



The Future is Assured

XXXX Sail Paradise 2012

Southport Yacht Club's XXXX Sail Paradise regatta has again confirmed itself to be on the cusp of becoming a major offshore and inshore series in Queensland in the years to come.

This year's event, which attracted more than 40 entries, was re-scheduled to March in the hope of finding more favourable sailing conditions, and that certainly was the case, except for one day where a gale was forecast and racing was cancelled. However, as is so often the case these days, the forecast wasn't quite right for the Gold Coast. Winds reached 40 knots at Cape Moreton, some 50 nm to the north, however, the breeze struggled to top 18 knots off the Gold Coast's beaches.

Even so, with this series abridged to four days of racing there was still no disputing who were the worthy winners. While the competition was close in the IRC class between Roland Dane's recently purchased Corby 36 *Jessandra II* and Peter Harburg's *Blackjack Too*, consistency paid for *Jessandra II*. She won five of her seven starts on corrected time and finished second to *Blackjack Too* in the two remaining races. Matt Perc y's *Alacrity* sailed under the SYC burgee was third overall.

This success got Dane's entrée into the upper echelon of ocean racing off to a great start. Better known for his exploits in the management of the Team Vodafone Australian V8 Championship winning motorsport team, Dane showed a similar ability on the water by pulling together a team of top sailors for XXXX Sail Paradise, including Michael Spies as sailing master. *Jessandra II* now has both the Grand Prix Division and the Audi IRC Australian Championship at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week in August in its sights.

XXXX Sail Paradise was also the venue for the SB3 Queensland Championship, and here it was the class's founder in Australia, Rod Jones, who claimed the trophy sailing *Audi Sunshine Coast*. It was a great result for the talented Jones who would normally have Olympian and World Championship winning sailor Glenn Bourke steering the boat. *Black Rat* (Troy Forrest) from the Sunshine Coast was second while Victorian sailor Nick Bez claimed third sailing *A-Play*.

Without doubt the star of the show on the courses that were set adjacent to the Gold Coast's magnificent beaches was Sean Langman's ORMA 60 trimaran, *Team Australia*. Crowds on the beaches and residents in highrise buildings watched in awe and wonder as the high-speed 'pickle fork' blasted along the shoreline at between 20 and 30 knots.

Langman used XXXX Sail Paradise as a warm-up for his successful assault on the multihull race record in the Brisbane to Gladstone yacht race, which was staged at Easter.

'I can't tell you how beneficial being at XXXX Sail Paradise was for us in our preparations for the Gladstone race,' said Langman. 'We learned so much about sail handling techniques, but more importantly we quickly realised that we would need eight crew, not six, for the big race.'

This year XXXX Sail Paradise was open to off-the-beach dinghies and catamarans as well as offshore keelboats and multihulls. It was a formula that was well received by all competitors, so there is little doubt that in future events the regatta will be open to the full spectrum of sailboats.

Apart from being sponsored by XXXX, Sail Paradise was supported by Gold Coast City Council, Gold Coast Tourism and Club Marine.

For more information on XXXX Sail Paradise go to the regatta website, www.sailparadise.com.au or contact Bronwen Ince at Southport Yacht Club: (07) 5591 3500.

