

# The Bluebird Newsletter

www.bluebirdsailing.org.au



The official newsletter of the Bluebird Yacht Association of Victoria Inc. The articles and opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the official views of the BYAV.

## From the President

In summarizing our achievements this summer season, I have just one word— "fantastic".

We saw our entries for the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria's Lipton Regatta last November grow from six in 2006 to eight in 2007. Dave Wallace and Craig Black and crew in *Drambuie* took the honours for the series giving them bragging rights in their home club, RYCV. Congratulations guys.

The Bluebird contingent at the Skandia Geelong Week saw remarkable growth, with six entrants this year up from two in 2007. So many yachts had entered the 'Cruising Division with Spinnaker' this year that four sub-divisions were created for the first time. However, if all of the sub-divisions had been combined, *Drambuie* would still have won the Passage Race overall on handicap. *Shadow*, *Pisces* and *Paramour* went on to compete in the remainder of the series. *Paramour's* series win and *Shadow's* seventh place once again gave our class the prestige and profile it deserves.

Our biggest success story for the season was to have 15 entrants in our State Championships, up from eight in 2007.

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Mark it in your  
diary now

**Presentation Night**  
**Friday 2 May 2008**  
**Details to follow soon**



*Dan Kennedy and crew on Hanini II crossing the finishing line, Heat 5 2008 State Championships.*

This did not include *Tandeka* and *Motley Crew* as they are undergoing repairs. That, together with the fact that there are several prospective buyers searching for Bluebirds for sale, must ensure an even larger fleet in future series.

Several yachts were competing in the State Championships for the first time, their owners being relatively new to the class. This included Dave Wallace and Craig Black in *Drambuie*, Christian O'Halloran in *Manjimup*, Nick White in *Pisces*, Logan Stuart in *Kotare* and David Barnett in *Nunyara*. I hope you

all enjoyed it enough fellas to return in future series.

Once again, demonstrating that all Bluebirds are potential winners, it was gratifying to see the crews of different yachts on the podium this year.

Finally our website is up thanks to Andrea Drobnik, giving us electronic exposure to the sailing and general public. ([www.bluebirdsailing.org.au](http://www.bluebirdsailing.org.au)) Our Vice-President John Owens has agreed to be our 'Webmaster' and will be glad to receive your feedback.

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## SKANDIA GEELONG WEEKEND

The weekend began with an impressive fleet of yachts lined up for the start just off Williamstown. A good northerly breeze ensured that it would be a fast run with spinnakers flying down to Portarlington. From there, the wind turned south east, enabling spinnakers to be carried all the way to Geelong. You couldn't have asked for better, with many yachts finishing the Passage Race in around 6 hours. Congratulations to all boats competing in the Passage Race; *Drambuie* (1st), *Paramour* (3rd), *Shadow* (12th), *Manjimup* (18th), *Secret* (34th), and *Pisces* (41st) out of 53 boats.



*Paramour's Geelong crew David Barnett and Andrew Lucas with skipper, Ivan Knight, holding their well earned trophy for winning D Division.*

Race 2 began with some confusion and continued with some changeable winds and challenging sailing. Race 3 began with a breeze that was so light that although the eventual winner, *Paramour*, took 25 minutes to cross the starting line, she was still a relatively short distance behind the early leaders.

The Bluebirds were certainly very competitive in 'Cruising with Spinnaker' Division D, taking on and often beating much bigger yachts over the 3 races. Congratulations to *Paramour* (1st) and *Shadow* (7th) in overall placings.

David Barnett  
Nunyarara

## Manjimup's Passage Race to Geelong

Having slept on the boat, we woke to a fresh, clear and still morning. The weather report was good with a northerly wind predicted; we only hoped it would arrive prior to the race start. This was *Manjimup's* first Geelong Race, first passage race at all in fact as I had only started racing the boat in the 2007 winter series. However, I did sail in the 2007 Geelong Race on *Paramour* with Ivan where we managed to notch up a first place on handicap in our division. This probably did help the enthusiasm to enter, but I was not expecting to match this result.

As we completed final preparations we could feel hints of the northerly wind coming in; While not enough to get us to the start line under sail, it was time to get underway - Let's Go!

We motored out from Parson's Marina to join what appeared to be a four-lane boat super highway with yachts coming down the river and from Hobson's and Royal's all converging in the channel around Point Gellibrand. By the time we had reached the start area the wind was freshening. We raised the sails, stored the motor below and began weaving a path amongst the numerous yachts circling and traversing the start line.

Bang, we're off! The first moments were fairly chaotic, however, the diverse size and styles of the yachts meant the fleet separated quickly. With the wind over our starboard stern we hoisted the kite immediately. The wind continued to increase and early on there were some hairy moments when strong gusts came across what was still a fairly dense fleet as spinnakers flapped and boats changed course without notice.

We had seen little Bluebird action in the first leg of the race until a couple of miles from the first mark we spotted *Secret* just ahead of our starboard, then spotted *Shadow* ahead of her. The wind started to drop away as we approached the mark and, amazingly, we converged on the mark almost

head to head with *Pisces* who came in on our port side.

Just after the first mark was the most frustrating part of the race. At one point the wind practically died completely, but it wasn't long before it came up from behind us again and the kite was back up. We took the rhumb line from the channel gate to Point Henry and had a great run. We left *Pisces* behind and picked up and overtook *Secret*, who had taken a course much closer to the shore following the channel around. We had



*Manjimup*

*Shadow* in our sights all the way and although we felt we made gains, we never looked like catching up. We didn't see *Drambuie* or *Paramour* and correctly assumed they were well ahead, later finding out they had achieved great results.

Through the channel past Point Henry, we hardened up on a tight reach still under spinnaker, and held this course to the line. We finished not long after 3:00pm completing the course in around six hours. We packed up sails and followed *Shadow* in to look for a berth. The afternoon breeze had strengthened making exposed berth's worth avoiding. We manage to find a sheltered hole at the end of a marina bay rafting up against Andrew and Ryan on the Triton 28 they had chosen to sail in lieu of the Bluebird. Following a quick swim to freshen up we joined several thousand others at the bar...

This year saw a healthy increase in Bluebird entries to the race with 6 official entries up from 2 in 2007. This increase in numbers has potentially provided an opportunity to have the Bluebirds represented as their own class in the 2009 race. This will be investigated by the Committee in the coming months and will hopefully encourage further entries for next year's event.

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## 2008 Bluebird State Championships Final Results

Yacht & Final Placing	Owner	Sail no.	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	FINAL RESULT - BEST 4 of 5
<b>1st</b> Drambuie	David Wallace/ Craig Black	S57	1	5	16	1	1	<b>8</b>
<b>2nd</b> Warranilla	Ian McGrath/ John Vermeulen	H271	3	1	4	2	2	<b>8</b>
<b>3rd</b> Moody Blue	Mike and Narelle Grey	H1150	4	3	2	3	3	<b>11</b>
Jay	Ryan Blackstock	H411	5	2	3	16	4	<b>14</b>
Paramour	Ivan Knight	H66	6	4	1	4	6	<b>15</b>
Shadow	Ian Lewis	H241	8	8	5	16	5	<b>26</b>
Gaylene	Tim Blunt	H1138	7	7	16	6	9	<b>29</b>
Manjimup	Christian O'Halloran	H1684	9	6	16	5	16	<b>36</b>
Pisces	Nick White	H71	11	10	7	9	16	<b>37</b>
Revel	Warwick Norman	H292	2	9	16	11	16	<b>38</b>
Secret	Jock Murphy	H90	16	12	6	10	12	<b>40</b>
Nunyara	David Barnett	H471	16	11	16	7	7	<b>41</b>
Kotare	Logan Stuart	H85	16	16	8	8	12	<b>44</b>
Hanini II	Dan Kennedy	H113	10	13	16	13	8	<b>44</b>
Bounty	Bruce and Peter Hocking	H56	12	16	9	16	16	<b>51</b>



# 2008 Bluebird State Championships



*Bluebirds spread across the bay*



*Our gratitude as always goes to HBYC for organising our starts from the Shirley Freeman*



*Bluebirds dwarfed by a passing container ship*



*Nunyara calls starboard on Drambuie*



*Drambuie*



*Warranilla in full flight*



*Shadow showing perfect spinnaker control*



*Drambuie rounding the mark*



*Kotare is pursued by Hanini II*

All photos on this page were taken during Race 5 of the series by Rosalva, who, as well as enjoying her second ever sailing experience on *Paramour*, took some great shots on the day.



## Paramour's various upgrades

During my decade on the water in *Paramour*, my dream has been to use her as my pocket cruiser as well as a class racer. Consequently, whenever I have had her on the slip for her annual overhaul, I have undertaken a project to enhance her cruising performance, some of which I will outline below.

Never fond of mooring bits bolted onto the deck, I took mine off years ago and installed a stout timber sampson post and bit firmly attached at deck level and bolted to the lower end of the bulkhead below. During this project I also did away with the anchor well and hatch as, for racing, I did not like to position the heavy chain and anchors so far forward.

The main hatch slide always seemed to be vulnerable if ever a large wave broke over the deck. So I built and installed a fibreglass hood to protect it, at the top of which is housed the solar panel.

Storage is always a problem, so I extended the quarter berths to the end of the cockpit. This way I am able to store bulky items such as the inflatable dinghy, sails and personal effects beyond the sleeping berth. Also, in a seaway in the absence of lee cloths, one can sleep further under the cockpit seats without fear of being tossed out.

Beyond the cockpit seats aft, I have installed a lazarette locker. This involved removing the lifting hatch and installing a sliding hatch for easier access under the tiller. Below this hatch I have glassed in a false floor, sealed off from the rest of the interior of the boat, for the storage of fuels and anything else not welcome in the cabin.

When re-wiring, I built a new switch panel with volt-meter, DC outlet and switches for navigation lights, masthead light, cabin light and VHF radio. I have mounted the main VHF aerial on the masthead, but there is a secondary aerial mount on the pushpit for the detachable aerial in the unlikely event of dismasting.

I installed a new goose neck fitting last

winter doing away with the sliding adjustable one which broke the previous season. Also, the boom was replaced with a new anodised one since the old one had to be sleeved after being broken in Geelong in 2007. New rams horns by the goose neck make the jiffy reefing mainsail system quicker and more efficient.

The gloss white painted interior complemented by new timber cupboard doors, underbunk hatches for the storage compartments and a polished timber floor, give the little cabin a cosy feel. Incidentally, I can position the main floor panel on cleats and with the bunk cushions placed athwartships, form a double berth.

Another addition is an ice-box made to fit snugly into the outboard well bucket. In making this I used 40 mm refrigeration foam, glassed up and painted inside and out. Even without adding ice, cold items stay cold for at least 24 hours, which is far better performance than our esky.

With everything working efficiently, I felt confident to now sail her further afield.

Ivan Knight  
*Paramour*



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We were unable to stay for the full three day event and so sailed back to Melbourne on the Sunday. The report was for a 15 knots westerly shifting to the south and strengthening to 25-30 knots. The westerly was as predicted when leaving the marina so we hoisted a full main and the #3 headsail in preparation for a strengthening wind.

The wind followed us up the channel and out into the bay, slowly swinging and strengthening as predicted until we found ourselves surfing into Hobson's Bay down the face of 1 metre swells in 30 knots of stiff breeze. We must have exceeded 12 knots boat speed on a number of occasions. The last ½ hour was an amazing adrenalin rush. Can't wait to do it again next year!

Christian O'Halloran  
*Manjimup.*

Dates for Skandia Geelong Week  
2009 have been announced:

**Thursday 22—Monday 26  
January 2009**

Keep an eye on  
[www.geelongweek.com](http://www.geelongweek.com) for up-  
dates.





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Your Committee has worked hard to ensure, not only your Association's survival, but to advance it to become one of the largest keel boat fleets on Port Phillip Bay, rivaled only, if I'm not mistaken, by the S80 fleet. In particular I would like to thank Secretary, Ian Lewis for all his work and enthusiasm, Vice-President and Webmaster, John Owens and my wife Louise Avery, in her role as Treasurer and newsletter editor.

Together with our well attended social events and record-breaking fleets, we can be well proud to be a part of the Bluebird Association of Victoria.

Ivan Knight  
President

## Paramour's Little Sojourn South

Sometimes I get the urge to make more memories before I am too old. It's been in my mind to go offshore in *Paramour* for years, but for various reasons it's been put off until now. No more excuses to myself could be found; after all I'm retired, *Paramour* is as ready as she will ever be and early March is about as late in the year as I would like to depart for the sake of warmth, especially at night. An afternoon spent fitting the Tillerpilot and loading up a van load of cruising gear, and I was ready to set off.

I chose King Island for several reasons: a) at about 120 miles from Port Phillip Heads, it should be reached in 24 hours from there in anything but contrary winds; b) Grassy is a safe, all-weather harbour; c) I could catch up with a boat-builder turned beef cattle farmer friend after he and his family bought a farm there six years ago; d) there is plenty of sea room to the north and east of King Island so if caught in a storm I could hove-to without fear of running into other islands or reefs; and e) I had not sailed into Grassy Harbour,



Grassy Harbour

whereas I had in the case of all Victorian ports .

I departed Hobson's Bay Yacht Club at 0900 hrs on Saturday 8th of March. The breeze was from the west, but at about five knots, so I used the little two horsepower Honda motor to keep progress at 4.5 knots. Shortly after passing Gellibrand Light I set my Sinrad Tillerpilot to 180° and by 11am I was passing the Spoil Ground buoy. By midday the breeze had swung around to the north but was still very light. The Tillerpilot stopped working at 1300 hrs and a blown fuse in the switch panel had to be replaced. By 1445 hrs I passed the West Channel pile close by where a number of seals were very vocal as two of them appeared to be brawling. By 1600 hrs the Pope's Eye was abeam and an hour later I was in The Rip. The tide was in its last phase of ebb, increasing my speed over the ground by a knot or so. A friendly wave from the crew of an incoming yacht caught my attention and it was only after my return that I learned that the yacht was the *Cavalier 37 Red Sky* owned by Brian Yarnell (ex-Gaylene) and crewed by Ian McGrath and John Vermeulen (*Warranilla*). A few miles south of Port Phillip Heads I observed several more yachts making for the heads, and I assumed them to have retired

from the Grassy Race.

Through the night I continued to motor-sail, but by that time the light breeze was from the south-east and the best course I could make with sails set was 190°.

Through the day and night I had settled down to a routine of re-fuelling

the outboard's one-litre fuel tank every 90 minutes. Once every hour I switched on the GPS and entered the position in the log together with the wind strength and direction, the barometer reading and any other events to note. At night I made myself as warm as I could with layers of clothes and lay on the fore-deck with my head by the mast. This way I was able to keep watch away from the exhaust fumes in the cockpit. However, no ships or trawlers showed up through the night. Before dawn the breeze increased from the north-east.

Some examples of the log entries to Grassy Harbour read as follows:

0445 hrs Position: 39° 00.7' South, 144° 07.5' East. Motor sailing at 5.2 kts. Very starry night, light south-east breeze. Barometer 1025hP and steady. Course 194°

0610 hrs wind increased to 10kts from the north-east and cut motor.

0720 hrs sun just rising - beautiful. Position: 39° 13.8' South 143° 58.6' East. Speed 5.8 kts, wind 15 kts north-east - good sailing

0900 hrs Cape Wickham Lighthouse visible and bearing 210°. Changed course to 150° to follow coast between 1 and 2 miles offshore. Making from 5.5 to 6.5kts. North-east wind freshening, unable to keep down food - thrown up twice.

1200 hrs passed Lavina Point and romping along.

1515 hrs passed inside Councillor Island.

1615 hrs passed Naracoopa and Fraser Bluff. Four yachts sighted sailing north from Grassy Race including the easily identified Swan 65 Independent Endeavour.

1720 hrs re-installed motor and dropped sails while waiting for the King Island Ferry to exit Grassy Harbour. Motored in and anchored at head of Harbour in three metres. Two racing yachts Gigi and INXS remained on moorings.

On reaching Grassy I was most disappointed to discover that my NextG mobile phone had no service. This phone, was on loan from Telstra while mine was in for repair, and was now not

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working properly. I therefore inflated my Bombard dinghy for the row ashore and a two kilometre walk to Grassy township and a public phone to ring home. I had not rowed far before being hailed by the owner of *INXS* who wanted a lift ashore to retrieve his crew from the Grassy pub, so I had company on the walk. I slept very soundly on Sunday night, sleeping in until 8.45 the next morning. I was to be met by my friends Ian and Carol Bott at 10am by the yacht club and taken to their farm a few kilometres away. Ian introduced me to his next door neighbour and long-time friend John Brewster who has farmed on the island for 20 years and is building a 26 foot Warram catamaran. John was keen to see aboard *Paramour* so we decided to take her out for a sail, before returning to John's for dinner. Outside the harbour there was a fresh breeze and steep seas and, with the No 3 headsail and double-reefed main, there was more than enough sail for exhilaration. On Tuesday the 11th March I did my best to help on Ian and Carol's farm, having stayed there overnight. We weighed 24 cattle individually on the scales, having transported them in four truckloads from one farm to another to . After lunch we used his tractor to spread out some hay from round bales, before I was taken back to the Harbour to begin the passage home.

Armed with a printout of the 7 day wind forecast from [www.buoyweather.com](http://www.buoyweather.com) that fisherman use, I knew that I had best not stay longer, or I would be beating into north winds.

I departed Grassy Harbour at 1520 hrs and, with a 12 knot breeze from the south-east and clear skies, could not have asked for better, although the seas were a bit bumpy.

The breeze continued at about 10 knots from the south-east throughout most of the night, keeping my progress at about 5 knots. My Tillerpilot (which I nicknamed Sinbad) was doing a great job in the difficult steering

conditions of quartering seas. Through the early hours before and after dawn, the wind was dying out.



"Sinbad" the Tillerpilot

However, I was reluctant to start the motor, as I was able to rest below in the warmth of the cabin, with occasional glances around the horizon without fumes or noise from the Honda. I turned off the nav lights at 0530hrs concerned that I might run out of battery power for "Sinbad".

However at 0745 hrs Sinbad froze and on inspection another fuse had blown. The DC outlet on my switch panel continued to blow each of my spare fuses in turn, and I was unable to work out what was causing the short.

I hand steered for a few hours in light winds without the motor, but by 1200 hrs I had only covered 15.6 nautical miles in five hours. I decided to try to run Sinbad on the 12 volt battery pack as it had a DC outlet but did not expect the small capacity battery to last for more than a few hours. However it gave me a six-hour break from hand steering which was a welcome relief.

The breeze was light throughout the afternoon and into the evening, but I persisted with wind power and only used the motor when boat speed dropped below three knots.

At one stage at least a hundred dol-

phins kept me company for half an hour or so, relieving what was otherwise a fairly boring passage. Once in view of the Victorian shoreline it took several hours before Port Phillip Heads were in sight, but by then the sun was setting. I had been watching a distant yacht on the horizon making for the Heads and then, in the dark, saw their nav lights as they entered the Rip. It was not slack water, but full ebb and although it took them some time to go through, they obviously made it ok. I had planned to sit it out and wait for slack water before entering the Rip, but as there was virtually no wind or much swell running outside, I decided it should be safe enough to give it a try. After all, I was by now quite tired and needed to put my head down.

With a topped-up outboard fuel tank, I lined up the lead lights from Queenscliff and entered the Rip. The sea conditions changed rapidly in the dark as it seemed there were standing waves all around and steering needed my full concentration. At one stage a pooping wave caught me by surprise and slapped my back.

In that time trying to motor through at 4.5 knots, I had to avoid four ships exiting Port Phillip Bay by heading to the west. I discovered that whenever I headed to the west to avoid shipping, the tide was stronger and I was going backwards, but in line with the leads I was just holding my own and a little better. Still further west I was able to



Sunrise on the way to King Island

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### Races Coming Up in 2008

Bluebird Cup Winter Series					
Date	Heat	Start	Date	Heat	Start
<b>April</b>			<b>July</b>		
Saturday 26	1	1300 hrs	Saturday 5	5	1300 hrs
<b>May</b>			Saturday 19		
Saturday 10	2	1300 hrs	6	1300 hrs	
Saturday 24	3	1300 hrs	<b>August</b>		
<b>June</b>			Saturday 2	7	1300 hrs
Saturday 21	4	1300 hrs	Saturday 16	8	1300 hrs
			Saturday 30	9	1300 hrs

Bluebird Long Course Series (Safety Cat. 5)	
Date	Heat
Saturday April 19	2
Don Thompson Trophy to St Leonard's. Entry details from HBYC	

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make headway.

There is a bay between Point Lonsdale and Queenscliffe where it is safe to anchor. I picked my way in towards shore using my Hondex hand held depth sounder to find an anchorage in three metres of water at 22.30 hrs. After a warm meal, I bedded down for a few hours of much needed kip. I was woken at 03.30 hrs on Thursday morning due to changed sea conditions as the incoming tide put *Paramour* at right angles to the swell and it became too uncomfortable to stay anchored there. The flood tide and motor together rushed us up towards the West Channel pile and by 0615 hrs we were past the pile and into the open waters of the Bay. Just as it was dawning, a fog rolled in and for nearly three hours I motor-sailed up the Bay into a NNE wind with no more than a few boatlengths of visibility. As the fog lifted the first thing that came into view was the water tower at South Werribee about two miles to the west. Shortly afterwards I went about onto

port tack to clear Point Cook and motor-sailed the final hours in bright sunlight, pulling up at HBYC at 1330 hrs on Thursday 13 March. As it had been 20 years since my last single-handed offshore passage, it was satisfying to find I was still up to the task and enjoyed the experience.

*A few notes on safety*

*On this trip I did not carry a life raft as stowage space is rather limited on a Bluebird. However, I carried my registered 406 EPIRB, took careful note of the weather before departing, always wore a PFD and clipped my life harness onto the jackstays or strong point in the cockpit when on deck. I also carried 34 litres of petrol which, in calm conditions should be enough to motor from Port Phillip Heads to Grassy and return.*

Ivan Knight  
*Paramour*



Peter Roberts and son Brody enjoy a beer at the Bluebird 2007 Xmas function.

