



Short Handed Sailing Association of New Zealand

Press Release 3: Round North Island Race – 2020

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Race Start 22.02.2020

For Ben Beasley and Nick Gardiner, the start of the 2020 Short Handed Sailing Association Round North Island Yacht Race can't come soon enough. As the youngest competitors in the race, on the smallest boat in the fleet, Beasley (19) and Gardiner (20) are keen to get out there and prove they can take on this epic adventure.

Their yacht, Moving Violation, is an Elliott 7.9 designed by Greg Elliott. At just 7.0m on the waterline Beasley and Gardiner will have plenty of work to do to keep Moving Violation at the front of the pack in what will be a diverse division including Coppelgia and Arbitare, both Farr 11.6's, Duty Free, a Farr 1220, Fifth Dimension, a Beneteau First 36.7 and Distraction, a Farr 1020. Also, in this division, we have Am Meer, a Bavaria 38, Start Me Up, a Ross 930, Pelagian II, a Stewart 34 and the fleets second smallest boat, C U Later, a Ross 8m.

Beasley, who owns Moving Violation, began sailing at age 9 and moved through the youth classes, competing in national and international regattas. Gardiner had a similar start with dinghy's and sports boats his early focus. Both Beasley and Gardiner have crewed on keelboats competing in harbour races and regattas including class nationals and Coastal Classics. Together they have competed in events such as the ANZAC 250 and last year completed the Coastal Classic two-handed as part of their qualifying process for the RNI.

With just 9 days until the race start, we asked Beasley how he is feeling – "It's a mixture of emotions. Really excited and a bit nervous at the same time, we're hoping we've crossed all the t's and dotted the i's! The boat is nearly ready, we have still got to service the engine, change a few ropes and blocks, add some fuel, food, water, clothing and then we're good to go!"

It's been a real family affair with both Ben and Nick's parents heavily involved in the build-up and preparations. Ben's Mum Jo sums it up nicely for the parents - "It has always seemed such a long time away until the race but now it's so close and the reality is hitting home. We're very proud of what they're doing, just getting to the start line is a big feat. We just can't wait to see them sail safely back into Auckland so we can get our sleep back to some semblance of normality!"

Odyssey V, skippered by Garry Coleman and Nigel Siburn, have the privilege of being the oldest combined crew in the 2020 RNI with a combined age of 138, and are impressed by what Beasley and Gardiner have been up to. "We wish Ben and Nick all the best for the race and look forward to seeing them off our stern all the way around the North Island, - just follow us lads, us old chaps can show you the way – and then make sure you do the race again and again until you're our age!"

Beasley and Gardner are raising funds for Lifeline as part of their epic adventure. "NZ has a very high suicide rate and personally I have known people with depression who have taken their own lives. With Lifeline there is always a person on the phone that you can talk to confidentially and I think it's important people are aware of this" – Ben Beasley. To support Ben and Nicks fundraising efforts you can click [HERE](#)





Further contact details

Media Contact: Sarah Wiblin 0277051502 media@ssanz.co.nz

Race Director: Jon Henry 0274779745

SSANZ Chairman: Neil Hilder 021766793

Website: www.ssanz.co.nz

Words: Sarah Wiblin

Images: Supplied

Ben & Nick's Fundraising for Lifeline Page - <https://give.everydayhero.com/nz/sailing-for-lifeline-1>

RNI Background

The SSANZ Two Handed Round North Island Race (RNI), proudly sponsored by Evolution Sails, is New Zealand's most iconic yachting challenge and the 2020 edition will feature 38 yachts from 28 to 52 feet. This is 13th edition of the race, 43 years after the inaugural event was first planned by Sir Peter Blake and Martin Foster!

The race starts in Auckland with the first leg to Mangonui in the far north (154NM), Leg 2 is from Mangonui to Wellington (550NM), Leg 3 from Wellington to Napier(200NM), and the final leg from Napier returning to Auckland (367NM). The race is expected to take approximately 2 weeks in total to complete.

Thirty-three feet separate the smallest to largest boat, so the diversity of this fleet will bring with it not only great line honours racing for the larger yachts but an epic handicap battle across the fleet. With 26 of the total 38 yachts between 34 and 40 feet we can expect some very tight racing in the middle of the fleet and each leg will go down to the wire on handicap.

Making it to the start line of this epic race is a challenge in itself. Each yacht must have a Category 2 Safety Certificate issued by Yachting New Zealand, have completed a 250 Nautical Mile qualifying passage with both Co-Skippers on board. The Co-Skippers must both also complete Advanced First Aid training, Advanced Sea Survival qualifications, and provide a medical certificate deeming them fit to compete. Each yacht must meet an extensive list of safety requirements and have completed safety drills, all of which are in addition to preparing the boat to ensure it is ready for this epic race and getting as many miles under the keel as possible two handed before the race. Many of the fleet used the SSANZ Anzac Enduro Race as their qualifying race and have also used the SSANZ Lewmar Triple Series, PIC Coastal Classic, RAYC White Island Race and other races to build up two handed time on their path to the start.

Ends

