

# PLAIN SAILING

MARCH 2025



RICHMOND  
YACHT CLUB



# FROM THE FLAG

BY CHRIS CRONE  
RYC COMMODORE

## **It's been a busy start to the year for the Richmond Yacht Club.**

In January, SailGP finally made it to Auckland! While the Kiwi team didn't have tremendous results, we had a fun time at the Club, hosting club members and families for two days to watch the racing. Unfortunately the officials laid the course further east than we were hoping, so the best views were definitely on the TVs, but it still made for an enjoyable atmosphere both inside the Club and along the seawall.

Our Wednesday Night Series has been a blast this season, and will have wrapped up by the time you read this. Thanks to all competitors, our volunteers and of course series sponsors CRC, New World Victoria Park and Sailutions, for making summer racing such a success.

The Friday Night Special has also been a huge success over summer. The seminar after the final race was titled "Where to from here?" and laid out several options for new sailors to take further steps into the sport. To all FNSers, it's been fantastic having you out sailing with us and we as a Club



would love to help you any way we can on your future sailing journey.

Some Friday Nighters took a big step and found crew spots for this year's Route 66 to Marsden Cove. While the wind was hit-and-miss at times, most sailors reported an enjoyable race. Thanks to all of our R66 sponsors for making the event possible, particularly our terrific hosts Marsden Cove Marina. A number of our intrepid single- and double-handers tripled the excitement and took on the challenge of our Gulf Triangle, thanks to Excel Refrigeration.

The days are getting shorter, but there's still a lot of racing to be had, with the upcoming Closing Day Regatta in April and Winter Series kicking off in May, so stay tuned for more notices about those.

Before I finish, a huge "Thank You" from the Club to Sharon Hill, who took over the reins of Club Administrator for a year while Kerry Bevan was on maternity leave, and a huge "Welcome Back" to Kerry.

That about wraps it up - see you on the water or back at the Club! ▶



# THIS ISSUE

BY DERYN WILLIAMS  
EDITOR

## Welcome to the March 2025 issue of Plain Sailing.

In this issue, we have several trip reports of all the exciting sailing events over summer.

Damon gives us a run-down of the Gulf Triangle, a lovely weekend of short-handed sailing up to Marsden Cove and out to Great Barrier. I also hitched a ride with Trish on Chico Too.

Check out the photo spread of the Route 66 and lots of happy winners.

Keeley tells us about the Mahurangi



cruising weekend, with all the classic yachts making a spectacular display.

Mel describes her first night race to Kawau and admires the stars along the way.

We've also included a slice of history with Kevin Lidgard sharing some stories from the Starter Box.

Please submit articles to [magazine@richmondyc.org.nz](mailto:magazine@richmondyc.org.nz) ▶

## FROM THE COMMITTEE

### We want to future-proof Richmond Yacht Club.

This year's AGM (Friday 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025) will see a major agenda item being put to a vote to all club members. Having been built in 1940, our clubrooms are now 85 years old, which, combined with the long-term proposed changes for the Westhaven seawall, has got the general committee thinking that we need to put some long-term planning in place. Accordingly, we're proposing the

establishment of an Endowment Fund that provides future members with the financial resources so they have more options available for the direction of our club in the coming decades. A draft outline of the proposal, along with a supporting opinion from the club's honorary solicitor, will be distributed closer to the AGM and will also be available from the office. If you have any questions on this, please direct them to Kerry in the office and she will pass them on. ▶





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# UPCOMING CALENDAR & EVENTS

## March 2025

- 5<sup>th</sup> Pot Luck Lunch  
Wed Night Series Race 10
- 7<sup>th</sup> Marsden Cove Route 66
- 7<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> Gulf Triangle Short-handed  
3-race Regatta
- 19<sup>th</sup> Wed Night Series Race 11 (final)
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Cruise Rally

## April 2025

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Pot Luck Lunch
- 5<sup>th</sup> Single-handed Series Race 9
- 12<sup>th</sup> Closing Day Regatta (Haystack)  
& Single-handed Series Race 10 (final)

# WELCOME



## New Members

**Tom Laurie**  
General  
*Prism,*  
Stewart 34

**Liz DiFiore & Kevin Donovan**  
General Family  
*Arikitahi*

## May 2025

- 7<sup>th</sup> Pot Luck Lunch
- 11<sup>th</sup> Winter Series Race 1
- 25<sup>th</sup> Winter Series Race 2



# MAHURANGI NIGHT RACE 2025

BY KEELEY SANDER,  
PERCHANSE

## Classic yachts and wild weather.

A stunning evening - the sun was warm, the water sparkly and the wind quite elusive. The wind huffed and puffed around 6 knots westerly shifting to north westerly, eventually disappearing all together by 8:30pm. Most of the fleet were parked up by the Rangitoto Lighthouse without so much as a whisper of wind. Tutahi broke the silence first and the gentle hum of her motor saw her getting to Mahurangi first. One by one, the fleet broke free from their drifting purgatory, with Moving Violation the last to retire for the evening.

Some took shelter for the evening in Gulf Harbour, others motored well into the night to get to Mahurangi. For those who motored, they awoke to a pageantry of yesteryear's finest classic launches as they sashayed around the harbour.



The start of the classic boat race was set and about 11:20am around 80 classic beauties crossed the line, everything from L Class 22 Mullets, Mid Century Classics, Sailing Dinghies to



the pre-1955's traditional wooden classics. Representing RYC in the fleet was Apparition and Patere (qualifying as a design prior to 1985). Apparition did look a bit out of place with carbon sails and winches!



Throughout the morning, the wind built and the course had well over 60 classics threading the needle between the anchored boats in the harbour. It was one of the best race experiences ever, having 30-40 foot classics cross your bow or stern with wind gusting up to 25 knots and a very real threat of being T-boned. What was very evident was how skilled their skippers were





and how hard their crew had to work. No winches and limited blocks - the mainsail trimmers had their work cut out for them.

Chico Too, Tutahi and Perchance were the spectator fleet cheering on Apparition and Patere as they sailed up to the mark of Scott's Landing.

The Dinghies were a highlight; kids, dads, solo sailors and some skippers nearly as old as their Frostbites, Minstrels, Zephyrs, and Sunbursts.

Taipan, Apparition and Perchance enjoyed the champagne breakfast, with others in the fleet understandably making a run for home on Saturday evening to get ahead of the 50-knot winds that blasted through overnight. These winds brought a big thunderstorm in the distance, which we found out later had caused havoc in Mangawhai.

Sunday was another day of racing, or just a great day to be out of the water

heading back to Auckland with other classic yachts. As the Mahurangi boats made their way south, the Bay Of Islands Sailing Week boats were also passing through. Hotdogger was seen speeding down the Gulf, spinnaker flying at around 12 knots of boat speed!



Wow, what a magical weekend and for those who have not yet experienced it, 2026 is your moment! ■



## Richmond Winter Series

5 DIVISIONS ~ 9 RACES

FIRST RACE ~ SUNDAY MAY 11<sup>TH</sup>

THEN EVERY SECOND SUNDAY

LAST RACE ~ SUNDAY AUG 31<sup>ST</sup>





# ROUTE 66 2025



66nm from the start at Richmond Yacht Club to finish at Onerahi Yacht Club in Marsden Cove.

Here's a selection of photos from the start and finish. Congratulations to all the winners!

Thanks to all the volunteers from RYC and OYC and a huge thank you to all our sponsors! ■







# THE GULF TRIANGLE

BY DAMON PALING, ORO ROSA  
7<sup>TH</sup> - 9<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

## A Thrilling Three Days

The Excel Refrigeration Gulf Triangle once again proved why it is one of the most thrilling and unpredictable races on the Club's calendar. With a course stretching from Westhaven to Marsden Cove, then to Great Barrier, and back home, the 2025 edition delivered all the hallmarks of classic Gulf sailing: shifting winds,

tactical challenges, and a camaraderie that defines the spirit of our Club.

This year saw a fleet of eight yachts, evenly split between four solo and four double-handers, each team setting out with a blend of competitive drive and an appreciation for the adventure that lay ahead.

Among them were Trish and Deryn on Chico Too, marking the first-ever female double-handed team to take on the Gulf Triangle. Stakes were high in the solo division as seasoned campaigners in the form of Nigel sailing Katana,

Rodney sailing Peppermint Planet, and Michael sailing Penury once again entered the fray.



## Day One: Spinnakers and gybes aplenty

The race kicked off from Westhaven under a light southerly, giving competitors a promising start as they charged through the Tiri Passage and past Kawau Island towards Marsden Cove with spinnakers flying. However, as is often the case in the Gulf, the wind had its own plans. The breeze softened off Bream Tail, turning what had been a steady ride into a test of patience and sail-trimming finesse. Thankfully, a westerly filled in, rewarding those who had positioned themselves wisely with a welcome reach to the finish under the Whangarei Heads. Michael on Penury and Richard & Pete on Cool Change took handicap honours in the single and double-handed divisions respectively.



## Day Two: Finding the fast lane to Nagle Cove

The second leg from Marsden Cove to Great Barrier saw a delayed start at 11:30am and fickle winds, with competitors drifting slowing towards Sail Rock. Come early afternoon, the fleet welcomed a new westerly breeze, and spinnakers were rapidly raised aloft



with great sailing enjoyed by all. However, as the winds started gusting 20 knots, spinnakers were quickly doused turning the final stretch into a high-speed ride towards Nagle Cove. With boats flying along at 9 knots, the thrill of the chase was evident as the fleet powered into Great Barrier, eager for an evening of well-earned rest. Penury and Zen took handicap honours in the single and double-handed divisions respectively.



No adventure is complete without a bit of drama, and this year, Oro Rosa wrapped a spinnaker sheet around the propeller upon entry to Nagle Cove. Damon found himself taking

not one, but two swims to untangle a stubborn sheet from the propeller. With borrowed flippers, snorkel, and mask, and plenty of advice from fellow sailors, after a few determined efforts and some deep breaths, Oro Rosa was back in action.

The hospitality that awaited them at Nagle Cove was second to none, thanks to Kevin and Hans on Murphy's Law, who opened their boat as the de facto social hub of the stopover. As competitors shared stories, compared notes, and enjoyed the camaraderie, the spirit of the event was fully on display.

### **Day Three: A game of patience and attrition**

The final day brought a fresh southerly at 20 knots, giving competitors a strong beat in steep waves out of the Barrier. But in keeping with the weekend's unpredictable theme, the breeze eventually fizzled out by mid-

afternoon as yachts tracked across towards Tiritiri Matangi, leaving the fleet drifting once again and forcing yet another round of tactical manoeuvring. The forecast Easterly failed to arrive. And just when it seemed like an endless wait, a new Southerly breeze arrived, filling sails and delivering the fleet under moonlit evening skies safely back to Auckland.

Katana and Oro Rosa took handicap honours in the single and double-handed divisions respectively.



### **The True Champions**

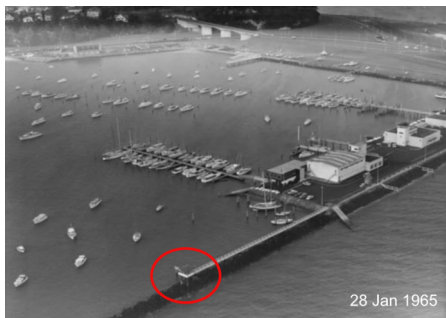
This event would not be possible without the passion and inspiration of Richard, whose vision for the Gulf Triangle has created an event that embodies the adventurous spirit of racing. A huge thank you also goes to Excel Refrigeration, whose support ensures that races like this can continue to challenge and unite our sailing community. While podium finishes always deserve recognition, the real champions of the Gulf Triangle were those who not only completed the three-day challenge but somehow found the strength to show up to work on Monday morning—a true feat of endurance and commitment in itself! As the fleet recovers and reflects on another unforgettable edition of the Gulf Triangle, one thing is certain: the call of the Gulf will be just as strong next year, and we'll all be back for another round of adventure, strategy, and camaraderie on the water. ■

# STORIES FROM THE STARTER BOX

BY KEVIN LIDGARD

As you may have noticed, the shared Starters Box at Westhaven has been undergoing a significant refurbishment, thanks to Eke Panuku.

For a bit of background, in 1962 my parents and others were privileged to be allocated a berth in the first issue of marinas at Westhaven. The first pier of berths is to the left of the Auckland Motor Yacht Club (now the RNZYS Youth building) in this photo from 1965.



28 Jan 1965

From 1956, the Harbour Bridge presented a risk to yachts manoeuvring while starting races run from the clubrooms, especially the PCC. To solve this issue, the Auckland Harbour Board constructed a walkway over the Westhaven Seawall around 100 meters long and built a Starters Box to be shared by all clubs.

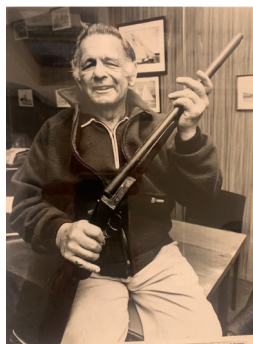
When the car park was extended in 1983, the walkway was removed, but the Starter Box was left situated on the seawall untouched until it was moved east a couple of years ago.

Jo (The Pipe) Clark was a starter for the PCC as was Min Harold. A shotgun was used to start and finish races before the hooter system.



It is easier to understand why yacht racing moved away from the shotgun method when you know the history of two PCC members.

Min Harold had a twitchy trigger finger and blew the



window out of the Westhaven Starters Box on more than one occasion. After this, it was decided to fit a tube through the north-facing wall so that the shotgun could be pointed

through that before pulling the trigger, but the story goes that Ron Copeland who actually came up with the idea and fitted the tube, blew the window out again while he was loading the shotgun before placing it through the dedicated gunport!

On November 11, 1988, Westhaven experienced a full armed offenders' turnout. It had been reported that a person armed with a shotgun and walking with a drunken roll was about to attempt a hold-up. It was Joe (The Pipe) returning from Motuhe Island after taking finishing times of the Foruna Regatta.

Jo (The Pipe) Clark caused an armed offenders' callout in 1988 when he headed back from the Starter Box with a shotgun over his shoulder. ■

# NIGHT RACE TO KAWAU

BY MELANIE ADRIAANSEN

## First Night Sail

I was lucky enough to be invited to crew for Trish Beken on Chico Too for the Night Race to Kawau. It was my first time heading away with Richmond Yacht Club and my first night sail. We started the race as the first boat across the start line at Westhaven, and Trish and I celebrated with a quick high five before heading on to North Head. The single-handed race division weren't so lucky, and all four boats crossed the start line five minutes early, with three of the boats turning back to restart the race.

The wind started off strong but soon settled into a constant SW 15 knots, which was a great way to test out Chico Too's brand new genoa. We progressively unfurled it over the course of the race until we were charging along under full sail. At 30 feet, Chico Too was one of the smaller boats, but with the new genoa we were

able to keep up with the fleet most of the way. We sailed closer to Rangitoto, instead of along the East Coast, and the strong winds got us to Tiritiri Matangi in good time. The darkness and stars were just setting in. From here, the first night mark to look for was the Navy buoy. Trish made me take the helm while she went forward to check the navigation lights. I focussed my helming on following the compass bearing and was happy that I was able to keep Chico Too on course in the dark! A new skill for me.

Behind us was Jeremy on Time Out slowly closing in and we knew it would be a tight finish at Kawau. As Trish took the helm back, I took a moment to look up at the distinct band of stars that formed the Milky Way in our night sky. This view, combined with the gentle sound of splashing waves against the hull, was a breath-taking moment. How lucky we are to experience this. I was living the dream!

Halfway between Tiri and Kawau we spotted Flat Rock mark in the distance.

"Count how many seconds there are between flashes," Trish said to me, "It should be 5 or 10."

After a few tries at counting, I said "I'm not sure... I've got 8 seconds."







line just in front of him.

My first night sail felt like a huge success, and I am extremely grateful for Trish's gentle encouragement and guidance on our journey.

Signed,

A soon to be Club Member. ■

What terrible night crew I make - I can't even count! We had some conversation about whether it should be 5 or 10 seconds and decided it must be 10. But the next day when we looked at the charts it was 7 seconds between flashes - so I wasn't too far off with my original count. At this point, we heard over the radio that Perchance and High Voltage were crossing the finish line. We weren't too far off, either.

Thanks to the constant South-Westerly we didn't tack much on our sail, and this gave us some time to have a delightful cup of soup and some of Trish's homemade fruit cake. I swear food had never tasted so good!

As we headed past Motuketekete, the winds turned light, and we were again grateful for the large size of the new genoa. Jeremy was trying to quietly sneak past us on the port side, but up ahead we saw the strobe light on Taipan, and we managed to cross the

## Flat Rock, Kawau



Maritime New Zealand's lighthouse expert says the white structure is the MNZ light, Admiralty number K3738 Flat Rock, originally built around 1918, and updated around 1950. The white tower is fibreglass, mounted on a round concrete pier. Its signal is a white flash every seven seconds. The dark stone spike is or was the original mark on the rock, probably pre-1900.

*Editor's Note for the Curious  
(from NZ Herald):*





## Officers

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VICE COMMODORE **Jacky Bush**

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

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

SPONSORSHIP **Jacky Bush** [sponsorship@richmondyc.org.nz](mailto:sponsorship@richmondyc.org.nz)

## General Committee

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**Andy Bevan** - *Atamai*

**Damon Paling** - *Oro Rosa*

**Gregory Thwaite**

**Jeremy Cope** - *Time Out*

**Richard Limbrick** - *Cool Change*

**Russell Hawken**

**Tony Evans** - *Predator*

**Keeley Sander** - *Perchance* [co-opted]

## Office Hours

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ADMINISTRATOR **Kerry Bevan**

Tues - Fri. 10am - 2pm

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## Magazine

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See your name in print! We would love to hear your stories and feedback.

To submit news, stories or photos, email us at: [magazine@richmondyc.org.nz](mailto:magazine@richmondyc.org.nz)

Thanks to Kate Herstell, Jacky Bush, and all contributors for their photos.



Thank you to our generous sponsors:

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