



Maylands Yacht Club December 10 2004

Commodore's Comments



Welcome to the mid season edition of **The Mudlark**.

During the first half of the summer sailing season we have had good size fleets of Lasers and a few mixed fleet class boats racing each week. We have experienced a variety of breezes and courses with some very competitive racing and all sailors gradually getting better at getting the most out of their boats. I notice many relaxed members around the club, some friendly bantering on and off the water and sailors seemingly enjoying the sailing. Zooming along *on a reach* on a Sunday afternoon is a wonderful contrast to what most of us do during the rest of the week to make ends meet.

We have healthy membership numbers and an active voluntary Committee, which meets monthly and attends to a range of matters to make sure the Club, continues to run smoothly. We are also grateful to have many volunteers who help out each race day to ensure the smooth running of the training and racing events. On a typical Sunday race day; after the volunteers have wound up the training program at midday, after Joanne has voluntarily provided us with hot pies, after the volunteers in the starting box Max, Jan and Sandy have got us off the start line, after Mal has voluntarily kept an eye on us from the support boat, after several volunteers have packed away the support boats and hoses and locked the boat storage doors, after Blake and Ross have voluntarily sorted out the results, after we voluntarily buy the (compulsory) chook raffle tickets, we can finally enjoy a drink served by Kim our friendly voluntary bar person.

Ken Patterson (Rear Commodore Training) and his assistants continue to do a tremendous job providing regular Sunday morning training for a group of enthusiastic younger learner dinghy sailors. Ken has reported that all the trainees are fast learning how to get the boats to go in the direction they intend the boats to go and are generally gaining in confidence and expertise. It is great to see one of the Mirrors with a young crew from the training squad having a go at racing in the afternoons.

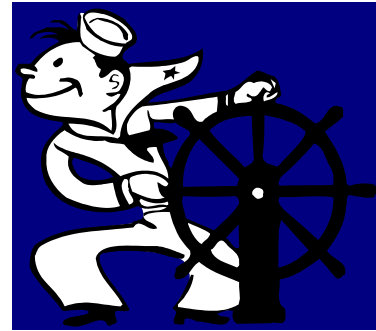
A big thank you to all those who have recently indicated willingness to sponsor or donate trophies to be presented to deserved winners on the Club's annual prize-giving night. Also a big thank you to Steve Fox for promoting and co-ordinating this trophy sponsorship program.

I wish all Club members and their families a safe, happy and enjoyable Christmas and New Year break.

Sailing races recommence on Sunday 16 January 2005.

JEROME TOONEN
Commodore

Junior Corner



The training fleet has been blessed this season with ideal conditions. I know when I leave home in the hills on a Sunday morning, with the easterly wind whistling through the trees, that it will have lost much of its puff by the time it gets to Maylands, to give us a wind gentle enough to safely venture onto the water. If only we could be sure as to which direction it was blowing! On too many mornings we have seen the wind direction change 180° or more. This is a pretty tricky thing to deal with when you have sailed for years, but even more so when you are still trying to decide which end of the boat is the bow or stern and which way you have to move the tiller to turn this way or that way. However, despite these troubling wind shifts the group has made fantastic progress. The rate of skill development has been very pleasing, to say the least. It has been wonderful to see the young (and not quite so young) sailors getting the feel for what it takes to stay upright and experience some of the fun of sailing.

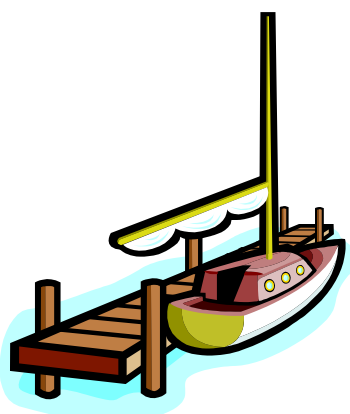
As a group we are in sight of completing the first of the Yachting Australia courses called 'Get Into Small Boat Sailing, Basics 1'. Having learnt how to make a dinghy stay upright and go forwards we still have to learn how to make one 'heave to'. Some have also to demonstrate that they can capsize and recover. Others showed me they could do this much earlier in the course!

It has been great to see Michael Albury and Lara Troy-McDermott competing in the afternoon racing. All they need now is to have some of our more confident juniors lay down the challenge to race against them. Guy Armstrong is really keen to have a go. He needs someone to crew for him. What about it?

Many thanks to the parental group who have pitched in to assist in so many ways and to the regular assistance of Max Albury, Brian Plumb and John Wallace. Your help has been a godsend.

When you get a quiet moment you might like to find the parts of a boat in this word sleuth. Happy Sailing!

Ken



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Radial Ravings



The season is almost half over already and the competition in the radials has been intense throughout the fleet. The numbers each week have been encouraging with more than 10 radials facing the starter each week. If we can get all radials out on the water at once there will be at least 15 boats. Let's try and make it happen during the second half of the season so we can justify our separate start from the "big" boys.

The breezes have been kind so far with only a couple of dodgy easterlies. One of which caused a number of DSQ's for those who did not read the sailing instructions or forgot their contents in the heat of the battle.

The handicapper has been doing his job as the spoils have been well spread around with most sailors getting a place in the consistency stakes. The progressive results are close with Brian (Plumb), Alan, Ian and Jerome leading the way with a bunched field not far behind.

Kim is leading the championship series but there's not much in it after only 3 races and the rest are snapping (or should it be snap dragonning, with apologies to Ray) on his heels. With only 8 points between 1st and 6th it will be a close tussle with Kim, Ray, Ian, Jerome, Alan and Brian (Plumb) all in with a chance.

The recommendation that the Laser Radial replace the Europe dinghy as the Olympic women's singlehander class means that we can now say that we sail an Olympic class.

Alan, Kim, Ray and Brian (Kent) have been sailing at the WA Laser Association events with some good results.

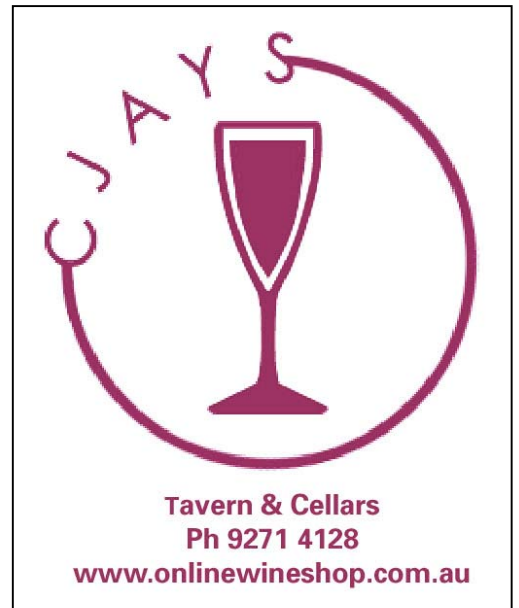
Kim, Alan and I attended the WALA training morning at RFBYC. This training was aimed at boat handling with 3 stations set up to improve skills in several areas. One was aimed at starting and holding the boat on the start line for a minute before the start and keeping a hole to leeward to accelerate into. The second entailed doing 720's upwind and downwind and recovering from a leeward capsize quickly. At the third a small triangular course was set up with the first lap sailed normally. On the second lap we had to sail backwards – upwind, this consisted of reversing out the tacks and downwind actually sailing backwards. I would heartily recommend these training sessions to anybody wanting to improve their skills as I certainly did many manoeuvres that are not normally performed during "normal" sailing – you just have to be a member of WALA to participate! We even had an Olympic Gold medallist (Belinda Stowell) as one of the coaches for the morning.

Is everyone still falling asleep in front of the TV after sailing? Just remember why – sailing is a full mind/body experience!

Have a great Xmas and New Year. Stay safe and see you in the second half of the season.

John Wallace

And once again many thanks to our Sponsors without whose financial help the races would not be possible!



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