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They're off ... as dusk descends the Rudder Cup fleet heads out of Auckland. Photo by Waitemata Woodys.

Epic Rudder Cup Re-Run Tests Fleet

By Jason Prew

On December 14th, 2018, 15 launches roared down the harbour starting the Rudder Cup commemorative race for only the 3rd time in 100 years. Entries ranged from American-designed speedsters to Kiwi workboats.

The handicaps were sealed and handed over after the race started. The usual pre-race banter was being fired around by the four entries berthed outside the Squadron.

My Girl was sporting some new cockpit clears that had been fitted only moments before. *Meola* was trying to figure if she had more room to hoist extra flags and sails to help out. The *Trinidads* were cool and calm in the confidence this was a walk in the park. Drew Miller was lubricating the crew to ensure a smooth start.

The race proper started at exactly 7pm outside the RNZYS and was announced by an American Civil War replica cannon whose boom was enough to shake the Westhaven precinct back to life!

The racers all started with various degrees of full throttle and diesel smoke. *Waitangi* led the charge down the harbour – and all the way round the course – followed by *Rorqual* and *My Girl*. *Lady Margaret* was at full

throttle not far behind. The rest of the fleet were closely packed as they rounded north head. By the time the Rangi light was abeam, most of the entries had calmed down and set a more realistic state of throttle. Aboard *My Girl* we settled at 10.5 knots in the setting sun.

The return trip was a different story. The wind was calm, but we were treated to a lightning show of spectacular proportions and torrential rain showers.

After a particularly close strike to port and one almost immediately following to starboard, I was asked by a concerned crew member what the strategy for dealing with a strike on the helmsman was. At this time Deano had his head well out the hatch navigating us home. I attempted an amusing response, but was a wee bit concerned it might be a reality. We slowed a bit and followed *Lady Margaret's* stern-light back towards Auckland as visibility varied from zero to slightly more.

After this I gave up the helm and fell into a deep sleep, woken as we approached North Head, finishing 3rd on line behind *Lady Margaret*,

My Girl had only been launched four weeks earlier and passed her grueling sea trial with flying colours.

Lady Margaret powers away towards the Gulf. Ivor Wilkins Photo.



Royal Falcon Embarks on Long Voyage Back to Full Health and Vigour

By Nathan Herbert

CYA member Steve Pople is a man on a mission. Purchasing the 38ft bridgedecker *Royal Falcon* in 2016, after a short period on pile moorings at Panmure, he hauled her out for a keen, but restrained and basic fix-up of

cabin rot and softness in her decks. Well, in the footsteps of the 'eight-week' *Lucinda* restoration and the *My Girl* job, *Royal Falcon* is being completely rebuilt from the keel up!

Built by Cox and Filmer in 1934 and launched as

Royal Falcon, she began life only 32ft long and with a wheelhouse, but no dodger, or cockpit protection.

A feature of many early Auckland boating photographs, by 1938 she had been extended to 38ft with a new cabin style. Fast-forward through the decades where she was variously involved in Gulf cruising and Bay of Islands game fishing, she finally ended up semi-derelict in Panmure and sold with deck grip pads strategically placed over rotten areas!

I first met Steve at *My Girl*, when I had been helping Jason Prew copper rivet new steamed ribs in. Steve visited us for a chat and a look-see to get a feel for what is involved in working on a classic launch. It was refreshing to meet somebody who had saved a classic from 'rotten row' and was realistic about the work ahead.

In light of the soft areas in her deck and cabin coamings, *Royal Falcon* was hauled out

at the shed of Dave Patterson (Leader Boatbuilders) for repairs and some new ribs. Well, area after area was removed until Steve realised the best course of action was full replacement of decks and replacement or repair of all broken ribs, fastenings and structural timbers.

Her intriguing Commer TS3 diesel engine has been removed to be refitted eventually, and as *RF* sits just now, she has beautiful new panelled bulkheads and solid keel floors, engine beds and other minor planks replaced. Dave Patterson's outstanding expertise in wooden boat construction is well demonstrated.

This is going to be a really beautiful and seriously well built classic when she is relaunched. With a brand new bridgedeck cabin fitted she will combine modern spaces and convenience with classic good looks. A fantastic addition to our classic fleet, keep up the good work Steve.



Photo by Nathan Herbert.

*My Girl strikes
a serene pose
before the
Rudder Cup
start. Waitemata
Woodys Photo*



Rudder Cup continued ...

Prize giving was held later that evening, Brett on *Sterling* picking up overall honours. A well-deserved effort! The post race debrief was full of tall stories and merriment, a great deal of fun was had re-running the race verbally. Rumour has it

one entry rounded Sail Rock twice, maybe a tad unsure they had.

A huge thanks goes out to our sponsors, particular mention to Manson Anchors and the Riverhead Tavern for their generosity. Thanks to the Rudder Cup committee for pulling off an event to remember.