

PLAIN SAILING

DECEMBER 2024



RICHMOND
YACHT CLUB



FROM THE FLAG

BY CHRIS CRONE
RYC COMMODORE



Summer is here!

Welcome to all new crew members who have joined up for the Victoria Friday Night Special – there is nothing quite like being out on the water on a summer's Friday evening and we're thrilled to have you on board to experience it! Thanks to all of the RYC skippers who volunteer their time and boats to introduce our Friday nighters to sailing and to the Club.

The RYC Wednesday Night Series is in full swing, and we've had some phenomenal racing in the six races so far. There isn't much daylight between first, second and third places – so anything could happen in the next five races! A huge thanks to our friends at CRC, New World Victoria Park and Sailutions.

The Burnscot 3x3 Summer Blast was a great success, introducing pursuit-style racing to our sailing calendar. We've

had very encouraging feedback from those who took part, so look forward to more pursuit racing next year!

More recently we had the first of our cruising events, the Sir Peter Blake Memorial. Unfortunately the wind didn't come to the party, but we're crossing our fingers for the three remaining events this season, all supported by Yachtshare.

Things get quiet at the Club over Christmas, but they'll roar back into action in mid-January when the Sail GP gets to Auckland! Sign up for tickets to our members-only event at richmondyc.org.nz/sailgp/

In the meantime, on behalf of the committee, I wish all members and their families a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas break. I look forward to seeing you on the water or back at the club soon! ►



THIS ISSUE

**BY DERYN WILLIAMS
EDITOR**

Welcome to the December 2024 issue of Plain Sailing.

In this issue, we welcome a huge new batch of Friday Night Special crew - 44 new crew members!

Nigel gives us a report on the Coastal Classic, and Damon shares his thoughts on the first single-handed weekend race this season.

Russell sends us two more postcards from Barcelona, where he has been enjoying the excitement of the

America's Cup racing.

MetBob lets us know what to expect from the summer cyclone season.

For all you new Friday Night Special crew, this could be the start of your sailing journey, just like for Jonathan and his young family. Check out his story at the back.

Keep an eye out for wildlife when you're out on the water - well spotted Jacky!

Please submit articles to
magazine@richmondyc.org.nz ►



SAILGP IS COMING TO RYC!

We can't wait for SailGP to hit Auckland, and we're looking forward to watching the action from the clubhouse.

We're holding a members-only event at the club on two days, Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th January. Tickets for each day are \$35 (including a free drink and complimentary nibbles) and you can order these at: richmondyc.org.nz/sailgp

We'll have screens set up to watch the televised coverage, not to mention the views out the window towards the rounding marks. Come join your clubmates for a lot of fun watching some seriously frenetic sailing!

Westhaven Marina are expecting a large turnout, so come along and take advantage of the RYC location where you can wander the new seawall, take in the vibe, see all that's going on and then return upstairs for refreshments and food to watch SailGP on the TVs or live on the water ►



WELCOME



New Members

Vaughn Clark

General

Alegre,

Soto 40

William Gorter

General

Magic Dragon,

Magic 25

Scott Burrowes & Elizabeth Carlson

General Family

Wildwood,

Young 88

Jon & Margie Shears

General Family

Pragati Gautamal

Associate

New Crew Members

Jacek Stachowski

Brittany Le Sueur

Michael Jansen

Suzanne Histen

Ben Sharp

James Stent

Daniel Foote

Ali Skinner

Penelope Hamilton

Zane Hamilton

Jen Hilliar

Chris Charles

Matt Vandervecht

Makayla Montgomery

Neil Carpenter

Miroslav Toman

Simone Rinke

Dmitrii Adaikin

Elena Adaikina

Ashley Petherick

Robert Campbell

Mohammed Atiq

Ake Dhimann

Paige Gillingham

Ryan Chadwick

Victor Castaneda

Ashlee Smith

Feng (Terry) Lin

Nick Roberts

Elliot Maassen

Jason Hewitt

Harriet Shaw

Rodney Orton

Sarah French

Chase Bloch

Anila Antony

Niharika Konduri

Andrew Allcock

Pippa Blow

Andrew Stacey

Olivia Tallott

Ocean Mead

George Feast-Parker

Danique Faberd



UPCOMING CALENDAR & EVENTS

December 2024

- 1st Cruising Event (Sir Peter Blake Memorial) & Single-handed Series Races 4 & 5
- 4th Pot Luck Lunch
- 6th Victoria Friday Night Special 5
- 11th Wed Night Series Race 6
- 13th Victoria Friday Night Special 6

January 2025

- 17th - 19th SailGP
- 22nd Wed Night Series Race 7
- 24th Cruising Event (Mahurangi) &

- Single-handed Series Race 6
- 27th Auckland Anniversary Day Regatta
- 31st Victoria Friday Night Special 7

February 2025

- 5th Pot Luck Lunch
- 5th Wed Night Series Race 8
- 14th Victoria Friday Night Special 8 (Final)
- 19th Wed Night Series Race 9
- 21st Cruising Event (Kawau) & Single-handed Series Race 7
- 23rd Single-handed Series Race 8 (Kawau return)

The kitchen is open for dinner after racing on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the summer.



2024 COASTAL CLASSIC

BY NIGEL GARLAND,
KATANA

Sprint or marathon? 119nm from Devonport to Russell.

A forecast 2% chance of a northerly stayed true for race day. Fortunately, the forecast had moderated a little, but was still suggesting 30kn gusts and a nasty sea state heading into Cape Brett, so we approached the 24-hour upwind slog with a good deal of caution.

The fleet was a lot smaller than normal due to a good number of people having been in Barcelona for the America's Cup, as well as some issues with boats getting Cat III in time, and many pulling the pin early due to the forecast. Not a race for the smaller boats who normally enjoy a good downwind slide.

Our start was in the middle at 9.45am, in perfect clear conditions of 8-12kn. We were a bit deep and struggled along in dirty air before a short tack into North Head and then again tacking onto starboard down the North Shore to keep out of the tide. That



seemed to work well, but a lot of the fleet had gone right, which was supposedly the right thing to do, so we followed with a tack to Rakino when we got the opportunity. From there it was up around the outside of Tiritiri Matangi with the breeze pushing up to 25kn, so we put reefs in main and jib. We had a few issues requiring some sewing of a reef line cover and webbing to the main slides, but we were still heading in the right direction on a beautiful day.

We had a nice long starboard stretch inside Sail Rock as it started to get dark. The breeze seemed to be building again, so we took the opportunity to change down to the smaller jib in the flat water under the Hen. Also a good chance for everyone to take on some more food before the long night ahead.

The breeze then eased and we were under-powered at stages, but with the forecast staying gusty, we thought it was better to stick with the conservative set-up. It was choppy but a lovely night of sailing with warm clear skies. The bucket got plenty of use with everyone peeing into it (too dangerous over the side and too bumpy in the head near the bow) and the old hands all taking a turn to add some texture with dinner residues. Three out of the five got seasick.

We tacked out again shortly after



Tutakaka and were close to laying the Brett when we tacked back on starboard. That soon became an easy task with a 10-degree lift and some extra pressure. We had a great last few hours sailing into Brett in a pretty consistent 20kn, without any of the forecasted big gusts. The moon finally came up about 4am to provide a little light, but the cloud then rolled in so it didn't get light until after 6am. We sailed through the gap at Cape Brett in the light about 7am in surprisingly flat seas. We had been having a good battle with Niksen up the coast and Titanium also followed us through.



The wind was lighter in the Bay, up with a code 0 across to Red Head, before hoisting an asymmetric kite for the run to Tapeka. The breeze was building again and Niksen were able to surf past us on the northerly swell. It was a couple of gybes to the finish at 8.45am. An enjoyable way to finish after 20 hours on the wind.

This was the first time Katana had completed the Coastal fully crewed. It was great to have a couple of



hours sleep and even better to have help tidying up. After a breakfast wrap and couple of rums at anchor we were feeling great. The forecast was horrible for the Saturday so it was good to be able to get Katana a berth on the wharf for the night while we made the most of sleeping ashore and a fun prize-giving party.

Speaking of prizes - Katana's efforts were mid-fleet but I'd been emailed a couple of days earlier to enter a RYC team for the Yacht Club Teams prize. 4 boats - 3 best scores count. I thought ourselves, Indis, Apparition and Carpe Diem but I didn't have any contact details for Apparition so put in Hotdogger instead. I think there only ended up being 3 teams entered and though Hotdogger pulled out at Kawau the 3 of us had done well enough to take the trophy for RYC. Ironically, Apparition was the best RYC boat in the event and sailed really well in conditions that wouldn't normally suit them.

It is a big effort to get everything ready but a lot of fun both ways. ■



POSTCARDS FROM BARCELONA #2 & #3

BY RUSSELL HAWKEN



After a short break, it was on to the Louis Vuitton Cup Finals.

My expectation was that Luna Rossa would ace the finals so they would be pretty boring. They were anything but!

We arranged our sightseeing (Sitges, Picasso Museum, Cathedrals, Old City...) around the race days and I became an addict. Waiting for races to start in the local (Bogatell) Fan Zone was exciting, with unpredictable wind and water conditions causing delayed starts, making the 3 min announcements eagerly anticipated before each race - to be greeted by cheers or groans! Too much wind or not enough, what will it be today? We were all hanging on the race committee announcements.

Then there were boat problems on board Luna Rossa, and the 50-knot crash which ended one race - but with Luna Rossa taping everything together between races and going on to win! It couldn't have been

scripted better.

It was really amazing to see how close the boats frequently got when going close to 50 knots, incredible closing speeds which required split second decision making - Wednesday night racing will seem so slow when I get back!

So, after many days the teams were even at 4-4. Then the Ineos Britannia team won 2 races in a day (by seconds only), so the next day was a 'must win' race for Luna Rossa, but Britannia came through, and the celebrations commenced. All credit to Luna Rossa, but in reality, the Ineos team had looked pretty flawless with no 'breakdowns' throughout the finals.



It is just incredible to see how fast these teams make their boats go! This was brought into stark contrast yesterday when the J Boats were racing (with crews of 38) - they looked like snails as the AC45's zipped past them.

Of course, we hope that Emirates Team New Zealand will have the legs on Ineos Briannia but with so few passes made in the Louis Vuitton Cup, once you are ahead you are most likely to win. Whatever you think about foiling this is amazing sailing - roll on the Cup races.!

(Postcard dated 6th Oct)



And now the America's Cup!

In between watching the AC Women's racing – and feeling really sad about the ETNZ Women falling off the foils after being well ahead in one of their qualifying races, we 'attended' the opening ceremony at Bogatell beach. So many people and an amazing event with drones making patterns and buildings in the sky, lit-up local sailing boats going past, all sorts of music – a real tribute to Barcelona. Have a look at "Barcelona far al món" on YouTube – it does not do it justice.



Sadly, the ETNZ women, after making the semi-finals, did not make the final and ended up 5th.

Chris and I attended the RNZYS dinner the evening before the AC racing. It was a great event at the Maritime Museum with another 400 or so Kiwi supporters. All 'experts' picked ETNZ to win (retain) the cup, but by varying margins – we shall see!

First day of the cup – and all Kiwis seemed pretty nervous. What races! Light conditions and with 2/0 by the end of the day, relief and hope. All expect Ineos to take some races, but now we know that ETNZ are extremely competitive. Day 2 is going to be light again but we approach it with more confidence.

And day 2 delivered! 3/0 and more Barcelona variable weather, so race 4 was on the 1st reserve day. Now 4/0 and lots of negative talk from Ineos about the judges. Clear port/starboard situations from what I could see.

Next day, ETNZ off the foils for one race and trailing for all of the other race after a poor start. Kiwis in Barcelona were very quiet with the 4/2 score! Next day saw us at the W

Hotel with a view over the racecourse and the TV commentary. Everyone was very nervous. But 2 impeccably sailed races, a score of 6/2, and hopes were high again.

Next day and predictions of very light winds and no racing. We went to the Club Real Nautico Barcelona, the sister yacht club to the RNZYS. And after a 40 minute delay, the

cheers were echoing around the room – 7/2!! Emotions were high, eyes were wet and the champagne was flowing. Well done ETNZ!

We had watched the dockout at midday and now watched the return in crowded waters. Then to the race village to celebrate more and to watch the cup being awarded to ETNZ.

What a campaign and what a place to hold the Cup. I don't think there are many people who did not enjoy the Barcelona beaches, the old city and the overall hospitality. And now ETNZ is the most successful Americas Cup team in modern history – and well deserved.

(Postcard dated 22nd Oct) ■



SOLO WEEKEND

BY DAMON PALING, ORO ROSA
October 12th and 13th

A Tale of Two Thrilling Days on the Water!

RYC's 2024 Solo Series kicked off with a bang, treating sailors and spectators to two unforgettable days of racing. With the wind up, the sun shining, and competitive spirits at an all-time high, around 20 yachts from RYC and Pine Harbour squared off—taking on both the elements and each other. Across two days, racers battled fresh gusts and tactical manoeuvres, creating a weekend filled with close encounters, adrenaline-pumping moments, and stories for the ages

Day One: Reefs, Indis, and Haystack Scrapes

The first race of the weekend began with a fresh southwest wind, blowing 20 knots and steadily building to 25.



This was not for the faint of heart. Those who wisely reefed their main sails early found themselves better positioned when the gusts really kicked in. Starting from

the Northern Leading Buoy and heading toward Gulf Harbour, the course took the fleet on a fast, thrilling reach to Cable Buoy before a wild downwind run towards the Haystack. It was an exhilarating ride, as the fleet tore across the water with sails reefed and helms tightly gripped.

Andy on Indis was a man on a mission as he unleashed his Fro and shot toward Cable Buoy, only to see it tear from luff to leech. Quick thinking saw the Fro retired back below deck, but Indis stayed in the hunt, playing the conditions masterfully to stay in the race. In true sailor fashion, Steve on Belle seemed determined to inspect the Haystack up close, narrowly avoiding a collision, much to the relief of his fellow sailors and his beloved boat. These daring moves were the talk over beers later that evening.



The racing was tight, with little room for error, as sailors dug deep into their reserves of experience to navigate through the gusty, choppy conditions. The fleet battled a wild reach to Navy Buoy before facing a nasty short beat upwind to Gulf Harbour and the finish line. By the time the boats crossed the line, a collective sigh of relief swept over the fleet.

After the day's exertions, sailors gathered for a well-deserved roast dinner at Gulf Harbour, sharing stories, laughter, and, of course, the occasional exaggerated tale of near misses and bold moves. With trophies handed out to the handicap winners from both RYC and Pine Harbour, it was clear that this weekend was about much more than just racing—it was a celebration of camaraderie, sportsmanship, and the

pure joy of sailing. Monotone, Indis, and The Entertainer claimed podium places in the Extras Division. On corrected time, only 13 minutes separated the fleet. While the first battle was over, there was plenty more racing to come.

Day Two: Blue Skies, Kites, and Code Zeros

Day two couldn't have been more different. Gone were the gusty southwest winds of the previous day. In their place, a gentle north westerly breeze of 10-12 knots and calm seas greeted the sailors. With blue skies overhead and the sun beaming down, conditions were perfect for hoisting kites and Code Zero sails.

After the excitement of the previous race, Race 2 was all about finesse and tactics. Starting from Gulf Harbour, the course took the fleet around Piripiri Buoy at the northern end of Long Bay Regional Park, then along the North Shore beaches to Cable Buoy, before finishing at Northern Leading Buoy. It was a tactical challenge that tested boat handling skills in close quarters and demanded precise sail management.



The long stretch from Piripiri to Cable Buoy was a sight to behold, with a vibrant array of kites and Code Zero sails dotting the coastline. Competitors pushed their boats to the limit and as the race wore on, the tactical decisions

made earlier in the day began to pay dividends as the fleet closed in on the finish line. Steve sailing The Entertainer, Cool Change, and Indis secured podium spots in the Extras Division. On corrected time, only 10 minutes separated the fleet.

A Toast to the Weekend

Special mention must be made of Richard on Cool Change, the event's lead organiser, who deserves a hearty round of applause for pulling off such a seamless and exciting weekend.



Steve on Pipi, despite being away in Barcelona watching the America's Cup, was also recognised for his efforts to rally mates from Pine Harbour and grow the solo fleet. His initiative clearly paid off, with a strong turnout and a fantastic weekend of racing.

Kevin and Hans on Murphy's Law kept a watchful eye on the fleet throughout the weekend, ensuring that everything ran smoothly and that all boats made it safely back to shore. Their efforts, combined with the generous sponsorship from Cool Store Construction, helped make this Solo Weekend one to remember.

Steve on The Entertainer showed off his rekindled navigational skills, avoiding any unwanted encounters with the rocks, and now sets the early pace for the 2024 Solo Series ahead of Race 3, scheduled for Sunday, November 3.

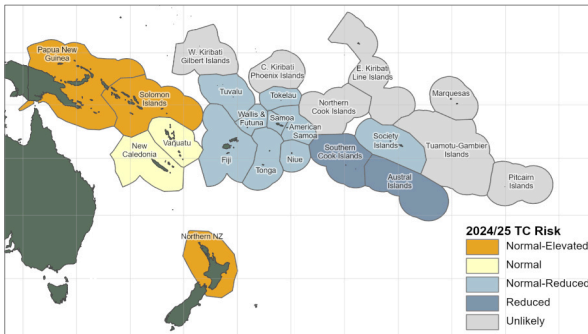
Here's to the next round of racing—may the winds be fair, the seas calm, and the Haystack remain unscathed! ■

TROPICAL CYCLONE SEASON

BY BOB "METBOB" MCDAVITT

Are we going to be hit by cyclones this season?

The NIWA and MetService assessment of tropical cyclone (TC) activity for the coming season (from start of November 2024 to end April 2025) indicates normal to below normal activity. (Six to 10 named TCs could occur in the Southwest Pacific from November 2024-April 2025. The long-



term average number of named TCs per season is around nine.

The risk of impact from a TC is expected to be higher near the Coral Sea, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea, as illustrated in the following map. Normal to reduced risk is anticipated in the central and eastern part of the basin.

Tropical cyclone outlook summary for New Zealand

On average, at least one ex-TC passes within 550 km of New Zealand each year. This season, the risk is considered normal-elevated.

If an ex-TC tracks close to the country, there is a near-equal

probability of it tracking to the east or west of the North Island based on historical climate data.

Two out of five analogue years considered in this outlook had at least one ex-TC passing within 550 km of the country.

Analogue years suggest that a decaying ex-TC entering the New Zealand region could affect maritime and coastal areas around the North Island, and an interaction with the South Island cannot be ruled out.

El Niño-Southern Oscillation Outlook

Sea surface temperatures across the eastern and central equatorial Pacific Ocean are below average and close to La Niña thresholds.

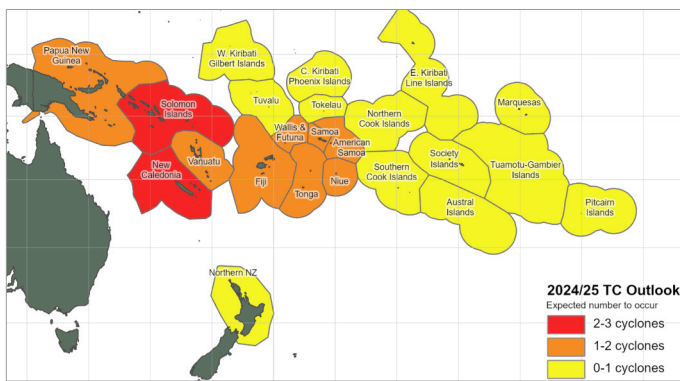
Atmospheric circulation patterns related to ENSO over French Polynesia and northern Australia indicate neutral ENSO conditions as of early October 2024.

So, taking these measurements into account, this suggests that a La Niña, of weak-to-moderate intensity, has a 60-70%

chance of emerging by December 2024. La Niña conditions, should they develop, are likely to persist through the back half of the TC season in February-April.

Watch the NIWA video at youtu.be/Jdy9IJ2tOv4

With thanks to NIWA and MetService. ■



A NEWBIE'S JOURNEY

BY JONATHAN ALLAN

Charting My Course: A Journey Into the World of Sailing

After 30 years of frustration on the golf course, where immense power was always overshadowed by extreme inaccuracy, I decided it was time for a change. My golf game was a lost cause, and I needed a new hobby, something that would challenge me in a different way. It was around this time that I moved into a place overlooking the West Harbour Marina. As I stood on my balcony, gazing out at the endless stretch of blue water, I realised something: it was almost criminal that I hadn't tried sailing, especially given everything Auckland and the wider region offers in terms of maritime adventure.

The idea of sailing started to take root in my mind. To get a better sense of what I was diving into, I bought a book on sailing and started watching YouTube videos. One series in particular, chronicling Eric Aanderaa's repeated attempts (and failures) to sail from Norway to Greenland, became a favourite. Watching his determination, even in the face of setbacks, was both entertaining and inspiring. It showed me that sailing wasn't just about success; it was about resilience, learning from mistakes, and the joy of the journey itself.

Still, I hesitated to take the plunge. I had this image of yacht clubs as exclusive enclaves, where membership required owning a yacht and navigating a minefield of etiquette traps. The idea of joining one felt daunting, to say the least. But then, Chris Crone, a workmate



of mine, mentioned the Friday Night Special. He explained that it was a casual event, perfect for newcomers like me who wanted to dip their toes into the world of sailing without any pressure.

Encouraged by Chris's words, I signed up for the Friday Night Special about 18 months ago. It was an eye-opener in the best possible way. The event was relaxed and welcoming, offering the perfect opportunity to spend time on different boats and get a feel for what sailing was really about.

One of my first experiences was sailing with Steve Morriss on his boat, Belle. It was everything I had hoped for and more. The sensation of the wind filling the sails, the boat cutting through the water, and the teamwork involved in making everything run smoothly—it was exhilarating. Steve is a good teacher, patient and knowledgeable, and a great human being.

What started as a single Friday night quickly turned into a regular commitment. Then I began crewing for Steve during the Wednesday Night



series and the Winter Sailing Series, each time learning something new. The more I sailed, the more I realised how much I enjoyed it. The challenges of sailing—reading the wind, trimming the sails, strategising during races—were exactly the kind of mental and physical workout I had been looking for.

Last Christmas, my wife gifted me a Level 1 Sailing Certificate course at Great Escape in the Bay of Islands. It was spread over two days, with just me and the instructor on a Noelex 25. I learned a lot, but the real highlight was the experience of sailing through the Bay of Islands. The area is absolutely majestic, with heaps of little uninhabited islands to anchor off and explore. It was during this trip that I decided I had to get a yacht of my own one day and bring my family back to experience this incredible place together.

With this goal in mind, I started to think about a massive propaganda campaign to win over my wife and our two daughters, aged 2 and 5. I reached out to Marcus at Yachtshare. He was more than happy to help, and we arranged a trip on his Beneteau Oceanis 41 to

Motuihe Island. The trip was a success in every way, and it was clear that the seed had been planted. When my youngest daughter woke me up one morning after, excitedly telling me about a dream she had of a “biiiiigggggg yacht,” I knew the momentum was building. My wife has since given me tentative agreement on signing up for a yacht after the summer, and I couldn’t be more delighted.



As I spent more time on the water, I also started to spend more time at the Richmond Yacht Club. Here I’ve found a bunch of good geezers who are passionate about the sea and eager to welcome newcomers. The Friday Night Special, along with other events organised by the club, provide endless opportunities to learn and bond with fellow sailors. The camaraderie within the club was something I hadn’t expected but quickly came to value. It wasn’t just about sailing; it was about being part of a community that shared a common love for the ocean and the challenges it presents.

As I look to the future, there’s one long-term dream that stands out above all others: a personal sailing pilgrimage back to my ancestral lands of Scotland. It’s a dream that combines my love for sailing with a deep connection to my heritage, and it’s something I’m determined to achieve one day. But for now, my focus is on continuing to build my skills, enjoy time on the water with my family, and perhaps, by the end of the summer, finally having a yacht of my ‘own’ in the Yachtshare sense. It’s a lifelong adventure, and I can’t wait to see where the wind takes me next. ■



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