



# Risk sub-committee review.

## Short Haul Race Sunday 12th October 2025

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### Preamble

During the short haul race held by Port Hacking Sailing on Sunday, 12th October 2025, the fleet encountered sudden and unexpected gale-force wind conditions, which arrived after the race had started. This race was held in the semi-sheltered waters of Bate Bay with the whole racing area being within 2nm of the Port Hacking Estuary. All yachts, made their own decision to abandon the race and make their way home. One yacht, Starship, had difficulty in lowering sail which resulted in the inability to motor into the wind to return to Port Hacking. Y Knot, who was nearest to Starship, stood by to assist. Marine Rescue was notified and a Marine Rescue vessel attended to take over the standby role.

Although several yachts suffered sail damage, there was no major damage or injuries to any crew.

This race was one of the races in the PHS Short Haul series. This is a series of races all held in Bate Bay within a range of 2nm from the estuary of Port Hacking. The races are Pursuit Start races such that each yacht is given a start time according to their handicap.

PHS has nominated these to be Category 5 races. Category 5 is defined as: *Races with limited rescue availability, in protected waters, in daylight hours or in sheltered waters at night.* Protected Waters are further defined as: *Are those not fully exposed to the extremes of the ocean in such a way that the ocean swell has been broken. It may include large bays and gulfs.* (Definitions from Australian Sailing Special Regulations)

Eight boats started the race, All boats in the race had completed a Special Regulations audit to at least Category 5 standard within the last 12 months, All skippers were very familiar with these waters having raced here frequently and in many different conditions. All boats and crews were well known to each other.

Equipment failures: Several cases of boats being unable to use their headsail furling equipment in the gale conditions were reported. Skippers who use such equipment need to be prepared for alternative methods to drop headsails or extras if taken by surprise by wind conditions. It was this type of failure that was the focus of Starship's difficulties.

Communications between boats became difficult as skippers and crews were very busy in looking after their own boats. VHF contact was consistently good, whereas mobile phones are of little help. Should the Incident Management Plan be activated, all boats should nominate one crew member to take on full time radio operator function using the yachts main VHF installation as Handheld VHF are only useful between boats close to each other.

This shows the problem in having one of the racing yacht's skippers also being the race officer. Excentric, as the duty skipper and also a member of the Race Committee, was never incapacitated and took over the task of ensuring that all yachts made it back to Port Hacking.

Following the race, a request for feedback was sent to all skippers. Their responses, together with a response from Marine Rescue, are shown in Annex 1.

### Questions raised

We have considered the skippers' reports to review whether any changes need to be made to the way in which races are run by Port Hacking Sailing. This is set out below as a question and response format.

#### **1. Was the wind increase anticipated in the weather forecast and should the race have been cancelled before the start?**

Sailing Instructions include this:

##### WIND and WAVE LIMIT Category 5 and 7 Races

The race for the day shall be **CANCELLED** if the forecast for the race area provided by the Bureau of Meteorology on its MetEye site and/or Willy Weather, within two hours before the nominal start, till the race time limit:

- Has wind forecast speeds that are greater than 25kts, and/or
- The forecast Total Wave Height is greater than 2.5m inclusive, or if. (
- The observed wind speed by the Duty Officer is greater than 25kts.
- Heavy rain/lightning or sea conditions may also cause the cancellation of a race at the discretion of the Duty Officer.

The usual practice is for the race committee to review the weather forecast before 08:00 before confirming to all skippers by SMS at 08:00 that the race will go ahead.

Bom indicated north westerly gusts to 20 kts, Willy weather was similar, and it was on this basis that the race went ahead.

After the race it was noticed that the BOM issued a gale warning on-line at around 11:40 (less than two hours before the race nominal start) but this was not promulgated, for example by a SECURITE call from MR stations, and was not considered in the decision to race.

**2. Should the race have been abandoned rather than let each skipper decide for themselves?**

It is not the normal practice of PHS to abandon races after the start although there have been occasions in Wednesday Cat 7 races where abandonment has been called.

Rule 32 deals with abandoning a race after the start. There may be a need to amend the Sailing Instructions to allow abandonment to be called by VHF rather than setting flags.

In this event, a call to abandon the race went out from L'Attitude, but this was not heard by all competitors. Separately, the question of abandoning was raised by competitors on VHF73. In the event all responses from boats were that they had each independently made the decision to go home. Had even one boat decided to continue racing and complete the course, their decision would have stood.

It is noted that in PHS races, the Race Officer is also a racing skipper of a yacht in the race. This could have significance in severe conditions. At the time that the Abandonment call went out, L'Attitude had already withdrawn from racing.

Once the race has started, PHS follow the Sailing Instructions and the Racing Rules of Sailing are in force. In this case, Rule 3 Decision to Race: The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone.

It is worth noting that all skippers displayed similar caution in abandoning their race intentions.

**3. Was there a danger that Starship's difficulty in returning to Port Hacking could not have been noticed?**

The whole race course is contained within 2.5nm of the start line. At the time that Starship got into difficulty, all boats were nearby and clearly visible. The Estela record shows that both YKnot and Excentric were within 0.25nm of Starship. However all yachts were fully occupied with their own handling. YKnot had, by this time dropped all sails and was under power. To provide scale to the estela picture, the distance C to K is approx. 0.8nm.

It is significant that YKnot was the nearest yacht to Starship. YKnot was fully under control and took it upon herself to standby Starship. Both YKnot and Starship had working communications, and neither asked for any other assistance, There is no reason to believe that Starship could not have asked for assistance had YKnot not attended on her own initiative.



#### 4. Was Marine Rescue response what PHS expected?

At no stage did any boat activate the Incident Management Plan by calling in a distress MAYDAY or PANPAN. Instead MR were notified both from onshore by telephone (Bill Dickson) and on water by VHF (Y Knot to MR and L'Attitude to MR vessel) that Starship was having difficulty and that YKnot was standing by to assist. As such MR treated this as standard call. This is very different from an emergency call which would have resulted in a more urgent response. The ability of the Marine Vessel to attend and standby within 30 minutes was appreciated.

#### 5. Was the PHS Incident Management Plan (IMP) activated and was it appropriate?

The Incident Management Plan (IMP) is to be activated by any yacht /skipper using VHF 16 to make a MAYDAY or PAN PAN call. This should carry the identifier of the vessel making the call, her position and the nature of the emergency. Any skipper either needing emergency assistance, or in sight of another vessel needing assistance, can initiate this call. If the incident does not merit a MAYDAY or PAN PAN, MR can be asked to Standby via VHF Channel 16.

The IMP does not anticipate that a party ashore will notify MR by telephone. Yachts on the water will not be aware of any telephone communication until MR decide to take on management of the incident directly. This did not happen.

The conclusion is that the IMP was never activated, nor did the situation require it to be activated.

**6. Were the conditions that arose during this event anticipated in the PHS Risk Review?**

The risk review anticipates hazard #1 “Severe weather (including squalls, electrical storms) resulting in sailors and officials being exposed to hazardous conditions during events” . It is assessed as Likely (high probability, likely to arise once per year) carrying an expected consequence Minor (Reversible temporary illness/injury requiring medical treatment. Damage to equipment that requires repair prior to being operable).

No feedback from this report would suggest any change to the risk analysis.

**7. Were the mitigation actions listed in the risk review for this hazard properly executed?**

The following assumptions were made in the preparation of the risk review:

- The races are of short duration - typically around two hours and generally less than five hours.
- The races are held entirely in daylight hours.
- For Category 4 and 5 races all yachts carry VHF radios. These are checked to be functioning annually during the yachts’ Special Regulations audit. The courses are set to be within VHF range and during the operating hours of Marine Rescue Radio Stations. Water Police also keep a listening watch for emergency calls.
- Yachts also carry personal buoyancy, flares, V-sheets and MOB recovery equipment and their condition is checked annually. It is likely that these will be carried below decks.
- It is anticipated that yachts are unlikely to be outside of the line of sight of at least one other yacht at any time. It is likely that other yachts in the race will be the nearest vessels available to render assistance. Easy communications will be critical.

Nothing in the Skippers’ feedback challenged these assumptions.

Further the risk review includes a series of risk mitigation actions to be in place, (See Risk Assessment and Risk Register on PHS website. All of these have been actioned consistently with the exception of an annual briefing of skippers on the Operational Management Plan and the Incident Management Plan. Both of these documents are in the process of substantial revision. A skippers briefing will be held specifically on this topic.

## Conclusions

1. The race did not develop into a major incident. All yachts on the water were managed competently, and the major assumption that PHS own yachts are most likely to be the ones to bring assistance to a yacht in difficulty during a race was confirmed by the events reported. Similarly, the parallel decisions by all skippers to abandon the race and head for shelter, is to be commended.
2. Despite considerable care being taken by the race organisers in anticipating wind and sea states, it is still possible that yachts may experience unexpected severe weather during any race. All skippers and crews need to ensure that their boats and their personal equipment are in place before starting the race. The PHS checklist is available to assist in this preparation.
3. Headsail furling equipment cannot be relied upon to quickly shorten sail in adverse conditions. In particular, furling ropes may need additional wraps on the furling drums to compensate for tight sail wraps in strong wind.
4. There is a need for a refresher briefing of skippers on the published Incident Management Plan (IMP), and especially the intention that it is for any skipper in the fleet to activate the IMP using VHF 16 to Marine Rescue. The IMP recognises that skippers do not need to wait until a MAYDAY or PANPAN call is called for. A STANDBY call can be used at an early stage for information and awareness of MR staff in case the situation develops further.
5. The primary importance of VHF as the primary means of communication was reinforced by the skippers' responses. Mobile phones are of little use to skippers busy managing their own boat in difficult conditions. Where possible, a member of the crew, rather than the skipper, should be assigned to the radio operator position once there is a STANDBY status in operation.

## Annex 1 Feedback from skippers

Request for feedback	<p>In light of yesterday's unexpected conditions for a short-haul race, I plan to compile a summary of what happened so that we can properly consider and record any lessons learned while the event is still fresh in our memories.</p> <p>I would welcome any feedback that you would like to give me, such as:</p> <p>What did you experience at sea          What weather forecast did you check, and what did it tell you?          Any gear failure, damage or injuries you experienced,          Any communications issues              between boats in our fleet              with Marine Rescue on-shore              with Marine Rescue vessels          Any thoughts on what could have gone differently - better or worse          Anything else you want to add</p> <p>Happy to receive anything you choose to share by SMS or email. If you think any of your crew might have anything to add, please forward this to them. But this week, please.</p> <p>Michael Wolf</p>
Excentric	<p>I had checked the BOM site for weather forecast at 8:00 Sunday morning. I expected a WNW breeze between 10-15kn.</p> <p>Excentric was the duty boat and left RMYC around 12:45. We experienced a 5-10 kn Easterly breeze while heading to sea and setting the C Mark. This slowly died away to &lt;5kn when we started at 14:08. A drifter out to the C mark. After rounding the C mark with the wind changing to Westerly. It rose quickly. We were over powered with #1 Genoa but determined to get to the K mark so that we could drop the headsail on the run to B mark. We did this but left #1 on deck as I expected the wind to drop again. Set the #3 headsail which is good to 30+knots. Gybed at the B mark and put in one reef.</p> <p>The B to E leg turned into a windward leg, with wind &gt;30 knots and several times we saw &gt;40 knots. One reef was not enough. We were overloaded. But we did not have the 2nd reef line rigged, so putting in a second reef was not an option. We were approaching the C mark when we heard conversations about abandoning the race. I tried to contact L'Attitude to say that we were not intending to sail the course but would instead sail into the PH estuary and then go home. I did not know that L'Attitude had left the sailing area and could not contact him clearly on my handheld VHF. My main VHF is only</p>

operable from the navigation station, and we were too busy to leave the deck. I also saw that YKnot was approaching the C Mark to pick up the mark and so tacked away to give him room. The tack was not easy as we were overpowered with #3 and one reef. We tacked again to enter PH Estuary, and dropped the headsail, started the engine, checked for ropes in the water ( happily as there was a spinnaker sheet in the water) and then started to motor sail, making 3kn into the wind.

Once we settled down on that course I saw Y Knot heading North East and called on handheld VHF to check that she was OK. That was the first time that I heard that Starship was in trouble, and that Y Knot was standing by her. I considered turning around but recognised that there was nothing Excentric could do that Y Knot could not do better. I monitored VHF and copied the traffic between Y Knot, L'Attitude and Marine Rescue. Heard from L'Attitude that they had communicated with MR rescue boat. Heard from MR rescue boat that they could maintain a fix on Y Knot using AIS. Did not hear any communication between MR and MR rescue boat as this is on a dedicated emergency services channel.. Also heard a call from Marri Nuwi saying that they were going into RMYC marina. I thought that meant that they were ahead of me. It was only after we got back to RMYC that I realised that Marri Nuwi had still not returned. On checking I saw Marri Nuwi in the Gunnamatta channel. Saw Navigator on a mooring close to RMYC and Excelsior on her mooring. Never saw Tobruk who, I now know, was back well ahead of us.

We dropped the main off Salmon Haul. With the wind at 40knots, the main would not drop into the boom bag. Taming it took all hands. The boom bag suffered some damage from flogging about. Should have dropped the main straight on to the deck.

About lifejackets, Everyone on board had self-selected to wear PFDs. Conditions at the start were benign and, not expecting the severe change, I had not made it mandatory. We subsequently recognised that had we not been wearing lifejackets, the conditions worsened so quickly that we might not have put them on later. Richard subsequently commented that, as foredeck hand, he would have used his tether had he thought about it earlier. Also, none of us were wearing waterproofs and we were all wet through before we returned to RMYC. Very cold too which would have become debilitating had we gone on much longer. Proper clothing and waterproofs were on board.

Motoring back we saw the MR rescue boat speeding to sea just after we turned into the Gunnamatta channel. At RMYC, we used YKnot's marina pen to find shelter to clear headsails from foredeck and tidy up. We could not have done that at our mooring in those conditions.

	<p>Since the race I have reflected that we had both a #4 jib, about 1/2 the size of the #3, and a storm jib, 1/2 the size again, on board, either of which would have been a better choice than the #3 we changed to. Had we used the #4 and been able to get a 2nd reef in, we could have comfortably sailed on.</p> <p>Again, in retrospect, there was no serious incident for us or MR to respond to, and our incident management plan was not activated through PAN PAN or MAYDAY call. The assumption that boats in our own fleet are the most likely to assist those in trouble was again confirmed through Y Knot's action. Communications were not inhibited by equipment but rather by all of us being fully occupied with boat handling.</p> <p>Michael Wolf</p>
Excelsior	<p>Hi Mike</p> <p>We got the wind change as we rounded the Boat harbour mark and headed SE on starboard tack. We were hoping that it might ease after initial front but actually increased to steady 35kts as we approached the C mark. Changed to Port tack and then noticed headsail dropping as halyard had let go of head. We started engine and dropped headsail. Notified Lattitude that we were safe and had retired from race.</p> <p>Once sails down we were able to hear radio chat. Race abandoned and later trouble with Starship.</p> <p>Weather apps checked Willy weather which I didn't see any mention of this westerly change.</p> <p>I wonder in retrospect that race should have been called off when Lattitude turned around? Call would really need to be repeated at intervals as noise made radio difficult to hear.</p> <p>Damage to head sail head and top 1m of lufftape pulling away.</p> <p>Our take aways. Check forecasts more thoroughly. Reef earlier don't wait.</p> <p>Thx Pete</p>

L'Attitude	<p>Mike,</p> <p>Some thoughts:</p> <p>We cancel a race when wind exceeds an amount within two hours of a race. Do we need guidelines for what happens during a race or is it just the responsibility of the skipper</p> <p>When the duty skipper leaves the race, should he transfer responsibility to another skipper?</p> <p>I check Willy Weather, Windy, Meteye and the BOM warnings. Only Windy showed gusts to 30k around 5pm. We had 30k before 3:30pm when I retired and 40+ later. BOM eventually put out a gale warning.</p> <p>I think other boats in the race are the best responders, not VMR. Yknot had trouble with tow, but VMR could have been a disaster unless they understood sailing boats. We need to know why Starship couldn't be towed and the solution.</p> <p>I heard Starship call Yknot but didn't hear Yknot respond. I then tried to call Starship and she didn't respond. Other than excelsior not replying before the start , there was no other problem with VHF communication for me, other to say under those conditions it was very difficult using the phone.</p> <p>I rang the emergency numbers on the back of the handbook before printing and rang to confirm all were valid. What number was called?</p> <p>A number of people view the situation on shore using the tracking and responded including Bill Dickson, Ken Teifel, Lisa Jude and David Cartmer in Spain.</p> <p>My damage occurred on the way home when a gust opened the code zero and totally destroyed it.</p> <p>Personally, I think it has to always be the responsibility of the skipper to race or not. I may have delayed the call to abandon the race and may have done so sooner if say the rule for Cat 5 was to abandon at 30k, It could also depend on the sea state although it would rise above 2.5m more slowly than wind.</p> <p>As it turned out, we all returned safely albeit with damage. There were a number of rescues scenarios working together and eventually VMR were involved but I think it will mostly be the other yachts that are best placed and Yknot was the best example of that. John</p>
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MC Starship	<p>Hi All</p> <p>After dropping sails due to increased wind pressure, we were making our way back to shore when hit by the 50+ knot gusts and our jib unfurled and couldn't be contained. It quickly shredded and we cut it free from the boat to avoid the rig being ripped out or the boat capsizing. Due to all hands required on deck to manage the situation, communications were not yet taken up to seek assistance. In future similar conditions I will have the VHF radio fixed to my body for easier coms. We appreciated Yknots offer for a tow however the first attempt we missed the opportunity to properly secure the tow rope and the idea was later abandoned. We struggled to make headway due to significant chop and windage from the remaining sails. Once other sails were properly secured we were able to make headway unassisted back to Port Hacking, but by tacking into the winds on an angle rather than going head on or directly into the waves. Maritime was on standby which we also appreciated. We tied up to Wally's wharf and packed the boat away and thanks Maritime. All safe, just a little cold. We will be reviewing our jib furling process.</p> <p>Before racing I also reviewed Willy Weather, Seabreeze and Bom and no forecasts of that severity. Brad however mentioned that Surflines.com predicted a wild westerly to blow out the conditions. Westerlies as we know are notorious for conditions above forecast and this is the third time I've been caught by one. I think if we have a westerly of 15-20 knots forecast, I will be staying at the club next time.</p> <p>Thank you to Yknot and all for assistance rendered yesterday and everyone else for keeping an eye out.</p> <p>New sail being made. See you next week.</p> <p>Regards Brent.</p>
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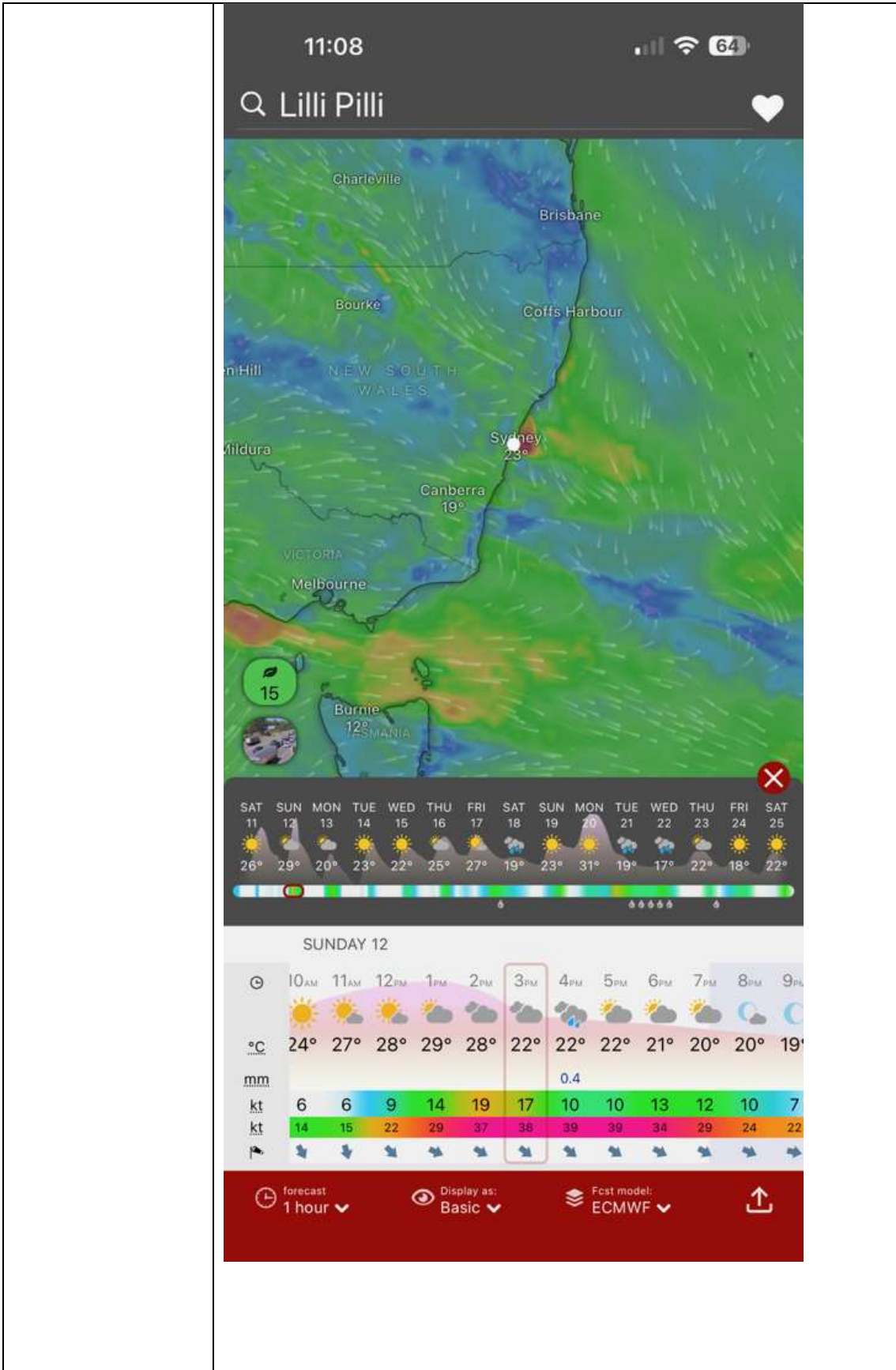
<p>Marri Nuwi</p>	<p>Hi Mike Report from Marri nuwi</p> <p><i>What did you experience at sea?</i></p> <p>Wind increased well above forecast after 1st kingsway mark, so we put reef in main, but wind continued to increase. Heading back from boat Harbour as wind rose above 25 kts we lost steerage, as we were approaching merries reef we started motor and tried to furl jib and dropped main. Wind now well over 30 kts, Still struggled to get steerage due to not being able to fully furl jib (short by approx 1.5m) . ( Jib and sheets were wildly flogging, sheets got tangled with lazy sheets) This likely due to using all the rope on drum as sail was tightly wrapped around forestay. So once we had sea room we unfurled jib and lowered it to deck, securing with sail ties, and motored back.</p> <p><i>What weather forecast did you check, and what did it tell you?</i></p> <p>Bom indicated north westerly gusts to 20 kts, Willy weather similar So should be ok with no. 1 jib, and possibly reef in main I noted north westerly winds came through Katoomba around 9am as per forecast, and then thro Penrith, as per forecast.</p> <p><i>Any gear failure, damage or injuries you experienced,</i></p> <p>Damage to jib sail due to flogging Broken furler line pulley bracket, ( trying to winch furler). Bruising, one crew cold and wet went below</p> <p><i>Any communications issues between boats in our fleet.</i></p> <p>Unable to hear all radio due to noise levels</p> <p>with Marine Rescue on-shore with Marine Rescue vessels</p> <p><i>Any thoughts on what could have gone differently - better or worse.</i></p> <p>Don't try furl jib, drop it !</p> <p>Not having regular crew, ( Steve, di, john bell) made recovery harder.</p>
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	<p>One new crew member hadn't sailed on our boat, hopefully she will come back!</p> <p>, <i>Anything else you want to add.</i></p> <p>Worrying to see mc starship so far out to sea with sails flapping, good to hear on radio that yknot and marine rescue heading out to assist.</p> <p>We were wholly focused on getting boat and crew back to safety so weren't in position to offer assistance.</p> <p>These westerlys are nasty, we saw over 40 kts, there was a strong rain cell further south maybe this contributed.</p> <p>When we got into shelter in the channel , Bill Dickson called to update me on mc starship, I asked him to send in a time line of what had happened for our records, which he has done.</p> <p>Thanks Alistair</p>
Y Knot	<p>Hi all, YKNOT's review of Sunday's Short Haul race I checked Willy Weather early Sunday and just prior to leaving dock and discussed same with Graeme and crew. Prediction was WNW approx 14kts although wind in the dock noted as more Easterly than anything. Out on course 5mins prior to our start time of 2:12pm wind seemed to drop to SE 5-7knots. Just prior to our start we noticed a Westerly change coming down the Hacking, clean start and deployed Code Zero to C mark, wind building and we were expecting it may swing NW closer to predicted. We had trouble working to Kingsway mark with increased winds to 25knots and code zero partially unfurling requiring a head to wind to drop it to deck, no damage. Rounded K mark at pace with wind in mid 20s, boat speed building running down to Boat Harbour mark with breeze seeing 30knots. We partially furled the headsail on the way but didn't reef the main (big mistake!) As we gybed the BH mark we got hit by a 35-40+knot gust which blew the mainsail. Started engine and after settling the boat into the wind at up to 42knots shown, furled headsail and dropped mainsail As we could see boats continuing to race we headed toward C mark to pickup on our way back. On approach to C Mark I called JB on L'Attitude on VHF 73 to see if there was a call made on the continuation of the race because we could not pickup on C mark if there were boats coming back after</p>

	<p>E Mark. JB called race abandoned and Mike Wolf on Excentric retired from race also</p> <p>After we recovered C Mark we could see MC starship getting blown toward Cape Bailey with obvious headsail damage</p> <p>We called MC Starship on VHF however nothing heard in response so we went to assist if required concerned that they only had an outboard engine for propulsion and possibly no communications available</p> <p>Enroute to MC Starship we called Marine Rescue on VHF for assistance and to advise we were headed out but were told no vessels available to assist but they had been tracking us on AIS. One of our crew, Richard Wilson, is a MR volunteer so he called on mobile to expedite things and they did send a boat out.</p> <p>On arriving at MC Starship we still could not raise them on VHF nor could we communicate verbally</p> <p>We raised a tow rope in hand to indicate our intention to throw it to them and Gordon Knight made a great throw to their bowman who was straddling the bow of the centre hull by this stage. He passed the tow rope back to midship where another crew member attempted to secure it to a winch but ran out of time and rope to secure it.</p> <p>We decided not to attempt to try again as, by this stage, we were advised MR were on their way and we thought best to leave it to the professionals</p> <p>We stayed close in case MC Starship needed any assistance but we could also see that when the wind dropped to 25knots they were making way toward the beach across the wind rather than into it.</p> <p>MR arrived and we headed for home</p> <p>Lessons learned:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Conditions can change fast and any amount of review of prediction models involves an amount of risk and guesswork</li><li>2. Don't trust a westerly</li><li>3. Reef earlier and more than needed in a building breeze above 18knots</li><li>4. Consider retirement over 30knots as stuff is going to break</li><li>5. Have a longer tow rope in a different colour to mooring lines and stored separately to mooring lines</li><li>6. Keep the vouchers you win for Ian Short sails, as you never know when you'll need them!</li><li>7. We have had life jackets as optional for those staying in the cockpit till now and while everyone opted to use a life jacket from the start on Sunday we will make it compulsory for all on Sunday Short Haul and Short Ocean races from now on</li></ol>
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	<p>Suggestions to improve:</p> <p>A. Consider abandonment of race with sustained winds above 30 knots or swell above 2.5m</p> <p>B. Communication between boats is key in difficult conditions</p> <p>Finally I personally think every boat out racing on Sunday did their best to act safely and responsibly in conditions that were far from expected or predicted and clearly changed quickly. In particular I appreciate our crew remaining calm and proactive in tough conditions and all were committed to helping others and doing what needed to be done like retrieving the C mark and communicating with MR and other boats</p> <p>Thanks to all for great sailing with great people</p> <p>David Newton</p>
<p>Bill Dickson (Ashore Oak Park)</p>	<p>Hi some brief notes regarding this afternoon's events. Bill Short Haul race on Sunday, the 12th of October.</p> <p>From approximately 2 o'clock this afternoon, the winds increased rapidly from a steady 12 westerly to approximately 30knts plus south westerly.</p> <p>Observing the wind increasing, I turned on to watch Estella and observed a number of yachts seem to be floundering with the wind. I therefore decided to come down to Oak Park and observe if there were any issues.</p> <p>Upon arrival 3pm, I noticed that there were three yachts well out towards Osborne Shoals and one of the yachts (Star Ship) with a ripped sail still flying looked like it was having trouble making headway back into shore.</p> <p>I made a phone contact to Ron of Marine Rescue Solander and asked if he'd been contacted by any yacht in Bate Bay regarding any assistance. He had no communication at all. I then contacted John Barter. John was at Salmon Hall with his own problems, so I went back and rang back Solander Rescue and requested that they send a support vessel out to assist.</p> <p>YKnot was heading back out to assist with Star Ship?</p> <p>At this stage, the Solander Rescue said that their ship was attending to another rescue or preparing to. But I asked them to come out and give assistance to the yachts offshore as soon as possible.</p> <p>Approximately 3:15pm I contacted Solander Rescue again and expressed concern for Starship who at this stage would be running out of fuel for their outboard. They said their vessel is available and would attend. They had YKnot on AIS and could track Starship in the same area. I also had a call back from YKnot who said they were just standing by, they were having difficulty trying to bring them under tow. So I said that we had organised Solander rescue to come and provide assistance.</p>

	<p>It's now approximately 4pm, and I observed that Starship is just making progress past Oak Park in calmer waters. With Solender Rescue on standby.</p> <p>Note; I had no VHF Handheld available and was communicating by mobile phone. I had to ring marine Rescue State centre initially who then gave me Marine Rescue Solander's number 8522-9400.</p> <p>We used the "Windy" app. I specifically use the "Predict Wind" app which runs 4 different models. On Sunday morning I looked at the most validated model for the Cronulla Bate Bay Area and it predicted the winds in excess of 30knts after 2pm. Note the BOM sent out a wind warning late on Sunday morning.</p>
Navigator	Windy app forecast on Saturday, 11 October 2025 at 11:08 am



<p>Tobruk</p>	<p>Hi Michael</p> <p>I consider that Nick made the call early to abandon the race ( mostly due to us selling the boat ) mind you that we reefed the headsail before going around the bate bay mark.</p> <p>With 40 knots we reefed the main ( not enough ) and not much after that pulled all sails in which is pretty easy on our boat.</p> <p>We started motoring whilst checking how other boats were handling the situation and declared that other boats were close by so the proceeded to pick up the E mark.</p> <p>So good experiance and just happy there was minimal swel.</p> <p>Lessened learnt is reef early more than you think as even in 40 knots there will be a sweet spot. Easy to shake reef out than to reef in.</p> <p>Good to experiance these situtions as long as there are no casualties.</p> <p>Lot of sails trashed which reinforces that we should reef early.</p> <p>Brett Parr</p>
<p>Marine Rescue response (via Glen Burgess)</p>	<p>MR Response from Neil Tickner the Deputy Unit Commander MR Solander</p> <p>Graham Clarke has sent me his comments (Below) which really just echo what has already been said. I have copied it below - sounds pretty textbook from our perspective. We would have responded faster if not already tasked.</p> <p>"I dont really have anything to offer. Sue Tate on radio did a great job handling both incidents we were involved in at the same time. Sue kept us up to date on the yacht at the Osborne Shoal whilst we were tied up with the capsized skiff until the club safety boat arrived to relieve us. We then headed straight to Bate Bay for the second assist. They were slowly making way with their outboard motor in strong winds and very rough conditions, their furling jib was torn and flailing from the top of the forestay. We pulled alongside to speak to the crew who were very happy to proceed as long as we were able to follow up in case of any problems. Under the circumstances this was the safest and most sensible approach so we followed them to Dolans Bay. As we got closer to the coast we had protection from the Westerly so conditions calmed. They tied up at Wally's wharf. We came alongside to make sure they were OK and there was nothing further we could do. They said they were fine and thanked us for the support and wished us good day. We stood down and gave the information required for the incident report to Sue. The</p>

	time was approximately 1630. Tell them we were glad to help wherever we could and were happy they got back safely”
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