



Short Handed Sailing Association of New Zealand

Press Release 7: RNI Leg 2

Release Date: 2 March 2020

Race Start Leg 1: 22.02.2020, Leg 2 Start: 24.02.2020 Leg 3 Start: 2.3.2020

The second leg of the Evolution Sails Round North Island Race started in Mangonui on Monday (24.2) with a 550nm leg to Wellington. This leg is the longest and most challenging leg and in true West Coast fashion delivered every possible condition our skippers could have imagined.

Wired, Miss Scarlet and Kia Kaha pulled out to an early lead and managed to maintain this through the race to claim the line honours positions. Mr Kite, skippered by Nathan Williams and Craig Satterthwaite, took out the PHRF Handicap win in Division One, with Anarchy skippered by AJ Reid and Will Reid took second place leaving Mr Kite and Anarchy tied in first place for overall PHRF in Division One.

In Division Two Clockwork, with Jamie Logan and Steve Mair as skippers, continued to pull ahead of the fleet taking their second line honours win on Handicap, firmly chased by Titanium skippered by Shane Bellingham and Casey Bellingham.

The real battle in this race was with the weather, with the forecast delivering a significant high off the coast of Taranaki and getting ahead of this dead breeze patch created a massive challenge for our fleet with 13 of the yachts managing to pull ahead. For the remaining 25 yachts, the reality was being becalmed off the coast of Taranaki for between 24 and 48 hours. Frustrations grew across the fleet at the slow progress with less than 30NM sailed for many of the fleet in 24 hours.

The true heroes of this race were Ben Beasley and Nick Gardiner our youngest skippers on Moving Violation, an Elliott 7.9, the smallest yacht in the fleet. Beasley and Gardiner took a massive gamble heading well west towards Australia before catching the Northerly and screaming back in towards Cook Strait. With a top speed of close to 20 knots and water flying, these boys had an exhilarating few days sailing.

Hot on their heels for the handicap win in Division Four was C U Later, skippered by Logan Fraser and Nico Henry, who have been pushing their Ross 8m hard and are currently tied for the overall win on PHRF in Division 4 with Moving Violation.

Chatting with Fraser after the Leg he described the rollercoaster that was Leg 3, "We really had a bit of everything, from a great downwind start out of Mangonui, a blast reach up to North Cape, big upwind bash around Cape Reinga, drifting, incredible sunsets, tricky tactics and then the most insane ride into Wellington. The little C U was amazing, the boat performed so well with only minor repairs in Wellington. We ate well, slept well, and sailed hard and were stoked to hang on to all the 35 footers into the finish."

Logan continued "We had the most insane ride through the Cook Strait. It's impossible to describe what it was like onboard. We went from full main and A2, to full main and A7, to full main only, to



double-reefed main in 42+ knots of wind. We were sitting on 16 - 18 knots of boatspeed launching from wave to wave like a bullet out of a cannon. The acceleration of the boat through the waves is something that can only be felt to be appreciated. As we approached the Wellington harbour entrance, we thought we were through the worst of it, only to be faced with a 30+ knot beat all the way into the finish line. We dodged ships and reefs and eventually finished just after midnight on Friday night. The sight of all our friends, family and supporters on the dock when we arrived was amazing.”

The support that our skippers have had at each stopover from friends family and supporters has been echoed by all our skippers, as truly humbling, this combined with the welcome and hospitality shown by the amazing team at the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club has been amazing!

With the 200NM Leg 3 from Wellington to Napier starting today Monday 2nd March at 2:30pm our skippers are ready to race again and start on the homeward stretch back towards Auckland and the last leg of the race. The first yachts are expected to finish in just over 24 hours into Napier. Race Tracking:

You can track the fleets progress on the Burnsco Race Tracker – visit our website ssanz.co.nz to access the tracker.

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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