

RACING RISKS

By Colin Fraser

The ravages of racing! The November issue of Squadron Quarterly was graced on the front page by a magnificent picture of *Kaesler*, sublimely flying 'The Old Bastard' spinnaker. Such is life in the racing world, when shortly after, *Kaesler* and *Shining Sea* clashed their masts during the Premier's Cup, resulting in both being severely damaged. Colin Fraser, Skipper of *Kaesler*, gives us a technical but poignant account of the incident.

The *Kaesler* – *Shining Sea*, Premier's Cup Incident.

The Premier's Cup, 4 race series over 2 days in November each year is always great and provides highly competitive racing between the CYC and Squadron.

This season's series held on November 22nd & 23rd, culminated in a disastrous mast top collision between *Kaesler*, a Sydney CR39 and *Shining Sea*, a Sydney 38. It blew the crabs out of the sand Saturday and was unusually cancelled. Those 2 races were then sailed on the Sunday.

We had a general recall on the 2nd race, and then I blew the start of the 4th race and restarted- not a good omen! On the last windward leg about 300m from the mark, we were on a port tack logging about 7kts with *Shining Sea* running under a starboard kite, logging about 10-12kts, on a collision course towards us and riding a 22kts South Westerly. *Shining Sea* pulled away to pass below us, however sod's law prevailed, wrong wave, wrong place, wrong time, and the masts collided at the very tops pulling the top 10 feet of *Kaesler*'s down and bursting a leeward spreader on *Shining Sea*.

Shining Sea didn't actually lose her mast but ended up bending it badly after she lowered her kite. By the time you read this both masts will have been replaced under insurance.

Both boats were particularly fortunate in that no one suffered personal injury – other than my severely fractured pride! My crew were outstandingly cool doing things slowly and carefully in regard to their personal safety and preventing any consequential damage to the ship. We even had Langdon Hamlyn watching us carefully from Natani offering good advice, like pointing out an overboard sheet after I had started my engine.

Bones Haskett led a welcoming party of hearty volunteers on the Crane Wharf, who, along with my crew and mast climbing bowman, Andy Napier, professionally directed the mast - out ceremony, while I did what I was told!

Lessons for the day:

1. A port- tack boat keeps clear of a starboard- tack boat (Rule 10 – Opposite tacks).
2. Judgemental error is always a factor but more so under fatigue.

Of course none of us want to admit we are tired, but after 4 races in 18- 25kts, a general recall and a restart at the end of the day it all adds up. We live to learn, even an 'Old Bastard' like me!

SAIL CROATIAN ISLANDS



Croatian Islands Experience





The most popular sailing destination for Australians.
Over 1000 islands to explore,
Centuries of history to experience,
Food & Wine to savour.



Local Contact 0400 222 060

info@croatianislands.com.au

www.croatianislands.com.au



Kaesler's cool crew in recovery mode photo Langdon Hamlyn



Adelaide Sail Loft

435A Military Rd
Largs Bay 5016

Ph: 8341 7655
Fax: 8341 7622

Racing & Cruising
Marine Canvas Products

Luke Burrow 0411 618 633
John Hayter 0408 291 948