

NEWSLETTER

Cygnet 20 Marlay Point Overnight Race: 12-13 March 2022

By David Bradburn

March 2022



Preparation prior to leaving included rigging and safety equipment, hull number, bedding and personal items. It's good to use the boat on a continual basis as she's always ready to go without too much fuss. Things such as cleaning, tools, bedding, safety equipment is always on board so just need to check the batteries and lifejacket yearly check.



Having completed in last years event I knew what we were up for and enlisted two of Bluewater's 1st Year Apprentice's Adam and Race to help and share this unique experience.

Driving 900 km each way, launching and cruising 30 nautical miles to the start line then racing back overnight over a four day weekend is quite full on. That's what I love about the Cygnet, it's introducing new people to sailing and cruising. With a trailer sailer you combine a road trip with boating.



The drive each way is 12 to 13 hours including stops, and I like to break it up into two days with an overnight stop in between. Great with a Cygnet 20 as you have accommodation on the go, on land and sea! From Newcastle to just outside Canberra first leg, parking at the RAFF Memorial Park. Breakfast and shopping at Cooma then five hour drive to Paynesville second half. Lucky Adam likes to drive which took a lot of pressure off me!

Having reached Paynesville Friday after lunch we proceeded to rig the boat and transfer gear from the car as well as mandatory safety audit. The race is very well organised with friendly club officials. Cruising from Paynesville to Marlay Point is another overnight stopover sailing late afternoon then early morning to Marley Point Yacht Club for the festivities.

Great to check out the course and Magellan Straits by day, and get some crew training along the way. I also enjoy rafting up in the reeds it's a tradition! Sign on, charge phones, catch up with Tim and the crew from other gaff sailers, with food and coffee to go with the presentation.



I thought I would get a little sleep coming with no wind and drifting into the Magellan Straits and leave the Apprentices to sail the course (having given them basic lessons on the trip down). I woke up to find Cygnet in an effective hove to sail configuration (Jib back winding on opposite side of mainsail). We were going backwards! Not only that we had no steerage and the Apprentices were having to fend off the other boats from getting tangled.



We had a much better start than last year having chosen the larger headsail. We were off! The wind was around 10 to 12 knots and died out by midnight. This first leg across Lake Wellington was large tacking, reaching Magellan Straits by midnight then a slow four hour sail through the canal. This is where Cygnet really comes into her own. Such a good, light weather performer. I think we were about mid fleet by 1 am.



They didn't want to wake me as we had been up since day break the previous morning cruising to the start. No more sleeping for me! No damage and a good first lesson for Apprentices. Now it doesn't look so easy! Always hard to sail with little to no wind.

Now is a good chance to show the Apprentices what the Cygnet could do in light airs. Having set the right tension and heel angle, the Cygnet doesn't fail to deliver, and we passed around 10 to 12 boats in our division up to the finish line over the next 10 hours.

What happened to #24 Cirrus our other Cygnet 20 In the race owned by Tim from Melbourne? I felt a little sad for his result taking him to surely be behind us because we passed so many. I called him as we finished, and he told me he finished 3 hours earlier unbelievable! I was in shock and happy for his result. Well done Tim. I would later find out why he did so well... that's another story! Having finished we check in and officials question our position throughout the race.

Adam and Race did a excellent job keeping track. We packed up Cygnet pleased with our performance 12th out of 38 in our division A. We left Sunday lunchtime, and arrive back at lunchtime Monday having stopped in at Goulburn for dinner and sleep on Cygnet. Having spent two days on the road and two days sailing with four nights on the Cygnet it was a great time. It was so much fun getting to sail and show off our Cygnet to my staff, and getting to know my Apprentices better... Adam and Race, really fine young men. I hope they enjoyed the experience as much as I did.

