

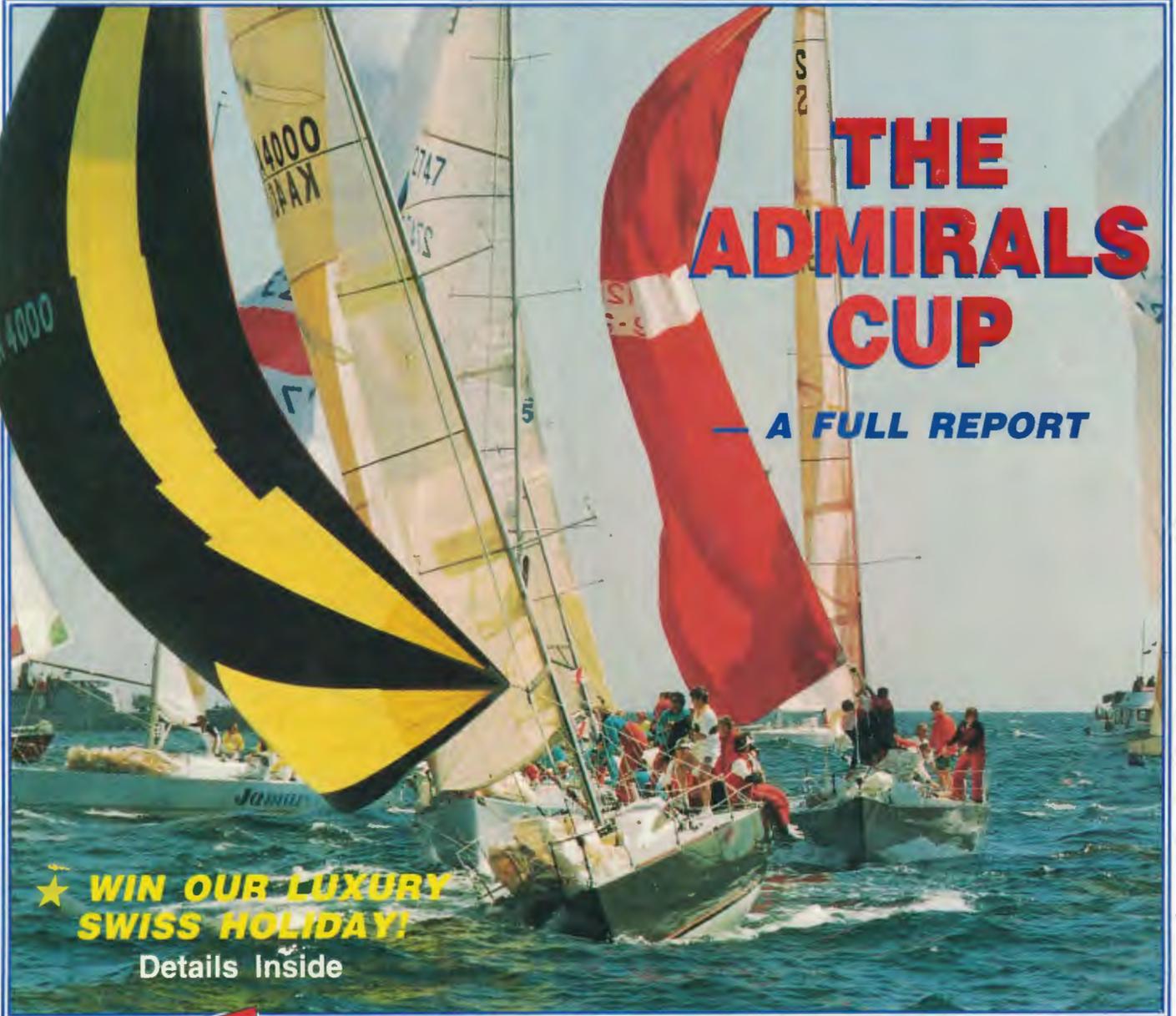
# OFFSHORE

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA



# DRAMA AT SEA...

SOVEREIGN, Bernard Lewis' maxi, took line honours in the second annual Jupiters Gold Coast Race, but light winds off the NSW North Coast stymied her bid to break Apollo's race record. (Ian Grant pic).

**O**CEAN racing towards the warmer winter sun may become an obsession with southern blue water sailors within the immediate future.

Queensland's Pacific shore based clubs, Southport and Mooloolaba, are about to realise the promotional potential of their facilities following highly successful racing last August.

There is no doubt that the Sydney-

Gold Coast Race, sponsored this year by Jupiters Casino and Conrad International Hotel, has confirmed its acceptance by the keenly-competitive ocean racing sailors:

This classic over 380 nautical miles attracted entries from New Zealand, Tasmania, Victoria, A.C.T. New South Wales and the host State, Queensland.

The standard of the fleet particularly in I.O.R. showed that the timing of this

race has proved ideal for owners keen to have a long-race shakedown and two short course regattas added to their boat-tuning plan for the summer '87-'88.

## ...and in the protest room!

Included in this year's fleet was the impressive Bernard Lewis-owned, Dave Kellett-skipped maxi *Sovereign* and a representation of some of Australia's best I.O.R. performers.

Among them were several high-performance Davidson-designed Three Quarter Tonners, Tony Dunn's 1986 AWA/Sydney-Hobart race winner, *Extension*, John Eyles' XXXX/Ansett Hamilton Island race week champion, *Indian Pacific*, the consistent *Singapore Girl* (Tony Poole) and Bruce Staples XXXX/Southport classic and Australian Airlines Brisbane-Gladstone race winner, the Farr 40, *Witchcraft 11*.



CREW members of Russell Dean II relax offshore at Southport Yacht Club after their ordeal in galeforce winds off Cook Island on the NSW North Coast. At left is radio operator Audrey Brown, wife of the skipper, who kept a constant radio contact with race headquarters at Southport. (Ian Grant pic).

Adding the competitive nature of these ocean racing combinations to the proven standard of Bill Currie's *Once More Dear Friends* now sailed from Melbourne, New Zealand's record-breaking Davidson 55 *Starlight Express*, Graham Lambert's *Too Impetuous* and Southport's remarkable 11.2 metre light displacement maxi-chaser, *Boundary Rider*, and Sydney-Noumea race winner, *Nadia IV*, confirms the popularity of this new end-of-winter racing programme.

In the week leading up to the Jupiters race up the northern rhumbline to the playground of the Pacific, Queensland's Gold Coast, several top Sydney sailors set their boat-on-boat bets with the standard wager being the normal jug of Bundy and Coke.

Veteran Jack Rooklyn and his sailing master, Graeme "Friz" Freeman, were in the Bar at CYCA on race morning and held little concern for the bar talk on *Sovereign's* assault on the famed Gerkin's (*Apollo*) race time of 49hr.19min.41sec set in the inaugural race last year.

Friz took a break from the Kookaburra 12 metre camp to play a major role in *Apollo's* unique line honours/corrected time double.

*Sovereign* was freely tipped to lower



ABOVE: Sydney sloop Dr Dan moves northwards in a light southerly off the coast of Sydney. LEFT, Sydney-Hobart race winner Ex-Tension clears Sydney Harbour after, BELOW, the melee at the start of Jupiters Gold Coast Race. (Pics by David Clare and Ian Grant).

the race time by some hours, but there was one thing wrong — they forgot to advise "Hughie" to lay on the correct wind speed and direction.

When David Hilton, heir to the Hilton Hotel Family and vice president of Casino operations at Jupiters on the Gold Coast, fired the start signal from *HMAS Freemantle* at 1400 hrs there was next to no wind. *Sovereign* started in clear air down the line while *Bushfire* (Michael Spies) and *Bacardi* (John Gould) were best served from the committee boat end in the 79 boat fleet. *Sovereign*, with Tokyo Olympic gold medalist Peter ("Pod") O'Donnell picking the



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## Jupiter's Gold Coast Yacht Race



SEAQUESTA managed to get clear of the melee at the start of the Jupiters Gold Coast Race as she headed down Sydney Harbour and out to sea. Skipped by Peter Nicolson, Seaquesta finished fourth overall. (David Clare pic).

eyes out of the wind was, as expected, first to clear North Head.

*Ex-Tension*, with the crafty Max Tunbridge and Lawson Abbott playing their role in triple T (TACTICAL THINK TANK) headed *Dr Dan* (Rod Muir), *Evelyn*, (John Fraser) and *Starlight Express* (Ian Treleaven) as they took a fix on Barranjoey Head.

*Sovereign* put some distance on the fleet while the soft Eastly held but after dusk it was a different story. "We were parked 400 metres to sea of the land breeze off Terrigal and there was a progression on Nav lights sailing straight up the beach. Big displacement boats just stick in that sort of stuff and there is very little you can do about it," said Dave Kellett later.

"When the morning mist cleared we were not in great shape — perhaps 30 boats were ahead of *Sovereign*. Even the comfortable cruiser/racer *Polar Bear* was in front of us, and what they said certainly did not lift our enthusiasm."

The first morning sked placed *Dr Dan* ahead of *Starlight Express* and *Evelyn*, with *Indian Pacific* holding time on the fleet. But there was intense frustration in the first 15 hours with many falling into the theme of the sponsor Jupiters Casino-Trade the yacht's wheel for a thrill of a flutter and 24 hour-a-day excitement and with a bit of luck your ship could come in.

Some gambled and lost while others caught outside the wind line spat their chips.

Offshore racing can be a lottery as *Sovereign* proved in her first Jupiters race, with all chance of a record lost with only a 5.5 knots average logged in the first 15 hours to Crowdy Head. Finally she hit back to reveal her true speed potential.

"Our sewer staff will always remember this race with sail changes on each side of the unusual squally pattern," said Kellett. During one particular squall of deep black cloud, rain and bags of wind,

came the question shouted from the foredeck to the rear-guard; "Hey, Kellett check your bearing. Are you bloody sure we are not heading south, this is Bass Strait weather."

Despite blowing out her No 1 genoa on Sunday night and the No 2 early the next morning, *Sovereign* was back on target for the record when she weathered South-West Solitary Island. But a little north of Yamba she was dumped for another four hours and *Apollo's* race time lived for another year.

*Sovereign* completed the course in 51-52-25, 2-32-44 outside *Apollo's* time.

The two Davidson sloops, *Starlight Express* and *Dr Dan*, ended their private match racing duel split by only 40 minutes to take the minor line honours placings. They were followed by *Boundary Rider* just under four hours later. Skipper Jim Inglis said, "You just had to be at the right end of the line squalls".

"Each time one came through *Starlight Express* and *Dr Dan*, particularly north of Cape Byron, put a lot of distance on us. They carried spinnakers off the front of the squall while we had two-sail working gear to handle the scraps of the back."



BUSHFIRE makes the most of the gentle seabreeze as she reached northwards towards the Gold Coast. Skipped by Geoff Bush, Bushfire finished eighth overall. (David Clare pic).

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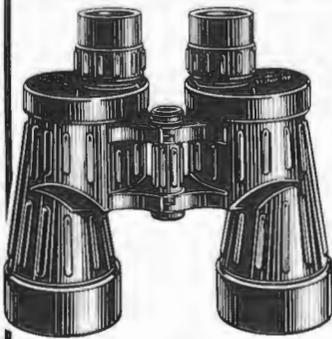
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## Jupiter's Yacht Race

*Boundary Rider* produced another great performance, confirming she can handle all conditions. The 37-footer, designed and built by Jim Inglis set the yachting circles in a whirl last Easter when she completed the 308 nautical mile Australian Airlines Brisbane Gladstone race in a little over 29 hours, to set the third fastest time ever behind the former Whitbread Maxi, *Castaway Enterprise*, and *Starlight Express*, who broke *Windward Passage's* one year old record of 28hr.57min.6sec.

As expected the IOR struggle proved exciting with *Indian Pacific*, *Two Impetuous*, *Witchcraft 11*, *Marloo*, *Ex-Tension* and *Singapore Girl* correcting out with a good chance on Monday's PM sked.

*Too Impetuous* finishing almost seven hours behind *Sovereign*, correct out with a good average of 7.77 knots to be best in Div 1. *Indian Pacific*, finishing another two and a half hours astern, corrected out at 7.80 to the best in Div 2, while *Singapore Girl*, 21st over the line, pro-



LIGHT winds off Sydney Heads as Ex-Tension and Marloo move slowly out to sea in search of the south easterly seabreeze. (David Clare pic).

duced the fastest overall corrected speed 7.90 knots.

But in unusual circumstances all three Division winners who produced great

performances on the water had to face the protest jury, for different reasons.

Lambert and Eyles survived but Poole (*Singapore Girl*) was penalised 20% for

## Mirage Resorts Regatta

After the storm fed winds which blew home the Jupiters race tailenders, Southport Yacht Club officials were confident of fair sailing breeze for the three race Mirage Resorts regatta.

Sailing conditions were far from perfect. However, this did not affect some clever tactical racing in the soft unpredictable wind pattern.

John Eyles suffering from a combination of withdrawal symptoms from a hard fight in the protest room and the dreaded power of Bundy and Coke, withdrew from the series with some rumour that *Indian Pacific* was sold. However, the withdrawal of *Indian Pacific* and her major sparring partner, *Ex-Tension*, failed to affect the racing standard.

The baby of the Zulu ocean racing tribe, *Imazulutu*, skippered by former world 18ft skiff champion Peter Sorensen who won the 1986 Rookie of the year award for his wins in the Mooloolaba YC Kawana Waters-Ansett Sunshine Coast Ocean racing championship and the Southport YC Quality Inns Series last year was in the fleet to defend his title.

*Sovereign*, *Starlight Express*, *Boundary Rider*, *Singapore Girl* and a small but very competitive JOG Fleet offered some interesting comparisons in sailing performance, in the 24 boat IOR 27 Arbitrary and 7 JOG division fleets.

*Imazulutu*, the high performance Steinman Quarter Tonner is the pro-

totype of a new dimension of yacht regatta racing with a proposed deal between Innovator Bill Dodds and Bob Ansett to launch BUDGET - A - ZULU at regatta venues.

Sorensen, who had not been at the helm in a major race for 12 months, showed he was hot to trot when he sorted out the way to go was to sea where the wind was more constant.

These tactics paved the way for a runaway win of 12½ minutes from the former Harold Cudmore Holland Holt Half Tonner *Silver Shamrock* (Richard Gregory) and *Magic Dragon*, Allan Mitchell's Whiting 31.

A feature of this absorbing race was the line honours battle over a shortened course between *Sovereign* and the light displacement *Boundary Rider*. *Sovereign* became stuck in the flat winds allowing *Boundary Rider* to establish a 3 minute advantage with only six miles to sail from Point Danger to Burleigh Bluff. A late race, two sail reaching wind which picked up from 4 to 12 knots allowed *Sovereign* to sail a minute a mile faster gave her line honours by three minutes.

Similar late race winds proved the difference between *Imazulutu* and the high performance Petersen designed *Marloo* (George Girdis). Girdis did everything right, including taking full use of the ebb flow-out of the Seaway to set up his winning chance, but while she had minimal opportunity to use the freshening wind *Imazulutu*, back in the fleet, was advantaged on her faster sailing angle. Sorensen won the race by 18 seconds, reflecting the importance of longer use of the sea breeze.

*Silver Shamrock* kept her title pro-

spects alive in the three race to count series with a creditable third for 2-3 score card, compared to *Imazulutu's* 1-1 and the Michael Spies-skippered *Duncanson Bushfire* best of the others on points with a 6-4.

In the best wind of the series, a 10-12 knot northerly, *Sovereign* sailed the 8 nautical mile course in 59 min 20 sec. She was shaded of a dual honors win by *Witchcraft 11* (Bruce Staples) with *Singapore Girl* third.

*Imazulutu* with her 6th placing finished the series with 292 pts and a successful defence of her 1986 title win. A fifth placing allowed *Bushfire* a two point split for second ahead of *Silver Shamrock* who finished with 277 pts.

The Arbitrary title finished in a deserved win for former world Hydra catamaran skipper Col Metcher. Metcher, who recovered a small Swarbrick sloop from a desolate beach on the central New South Wales coast, skippered the rebuilt sloop to an outright win in the series.

The Metcher skippered *Starlight* with 1-2-10 for 285 points to finish two points clear of *Boundary Rider* (13-1-2) with Paul O'Hare's *Flyaway* relegated to third on countback after finishing equal with *Boundary Rider*.

Southport's specialist smallboat sailor, Noel Leigh-Smith, sailed the Atkinson *Desperado* (rating .6727) to a three point win over the modified *Masrm Time* and *Money 111* (.6797) skippered by Mark Livingstone. The new Mal Jones Atkinson *Two Desperados*, which won the first race of the series to finish with 1-4-4 lacked the upwind speed to match the leaders.

## Jupiter's Gold Coast Yacht Race

not observing a safe distance at sea after sunset.

While all of the Racing Rules drama was unfolding in the Southport Yacht Club committee room, a real life drama was happening in atrocious weather conditions east of Cook Island on the north New South Wales coast.

Out of a pitch black wet and windy night came the voice of a concerned woman at sea. Race controller Doug Lee, who maintained a 24 hour listening watch, alerted all area rescue operations when he heard: "We are out of control in establishing our position and are concerned of the lee shore and exposure to the Windarra Bank and maybe Fido's Reef.

"Heavy squalls are coming through and we are down to No 4 and two reefs

in the main. The sea is Milky white, the wind is 40 knots and building with each squall."

The voice of Audrey Brown aboard *Russell Dean II* gave indication she was tired like all other four crew members including husband Michael, John Laird and John Brown (no relation).

"We have had bad weather for 18 hours and all of our time has been taken up with keeping the boat moving - sleep has been impossible", she said. But their Cole 31, was designed to survive and common sea safety prevailed in decision-making on board.

"Please issue a Pan Alert on our behalf," Audrey asked by radio. At 3.30am the Gold Coast Seaway Tower established radar contact and confirmed

the sloop was in safe water 20 nautical miles off the coast. After an anxious night, *Russell Dean II* berthed at the SYC marina at 11.30am.

Audrey Brown said later: "That was my worst experience at sea. It was frightening, but comforting to know the officials had the fix on our position".

The second Gold Coast Race was an exciting race, but with wild moments at sea and the torment of an unpredictable weather pattern. But competition indicated at the Gala presentation at Jupiters Casino that they would race again next year.

Jupiters, realising the exposure potential and the amazing growth rate of this race, will again be the major sponsor in 1988.

## Mooloolaba SCOR

**M**ooloolaba Yacht Club's successful Kawana Waters — Ansett Sunshine Coast Ocean Racing championship always attracts a good standard fleet and this year's series was no exception.

Included in the I.O.R. Division were *Ex-Tension* (Cark Ryves), *Indian Pacific* (Tim Chambers), *Singapore Girl* (Tony Poole) and the Farr 40's who finished first and second in the Australian Airlines Brisbane — Gladstone race, *Witchcraft 11* (Bruce Staples) and *The Gambler* (Ian Kenny).

The 1986 champion *Imazulutu*, rating .6577, the second lowest in the 16-boat fleet, was favoured to win following her Mirage Resorts regatta success.

This year MYC officials, headed by Tim Moore, arranged a new racing format for SCOR to co-incide with the fleets contesting both the Jupiters and Mirage Resorts events. For the first time in the history of SCOR the racing started away from Mooloolaba with the Southport-Mooloolaba race for IOR and Performance Handicap divisions.

When the morning fog lifted the fleet experienced perhaps one of the toughest medium distance ocean races contested off the Queensland coast. An unstable trough to the east dumped torrential rain, lightning, hail and a tough 20-25 knot headwind on the fleet.

*Starlight Express*, reefed down to suit the conditions, gained line honours in a little over 15 hours beating *Boundary Rider* by 2 hours with *The Gambler* third.

*Imazulutu* was one of the first to withdraw in a drama-packed race. There was a fullscale rescue mission for the crew of the Mooloolaba sloop *Mail Box* which was abandoned at sea during torrential rain and high winds after striking Boat Rock off Cylinder Beach,



Stradbroke Island.

*Mail Box* lost her keel in her brush with the Rock and her crew, under skipper Leigh Atkins, bailed with buckets for 2½ hours before abandoning ship at sea. They were rescued by the crew of *Elusive* skippered by Peter Loganzo.

Terry Passey skipper of *Foolish Behaviour* said "it was a miracle no others hit the Rock. We were forced to take evasive action ourselves.

"The conditions were some of the worst that we have raced in. As we slowly slugged north the colder, wetter and windier it got."

*Ex-Tension* again revealed her strong wind sailing reputation to finish 14 minutes clear of *Singapore Girl* with three mins to *The Gambler*, to take the major points in IOR while *Boundary Rider* overcame a .9100 rating to score a dual honours win in Performance Handicap from Mooloolaba's *Pabati 111* (Tony Woodcock) and the Pittwater sloop *Perfect Vision* (Jim Anning).

*Singapore Girl* continuing on with her fine performance only to lose the Jupiters race overall IOR on protest kept this hot IOR fleet honest in the short course races off Mooloolaba.

She never won a race, but with placings of 2-2-2-3- led *Ex-Tension* on

STARLIGHT EXPRESS chased Sovereign to the Gold Coast but had line honours all to herself in the SCOR series at Mooloolaba, as well as gaining other trophies.

points into the final. However, the tactical skill of Carl Ryves, who relentlessly pressured *Singapore Girl* at the start of the final heat, sailed in perfect 10-12 knot east south-east winds, paved the way for the Hobart champion to win the series. She finished second behind *Imazulutu* and four minutes clear of *Singapore Girl*.

*Perfect Vision*, rating .7650 compiled a 3-2-5-7-7 to win the Performance Handicap Division over *Boundary Rider* and *Valiant* (David Boyd).

As expected, the JOG series featured another exciting boat on boat match race between *Desperado* and *Time and Money 111*.

Noel Leigh-Smith with placings of 1-2-1-1-2, finished on 27.75 points to edge out *Time and Money 111* (2-1-2-2-1) 26 points with Mooloolaba's *Image* (3-3-3-3) 20 points.

In all races over excellent courses the crews enjoyed the tight racing format with buoy-rounding mistakes generally affecting the overall placings. *Imazulutu*, who had her back to the wall after withdrawing from the Southport-Mooloolaba race with rig fitting failure, won three of the five races but her 8th placing in race four ended her title chances.