NEWSLETTER
Tin Can Bay to Hervey Bay

By David Bradburn

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Tim Bardon #21 said he was going to do this year's 2022 Bay to Bay (ie. Tin Can Bay to Hervey Bay) trailer sailer race over 2 days (Saturday 30th April to Sunday 1st May). Myself #1, Will Hardcastle #11 also, agreed to join Tim and make a Cygnet Race/ Get Together of it. The road trip I have done so many times from Newcastle to Grafton stop over then Grafton to Tin Can Bay. Leaving around 5:00 pm and driving until 11:00 pm to midnight then leaving 6:30 am and arriving by lunch at 1:30 pm is quite comfortable. I enlisted Khara as a crew member who just did the 2nd leg circumnavigation of Tasmania trip on China Girl.

The Bay to Bay race was originally conceived by members of the Hervey Bay Sailing Club on 18 April 1980. The course length is approximately 87 km (54 miles) and takes place over two days with an overnight stop at Garry's Anchorage. Over 114 vessels arrived to compete in the inaugural event in 1981.

Hervey Bay
FINISH

Fraser Island

Garry's Anchorage

Tin Can Bay
START

Arriving at Tin Can Bay we immediately launched Cygnet so I could drive to Hervey Bay with the trailer then get the bus back to the start before starting the next day on Saturday.

Day 1, 21 nm

Cygnet got off to a good start and was neck to neck with Cirrus until Tim started to break off to port. I couldn't understand why he was doing that? I thought we should stick with the pack (we found out later why!). It wasn't long before Amethyst were flying an asymmetrical spinnaker. She passed us and most of the fleet too! Where's Tim going? Does he know the course?

Well after observing Tim from the side at 9 o'clock suddenly he was 10, 11, 12 o'clock straight ahead of us, seemed like 1-2 nm! Incredible! We just kept sailing the best we could with the #2 poled out, giving everyone a run for their money but could not hold them off without a spinnaker! Not to worry we were having fun being on the water in beautiful conditions. The first day's racing started at 11:30 am and finished around 4:00 pm and we all rafted up together to talk about the day and what we saw, a few drinks and nibbles.

Found out why Tim did so well beating a lot of boats with spinnakers. He sailed on the edge of the Straits thus avoiding the head on current, and picked up so much ground on everyone!

After this everyone retires to their own boat to prepare dinner, and an early night ready for the next day's racing.

Day 2, 24 nm

We generally motored to the start and talked banter with the other crews, what fun! This is a fun event and other crews take it in good spirit. We started first with the larger and faster classes later. It was very exciting to be amongst so many boats with some large skiffs slicing their way through the fleet that seemed somewhat out of control. No collisions that I saw!

The race was close for the three boats in front but began to spread out. Tim and Will were way in front and we just kept trying to do our best! We sailed along the Great Sandy Straits with the current and at one stage were doing over 8 kts! The 2 Cygnets were way in front but most of the small boats were way behind so I thought we mustn't be doing too badly! There was a bit of confusion as to the finish line but eventually we made it back by 2:00 pm. A quick sail to the yacht club marina with the customary running aground, keel up and onward to catch up with the others.

We all were keen to go to the Awards Ceremony to see how we went! Division A 1st Amethyst, 2nd Cirrus, 3rd Cygnet. We were all blown away and thought they mucked up 1st and 2nd as Tim by my reckoning did better. Will also went on to win the overall 1st place? (Did they know he had a spinnaker ?). It wasn't until a few days later they picked up that he did have a spinnaker and that now 1st Cirrus and 2nd Cygnet! (Will did advise them but didn't tick a box so overlooked). We stayed overnight at the Marina and headed off the next morning back to Newcastle dropping Khara off at Kew (near Port Macquarie). What a great trip and so much fun. Look forward to next year and hopefully more Cygnet 20s !