

Sailor killed in shocking yacht race crash on Pittwater

<http://www.boatpoint.com.au/editorial/news/2016/sailor-killed-in-shocking-yacht-race-crash-on-pittwater-55977>

Deceased sailor named, another injured, in shocking crash in the Prince Alfred Yacht Club race on Pittwater

Very sad news — there has been a fatality after a collision between two yachts competing in the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club race day on the afternoon of Saturday February 27.

The name of the deceased sailor, David "Boothy" Booth (72), has now been released. The second yachtsman and crewman with severe injuries remains in hospital.

The RPAYC race calendar reveals the Inshore Series Race 9, the Classic Boat Race 8, and the Classics Series Race 7 were being held on Saturday on Pittwater. Some 50 yachts were reportedly racing around the cans, which is nothing unusual.

Police are now investigating the death of Mr Booth, a real estate agent and popular club sailor from Hornsby, and the serious injury to another man in the tragic Pittwater race.

The RPAYC has issued a statement that we reprint in full at the bottom of this news.

The NSW Police dispatch says that at about 2.30pm (Saturday, February 27, 2016) the police and Ambulance Paramedics were called to the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club on Mitala Street, Newport, after reports two yachts collided during a yacht race in Pittwater.

One man died at the scene. The other man has been airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital with severe leg injuries.

Those involved in the Saturday racing with the RPAYC were believed to be in shock.

Since the terrible news broke, sources have reported that the 11 Metre Class race yacht *Pacesetter* and a Couta boat *Emily* collided head-on after the former was allegedly setting a kite after rounding a mark off Clareville.

The Couta boats have a very long protruding bowsprit and any head-on crash between two yachts would have exacerbated the impact.

Police from Marine Area Command are conducting inquiries into the incident and a report will be prepared for the Coroner.

The yachts have been towed from the scene of the crash and will be subject to forensic examination.

Northern Beaches Police Chief Inspector Graeme Pickering said police had seized the yachts that crashed.

Chief Inspector Pickering wouldn't elaborate on the yacht race and crash and said that will be determined by the investigation itself.

"We'll be interviewing quite a few witnesses involved," he told the ABC.

Police were appealing for any members who may know about the incident to come forward and speak to them. Witnesses that had been interviewed thus far were said to be distraught.

"I spoke to a number of senior members of the club and of course they are all very upset, they would have known these people personally," Chief Inspector Pickering said.

The RPAYC was holding the Classic Boat Race 8 and the Classics Series Race 7. Deaths in yacht races, especially club races 'around the cans', are extremely rare.

The Prince Alfred Yacht Club was shocked to lose a returning yachtsman near Port Stephens after the Pittwater to Coffs race earlier this year.

The crewman missing off Port Stephens on a return journey from the Coffs Harbour [race] was Mal Lennon from the vessel *Amante*. We reported on that [terrible yachting drama and tragedy at Port Stephens earlier this year](#).

We are updating this sad story about the loss of a sailor and the injured crewman on Pittwater as more information comes to light. All we can say is that it must have been a hell of a yacht crash.

We hear a flying bowsprit may have caused the death, that the deceased was reportedly sailing on an 11M that collided with a Couta, and that the injured man with a severed leg almost bled to death in the water before he was airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital.

Our thoughts are with the family, friends, local Pittwater sailing community and RPAYC members at this terrible time.

Police are urging anyone with information in relation to this incident to call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or use the Crime Stoppers online reporting page <https://nsw.crimestoppers.com.au/>.

RPAYC STATEMENT: Yachting Incident

We regret to advise of a serious incident on Pittwater between 2 yachts on Saturday 27th February. Sadly, one person involved in the incident is deceased, and the next of kin have been notified. Another person sustained serious leg injuries and was airlifted to Royal North Shore Hospital. The matter is in the hands of the police. We thank all members and staff who provided assistance and first aid in this tragic event and our thoughts and prayers are with those involved and their families and friends.

*Ian Audsley
Commodore - The Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club*