



Melbourne Whitley Cruiser Club Inc.

AFL GRAND FINAL WEEKEND CRUISE – MELBOURNE DOCKLANDS

Friday 27 September to Sunday 29 September 2019

It was time to hit the city and experience all the energy and buzz surrounding the AFL Grand Final between Richmond v Greater Western Sydney!!!

“Lucky Us” (Gary & Lee) arrived with “Ruby Tuesday” (Wilco, Marisca & Eric) to St Kilda Marina late morning on the Grand Final Eve public holiday to find two other Whitley Club members ready to launch as well. Waiting for us was “Our Time” (Russell who had to leave Deb at home for the weekend due to work commitments) and new club members Craig, Lea and Emma in their new SL22. The boat ramp was extremely quiet with only the four of us launching our boats and then leaving our cars in the marina car park. Even though it was a bit blowy on the bay, the trip from St Kilda to the mouth of the Yarra was smooth. It was good to be back on the bay!!



We cruised up the Yarra to Melbourne City Marina to be met by “Impulse” (Mike & Monica, our cruise leaders for the weekend) and “To The Point” (Dean & Tracey). After a quick planning meeting in the marina lounge, we thought we would go and explore the CBD. However, mother nature had other thoughts as the predicted cold front hit the marina with extremely strong winds and rain. Eric & Wilco were the only intrepid explorers to catch the tram into the CBD. The rest of us decided to relax around Harbour Town with retail therapy time or at the marina. “Black Sheep” arrived after the rain passed so all boats who were coming had arrived safely.

Happy hour was in the comfort of the marina lounge where we all got to know Craig, Lea and Emma better. It is always good to have new members come cruising with us. Dinner for most of us was delicious pizzas from Costco – thanks to Marisca, Dean & Tracey for organising them.

Grand Final Day arrived, and we were all glad to see the sun and no wind. It looked like it was going to be a good boating day. A few of us decided to catch the tram and go to the MCG to soak up the atmosphere of the day. We weren't disappointed. There was action everywhere – live TV and radio sites, football competitions, pop up bars, food stalls and even the Richmond drummers were there getting the crowd fired up with their impressive drumming skills.



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Monica & I decided to stay around the "G" and Fed Square while the others headed back to cruise up the Yarra for lunch. The Yarra River re-opened to boats from noon onwards as it was closed from 9 am due to the longest kick across the Yarra. Monica & I positioned ourselves in Fed Square to watch the boats cruise past. The four boats – Impulse, To The Point, Our Time and Ruby Tuesday looked very impressive against the city skyline. They even made television via Fox Sports live site which was situated on the Yarra bank at Birrarung Marr – thanks Peter Nic and Mike Smith for your sharp eyes whilst watching the Grand Final coverage.



The crews enjoyed a relaxing lunch on the banks of the Yarra opposite the Collingwood Holden Centre. Russell had invited his Mum, daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren to accompany him up the river. They had four generations on the Whittley - they loved it!! Dean, Tracey and Bryce invited Lea and Emma to cruise with them as Craig had taken up the opportunity to attend the Grand Final. All boats arrived safely back to Docklands in time to watch the last quarter of the game. We decided to have dinner at Urban Alley Brewery which is located under the Melbourne Star. Wayne &



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Lee-anne Carpenter joined us for dinner and enjoyed a catch up with all crews who were attending the cruise. Unfortunately, "Black Sheep" had to leave late Saturday afternoon as Caroline was feeling unwell.

Sunday morning, we were up early to follow Mike and Monica on a cruise along the Maribyrnong River. The Maribyrnong always continues to surprise – it feels like you are in the country with parks, open spaces and walking tracks along the river. We cruised up to "Mike's Lagoon" where we stopped for a delicious morning tea and coffee. "To The Point" and "SL22" left us here to head back to St Kilda Marina. The remaining 4 boats continued further upstream to Poynton's Nursery jetty. We then turned around and headed for home. You get a beautiful view of the city skyline when cruising back downstream. "Lucky Us", "Ruby Tuesday" and "Our Time" bid farewell to "Impulse" at the Warmies and continued to travel over to St Kilda Marina. All boats were retrieved safely so we headed for home.



Thanks Mike and Monica for organising a fun trip to the Docklands and all the crews for coming along and sharing in another great boating weekend.

Lee & Gary Honeychurch

"Lucky Us"