



**NATIONAL NEWSLETTER**



**FEBRUARY 1992**

**RL24 - It's YOUR kind of boat**

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## PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE.

Hi folks! Yes, it's still me in the hot seat. I thought there may have been a coup at the AGM, but no such luck. Nominations were thin on the ground! What's more Don & Ron are back too.

A summary of the AGM is included in this newsletter as some important issues were discussed. One decision, as you can see, was to keep the National Committee in Victoria. This decision was made due to the strength of the Vic. Association, and the lack of a strong member base in other states. We hope that during this year interstate owners will make a concerted effort to increase membership in their associations, and that the normal rotation of National Committee and Titles will continue in 1993.

The AGM decided to follow up the suggestion to hold next year's National RL24 Week at Sandgate, however this is not possible. Sandgate's secretary has given me some other leads in the Brisbane area which we are currently pursuing. You will appreciate the difficulties we face organising the titles from Victoria and any assistance members may be able to provide will be gratefully accepted!

Many thanks (?) for the vote of confidence shown by voting Don, Ron and me back into office. Also thanks to those who so willingly lent a hand last year. I hope your all back in line again waiting for the jobs to be issued.

See you soon. *Sue*

## NATIONAL RL24 WEEK.

This event proved to be a history making, nail biting National Titles! Yes, it was a draw in the drop keel division, even on count back!

Congratulations are due to both Ken Hackett (*Sasha*) and Simon Walsh (*Ohau Rua*), and of course their crews, for taking first place. Congratulations to Gerald Beck and sons for their success in the swing keel division in *Lowana IV*. This was their first titles and they are definitely a force with which to be reckoned.

Overall the sailing was exciting and close. Even further back in the fleet boats were being pipped on the line by fractions of a second. Many thanks, and congratulations, to all competitors. It was YOU who made the week such a success!

Although it was disappointing that the only interstate representation was by way of *The Sting's* crew (from Darwin and Sydney!), the week was definitely a success. It was great to welcome several new owners, and also several cruising RLs to National RL24 Week. Even some who have sold their RL24s couldn't stay away - The Mellors, ex *Jacqui*, the O'Neills, ex *Bumble Bee*, the Mahons, ex several 24s, and the Bowmans from *Lulu Too*.

Sail No.		Skipper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Points	Pos.
199	<i>OHAU RUA</i>	S WALSH	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	8.25	1
102	<i>SASHA</i>	K HACKETT	1	2	2	2	1	3	1	8.25	1
450	<i>WINGS</i>	C RAINEY	3	5	4	3	3	1	3	16.75	3
427	<i>LOWANA G</i>	M SHANNON	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	24.00	4
152	<i>PEGASUS</i>	B CASTLES	6	3	3	5	5	5	5	26.00	5
555	<i>THE STING</i>	L GRAHAM	5	8	7	7	6	10	7	40.00	6
97	<i>ENCOUNTER</i>	D SHELTON	11	7	6	8	9	6	10	46.00	7
307	<i>CASPER</i>	T. JONES	7	9	9	11	8	7	6	46.00	8
231	<i>SPLICE</i>	K GRIFFITHS	12	6	8	6	10	9	8	47.00	9
405	<i>BUNYIP</i>	R McCRINDLE	8	10	10	DNF	7	DNF	9	58.00	10
600	<i>COSMIC SEDSO</i>	R CORBEN	9	DNF	11	9	11	8	11	59.00	11
402	<i>LOWANA G</i>	D LEWIS	10	12	12	10	12	11	13	67.00	12
552	<i>CRACKER JACK</i>	A NEW	13	11	13	DNF	13	12	12	74.00	13

Sail No.	Class	Skipper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Points	Pos.
115	LOWANA #	G. BECK	1	1	1	DNS	1	1	1	4.50	1
103	TOUCANDOIT	B. DARE	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	13.00	2
207	SHAMROCK	P. GAUDION	3	DNS	DNS	1	2	2	3	15.75	3
BW316	FISHER OF MEN	P. BORG	4	3	3	DNF	4	DNS	4	23.00	4

New owners and those not racing were:

Les Brown (*Alicia II*) bravely crewing on *Bunyip*.

Alex & Margaret Maxwell. They got home and ripped the keel out of their yet un-named boat!

Barry & Shirley Dare. (*Toucandoit*) Winners of "Industrial Protection" products provided by James Shannon, for the Safety Award because "they probably will do it!"

John Browning (*The Swift*) who crewed in a couple of races prior to cruising.

Joan & Graeme Cox (*Shoreham Follies*) who enjoyed the cruising but not the weather.

Jenny & Graeme McDonald (*Solitaire*) Graeme successfully dodged a wild shot on the start boat.

Peter & Vicki Gaudion (*Shamrock*) Vicki says she helms, the girls crew and Peter tries to look busy.

Gerald Beck (*Lowana IV*) who sailed with sons Michael and Anthony.

And Jack & Joy Walsh who seem to have lost *Ohau Rua* to son Simon.

The cruising folk joined in the social fun, some crewed in a race or two and some cruised the Lakes for a few days; despite the Riviera of the South getting the weather wrong!

Most of the races were held in strong conditions - attested to by the fact that by the end of the series I only had ONE bruise! They all joined up sometime after the second race!

The social and entertainment side of the week was as exciting as the racing. In true RL24 fashion all members became involved in a Nautical Wedding, gnome "gnapping" with a ransom, and a wanton woman named "Fifi" who wanted Ron, from *Bunyip*, in her clutches! More about these later from my roving reporters!

Other notable events were:

- the launching of Ross & Jan Corben's brand new *Comic Sedso*,
- three attempts to test the self righting ability of the RL24,
- a crew member Ko'd on *Splice* resulting in the presentation of a voucher from Gippsland Base Hospital for one free treatment of a head injury,
- presentation of the Gardening Award to the Corbens. (This event will be judged annually so don't forget your plants next year!)
- and presentation of the Herald Endurance Swimming Certificate to 3 gallant lads following a pre race test sail in lousy weather.

The inaugural *Twin Peaks Race*, by popular demand now a permanent fixture on the titles program, was organised by our very own Commandant Castles. Run under some very dubious rules, and involving some equally dubious competitors, the race attracted a huge crowd, many later wishing they had entered!

The race included a running leg, (through tiger snake infested swamp), a motoring leg in which competitors had to fight off renegade crash boats, water bombs etc, a swimming leg, and a sailing leg during which all crew had to jump off the bow and return on board via the stern. All means, fair and foul were used by entrants and officials alike before *Fisher of Men* (Paul & Lianne Borg) was pronounced the winner!!!

# HOT GOSSIP (From National RL24 Week)

Thanks to Slave Shirley Voyeur and Dirty Dave Edwards for the following:

Steve Holligan and his fiancée, Anne had to leave the RL 24 National Championships early in order to complete the preparations for their marriage the following week. Unbeknown to them, they were not to be allowed to escape before a special nautical wedding had been performed. Preparations were 'under way' in great secrecy days before the event. Wedding invitations were sent out to each RL crew. Bow ties were made. Cakes were baked. A special version of the Wedding March was written and a special wedding ceremony was prepared including shackles instead of wedding rings. On the evening of the event all crews had early suppers and Anne and Steve could not understand why they had to sit outside their tent in the cold with Rod, Lee, Lloyd and Sue whilst everybody else was warm in the clubhouse. The reason was that the clubhouse was being transformed into a church. The choir of young girls was in place practising their singing and the wedding guests were gathering in all their finery. All the men being dressed in bow ties, tee shirts and thongs. The ladies in bonnets, tee shirts and thongs. Father Kevin O'Niell was at the ready with a towel for his robe, a tent bag for his head dress and a genuine dog collar which he borrowed for the evening from his dog Punk.

Imagine Anne and Steve's faces when they finally arrived at the clubhouse and the ceremony started. They were allowed to sit down whilst the special ceremony was performed. They promised to 'Luff and to Leech' each other etc. When the congregation was asked if any person had any due cause or impediment why the couple should not be shackled together, a Mr McCrindle of 'Bunyip' and Brighton stood up to warn the couple that marriage was the first step towards divorce. After the ceremony a wedding breakfast was held and photographs of the couple were taken with the guests. We were left wondering whether Anne and Steve would enjoy their real wedding as much, certainly there would not be as many laughs.

*Dave*

P.S. (From the Editor.)

Many thanks to Jenny McDonald who, at short notice and with little knowledge of the set up, played Fifi to perfection at the Presentation night! Last we heard RR was still trying to work out who started the whole business!

The "Mothers of the Bride" would also like to thank everyone for making THE wedding such a success. Special thanks to:

- \*The Sheltons for providing the Marriage Sea-tificate.
- \*Bruce Castles, who, dressed in work singlet, shorts, thongs and tails (with stubby in hand) gave Anne away to the "mongrel."
- \*LWYC for the loan of the start gun when Steve baulked at taking Anne as his "lawfully wedded skipper."
- \*Kevin Francis Patrick Shamus...O'Neill (ex Bumble Bee) - with such a name who better to play the Priest?
- \*Gillian Shannon for the telegrams which even her father was too embarrassed to read out!
- \*Fred Shannon for reading the telegrams. (The shock caused Kristina to splutter champagne on her clothes.)
- \*The boys for decorating the car, *Reflections* and anything else they could think of!
- \*Ken Griffiths, who having just survived the swimming leg of the Twin Peaks Race, filmed the event.
- \*Barb Castles for the wedding cake, complete with one of Pegasus' trophy tops.
- \*And lastly Anne & Steve for being such good, though some what surprised sports. They even repeated the rather dubious, nautical vows.... To shake out the sheets, to man the wench, to harden up etc. etc.

STOP PRESS: The real wedding, though more sedate, went very well. Congrats.

After the very successful splicing of Steve & Anne, the Entertainment Committee led by Salty Sue & Lucsious Lee decided that in view of the fact that Shirley was not wearing a shackle on her left hand, after 6 years as Randy Ron's galley slave, they would set her adrift from W'reckless Randy Ron for ever!

Remember? Reckless tried to sink a gas tanker in Western port last year, and had Shirley not fended off with her foot we would have been blown out of the water; and ask Keen Ken Hackett about Reckless in the race start, after much \*£!\*\*\*^£ and screaming at RR who was talking to a blonde in the boat. KK gave up hope of escaping with Sasha intact and waited eyes closed for the crunch that did not come.

RR & Lecherous Les (Alica 11) were sharing a tent and fending for themselves while Slave Shirley was home bound with a wrecked tooth. This chance was too good to miss; it is a well known fact that RR is attracted to Tall Beautiful Blondes (TBB). Remember the TBB at Hastings last year, the waitress he tried to introduce to SS on 2 occasions?

It just so happened that there was this TBB at the races at Marlay Pt., her name was FIFI, and she very kindly agreed to set SS free forever from her post as galley slave to RR and crew. Fifi had already seen the "Female Crew Wanted" notice on RR's tent, so she sent letters, cards and references and offered to take up any position! She even had a pair of her black, lacy nickers flown from Bunyip's spinnaker retrieving line!

Lech being a wise man and happily married to Barbara, was so disgusted he shoved off from RR's tent and fended for himself with the help of fellow crew mates Artful Annie & Dirty Dave.

That was a wise action to take as SS, kindly rescued from a train trip by Reliable Ruth Hackett, had just arrived on the scene. SS was met by Kindly Ken Griffiths who very kindly informed her that RR was causing so much trouble it was upsetting all the crews. He was too embarrassed to tell her what RR had done, and left that to a very guilty RR who had just come ashore. After giving SS a big hug and kiss RR told her a tall story about a girl called Fifi who was chasing him. He showed her the cards, letters and BL nickers. SS smiled sweetly and thought "he's at it again", and waited to be introduced to a TBB...

But, before this could happen SS found a dwarf called Morrie the Mower Man (complete with mower, 2 planters of petunias and a palm tree) had moved into her tent! Being too embarrassed to tell anyone, she put on a brave face when a ransom note was posted in the Yacht Club. The ransom being a bottle of Bundy Rum, which was guaranteed to grow hairs on the bum! The ransom was brought to SS by Morrie's distressed owner, Resourceful Ross and his mate Mainstay Mike, begging SS to help solve the mystery of Morrie's sudden disappearance by being an intermediary with the "Gnome Gnappers." SS agreed to do this and in no time Morrie was tearfully reunited with Res. Ross and family.

The bottle of Bundy Rum was seen disappearing into the tent of Mainstay Mike. You had better watch out at the next race, their secret weapon for Gunnell Bum could well be Bundy Rum!

Sugar sweet Shirley was so nice to RR at the Presentation Dinner, until Fifi appeared while RR was receiving the (very fitting) Toad Award. Fifi threw herself at RR and dragged him into the Ladies Head. This was too much for SS. She clawed at Fifi calling her a Wanton Woman for want'g her old , sugarless daddy.

Res. Ross came to the rescue with the sad news that Morrie had been gnapped again, from right under his nose, more tears, then Fifi handed a letter of explanation to Res. Ross to be read to all present. Fifi and SS were then seen to be talking sweetly to each other before RR and Fifi had a fond farewell in the morning sun on Fifi's yacht.

It is said that Morrie stowed away on Fifi's yacht as Res. Ross made him walk the plank for twice deserting ship.

Ive known some funny men, it's true  
 Given the sort of work I do  
 But none were funnier or of a more geriatric hue  
 Than those who are of the Bunyip crew.

There was Randy Ron & Kissing Kate  
 Dirty Dave & Lecherous Les, his mate  
 But it t'was Ron Mc C had life by the short & curley  
 He was down here alone free of Shirley.

I fell in love with Captn Ron McCrindle  
 Tall, slim & charming- he appeared to be single.  
 So to his tent I went with romantic intent,  
 Romance? - he was as romantic as wet cement.

So I hid myself away from sight  
 And worked on a plan to be in his tent one nite,  
 But alas - it should have been no surprise  
 His tent was always full of guys.

It was said one day I lost my nickers  
 Around the camp there were winks & snickers  
 But if the truth be known about those drawers  
 Ron, we all know they were yours.

I saw them take Bunyip down the track  
 And heave her in the water  
 I saw Ron back his trailer down  
 I saw the carnage and slaughter.  
 And on the ramp after the race  
 During which he hadn't gone faster  
 I heard the cries, the anguished cries  
 " PissOff, Captain Disaster"  
 And just when I thought I had him cold, and into my arms  
 he'd curl,  
 A solitary car comes down the track bearing a solitary girl  
 And as it drives up thru the camp, Rons face becomes unsurly.  
 Because out of the car, with a lovely smile, steps his long  
 awaited Shirley.

ANON. (This arrived by Intergalatic Shuttle Services)

## RHYLL WEEKEND.

FEBRUARY 22nd. & 23rd.

The Shannon family have again invited members to a weekend at their house at Rhyll, Phillip Island. This is a great weekend of family fun, starting with a race on Saturday (approx. 1.30 pm.) for the coveted "Olney's Gong." This magnificent trophy, along with the prestigious "Piddling Little Trophy", will be presented at a BBQ at the Shannon's that night.

You can sleep overnight at the Shannon's; either in your boat or pitch a tent on the adjacent, vacant block. Meat will be provided for the BBQ, but bring a salad, fruit or desert, and drinks.

On Sunday the Victorian AGM will be held, (LATE morning!) prior to a cruise or drive to Silverleaves Beach for a picnic lunch. We hope to see most members there so give one of the committee a ring if you are not sure about directions.

RL24 OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 8.1.1992

1 MOTIONS:

1. Life Membership for Bruce Castles.

Bruce Castles nominated for appointment of Honorary Life Membership of the RL24 Owners' Association of Australia. Moved K Troy, Seconded B Troy. Carried.

2. Clause 6 Class Rules: Keel - Minimum weight 100 kg.

The shape unrestricted provided that, in the case of Swing Keel hulls, keels manufactured and fitted after 8th January 1992, must be capable of being completely housed within the confines of a centreboard case whose dimensions shall not exceed those of the case as supplied with original, standard, factory manufactured Mark III & IV hulls.

Moved J Wood, Seconded B Castles. Not Carried.

2 CLASS RULES & CONSTITUTION:

The following appendices are to be added to the Class Rules and Constitution -

- i. This meeting recommends that in RL24 class regattas the swing keel division shall be restricted to yachts whose centre cases are as originally constructed prior to 1992 and that no device be fitted to close the centre case slot.
- ii. This meeting recommends that in the RL24 class regattas keels shall not be lifted beyond a point which leaves exposed 600mm vertical depth of keel, and that a locking device be fitted to prevent raising beyond this point.

3 INTERSTATE COMMITTEES & MEMBERSHIP:

The meeting discussed the lack of interstate interest, probably due to the present economic climate.

4 1993 NATIONAL TITLES:

Due to lack of interest from interstate, the meeting decided to retain the National Executive in Victoria, and investigate holding the Titles in Queensland in 1993.

5 ROB LEGG YACHTS CO:

Committee to investigate the future of the RL24 mouldings, and if there is no commercial interest the Committee be authorised to spend up to \$1000 to purchase same. Carried.

6 NATIONAL COMMITTEE ELECTIONS:

The existing committee re-elected for 1992/93. The Committee was thanked for encouraging new members into the series, particularly in the swing keel division.

The meeting closed at 9.25pm.

## HUFF & PUFF RACE (Geelong Trailable Y.C)

To be held on SAT 21 St MARCH '92 and, with 3 sailing & 3 running legs, you had better get into training now. Last year the CASTLE 650s dominated - don't let this happen again. Let SUE & LLOYD know if you are interested in entering your boat, or running, so that we can get a couple RL teams entered.

I need *YOUR* news for the *MAY NEWSLETTER* by mid APRIL. I am desperate for interstate news, please send it to Sue Graham. 12 Cleland St Ringwood East. 3135.

## THE RL24 - A RESTRICTED DEVELOPMENT CLASS.

During RL24 week at Lake Wellington I met a number of relatively new owners. While yarning with these new enthusiasts it occurred to me that there is quite a development story, or RL24 heritage, that would give new RL lovers a more complete appreciation of the class. i.e. where we have come from.

Took delivery of "Sasha" in March 1973. At that time everyone was sailing this new trailer-sailer with the rig recommended by the designer. The RL24 was promoted as the fastest TS on the water. This was probably correct. One of our closest rivals was another new design at that time, the Timpeny 670. It is indicative of how our class has progressed compared to the strictly one-design Timpeny - in 1973 they were comparable, in 1992 there is just no comparison.

The first significant development seemed at the time a retrograde step. In a far from unanimous vote the association membership agreed (I think in 1977) to ban the use of a trapeze for crew. Yes, for the first 4 or 5 years we raced with one on the wire! Many of us thought "how are we ever going to keep this race-horse upright without a trapeze hand?" The answer of course lay in scrapping the original rig concept of a stiff, over rotating mast and going for a flexible mast that could flatten the mainsail shape and so de-power in the heavy stuff. The transition period was something of a learning process and problems of excessive heeling, rounding up etc led to other innovations e.g. the original pivoting rudder gave way to a longer, more efficient dagger rudder.

During the seventies Rob Legg also elected to improve the comfort of the boat, leading to the Mark II design. Quality of finish of this model was improved and gunwale shape flattened for more comfortable hiking. A heavier and larger centerboard was also available. At this time people were experimenting with ballast as part of the reaction to losing the righting moment of the trapeze hand. Some bolted lead into the bilge, others went for heavier plates. A few tried adding area to the plate in an effort to improve pointing ability. It is generally felt that most experiments with ballast and swing keel shape/weight did little to improve performance.

In 1980 Peter Yeomans enlisted the help of a young sailmaker from Norths (Michael Coxon) to have a good look at the sail plan and design a "winning set of sails". Michael leant heavily on his skiff background and came up with a fully battened, loose foot sail, also altering the traditional Main/Jib area ratio. This proved a quantum leap forward and together with Peter's subsequent introduction of a drop keel lifted the RL24 performance significantly. Super tight rig tensioning also became fashionable after Yeomans successes.

Meanwhile Rob had altered the topsides and introduced the Mark III. The under water shape remained fixed of course, but higher freeboard was aimed at enhancing comfort. Design and layout progression through MkII and MkIII stages resulted in a yacht with a higher cockpit floor and thus more quarter berth room, a moulded double floor in the cabin and an altogether more comfortable and better finished product. Keeping up with developments, the factory then offered a drop



keel option as Mark IV.

Part of the big advancements in the early 80's was the push towards minimum weight. After all the RL is "just a big dinghy" - lower weight must lead to easier planing. And so the introduction of "exotic" materials to get down to the class minimum hull weight. (454 kg). (Bunk cushions, floors boards, porta potti etc, had long since been left on shore for important events).

But is a 454 Kg hull faster than a 500 Kg hull? Current thinking is that there is only a very marginal difference in some conditions. However, although most Mark I and Mark II hulls probably weigh in at around 500 Kg, later hulls may go as high as 600 KG and may suffer in planing conditions. Somewhere in the mid 80's spinnaker handling received some attention and spinnaker chutes were introduced. Pole handling and stowage has also had its share of ideas - the very latest "pole launcher" fitted by former Flying 15 types looks good.

More recently there have been further developments with the sail plan. Keeping, of course, within the 20 sq.m. total area and 8.3 m. mast height, plans have evolved with yet larger mainsail/smaller jibs. Thinking is that these rigs could be faster off the wind. So far they have gone well but results are inconclusive - usually they are on a boat that is well sailed whatever sail plan is used.

There have been other more isolated development paths taken from time to time.

The wishbone rig was introduced in Queensland and tried on a few boats. This sailboard inspired arrangement seems to provide heavy weather advantages but has not yet shown a dramatic overall performance benefit.

Before the class rules were tightened to control deck modification, one radically designed RL appeared with an unrecognisable topsides profile. This design aimed at improving crew hiking position to enable maximum righting moment.

There is naturally a great proliferation of rig controls aimed at varying sail shape for various conditions. You may see RL's with sophisticated hydraulics for rig tension, keel stepped masts, backstays, running backstays, checkstays, super powerful boom vang, etc, etc.

There have been moves to change our class rules to allow such things as:-

- . a genoa for improved light weather performance.
- . an additional flatter spinnaker for improved reaching.

However there have been very few changes to our original rules and that is a great strength of our class.

And what of the future? Who knows?

Our 20 year history has shown that our restricted development rules have just about got it right - 20 year old hulls can still win championships, RL's can still win in open competition with modern designs. We are still among the fastest around and guarantee our crews an adrenalin rush.

KEN HACKETT.

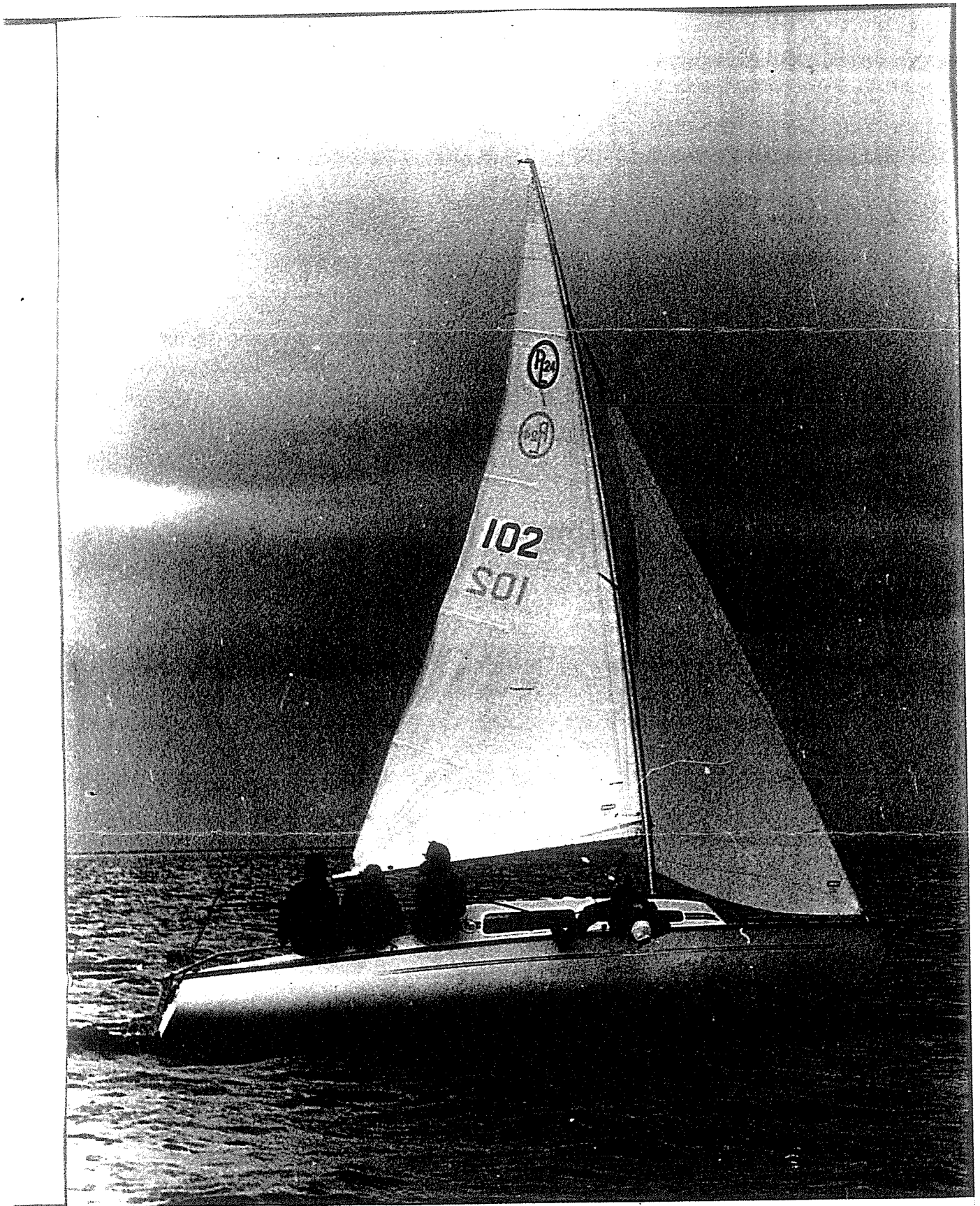


Photo: Sasha in 1977 - The new flexible rig was put on in anticipation of the trapeze going out. Note old style rudder. Mast rigged with ultra long spreaders, lowers, backstay.