

Kama II (Skipper: Gareth Edwards) – 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race March 2019

“Sir Edmund Hillary said that he climbed Everest “because it was there”.

Doing a 24-hour Endurance Yacht Race is a no-brainer in comparison – it’s a lot easier, a lot safer and a lot closer. But it’s still a challenge. How much of a challenge is entirely up to the crew of each boat and that’s a big part of what makes this event so special. Where else have the New Zealand Navy sent a race crew who sat out on the rail all night in a 40-footer, then come morning sailed past a 26-footer who stopped to take a swim. And the nice thing about this race is that both boats finished at exactly the same time as ‘line honours’ and handicap are measured by distance travelled over the 24 hours.

On Kama II (and before her Amnesia) the crew have been happy to take the approach that we will race reasonably hard to start with then, if we’re not doing well, we will relax and just enjoy being out there. We’ve run four-hour shifts, giving people time to get at least some sleep, and we’ve ensured plenty of warm clothing, reheated meals and percolated coffee. The light winds in all three races to date have allowed us to fly a spinnaker day and night, but we’ve been clear that if the wind comes up, we will just pole out the headsail. Other boats might want to take a more serious approach than us, even staying awake the whole time. Equally though, there’s the option to leave the

spinnaker ashore, prepare first class meals and having long sleeps to the sound of water going past the hull. The 24-hour race really is a race for everyone. And like a marathon just finishing is a worthy of achievement in itself. Anyone who has done the race can attest to the comradeship on the course and after the race.

For those who haven’t sailed at night before this is a great opportunity to get used to doing so and will provide the confidence to sail much further afield. There’s plenty of other yachts out there with you, rescue vessels are on hand, and the city lights make a fantastic backdrop.

The 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race is an iconic event and it’s right here at LBYC! So, skippers, why not give it a go if you haven’t already? And crew, if you can’t persuade

your skipper to enter, then you can register to sail on one of the other boats and find out what all the fuss is about.

To quote Hillary again, if you haven’t done the 24-Hour Race yet, make 2020 the year you “knock the bastard off”.



Gareth Edwards (*Skipper of Kama II*)