By Caillin Howard *(photography: Down Under Sail)*

The *Aikin* Perspective

Aikin (Caillin Howard / David Oliver)

WELL, while comparatively speaking (compared to the rest of the globe) our lives are fantastically free of COVID-19 which is ravaging that freedom elsewhere, sailing regattas are still providing a reminder that things are far from normal. Unlike the Sydney to Hobart Race which was cancelled, the great SA race was held but, with community cases surfacing in the weeks before across Victoria, many of the regular interstate entrants were unable to compete.

Their loss is something the *Aikin* crew truly understands. Imagine the pain that the *Fast Forward* crew (Sydney 38) must have endured after the effort and cost of getting their boat to SA, then be unable to get back to it to race, and now having to get it home with no reward. Or imagine the frustration of the *Wicked* team (Beneteau First 40) of reaching the waters off Robe and being instructed to turn back with entry to SA banned.

To those two and the others that made the effort and commitment to the race and were unable to enjoy it we pass on our thanks for your efforts, our sympathies for the loss and frustration and our encouragement to be back here next year. Like salt in the wound or in the eyes from the rail of a racing yacht, you missed another great event.

One interstate boat made the journey and managed the COVID-19 closures, that being the International Boat and crew of the year (RORC), Matt Allen's *Ichi Ban*. What a lesson they would deliver to the fleet, both in the race and the regatta, and remind us of how deserved that title is.

The race was far from typical. It started in a trough with a pending front edge of high setup to bring strong breezes from the south west settling to the south. We started in a light breeze and flat water, and a couple of hours later we got a healthy 20 plus knots and a confused sea for the remainder of the race. Picnic to warfare in the same chapter!

The race wasn't our best, with some untidy headsail changes, chasing a lost halyard, ripping the mainsail between reef 1 and 2 mandating two reefs for the race, and blowing out a staysail halyard, which all contributed to us sailing well but on reduced cylinders.

Ollie and I were proud of the team and the way that they fought it out to the end despite knowing the effort was in vain for the podium, but while the time was quick, we were more than an hour off the pace that we needed to be truly competitive with the fleet. Nevertheless, arrival at 1030 hrs in Port Lincoln is both a gift and a curse, providimg the platform for two days of Bar Karate (a sailing podcast) with friends at the centre of the universe.

The Regatta

THIS was much the same story as the race, and with the reduced numbers we found ourselves in an atmosphere more akin to a decade ago. There was plenty of time to catch up with everyone, and enough crayfish for every boat during the daily presentations.

The division spread was excellent with the four TP52s making up Div 1, *Aikin* and five other boats from *Shining Sea* (GP42) through to a Mumm 36 *Magic* in Div 2, and five boats in Div 3 including Sydney 38s and an Etchells. We had a great week fighting amongst predominantly *Shining Sea*, *Game On* (MC38) and *Dr Feelgood* (Melges 32) and the local serial pest *Fresh* (Sydney 47) which smashed us in the race costing us five jugs. The conditions ranged from 7 kts to 20 kts with shifty conditions up to 30 degrees making it, as always, a very strategic week.

We're honoured to have won the AMS division, and proud of a third in IRC where over three races a total of 25 seconds decided three races between us and the MC38. However, well done to *Shining Sea* who clearly dominated the division for the win.

It might be our last for a while with the little white boat going on the market in a couple of weeks. We'll be back, just not sure in what. Thank you to all who have sailed with Ollie and me for many years – we've kept coming back because of you and the laughs we have around all of these events.

Another Hooligan (Nick George)

Audacious (Stuart Johnson)

Mystery Taxi (Paul Henshall)

3 Cool Cats (Scott Mutton)

By David Eldridge

Kings of the Gulf are crowned. Graeme Footer (*Marnico*) and Alan Dowler representing Geoff Kneebone (*Tearaway*)

THE King of the Gulf continues to grow, and so does its reputation with a record 38 entries this year. The big increase was in the monohull division, with 16 fantastic yachts representing both the CYCSA and our own Club competing in some spectacular racing. Although the important social side of the event was impacted by COVID-19 regulations, we were still able to book out the presentation dinner at the local bowls club. We were also limited to 150 people at our regular evening events which were held in the biggest marquee we could fit on the marina lawn, with tables both inside and outside.

The passage race over was interesting to say the least, with the wind just not cooperating. PRO Jock Ross eventually abandoned all divisions in the race, but two Division 2 yachts, *Musetta* and *Silver Gull,* defied logic and the PRO and continued to race. Both yachts finished the race to Port Vincent and were awarded unofficial bottles of wine. Kevin Kelly and Rob Hutson accepted the win with enthusiasm, and then cheekily claimed first and fastest honours for the race which was appreciated by the big crowd.

Lincoln Week and the King of the Gulf regattas had great winds for racing, and it seems that we were due for this having put up with some poor winds for most of the sailing season.

The racing was extraordinarily close in all divisions, with countbacks required in the Cruising Division, Division 2, and the South Australian State Multihull Championships.

Credit must go the RSAYS's Peter Trenorden for his efforts in ensuring that all boat handicaps across all clubs were appropriate.

The crown of the 'King of the Gulf' for monohulls was bestowed upon Graeme Footer (*Marnico* CYCSA), with a half point victory over past winner Mal Denton (*Blue Diamond* RSAYS). Another past winner Colin Doudy (*Circe* RSAYS) was just points behind.

The Multihull crown, in Victorian hands for the past 12 months, was returned to a South Australian and RSAYS via the remarkably consistent Geoff Kneebone in his Farrier trimaran *Tearaway*. Unfortunately, Geoff missed out on the double, losing the South Australian Multihull Championships on a count back to the Victorian trimaran *Sknot* and Craig Unthank. It was, perhaps, a just reward for Craig and his crew as they had waited at the border until midnight to pass into South Australia, then raced on to Port Vincent with no time to spare.

The new Division 2 monohull division was also decided on a countback, with past winner *Fifi V* (Brian Lawrie), a Noelex 25, just edging out *Silver Gull* (Rob Hutson RSAYS). The King of the Gulf committee will seek to grow this division which is perfect for trailer sailers and smaller keel boats on the beautiful flat waters of Port Vincent.

The Cruising Division was taken out by the popular *Witchcraft* (RSAYS) Peter Hastwell and his crew, winning on a countback from *Aquitaine* (RSAYS). The racing in this division was again close in all races. This division will be another growth area where the two-sail limit is ideally suited to twilight monohull and multihull cruising yachts who just want to have a crack at social regatta racing.

The ticketed meals were all sold out with the restricted numbers, so special thanks are due to the participants who missed out for their understanding. The event also had 10 volunteer COVID marshals and a huge supply of hand sanitiser and disinfectant for the tables and chairs. The surplus will be given to the CYCSA and the RSAYS. The welcome barbecue and the morning breakfasts were once again provided by the warm and friendly local coast guard.

The event could not have been conducted without the volunteer race and event officials. The Principal Race Officer, Jock Ross and his team, conducted a very professional series under trying conditions where both *Macro* and *Miss Robyn* had technical issues. This team included Rose Ross, Neil Dell, Rick Ottaway, Peter Boyd, Peter Hutchinson, Roger Oaten, Adam South and Ross McOmish. Events like the King of the Gulf can only continue with such generous support from these volunteers.

The King of the Gulf is now jointly managed by MYASA and the RSAYS and it still has room to grow. However, it is expected that next year or the year after, nominations will be capped to keep the event fun, personable and manageable in order to maintain its outstanding and growing reputation.

The multihull fleet at the start

The monohulls jostle for position during a pre-start sequence