



**T**he spell between 'Between the Sheets' has stretched a bit and you all are no doubt well and truly due for another few lines.

The Port Hacking - Batemans Bay Coastal Regatta has come and gone and we can all be proud of the efforts of the combined club committee who worked hard to make it the success it was. Last year your committee had a fairly heavy workload with the regatta and other matters. The Regatta will be happening again next year and your committee is well under way with the forward planning.

Although we are refining the procedures for the 2003 regatta, we want to hear **your** comments or suggestions for either the 2003 regatta or the remainder of the sailing season or both! Don't keep it to yourself, write to the committee. (They have to answer a letter!)

Unfortunately the Wollongong weekend was cancelled due to public liability insurance issues well beyond our control so we subsequently made a sojourn to the CYCA for that weekend. I understand that some business interests in Wollongong along with some prominent CYCA yachtsmen are addressing the issue of public liability insurance in an endeavour that the weekend stay over will go ahead next year.

We have had some good conditions and some trying conditions with our racing in the season's second half. All good character building stuff. If pressed again, hard enough, I will explain why *Third Man* flew the 'Q' flag during the approach to Sydney Harbour on race S8, but then again, it may be prudent to let it ride.....

**And now, some safety matters;**

All skippers and crew would (and should!) be well aware now of the need to refer to the 'Blue Book' to check out their yacht's safety systems and arrange where applicable for new equipment to be installed.

In particular, Rule 3.25, sealed batteries for Cat 2 and 3 is mandatory from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2002, which means come September and the start of the new season, all Cat 3 yachts must have these batteries installed. These batteries will be at some expense so this is a 'heads up' to arrange, negotiate and juggle the finances.

Lifelines or Guardrails wire diameter will be checked to ensure that Rule 3.11 is complied with. Some wire that had the plastic removed may not be the required diameter and therefore needs to be checked for compliance.

Safety Harness Tethers Rule 5.02 (c), this rule refers to the new requirement of a 'flag' integrated in the tether to indicate overload. This rule is applicable from Cat 1 to Cat 4. There hopefully will be more info on this as the items currently available are around \$219.00 each.

Again, I urge all skippers to review their radio and safety routines. All crew need to know where all safety equipment is stowed and be familiar and confident in its use.

Get the crew together and conduct an exercise of Man Overboard drill as detailed in the Blue Book, practice rigging the emergency steering, exercise treating a casualty, fitting your safety harness and tether, donning and adjusting your PFD1, read up on the 'huddle' position for survival. Remember that this is the basic stuff we all need to know and be prepared for.

Here is something may interest those who aspire to skippering a towboat on flood-swollen rivers.

**And now for something completely different,  
Think back to the Clyde River Bridge at Batemans Bay!**

Do not try this at home. Remember that this is a professional Captain.



Photo01

The towboat is approaching the bridge with barges loaded with coal.



Photo02

This frame gives you an idea of how fast the river is running. Obviously at or near flood stage



Photo03

Oh CRAP!!! The bridge didn't open and the boat can't stop. Notice that the tug has released the barges. He is backing as hard as possible to try and avoid a collision with the bridge.



Photo04

Can't back down enough against the current.



Photo05

Bloody Hell! The current has swung the boat around sideways.



Photo06

The cook thinks maybe something isn't quite right.



Photo07

The boss is going to be REAL mad!



Photo08

Uh... Boss? Do we have flood insurance on this tug?



Photo09

Uh.... Boss? You ain't gonna believe what we just did!



Photo10

She's low, but the flag is still flying.



Photo1



Photo12





Photo13



Photo14



Photo15



Photo16



Photo17



Photo19

Notice anything unusual? Look at the smoke coming from the exhausts. This thing is running!!!



Photo20      *Acknowledgment to Roland Melzer <http://home.attbi.com/~nwiggen/TowBoat/towboat.htm>*

Notice the propwash at the rear of the tug. The vessel is upright and back under power. Ho Hum. Just another day on the river.

It goes to show, getting into strife is one thing, but it's how you get yourself out of it!

***Fair winds and following seas and keep a sharp lookout for low bridges!***

***Jim Lupton.***

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