

Adelaide to Lincoln



for Multihulls 2005

An account of the inaugural multihull division in the annual Adelaide to Pt Lincoln Blue Water Classic.

■ by PETER BOYD

It would be inappropriate to start this story without first acknowledging the Port Lincoln Yacht Club (PLYC) for including a multihull division in what is one of Australia's classic offshore yacht races and for over 50 years has been a keel boat race. While it is not the first time multihulls have raced together with monohulls, Brisbane to Gladstone is an example, it is arguably the first time multihulls have raced with monohulls in an offshore race such as the Adelaide to Lincoln race under the auspices of a single organising body. For this the PLYC must be applauded because I believe it marks a watershed in Australian yachting which will ultimately see multihulls accepted in all major yacht clubs and multihull divisions in all major yachting events. In this regard acknowledgement should also go to the Cruising Yacht Club of South Australia, where in club racing,

multihull yachts have competed head to head against monohulled yachts on PHF for many years.

With seven entries confirmed there was a special air of excitement for the South Australian multihullers in the week leading up to this year's Lincoln race. Enough to give us our own division and official right of passage after many years of lobbying and frustration. In addition Martin Riley's, *Raw to the Core* was already in Adelaide and was creating an enormous amount of interest amongst CYCSA members. How fast would it go. Would it make the distance. Would it pass Cat 3, etc etc.

The final entry list comprised two F9A's, my own boat *Bushranger* and Geoff Kneebone's *Tearaway*, Rob Remilton's well known F9R, *Wilparina 2*, Martin Riley's F28 cat, Steve and Ann Lords 55 foot Grainger cat, *Watermark*, Mark and Karen John's new Whitehaven 11, *Aquila* and Jack Thompson's well seasoned Twiggy, *Tooshay*.

The official briefing was held on the Thursday evening prior to the race and

there was a real buzz around the CYCSA. It was a feeling I had not experienced prior to a Lincoln race since I stopped sailing keel boats quite some years before. In addition there was the excitement of doing it in my own boat and being part of the first ever multihull race.

Amongst other things the briefing included a detailed weather analysis by one of the senior forecasters from the local BoM. As usual a 25 knot south-westerly sea breeze was predicted for the start of the race. Unfortunately the fairly sedate south-east gradient breeze which would replace the fading sea breeze indicated the race record would remain intact and we would have a dead run up Spencer Gulf to Dangerous reef. Still it would be a good run to Cape Spencer at the foot of Yorke Peninsula and not to punishing on boats or crew.

Race day dawned as a typical late summer day in Adelaide. Sunny skies and gentle south-east breezes. Crews were busy doing all their last minute preparations and the random safety inspections were being carried out. To no ones surprise *Raw to the Core* was randomly selected for inspection but passed her Cat 3 with room to spare. Geoff Kneebone's *Tearaway* also got the once over without any problems.



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Start time for the multis was 1510hrs, 10 minutes after the mono fleet got away. As we sailed out to the start the sea breeze was already well and truly in. Geoff Kneebone and I were running our number two headsails and were pretty much on the limit of our full mains. All the others seemed to be running similar configurations except for *Aquila* which had a tuck in the main. Martin Riley was entertaining the 60 or so keelboats blasting up and down behind the start line prior to the mono start.

The first leg of the race this year was the Semaphore sprint. A hard on wind leg of approximately 3nm to a turning mark off Semaphore jetty. It is designed to keep the boats inshore and give land based spectators a good view of the race start. There were prizes for the fastest all comers time to the jetty as well as the fastest multi and mono. *Raw to the Core* took the Semaphore Sprint beating the time of the Reichel Pugh designed mono rocket, *Secret Men's Business* by approx 10 seconds.

As the gun went for our start the stragglers in the mono fleet had barely cleared the line. *Bushranger* got a good start just to weather of *Tearaway* with *Raw to the Core* further up the line and *Wilparina* a little way back. The big Grainger and *Aquila* were more conservative and *Too Shay* was held up by a blown sheet just prior to the start.

By the time we settled we were doing 10 plus knots hard on the breeze and just holding out *Tearaway*. As I looked back I could see *Watermark* cranked up and throwing a mountain of water. It was an awesome sight. We left our first tack as long as we dared for fear of hitting the beach and headed out to sea on port to cross in front of the rest of the multi fleet. It was our 15 seconds of fame and the last time we would be anywhere near *Raw to the Core* until Lincoln.

Bushranger, *Tearaway*, *Wilparina* and *Aquila* all rounded the Semaphore mark in fairly close proximity with *Wilparina* drawing ahead as she got into the groove on the long haul to Marion reef.

Aquila was underpowered and dropping back so they stopped to shake out the reef in their main. *Watermark* and the Twiggy were some way behind *Aquila*. We were later to find out that Steve and Ann blew out their one and only headsail and had to withdraw from the race while the Twiggy sailed on with a jury rigged mainsheet system. However for us the real excitement was the match race we had with *Tearaway* for the next 30nm with the boats at times being no more than three metres apart. Fortunately for us *Tearaway* in the vulnerable windward position got too close to our weather quarter and we were able to gas them and slowly draw away to a lead of about one mile at Marion Reef. In the meantime *Raw to the Core* and *Wilparina* who were probably one to two miles ahead had taken a dig to the south to clear Marion Reef. If only they had hung on they would have got the big lift we and *Tearaway* were chasing and laid Marion in one tack.

Bushranger was third multi around Marion and we had passed all the monos except for the big three. *Rager*, *Secret Men's Business* and *G Wizz* who had started 10 minutes before us. However cracked off the boat speed jumped to 14 to 16 knots and within five minutes we had gone over the top of *G*

Wizz just as the last glimmers of light faded.

It's nearly 50nm from Marion to Cape Spencer so plenty of time and not much to do except keep the boat speed up and look into the gloom for lights coming into view from ahead or more importantly from astern and as the breeze started to back and fade contemplate on when the screecher or spinnaker would go up. Unfortunately for us we spent to much time contemplating and about 10nm from Cape Spencer we watched as *Aquila* cruised past us with her screecher up. We must have been on some sort of trance inducing drugs because we didn't respond and continued to procrastinate as *Aquila* slipped away.

In the meantime *Tearaway* somewhere behind were on a different type of drug because they attempted to fly their 100sqm kite and may have been fortunate that they shredded it under the boat before it filled with air.

Raw to the Core also had some excitement as they made a bee line for Yorke Pt trying to keep their screecher under control. Parked on Yorke Pt is not a good place to be in the middle of the night.

Around Cape Spencer the big masthead assy went up on *Bushranger* but even 100sqm of kite wasn't enough to make life exciting as we gybed up Spencer Gulf toward Dangerous reef desperately trying to keep a reasonable VMG. The only consolation in this was that it would be the same for everyone and worse for the boats following us. There was also a realisation that at times like this there is still a place for a nice big symmetrical kite that can run deep.

Somewhere north of Wedge Island the tedium was overcome when we realised we were making ground on a boat in

front. It soon became apparent the boat was *Aquila* who had romped past us along the foot of Yorke Peninsula. Like ourselves they were struggling to make good speed in the light breeze. After about an hour of cat and mouse tactics that included many gybes we eventually got past *Aquila* and so commenced our second match race which was to last until the finish in Lincoln approximately 40 nm further on. Through this period the lead changed several times with both *Aquila* and *Bushranger* paying the price for failing to cover when in front. As dawn came up we crossed within 50 metres and then proceeded to sail within hailing distance of each other over the last few miles from Donnington Pt into Lincoln with *Aquila* beating us over the line by approx 90 seconds. Not a bad result after more than 17 hours of racing.

While *Aquila* and *Bushranger* were having our own private duel *Raw to the Core* had been creating havoc in Lincoln as they sat on the radio trying to rouse someone to be on the finish line when they arrived there in the dark. *RTTC* had managed to carry reasonable breeze all the way into Lincoln. Their eventual elapsed time of 14 hours was only 20 minutes outside the outright race record held by *Wildthing* mark 1. A remarkable achievement considering the conditions were far from ideal for record breaking.

About 30 min behind *Raw to the Core* was Rob Remilton in *Wilparina* followed by *Aquila* and *Bushranger* a further three hours behind. Rob had also managed to carry the breeze into Lincoln. After that there was a long break to *Tearaway* who limped in under his screecher and *Too Shay* who continued to race inspire of myriad problems, to finish a long way back.

Watermark had motored into Lincoln to ensure they didn't miss out on the party.

On elapsed time four of the first five places were filled by multis with *Secret Men's Business* the first mono finishing 90 minutes behind *Wilparina*. *Rager* had parked on the reef at Fanny Pt only two nm from the finish while leading *SMB* and in a position to take both line and handicap honours in the monos. A big price to pay for the sake of 50 metres.

Obviously line honours in the Multihull Division went to Martin Riley and the crew of *Raw to the Core*. A truly great effort in probably the shortest boat in the fleet. It is right on minimum allowed length. On handicap first place went to Rob (the *Bandit*) Remilton and the crew of *Wilparina 2*, followed by Mark and Karen Johns and the crew of *Aquila* and in third place yours truly and the fine crew of *Bushranger*.

According to the GPS, *Bushranger* had sailed approx 180nm to cover the rhumb line 150nm to Lincoln in an elapsed time of 17¹/₂ hours.

As always it was a great race and an even better party. The interstate sailors, Martin Riley and crew, Stewy Bloomfield and the boys from Hart Marine and Ben Kelly, Joel Berg and big Tony who crewed for Rob Remilton had their first taste of the legendary Lincoln big drink on Sunday and seemed to be totally intoxicated by the occasion.

Next year we want to see at least 14 multis on the start line including some more interstate boats. Martin Riley has already indicated that *Raw Nerve* will be one of them and some of the other hot multi's have indicated they will be coming. We also hope to get a regatta happening that will give at least two full on days of round the cans racing to make the whole trip worthwhile without cutting too much into everyone's valuable time. ❖

MULTIHULL HANDICAP RESULTS

YACHT	SKIPPER	SAIL NO	YACHT CLUB	HANDICAP	ELAPSED TIME	CORRECTED TIME
1 Wilparina II	Remilton	GR 297	GRYC	1.100	14:30:08	15:57:09
2 Aquila	Johns	YC 241	CYCSA	0.940	17:34:43	16:31:26
3 Bushranger	Boyd	YC 666	CYCSA	0.940	17:36:11	16:32:49
4 Raw To The Core	Riley	V 28	Sandringham	1.218	14:00:48	17:04:06
5 Tearaway	Kneebone	YC 0381	CYCSA	0.940	19:45:49	18:34:40
6 Tooshay	Thomson	YC 04	RSAYS	0.940	24:57:19	23:27:29
7 Watermark	Lord		RSAYS	0.940		DNF