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Three of the crew members of the Alpha Centauri, which ran into trouble in the steep seas and high winds on Sunday.



Skipper Ian Ullett is joyfully reunited with his three daughters, from left, Christine Ullett, Debbie Daw and Briolly Ullett, and his wife, Margaret.

Rescue alerts amid wild weekend weather

It was a day of drama and tension on the South Coast last Sunday as the crew of a 12 metre yacht struggled to make its way

Wet start to football

The Great Southern League football season got off to a wet and wintry start on Saturday with rain commencing in the first half of all four A grade matches.

There were plenty of surprises in the opening round with reigning premier, Myponga, going down to Victor Harbor.

Even more suprising was the three goal win of last year's bottom side, Mount Compass, over Encounter Bay, which was runner-up to Myponga in 1984.

The other two matches did not feature any upsets with Langhorne Creek beating Goolwa by just over four goals and an impressive Strathalbyn side easily accounting for Yankalilla.

to safety in some of the worst seas seen in this area for many years.

A member of the Victor Harbor Sea Rescue Squadron said winds reached 110 km hour, the equivalent of 70 knots, at times.

A Mayday call was put out by the Alpha Centauri just after 9.30 am on Sunday after her engine broke down and sails were blown out 18 miles south-east of the Murray Mouth.

Guided and reassured by rescue

squadron radio operators, the skipper of the yacht, Mr Ian Ullett, of Mount Jagged, and his four crewmen were doing reasonably well until they ran off a wave at midday and smashed both the rudder and remaining jib.

Three minutes later the crew managed to start the engine and a temporary rudder was rigged which enabled the yacht to make her way towards Granite Island.

However, she ran into difficulty again at 1.30 pm when a rope became entangled in her propeller.

Continued on Page 12

Trees, roofs feel force of Sunday's storm

Trees, roofs and boats appeared to bear the brunt of Sunday's storm.

Each district in the Fleurieu Peninsula reported trees down, parts of roofs blown off and the sea rescue personnel were called out.

The worst hit area, according to the controller of the South Coast

SES, Ian Pease, Victor Harbor, was the Liverpool Road area of Goolwa, where three pine trees crashed onto a house.

The SES had 52 call-outs from the top end of Encounter Bay to Hindmarsh Island.

Apart from the crushed house, most of the call-outs attended by

Continued on page 12

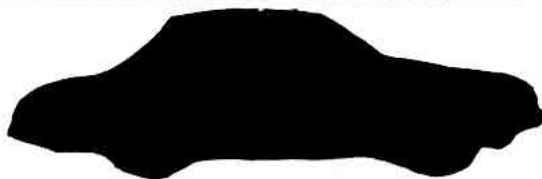
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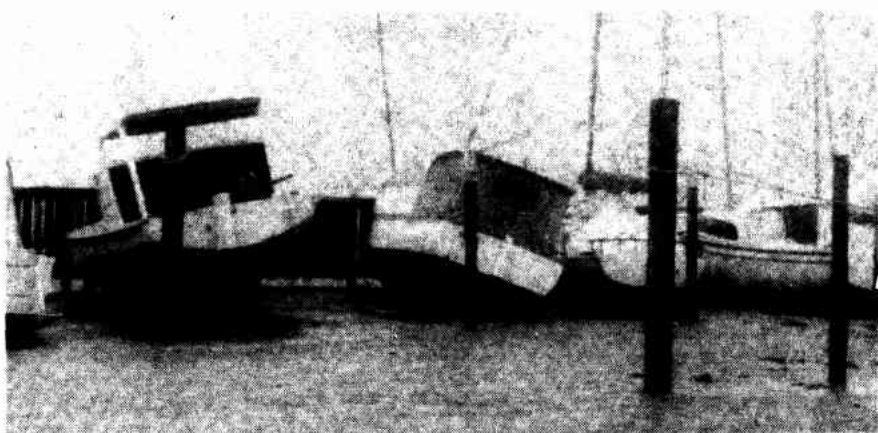
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A Middleton holiday shack that was ruined in Sunday's storm.



A marina full of boats but without the necessary water required to keep the hulls afloat.

Trees, roofs feel force of storm

From Page 1

SES, Fire Brigade and local CFS members were usual storm damage such as lifting roofs, loose tiles, and trees bringing down telephone and electricity lines, temporarily cutting power to some areas.

The SES was hit itself, along with the St John Ambulance and the Victor Harbor District Council, when the radio mast on Waitpinga Hill they use was blown down and smashed.

Sergeant Brian Liddy, Victor Harbor Police, said a new tower will have to be erected and the ambulance is being given temporary permission to use the near-by police radio mast.

Yankalilla township, itself, was largely free of damage but the District Council's Works Manager, Brian White, said Range Road was completely cut off near Parawa with 14 large pine trees across the road. Council workmen were still hard at work Monday morning trying to clear the road.

Trees also fell onto the road between Willow Creek and the Waitpinga turn-off while a power pole came down at Second Valley, cutting off power from there to Kangaroo Island he said.

The Goolwa police received about a dozen reports of trees down and a

few roofs being carried off by the wind.

A shed was knocked flat and a caravan was caught by a strong gust as it went through an S-bend on Currency Creek Road and rolled.

Otherwise most of the damage was minor and superficial caused by wind and flying tree limbs said the police.

Strathalbyn also came away with little major damage although a few houses also suffered the indignity of losing part of their roofs.

And while some sectors in the district had their power turned off for several hours, the main damage occurred at Clayton, where the SES and CFS were called in to help with roofs lifting, trees falling and power being interrupted.

Geoff Moran, group captain for the Strathalbyn CFS and controller for SES in the district, said about 40 men were out for about four hours tying down roofs and helping with the damage, which included one house losing its entire roof and a shed being blown over.

"At a rough guess I'd say about \$40,000-50,000 damage was sustained," he said.

The men came from Strathalbyn and Milang he said.

Rescue alerts amid wild weekend weather

From Page 1

causing the engine to stall.

"I didn't think we'd ever make it back at that point," said Mr Ullett, who is a 55 year old farmer with 40 years of sailing experience.

But the rope broke up to nothing which solved this problem and enabled the Alpha Centauri to motor into Granite Island at 3 pm.

The yacht had left Outer Harbour on Friday morning and was destined for Portland as part of an eighteen month sailing voyage to New Guinea.

The four other men on board the yacht were Howard Byerley, 67, Jock Evans, 20, Rob Coles, 21, and John Myall, 43, all of whom are from Adelaide.

Myall was actually tossed off the helm at one stage when the yacht was horizontal with the water but he was wearing a life-line and the rest of the crew managed to haul him back on board.

Throughout the day, rescue helicopters and and RAAF Orion aircraft hovered over the yacht while the Victor Harbor Sea Rescue Squadron, SES volunteers, police and life saving officials, organised rescue tactics which fortunately were not required.

Mr Ullett, a member of the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron, was joyfully reunited with his wife and three daughters who were naturally relieved to see him safe and well.

The other crew members showered on board the boat while their skipper spoke with the press.

Mr Ullett remarked that there was a time when the yacht was caught up in the surf when he didn't think

he would be the one to relate the story.

"We are supposed to be doing an eighteen month sailing trip around the Pacific but I think I might buy a caravan now," he added.

Mr Ullett said he had sailed in rough seas before but nothing like the conditions on Sunday when the wind gauge was constantly stuck on the maximum of 60 knots.

On Saturday evening 40 knot winds blew out the main sail of another yacht which had lost her motor and drifted to an unknown position.

Rescue squadron members informed the five man crew that they were south-west of Victor Harbor and assisted by radio as she made her way into the harbour.

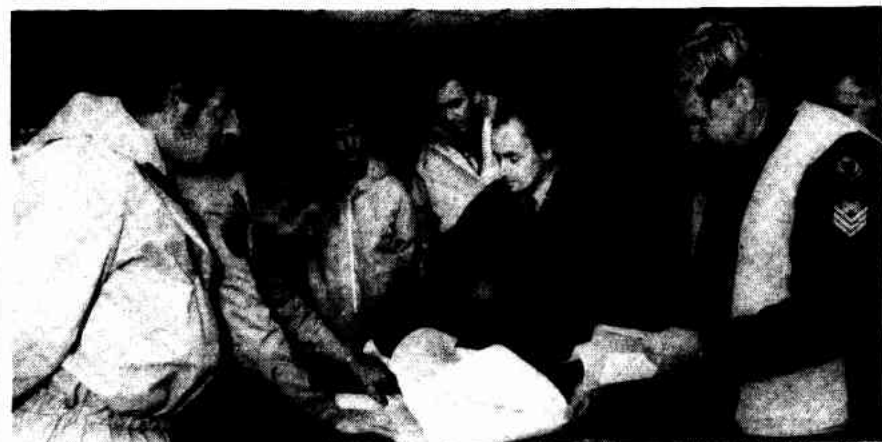
The next morning the drama started again when the 45 foot yacht lost her anchorage and ropes had to floated out from the wharf to rescue the crew.

In addition, a Taiwanese cargo vessel was forced to come into Victor Harbor for shelter on Sunday morning after having difficulty steering in the rough seas.

The Hu Lung was unladen and heading for Backstairs Passage when she changed her course for Victor Harbor.

Two boys, aged eight and ten, camping with two men on the Coorong, were flown by helicopter to Victor Harbor late on Sunday after becoming stranded on Younghusband Peninsula.

The two men, one of whom was the boys' father, remained with the boat until the storm abated.



Organising rescue tactics at the Goolwa Oval rooms on Sunday were, from right, Sergeant Brian Liddy, Victor Harbor, Bob Rosser and Adelaide State Emergency Service members.



Retired Victor Harbor resident, Ted Webb, found the large visitor, the Hu Lung, "very interesting."

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