



## **50<sup>th</sup> Annual Cruise to Pittwater and Broken Bay by Cruise Captain John Taylor**

The 68 strong fleet encountered picture perfect autumn weather for the duration of the recent 50th Squadron Annual Cruise. Blue skies and fair winds contributed to a memorable week of cruising, competition and camaraderie.

On Friday 12 April, the 'offshore racers' readied to set sail, bound for Broken Bay. Due to light easterly winds, the fleet raced only 5nm from Bungan Head to Barrenjoey then hurried to join in the activities at Refuge Bay - the word was out: Happy Hour and Canapés at Waterfall Beach had begun!

Quickly the fleet relaxed into Cruise mode. Whilst the active keen beans were seen rowing or paddling SUPs and kayaks early in the mornings, the less active waited for the daily edition of the *Cruise News* to be delivered hot off the '*Mischief* press' directly to individual boats. Many thanks to Kylie Wilson who toiled late into the night to compile our photos and articles ready for the morning edition.

Saturday: The Hawaiian themed BBQ at Hallett's Beach was well attended, with colourful Hawaiians looking very much the part against the natural backdrop. Fortunately, no spears were allowed. Whilst RIBS ferried thirsty sailors to the beach, the Cruise committee BBQ team set up a production line (thanks Penny Scardifield for your assistance) and 230 sausage and onion sandwiches were dispatched.

Sunday: Mushroom Bay's Progressive Dinner saw catering shared between rafted up boats. Rob and Cath Reynolds (newbies to the Cruise) mentioned they had not been allocated to a particular group – 'No problem, we'll come to you,' said the Cruise Captain; did he really expect crew from *Casamajor*, *Lunacy*, *As You Do*, *Allegro* and *Coco* to dine onboard his very comfortable 52 ft Riviera Shellbank? What a fabulous night was had by all.

Most mornings were windless and foggy with the racing fleet fearing a 'no wind race day' but each day we were proven wrong as the wind built steadily throughout the mornings. PRO Rob Ridley did a fabulous job setting courses, laying marks and recording finishing line positions.

Monday: Pizza night on the lawns at Kurin-Gai Motor Yacht Club gave crews the opportunity to meet on *terra firma*. Whilst pizza production was slower than pizza consumption, the opportunity to mingle once again demonstrated the great camaraderie the Cruise engenders.

Tuesday: Once again the SUP competition in Smith's Creek on lay day provided fun for competitors. I was MIA for this event, however I'm told that competition was fast and furious. and past Cruise Captain Arthur Psaltis commentated the event like Johnny Tap. Requests have been made for female and junior divisions next year citing barging and induced capsizing from overzealous male competitors.

The Galley Gourmet Challenge, co-ordinated by Trish Stanley, was a huge success. It continues to amaze me how such intricate creations can emerge from a galley with a single burner stove and an esky after a busy day of racing – see the next report. On behalf of the Cruise Committee and all



Squadron Cruisers, I would like to acknowledge and thank Trish Stanley for the valuable contribution she has made to our Committee over the past 13 years.

Our thanks go to Coursemaster once again for generously donating an Icom handheld VHV radio for the Navest Competition. This was won by Mark Tolhurst of *Arunga* who managed perfect estimates in two of the five races.

Murray Spence from Sam Hill's *Forty* flotilla was the stand-out photographer on the cruise – seen paddling early mornings to capture the fleet waking to another beautiful day in another perfect bay. Murray was awarded the prize for best 'Under Sail' photo, while Graeme Kennedy of *Vibe* shot a panorama of the Hallett's BBQ to win the best photo in the 'Other' category.

It was great to see more children involved this year – Sam Hill with wife Nicki and their three children fully embraced the Cruise. Sam's Farr 40 *Forty* was supported by two motherships and a five metre RIB - all necessary to accommodate the friends and family who joined them for the week.

Wednesday: The Pinta Bay raft up was always going to test the bay's berthing capacity. To my surprise there was more than enough space with the major raft up comprising some 35 boats.

Thursday: Club Captain Karyn Gojnich joined us at Cottage Point. It was great to have Karyn coach us for the day while we gave her a little insight into what our Annual Cruise is about. The shorter course was a wise move by Rob Ridley as the light breeze was only just enough for the fleet to complete the racing in time to find their berths at Royal Motor Yacht Club and Royal prince Alfred Yacht Club before dusk and then proceed to RMYC to enjoy the festivities of the end of Cruise dinner.

Our sincere thanks to Margaret Carney in the Sailing Office for all the pre-cruise preparation, and Rob Ridley and his team of Kylie, Scott and Paul for all the vital on-Cruise support.

Reflecting on the week, the stand out was the great weather – warm and sunny during the day, cool and comfortable at night, and just enough breeze each day to get a race in. Both the cruising and racing boats melded together with many new friendships made, and as they say, 'A good time was had by all.'