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OFFSHORE

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GOLDEN FORTUNES!

HOW ENVY SCOOTERS TRIUMPHED IN 2019
NOAKES SYDNEY GOLD COAST YACHT RACE

LOOKING SHARP

New partner for
Monday twilights

WINTER WONDER

Taylor makes it
two in a row

SHIP SHAPE

CYCA legend becomes
Life Member



Golden fortunes!

The 2019 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race was a journey to remember for many, especially Barry Cuneo's crew on *Envy Scooters* writes OLIVIA PRICE



A jam-packed start line in as the 76 entrants jostled to get down the harbour. Credit - Andrea Francolini

The 34th Noakes Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race was set to be a slow start, yet the faster-than-expected race north saw favourite *Wild Oats X* cross the finish line just 1 day, 9 hours and 28 minutes after the 1300hrs Saturday 27 July start. The battle for overall honours was tightly fought among the TP52s, but it was Barry Cuneo's Queensland entrant *Envy Scooters* that staked their claim in the opening act of the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's (CYCA)'s Audi Centre Sydney Blue Water Pointscore Series, making them the new hometown heroes.

Seventy-six yachts entered the 384-nautical-mile journey north, starting in a beautiful 10-knot south easterly downwind breeze before setting their sights on the finish line at Main Beach on the Gold Coast. The start created a colourful conga line of competitors charging downwind through Sydney Harbour with spinnakers hoisted.

Wild Oats X led the fleet out of Sydney Harbour following the 1300hrs start. From there, the champion team worked tirelessly throughout the night to hold onto their often-slim lead over fellow 60-footers *Naval Group* and *No Limit* in the shifting southerly winds, with much of the race spent side-by-side in the exciting reaching conditions.

Skipper of *Wild Oats X* Mark Richards said the crew sailed exceptionally up the NSW coast.

"It was tricky for us; we kept head-butting cloud banks then we'd slow down and the guys would compress back up to us

again," Richards elaborated, adding "that got rid of our chance at a handicap result. There were quite a few close calls with whales - we missed one by around three feet passing Byron Bay. They were everywhere!"

The line honours win in the 2019 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast was the third for the Oatley family's Reichel Pugh 66, previously crossing the line first in 2005 and 2009. Dockside at the CYCA's finish partner, Southport Yacht Club, Richards said, "It was a great race, you couldn't have asked for better conditions or a more fantastic fleet - very competitive. It was great to sail the 66 again. It's a beautiful boat...it's 15 years old now and it's given a lot of people a lot of joy.

"Line honours is a fantastic way to celebrate my birthday," Richards continued. "Sean Langman and *Naval Group*, they had a great race and had some great pace out there over the last day and a half. They were sort of nipping at our heels the whole way. You know, they were a little bit unlucky with a few shifts out there which went our way, but that's racing. It was a good contest."

No more than one hour later did race sponsor Noakes Group's Managing Director Sean Langman skipper his Reichel Pugh 65 *Naval Group* to second across the line. The shifty conditions created a course full of snakes and ladders between the four 60-footers, including David Griffith's JV62 *Chinese Whisper* and David Gotze's RP63 *No Limit*, with Gotze's crew reporting that they got within half a mile of race winners *Wild Oats X* during the night.

The reaching and running conditions were ideal for the fleet of 11 TP52s entered in the 34th Noakes Sydney Gold Coast. Often known



The march north to the Gold Coast. Credit - Andrea Francolini



Bush Paul Group making their way to the finish line off Main Beach. Credit - Michael Jennings



It was a fast paced start with a southerly breeze propelling competitors towards Sydney Heads. Credit - Andrea Francolini

as the race within the race, the popular offshore-designed yacht took the top seven places on IRC overall.

However, it was Barry Cuneo's *Envy Scooters* who stole the show in his home state. Finishing an honourable fifth over the line, just an hour and a half after *Wild Oats X* and first overall on IRC. *Envy Scooters* edged out its previous owner, Matt Allen AM of *Ichi Ban*, Allen had sold Cuneo the boat in November 2017. Since then, Cuneo has campaigned the yacht in all major ocean races in Australia and knows firsthand how competitive the TP52 fleet is.

"It's something I didn't think we could achieve," Cuneo said just moments after finishing the Noakes Sydney Gold Coast, knowing that there was plenty of waiting to be done before an overall winner could be announced. Even on Sunday afternoon, the crew knew that their chances of winning were slim, sitting just behind second placed overall.

During the race Cuneo reported, "*Ichi Ban* has held her lead over us. Our chances are slim to overhaul her lead."

Cuneo attributed *Envy Scooter's* winning run north to the experience of his close-knit crew, and meticulous preparation. "The saying is 'proper planning and preparation beats piss-poor performance'. We plan smart on a limited budget and position people to get the best performance out of the boat.

"The standard of the boats, the number of race yachts at the CYCA as we walked down towards ours, was quite daunting, we're the best boat in Brisbane and to come down and see ours as one of a dozen of equal standard is pretty daunting.

"The conditions suited us - mostly 12 to 16 knots to a maximum 18 knots out of the south. We had very good intelligence on the weather, we made good decisions, and there were no breakages. We went out there and smacked it!

"Our boat's particularly good in 15-20 knot downwind running. We kept on the plane the whole way.

"Everyone was up for the final sprint to the finish; we were concentrating very hard to stay ahead of *Ichi Ban* and finished with a 6.5-knot land breeze doing 8.5 knots of boat speed," said the proud skipper and Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron Commodore.

Cuneo and the team started to notch up a winning streak, taking overall honours in the Brisbane to Gladstone in April this year, the first of their four-stage 2019 program in the lead up to the momentous 75th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race in December this year which also includes the Lendlease Brisbane to Hamilton Island Yacht Race.

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To win this against not just *Ichi Ban* but the whole fleet was something I'll never forget. And I know our crew won't either.

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"After we won the Brisbane Gladstone I thought 'wouldn't it be amazing - as an unrealistic goal - to win all four'. It's seemingly impossible but we've started off pretty well," Cuneo laughed.

"To win this against not just *Ichi Ban* but the whole fleet was something I'll never forget. And I know our crew won't either."

Day three of the Noakes Sydney Gold Coast was met with a flurry of yachts continuously filing into the docks at race finishing partner Southport Yacht Club to share their stories from sea.

Onboard Phillip Neil's beautiful *Hoek 78 Orotan Drumfire*, crewman Lachie Paramour shared some tales: "We started by watching the All Blacks vs Springboks rugby on satellite TV (of course) before a lamb ragu dinner. The on-watch did a good job of keeping the boat rumbling and picking up a few places before the half-time change over.

Fading south-westerly winds continued to greet the competitors on day three of the Noakes Sydney Gold Coast



Pekljus winner of PHS. Credit - Andrea Francolini



Matt Allen's *Ichi Ban* and Sean Langman's *Naval Group* battle in the harbour just after the start. Credit - Andrea Francolini



Wild Oats X crossed the finish line first after holding a narrow lead the whole race. Credit - Andrea Francolini

Yacht Race, slowing the stream of yachts throughout the morning. However, in the early afternoon, the south easterly winds filled in once again to fast-track the fleet to the finish on the Gold Coast. In a 24-hour period, there were 50 yachts that crossed the finish line.

As presented in the race briefing by the Bureau of Meteorology's Gabrielle Woodhouse, Tuesday brought a new southerly front to the tail end of the fleet, ensuring that all but three yachts finished on 30 July. The build was welcomed by the remaining yachts, who enjoyed an afternoon of fast sailing up the coast.

The final yacht to finish was the smallest in the fleet, 9.3m *Jarkan Gun Runner*, owned by the The Army Sailing Club.

"It was pretty benign conditions for most of the race, we were becalmed for almost a full day but were greeted by the southerly yesterday which meant we were able to catch up a lot of time on the other boats that had already finished," said skipper Reece Young.

"This is our third Sydney Gold Coast race and we completed it in the fastest time we have ever done which is fantastic."

Jan Koudelka, who was competing in his first ever ocean race on board *Gun Runner*, was blown away by the experience of competing.

"It was pretty spectacular and challenging, even though the skipper said it was calm conditions it was certainly a roller coaster for me at times. I had to brace myself a couple of times during the race while I was on the helm, but it was a really amazing experience," said Koudelka.

"It was a bit of a National Geographic trip, there were dolphins glowing in the dark at night, orca and humpback whales putting on a show. It was fantastic."

Race sponsor Sean Langman spoke of his fondness for the event he will sponsor for five years.

"Over all the years I've sailed up and down the coast, the Sydney Gold Coast has always been my favourite. Noakes is focused on the commercial Defence area of our business but our roots are with yachting and we love seeing yachts in the yard - it's where our heart is. We are delighted to give back to the sport."

"This year's Noakes Sydney Gold Coast was once again a great success," Langman said. "The 2019 Noakes Sydney Gold Coast had the biggest fleet in a decade or so, a smooth but exciting trip north and some great engagement with fans and sailors both on and off the water.

"We couldn't be happier and can't wait for next year's race." ↴



Winter wonders!

Light airs dominated the 2019 CYCA Winter Series, serving as excellent training for crews of all types

Zoe Taylor's Grace O'Malley. Credit - David Brogan

Some of Australia's best and most consistent sailors were celebrated at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia (CYCA) 2019 Winter Series Prizegiving, held in front of a full house at Rushcutters Bay on Friday 17 July.

A total of 48 crews and skippers, including the likes of Bob Steel, Zoe Taylor and Dean Harrigan, were awarded prizes following stellar seasons across both the CYCA Winter Series and the Women's Winter Series, with Taylor's *Grace O'Malley* taking IRC overall in what was a predominantly light-air series.

"The 2019 CYCA Winter Series - and the Women's Winter Series - showcased what the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, and our sport in general, is all about," CYCA Commodore Paul Billingham said.

"Great sailing, incredible levels of participation and some tough competition summed up a tremendous series, one that once again attracted a huge number of entrants.

"Congratulations to all winners and placegetters - and indeed everyone who participated in the 2019 series. We look forward to seeing you back in 2020!"

Matt Wilkinson's Farr 30 *Foreign Affair* sailed a brilliant series, claiming their divisional win with one race to spare.

"We just had a really good series. I have a really great crew on board, and they are a group which are able to have a lot of fun while we are racing. I don't ever have to worry about something getting done during a race, I can just let them know what I want to do, and it happens," said Wilkinson.

"I have had this boat for a few years now and it is actually the second time we have been able to win our division. It is definitely a light wind boat. The two races that we had bad results were the strong wind days, when that happens, we just can't catch the rest of the fleet. In the lighter conditions we have been able to pick some decent shifts and sneak our way back into the lead," he finished.

Mary King and her crew on *Solymar* were not only able to secure the division win in the Women's Winter Series but also claimed the top spot in PHS Div J1 for the CYCA Winter Series. Mary is the only female skipper to have divisional wins in both series!

Jason King, who normally skips the yacht but was unable this season, was overwhelmed with the result.

"It is the first time Mary has taken the boat out this many times without me. She has done an amazing job this season taking divisional wins in both series and it has been great for her and the whole team," said Jason.

Mary who normally trims on the Farr 40 didn't shy away from the challenge of skippering for her first full season.

"This is the first season that I have been skippering. I have skippered Women's Series Races a few times but haven't skippered a whole season before," said Mary.

In addition to divisional winners and placegetters across the two series, the night also paid tribute to a person who has contributed significantly to the Club over more than 20 years, with the Alan Brown Memorial Plate awarded to Robyn Morton for her tremendous time and effort as a volunteer for the Club.

Additionally, a moment's silence was observed by all in attendance to pay tribute to Maryrose Heffernan, following her tragic passing during the season. Maryrose contributed greatly to the CYCA, as part of the Race Management Team in addition to other roles, over more than two decades. ⚓



Foreign Affair in their favorable light air conditions



Mary King skipper of *Solymar* receiving her prize from Vice Commodore Noel Cornish AM.

DIVISIONAL WINNERS AND PLACEGETTERS

WOMEN'S WINTER SERIES

NON SPINNAKER DIVISION 2
1st Place - *SALONA* - Paula Dock & Beth Morley
2nd - *LIMELIGHT* - Ana Svensson
3rd - *DEFIANT* - Jenni Hayward

NON SPINNAKER DIVISION 1
1st Place - *SOLYMAR* - Mary King
2nd - *MARLOO* - Vivienne Macmahon
3rd - *RUM JUNGLE* - Helen Springer

SPINNAKER DIVISION 2
1st Place - *RAPID TRANSIT* - Beth Abbott
2nd Place - *SINEWAVE* - Barbara Maunsell
3rd Place - *ZARA* - Theresa Seargent

SPINNAKER DIVISION 1
1st Place - *THIRLMERE* - Iona Williams
2nd - *SMUGGLER* - Justine Anson
3rd - *WAX LYRICAL* - Dinah Eagle

CYCA WINTER SERIES

DIVISION K
1st - *SHORETHING* - Jimmy Butler
2nd - *STAR FERRY* - John Conroy
3rd - *HEAVEN* - Joost Kerdiijk

DIVISION J2
1st - *SYMBIOSIS* - Troy Scott
2nd - *TEA FOR THE TILLERMAN* - Richard Allen
3rd - *SALONA* - Robert Blanch

DIVISION J1
1st - *SOLYMAR* - Mary King
2nd - *PAZAZZ 2* - Robert Drury
3rd - *NEXT* - Robert Hunt, Jon Short, Miles Bastick and Greg Gleeson

IRC DIVISION
1st - *GRACE O'MALLEY* - Zoe Taylor
2nd - *VICTOIRE* - Darryl Hodgkinson
3rd - *PATRICE* - Tony Kirby

DIVISION G
1st - *HIGHWAY PATROL* - Michael Blaxell
2nd - *SPACE INVADER* - Richard Cunningham and Johnathan Green
3rd - *SEA YA* - John Hewitt and Chris Johnson

DIVISION F
1st - *LORELEI* - Matthew Farr
2nd - *GREAT WHITE* - Bob Penty
3rd - *REVE* - Kevin Whelan

DIVISION E
1st - *FOREIGN AFFAIR* - Matt Wilkinson
2nd - *CLEWLESS?* - Lachlan and Guy Irwin
3rd - *RAPID TRANSIT* - Andrew Wyllie, Michael McLean & Beth Abbott

DIVISION D
1st - *ONE MORE NO MORE* - Ian Guanaria
2nd - *SOMMERBREEZE* - Hans Sommer
3rd - *CROSSHAVEN* - Sean Rahilly and Justin Pelly

DIVISION B
1st - *ARCH RIVAL* - Steve Connors
2nd - *HUNTRESS* - Philip Grove
3rd - *RUM JUNGLE* - Scott Russell and Tony Johnson

DIVISION A2
1st - *PLAYSTATION 4* - Dean Harrigan
2nd - *BORDERLINE* - Andy Offord
3rd - *FINN* - Janey Treleven

DIVISION A1
1st - *QUEST* - Bob Steel and Craig Neil
2nd - *ZEN* - Gordon Ketelbey
3rd - *TRITON* - David Gotze & Michael Cranitch

SYDNEY 38 DIVISION
1st PHS - *SHINE ON* - Phil Herscovics
2nd PHS - *WILD ONE* - Larki Missiris
3rd on PHS and 1st on Scratch - *ADVANCED PHILOSOPHY* - Peter Sorensen

