

I sent this to Malcolm who is gallivanting around in Europe somewhere.

"We sailed the last Autumn Saturday race yesterday.

Despite being Anzac day there was a good turnout of yachts at the start.

The languid breeze barely fluttered the New Zealand and Australian flags flying from the top of the Bridge as we waited for the start.

The start was delayed about 30 minutes as we waited for a breeze. Phil Hare had picked up a buoy off Birchgrove whilst we waited for a breeze and a course. The breeze was a typical winter one. Coming and not coming from everywhere. Usually nothing. The tide moved the boat more than the "breeze". Eventually Phil decided on course 10A, which I guess was meant for a north wester, which was as good a course as any to pick. It looked at one stage like a spinnaker start, but the breeze finally settled into a sort of northerly direction.

Finally we got under way. We got a good start with Colin at the helm, DJ (borrowed from Gee Whizz) on sheets and myself being a tailer to Denis on the genny and general odds body. From a start off Birchgrove/Long Nose we followed Solitude and Chloe to the mark at Compass and headed to Goat. On the beat we passed the rest of the boats coming down to Compass.

Wait on. Who's that? There was Gee Whizz which had not participated in the long wait for wind and not been there at the 5 minute gun.

I yelled out to Graham "Where did you come from?" "Pittwater" he replied. They had participated in the Port Stephens Regatta the week before and had delayed their sail back until the weather cleared. They got to Pittwater on Friday and were coming past Longnose when they noticed the race had just started so joined in. As you do. Blue Chip and Gee Whizz had been neck and neck in the point score.

Well, we went on to chase down Solitude which extended her lead at each mark in the light conditions. At the first beat up from Spectacle/Testicle Chloe forgot about Compass and we passed them. Coming down from Goat the second and final time saw Speedwell and Eggshells breathing down our necks. Somewhere back there were Chloe, trying to make up lost ground and Gee Whizz who were sailing two up and thus Kite-less. Our run up Humbug was immaculate for once, getting the lifts when we wanted them and we cruised over the line behind (a long, long way) Solitude which had already gone back to her mooring.

We dropped DJ at his Etchells to pump it out and derigged Blue Chip. Back at the Deck of Knowledge, which was indoors due to the black, black skies overhead, Michael Coleman turned up with a huge slab of Atlantic Salmon which he had got from the Fish Markets and then smoked himself. This was washed down with beer and fresh bread stick.

Meanwhile outside the shed Graham and John retrieved their "going away" sailing gear into the club and took Gee Whizz back to her mooring. They had barely got back in the club when the heavens She opened. Down it came. Thunder, lightning, and then deafening hail. Graham and John had made it back by the skin of their teeth and were trying get hold of wives to get them home. The poor unlucky boys in the starters boat had gone out to retrieve the buoys and got caught in the thick of it as the tempest lashed us. They had to shelter behind Onions and wait for a break before attempting to go to the mooring.

Phil Hare managed to get back to the club just before the storm, and waited until the boys were back safe and sound in the shed.

Phil got the results from the computer and guess what.... Gee Whizz won the series with Solitude. We trailed Speedwell to third.

A very memorable day.

Phil"