

## The 'There and Back Challenge' formerly The Cape Point Challenge

By now you know this was HECTIC !

I am not sure if I am glad or sad I was not able to sail this year.

Not being there meant I had to rely on others to report and thanks to Caroline, Rob, Duncan, Albert from the NSRI, Iain Park-Ross, Jack and Jimmy Cairns you have for once a view of what it was like in the washing machine that is False Bay. Remember the Kalk Bay Fishermen say that while the South Easter will give you a good drubbing the North Wester will kill you !

Well done to the winners - Duncan Ross and Hein - fantastic result and to the Surfskis - Alex Topliss in the singles and Adriaan Hoeben & Richard le Mesurier in the doubles and on the SUP's - Ethan Koopmans

Results for all attached.

Belinda's crew Janine is recovering well.

Also on WCHCA Facebook page.

### Results of top 9 finishers!

Sail No	Class	Helm	Elapsed	Handicap	Corrected	Place	Points
2305 10860	F18 TIG	Duncan Ross	2:38:05	1.2186	3:12:38	1	1
3	H16 TIG	Rob Selig	3:24:25	1.000	3:24:25	2	2
2292	F18 TIG	Richard Goldstein	2:56:20	1.2186	3:34:53	3	3
2641	F18	William Kieser	3:01:30	1.2186	3:41:11	4	4
47381 11248	H14	Jim Cairns	4:32:20	0.8555	3:52:59	5	5
7	H16	Mark Obree	4:04:28	1.000	4:04:28	6	6
60395 10890	H14	Jack Hartland	4:56:27	0.8555	4:13:37	7	7
7	H16 TIG	Klaas de Rooy	4:20:14	1.000	4:20:14	8	8
11	F18	David van Niekerk	4:14:00	1.2186	5:09:31	9	9

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### **Sturrock Grindrod Maritime – There and Back Challenge 21 March 2015 (Fishhoek Beach Sailing Club) – Caroline Hutchinson – Commodore of FHBSC**

At our first brain storming planning session we wanted to make this year's event an EPIC –and have a group of 90 Hobies/SUP's/Surfskis all on the water all at the same time. First time ever that the event has been multi-disciplinary. (BTW we had 87 in total)

As things turned out – it certainly was an epic adventure and will provide fuel for many stories.

My first challenge was trying to sail and be part of the organising committee. So once I'd sorted out...my T-shirt is the wrong size..i need a radio...get the photographer onto a rubber duck...no – not that one –a big one....don't want to get my feet wet....6 more

lunch packs...I need change for R 20...where has the coffee truck gone...is the event on – do you know it's windy and raining.... I then had 5 minutes to rig my boat.

I thought calmness would return once I launched and headed for the start line – only to be reminded that I had a novice crew who had never sailed before so we practiced a few gybes along with a quick run-down of which were his sheets and which were mine. After two postponed starts – the second to avoid the Hobie Tigers mowing down a flotilla of 37 Surfskis and 18 SUPS who were paddling furiously downwind in race mode toward Millers having gotten tired of hanging around waiting for those Hobies who seem to take forever to get going – we eventually got going. By the way Perry – that first marker buoy was nowhere near Kalk Bay .

Things were going wonderfully all the way past Roman Rock and towards Millers point. I was able to chat to my crew who was now able to gybe without wrapping the jib (sailing 101) and I thought we were in for a classic race to the point –and back. The sea was flat and the wind was sort of 18 knots with a few gusts but all under control.

The event is not called a “challenge” for nothing. At Smitswinkel the wind and sea appeared possessed and tossed boats upside down all around us. Don't worry, I said convincing to my crew, upright is fast, we will sail conservatively through this patch and it will smooth out once we are past this bay. Well, that never happened. It got stronger and wilder the closer we got to Buffels. We also realised that we could not see more than 2 or 3 other Hobies and no NSRI boats. By this stage the Tigers should have all been on their return trip. It then dawned on me that there must be big trouble at Cape Point so we made the decision to turn around and head back to Fishhoek. So after taking forever to unwrap the jib (again) we started the upwind slog back in 30-something gusty knots. I am very glad I took the decision to head back!!! I hope my crew believed me when I told him that “sailing is not always like this”! (well, maybe he did just briefly, until we beached at the club and he heard that his girlfriend had been taken off to hospital after being chewed up and spat out by a Hobie)

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From Rob & Josh Selig

The weather looked stunning going out to the start, the first incident to report was Jack Hartland in the drink with my comment to rescue was not to help Jack, about 10 minutes later We ended up with a port starboard and then proceeded to go for a swim.

From the start going towards the light house the wind was very pleasant and we were relaxing for the long haul to the point without incident. In the middle of the bay we went slightly further out than most of the fleet and sitting in 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the 16's, we then got a blast which propelled us into first 16 which we held till just passed millers when Doug Edwards managed to pass momentarily until he buried the nose and went swimming.

The wind started to pick up just before millers but as we were almost running dead downwind it did not cause to much problems with 85kgs on the corner casting and a youth Americas cup sailor(Josh) who was a master on jib control and chirping go faster with lots of laughter and no's from the skipper who says we are out of control as the main sheet was not in my hand and we were flying.

Going further towards Cape Point the waves got deeper with the potential of a Chinese gybe/pitch pole as both hulls were digging into the back of the swell but managed to stay upright and rounded the point with no incidents.

Now the long beat back, this favoured port so the 2 of us out on trapeze with big swell and big wind was rather tiresome to say the least, playing the main traveller by Josh caused the blocks to uncleat every time which resulted in me having to hold the mainsheet so my left arm has lengthened somewhat. With the ever increasing wind speed and not to many boats insight some thoughts and discussions on the boat was where was the rescue/NSRI as the only boat we saw was the one at the

rounding mark, we did however come across the NSRI and gave them a wave as we were still in good shape.

We decided to go inshore firstly to get onto starboard as that part of the body hadn't worked much yet but the pressure seemed to increase and we lost quite a bit of time doing that not to mention stopping to chat with Doug to see if they were ok, at that time he wanted to swop crew as he wanted to finish the race.(he was upside-down at the time and not sure how many times he had been over)

We also came in off trapeze a few times to have a breather and take stock of our next manoeuvre. Only when we got near the light house did we have a bar one, this gave us the energy to get back to Fishhoek in one piece.

On arrival at the finish we were asked if we completed the course as they had a tracking on Klaas De Rooy so they thought he was in the lead.

Cape Point Challenge(now there and back challenge) certainly stood up to the name and for Rob and Josh the best one ever as we both enjoy solid strong wind and thanks to Hobie for building a strong boat.

Joint Report from Rob and Josh.

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John

First time I ever done this race in a solid Northerly. It was safety first all the way – upright was fast - something Alan and Daniel learnt the hard way – after capsizing twice and going thru their main it was game over. The cliffs near Batsata rock where brutal with true “Williwaw” type gusts that were virtually un sailable – I estimate 40 Knots. The trick was to stay as far away from the land as possible. Ask Parky about how he saved his boat from being trashed on the rocks by tying off on a piece of kelp... It was a lonely race from Cape point back home – as we saw the carnage on the way up wind, the yellow mozzie dis - masted and varying boats without sails up in tow left right and centre... We had one near capsize with everything flogging teetering on the edge – but Hein's weight and height advantage kept us upright ..?!!!

When we got to the beach the timekeepers where still at the club and when we tracked them down - they asked us why we turned around so early – it took some convincing to tell them to push the stopwatch because we had finished and sailed the course...2hrs 36 – it should be close to the record ... (so they say).

In need of physio and spent the night cramping up .. one to be remembered...

Best regards

**Duncan Ross**

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On Saturday 21March 2015 the Cape point challenge was underway with a fresh NW wind blowing. The first Hobie's were passing Roman rock light house and the wind started gusting. With the leaders (Hobie Tigers mostly) almost at Smitswinkel they took a beating from the wind and almost every Hobie that we saw started capsizing. One by one they tried to recover and carry on with the race. A few lost their rigging and needed to be towed to Buffels jag where they were recovered onto trailers. One crew bent their mast and had to be towed whilst capsized. A few injuries and hypothermia was reported by other vessels and one lady had to be taken to hospital

after she hurt her back trying to recover her Hobie. The coordinators had their hands full trying to scramble the rescue crafts to assist the capsizing Hobies. Its been a few years since the wind was such a big factor. Albert NSRI

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**From Iain Park-Ross**

I had Catherine Grier crewing for me (**Brave girl and will she sail a Hobie again ? Ed**)– organized by Belinda and she was great. We had a nice fast sail as far as about Millers – in about 15 – 18 knots. Our mistake / bad luck was that we were closest in and that’s where the strongest new gusts were. Our pitch pole was in a gust of about 25 and we really struggled to get the boat up from turtle. Once up we did a STBD tack further inshore – wrong move! A gust over 30 just blew us over – turtle again and we began drifting towards a big rock off Millers – which we would have been smashed against if the NSRI hadn’t magically appeared, towed us clear and held us head to wind while we got the main down and then sailed jib-only towards “Buffels”, as they had asked us to do – as there were to be trailers there. Trying to sail back would have been irresponsible as it would have stretched the resources unfairly, so we decided to comply. Anyway after a while we just blew over in a second on the way down with just the jib up - I reckon the gust was over 40 – spray being blown off the water – another turtle – need to have a good look at my mast seals! So not having ever made landfall at “Buffels” we wound up in the wrong bay with no beach and spent a painful 30 mins trying to hold the boat off the rocks – stepping on sea anemones amongst the kelp heads. Eventually I dived down and managed to secure us to a kelp head with the righting rope – and we were comfy until we were towed out again – to join the other (about 10 boats) stranded on the most pristine beach. The other crews were great in that they came all the way down the beach and about 12 people carried my boat along the beach to the grass where the others were..... Pierre ? arrived with his Landy and a trailer and we piled on. What an adventure. Over a few beers back at FHBSC I was told by Dave van Niekerk that that bay is a breeding area for Great Whites.....still don’t know if he was just taking the piss. Anyway that’s why I love Hobies – on a monohull steering downwind and staying upright in heavy air is my forte – but on this baby I was at a complete loss – humbling! Thanks to the NSRI and well done and hats off to those Hobies that finished!

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**From:** jack Hartland [<mailto:nuparadigm.jack@gmail.com>]

There were quite a few capsizes at the start, including Rob Selig and myself. Sean Ferry did not even make it to the start as his rudder sheared off his Tiger when he launched off the beach.

The wind started at about 14 - 24 knots North Wester to Roman Rock, along the shore to Millers nice runs of 14-24 knots, after Miller fast 25 knots barely keeping the nose from diving. Smitswinkel to the point 28 - 38 knots very gusty. Then the beat back to Millers very very hard and gusty. At Millers the sea got calmer but still hard trapezing and beating in 18 - 25 knots in choppy conditions all the way back to FHBSC. Had one capsize before Roman Rock and one off the quarry before the day was done.

The wind was hectic around Smitswinkel, I reckon those gusts reached at least 38kts. This certainly rated as one to remember, wind was like the Hobie Worlds at PE, where it reached 38 kts, only this race was much worse, since the race at PE only lasted about 30 minutes before it was abandoned. Jimmy and I got to Smitswinkel to find four capsized Hobie 16s further out, we were screaming along, I was perched right at the back of my boat trying to keep the nose from diving, when the gust hit and I went flying, Jimmy came screaming past and fifty metres further he also took a tumble. Got the boat back up and decided to sail more cautiously, trying to depower by sheeting the main in a bit and letting it out on the gusts, which allowed Jimmy to get to the Point before me. Don't know what Jimmy did, but I think he was trying to gybe at the mark instead of tacking and he went over. I tacked around the mark and carefully set my sails for a beat and took my time getting out on trapeze, but 100 metres on the next gust hit and turned turtle. Took me too long to get the boat up and Jimmy past me again. Chased after him back on trapeze but another hundred metres and over again. After a long struggle to get it back up, decided to sail sitting and working the boat slowly back to Miller's which was real slog in survival mode. Exhausted and hypothermic, the thought crossed my mind several times to go in, but at Miller's the swell smoothed enough to get back out on trapeze but had another two tumbles before the lighthouse.

I couldn't work out why my boat was veering into the wind on starboard tack or nose diving when I footed off, until I got to the beach and Hein remarked, "it must have been difficult to sail with such a loose rig?". Then it dawned on me that I had forgotten to adjust my side stay after stepping the mast. Hectic winds, seven capsizes and a loose rig certainly made this the toughest race in fifteen years of sailing Hobies, certainly one to remember. Wonder how many guys under forty managed to finish the race? Well done to all the old timers who did.

By the way I lost my water and energy bars in my first capsizes, managed to grab my energy drink and energy bar floating in the water and stuck it in my vest, which I managed to gulp down near Millers point on my way back, while my boat was upside down. I think camelbacks are the way to go in future.

Jack Hartland

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**From:** J Cairns [<mailto:mfs@mweb.co.za>]

Hello John,

Nice little breeze for a change – an improvement on the drifters of the past couple of years!

I think there were 5 or 6 Hobie 14's in the fleet. We started in a fair off-shore wind, more or less what the forecasters had predicted, and everyone seemed to trundle along happily until just after Millers Point, where the gusts started to come through. I found that by running slightly by the lee, I managed to keep my leeward hull from digging in, until at Smitswinkel a wild gust sent me into a pitch pole that had me flying right over the bridle wires. This after seeing Jack do the same thing just ahead of me, and congratulating myself (prematurely) for taking steps to avoid the same fate. From here on to the turn mark at the Point, the wind seemed to be a steady 25 knots or so, with some heavier gusts. I sat on the back pylon and dragged my foot astern to slow down in the big gusts, thus survived upright and at speed all the way down to the mark. I got to the mark about 200m ahead of Jack, and decided not to gybe round it, rather go for the safer wheelbarrow turn. In the tack, the gusts lifted the bow and threw me over backwards, while Jack sailed past and gybed comfortably round the mark! I got the boat up, only to see it go straight over the other way – twice!! Third time lucky, I started the return leg, and passed Jack just after the mark, while he seemed to be washing some more dust off his sail. The wind had freshened a bit and I decided to favour the port beat and keep out to sea, partly to avoid possible turbulence under the cliffs, but mainly because my mast was over-rotating on starboard. It was a bit hairy coming inshore to round the marks at Smits and Millers, with the front of the mast pointing straight at me, but I figured that if the boat could handle it, I could sail it back to Fishhoek. By this stage, the fleet was very spread out and I didn't see anyone else apart from some rescue activity off Smits. My trapeze rings were set too low for comfort in those waves, and I took advantage of a temporary lull to raise them. I found that my speed and stability improved and I stayed on the wire all the way back. It was actually quite pleasant between Roman Rock and the finish. Ended up 5<sup>th</sup> overall, with Jack being the other '14 to finish.

My eyes were sore from the jets of water trying to wash out my contact lenses, and I was too busy to drink the bottles of water I had taken along, but all in all, a great challenge. It added confidence to know that we had Darren and the great rescue team should things go wrong. I'm glad I didn't need to trouble them, though.

Regards,

Jim