



February 2017



By: Theo Muller

It's all coming together. We are receiving a steady stream of expressions of interest from skippers who are keen to enter the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race to be staged in April of this year. Entry form and Notice of Race are now on LBYC's website. Click here. <http://www.lbyc.org.nz/24-hour-endurance-race>

We've had enquiries from as far away as Gisborne and even the Royal New Zealand Navy have been in touch. We had suggested that they bring their Chico's 40 down from Auckland for the race, but they are not available. An experienced Royal Navy crew hiring a Wellington-based yacht would be an option if one was available. Please contact me – theo.muller@mm-research.com – if you know of somebody who would be happy to make their yacht available. They can be assured of some very experienced Navy personnel looking after the yacht while flying the white New Zealand ensign on the yacht's stern.

We've been in touch with a keen videographer who will video the entire race from start to finish, day and night. He will be filming during the race from some of the participating yachts, interviewing skippers and crew while racing and also record the prize-giving after the race. From all the footage shot during the race he will produce a 15-20 minute video, which will be put on YouTube. A three minute short will also be produced for future promotional purposes.

Also TVNZ has shown interest. They will send a senior reporter to cover the race for the sports section of One News. They clearly understand the unique nature of this race and consider it a very newsworthy topic.

The 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race would not be possible, if it wasn't for the enthusiastic support of our sponsors. All local companies who consider the race a great event and potential asset for the greater Wellington region. We have

invited them for a special sponsors evening at LBYC where they will be treated to a buffet dinner, while watching a video presentation of the 24-Hour Endurance Yacht Race 'in the making'. This fantastic sponsor support has made it possible for the club to be very generous with prizes for winners and all race competitors.

Please keep an eye on LBYC's website for further developments. If you are keen to enter the race, please complete the entry form by clicking on the link above. Don't leave it till the last moment, because it does take some planning of successfully competing in this race. For those of you wishing to make yourself available as crew, please use the form on our website. Also skippers looking for crew can advertise on LBYC's website. Let's go racing!!!

Lastly this. A 'trial night race' is planned for Saturday 11 March 2017. Briefing at 1700hrs at the club. Start at 1800hrs and finish at 0000hrs (midnight). The purpose of this trial race is for competitors to get a feel for what it is like racing during the hours of darkness. Please keep an eye on LBYC's website and weekly email briefing notes.

A BIG REGATTA FOR THE WORLD'S BEST SAILORS & A LESSON IN RACE MANAGEMENT.

Ray Manning

The Aon Youth World Sailing Championships, hosted by Torbay Sailing Club in Auckland, 14-20 December 2016, was the biggest international dinghy sailing regatta ever held in New Zealand. Competing were the best young sailors from 65 nations. There were just under 400 competitors, sailing on four different courses, requiring around 300 officials and volunteers to make it all happen.

Five Classes of yachts competed with all except one (the Nacra 15 class) having separate divisions for boys and girls. The classes involved at this event were; Laser Radials, 420's, 29er skiffs, Nacra 15 Catamarans, and RS-X Boards. The largest fleet was the Laser Radials which had 58 Boys, and 47 Girls competing. Only one boy and one girl competitor per country per class was allowed. This regatta was the equivalent of the Olympic Sailing for youth and the World Sailing Officials required the standard of Race and Course Management and Shore Organisation plus to be up to Olympic Standard. To ensure this, World Sailing representatives were appointed for each course and to oversee various shore functions.

The Sailing area stretched from as far north as the Weiti River (getting close to Whangaparoa Peninsula) down to the south end Mairangi Bay, a distance of 6 Nm, with Torbay Sailing Club base sitting about mid-way between these two extremes. Care was taken to ensure the 4 course areas did not overlap or interfere with each other.

I was lucky enough to have been invited to assist on Alpha Course. Our Race Officer and Team Manager was Paul Davies, who is well known to most of us. Paul is currently working toward becoming an IRO (International Race Officer) and recently completed a course and passed the examination for this in Chicago, USA. The World Sailing Representative on Alpha Course was Maria Torrijo Moll from Spain, a very experienced and talented IRO, from who we all learnt a great deal during the event.

When I did my YNZ Race Management Seminar several years ago I wondered whether I would ever use all of the techniques and tables we were taught. These guidelines showed how one must behave to deliver, in full, the requirement of RRS. At Easter 2015 I assisted NRO, Brett Linton, at the Opti Nationals at Worsler Bay. That was an eye opener, but this above event took one into a whole new dimension again. We needed to employ every page of the YNZ Race Management Guidelines (produced by John Parrish for YNZ).

While I would have liked to be able to cover the whole event I can only report on the Laser Radials which sailed on Alpha Course. The concentration of our effort was locked into our own Race Management so much so that, frankly, I can't tell you who actually even won the Radial girls; but do know that the Australian won the Radial boys because he was so dominant.

Let me start by outlining the resources used on our Alpha Course:-

A Signal Boat and Start Pin Boat – 6 + 3 people

4 Mark laying and recording RIBs - 8 people

A Finish Boat and Finish Pin Boat – 4 + 2 people

Total Race Management team – 23 people

A Gear RIB – 2 people

10 Safety RIBs – 20 people (to cover the 105 boats competing on our course)

2 Jury RIBs – 4 people

Total officials on the Alpha Course – 49 people

Plus:-

A Media Boat

A boat for Coaches (Steinlager or Lion NZ were used)

Several official spectator boats.

Then repeat this for the other 3 Courses, and then add all of shore personal and you get the picture.

Each day commenced with our Race Management team meeting under a tree to discuss the day and then being ferried out to our boats and RIBs anchored in Torbay. If we were lucky we got a ride out on one of the SeaLegs RIBs and didn't get our feet wet. Nice! We departed Torbay about 2 hours before start time and about 1 hour before the competitors were released from the beach. As soon as we arrived at the Course area the 4 mark boats were sent to the approximate corners of the course and commenced sending five minute wind speed and direction readings back to us on the Signal Boat. These were recorded and plotted as we attempted to determine the course axis, and course length, we would use. Once a pattern settled close to our final numbers the course reference point would be calculated. This point is defined as being a point directly upwind by 0.05 nm from mid-start line. The Start line length was 380 metres. This Reference point was sent to the 4 Mark boats who would enter that Latitude and Longitude into their GPS and this would immediately tell them their own distance and compass course back to that reference point. Finally with about 15 minutes to go, before start time, the course direction and distance would be decided by the Race officer. We had a race target time of 45-50 minutes so getting the distance correct for the wind strength was critical, although this was managed during the race when things changed.

10 minutes to start time the Signal Boat raised the Orange Flag and the RO called the course Axis, but would not finalise the course leg length until close to the 4 minute Warning signal. Meanwhile Mark Boats would be jockeyed into position to await the RO's to call for Marks 1-2 to be dropped, Marks 3 and 4 were both Gate marks and wouldn't be set until after the boats started. At this stage the Finish Boat and Finish Pin RIB would also yet to be anchored.

The course used was a Trapezoid with the distance from Reference to Mark 1 being equal to the distance from Mark 2 to 3. The angle between Mark 1 and Mark 2 was 60 degrees and distance was 2/3 the length of the windward legs. The first flight away (boys one day, girls the next day) would use the Outer Course and the second flight would use the Inner Course. This meant that two fleets would not interfere with each other during the race. There was a 15 minute gap between starts which required the Orange Flag on the Signal Boat to

be lowered 4 minutes after the first start and then raised again 1 minute later to mark 10 minutes before the second start.

If one had thought that with the 2 starts underway we could relax then that was not the case. The wind strength and direction readings from all Mark boats continued to come in and the time of the first boat to the top mark in each flight was monitored to see that the race timing target was on track. When necessary the course axis and length would be changed using Flag C with a + or -, to signify whether the next leg was longer or shorter, and a Green or Red panel to signify whether the new mark was to Starboard or Port of the old mark position. All of this was done using a replacement Mark of a different colour and the appropriate continuous hooting required as the fleet round the mark before the change.

Even setting up the Gates at Mark 3 and 4 can be a science as not only is it important to keep the gate square to the wind but also to ensure the width of the gate is wide enough not to cause mark room calls between boats heading for the opposite gates. The finish was a short reach from Mark 4 which completed the course for both Outer and Inner Courses.

The finish boat uses a Blue Flag to signal that the Finish is opened and this was lowered after 15 minutes to show the Finish was closed. Once race one was over the fleets headed back toward the Start Signal boat, and only then could they find out whether they had been disqualified as a UFD (U Flag Disqualification) or BFD (Black Flag Disqualification), depending which Flag we had used at the Warning Signal. No Blue Peter is used at this level of competition. U Flag is normal, and Black Flag is used if the fleet doesn't behave. So no OSC or Individual Recalls are made.

After Race 2 it is off home for the day and an Alpha course management meeting under our favourite tree. At no time during the actual event did we have do a General Recall although we did on one occasion abandon a race, with Flag N, after the start as there was a unacceptable wind direction move (20 degrees or more) on the way to the first top mark. Mark boat 4, which had not yet laid its gate, took off and crossed ahead of the fleet with N Flag flying to bring the fleet back.

So who was on our team and how did RO Paul Davies use the skills he had in his team. I won't go into all the names but the Alpha Course Race Management was quite diverse including; 7 people from New Plymouth, Paul and I plus two others from Wellington, and the balance from Auckland. The team skill sets were also diverse with some being very experienced and others being on a fast

learning curve. Yes, we all made mistakes and Paul was very calm and helpful about letting these things pass while encouraging us to improve. I guess the funniest error was a gate mark that was launched without the anchor and warp being attached to the buoy. This was followed by the best recovery I have ever witnessed improvising just in time to drop the mark less than a minute before the fleet arrived at the gate. Well done TZ! You are a champion and a Wellingtonian.

From a Race Officer's perspective having to work with diverse skill level will often be like this. While an RO would, I am sure, have a complete preferred team he, or she, likes to work with, there will always be some volunteers whose skill and development level is unknown or in development. This would especially be the case where the Race Management team is as large as we had for this event. I think Paul D did a brilliant job managing his team throughout the regatta, and look forward to working with him again soon.

On board the Signal or Start boat we all had very specific roles. Race Officer Paul and World Sailing Rep Maria consulted together constantly as decisions were made. This is a bit different from the norm where a RO may have much more dialogue with the Assistant RO. I guess I was the closest thing to an assistant RO on this occasion, but my role was to log all of the information coming in and keep Paul and Maria informed, and to man the radio except for times when Paul needed to pass key information to his Mark / Finish Boats or to Shore Base. We had a dedicated Timekeeper who had a clear and loud voice to keep us on our toes. The last two on board were the dedicated Flag man, and the last person looked after anything else that was needed, including standing by the General Recall flag, on a very long pole. All other flags were on permanent halyards and could be managed by one person. 6 persons were enough on board the Signal boat, even for an event of this size and complexity. Lesson learned – don't have any more people on a Start boat than is essential!

When Race Management is done well it all looks easy, however a great deal of forward planning goes into making it go well, including knowing how to recover gracefully when things go pear-shaped. Remember there is always the N Flag (Abandoning a race that has started) or the AP Flag (Postponing a Race prior to the start) that can be hoisted.

A great experience and good lesson in Race Management at nearly the highest level.

BOOK REVIEWS - 3 new donations

Bill Dashfield, Cruising Committee

Marooned On Mogmog (2011) Jennifer Barrie: this has about 4 pages on sailing; after a shipwreck in a typhoon, and an Aussie family's five months on a remote Micronesian island repairing their boat. Helped and hindered, puzzled, loved and loathed to the local villagers, it's a tale of totally different cultures, values, beliefs, misunderstandings, frustrations, final success. **Interesting and different. *****

Landmarks from the Spirits (1993) Iris Nolan: following routes taken by *The Spirit of Adventure* and *The Spirit of New Zealand*, the boom tells you tales, history and facts about some of the headlands, rocks, reefs etc. seen, plus snippets about the voyages. **Worth taking when cruising round New Zealand, or dipping into when planning or remembering... *****

The Voyage of the Mir-el-lah (1980) Lorenzo Ricciardi: a charming, amusing and almost incredible story of a man who dreamed of sailing a dhow along the old trade routes of the Arabian Gulf and East Africa; immersed himself in the Arab culture and dhow building and sailing, won the cash for his dhow, found a crew and meandered through an edgy, militarised Gulf and coast. Monster sharks, reefs, white rhinos, shipwreck and hijacking are mentioned in passing. With beautiful photos by his photographer wife. **Recommended. ******