



Lightwave

owners regatta

■ by ANDREW CRAWFORD

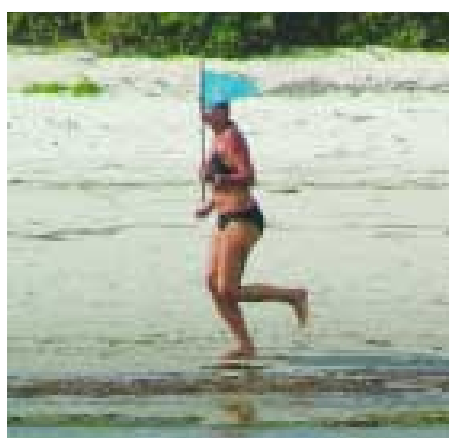
This year the Lightwave extended family held their regatta over a the Labour Day long weekend in Queensland. The format was for a get together and briefing on Friday night at the Southport Yacht Club, a race on Saturday leading into a beach barbie on Saturday night with an overnight stop at Paradise Point.

UNFORTUNATELY I was unable to join in all the weekend festivities but I did catch up with the crew on Sunday. The format for Sunday was a fun race from Paradise Point to Couran Cove with a 'Boat Show' on Sunday afternoon so all the owners could compare the little differences that each boat has.

We joined Roger and Louise Overell and a few of the Lightwave crew aboard the Lightwave 40 Powercat on Sunday



Couran Cove boat line up. (above)
Penny securing her flag. (right)
Paradise Point Anchorage. (below)



morning shortly after the pre race briefing. The race start was something reminiscent of a Le Mans start, with the race instructions indicating that each crew should repair to their dinghy and get aboard and get sailing. Some handicapping was involved with Louise holding back the instructions for *Inn for a Penny* widely regarded as the gun Lightwave racing crew. Didn't seem to affect them too much as from what

anyone can recall of the results they still finished well (first I think).

Some of the competing skippers had to be reminded that engine power was not really kosher in a sailing race and most skippers did make at least some attempt to sail the course. Midway though the run from Paradise Point to Couran Cove crews were required to retrieve a flag from the beach on the western side of

South Stradbroke Island. A number of differing styles were employed to achieve this outcome from the James Bond high powered dinghy launch onto the beach, to Penny – from *Inn for a Penny* – swimming ashore whilst the boat sailed on.

Some of the skippers cut a few corners a little fine but with a flooding tide the dramas were more related to delay rather than anything else. On one occasion we noticed a small yacht – a Sonata I think, heeling hard whilst going to windward and sailing well wide of the windward course made good that the Lightwave in front was able to manage. But cats can't go to windward – particularly larger more cruising oriented cats, I don't know what it's going to take for that furry to disappear.

The race finished off the entrance to Couran Cove and I am pretty sure that someone won – though I don't think it really mattered to virtually anyone. On a marginally more serious note however owners regattas such these do really show up the ability of crews that regularly either race or undertake self testing. I don't think everyone wants to be the fastest boat out there but racing certainly increases the skill level and also gives crews a better understanding of their craft, particularly racing against other boats of the same design. It encourages crews to experiment with things they may not otherwise worry about – sheet angles etc.

But on to Couran Cove and what was really the driver for the Sunday schedule. For those that are unfamiliar with the southern Broadwater on the Gold Coast, Couran Cove started as a canal





Nav station variant. (above left)
 Piano hinge door. (above centre)
 Interior treatment. (above right)



development that went nowhere 20 or 30 years ago, I know in my trailer sailer days it was a regular anchorage. A few years ago it was developed into an eco-tourist resort (mind you I am not quite sure what an eco-resort is but that's a debate for another day). It is quite a stunning but very low key development, almost the

obverse of what has been the norm on the Gold Coast for many years. The marina operators placed all the Lightwaves side by side in one area of the marina and after lunch and awaiting the arrival of the more relaxed crews a mini boat show was held with all owners keen to examine each others boats.

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Stainless steel galley. (above left)
Saloon variant. (above right)
Heatwave. (right)
Starfish name treatment. (below)

There were interesting and subtle variations on what is a production theme. Nat and Roger have often said they see the yachts as evolutionary and this was evidenced by being able to examine about one third of the total production of this range of boats.

There were a few interesting variations that appealed to me, but of course they are personal preferences and others may have a different set of criteria. Some of the subtle differences included:

- The location of navigation stations, from minimalist and or in the hull to bridgedeck forward facing, which I admit is probably my preference;
- Differing timber treatments i.e. light versus dark;
- Impressive stainless steel galley finishes;
- Escape hatches (or as I prefer to call them – re-entry hatches) – with most boats opting for none, some with hull mounted





At anchor - Paradise Point. (left)
Starfish cockpit table. (above)

hatches and one with a hatch in the bridgedeck, which probably makes the most sense if you are determined to have one;

- A piano hinged door that does double duty as a door to cover a storage area and a door to the head. This reduces weight and clutter, but will probably not find favour with the charter trade;

- An innovative storage system for a washing machine;
- And my favourite – *Starfish* is owned by people who have a graphic design and sign company. They made their own cockpit table with the logo of the boat from a plastic Perspex material and I immediately decided no future boat of mine would be finished without one.

Talking to the owners, all were very pleased to be able to check out the little things that make each boat different.

All in all a great day and a credit to Louise and Roger, Samantha Little and the staff from Lightwave Yachts. For those owners who didn't go, Sam and Louise took lots of photos and I have also sent 20 or so to Sam. ❖

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