero back up and a gentle beam reach settling in, Belle came alive. Speeds stabilized around six knots, and gradually we began reeling in competitors. *Time Out* slipped astern. Then we edged past *About Time*. Ahead, nothing but open water. Behind, a scattered fleet. We locked onto our course, following the waypoint plotted neatly on the chartplotter—a reassuring electronic guide aligned perfectly with a bright white light on the horizon. And that's where things began to unravel.

The trap of assumption

It was after 0200. Fatigue had crept in, subtle but real. The light ahead looked convincing. Bright, steady, even sporting a hint of yellow flicker. It had to be the finish vessel, didn't it? But something didn't quite add up. Where were the other boats? Why weren't we seeing traffic closing in behind us? A quick call was made to the race committee. Could they see us approaching? The response was inconclusive—understandably so. From their perspective, we were just one of several boats somewhere out there in the dark. Closer still. The light grew larger. Then came the sound that changes everything offshore: surf breaking. The penny dropped. We weren't approaching the finish—we were heading toward the beach.

Realisation... and resignation

I spun Belle back out to sea, heart sinking as I scanned the horizon again. There, unmistakably, was the actual finish—its yellow flashing light sitting a full two nautical miles away. But by then, the breeze had deserted us. Completely. With a lee shore closing in and no steerageway, the engine went on. Racing rules left us with no choice but to retire. We motored clear,



frustration hanging heavy in the cockpit, and later crossed the line unofficially—hours after the boats we'd overtaken during the night.

Lessons from two miles

Post-race reflection is never comfortable, but it is always valuable.

The root cause? A simple but critical oversight. While I had updated the finish location on the chartplotter, I had not fully absorbed the sailing instructions—specifically the GPS coordinates and supporting details. The finish vessel was transmitting AIS, meaning its exact position was available with a quick check on MarineTraffic or onboard systems. Instead, I trusted what I expected to see. That's confirmation bias in its purest form: interpreting information in a way that confirms your assumptions, even when subtle cues suggest otherwise. In daylight, or with fresher minds, we likely would have caught it. But offshore racing is rarely conducted under ideal cognitive conditions.

Final thoughts

The R66 is a race that rewards attention to detail just as much as it does seamanship. This year, Belle had the pace, the teamwork, and the perseverance to finish strongly. But in the end, it was a navigational decision—made in the quiet hours of the morning—that defined the race. Two miles short. A frustrating result, yes—but also a powerful reminder: offshore, it's not what you think you see that matters. It's what you verify. ■

ROUND NORTH ISLAND

BY SAILIQ RACING TEAM
INDIS



RNI 2026 - The Indis Short Story

The 2026 Round North Island had everything: fast rides, big weather, questionable decisions, fierce rivalry, and the kind of friendships and memories that only come from sailing 1,200 miles around with a bunch of equally mad competitors.

*Andrew Benton
and Andrew Hall*



Leg 1 - Auckland to Mangonui

We kicked things off with a dream run, a great reaching leg and then downwind. From Percy Island to the Cavallis, we were blasting along with only three-quarters of a spinnaker as our kite sock had jammed. When the breeze eased, we wrangled it back into shape, grabbed a perfect windshift, and suddenly we were charging into Mangonui, right on *Ragnar's* heels.

And then came the first port stop: hot food, cold drinks, friendly ribbing, and that classic RNI dockside energy — everyone pretending they weren't checking each other's boat speed.

Leg 2 - Mangonui to Waikawa

The longest leg delivered the biggest headaches. A system glitch left us without internet, and with no cell coverage our navigation became...

interpretive. We sailed into a windless hole that we hoped would've been avoided with proper data.

Things got spicy entering Queen Charlotte Sound: 30 knots, dead downwind, kite up, boat in the 17-18 knot range. "What's the plan if we roll out?" "The plan is not to roll out." Next minute... Time to drop the kite anyway — but not before squeezing out every last bit of fun. And yes, it was cold. Very, very cold.

Waikawa gave us warmth, banter, and that shared "we survived Leg 2" camaraderie. Rivalries softened over wines and beers, then sharpened again the moment the skippers' briefing started.

Leg 3 - Waikawa to Napier

It was game on as soon as we left Queen Charlotte Sound, with more 35knot breeze. The Karori Rip delivered its usual gift: chop, more chop, and then extra chop. But the world loved it — our video is now sitting around 2



million views, which still blows our minds. Around Cape Palliser, the leaders slipped through cleanly, but we copped the flukey winds, that caused a significant amount of frustration. After getting through that, the leg settled into something dangerously close to boring.



Napier, on the other hand, was anything but boring. Great food, great company, and the kind of laughter that only comes when everyone's equally exhausted.

Leg 4 - Napier to Auckland

The final leg threw the whole weather menu at us: biblical rain, thunder and lightning ("very, very frightening") and thick fog. We possibly detoured a little too far east, but well these things happen! Getting to and rounding the Coromandel was brilliant, but the beat into Auckland was a grind. To round out the weather menu, we went from breeze to absolutely nothing inside the harbour. Out came the anchor, and we clawed — painfully — toward the finish. Not glamorous, but unforgettable.

And the best part? The hugs, the beers, the stories, the shared madness. Rivals on the water, friends on the dock. Would we do it again? Of course. It's the RNI — equal parts chaos, challenge, and pure magic. The race ends, but the memories (and the friendships) last far longer. ■

THREE KINGS OCEAN RACE

BY SAILIQ RACING TEAM
AKONGA



For a race that's only 100 nautical miles shorter than the Sydney to Hobart, the Three Kings Ocean Yacht Race has a reputation that punches well above its length.

Ask anyone who has completed both: the challenges are every bit as real, every bit as relentless, and every bit as defining. Akonga's 2026 lap around the Kings proved exactly that.

A dream run north

Our delivery up the east coast from Auckland felt like a gift from the weather gods. Sun on our backs, a steady breeze in the sails, dolphins riding the bow — the kind of passage that makes you believe the ocean is on your side. The watch system clicked, the food was great, the sleep was enough, and the miles rolled by without drama. Everything felt under control. And offshore racing being what it is, that's usually the moment the sea decides you've had enough comfort.

The shackle that changed everything

Just before the Three Kings, in the dark (because of course it's always at night), the rollerfurler swivel shackle let go. Our Number 1 jib took off on a trajectory toward the water, and the calm, tidy rhythm of the race evaporated in seconds. The crew moved fast. The jib was wrestled back aboard and lashed down, but the masthead halyard stayed aloft, out of reach and out of play. With no way to hoist a headsail, the storm jib came out early — not the sail you

THREE KINGS

CONTINUED...

expect to be using before you've even rounded the Kings. Still, Akonga pressed on. We rounded the islands under storm jib, then unleashed the gennaker and let the boat stretch her legs. The sea state built, the breeze freshened, and suddenly it was SendIt Saturday.

SendIt Saturday: 25-30kn, 3m following seas

Downwind, Akonga came alive. The breeze sat at 25-30 knots, the following sea stacked to three metres, and the boat surged and surfed with that intoxicating mix of control and chaos that only offshore sailors truly understand. Adrenaline high, focus sharp, the crew settled into the rhythm of fast miles. But the environment was only warming up. This was the calm before the storm, and we still had a halyard stuck up the mast — a problem that had now become non-negotiable.

Three of the five crew volunteered to go aloft, but the choice was obvious: Ryan Mills, the youngest and fittest, and our brilliant bowman. Up he went, with the mast swinging like a metronome on espresso. He didn't linger. Retrieve the halyard, get down, stay alive. He nailed it. With the halyard back in hand, we finally had options again.

Survival Sunday: Lightning, thunder, 40kn, 4m seas

The shift from SendIt Saturday to Survival Sunday came early, abrupt, and violent. The breeze climbed into the 40s. The sky lit up like a fireworks show — forked lightning, rolling thunder, and rain so

heavy you couldn't read the instruments two feet away. It was humbling. It was loud. It was unforgettable. But Nick Roberts and Andrew Hall were having the time of their lives sharing helm duties.

At some stage we changed to the No. 3 and then the storm jib made another appearance as the boat shouldered through the worst of it, each wave and gust a reminder of how small you really are out there.

As the weather eased, the work didn't. We hoisted the gennaker only to find it had torn somewhere in the chaos, and it needed attention. So, in the dark, while it flew, Ryan and Andrew Hall crawled out and repaired it — not pretty but functional and a balancing act that would make a circus acrobat proud. Offshore racing doesn't pause for convenience. You fix what breaks, when it breaks, however you can.

A Race That Earns Respect

Akonga's Three Kings race was everything the legends promise: beautiful, brutal, exhilarating, and humbling. The kind of race that reminds you why sailors keep coming back for more, even when the sea dishes out its worst. ■



ROUND NORTH ISLAND

BY KEN ORMANDY
PERFECT STORM

Round the North Island with your wife... what could possibly go wrong?

Three years ago we bought a Thompson 38 and renamed her *Perfect Storm*. She's a "racer cruiser" and was a serious upgrade on my previous Elliot 1050, *Gale Force*. I crewed the 2023 RNI on *Legacy III* with Ryan Wiblin and Lori volunteered as SSANZ shore crew. She looked somewhat envious, which prompted the idea of doing the 2026 RNI together on our new boat.

Perfect Storm is a serious boat for a full crew, let alone two people, so naturally a 2-handed, anti-clockwise, four-leg lap of the North Island covering roughly 1,210 nautical miles between Auckland, Mangōnui, Waikawa and Napier was doable, but ambitious. We knew we would have to put in some serious preparation hours, split equally between boat upgrades and time on the water.

The "3-year good idea" plan began with the 2023 Coastal Classic, where we discovered major waterproofing deficiencies. Buckets after buckets of water came through hatches, fittings and windows and nearly broke us and the delivery crew. Then came the 2024 Helly Hansen Three Kings Race: relentless upwind slamming, continuous bailing, and enough hardware issues to force our race retirement about 10nm north of North Cape. Regardless, those races proved two things: the boat could survive brutal upwind smashing, and so could our relationship. Perfect RNI recipe!

A few DIY-led upgrades also helped our odds: a bespoke designed sliding

dodger, a watertight bulkhead in the back, bigger winches (thanks Sailutions), a binnacle redesign & chartplotter mount, a more manageable mainsail, and a successful weight-saving programme involving Lori removing the oven from its gimbal during the Three Kings race and me deciding it didn't need to go back in.

Leg 1: The adventure begins

The 2025 Northern Triangle became our qualifier. Finishing 2nd on handicap in division confirmed for us we could do it, and that our RNI campaign was on. On 28 February 2026 we slipped lines - nervous, excited, and questioning our life choices.

Friends and family lined Devonport Wharf giving us an opportunity to do a graceful sail-past for photos. We ran aground instead. The sudden impact of the stop launched Lori into the side stays causing immediate bruising and temporary loss of arm mobility. With 30 minutes to go, we motored to clear water so I could quickly dive and check the keel, which was fine. Lori also declared herself seaworthy and ordered me to get ready for the start.

Boosting North under FRO, just before the Hen and Chicks, we noticed water entering around the rudder stock. The bilge pumps initially kept up. Then they didn't. Inspection revealed the rudder stock had slipped downward. Only the quadrant prevented the rudder dropping out of the boat completely.

We suspended racing and headed for shelter behind the islands. Naturally, a squall arrived at exactly that moment, accelerating us faster than was sensible towards a land mass with a compromised rudder. Then the instrument network crashed. I went below to inspect and smelled burning plastic. At that point Lori was steering blind through the squall, demanding navigation help and assistance dropping the FRO. I threw her a phone

ROUND NORTH ISLAND

CONTINUED...

for navigation and yelled, "Sort it out yourself, I think the boat's on fire." While she charged down waves hitting a consistent 15 knots, I frantically dismantled the switchboard and found the electrical meltdown before it became an actual fire.

Sheltered in Home Bay, I climbed into the aft compartment expecting a few litres, instead I found hundreds of litres of water. "(Expletive), we're sinking" I thought, and obviously said, because Lori immediately jumped on the manual bilge pump while I tried to work out a solution. Around six passing boats offered help, which we hugely appreciated, but we managed to get going again by lifting the rudder, resetting the clamp, and pumping out the unwanted water. Ten miles before Cape Brett, it happened again. This time in darkness and a testing seaway. Another hour of racing progress was lost to the rudder repair and so we agreed to take it easy for the rest of the leg. That strategy lasted about a mile before the FRO went back up. We crossed into Mangōnui frazzled but not last, and somehow still keen to continue.

Leg 2: Glamour start, full-noise finish

FRO up heading north. A couple of hours into what was looking like a variable 3-day leg, the FRO halyard cover failed with a bang. Flailing around to get it down, we hoisted a headsail to maintain progress. Heading toward Cape Reinga, darkness ended our glamour day and we battened down for the night under two reefs and a #3 jib.

Our strategy was to start with watches of 2hrs on, 2hrs off and I'll never forget

Lori's expression as I headed below for my first 'off' watch with 25-30 knots on the nose. With nothing but ugly seas ahead she looked at me and said "What do I do?" Ever the perfect husband, I said "You figure it out. I'm going to bed. Don't break the boat." Of course, she handled it brilliantly and, importantly, didn't break the boat.

The next few days involved tactically threading through light patches and parked-up boats, sending us far, far west under the #1 jib. After the Taranaki oil rigs, tight-reaching toward Waikawa, the vang attachment sheared its bolts from the mast. Working in darkness and exhaustion, I rigged a temporary purchase around the mast base. Lori quickly pointed out my solution was about to rip the deck cleats out. More purchases fixed the issue and reinforced why two brains beat one offshore.

With 20 miles to go, damage and fatigue had us sailing conservatively until *Kick* started closing in. Competitive stupidity mode activated and we agreed to hoist the big kite to keep speed. We accelerated our average from 8-10 knots to 13-15. Then came the puff. We broached hard and couldn't recover. We blew the tack line to dump the sail, only to discover the retrieval line had vanished. Our 190sqm gennaker ended up flying from the masthead and a single sheet while we lay on our side. Easing the halyard made it worse, leaving the sail hanging below the masthead



and behind the transom, dragging us sideways. Eventually it hit the water and we painfully recovered it while *Kick* sailed past filming the spectacle, getting some great footage!

We recovered and headed for Cape Jackson. It was gusting into the mid-30s, and *Storm* became badly unbalanced under the reefed main alone. She really needed a headsail for balance, but with no time to change down from the #1, we were out of options and hoisted it anyway. Wildly overpowered, with the wind squarely up our backside, we charged to the finish at around 16 knots.

Leg 3: Questionable choices

The Waikawa stopover was glorious. Good weather meant we could tackle boat repairs and beer therapy in roughly equal proportions. All too soon it was Leg 3, Waikawa to Napier. The forecast was 35 knots directly on the nose. As we motored 3 hours to the start line, the instrument network died. No autopilot, wind data, or boat speed. Ideal preparation for what Cook Strait was putting out. We dug out spare cables, isolated the fault, and managed to bring the autopilot back to life, but not the others. The start was conservative as the fleet launched into heavy breeze and seas. The sensible boats went around the Brothers Islands. We went through and made it....just!

Wellington's south coast dished up more savage seas and wind before easing around Cape Palliser. After getting pummelled the first night, having to spend a few hours parked up at Palliser was frustrating. Finally, the breeze returned and we hoisted the A3 for a fast reach to Cape Kidnappers for most of day 2. We got the chance to peel to the A2 as we got closer to Napier, enjoying a surprisingly moderate run into the finish line in fading airs.

Leg 4: One last humbling

It began with a punishing beat out of Napier through head seas past Portland Island and eerie sea fog before the wind swung south. We dropped the A2 as breeze built and launched into an epic two-sail send. The seas continued building and we had our hands full pushing *Storm* north, consistently hitting 18-19 knots.

Near East Cape, *Motorboat III* blasted past under gennaker before peeling to FRO and disappearing. *Pipi* the Pogo looked spectacular against the East Cape backdrop. Across the Bay of Plenty the race became highly tactical with light patches and shifting breeze. Around the Mercury Islands we chose to go inside to get a better angle towards Cape Colville. Bad call, as the breeze disappeared.

That wasn't the end of our bad calls. Rounding Colville, brutal sea state and wind against tide convinced us Motuihe Channel was the right route home. What should have been a Sunday finish became a Monday morning nightmare involving a "billionty" tacks up Motuihe Channel in a dying westerly. It was soul destroying watching boats we'd spent days building a lead over sail past us after choosing the better side of Rangitoto.

Miraculously, we found our finishing skates, rode a lucky tide line to ODM, and crossed the line around 5am Monday morning, just in time to pick up our kids and return to work.

Heartfelt thanks to all who helped us along the way.

Bring on 2029! ■



INTRODUCING...

RICHARD LIMBRICK
COOL CHANGE

Kerry sits down with one of our skippers to hear his sailing stories

I have owned *Cool Change* for over 13 years. During that time I've completed the Three Kings Race, the Round North Island Race in 2014 and 2017 and numerous Coastal Classics and Auckland to Tauranga races. Originally launched as the *Dodge*, she's a Murray Ross design but has been significantly modified and really enjoys the wind slightly aft of the beam. I really enjoy the Wednesday and Sunday racing but short-handed and single-handed sailing have always been my passion.

My regular crew is Alex, with whom I share a classic boat, and Ben who owns a Diehler 37. I also sail from time to time with Peter, who I first met in 1987. Other than that my crew tends to be drawn from Friday Night Special sailors who want to go that little bit further in developing their skills.

My connection with Richmond Yacht club began in the early 1990s when I bought my first keel boat, a Harmonic called *Ben Gun*. We used to bring it down from Torbay to race in the longer Richmond events. Involvement continued through the 1990s with the Up to 26 Foot group, an initiative run by Richmond Yacht Club members to bring smaller boats together for competitive racing. In 2016 I was involved with the redevelopment of the Richmond Yacht Club's single-handed series and I been one of the organisers and champions of the series since. I have been on the committee for a number of years, served as Vice Commodore and Commodore for two

terms and I'm currently on the building Committee. Our big challenge at the moment is the refurbishment of the upper level of the clubrooms in order to have it completed by the end of June (this year).

One particularly memorable sailing occasion was a Sunday winter race when we were heading to the Illiomama buoy. We had a mast kite on and we were tracking fairly quickly towards the mark in the gusty conditions. Everyone was standing on the transom trying to keep the bow up. A particularly strong and sustained gust came through and we saw the log peak at 19 kn just before the spinnaker decided to go faster than the boat and that was the end of the ride. I was left with a kite that was shredded from top to bottom!

I was brought up in rural New Zealand and my first sailing experience was in an Idle Along on Lake Wairarapa. I was eight. I finally bought my first boat, an X class, when I left school and moved to Wellington, where I taught myself to sail. Later, I built a trailer sailor then a couple of dinghies on spec. Three Flying Dutchman followed before I bought my first keel boat (a Harmonic) in 1992. *Crikey Dick* followed (a better Harmonic), then the *Travelling Man* (an SR26) and finally *Cool Change*.

Over the last few months I have also taken on a small classic boat called *Crikey Dick* (yes, I did own it previously) with a plan to bring it back to its former glory. We are looking forward to the relaunch in the next few weeks.

For me, Richmond Yacht club has been a special club and I have made many friends over the years. The biggest drawcard is finding people with boats similar to mine who want to do similar events. ■

Richard on Cool Change opposite >>

Officers

PRESIDENT **Hans Swete** - *Transformer*

COMMODORE **Jacky Bush**

VICE COMMODORE **Mike Matthews** - *About Time*

REAR COMMODORE **Allan Geddes** - *Q2*

TREASURER **Steve Morriss** - *Belle*

SECRETARY **John Marshall** - *Dream Machine*

BUILDING MANAGER **David Cashmore** - *Georgia Rae*

SPONSORSHIP **Russell Hawken** sponsorship@richmondyc.org.nz

General Committee

Andy Bevan - *Atamai*

Cameron Le Sueur

Damon Paling - *Oro Rosa*

Gregory Thwaite

Jeremy Cope - *Time Out*

Karen Aw Yong

Keeley Sander - *Perchase*

Richard Limbrick - *Cool Change*

Russell Hawken

Tony Evans - *Predator*

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