

## ***Club Cruise Report***

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Melbourne Cup 2006 : Maribyrnong River

### **Melbourne Cup On Water**

I think it would be almost enough to say that this was a great long weekend and that a fantastic time was had by all who went on the trip.

Parking arrangements prior to the trip were pretty flimsy to say the least until Paul stepped in and gave them a professional touch. Paul's good work meant that we had a secure area for parking trailers and boats and that we were all able to launch and get together in relative comfort before heading off. Our thanks to Scott at the Anchorage Marina for all his help both on the day of launching and when we came back to recover the boats. This is a great venue to launch at and, although the ramp is a bit tricky to recover from, it is just possible to get the boats back on at high tide. I can see we will be making use of these facilities more often in the future.



Once everyone was launched (8 Whitley's in total) we tied up to the floating wharf while the trailers were parked and then with Don as leader and Paul as TEC, headed out onto the bay to have a look at the oil rig moored offshore from Altona. We followed the main channel markers out and then turned to starboard for a run to the rig.

The rig itself was a very impressive sight towering well above anything else and dwarfing our boats. The rig turned out to be a small exploration drilling rig mounted on a submersible carry ship.



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After a slow cruise round the rig, stomachs started to rumble and it was off to find a calm spot for lunch. At Paul's suggestion we all went across the bay to Station Pier to see if the sandy beach was sheltered enough but unfortunately it wasn't and we headed around the pier to moor in alongside the restaurants and suddenly lunch became fish and chips at D'lish Fish of Rex Hunt fame.

The doggy lovers amongst us were also very interested in the dog restaurant in the pier and I can see that some much pampered pooches will get their turn at dining out there in the future.



Following lunch it was decided that as the wind was coming up a bit we would all head off and get to the YE Marina to book in and get ready for dinner out.

A pretty uneventful run until we arrived at the marina to find that not all boats were to moor together and rearranging the boats wasn't the customer service persons forte.

Finally we were all moored and comfortable and we went off to check in and check out the facilities. All I can say is that it isn't Waterfront City and they really need to get their act together if they are to compete. Having said this it was still more than adequate for our needs for the weekend.

We dined that night at a Yarra's Edge café and the previous comment re upping their game could be applied here also. Long delays were the order of the day.

Sunday morning came and everyone seemed to be keen to feast on Bacon and Eggs or similar culinary delights and any idea of departure became more and more unlikely. Some hardy souls went off for long walks and others ventured into the City and yet others tried out the Southbank Markets.

The kids were more than happy to spend time rowing around the Marina in Mike Jones's inflatable which he had brought along.

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Monday morning dawned cold and a little grey and with ideas of an early start to go up the Yarra to Herring Island for lunch we all had breakfast purchased groceries and headed up the river. Paul and Rhonda had ventured into the city so Don commandeered their boat and picked them up along the way.

A fairly uneventful trip up the river top Herring Is where we all rafted up for a bite to eat and for those that felt like it a chance to look around the island.

After a short stop here we all headed back down the Yarra toward Marina YE.



Passing under the bridges was fun as the tide was up a bit and it was getting a bit tighter. All boats successfully negotiated this and then the message came over the radio that the Taylor's were heading for icecreams at Docklands. Nearly all the boats decided this was a good thing so we headed round to Victoria Harbour and pulled up on the public berths outside Waterfront City.

It was blowing fairly steadily by now and getting in and out of the berths was a little challenging for some.

Ice creams eaten we headed back to our berths at Marina YE and settled down to cooking dinner and enjoying happy hour.

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An early start would be required in the morning of Cup Day so we could get the boats tied up at Flemington before the rush. We got away by 8.00am and were all tied up along the riverbank at Flemington by 9.00. Just our luck to arrive as the rain came but once we were all settled the rain stopped but the wind kept up.

A very cold wind meant that no one went into the racecourse as we were able to see the big screen from where we were and there was also a viewing platform if you wanted to get the true atmosphere of the track.



The ladies dressed up for the day but the weather finally got the better of them and they reverted to more practical clothing to see the day out.



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Straight after the running of the cup, those unfortunate soles that had to work the following day (Bay Cruiser & Baby Girl) set off down river for an uneventful trip back to the Anchorage, with the exception of a short stop for a breathalyser check by the boys in blue on the Maribyrnong.

These two boats were out and were on the way home within the hour and got home while it was still light in time to clean the boat.

The balance of the boats spent a quiet Tuesday night on the Maribyrnong and headed off the following day. Don and Paul had a few extra days off so continued to spend some more time on the water together.

All in all a great weekend and a definite must-do for next year.

Mike Fisher  
Bay Cruiser