



COBRA TALES

Editors Bit:

Welcome to the April newsletter for the Victorian Cobra Catamaran Association. It has been some months since the previous however things have not been standing still, 2 title series have been sailed and won or lost as the case may be, a social sale was held between Macrae and Queenscliff with another planned for the 21st April. The weather has improved from the pre-christmas period to ensure regular Sunday sailing and Stan's boat has been repaired again and again and... Rick is still waiting for his new hulls. It has been good to see the lease boats making a regular appearance on Sunday's and some of the crews are keen to move into their own.

The class is a-buzz at the moment with talk of new boats or upgrades, the standard of sailing has improved this season with most boats finishing within seconds of each other and everybody is looking at ways of getting that competitive edge. This can only be good for the growth of the class and if we wish to beat the Queenslanders at the Nationals.

Talking about Nationals, a submission was sent to the AYF on your behalf as members of the Cobra Association over a proposal that the AYF believe they have rights to the term "Nationals" and "Australian" and that no class may hold a Nationals or Australian Championship without approval from the AYF. This approval is based around points gained for number and length of boats, number of states represented, number of "quality" (???) sailors in fleet, and the presence of nationally recognised race officers, judges and juries. If sufficient points were not gained then you could only hold a class championship. The AYF believe this is a way of giving some credence to the term Australian or national champion. Whilst this may seem like a trivial thing, removal of the use of these terms, it is an example of bureaucracy gone wrong. The AYF by their own constitution are there to promote the sport of yachting and its advancement throughout Australia and this proposal does not contribute to this. The AYF through their publications and web site will promote Australian champions in various classes and the small classes (of which Cobras can be considered) if unable to meet the required points are in danger of losing potential new members with this lack exposure.

Because of the way the point score is constructed, small training boats like minnows will need very large fleets to meet the requirements whereas the larger "more elite" boats ie keel boats will require minimal representation, gives you some clue as to where this proposal came from.

It is also discriminatory against smaller states. If the Tasmanian Cobras hold a series the numbers will be down due to the prohibitive cost from the northern states so their chances of meeting the points requirement is limited. As a class you can have one year with a national titleholder and the next is deferred to a class champion because it was held in Tasmania, what does this do for the state and future growth of the class in that state?

Christmas time is a period where most classes hold some sort of championship, if extra points are needed through nationally recognised judges and race officers there just isn't enough of these people to go around and once again can provide benefits to some classes. A few large boats with a couple of states represented and internationally recognised race officers and judges or a fleet of 25 Cobras from 4 states with local race officials which to you sounds more representative of a "national series".

The other main problem with this is the extra work in setting this up from the host associations view. The AYF require submissions no less than 120 days before the event, so this means by the start of September you would need to know numbers of boats attending, where, race officials, how many states, etc most of us are still shaking off the winter mothballs at this time. Generally associations put a lot of time and effort to promote and organise championships and the AYF should be assisting to promote the sport of sailing rather than providing more hurdles and red tape.

On a lighter note, did anybody happen to see the catamarans racing in the movie “The Thomas Crown Affair” on TV a couple of Sundays ago? Managed to catch a glimpse whilst channel surfing and jumped on the Net for a bit more info. The class is Formula 40 and they look just like a big off- the-beach catamaran, no accommodation just two hulls and a trampoline. The dimensions are 40 ft long , 26 ft wide, the mast is 68 ft tall fully rotating and the sail area is initially listed as lots with more downwind. The actual measurements are 1250 sq ft in main and jib and then they can carry a spinnaker up to another 2100 sq ft. Whilst they appear to be a predominately American class, there is one in Queensland and on the Gold Coast to Moreton race she averaged 23.6 knots. Whilst not allowed in Australia because of local regulations, the Americans have 12 ft hiking racks, basically ladders with seats out each side to provide additional righting moment. If you have US \$ 150,000 there is a couple of second hand ones on the market, and if you need a crew, I’m free. If you want some more info have a look at <http://www.vanisle360.nisa.com/2001/boats/dragonfly/Dragonfly.htm> for starters.

Presidents Report:

It has been a very good year for the Cobra Class. We have had resurgence in Tasmania, possibly equal interest in NSW, with the reforming of the NSW Association. It is early days yet but we can only hope and support. It even looks like Queensland is rebuilding.

Our Association (lease) Boats are achieving the role we envisaged for them of putting people into boats and boats on the water. The Parkdale Cobra fleet has grown significantly and now is very competitive and it looks impressive. All of this has been due to a lot of work put in by members and I wish to thank them for their time and efforts for the Association and the Class.

Now what for the future? We need those with experience to become mentors for the new skippers taking over Association boats, help on and off the water, don’t be afraid to put your hand up.

To grow we need two things, the first is more boats, where do we get them? Do some of us upgrade or do we look to other the states. The second is more exposure, should we look at establishing the class at another club, while not undermining the Parkdale base? Big questions, think about it, and bring your ideas to the AGM.

Chris Wells.

2001/2002 National Titles

This title series was held at Speers Point Sailing club over the christmas / new years period and was a real test of everybody's sailing ability. Speers Point is located at the northern end of Lake Macquarie and can provide ideal sailing conditions with steady breezes and flat seas, however as most will recall the bushfires that ringed Sydney attested to the harsh conditions that were around during this period. Racing was held in absolute drifter conditions to gusts exceeding 40 knots, with extreme temperatures.

Race 1 started in 10-15 knots and was a close contested battle between the 2 Queensland boats Addiction (Matthew Caldwell) and Blue Dog (Scott McVey) with Blue Dog crossing the line first, followed by Addiction with Laurie Bradford 3rd on LiveWire and Dream Machine (Rick Nixon) 4th.

The second race saw the first 2 placing's reversed. In a light and variable wind the fleet stayed fairly close together with the fickle wind pushing the back of the fleet up to the front runners. A shortened course saw Addiction followed by Blue Dog and after carrying his own private breeze Reddy (Robert Pullen) in 3rd place. Live Wire was 4th. Rick Nixon managed to find the place on the lake where Reddy had stolen all the wind from and Chris Wells on Really Awesome showed everybody how to capsize a Cobra in 3 knots of breeze.

Race 3 start was delayed with boats sitting on the start line whilst a severe rainsquall and lightening worked its way down the lake. The race was eventually started in an increasing breeze and became a quick affair with gusts up to 27 knots. Many boats soon realised how shallow the lake actually is with many capsizing and on righting the top third of the sail covered in the thick black Lake Macquarie mud. Blue dog 1st, Addiction 2nd, Live Wire 3rd.

A few sore heads welcomed the lay day after the previous nights New Years eve celebrations and whilst some headed to the nearby Hunter Valley wineries others used this time to catch up on some sleep or simply play around in the lake.

Race 4 was a delayed start due to very light winds and constant changes in directions, after 5 postponements, the race was delayed to the afternoon where there was a further postponement due to strong wind gusts!!!! A start was eventually had however during the race gusts over 40 knots were experienced with Really Awesome (Chris Wells), Blue Dog and the NSW boat WPA all breaking masts. Boats were capsized from one end of the course to the other. Placings saw Addiction followed by Live Wire (Laurie Bradford) and Fuse a light (Colin Orchard) in 3rd. For some reason there was a lack of interest in running a second race that day.

After a night of rebuilding masts all boats started race 5. This race was held in very light and flukey conditions. The early leaders carried the last of the breeze to the finish line whilst the rest of the fleet were left to make do. Six Victorian boats Dream Machine, Wildcat, Really Awesome, Mean As, Fuse A Light and Live Wire were locked together fighting out 4th place, all crossing the line seperated by only seconds. 1st Dream On, 2nd Blue Dog, 3rd Addiction.

The penultimate race saw the breeze improve and great sailing, Addiction was in front but Blue Dog picked a gust and moved into the lead, Rick Nixon on Dream Machine found another and on the opposite tack sped to the finish to claim his second race. An overlap in racing courses with the VS's saw some spectacular racing as the 2 fleets intermixed. 1st Dream On, 2nd Blue Dog, 3rd Addiction.

Going into the final race saw 3 boats with 2 wins apiece and many other variations for the minor placings. Racing was finally started after several postponements as the wind settled into a 10-14 knot easterley. Blue Dog led from the start and then powered away increasing his lead on every leg. Addiction suffered equipment failure and was forced to retire, Dream Machine picked up 2nd and WPA 3rd.

Final placing's:

1st Blue Dog Jeans Scott and Brett McVey (QLD)

2 nd	Addiction	Matthew Caldwell and Andreas Rehberger (QLD)
3 rd	Live Wire	Laurie Bradford and Megan Thornhill (VIC)
4 th	Dream On	Rick and Robbie Nixon (VIC)
5 th	Dream Machine	Peter Marsh and Clare Pitcher (VIC)

Handicap:

1 st	Mean As	Malcolm Winder and Liam Gillespie (VIC)
2 nd	Undercover	Derek and Foghorn Thornhill (VIC)
3 rd	Really Awesome	Chris Wells and Michael Fitzgerald (VIC)

The Teams section was one by Live Wire, Dream On and Dream Machine.

Minor awards

Capsizing in the lowest wind speed:	Really Awesome
Most number of capsizes	Wildcat
Boat with noisiest crew member	Undercover
Boat with most trying wife	Live Wire (Keep persisting Kerry, don't let that windsurfer beat you)

At the end of this series Blue Dog, Addiction and Dream On were purchased by a Tasmanian contingent to strengthen their fleets in the southern state. It is expected with their potential return at the Nationals later this year and the new boats and sailors in the other eastern states that the next Nationals are shaping up to be the best yet. Even if you think your sailing is not good enough this series is probably the best opportunity for you to learn and develop more skills than you will in a season of Sunday sailing, everybody should be planning to attend the 2002/03 Cobra National's.

Colin's Poisoned Pen (At the Nationals)

Firstly, congratulations are in order to Mal for winning the "Yooralla award" at the nationals. See previous article for details.

It seems Lauren's similarity with Foghorn Leghorn is not just in looks. Could everyone please bring a bottle of sleeping pills for her at the next nationals?

Robert and his crew Ben seem to have a couple of things in common. After having imbibed a little too much, on separate occasions, both were heard to be calling for Ruth and Bill.

X to Colin : "Look in that tent, there's a whole wine rack set up in there"

Colin: "It must be Mal's tent."

X : " Are you sure? Its still half full and this is the last day."

Colin: "He must have restocked for the trip home tomorrow!!"

Overheard at the Nationals:

Chris talking to his new crew, "now while we're out there on the water you might hear some language that you have not heard before"

He did not elaborate, I can only imagine that the words we haven't heard from Chris must be things like please, thankyou, well done, when your ready, you're so quick!

Before the invitation race at the nationals, Laurie was seen polishing his boat. Is he a slow learner? Didn't he see what polishing did for Mal? He is however methodical and careful. He even placed a 'Sign On'

reminder sign at eye level going into his tent before heat one. Perhaps a little unnecessary as who could ever forget to sign on during a nationals series? Laurie may know, just ask him.

Overheard at the Speers Point clubhouse:

Commodore: " Why did that Cobra mast just fall over onto the grass"

Assistant: " The boat was Reddy"

Commodore: "Oh I see! OK."

What did Stan say to another skipper about the suitability of that boats forestay cord just before the mast fell over and how lucky was that skipper that nothing other than his pride was damaged. His reputation however was enhanced although I will not mention his name . Let it suffice to say that the editor of the Parkdale Yacht club newsletter was not keen to publish this story, that is why it has appeared here.

This was another presentation bought to you by 'Colin's poisoned pen'. The views contained within are not necessarily shared by the VCCA, at least not publicly.

Colin in an attempt to become as slow as Mal looks at fitting a spinnaker to his boat, however he soon realised that he doesn't need a spinnaker to go slow.....



What makes a Cobra Go???- by Laurie Bradford

Every skipper seems to have a different reply to this question, so I have tried to itemise the factors that improve the speed of a boat and to give each a percentage assessment in terms of its importance to the boats effectiveness. (I'm not doing this because I'm bored and need to get a life but because it may help us all to do what we need to do to beat the Queenslanders and/or each other!!!!)

	My Rating %	Your Rating%
1. Mainsail -This is the motor, and if it doesn't work, nothing else will help. Look at the sails that are effective and note the structure that will satisfy your needs. Remember that all sails work better in some conditions than others and that old sails are not necessarily bad sails	50	<input type="text"/>
2. Jib - must fit the main and be operated as a companion to the main. Old jobs are usually bad jibs.	7	<input type="text"/>
3. Battens - Shape/ strength/ curve/ weight- must match the sail design.	3	<input type="text"/>
4. Mast - most are the same	1	<input type="text"/>
5. Hull weight	5	<input type="text"/>
6. Crew weight	2	<input type="text"/>
7. Drag - Hulls/ rudders/ boards/ slot	2	<input type="text"/>
8. Traveller effectiveness	1	<input type="text"/>
9. Mast Rake	3	<input type="text"/>
10. Rig tension – super tight/ tight/ light	1	<input type="text"/>
11. Main beam curve	2	<input type="text"/>
12. Hull alignment	2	<input type="text"/>
13. Crew position	4	<input type="text"/>
14. Diamond tension	3	<input type="text"/>
15. Rudder blade angle - weather/ lee helm	2	<input type="text"/>
16. Good starts and smart tactics	7	<input type="text"/>

17. Mast rotation	<input type="text" value="2"/>	<input type="text"/>
18. Watertight hulls	<input type="text" value="3"/>	<input type="text"/>
19. Good wind indicator	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="text"/>
20. Other factors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

(Editors note: I came up with 387%, why can't I beat him??)

Some things that don't make a Cobra go faster

- Flash T shirts
- Dragging the boat over sand
- Coming ashore at high speed without lifting the boat
- Falling over at the wrong time
- Praying to the sea gods
- Hitting large objects at speed
- Late nights and arriving late at the club
- Hanging around with Peter Marsh
- Having things on your boat which will break at the earliest opportunity
- Calling starboard on a windsurfer
- Reading my article on how to capsize.
- Going near -red boats
 - the wrecker
 - the storm water pipe in a strong southerly
 - over rocks with the boards down
 - following Mal
 - using a spinnaker

Feel free to add to the list!!- Laurie

2002 State Titles

Easter 2002, 13 Cobra's attended Waranga Sailing club's easter regatta to compete for the 2002 Victorian Cobra titles. This regatta was a test of everybody's patience and proved how reliant we are on staying in Mother Nature's good books to compete in the sport we all love.

After arriving early Mal and myself managed to get a sail on the Thursday afternoon. The wind was blowing 10-12 knots and provided some of the best sailing I have ever had. One of the advantages of Waranga is the physical size that allows constant winds, relatively smooth waters and the ability to sail fairly long distances. That evening the wind started to pick up to the point that the scheduled race for Friday was postponed. Late on the Friday afternoon the wind appeared to abate and whilst all other boats had packed up and sort shelter a number of the Cobra contingent decided it wasn't that bad and they really needed a sail. All the Cobras were rigged in a small sheltered inlet, upon leaving this it

became apparent just how high the waves had been built up in the wind and maybe the wind hadn't dropped as much as we first thought. Many boats immediately turned around and went back in. Pete Marsh and Laurie Bradford, who went out on Dream Machine continued on and managed to break a diamond wire causing the mast to break and ripping a brand new jib. The ride out in the rescue boat to tow them back proved just how wild and woolly it still was as I was repeatedly slammed between the floor and roof of the half cabin in an attempt to get some weight forward to prevent the boat standing on end.

The next day the wind had increased even further and once again all sailing was postponed for that day. The wind indicator in the clubhouse registered over 45MPH and apparently this reads up to 10 mph low. After a round of cricket in the afternoon the wind did start to abate again, 2 Hobie 16's rigged and not to be outdone Sean on Quarter to Six and Dan on 551 managed to get a sail.

Sunday morning we were greeted with a 10 knot southerly and everybody was keen to hit the water, however the wind continued to drop and the first race was started in less than 3 knots of wind. Colin on Fuse-a-light showed fine form in the light and flukey conditions and finished the shortened course first followed by Laurie on Live Wire and Mike on 007 3rd.

The second race was started straight away and if possible the wind decreased even further. All crews were forced to sit on the bows of their boats and trim the sails based on the increase or lack of bow wave (ripple) created in the millpond conditions. Once again a shortened course and Mike Landers on 007 started to show his form in the light conditions taking first place from Chris Wells on Really Awesome and Peter Marsh on Dream Machine.

A 3rd race was scheduled for that afternoon but as boats drifted around near the start line in less than 2 knots with the impossibility to decide where the wind was actually coming from the race was once again postponed. The Cobra's managed to fill in the waiting time by capsizing their own or other boats. Many of the crews received a lot of exercise swimming between and ultimately back to their own boat

The wind did come up a little later that evening so Mal and Derek went out for a midnight sail, flat water, nice breeze, peaceful and quiet. Mal had managed to attach a small light to himself, don't think there was a lot of thought in this given Derek's record in falling off boats.

An early start was had on the Monday and 2 races were fitted in prior to the presentation that afternoon. Both these races were once again sailed in light conditions, 3 knots or less and once again both were shortened courses. Race 3 was won by Fuse-A-Light, 2nd Live Wire, 3rd 007. Some mental arithmetic showed that the final outcome was dependent on the final race with Colin with 2 wins, Mike with a 1st and 2 3rds and Laurie with 2 2nds. The race started in extremely light conditions and some indiscretions on the start line by other boats saw Colin forced into the middle of the fleet, Mike and Laurie got clean air and cleared away from the rest of the fleet with Stan on Turbo in tow. Further indiscretions at the first mark saw this gap increase and the first 3 crossed in that order.

It was unfortunate that the conditions were like this because the actual temperature was very warm with most days approaching the 30's and no rain. Waranga sailing club does a lot of work to ensure this regatta is a success and support from local businesses ensures prizes of some substance. Whilst the weather did keep some away approximately 50 boats of various classes did compete. The drinking, camping, drinking, pub visits, drinking, partying, drinking, sailing, drinking, social atmosphere and did I forget drinking mean a good time is had by all.

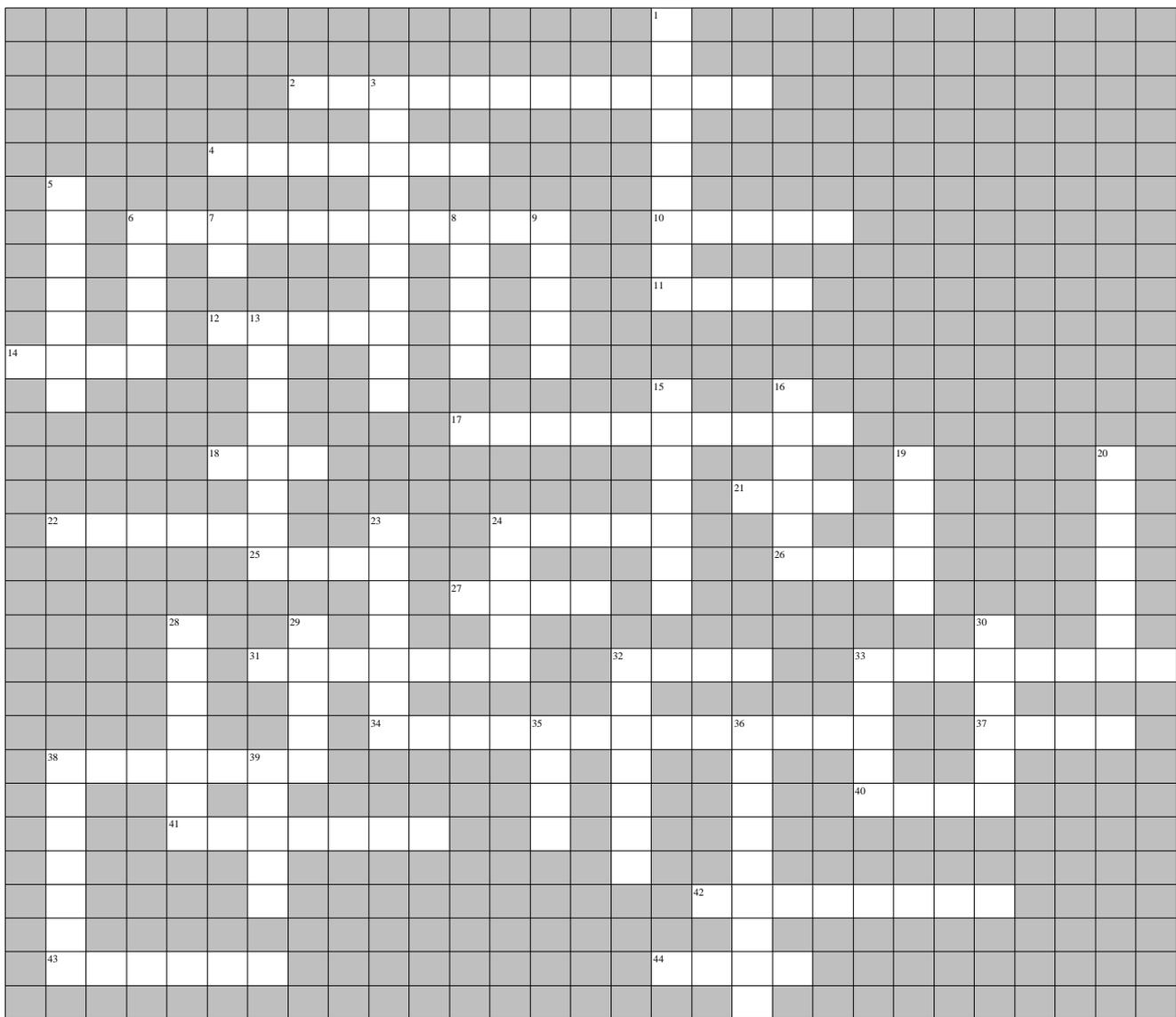
Final Placings

1 st	007	Mike and Clare Landers
2 nd	Fuse-A-Light	Colin Orchard and a guy he picked up
3 rd	Live Wire	Laurie Bradford and Megan Thornhill

Caption Competition

This photo was recently taken at Parkdale yacht club one pleasant Sunday afternoon. If you have a suitable caption for this then email editor@cobracat.com or phone me on 0398778078 with your submission. The best entry will receive a prize and all entries will be displayed at the AGM in June. Enter as many as you like.





Created with EclipseCrossword — <http://www.eclipsecrossword.com>

Across

2. TERM USED DOWNWIND WITH THE MAIN ON ONE SIDE AND THE JIB ON THE OTHER
4. A FLOW OF WATER RUNNING CONSISTENTLY IN ONE DIRECTION
6. THE TERMINAL POINTS ON THE HULL FOR ALL SHROUDS
10. ANOTHER EXPRESSION FOR A HEADER, WHEN THE WIND MOVES TO THE HEAD OF THE BOAT WHEN CLOSEHAULED
11. A BOAT THAT NEEDS TO TACK TO AVOID AN OBSTRUCTION MUST CALL THIS IF ANOTHER BOAT PREVENTS HER FROM DOING SO
12. A BOAT WITH MAIN AND JIB HAS A RIG
14. THE LOWER END OF A MAST OR SAIL
17. A ONE DESIGN SPEED HUMP
18. THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CROSSMEMBERS A COBRA CAN HAVE BETWEEN HULLS
21. THE FOREMOST HEADSAIL
22. A COBRA SAIL MUST NOT HAVE ANY OF THIS STRONG MATERIAL IN ITS CONSTRUCTION
24. A CLASS OF 16 FOOT CATAMARAN
25. TO SLACKEN OFF
26. THE TOILET ON A BOAT
27. THE P FLAG IS WHITE AND
31. THE CREW ON UNDERCOVER
32. THE WIDTH OF A BOAT MEASURED FROM SIDE TO SIDE
33. THE ART OF ROWING A BOAT WITH ONE OAR

34. A COBRA THAT CAN CAPSIZE IN EXTREMELY LOW WINDS
37. THE AFTERMOST POINT OF A SAIL
38. THIS BASIN IS WHERE MANY COBRAS MET AT EASTER
40. A RIBBON TO INDICATE AIRFLOW OVER THE SAIL
41. THIS VICTORIAN COBRA MOVED TO TASMANIA
42. IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION TO THE WIND
43. A STEERING HANDLE ATTACHED TO THE RUDDER
44. A BOAT ON THIS TACK MUST GIVEWAY TO A BOAT ON THE OPPOSITE TACK

Down

1. THE THING THAT MAKES MAL GO SLOWER THAN NORMAL
3. IF BOATS ARE NOT THIS THEN A BOAT CLEAR ASTERN MUST KEEP CLEAR OF A BOAT CLEAR AHEAD
5. THE BACK OF THE BOAT WHERE THE RUDDER HANGS
6. A DEVICE THAT COMES IN MANY FORMS FOR SECURING A ROPE
7. A POSTPONED RACE SHOWS THE .. FLAG
8. THE COBRA THAT HAS SPENT MORE TIME IN THE WORKSHOP THAN BEING SAILED THIS SEASON
9. A CHANGE IN THE DIRECTION OF THE WIND
13. THE COBRA THAT CAME THIRD AT THE STATE TITLES
15. A LINE OR PURCHASE USED TO HAUL A SAIL OUT ALONG A BOOM
16. IN NAVIGATION THE HIGHEST POINT IN THE SKY
19. A COBRA THAT HAS A HABIT OF FALLING MASTS
20. THE FITTING THAT THE PIN OF A PINTLE GOES INTO TO ALLOW THE PIVOTING OF A RUDDER
23. A BOAT THAT TENDS TO COME UP INTO THE WIND WHILST SAILING HAS THIS HELM
24. IF ONLY HIS SAILING WAS AS SHART AS HIS PEN
28. A COBRA GOES BETTER DOWNWIND WHEN THE MAST IS RAKED IN THIS DIRECTION
29. AN ALCOHOLIC DRINK OR MIXER THAT MOST COBRA CREWS HAVE GOT SICK ON
30. ONE OF THE RED LEASE BOATS
32. WORKING TO WINDWARD
33. THE TERM FOR A ROPE THAT CONTROLS THE SET OF A SAIL
35. THE FRONT EDGE OF A SAIL
36. THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF A BOAT
38. A COBRA THAT WAS MORE OVER THAN UP AT THE NATIONALS
39. A BOAT SAILING AT NIGHT MUST DISPLAY THIS COLOR LIGHT ON THE RIGHT HAND SIDE OF THE BOAT