

*For Immediate Release*  
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## Mass exodus as boaties head to Airlie Beach Race Week

While Covid continues to wreak havoc in parts of Australia, Whitsunday Sailing Club (WSC) officials and members are looking forward to welcoming a record number of competitors and their supporters to the 33rd running of Airlie Beach Race Week (ABRW), to be held from 12-19 August in the stunning Whitsunday Islands.

“So far we have a record 156 boats entered and some of the interstateers are already in town. We remain hopeful that the current situation will not end up restricting those who are in lockdown at present,” Event Chairman, Ross Chisholm says.

Victorians suffered lockdown for a period but are free now, and the sailors among them are champing at the bit to head to Airlie Beach. One is Royal Geelong Yacht Club’s Commodore, John Kint, who will race in the 53-strong Cruising Division.

“We are free from lockdown and itching to go racing again,” says Kint, who discovered the joys of Airlie Beach Race Week back in 1994. “We came back in 2016, 2017, and 2018, so this will be our fourth. Coming back has something to do with the people – and the sunshine.”

His yacht is ‘Bundaberg’, an elegant 17.4 metre Adams/Radford design. “I had it specially built; it went into my back yard in 1987 and did its first ocean race in 1988,” Kint recalls of the yacht he has raced in Sydney and Melbourne Hobarts and other offshore races. This alongside the northern circuit of regattas and cruising to and from destinations, showing the yacht’s versatility.

“Three of us will sail the boat up. At present our first stop will be Yeppoon, as NSW is in lockdown. We’re very buoyant and upbeat. Our crew is dying to get to Airlie. We have 18 crew that will be used in rotation - that’s how keen we all are to go,” Kint finishes.

John and Kim Clinton are two of the lucky Sydney escapees racing in the Cruising Division. “We’re very lucky, because we left Sydney at the end of May. We had a booking at Gold Coast City Marina to have a rig check and the antifouling done. We always go there; they are good in every sense,” John states.

The Clintons and their Beneteau Oceanis 523, Holy Cow!, are popular well known fixtures at Airlie Beach Race Week Whitsundays Festival of Sailing where John and his fellow band mates from The Wolverines have often performed.

“We sheltered at Hamilton Island and we’re off to Stonehaven. It’s one of our favourite places to anchor where we can still get internet and TV - and get to a bottle shop without too much trouble!”

They have a variety of reasons for repeatedly returning to Airlie Beach Race Week. “The people at Whitsunday Sailing Club are very good to deal with and very positive, so we want them to have a good regatta.

“We’ve sailed at Porto Cervo, Thailand, Tahiti and other places, but some of the nicest waters are in our own backyard, in the Whitsundays. There are lots of islands to visit, deep water, whales and lots of other things that make sailing there interesting. We love it there.

“Airlie Beach offers great marinas – we usually stay at Port of Airlie – you have a five minute walk to the Club, restaurants and accommodation. There are lots of tradies who are great to deal with and happy to help you too.”

The growing Cruising Division numbers represent Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia, and NSW.

Tourism Whitsundays Chief Executive Officer, Tash Wheeler, said The Whitsundays is excited to welcome and host a record number of entrants to Airlie Beach Race Week, Whitsundays Festival of Sailing in August.

# MEDIA RELEASE



**THE HEART**  
*The Whitsundays*  
**OF EVENTS**

“The Whitsundays offer some of the world’s best sailing, with a combination of clear turquoise waters, steady breezes, secluded coves and fringing reefs The Whitsundays is the Heart of Sailing,” Ms Wheeler said.

“Airlie Beach Race Week has attracted entrants from all over the country, and with seven days and nights of high-profile entertainment and social activities, we are thrilled to hear that already over 150 boats are entered.”

Airlie Beach Race Week Whitsundays Festival of Sailing is supported by the Queensland Government through Tourism and Events Queensland and is a feature on the It’s Live! in Queensland events calendar.

As entries do not close until Monday 2 August, there is still plenty of time to enter online at: [www.abrw.com.au](http://www.abrw.com.au)

For a full calendar of events and information: [www.whitsundaysailingclub.com.au](http://www.whitsundaysailingclub.com.au) or by contacting the sailing manager at: [sailing@whitsundaysailingclub.com.au](mailto:sailing@whitsundaysailingclub.com.au)

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**About Tourism Whitsundays:** *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

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