

offshore

YACHTING

WHITSUNDAY RACING

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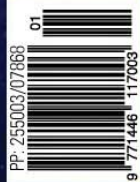
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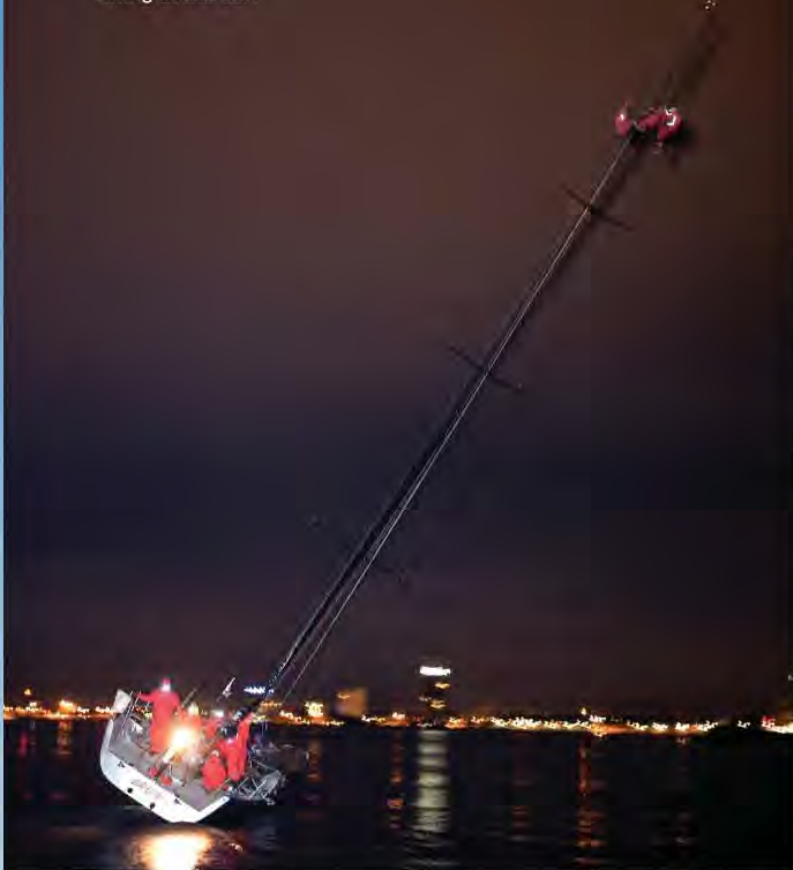
RECORD STILL STANDING



THE OPENING RACE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA'S 2007/2008 BLUE WATER POINTSCORE SERIES, THE AUDI SYDNEY GOLD COAST, SENT A VERY RESPECTABLE FLEET OF 72 SCOOTING UP THE AUSTRALIA EAST COAST TO SOUTHPORT IN QUICK TIME BUT AGAIN, THE RECORD STOOD FAST.

*By Lisa Ratcliff
Photography Andrea Francolini*

Tilting at the bar!



A howling southerly that topped 38 knots on the first night put the front runners on record breaking pace but like so many times before, the further north they travelled, the lighter the breeze went, safeguarding *Brindabella's* course record for the eighth consecutive year.

It was a fast and colourful spinnaker start in late July in an 18-22 knot sou'easter that saw the entire fleet exit Sydney Harbour in just 24 minutes. The pre-race forecast warned of fresh breezes offshore during the first night but some skippers were caught by surprise when it started edging close to 40 knots. By the first morning, the race was over for four boats.

Twenty three hours into the 384 nautical mile coastal race, Steven David's Reichel/Pugh 60 *Wild Joe* had upset proceedings by taking a winning punt offshore before gybing back in to find they were leading the larger Mark Richards skippered *Wild Oats X* and *Ichi Ban*, Commodore Matt Allen's Jones 70. *Wild Oats X* went onto take line honours for the second time in this race with an elapsed time of 1 day 10 hours 0 minutes and 45 seconds, but overall IRC victory belonged to David.

Upon confirmation of his win, Steven David thanked his crew for the effort they put into the boat's preparation.

"Setting the boat up for this race is a big thing. We used the Audi Winter Series on Sydney Harbour to iron out a few niggling problems and we've made a few modifications since Hamilton Island Race Week last year. Both things have seen us perform well in this race.

"the henri-loyd ocean racer is incredibly tough, light and extremely comfortable."

SIR ROBIN KNOX-JOHNSTON

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“Full credit to the boys for sailing a fast race and keeping to the strategy...and for not destroying the boat,” he added.

David wasn't aboard *Wild Joe* for this race, instead leaving the boat in the capable hands of skipper Adam Beashel, strategist aboard America's Cup challenger *Emirates Team New Zealand*.

“I'm usually the lonely Aussie amongst a bunch of Kiwis, it was great to sail with an all Australian crew,” Beashel admitted after docking at Southport Yacht Club.

Sailing in its first event, Rob Hanna's new Rogers 46 *Shogun* fired a warning shot with a second overall in the Audi Sydney Gold Coast. Unfortunately this is where the fairytale debut ended for Hanna with the boat suffering mast damage in the first race at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week and missing the series.

Rick Scott-Murphy's Bavaria 44 *Namadgi*, representing the Canberra Ocean Racing Club in the ACT, was declared the PHS winner from Cronulla boat *Stampede* (Feldmann & Buchan) and immediate past CYCA Commodore Geoff Lavis' *UBS Wild Thing*.

In the Sydney 38 division, Marc and Louis Ryckman's Star Dean-Willcocks *Yeah Baby* outclassed Gordon Ketelbey's *Zen* and Pittwater Sydney 38 *The Bigger Picture*, sailed by brothers-in-law Anthony Hooper and Ian Douglas, and Mike Roberts.

Due to the overwhelming support of the July Audi Sydney Gold Coast Yacht Race, it will remain a permanent fixture on the CYCA sailing calendar as the opening race of the Blue Water Pointscore Series.

At the time of writing, the club's sailing committee was proposing to the board of directors an alternate 250 nautical mile race for the final race of the BWPS. Rather than the club conducting two races to Southport, as happened this year, the committee, in consultation with a large sample of boat owners, has for many months been working on a creating a new event that will provide an exciting alternative.

With only four entries in this year's Audi Sydney Mackay Yacht Race, the sailing committee has also proposed handing this event back to Mackay Yacht Club which founded the event.

Full results <http://goldcoast.cyca.com.au> 