

changing

of the

guard

■ by IAN GRANT

Melbourne Multihull offshore sailing skipper Martyn Riley and the experienced Stuart Bloomfield wrote another chapter in Australian blue water racing history when they won the Allyacht Spars trophy over the Easter weekend.

RILEY and Bloomfield perhaps better known in the world of catamaran racing sailors as the Brisbane to Gladstone race record holders after they co-steered the 17.25m sprint machine *Raw Nerve* to a thrill a second 16.28kt average during the 308nm classic in 2004 claimed their fifth line honours in a row before lunch on Easter Saturday.

Five line honour trophy wins in a row in Australia's only major multihull class ocean race is a significant achievement and the *Raw Nerve* racing team had to overcome an expensive hurdle to claim the prestigious 2008 Allyacht Spars Brisbane-Gladstone first to finish trophy.

In fact their challenge with the power sailing *Raw Nerve* was shattered when the expensive carbon-fibre rig was smashed during a 40kt squall as the speed sailing catamaran was heading towards

***Raw to the Core* blast reaching to line honours victory.**





another runaway line honours win in the Adelaide to Port Lincoln race in February.

A fractured turnbuckle ended any hope of *Raw Nerve* making the start line on Brisbane's Moreton Bay at 1100 hours on Good Friday, March 21 leaving skipper Riley's personal challenge in jeopardy.

However the *Raw Nerve* crew had no longer salvaged the wrecked rig when plans for the Changing of the Guard were implemented and their official entry was changed to defend the title with the equally impressive but smaller fast lane sailing catamaran *Raw to the Core*.

This new high tech catamaran designed by Stuart Bloomfield and built with lightweight and super strong carbon technology had already established her own identity in the Deep South winning the line honours title in the 156nm Adelaide to Port Lincoln race earning a respected reputation but *Raw to the Core* while having the proven pedigree had to translate this to winning on a course which has a 44 year history of sorting the players from the stayers.

When dawn broke across Moreton Bay on Good Friday there were no signs of the sail stressing sou'east trade winds which had blown the stars off the national flag for most of the previous three months.

In fact a lazy six knot easterly which never threatened to produce enough

power to flick the speedo into recording exciting numbers presented the fleet with a slow start.

The Alan Carwardine and Shaun Jackson skippered catamaran *Cut Snake* and the Joel Berg helmed Allyacht Spars *Raider* stole the start slightly ahead of Rob Remilton's trimaran *Wilparina II* while there seemed to be little urgency on the trampoline of *Raw to the Core* as she struggled to sail in clean wind back in the pack.

Meanwhile the wind recorders at Cape Moreton, The Spitfire Channel and Double Island Point indicated the fleet of thirteen catamarans and the sole trimaran *Wilparina II* would not wait long before an ideal speed sailing breeze blew over the deck.

Tony Considine's high performance *APC Max* skippered by former Brisbane to Gladstone line honours trophy winner George Owen (*Taiping*) set the early pace with a surprisingly fast exit of Moreton Bay.

APC Max logged an impressive 11.23 knot average to lead *Raw to the Core* by a little over a mile with a similar distance to *Wilparina II* as they powered sailed on a fast track towards Double Island Point.

Bill Donnelly's *Boss Racing* crew were also in snorkel sailing mode on the spray drenched trampoline holding fourth place ahead of the match racing *Raider One*

| *Raider One Design* on the pace.

Design (Jamie Morris) and *AYS Raider* (Joel Berg) while *Wilparina II* (11.65kts) provisionally led the building battle for corrected time honours from *Raider One Design* (11.22kts) and *AYS Raider* (11.03kts).

As expected the breeze kicked in to provide the fleet with a fast reaching leg past Double Island Point dramatically changing the complexion of the race when the recently launched *Raider One-Design* (Jamie Morris) was forced out with rudder failure while the isolated squalls loaded with breeze propelled the leaders *APC Max* and *Raw to the Core* on a fast track towards Indian Head.

Both crews were settling into a line honours dog-fight when *APC Max* overpowered by fresh localised squall pitch poled into a dramatic capsized off Waddy Point just before 2350 hours.

Thankfully apart from damage to reputations with the unexpected 'swim' the *APC Max* crew were skilfully recovered unharmed by the crew of *Wilparina II* which after a delay rejoined the race for corrected handicap honours.

At the time of the incident *Raw to the Core* was leading. "We had sighted their



(APC Max) nav-lights, which confirmed our position as race leader,” Bloomfield said.

The *Raw to the Core* crew had logged an impressive 13.62kt average for the initial 171nm as the buoyant hulls of the catamaran comfortably dealt with the typically choppy seas as she tracked a fast course towards Breaksea Spit Light while her crew prepared to spend a busy period of tacking downwind on the leg from Lady Elliot Island to the finish.

Raw to the Core had lived up to her design potential powering away to record 1 hour 44 minute 14 second line honours win over *Wilparina II* with another 42 minutes 13 seconds to *AYS Raider*.

Stuart Bloomfield was naturally ecstatic and deserved to be when the relatively lightweight trailable 9.3m catamaran expressed her high power to weight ratio with a course average speed of 13.24kts.

When this time is calculated *Raw to the Core* with her 9.3m waterline and 23.27 hour elapsed time extended to her 2.502 metres/hour average has proved significantly faster in

Boss Racing reaches fast past Sunshine Coast.

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comparison to when the 17.25m *Raw Nerve* broke the record with her 18.92 hour elapsed time (1.097 metres/hour) average in 2004.

However while the *Raw to the Core* crew proved they have the fastest 9.3m ocean racer in the country their speed failed to outpace her 1.014 handicap penalty.

This result hung in the balance when Rob Remilton claimed redress for the time involved with searching and rescuing the *APC Max* crew.

They executed excellent seamanship finding the inverted *APC Max* in 55 minutes before spending a further 36 minutes getting their mates safely onboard before rejoining the race.

In spite of sailing more than half the race with four extra crew members on board *Wilparina II* still managed to complete the course with an impressive 12.32kt average.

Unfortunately the time with the applied redress was not fast enough for the Victor Harbour skipper Rob Remilton to claim an outright win on corrected handicap.

Ross Perrins and his co skipper the Multihull Yacht Club of Queensland Commodore Mike Hodges became the champions of the 2008 Allyacht Spars Brisbane to Gladstone race with the comfortable Jeff Schionning designed cruising catamaran *Renaissance*.

Skipper Perrins who has previously won three Brisbane to Gladstone races with the Peter Norlin designed IOR Half Tonne champion *Scampi A* now has three Multihull Gladstone race trophies displayed in his personal trophy locker.

Renaissance sailed into contention in the final half of the race to provisionally record the fastest corrected handicap course time which was later reduced to a 33 minute 56 second win when Race officials posted the official results following the redress allowance granted to *Wilparina II*.

Results

Multihull Yacht Club of Qld. Allyacht Spars 308nm Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race Line Honours: *Raw to the Core* (Martyn Riley, Vic) 23-16-10 1, *Wilparina II* (Rob Remilton, SA) Redress 25-00-24 2, *AYS Raider One Design* (Joel Berg, Qld) 25-42-37 3, *Boss Racing* (Bill Donnelly) 27-13-43 4, *Cut Snake* (Alan Carwardine/Shawn Jackson, Qld) 27-17-27 5, *Earthling* (Glenn Rutherford, Qld) 27-49-29. OMR Corrected Handicap: *Renaissance* (Ross Perrins/Mike Hodges, Qld) 22-39-56 1, *Wilparina II* 23-13-52 2, *Viento* (Mark Wilson, Qld) 23-14-01 3, *Spellbound* (Geoff Toomey, Qld) 23-18-53 4, *Raw to the Core* 23-35-43 5, *AYS Raider One Design* 24-14-41 6. Performance Rating: *Wilparina II* 23-16-52 1, *Raw to the Core* 23-55-16 2, *Cut Snake* 24-55-00 3, *Catalina* (Dale Low, Qld) 24-55-10 4, *Earthling* 25-02-32 5, *Boss Racing* 25-16-05 6. ❖



Cut Snake. (above right)
Wilparina II second with redress for rescue. (right)