



Club Captain's Report

Sailing Season 2018-2019

"A 15-knot South Westerly, a 15-knot South Westerly! My kingdom for a 15-knot South Westerly!"

Had Richard III been sailing at McCrae, he could well have used these words to summarise season 2018-19. Instead, we are left to ponder a year during which we seemed to cop more than our fair share of fickle sailing conditions. Maybe it's just me... Nonetheless, we still managed to get around 115 skippers to start at least one heat of 22 completed in the Aggregate and Skipper of Skippers.

Regattas

In last year's report, Col Dods suggested that this year's programme of additional events would be minimised in recognition of the heavy workload sustained by our sailors and volunteers over the previous two seasons. Although we hosted no Nationals, no Worlds and no States over the March long weekend, we still held a number of regattas:

McCrae Catamaran Championships in November – 46* entries

Ronstan Australia Day Regatta in January - 86 entries

Laser State titles in February - 72 entries

Paper Tiger State titles in February - 20 entries

Musto Skiff State titles in March - 18 entries

* Entries down due to a clash with the A-Class Worlds in Hervey Bay

With the support of Ronstan, we are aiming to make the Ronstan Australia Day Regatta a permanent fixture at McCrae in January. Limiting this regatta to two days enables us to run the event every year, regardless of when the public holiday actually falls.

Both the Paper Tigers and Musto Skiffs joined in with club racing as a separate division on Saturday, before spending Sunday on their own. Sharing on-water resources made these regattas cost effective for both the class associations and the club and this is a format well worth offering in future.

In the past year, we have pitched for two significant regattas which have not gone our way – the F18 Worlds in 2020 and the Tasar Worlds in 2024. That our club can submit such creditable proposals is a testament to our culture and values and the Tasars, in particular, was a close-run thing. As a consolation prize, we will host the Tasars for their Victorian States in 2022.

This season, we look forward to hosting the Minnow Nationals in January.

Power Boats

Overall, our fleet of power boats is in excellent condition and the Sailing Committee acknowledges our regular patrol boat crews, who all treat 'their' boats as if they were indeed their own.

Jubilee's motor is approaching 1,000 hours and was under consideration for replacement. However, given there is currently no indication of any issues, the decision has been made to defer this \$9,000 expense unless and until required.

Whilst we can afford to bare the risk of not immediately replacing Jubilee's motor, the same cannot be said of the tractor, of which we have but one. Accordingly, the Sailing Committee will be looking towards replacement at the end of next season.

The only power boat which required significant unscheduled maintenance during season 2018-19 was our beloved McArthur, which twice burst a seam on its starboard tube. This is nobody's fault and is simply the result of the outdated design of this 20+ year old hull. Notwithstanding significant repairs, there is no guarantee that McArthur won't go pop again.

In addition to its dodgy tubes, McArthur's motor is also approaching 1,000 hours and its trailer has maybe one more season left in it. The Sailing Committee has therefore recommended replacing McArthur with new aluminium-hulled RIB. A decision on funding is pending a review of the club's patrol boat requirements over the next 5-years.

Course Revision

Our standard course has held us in good stead for a number of years. However, there is anecdotal evidence that the ever-increasing speed of the fastest boats is leading to a corresponding increase in perceived, if not actual, risk to people and equipment, particularly around the gate.

The Sailing Committee has a revised course to trial from the commencement of next season. This report is not the place to get into the nitty gritty, suffice to say that the inner triangle is effectively being moved up the course such that it's own leeward mark will now be 0.1nm (around 200m) above the gate. The aim is to finalise a revised format before the commencement of the Aggregate and Skipper of Skippers.

Volunteers

In addition to our merry band of regular patrol boat crews, I also acknowledge those land-based volunteers who make a significant contribution to our club, including those in the tower, tractor drivers, fuel monitors, bar persons and, of course, the canteen. It takes a lot of free people power to keep our wonderful club functioning at such a high standard. Thanks.

The revisions to the rostered swimmer program have been a success. So much so, that from next season there will be 2 sailors rostered on patrol boats each week – one swimmer and one rib crew. Having a rostered rib crew will not only make life easier for the Sailing Committee, it will also open up the field of candidates to perform that duty. Same rules will apply. More details to follow.

Incoming Committee

For next season, we welcome Andrew Vize to the Sailing Committee and welcome back Simon Merritt (a previous Club Captain). Andrew and Simon will be joining those of last year's cohort back for another round; namely Al Watson, Andrew Pritchard, Cam Dunwoody, Steve Floyd, Brody Riley and Louis Chapman. What a great blend of youth and experience.

Thanks also to Steve Brayshaw and Dave Loutit, who are both officially stepping down from Sailing Committee – I say "officially" because both will still be doing a couple of RO duties next year. Nice gesture.

I look forward to seeing you all on the water next season. In the meantime, go Saints!

Richard Nicholson
Club Captain