



**RL - it's YOUR kind of boat**

April 2012

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## **“COSMIC SEDSO” and “SLYFOX” Win RL 24 Nationals**

The RL24 national championships were this year hosted by the Royal Motor Yacht Club Toronto on the waters of beautiful Lake Macquarie in NSW from the 8<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> Jan. The event attracted a competitive fleet of both drop keels and swing keels from all eastern states. The venue was a favourite for both the sailors and the ground crew, with the skippers and crew enjoying excellent sailing conditions and the land lubbers were wrapped that they could view all the racing from the shore. The race committee provided us with great courses and the yacht club was excellent for after race socializing.

After trying for 28 years Paul Corben on “Cosmic Sedso” has finally won his first RL24 (drop keel) national championship. This year Corben teamed up with Darryn Dyer on mainsheet John Knight on jib and kite sheets and Rob Telfer as forward hand. Corben showed he was going to be in contention after winning two of the three short invitation races on the first day. Corben won both heats on the second day of sailing, the first time he had taken out a heat at the nationals in 28 years of competition.

After four heats had been completed Corben had three firsts and a third with Mick Shannon and sons on Lowana VI not giving an inch.

Heat five was a long distance race from Toronto around Pulba Island and back again, this was the heaviest race of the regatta. After a shocking start Corben had to play catch up all day. Lowana VI had a good start and was well out in front with Simon Vaughan on Lowana V right behind, Legacy and Dodgy Vindaloo were also doing well at the pointy end of the fleet.

As the fleet edged closer to the lee half of the Lake and the water became a little flatter Cosmic Sedso started to make some ground. By the time Cosmic was three quarters of the way around Pulba Island she was about four boat lengths from the lead, this was where Cosmic decided to stay out wide so as not to sail into the lee shore of Pulba Island while Lowana VI sailed in closer and ran out of wind. This put Cosmic into the lead which she was able to hold until the finish.

Corben went onto win 7 out of 9 heats and took the title from Mick Shannon on Lowana VI with Simon Vaughan on Lowana V ending up 3<sup>rd</sup>.

In the Swing Keels Andrew Pike on “Slyfox” sailing with his two sons Michael and Jason and Michael’s mate David Corbett won their first RL24 (swing keel) national championship. Andrew has been methodically improving his boat over the last few years and has gained some good results in local races in Brisbane and the Bay to Bay race. He consolidated resent performances in Qld by sailing well at Toronto to take out the title with 6 wins, 2 seconds and a third, from Scott Jones on “Shady Lady” and Andrew Turnbull on “Ya Mum”. “Slyfox” also received the award for the best presented boat at this years event. Next year the RL24 class will celebrate 40 years of national championships, I am not aware of any other trailer sailor class that has continually had national championships for a 40 years.

The 40<sup>th</sup> nationals will be hosted by Albury Wodonga Yacht Club on Lake Hume from 7<sup>th</sup> January to 11<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The RL24 owners association would like to encourage all RL24 owners to come and celebrate this milestone, we understand that not everyone is into serious racing so there will be a cruising division with no spinnakers and you can just camp on your boat if you wish. This is a great chance to meet others with a similar interest and enjoy social sailing or serious racing.

From the Editor....

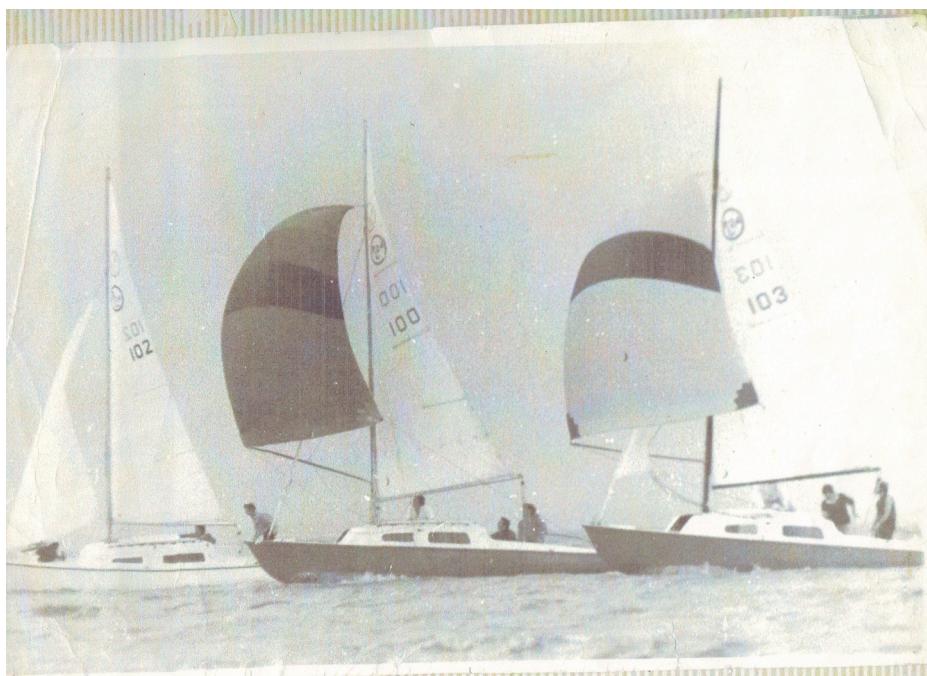
## Cosmic Corbens

\*This is my fifth go at writing this piece and if it's no good this time, well bad luck. Darryn will kill me if the newsletter doesn't go out this week. So if the self indulgent memories of the newsletter editor are of little interest to you, I suggest you head straight to the final paragraph.

My first recollection of Ross Corben is of a 10ft tall bearded bloke at a place called Barmera in South Australia. I was about six and about a dozen of us kids were jumping off his shoulders into the hotel swimming pool. I only had one go....a big ballywhacker.....I thought I was going to die. I know I would have met Ross earlier, probably at the previous Nationals at Lake Wellington or even before, but that's my earliest memory.

I do remember Tarya, Ross's daughter, from Lake Wellington (no, not because of THAT, that was much later ☺) and his son Tim. Tarya because she would knock around with my twin sister, Gillian, and the RAAF planes flew "RIGHT OVER THEIR HEADS" and Tim because he and Jim Castles had a birthday party and we made cakes out of Lake Wellington mud and threw them at this brick building and I got a smack on the bum for it. To this day I don't know why I got that smack, no-one else did and there were heaps of us doing it. But I digress.

I also remember Ross from Barmera because he had the deep green boat and if you hung around for long enough after the races you'd score a soft drink and some cake. I did quite a deal of hanging around.



**Figure 1** Sasha (Ken Hackett), Sundance (Bruce Castles) and Timtarri (Ross Corben) were three of the very early RLs in Victoria.

My next active recollection is three years after Barmera at Lake Hume. We didn't go to Sandgate (1979) or Speers Point (1980) I imagine because the distance was a bit much for 8 kids (to that point). I know there were events in between, RL weekends, state titles, and Marlay Point races, but they all seem to merge into one. At Lake Hume both Dad and Ross were running new boats. Dad had the deep red Lowana IV, and Ross had a beautiful green Talitha. Side by side they were without a doubt the prettiest RLs I've seen, and it is to be noted that both Ross and Dad have gone with white boats since. I probably should have learnt something from that.

Lake Hume is where I first remember Paul "Duckabomb" Corben. I'll come back to the nickname. Paul was something of a disappointment really. He spent most of the time sleeping and he couldn't spend too much time in the sun. Lake Hume was a simply fantastic place. It was as hot as Hades and we kids spent the entire week swimming in the lake, and because it was fresh we didn't have to have showers at the end of the day. It's a while since I've looked forward to a Nationals like I'm looking forward to these ones coming.

Now Ross Corben is to say the least a unique character. I remember he would ring our place and whoever answered would talk for a bit then yell "DA AAAD, IT'S RO OOOSSSS". Mum would put Dad's dinner back in the oven and say "See you in an hour or so" and Dad would head off to the study. Funnily enough, when Ross rings me today, Kristy will say "See ya James" and I'll head out to the balcony for an hour or so. The reason for this is that Ross is a particularly interesting bloke to talk to and he has a special talent for calling a spade a one-person-operated, manually-controlled, foot-powered implement of simple and robust yet adequately efficacious ligno-metallic composition designated primarily though by no means exclusively for utilization on the part of hourly-paid operatives deployed in the agricultural, horticultural, or constructional trades or industries, as the case may be, for purposes of carrying out such excavational tasks or duties as may from time to time be designated by supervisory grades as being necessary, desirable, expedient, apposite, or germane with regard to the ongoing furtherance of the task or objective in hand or, on the other hand, underfoot.

Loquacity aside, Ross is a terribly generous bloke with his time and his expertise. He knows about stuff and is always ready to benefit his friends with his varying areas of expertise. I remember an occasion when Dad and I were trying to fix an electrical problem on his trailer. In fact we weren't even trying as we had no idea where to start. In a rare moment of genius I mentioned to Dad that Ross and Bruce Castles were having a cuppa not 100m up the road. Dad knew exactly what I was talking about and we trundled the trailer up to where they were and recommenced scratching our heads. Within 30 seconds Dad and I were seated sipping Nescafes and Ross and Bruce were hard at it under the trailer. It must have been a complicated problem because it took two cups of coffee before they were finished.

One thing, though, about Ross was that he was never a terribly competitive yachtie. This is not to his discredit. I sailed with him a few times and one could quickly see that he was never going to trouble the engravers. The reason for this is quite simple. He knew all the theory and possessed all the skill but he never was able to muster the single minded intensity required to win a National title. There were sea eagles to look at, various attributes of makes of yacht to talk about, variations of names of opposing boats to be made up, and the pros and cons of various types of timber for the various tasks performed, oh and of course food to eat.

Another thing about Ross is that he is a father. Tim's the oldest. He's living in Norway (I think) and doing something scientific. The aforementioned Tarya (Hi Meggs if you're reading this) is living in Melbourne, married to Constable Todd and mother of a couple. Then there's Duckabomb. The term "duckabomb" is an old Shannon term used to describe flatulence of significant volume. Its application to Paul came about on a drive (yes, flatulence and driving, a poor mix) and my little brother Charlie and Paul had perhaps had too many of those sausages that they serve up before the Marlay Point race. What resulted was an hour or so of two little boys in the back seat communicating through their bottoms and giggling hysterically the entire trip. I'm not sure poor Mum ever really recovered from that. It's a reputation young Paul has found difficult to shake although I think he remains in some respects quite proud of it. As he should.

Paul's racing career has been somewhat chequered. Really, he should have been a far better yachtsman from a far younger age. As a baby only a few weeks old, he sailed the Whitsunday Islands with his family for 3 months (I still can't believe you managed that one, Jan) in Timtarri, their first RL24. At about age 4, he was competing in overnight races and

being sent to bed for hallucinating about cars driving in the water, only for a car to actually come driving through the fleet depriving poor Ross of the last remaining shred of authority he had on the boat. He did a short stint on the foredeck but he was in the office in no time and skipper by about age 14 (Dad still won't let me helm, I had to buy me own).

Now this is where things got a bit tough for Paul because he was fiercely competitive, but he'd inherited his Dad's concentration span. Now racing the relatively modern Cosmic Sedso, year after year he showed flashes of brilliance and found himself at the pointy end of the fleet quite often, but one always had the feeling that if one snapped away at him for long enough, he'd make an error and you'd sneak through. Never was this better illustrated than at Paynesville one year he (in Cosmic Sedso) and I (in Warrigal) took a flyer out to the right on the first beat and rounded the top mark minutes ahead of the rest of the fleet. As we headed down the first reach in an unassailable position Paul called out something to the effect of "Let's not mess with each other and just concentrate on us both beating the rest". I didn't respond (Pete Hackett had his hand on my throat and would have throttled me if I had) but Paul went on to put it in the drink at the next mark in relatively benign conditions.

Now it might appear to this point that I'm just sledging the kid and I guess I am, Lord knows there's plenty to sledge. But there is in competitive sport, whichever sport you are talking about, a necessary quality to success. Coaches, at least the good ones, talk about it all the time, it's a common theme in biographies, and it's the single quality that will overcome lack of natural talent every time (which is not to say Paul lacks natural talent, just that this particular quality is more important). That quality is persistence.

Paul has persisted and persisted and persisted in RLs and his victory at Toronto this January past is defined primarily by that persistence. It is an accomplishment of which he should be enormously proud. I know that I am proud of him (as patronizing as that may read) and I conclude by saying, again perhaps a bit paternalistically, that he is an absolute credit to his parents, Jan and Ross.

Congratulations, Duckabomb.

# **INVOICE**

**RL24 OWNERS ASSOC. OF AUSTRALIA.**  
A 0045403P ABN 75 905 426 014

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE RL 24 OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA FOR THE 2012/2013 FINANCIAL YEAR ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR PREFERRED MEMBERSHIP STATUS BY TICKING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

**FULL MEMBERSHIP** .....\$30.00

**ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP** .....\$15.00

PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHEQUE PAYABLE TO: RL24 OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA AND RETURN IT WITH THIS INVOICE TO: **MR. PAUL CORBEN, HON. SEC/TREASURER, RL24 OWNERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc., 2 Ross Street, BAIRNESDALE Vic 3875**

## **MEMBERSHIP DETAILS**

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IF YOU HAVE DISPOSED OF YOUR RL 24 COULD YOU PLEASE ADVISE THE ASSOCIATION OF THE NEW OWNERS NAME AND ADDRESS SO THAT AN INVITATION TO JOIN THE ASSOCIATION CAN BE FORWARDED.