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# Yachts salvaged

THERE were many images that captured the imagination of the Australian public after Cyclone Ului ripped through the Whitsundays in late March.

By Ben Glover

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Some of the last tangible reminders of Cyclone Ului were removed yesterday with the wrecks of Anaconda II and Aquaholic salvaged from the rocks adjacent to the Whitsunday Sailing Club. Part owner of Aquaholic, Bob Dalby, was on the scene to farewell his yacht.

THERE were many images that captured the imagination of the Australian public after Cyclone Ului ripped through the Whitsundays in late March.

One to evoke plenty of emotion was the plight of former Sydney Hobart winner Anaconda II  
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One to evoke plenty of emotion was the plight of former Sydney Hobart winner Anaconda II.

Washed onto the rocks adjacent to the Whitsunday Sailing Club, the grand racing yacht was propped up on the rocks for all to see.

What many Whitsunday residents and visitors may not have seen and may not have known when they took photos of the stranded vessel over the past couple of months, was that lodged under it was another boat, which told its own heartbreaking story of loss in the wake of the category three cyclone.

Aquaholic, owned by long time locals Barry Taylor and Bob Dalby finally saw the light of day again on Tuesday when she was salvaged, along with Anaconda II.

Although these boats will no longer lie on the rocks as a reminder of the suffering caused by Cyclone Ului, the feud brewing between the owners of the two boats is likely to continue.

Mr Taylor and Mr Dalby are furious with the owner of Anaconda II, local businessman Craig Ross, and are considering legal action against him after their quest to get in contact with him have fallen on deaf ears.

They believe that Aquaholic was the victim of bad luck in the storm.

Securely tied to a newly re-surveyed 20 tonne mooring out from the sailing club, Aquaholic had survived storms as severe as Ului in the past without so much as a scratch.

On this occasion though, the co-owners believe their boat was in the path of the coast-bound Anaconda II, with their mooring unable to withstand the huge forces of a collision with the maxi understood to be more than 40 tonnes.

"It had no chance of survival," Mr Taylor said.

Not only did Aquaholic not survive but its wreck has left its owners out of pocket to the tune of more than \$100,000.

Less than two years ago their boat was insured for more than \$85,000 but when that policy expired they were unable to renew it due to unrelated financial problems.

For that reason, their only recourse is to talk to Mr Ross and his insurer but repeated attempts to do just that have been met with nothing other than disdain.

"I had my solicitor put together a letter to try to get a response out of the Anaconda II owners or their insurers but they didn't even have the courtesy to respond," Mr Taylor said.

"I've reported the incident to Marine Safety but they don't want to know."

Mr Taylor said he and Mr Dalby were running out of options as any legal action they decided to take would cost them anywhere from \$20,000 to \$60,000.

"Where does that leave me?" Mr Taylor asked.

"I haven't got the dollars to fight it in court and that's what the insurers are anticipating."

The Whitsunday Times has left calls for Mr Ross this week but he has not returned those calls as yet.

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