



THE LAST WORD COMES FIRST - A message from the Editor.

Thank you to Laurie and Julie for their contributions, a cobra tales without other authors would be just one long Colin's poisoned pen and we know how much trouble that could cause.

Speaking of authors and writing and such things, as an English teacher, Julie will know all of this, but in case any of you prospective authors are only being held back by your concern about your grammatical correctness, fear not, here are some tips.

A PREPOSITION is a word that you should not end a sentence WITH.

You must try to NEVER split an INFINITIVE.

Multiple superlatives are an unnecessary TAUTOLOGY.

Never use a big word when a DIMINUTIVE one will do.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING FAR MORE INTERESTING!

From the pen of our President - Take it away Laurie.

This is an update on an article I put in the newsletter a while ago – update

D because I have discovered new and more exciting ways to fall over!!!!

COBRAS DOWN UNDER

I need to take this opportunity to dispel some of the myths about sailing a Cobra catamaran. To some of the sailors and onlookers at Parkdale, it may appear that Cobras are uncapsizable. This is not so!! After some practice and careful attention to technique, even spectacular capsizes can be achieved without too much difficulty. Here is my list:

1. The straightforward capsize to leeward rates poorly on the open ended Wreckt'er scale, partly because it can be so easily executed by jamming the mainsheet in the cleat whilst going to windward in only moderate breeze (I have managed this in 5 Kts,

whilst Chris has even managed this in 3 Kts – at the nationals!!!!) and partly because it lacks the sheer style of other more complicated capsizes.

2. The nosedive as practiced to perfection by Meaghan and myself in past years, cannot be beaten for its spectacular result. To be done properly, the mainsheet must be well out, with the boat on a good broad reach in windy, gusty northerlies, preferably close to the clubhouse for maximum spectator effect. The boat must be steered exactly so that the maximum pressure from the sails is developed and pushes the leeward bow down. Coming up into the wind spoils the effect, as surprisingly does bearing away. We have now refined this technique to the point where we can bury both bows at once, creating the most delightful 180-degree rotation around the tip of the mast. It also helps if the trembling crew moves forward of their normal position for these conditions and if you are patient, after a few tries, the lee bow will disappear in a flurry of spray. An experienced skipper will then know that the manoeuvre is accomplished.

The boats sterns should rear up cleanly and together and if the technique is correctly carried out, the skipper and crew should both be flung into the sea with perhaps hitting the mast/shroud/forestay as an embellishment on the way. The highly skilled skipper should be able to use the cushioning effect of the crew to prevent injury to himself.

3. Another way of achieving a capsize is by gybing. This can be successfully done by observing a few rules

1 Crew and skipper must remain on the side to which the boom will swing. (sending the crew across immediately before a gybe is no good at all as it will probably ruin the chance of success.

2 The boom should be extremely difficult to pull across – this means a gust is rising – don't wait until the boom is easy to move, as this will indicate that the gust is dying.

3 Pull hard on the boom and tiller and with any luck the boat will end up across the wind on the opposite tack, on a broad reach, in a gust, with crew and skipper on the leeward side. This should produce a successful capsize because even a frantic crew will have difficulty clawing their way up a rapidly inclining two metre deck. The effect can, of course, be improved if the crew gets in the way of the boom and is toppled overboard. Will and I perfected this technique further at Toukley in the Nationals. Picture this: Having led the field in the early part of the final race and then dropping back after minor gear failure, it was all stops out to catch up. The technique we used was spectacular though lacking in success in terms of catching the rest of the fleet. At the wing mark in a gusting 20 Kts, place at least two boats in your way at the mark. Commence the gybe with crew and skipper remaining on the lee side (this is called power gybing). Jam the traveler at its mid point and make sure the sheet is also cleated. As the boat tips, as it surely will, both crew and skipper slip over the side/stern and with just a simple dive under the boat both will emerge in just the right position to prepare for a quick righting of the yacht. Done properly, little distance will be lost as following boats will need to detour and with some luck the skippers rolling around their boats laughing will end up in the same situation.

4. The final way worthy of note (although I have only tried this once) is best done in gusty and veering wind conditions. With the boat on the wind and the crew out on trapeze, the skipper should pretend to free a jammed mainsheet and casually, knock the tiller away from him. With a bit of practice, this can be made to coincide with a change in wind direction, which will hopefully backfill the jib and push the boat around onto the opposite tack. To be successful, the crew must be

fully stretched out on the trapeze so that they drop cleanly into the water and have no time to unclasp the jib or worse still, scramble over to the opposite side.

So, all you Cobra skippers take careful note of these techniques, get out there and practice until you can be skillful enough to be an Arrow skipper. Good luck!!!
Laurie.



President's report

Well, the Nationals have come and gone with once again the Queenslanders showing their abilities. With only a small contingent of Victorians, one NSW rep and no Tasmanians, the result was predictable. However, this made no difference to our enjoyment of the event – Toukley was a great place to sail with calm water and good winds (see Julies report in this newsletter). The organization went well, with only a couple of minor hiccups, thanks to the year long efforts of David and Lisa, Ali and Chris, Rick, Sue and Kerry. My thanks to all of you for making my job easy. The number of Cobras racing at Parkdale has steadily increased as the weather warms up and we look forward to those skippers who have been missing out on all the fun to come and join us. We still have one lease boat for use, so if any of you have contact with other past or prospective yachties, let them know and bring them along.

We have only managed to fit in one social sail so far this season, with a small group sailing from Rye to Queenscliff in near perfect conditions. Hopefully we can fit in a few more before we mothball our boats for winter – watch your emails and get ready for the car rally TBA.

We intend to offer a new set of Cobra tops (the blue ones) – polos and polar fleece jackets- as our supply of the old ones are fading. Lisa and David will contact you so have your orders ready. On that note I can have Nationals shirts printed for anyone who was not able to make the Nats - cost \$25- see me if you are interested.

Our next task is to organize the Easter State Titles . At this stage we haven't decided on a venue, but will make a decision soon so that everyone can start preparing.

On a lighter note we have discovered a Cobra sailing in Western Australia!! Must be the only one over there, so I have appointed the owner, Greg Ritchie, to the position of President of the WACCA as an Australia Day honour. If anyone knows the history of Cobra 357, let me know!

Good luck and smooth sailing to you all for the rest of the season

Laurie

The Toukley Tournament Testimonial

Disclaimer: No Cobra's career or reputation was jeopardized in the writing of this article.

With fat deposits of Christmas feasting evident on the lean mean fighting machines hereby known as the Cobra sailors, the troupe from Parkdale, albeit without some of the regular offenders, set off for the Cobra Nationals at Toukley on the Tuggerah Lakes, NSW.

Some went all the way. Some did it in fits and starts. Some went all night and some had to have long breaks between sessions!!! Now as for the trip itself.. well that was basically 'smooth sailing' so to speak or so it was reported. A very unrecognizable Scotty from Bundy was there to greet the Mexicans raising hopes that one of them might just beat him this time.

Cabins, tents & even cars were changed into temporary lodgings to house this motley band of skippers, crew & respective/ respected partners come spectators. Then their parts were measured and their bits were weighed. Oh ... and their boats were checked out too.

The invitation race was sailed and handicaps were set. Although the criteria for determining able bodied seamen was notably different from the norm. John Bolton was able to give a lake bottom report on not one but 3 occasions in this race. Although a rumour was quickly spread that young Johnny and skipper had actually pushed him into the water.

Day 2 saw 1 marathon and 2 long races in 35°. 4 43 3 21 23 29 41. Oops not the positions of the great hunks of spunk but the tattslotto numbers for the \$30,000,000. Could there be a new cobra in sight? Scotty's new boats are certainly looking good but boy are those boys lazy as they don't spend 2 hours a day tinkering on their boats like the Parkdale skippers. Day 3 may have seen a few less sailors as there was Indian for dinner the previous night and some had the runs or was it just, the 25-30 knots that was brewing.

Patterns in placings started to emerge with no prizes for guessing 1st and 2nd and even last, although Chris and Mal fought over that. A mere spectator asked why the Bundy boys were always last out on the water but always first back on the beach. A mere Mal replied, "They know WHAT they are doing!" and so Mal got a first in the Nationals.... for the quote of the week.

Day 4 saw 3 more races making most of the party too pooped to pop on New Year's Eve although there was a lot of banging round the camp that night and well into the morning. NSW must have a less restrictive fire cracker legislation than Vic. New years Day/ Lay day

was quiet with many Cobras nursing battle wounds or prides. Day 5 and the final races were sailed. Were the Queenslanders beaten? NO. Did Rick Nixon's crew mutiny? NoT YET. Did young Johnny Bolton give the veterans & masters a run for their money? YES. Did Laurie Bradford resign not as Cobra president but as the team's human water thermometer? ALMOST. Did Mal Winder put extra weights in his crew's life jacket and get 3rd? YES 3rd LAST. Did David Badrock further extend his and Lisa's potty vocab? MOST DEFINITELY. Did Chris Wells sustain his handicap? YES. Finally did the sailing widows survive yet another Nationals? PROBABLY!!! Well done to all. Another Nationals bites the dust. JULIE.

AND JUST WHEN YOU THOUGHT IT WAS SAFE TO KEEP READING –

HERE IT IS, ALBEIT IN A diminutive FORM,

COLINS POISONED PEN!

Lisa was standing on the beach being blonde – which she does so well. She took about 5 minutes to acknowledge Daniel (van Oosterom) who was standing beside her. To try to cover her apparent rudeness, which was of course, was only rampant blondness, she said, sorry Daniel, I didn't recognise you with your clothes on.

Speaking of the P.M's, can anyone answer this question for me?

A failing wind and a strong current recently caused Dave and Lisa to get close and personal with a buoy. (I think there's a "u" in that word). It appears that David went quite red. Now was it through embarrassment for having been so careless, or was it Boat Rage for having been so careless. I didn't see the incident myself as I was so far ahead at the time!

Well that's all I have this time as people are getting careful about what they say around me now days . But if you have any dirt scandal or gossip, even about the nicest people, don't be afraid to hand me a folded up grubby piece of paper on the beach some time and remember not to let facts get in the way of a good story.