

The Varuna Breezes

THAI SPIRIT OF SAILING

ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB



NO. 04-OCTOBER 2026

**LIFE ON THE FLIP SIDE: WHERE
GRAVITY IS STRICTLY OPTIONAL**

DOWN UNDER CUP 2026

INSIDE:

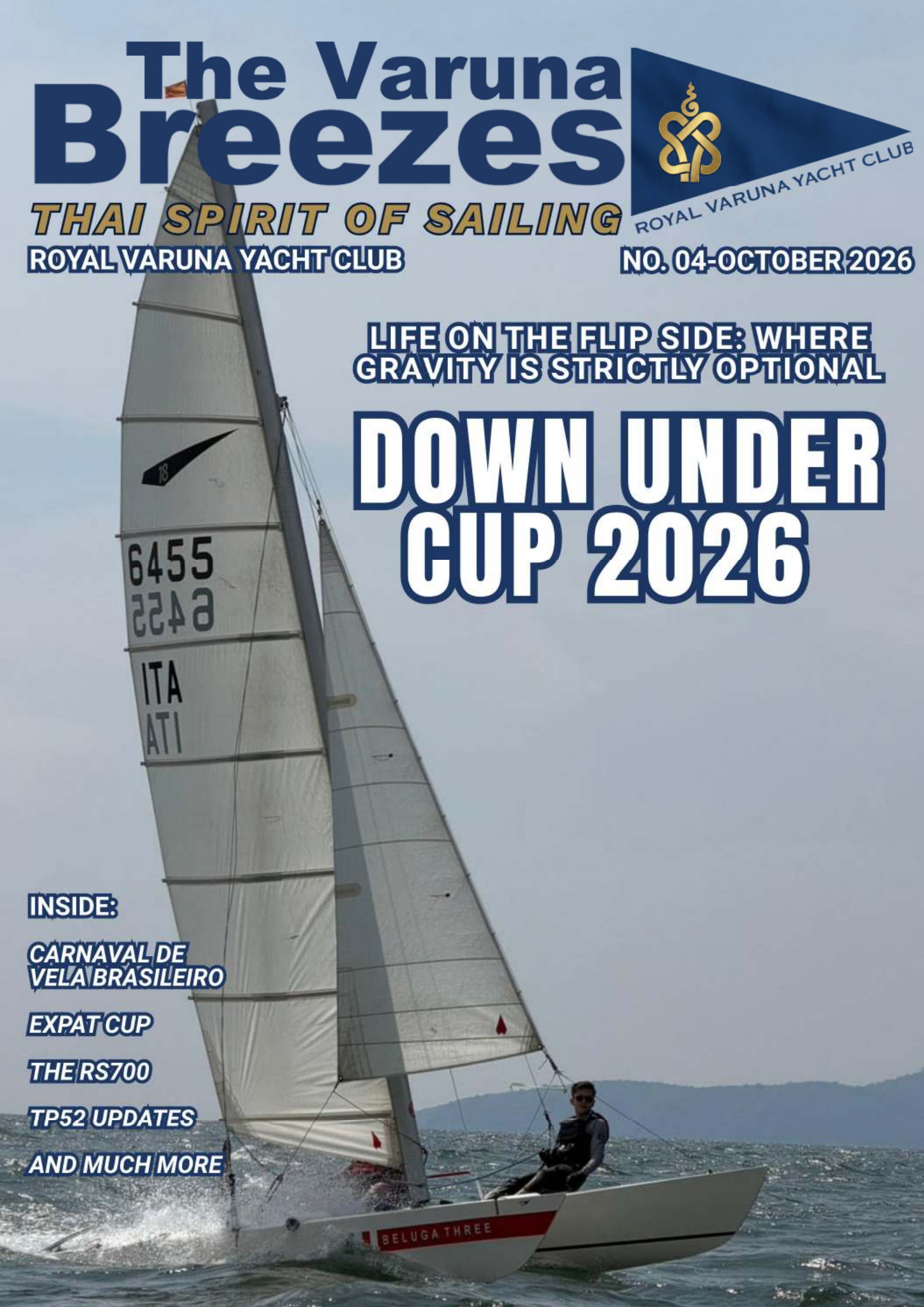
**CARNAVAL DE
VELA BRASILEIRO**

EXPAT CUP

THE RS700

TP52 UPDATES

AND MUCH MORE



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Royal Varuna Yacht Club

286 Moo 12 Pratamnak Rd., Nongprue,
Banglamung, Chonburi, 20150 Thailand –
Tel: (66) 0 3825 0116

www.varuna.org – generalmanager@varuna.org

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Editor in Chief:

Mr. John Higham

commodore@varuna.org

Editor Director:

Mr. Carlo Pagano

activity.chairman@varuna.org

Acting Art Director:

Mr. James Young

event2@varuna.org

This edition contributors:

Mr. Viroj Nualkhair

Mr. Morten Jakobsen

Mr. Lawnin Crawford

Mr. Ashwin Elijah IV

Royal Varuna Yacht Club

286 Moo 12 Pratamnak Rd., Nongprue,
Banglamung, Chonburi, 20150 Thailand
Tel: (+66) 0 3825 0116

<https://www.varuna.org>

Inquiries:

General: generalmanager@varuna.org

Sailing: director@varuna.org

Membership: membership@varuna.org

Events: event@varuna.org



[rvyc_thailand](https://www.instagram.com/rvyc_thailand)



[Royal Varuna Yacht Club](https://www.facebook.com/RoyalVarunaYachtClub)

Anyone who wants to participate, share, suggest changes, or criticize our publications can write to us at generalmanager@varuna.org



Why We Sail:

PASSING ON THE SPIRIT OF THE ROYAL VARUNA



I fell in love with sailing twice in my life. The first time was as a boy in Italy, watching from a dock I had no way of reaching, dreaming of a world that felt impossibly out of reach. It took years before I actually set foot on a boat – but once I did, sailing filled my life, right up until the day I left for Thailand. The second time I truly came back to it was here, at the Royal Varuna, twenty-five years later – almost by accident, on an ordinary Saturday afternoon, when the sight of a lawn full of drying sails did something to me I still can't quite explain. That second beginning changed my life. It gave me back a passion I thought I'd left behind for good, and it gave me a community I'm proud to now serve as Activities Committee Chairman.

But it also gave me something I didn't expect: a deeper sense of what this club actually is. Not long ago, I found myself sitting across from Peter Cummins – a man whose sailing columns I devoured for years in the Bangkok Post and the Pattaya Mail, long before I ever set foot at the Varuna. Hearing him speak, at ninety-one, about sailing with the King in the Gulf of Thailand, I understood something simple but easy to forget: this club is not just moorings, boats and trophies. It's decades of people who loved the wind enough to build something lasting for those who came after them.

That's the thread I try to hold onto in everything I organise here – the regattas, the magazine, the small traditions that keep this place feeling like a community rather than just a marina. It's also why I felt the need to write it all down. Earlier this year I finished a book, *Beluga*, telling the long, winding story of how sailing found me, lost me, and found me again – with Follonica, Australia, Thailand and, eventually, the Varuna all playing their part.

If you'd like the full story, *Beluga* is available to download for free at www.carlopagano.net/file-share

But the short version is this: whatever brought you to this club, it's worth protecting – for Peter's generation, and for whoever walks onto that lawn twenty-five years from now.

Fair winds,

Carlo Pagano

Activities Committee Chairman

ALERT

2027 Prince Bira's Firebird Trophy

January 16, 2027

Eligible Classes: Monohull, Multihull, Hobie/Dart Fleets

The Firebird - Prince Bira's Trophy is a prestigious, historic sailing trophy donated by HRH Prince Birabongse Bhanudej (Prince Bira) in 1970. While Prince Bira is world-famous as Thailand's first Formula One driver, he was also an elite yachtsman who represented Thailand in four Olympic Games. This trophy connects his royal heritage with his passion for the sea. Don't miss the action on the water and the chance to race for this prestigious club trophy!



Q&A

WITH VIROJ NUALKHAIR →

A WONDERFUL CHAT WITH A LIFELONG VARUNIAN WHOSE FAMILY LEGACY AT THE CLUB SPANS THREE GENERATIONS.

In 1993, Viroj Nualkhair collaborated with McDell Marine in New Zealand and famed naval architect Bruce Farr (Farr Yacht Design) to design a custom 25-foot keelboat. The goal was to create a fast, affordable, and easily handled day-racer tailored for the waters of the Gulf of Thailand and suitable for training sailors at a planned yacht club and the Thai Sailing Academy. Viroj named the design "Platu" after the short mackerel (Pla Tu) native to the Gulf of Thailand, symbolizing the hope that the fleet would circumnavigate the gulf. The Platu 25 went on to become an official ISAF (World Sailing) International Class, gaining widespread popularity across Europe and Asia. It serves as the primary boat for events like the Coronation Cup in Thailand and is frequently used by elite crews to sharpen match-racing and fleet-racing skills. He won the competitive IRC 1 class division in December 2005 aboard his boat Octopussy after a tight countback finish and placed high in preceding years like 2002 and 2003. Continued regional racing participation into later years, skippering boats such as MaDuZi in events like the Phuket King's Cup.



Khun Viroj on board Maduzi Yacht with his grandchildren

Q

Thank you for sharing your time and memories. How did you first get into sailing?

My cousin - Anirut, wants my kids to join his kids for sailing camp so I join as well.

Q

What is the most challenging or memorable race you've ever completed?

My favorite race was the Round the Island Race (RVYC Great Island Race). I won first place sailing a Laser. I still remember that race vividly. On the beat toward Koh Larn, everyone sailed close to shore, then tacked back out to sea. I was the only one who kept going closer to shore because I anticipated the change in current and the wind shifting in my favor. When I finally headed back out, I had opened up a huge lead over the entire fleet. From there, I sailed smart and stayed disciplined, avoiding unnecessary risks until I crossed the finish line in first place.

Q

What is your favorite memory or tradition associated with Royal Varuna Yacht Club?

The social and sportsmanship on the veranda. Everyone here to help out at that time. Sailing is a sport of gentlemen. It values honesty, respect for the rules, and conduct befitting a true sportsman. That's why being a sailor is something to be proud of.

Q

A family with three generations into sailing: If you could give one piece of advice to a new club member or beginner sailor, what would it be?

Enjoy sailing and don't complain about the veranda chairs!!! Don't shout and insult at other people. I'm very proud to be a sailor and that my grandson took after me. Weka is a great sailor and a world champion. He did not take after his parents, but he got it from his two granddads!

Q

Khun Viroj, naming the boat 'Platu' reflected a deep connection to local waters and a vision for sailors across the Gulf of Thailand. What was the exact moment or decision that made you realize a custom 25-foot day-racer was the ideal platform for Thai sailing development?

My team and I won the J/24 class at the SEA Games, but we all complained about how user-unfriendly the boat was. So, we agreed that we needed a boat specifically suited for the Gulf of Thailand, and we made it happen!

SHAPING OUR FUTURE GENERAL COMMITTEE LOG

The General Committee has continued its work over July, August, and September to strengthen club operations, enhance member experiences, and build positive momentum on and off the water. Here is an update on our recent initiatives, strategic progress, and upcoming plans:

Financial Discipline & Stewardship

Following our capital management plans earlier this year, our ongoing financial performance has improved significantly. While low seasonal activity and planned outlays in July created short-term pressures, targeted adjustments are ensuring a sustainable fiscal footing. We are also working closely with governing bodies, including the Sports Authority of Thailand (SAT), to ensure future major regattas remain financially neutral and well-backed.

Leadership Transition

We extend our heartfelt appreciation to General Manager Khun Kai, who stepped down in September for family reasons after dedicated service to Royal Varuna. A new General Manager, Mr. Willem T.P. Pentermann, has been appointed, with the handover currently underway.

Youth Engagement

A newly appointed Youth Sub-Committee has been established, taking charge of our digital engagement and social media presence.



World-Class Regattas & On-the-Water Operations

Royal Varuna continues to solidify its reputation as a leading international venue:

- **TP 52 Series:** RVYC will proudly serve as host club for the prestigious TP 52 series in Thailand, collaborating with YRAT, TP 52, and Ocean Marina, while providing our junior Optimist sailors an inspiring front-row role during the regatta.
- **World Championships:** The organizing subcommittee for the OK Worlds is fully operational, while long-term planning is underway for the 2029 Dart Worlds.
- **Safety & Standards:** The club successfully passed its annual RYA audit with only minor corrective points. We have also conducted comprehensive reviews of race officer and jury insurance protections, alongside reassessments of fleet maintenance following recent challenging weather conditions.

ALERT

38th Phuket King's Cup Regatta



Phuket December 05-12

The 38th Phuket King's Cup Regatta is officially set to bring world-class sailing back to the Andaman Sea from December 5 to 12, 2026. As Asia's largest and most prestigious big-boat regatta, this edition will once again transform the waters off Kata Beach into a vibrant arena of competitive racing. Continuing a proud tradition that began in 1987 under Royal Patronage to honour His Late Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the event unites the international yachting elite and passionate local teams. Off the water, the regatta promises its signature blend of tropical warmth, beachside camaraderie, and legendary evening events that capture the true spirit of Phuket.

Under the Royal Patronage of His Majesty the King of Thailand, the Regatta is organised by the Phuket King's Cup Regatta Organising Committee under the auspices of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, in conjunction with the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand, the Royal Thai Navy and the Province of Phuket.



Carnaval de Vela Brasileiro

What an unforgettable weekend at Royal Varuna Yacht Club for the Carnaval de Vela Brasileiro (Brazilian Cup)! Saturday night ignited the club with pure carnival rhythm—pulsing live music, hypnotic samba beats, and the electrifying presence of a Brazilian dancer setting the terrace on fire. The clubhouse buzzed with contagious energy, filled with laughter, clinking glasses, and sailors dancing late into the warm night, soaking in the true spirit of Rio right by the sea. By Sunday morning, the festive beats gave way to the roar of a brisk northeast breeze, churning up the Gulf and pushing our sailors straight to their limits. Across four hard-fought divisions, 24 boats and 35 sailors charged onto the racecourse, greeted by mounting gusts.





added a great spirit to Varuna

The race committee laid down true tests of nerve and tactics. The Open Monohulls and fearless young Optimist sailors battled through a tight, tactical buoy course, trading tacks in chop that demanded razor-sharp focus. Meanwhile, the high-speed Open Multihulls, Hobie 16s, and Dart 18s were unleashed on a punishing, four-leg blast around Koh Krok. It was pure adrenaline—crews fully extended on the wire, skimming wave crests, and hunting for every knot of boat speed on the reaches. Huge respect to everyone who braved the elements, and massive congratulations to our podium finishers!



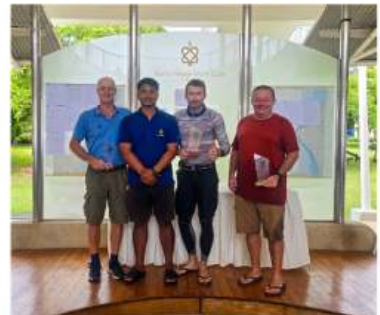


THE FIRST EXPAT CUP

Animated Varuna's Summer



On August 8 and 9, the rescheduled Expat Cup finally took to the water at RVYC under a wonderful summer breeze. Only the season's top sailors ventured out into the gulf, where 15-knot average winds and rolling seas set the stage for two days of challenging, unforgettable racing.



2026 DOWN UNDER CUP



Where Gravity is Strictly Optional



On October 10 & 11, the RVYC hosted the inaugural Down Under Cup, combining thrilling racing with an authentic Aussie beachside barbecue. Dinghy and cat fleets tackled high-octane conditions delivered by the seasonal Gulf breeze. Ashore at the Varuna Cove Beach Bar, ice-cold drinks, sizzling snags, and a vibrant sunset rounded out an unforgettable weekend.





VARUNA Cove Events

Pirate's Cove Saturday Night!

Yo ho, yo ho, a pirate's life for me. We pillage, we plunder, we rifle, and loot



ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB
BEACH BAR - VARUNA COVE

PIRATE'S COVE NIGHT

YO HO, YO HO, A PIRATE'S LIFE FOR ME. WE PILLAGE, WE PLUNDER, WE RIFLE, AND LOOT. GRAB AN EYE PATCH, AND THE FIRST ONE DRINK IS ON US, UP, ME HEARTIES!

SATURDAY OCTOBER 3

OFFER VALID FOR BEER ONLY.
EXCLUDES ALL OTHER BEVERAGES.





Bad Decision Saturday Night!

Cheap drinks, terrible ideas, and universal regret by sunrise.



ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB
BEACH BAR - VARUNA COVE

BAD DECISIONS NIGHT

A THEMED NIGHT WHERE THE DRINKS GET CHEAPER! THE WINKS YOUR IDEAS GET. COME READY TO REGRET EVERYTHING BY SUNRISE!

FEATURED STORYTELLER:
"FISH": TALES OF CANNIBAL FIJI

SATURDAY AUGUST 15
BEER HAPPY HOUR
6:00PM - 07:00PM
OFFER VALID FOR BEER ONLY.
EXCLUDES ALL OTHER BEVERAGES.

Phil & Nat Birthday Party

An evening of tides, tales, and Varuna magic!



Phil & Nat Birthday Party

FREE BEER & SPIT-ROASTED PORK

SEPTEMBER 05 SATURDAY AT 5 PM

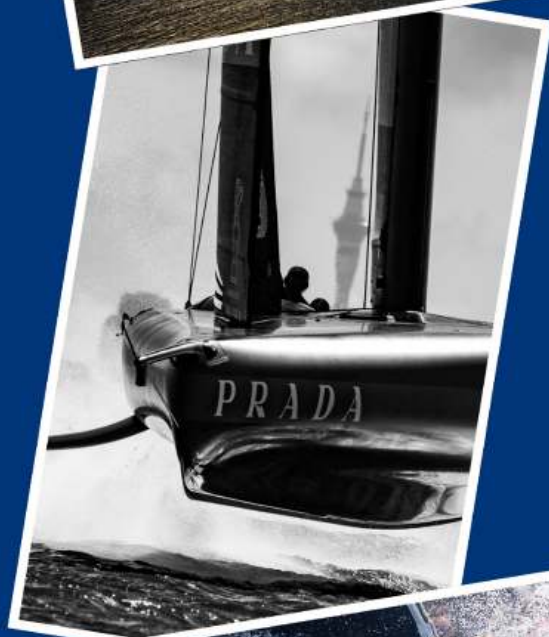
You're invited to a birthday bash! Celebrate with us and make it a day to remember!



The Lens That Captured the Sea

Honoring Carlo Borlenghi (1956–2026)

"Carlo transformed sailing photography into pure art, merging each competition into an iconic representation of nature and those men challenging the seas."



The world of sailing has lost one of its greatest photographic storytellers. **Carlo Borlenghi**, whose camera captured the soul of ocean racing for over four decades, has passed away at the age of 70. For generations of sailors, dreamers, and maritime enthusiasts, Carlo was not merely a photographer, he was the visual architect of our passion.



Dreaming in a Pre-Digital Era

Back in the late 1980s and early 1990s, before instant feeds, high-definition live streams, and social media, sailing lived in the pages of monthly magazines and printed posters. In those days, discovering a new Borlenghi photograph in a local shop or magazine felt like unlocking a window to another world. His images didn't just document races; they fuelled imagination. They hung on bedroom walls and in art shops, serving as daily reminders of the wild beauty waiting out on the open water.

Transforming Ocean Chaos into Pure Art

Sailing photography is notoriously unforgiving. Salt spray, unpredictable light, violent motion, and extreme weather make capturing a precise moment exceptionally difficult. Yet Borlenghi mastered the tempest. He framed delicate human craft against the titanic, chaotic energy of the ocean. Whether capturing the dawn light glinting off a bow wave or the high-stakes tension on a carbon-fiber deck, his compositions held the weight and majesty of classic paintings. Every shot conveyed the sheer courage and focus of the crews challenging the sea.

The Voice of Italian Sailing History

For Italy, Borlenghi was far more than an observer; he was the undisputed chronicler of the nation's rising stature on the global stage. Through his lens, millions followed the drama, triumph, and heartbreak of Italy's historic bids for the America's Cup. He gave visual life to legendary campaigns, turning sailors into icons and moments into collective national memory.

An Untouchable Legacy

Though Carlo Borlenghi has put down his camera, his work remains an untouchable archive of human spirit and maritime beauty. Today, as the sailing community mourns his passing, we look back on an incredible body of work filled with timeless emotion. His photographs will forever inspire those who look out toward the horizon and dream of setting sail.

www.carloborlenghi.com

THE PETER CUMMINS AWARD

AN ANNUAL RECOGNITION OF A MEMBER'S SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB

On September 5, 2026, the General Committee proudly presented the inaugural Peter Cummins Award – Varunian of the Year 2026 to Nima Chandler during a special ceremony on the RVYC Veranda. The Varunian of the Year Award was established to honour individuals who represent the very fabric of our club. Named after Peter Cummins—whose life remains deeply intertwined with the history and spirit of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club—this honour recognises members who serve as modern-day guardians of that legacy by consistently going above and beyond the call of membership.



This year, the General Committee unanimously chose Nima Chandler for this inaugural honour in recognition of:

- **Volunteerism:** A consistent willingness to support club events and initiatives entirely behind the scenes, without seeking the spotlight.
- **Mentorship:** A warm, welcoming approach that fosters an inclusive atmosphere, ensuring new and seasoned members alike feel at home at Varuna.
- **Leadership:** A proactive dedication to keeping the club a vibrant, world-class community for everyone.

During the ceremony, Flag Commodore John Higham officially presented Nima with the Commemorative Certificate of Appreciation. Vice Commodore Tom Whitcraft delivered a tribute honouring Peter Cummins, expressing the club's regret that Peter could not attend in person due to ongoing medical treatments for his deteriorating eyesight.

The entire RVYC community sends Peter our warmest wishes for his recovery and looks forward to seeing him back at the club very soon.

MARINA RUBICON LANZAROTE 52 SUPER SERIES SAILING WEEK

July 20th – July 25th, Lanzarote- SPAIN

The 52 SUPER SERIES debut off Playa Papagayo in Lanzarote delivered punishing conditions, with 15–20 knot trade winds, gusts exceeding 30 knots, and heavy Atlantic swells that even forced racing to be abandoned on Day 4.

Thailand's Team Vāyu capitalized on the heavy-air venue, showcasing their signature aggressive downwind speed. After opening the regatta with a 6th and 9th, their highlight came in Race 4, battling at the front alongside Paprec in 25-knot gusts to secure a top-5 finish. Despite lethal downwind pace, tricky shifts near the marks left Vāyu 9th overall in the competitive 13-boat fleet.



PUERTO CALERO LANZAROTE 52 SUPER SERIES ROYAL CUP

August 24th – 29th, Lanzarote- SPAIN

Team Vāyu, representing Thailand's Royal Varuna Yacht Club (RVYC), has clinched an impressive 6th place overall at the prestigious 52 Super Series Royal Cup. Facing elite grand prix competition and tricky Atlantic breezes, the Thai-flagged TP52 set the pace early, leading the fleet on Day 1 with back-to-back podium finishes.



Guided tactically by Manu Weiller with Don Whitcraft on the helm, the crew demonstrated fierce grit and sharp boat speed across four days of intense racing. Vāyu's solid mid-fleet aggregate in a packed 13-boat fleet underscores the continued rise of Thai sailing on the global stage, proving once again that RVYC's home-grown talent can challenge the very best in international yacht racing.

52 SUPER SERIES VALENCIA SAILING WEEK - THE FINALE

October 05th – October 10th, Valencia- SPAIN



Valencia Sailing Week: Shifty Waters and the Rise of Thailand's Vāyu (THA27)

The 52 SUPER SERIES Valencia Sailing Week gathered a record fleet of 16 grand prix TP52 yachts on the Mediterranean. As the finale to the season, the event tests tactical precision against complex coastal breezes, while the Thai-flagged Vāyu (THA27) has emerged as a standout contender.

Valencia is legendary in grand prix sailing, famous for its smooth sea breezes during the America's Cup era. However, autumn racing off Malvarrosa Beach brings far more volatile atmospheric dynamics. Rather than locked-in thermal sea breezes, racing has frequently been governed by land-influenced breezes hovering in the 9–12 knot range.



In Valencia's shifty conditions, Vāyu demonstrated how staying out of traffic pays dividends. Vāyu mounted a run near the top of the leaderboard against perennial powerhouses like Platoon Aviation and Sled. With Thailand set to host the circuit for the first time with the Thailand 52 SUPER SERIES Sailing Week and the Rolex TP52 World Championship, Vāyu's performance in Valencia cements THA27 not just as a crowd favorite, but as a legitimate podium contender on the world stage.



THAILAND AND ITALY FEATURE ON 52 SUPER SERIES' 2027 CALENDAR



The 52 SUPER SERIES will expand into Asia for the first time in 2027, fulfilling its initiative to race outside Europe every other year. The historic debut features two events in Thailand before the circuit heads to Italy and Spain for the European leg of the five-regatta season.

Thailand Debut (February & March)

Both Thai events will be hosted at the newly refurbished Ocean Marina near Pattaya under the flag of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club. The regattas are facilitated by the Whitcraft family, owners of the Thai-flagged team Vayū. Her Majesty Queen Suthida, an avid sailor who competed aboard Vayū in 2024, is anticipated to participate.

- Thailand 52 SUPER SERIES Sailing Week: February 8–13
- Rolex TP52 World Championship: March 18–23

European Leg & Season Finale:

The circuit shifts to Europe in late spring, featuring three regattas:

- Sorrento, Italy (May 25–30): A new venue on the Bay of Naples, coinciding with the opening round-robin phase of the Louis Vuitton Cup for the 38th America's Cup.
- Scarlino, Italy (July 5–10): A return to the popular Tuscan venue following previous stops in 2016, 2017, and 2023.
- Puerto Portals, Mallorca (September 14–19): The season finale in the Bay of Palma to crown the year's champion.

"We are proud and delighted to the 52 SUPER SERIES owners and crews have chosen to come to Thailand to race. The marina is lovely and has just been refurbished last year and the venue is spectacular and self-contained. The Yacht Club is very picturesque. It is very much a palm trees and sandy beaches kind of location. Thailand may have a reputation for being a light winds venue but we will be in a transition from a northerly breeze in January to southerly in March so we should get some decent breeze." Enthuses **Kevin Whitcraft** co-owner of the Team Vayū project.

www.52superseries.com



Triumphant Tide: Royal Varuna Yacht Club Sailors Shine at the ACDC Cup International Sailing Championship 2026

SATTAHIP, THAILAND — The waters of Sattahip came alive as top sailors gathered for the ACDC Cup International Sailing Championship 2026 (July 29 – August 1). Hosted by the Air and Coastal Defense Command Sailing Club, the event showcased elite racing skill, and sailors from the Royal Varuna Yacht Club (RVYC) stole the show. Across four days of intense racing, competitors faced shifting winds and demanding sea conditions. Despite the tough competition, RVYC's squad showed remarkable composure, technical precision, and strategic tactical execution in both fleets. Standout Highlights

- **Junior Excellence:** RVYC's young Optimist sailors displayed incredible tactical speed and composure, securing top finishes against a tough international fleet.
- **ILCA Dominance:** In the demanding ILCA (Laser) classes, Varuna sailors relied on peak physical fitness and superior boat handling to consistently claim podium spots.
- **Team Unity:** RVYC demonstrated exceptional sportsmanship and squad support throughout the competition.

Looking Ahead

This impressive performance highlights the dedication of RVYC's athletes and the strength of its world-class coaching program. The victory gives Varuna tremendous momentum as the squad prepares for the remaining national and international regattas of the 2026 season.

"Our sailors showed true grit, tactical sharpness, and unmatched sportsmanship. Their performance makes the entire RVYC community immensely proud."

Congratulations to all RVYC sailors—fair winds for the races ahead!



ALERT

18TH EASTERN SEABOARD REGATTA

WEDNESDAY 28th OCTOBER TO SUNDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2026
OPTIMIST – ILCA 4 – ILCA 6 YOUTH U19
INTERNATIONAL 420 CLASS YOUTH U19



The wind is calling, and the countdown has officially begun!

We are thrilled to announce that the 18th Eastern Seaboard Regatta will be returning to our waters this fall. From Wednesday, October 28th to Sunday, November 1st, 2026, the Royal Varuna Yacht Club will play host to some of the most exciting young sailing talent in the region.

Whether you are competing, cheering on our youth sailors, or simply looking to enjoy the incredible atmosphere and community spirit, this is an event you won't want to miss.



Member Spotlight: Beat Heinz takes on the Elbe!



Class of 1962, Swiss by nationality but Thai at heart, Beat Heinz has been representing the Royal Varuna Yacht Club across the globe. Fresh off a highly competitive 15th-place finish at the ILCA Thailand National Championship on our home waters in January, Beat recently traded the Gulf of Thailand for cooler waters. He joined the 2026 ILCA Masters in Hamburg at the Mühlenberger Segel-Club, battling the tricky currents of the Elbe as part of the EurILCA Master Series. When he isn't racing his boat LaSaBuSu, Beat does massive heavy lifting behind the scenes for the sport. He used to be the European Laser Master Co-ordinator for EurILCA and helps keep the major European Master Series events running smoothly. We are proud to have him flying the RVYC colors abroad!

Stellar Podium Haul for RVYC's Taiwanese Sailors Team in Langkawi, Malaysia

The 5th Langkawi International Youth Sailing Championship 2026, held from June 24-28, 2026, witnessed a spectacular display of talent from the Taiwanese contingent. Racing under the proud banner of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club (RVYC), these young athletes put on a masterclass in competitive sailing across the highly contested Laser (ILCA) classes, bringing home an impressive collection of podium finishes.

ILCA 6 Men: Kala Yeh delivered a brilliant performance through the waves, fighting off intense international competition to claim the 1st Runner-Up spot.

ILCA 6 Women: Matching that stellar performance, Kuanying Lee showcased incredible tactical skill and resilience, also capturing the 1st Runner-Up trophy.

ILCA 4 Boys: Yu Kai Chen sailed a phenomenal regatta, keeping the pressure on the fleet to lock in yet another 1st Runner-Up finish for the team.

ILCA 4 Under 15: The future looks incredibly bright for the club, as the U15 fleet saw a double-podium celebration. Yong Ray Chuang sailed beautifully to finish as the 1st Runner Up, while teammate Yeh Chen Yang fought hard right behind him to claim 2nd Runner Up.

Congratulations to all the sailors for their hard work, dedication, and for proudly flying the RVYC colors on the international stage!



ALERT

2026 ILCA District Championship
5 - 8 November 2026

ILCA Asian Open Championship
11 - 20 December 2026



SOPHIA MONTGOMERY WINS ASIAN GAMES SAILING GOLD AND SECURES OLYMPIC QUOTA



Sophia Montgomery has won the gold medal for Thailand in the women's dinghy (ILCA 6) sailing event at the Asian Games. The 23-year-old Thai-American sailor delivered consistent performances throughout the competition before finishing at the top of the overall standings to secure the Asian Games title. Source: The Nation



Sixteen-year-old Thai sailor Pinchanok Klaysomboon captured another gold medal for Thailand in the Girls' Dinghy (ILCA 4) event. Delivering a dominant performance, Pinchanok finished first in six of the twelve races. Although she accumulated 43 penalty points, discarding her two lowest finishes brought her net score down to 25 points, securing the top spot on the leaderboard. Meanwhile, compatriot Hussaluk Srinakorn placed fifth in the Boys' Dinghy (ILCA 4)—a promising result that suggests he will be a strong contender in the coming years. Rounding out the team's strong showing, Chusitt Punjamala finished sixth in the Men's Dinghy (ILCA 7).



SPORTSMANSHIP IN RACING, AND AFTERWARDS ON THE VERANDA

By Morten Jakobsen (OK Dinghy THA444 and RVYC OK Dinghy Fleet Captain)



2026 Royal Varuna Yacht Club Masters Championship

Being Danish-born, my sailing hero when I grew up was the four-time Olympic gold medallist Paul Elvstrom. If you are not familiar with him, his contributions to sailing are many. Examples include the invention of the Elvstrom Bailer, ratchet blocks, driving winches with bicycle pedals, and turning leisurely sail racing into a physically demanding sport. However, I see his most wide-ranging influence in his quote highlighting practical sportsmanship:

"You haven't won the race if in winning the race you have lost the respect of your competitors." — **Paul Elvstrom**

I have always tried to instill this approach within my teams. Neil Semple and I ran a keelboat racing program for 7 to 8 years and had over 50 crew members over the years who could attest to this approach. We may have been tough competitors, but nobody needed to encourage us to do penalty turns when we accidentally broke a racing rule; having fun and sailing fair was just the way our team operated. Racing rules are a mystery to many beginner sailors, but it is worth knowing that all the relevant right-of-way rules fit on about five pages in the rulebook. They can be learned by almost all sailors if they put their minds to it. I would like to mention Varuna member Shamus, who asked me about the racing rules one morning and got a brief explanation while taking notes. Later the same day at the bar, another sailor came up and asked why I had broken a particular racing rule. Shamus stood beside me and was able to explain which rules applied and who was actually at fault. Not everybody can learn the important racing rules in 15 minutes, but he could.

For sailors new to racing, it is perhaps worth mentioning that among high-level racers (including at least half of the Varuna monohull Junior sailors and all the adult Varuna sailors competing at the world championship level), rule knowledge is close to 100%. Almost everyone knows every right-of-way racing rule and how it applies in practice. At the back of the fleet, the rules are critical to preventing collisions, but at the front of the fleet, they are also used to allow sailing to be like a game of chess, adding to the fun and complexity of the sport. It is, of course, part of the game that you often get checkmated yourself, and most—including six-time OK Dinghy World Champion Nick Craig, who raced recently at Varuna, and myself—just deal with this with a smile and a shout of "well sailed!" to the other party at the first opportunity after the race. I hope Varuna junior sailors will read this part, recall receiving hundreds of "well sailed" shouts over the years and adopt the same habit themselves. There are, of course, situations where sailors disagree on the rules. Recently, my friend Matt and I had a mark rounding where there was a bit of disagreement on the water. As soon as we hit the veranda, we got the rulebooks out and analysed not only who had the right of way in our situation but also looked at the applicable rules for all the other ways two boats can overlap at leeward marks, ensuring we both understand the rules the same way from then on. You will rarely hear high-level sailors complain about incidents with other sailors after an event. Everyone knows the conflict resolution part of the rulebook and, for significant incidents, follows this process within the given time limits.



2026 Thailand Open National



2011 Matchrace Thailand Open National Championship – Team EM

They then let the protest committee earn their pay and deliver a verdict. The sailors accept the ruling and shake hands. I consider this a prime example of good sportsmanship in practice. (Note: there is always a protest committee available at events. If one is not set up from the beginning, the organizer is obliged to sort one out when or if it is required). In comparison, beginner and mid-fleet sailors may choose to just complain about incidents after the race on the veranda, which can cause bad feelings in a fleet and allow the same types of incidents to repeat themselves time and time again. In my opinion, it is far healthier if incidents are reviewed either formally or informally. For an informal resolution, a fleet can, for example, assign an experienced racer to act as an arbitrator and have both parties explain the situation in public so everyone around the table learns from the incident—ending it with a handshake between the two parties and perhaps a beer for the arbitrator. It happens very rarely, but should you hear veranda talk from experienced racers complaining about a racing incident with another sailor who is not present, the most appropriate response is perhaps to ask, “Did the other boat break any rules?” and “Did you protest within the time limit?” If the answer to either is “no,” you can draw your own conclusions and perhaps also firmly request that they refrain from the subject without the other party present, as you consider it bad sportsmanship to do so. How does this affect sailors new to racing? Should they be afraid of top-level sailors protesting or unexpectedly using the rules against them? My own take is that I would never protest a beginner sailor who breaks a rule inadvertently. I prefer to instead quietly have a chat after sailing to help improve the rule knowledge in the fleet. When beginner racers are not fully in control of their boats—for example, at the starts—the best solution is often just to get out of their way, and perhaps later invite them to join activities where they can learn better boat handling in a low-stress environment.

Close-quarters boat handling is unlikely to be improved by sailing in long-distance races or on cruises. For a sailor new to the sport, it could be a feasible objective to learn the basic rules and obtain reasonable control of the boat within one year. Both skills will add to the confidence and enjoyment of the fantastic sport of yacht racing. You never know where this will take you; one day you may find yourself at the front of the fleet, having fun playing chess with the other top sailors. If you are particularly diligent in your training, you may even find yourself on a world championship podium. And don't forget that when you sail elsewhere, you represent your club and your country, so treat others the way you would like to be treated yourself. Please also remember that Rule 2—helping sailors in need—takes priority over all other considerations at sea. Hopefully, one day you can look back on your career as a racer and have lots of sailing pals who see you as a tough competitor but still respect you. You may also have a few news clippings you can be proud of, like this quote from an article published after an extremely closely fought Asia-Pacific title in the Laser class in India:

“Jakobsen sailed clean and fair, exemplary of which was the workshop the Dane conducted here on the full rig on the rest day.” — The Hindu, Sunday, May 20, 2001

Full disclosure: The author has been protested twice under Rule 69 (gross misconduct/bad sportsmanship) in his 45-year racing career. However, one protest was for lending his keelboat for free to an overseas team with a broken, identical boat, and the second was an attempt to reuse prizes that was misunderstood. Both protests were withdrawn or dismissed.



2026 Royal Varuna Yacht Club Masters Championship



RVYC's David Lloyd, Simon Lake & Marco Manganelli at the 2026 Dart World in Carnac.

The 25th Dart 18 World Championship wrapped up at the Yacht Club de Carnac, leaving competitors with exhausted muscles and thoroughly tested nerves. Marking the iconic catamaran class's 50th anniversary, the regatta drew a massive fleet of 141 boats to the Quiberon Bay. However, the legendary French waters refused to make it a celebration, serving up some of the most frustrating, erratic conditions in recent racing memory. Instead of the classic, reliable Brittany breezes, the fleet was plagued by a relentless combination of awful, flat light and radically shifty winds. Visibility was low, making it incredibly difficult to read the water and anticipate pressure.



Worse still, the breeze refused to lock into any single direction. Massively unpredictable wind shifts turned tactical strategies on their heads, shuffling the leaderboard from one leg to the next. For the crews, it was a week-long mental chess match where a single bad read could drop a boat twenty places in a heartbeat. Despite the bruising conditions, the three teams representing the Royal Varuna Yacht Club showed incredible resilience. Facing down a highly technical European fleet on unfamiliar, unruly waters, the Varunians dug deep to grind out hard-fought results across the gruelling week. Leading the charge for the Varuna contingent was an exceptional performance by David Lloyd and crew Jojo Trafford, who broke straight into the top tier to claim a brilliant 13th overall. Navigating the shifty margins with remarkable consistency, they proved they could run neck-and-neck with the world's absolute best. Further back in the dense mid-fleet, where the real tactical dogfights took place, the remaining Varunian crews held their ground beautifully. Battling through the erratic starts and crowded mark rounding's, Marco Manganelli and crew Amanda Jenks secured a highly respectable 50th, while Simon and Paweena Lake fought hard to lock in 79th overall. Out of 141 elite international boats, placing all three teams inside the top eighty under such punishing conditions is a testament to the grit, adaptability, and world-class training of the Varuna sailors.





Dart 18 National Championships

22-27th August 2026
Falmouth, Cornwall

Congratulations to RVYC's David Lloyd and Jojo Trafford for securing a fantastic 4th place overall at the UK Dart 18 National Championship!

Royal Varuna Yacht Club made a strong impression at the UK Dart 18 National Championship, with our sailors delivering standout performances in a highly competitive 70-boat fleet. Leading the charge, David Lloyd and Jojo Trafford secured a fantastic 4th place overall, showcasing remarkable consistency, tactical skill, and boat speed throughout the regatta to finish near the very top of the leaderboard. RVYC was well represented across the fleet: Marco Manganelli fought hard to secure a solid 31st place, while Simon & Ja-aey crossed the line in 52nd place in an intensely contested championship. Congratulations to all our sailors for proudly flying the RVYC flag on the national stage!



ADVERTISING



RVYC DOG DAY AFTERNOON





"WELCOME TO THE PIGGY SHIRT CLUB, GUYS!"

**"SPECIAL
THANKS TO SEA
RESCUE
PATTAYA CITY
AND THE ROYAL
VARUNA YACHT
CLUB SAILING
DEPARTMENT
FOR THEIR
PROMPT ACTION
WHENEVER OUR
SAILORS
ENCOUNTER
DIFFICULTY AT
SEA."**

**THE
END**


Fish Adventure

ANOTHER FISH ADVENTURE

Talk about a wild ride! During July and August weekends, only the bravest sailors followed our Hobie leader, Fish, into the craziest adventures across the gulf. There is a unique magic to sailing in fleet out in front of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club. Together, the sailors decide where the wind will take them each day. One weekend it's a swift run to Koh Sak; the next, a leisurely cruise for lunch at Koh Larn's Samae Chompoo (Pink Beach), or anchoring off Monkey Beach when the tide plays along. On the bigger weather days—and with the trusty RVYC RIB standing by as safety support—the fleet sets its sights further out, pointing their hulls toward the pristine white sands of Koh Phai. No matter the destination, it's the camaraderie on the water, the spray in the face, and the shared horizon that turn every weekend into an unforgettable island journey.



2026-27 DART & HOBIE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



- Open to Dart18 and Hobie16
- Two Days of Thrilling Racing
- Beach Bar Event & Hospitality

IB Super Series Championship's 2027 Results & Standing

GOLD

SILVER

BRONZE



OVERALL STANDING

	BRONZE (5 Points)	SILVER (3 Points)	GOLD (1 Point)	Darts	Hobies
The Yorkshire Cup	Hobie 16 Nat Mulford	Dart 18 Simon Lake	Dart 18 David Lloyd	4.0	5.0
The American Cup	Hobie 16 Nat Mulford	Dart 18 Manito Henry	Dart 18 Will Thompson	4.0	5.0
The Italian Cup	Hobie 16 Nat Mulford	Dart 18 Manito Henry	Hobie 16 Grahame Southwick	3.0	6.0
Carnaval de Vela Brasileiro	Hobie 16 Carlo Pagano	Hobie 16 Lynden Astill	Dart 18 David Lloyd	1.0	8.0
Down Under Cup	Dart 18 Carlo Pagano	Hobie 16 Lynden Astill	Hobie 16 Grahame Southwick	5.0	4.0
The German Cup				-	-
The Japan Cup				-	-
The Varuna Cup				-	-
The Siamese Cat Cup				-	-
The Hobie & Dart National				-	-
The Chandler Challenge				-	-
Prince Bira's Firebird Trophy				-	-
The French Cup				-	-
The New Land Race				-	-
The Commodore Cup				-	-
The Drifters Dash				-	-
				TOTAL	17.0 28.0

BELUGA
RACING TEAM

IB
Chase Your Dreams
We are pouring happiness into people's lives.

Get Front-Row Seats to the Action: Race Management Volunteers Wanted!

BY LAWNIN CRAWFORD



World-class regattas do not run themselves; they are powered by the camaraderie, precision, and passion of our member community. With an exciting lineup of high-profile racing heading to our waters, the Royal Varuna Yacht Club Race Management team is calling on members to step aboard and take an active part in the excitement.

Volunteering on the water offers the best seat in the house to watch fierce fleet battles, sharpen your understanding of race management, and spend quality time with fellow members. Whether you are an experienced race officer or keen to learn the ropes alongside our veteran team, your time and support make all the difference.

Open Volunteer Roles:

October 29-31

*Eastern Seaboard Regatta
Timer/Gunner; Recorder*

November 6-8:

*ILCA Districts Regatta
Timer/Gunner; Finish Line*

December 11-20

*ILCA Asian and Open Championship
Pin End Starting Line; Finish Line*

To apply for any of these roles, speak directly with our Sailing Director, Khun Oat, or email director@varuna.org.

Let's make this season's regattas unforgettable!

Why Join the Race Management Team?

- *Unmatched Views: Watch tactical maneuvers and tight mark roundings from just meters away.*
- *No Heavy Experience Required: Seasoned volunteers will pair with you and provide quick, on-the-water training for roles like recording and timekeeping.*
- *Great Company: Enjoy a day out on the Gulf, complete with race committee boat hospitality and team spirit.*





RYA AFFILIATED

RYA Youth Courses 2026

(16 years old and under)

**DATES**

October MON 12 - FRI 16
December MON 21 - FRI 25

COURSES AVAILABLE**PRICES**

Stages 1-4 (5 Days)
Member 11,000 THB
Non-Member 14,000 THB
Surcharges may apply

STAGE 1

- Learn launching and recovery, sailing, steering, turning around, and basic parts of the boat.

**STAGE 2**

- Improve your sailing skills on all points of sail. Learn tacking, gybing, rope, rope, rope, and collision avoidance.

**STAGE 3**

- Practice and improve skills in rigging, launching and recovery, sailing techniques on points of sail, capsize recovery and sailing recovery.

STAGE 4

- Transfer your sailing skills, techniques and manoeuvres to sail rewed boats. Enhance your rigging, launching, recover, man overboard.



The number of students per instructor is limited to 6, so book soon!

Course fees include boat hire, tuition, safety equipment, logbooks and certificates.
For enquiries and further details, please contact director@varuna.org or call +66 3825 0116

Accommodation available

Scan to Register / Info



BOOK NOW: director@varuna.org | +66 3825 0116

ALERT



THE PIGGY SHIRT 2026 COMPETITION



Overall Standing

J. Francoise "Macron"	3
Grahame Southwick (Fish)	3
Philip "Yorkshire" Capel	3
Will Thompson	3
Matthieu Sensenbrenner	2
Fabrice Goetschmann	2
Henry Wiedman	2
Mark Hamill-Stewart	2
Laurent Landie	2
David Bond	1
Nat Mulford	1
Poppy Mulford	1
Chanokchon "Manow"	1
Florent Herson	1
J. Christopher Deledalle	1
Steeffan Devos	1
Morten Jakobsen	1
Nattawut "Oat" Vongrak	1
Cees Algra	1
Eric "Catherine Deneuve"	1
Koravic "Wikki" Bhanubandh	1
Lynden Thomas Astill	1
Jonathan Sims	1
Roch Giacinti	1
Andrew Hurrell	1
Nicholas Hurrell	1
Alex Frefel	1
Nima Chandler	1
Jimmy "Schettino"	1
Matt Norton	1
David Thomas	1
Joshua Kurtz	1
Ashwin Elijah IV	1
Lawnin Crawford	1
Liam Pepper	1
Bic Leu	1
Ja-ae Lake	1



Le Pig Frérôts

10% tactical genius, 90% pure pig-headed determination. Sailing fast? Non. Oinking hard? Oui, absolument, c'est bon!



Letting her drive is fine, as long as you don't mind the complimentary swim!



"THE PIGGY WALL OF ~~FAME~~ SHAME"



Four grown adults, one tiny rudder, and 100% collective confusion.



"Captain Jimmy SCHETTINO"
Jimmy's grand voyage lasted about as long as a sneeze before his dinghy decided it was actually a submarine



David's Thomas new sailing tactic: He opted to crack the sail window to let a breeze in!



TO BE CONTINUED 〰〰〰

Falling overboard and watching your own boat ghost you in real time. Matthieu, spitting seawater: "Tell me you didn't leave the autopilot on." Bonus points for turning our maritime shame into prime-time local news content.

Every club has a story, and ours is written across decades of camaraderie, competition, and wind-filled sails. This two-page feature brings together historic news clippings that celebrate the people and events that shaped RVYC into what it is today. Our heartfelt thanks go to **Charlie Zbinden**, whose generous contribution of his extensive archives made this walk down memory lane possible

Have a Piece of RVYC History?

Our archives are always growing. If you have vintage photographs, regatta programs, clippings, or memorabilia from years past, we would love to see them. Contact the club office to help us preserve our shared heritage for future generations.

FAIR WINDS & FRONT PAGES RVYC VINTAGE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Pattaya Mail PC Classic race next month

Royal Cliff Beach Resort International Regatta shapes up

The "Pattaya Mail PC Classic - Royal Cliff Beach Resort International Regatta" is scheduled to be sailed off the resort hotel on Saturday, February 24.

It will be organized by the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, which has over the years, maintained friendly relations with its illustrious neighbour situated to the contiguous bay to the Royal Varuna at Pattaya Point. In fact, the Club has looked to the Royal Cliff as the ideal location for such up-market social events as the Awards Night for last year's Volvo Fireball World Championships. It was an evening that the participants from around the world - especially now, when most of them are in the grip of a bitter Northern European winter - are still writing about.

Royal Varuna Yacht Club ring commodore Don Mackenzie regards the Royal Cliff support as a most positive step forward in promoting sailing and yacht racing as a means of furthering Pattaya's image as an ideal haven for marine sports generally. Don also sees this forthcoming regatta as a fore-runner of other yacht racing events supported by both the public and private sectors to Pattaya.

Richard Van Den Heuvel, the Royal Varuna sailing secretary, expects good fleets from the monohulls, the multihulls and the Optimists. He will



Laser greets, Neil Semple (L) and Charlie Zbinden will be there

organize the racing out off the Royal Cliff Beach Resort, with starts and finishes close in to the hotel beach from, thus ensuring maximum exposure for hotel guests and other spectators on the shore for this environmentally friendly and colourful activity.

Tidal conditions will not permit a landing in front of the hotel itself; rather the fleet will then proceed to the Royal Wing beach, on the northern side of the complex, after which the participants, race management team and supporters, numbering some 100 people, will enjoy Royal Cliff beach side hospitality and an Awards Ceremony to be provided over by Panga Vathanakul,

managing director of the exotic live-star resort. Inaugurated in 1995 to celebrate the sixtieth birthday of Peter Cummins, the Pattaya Mail scribe and 10th commodore of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club (1979-1980), the Pattaya Mail PC Classic is now regarded as one of the coveted events on Royal Varuna's rightly packed calendar. Selling secretary Richard hopes for some 40 craft at the start line and will issue the Notice of Race shortly, when details are finalized. The Classic will be open to all yachts affiliated to Royal Varuna or any registered yacht club.

The two major class winners will be awarded wood replicas of the PC Classic permanent trophy, cut from native Tasmanian woods and hand-tooled into the shape of Australia's island state which, fortuitously, is actually shaped like a shield. Special trophies are being prepared for the minor placings in each class and all competitors will be presented with "designer" polo shirts. Any enquiries could be directed to the Pattaya Mail, tel: (038) 411-210-1; 413-240-1; fax (038) 427-506; e-mail: pty@mail@chonburi.kse.co.th; of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, tel: (038) 250-116; fax (038) 250-116.

Watch this space for more information on the event.



"PC" is already preparing his OK dinghy for the event: a rare sighting of the "East Sea Rider" (read, "Easy Rider" (writer?))



Managing Director of the Royal Cliff Beach Resort, Panga Vathanakul supports the event

PATTAYA MAIL JANUARY 26, 2001

A WINDOW INTO THE PAST

YACHTING "Off the beach" series

Bird and Kanon win close yachting series

By PETER CUMMINS

M.R. BURANUBONGSE (Bird) Bhuanabandh and Kanon Chaisriwattana won the just-completed "Off the beach" series sailed off the Royal Var-

una Yacht Club over the past few weekends. Although this was relatively predictable, there were many surprises, nevertheless, and the winners had already left for Sattahip, to participate in the Southeast Asian Games selection trials, before the results could

be published.

As the six-race series entered its last phase, it was Bird and crew Kanon in the Fireball, who were marginally ahead of erstwhile leader Patrick Helms in a Laser. Yet, when one allowable discard for the series was de-

ducted, these two were equal as they started race five last Saturday.

Race officer Dave Wales inducted prospective Royal Varuna Club members, Stefan Hofmann and Jochen Rauchs, into service, to savour the intricacies and glory of race management: a prerequisite now for intending joiners of Royal Varuna.

The wind was ominously out of the north, light and astidest and race five again proved to be a mono-hull rout, with Fireball enthusiasts Bird/Kanon and Jens Overgaard/Pairote Maturanon, the latter pair making a late bid for the title, finishing first and second. Patrick needed better than his Laser's third placing to stay in contention. Ever-consistent Charlie Zbinden, always snapping at the heels of the leaders - if, in fact, he is not leading, was fourth, closely followed by fellow Laser lights, Rui Sulzmann and Kanji Kono.

Then came an ominous seventh placing - a Hobie Cat 16 under the very able helmanship of Hans Van Hattem with daughter Ms Van Hattem crewing. Two more rising stars, Trevor Risky and Sai Yin, avenging a line honours victory incorrectly assigned to another team some time ago,

were eighth in a Hobie Cat 16. The race five report would not be complete without a mention of Alex Skaria finishing ninth in his Laser, just ahead of solo sailor Steve O'Brien (Hobie Cat 17).

John Martin took the two novices - by now tried and trusted deputies - on board the race committee for the vital race six. Tension was high: Patrick had to win and have Bird in no better than fourth, to take the honours.

Club Commodore Martin set a starboard-hand course in light winds which at least came from the right quarter - the south. Bird/Kanon held away and it was all over for Patrick. But, was it? Bird finished incorrectly and was disqualified. Patrick was dancing. Bird's penalty made them equal first.

But there they were - those Van Hattems - again. Finishing race six in an incredible 52 minutes elapsed time, they had sufficient margin, after conceding handicap, to win over Patrick, Jens Overgaard/Pairote, Bianca Helms/Victoria, Wales (Enterprise), Rui Sulzmann (Laser), Kwan Posakriusa (Poh) (470) and the real Leslie Thornton (Laser), who were second to



Bird, left, and Kanon: Now for the SEA Games.

eight, respectively.

Bird's little finish line "misadventure" was oft repeated throughout this very different series. Not so, though, for Southeast Asian Games hopefuls, Kwan and Poh. Right behind Jens, Kwan saw the great Dane finish on the opposite side of the line to Bird and a hapless Charlie Zbinden who was also disqualified. "Something rotten in the state of Denmark," mused Kwan on a literary bent. "Unlike! But 'to be sure'," said the SEA Games sailing beauty, "we finished both ways, just to cover any eventualities."

Even as John started the presentations, five of Royal Varuna's finest were travelling to Sattahip, to participate in the 16th Southeast Asian Games selection trials for the yachting events which will be held there from 9-

16 December. Bird and Kanon will compete for the men's 470, while Kwan/Poh will compete for the ladies 420 in which class Kwan won a Gold at the 16th SEA Games in Singapore. Patrick will be pitted against the top Royal Navy sailors, striving for the Laser berth.

Results, 1995 Off the beach series (first 10). 1. Bird/Kanon (Fireball, 7.25); 2. Patrick Helms (Laser, 8.5); 3. Charlie Zbinden (Laser, 22.0); 4. Bianca Helms/Victoria Wales (Enterprise, 39.0); 5. Jens Overgaard/Pairote Maturanon (Fireball, 41.0); 6. Alex Skaria (Laser, 48.0); 7. John Guy (Laser, 50.0); 8. Alan Branscar (Hobie Cat 16, 53.0); 9. Hans Van Hattem (Hobie Cat 16, 56.75); 10. Kwan Posakriusa/Poh (470, 62.00).



The happy prize-winners pose while some sped for SEA Games trials. Photos: PETER CUMMINS

BANGKOK POST AUGUST 27, 1995

A GLIMPSE INTO SIMPLER TIMES

Varuna founders together: Varuna founder? - never!

by Peter Cummins

It was indeed a night to remember as several of Royal Varuna Yacht Club's founding members gathered at the Club sea-front property at South Pattaya last week for a night of reminiscing and snippers of the Club's rich 41-year history.

The meeting was a re-affirmation of the Club's viability far into the future: "The Club we founded will never founder," announced Walter Meyer at the outset. "Thank you, Walter; you have just given me a 'gom' for my headline," Hold the founding 'Flag Commodore'.

HSB Prince Bhisatej (Peter) Rajani, Walter L. Meyer, first "Chairman of the Board" (alias "Flag Commodore") and Rachiman Gintzburger, three of the four founders, were joined by second Commodore Sidney J. Watkins who had come to Thailand and Pattaya from his home town of Mullumbimby (yes, that is a REAL place) on the coast of Victoria, Australia.

Walter Meyer hosted the evening which included Charlie Zhinden, a long-time Varuna Club stalwart and Pa-

Incumbent Flag Commodore Lawrin Crawford had to cancel because of pressing business back in Bangkok.

When Walter hosted a similar event (lunch, that time), way back in July, 1957, seeking "friends interested in forming a boating club," he set in motion the makings of the then Varuna Marine Club and became the first Chairman. In those halcyon days, none of the founders knew much about such clubs, thinking "Commodore" was the title of a naval officer.

Walter thus served as chairman from 1957 until 1964, when Sid Watkins took over as second commodore until 1966.

There they were last week, together for the first time in 32 years, with a total age of 305 years between them, one cotogenarian (Walter, 83) and three septuagenarians Bhisatej (77), Rachiman (73) and Sid, the "beby" of the group, weighing in at a mere 72 years-of-age. Or, as Bhisatej remarked, "are we talking of total age or combined weights here?" Which, of course, sparked a new round of stories.

Walter raised a toast to honour Varuna's Royal Pa-



A toast to the Varuna Royal Patron, H.M. the King. (L to R) Sid Watkins, Walter Meyer, HSB Prince Bhisatej Rajani and Rachiman Gintzburger. Photo Peter Cummins

sented to become the Club's Royal Patron in 1965. Walter also revived the memory of some of the illustrious early sailors who had passed on, particularly Prince Birabongse Bhanubandh and Dr. Rachot Kanjana-Vanit.

Each one of the founders was a mine of information about a former Pattaya and environs that the rest of us could only dream about: spar-

Gulf so clear "you could almost drink it," as Sid noted. "Perhaps, in Australia, you DO drink sea-water?" was one retort.

The days of the late fifties and early sixties were recalled - a 'golden' era when members of the Royal Family graced the fledgling club with not only their presence but also with competitive dinghy racing.

of salting", according to Walter, set the Club onto a vigorous sailing programme from its pristine site at a South Pattaya village of some 20 fishing families. Bhisatej introduced His Majesty to sailing and, together with the King, built several boats, including Enterprises and OK dinghies.

His tutelage paid off when the King won a sailing Gold in the OK class at the Fourth

Games), in 1967. The King actually came equal first with his eldest daughter, Princess Ubolratana - a record unlikely to be equaled in sporting history.

Although Bhisatej had a hard time convincing his fellow-founders that he was seven times a national champion of Thailand, nevertheless, after his stories, the anecdotes flew, increasing in tempo in proportion to the "flow of the vino." All agreed, however, that even with the enormous changes that have befallen Pattaya, the spirit imbued in the original Varuna Marine Club, in 1998, is alive and well.

Now known as the Royal Varuna Yacht Club, after H.M. the King bestowed Royal Patronage on 26 April, 1965, the anecdotes still fly, the vino still flows, as the founding fathers intended it and the racing continues unabated, albeit with vastly different craft to the dinghies of yore.

Those who have the good fortune to descend on Royal Varuna after a frantic week-week in the capital, "are forever grateful to the founding fathers" - to quote from a recent Varuna publication - "for the foresight and the wisdom of our early Commodores, which gives us sailing, fun

PATTAYA MAIL - AUGUST 28, 1998

Honouring the Past, Sailing into the Future

While the clippings yellow with time, the spirit of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club remains as vibrant as ever. Here's to the legends who paved the way, and to the new stories, friendships, and victories still being written out on the water today. The article above, written by the legendary **Peter Cummins**, encapsulates the rich history of our club—memories that must never be lost.

ALERT



ANNOUNCING THE 2027 CHANDLER CHALLENGE

JANUARY 1st, 2027

OPEN TO ALL SAILORS: MEMBER AND GUEST

NO HANGOVER TOO BIG TO MISS THIS.

Start your New Year with a real kick, some salt air, and a fresh breeze! Shake off the fog and cure it with a bloody Mary and a brilliant sail. You can sleep tomorrow; race today!

SUPER-QUICK SINGLE-HANDED SKIFF WEAPON: **THE RS700**

RS

Sailing



A top-level single-handed skiff with a performance equalisation system meaning that people of all weights are competitive, leading to really close racing. Downwind performance is simply sensational! The RS700 has refined systems for user-friendliness and competition on the fantastic RS Racing Circuits. A challenging and fast sail, it's certainly not for the faint hearted but this class has a cult following and it's easy to see why. No bimbbling, no fuss, just take off the cover and get out on the water for thrills and speed!

Features

- Moderate hull form with minimal tendency to nosedive
- Flared topsides for reserve stability
- Cockpit design allows a secure helming position from which to initiate manoeuvres or hoist and drop the spinnaker – a crucial design element to make the boat more user friendly
- Spinnaker hoisting and dropping made simple by the large chute mouth and pump action halyard system
- Carbon composite mast. Ultra-light weight with dynamic gust response in the tip
- Lifting rudder for easy launching
- Performance equalisation system with adjustable width wings



At RVYC our top sailor Ashwin Elijah IV enjoying the RS700 in full mode. Here are his impressions: *"I'd never really sailed before I bought this thing. Zero experience. I just saw an RS700, decided it looked like a good idea, and handed over the money like a man with a plan. I did not have a plan. Turns out it doesn't matter, because this boat is an absolute weapon. It's fast enough to make my complete lack of skill look intentional half the time, and forgiving enough that I haven't drowned yet, which I'm counting as a win. I've named her Joanna. We have a good relationship, she does the sailing, I do the falling in, and somewhere in between we're both figuring it out together. Best first boat decision I never planned to make."*



Varuna Youth NextGen Leadership



Varuna Youth was established to operate as a self-governing subcommittee under the oversight of the RVYC General Committee. Aimed at bridging the gap between junior and adult sailing through high-performance technical mentorship, leadership development, and club service.



The inaugural meeting was held on August 30, with the Commodore and the Activities Committee Chairman in attendance.

Historically, Royal Varuna Yacht Club, like many international sailing institutions, faces a drop in active participation when sailors reach age eighteen. Lacking a dedicated transition tier or clear role beyond junior fleets, these members often drift away from the club. Varuna Youth provides a structured platform built on leadership, technical mentorship, global networking, and brand ambassadorship to ensure lifelong retention.

Strategic Value to RVYC

- **Technical Mentorship:** Support junior sailors through structured coaching, clinics, and Pro-Am regattas.
- **Leadership & Service:** Involve young members in race management, club operations, and subcommittee governance.
- **Global Digital Outreach:** Manage targeted social media channels to showcase RVYC activities, expand global followers, and forge formal ties with overseas sailing clubs and universities.
- **Community Integration:** Organize off-water social events that bridge generations within the club.

THE OCEAN'S TOXIC ECHO: WHAT GOES INTO THE SEA RETURNS TO OUR PLATES

BY CARLO PAGANO



For decades, we treated the ocean as an infinite, self-cleaning garbage dump. Today, that illusion is shattering. The poisons we discarded into the deep are closing the loop—washing back onto our shores, entering our food web, and embedding themselves inside our bodies.



The Macro-Crisis

According to the United Nations' third World Ocean Assessment, compiled by 600 scientists, marine ecosystems are nearing catastrophic tipping points:

- **Unprecedented Heat:** The oceans absorb over 90% of excess global heat. Astonishingly, 16% of all ocean warming since 1955 occurred between 2018 and 2023 alone.
- **Accelerating Seas:** Sea-level rise has more than doubled, reaching 4.3 mm per year in 2023.
- **Vanishing Ice & Coral:** An ice-free Arctic September could arrive as early as the 2030s, while 90% of coral reefs risk total collapse if global warming passes 1.5°C.

From Microplastics to the Dinner Plate

The most intimate threat is plastic. Over 52 million tonnes of plastic waste enter marine environments each year, splintering into an estimated 24.4 trillion microplastic particles. A single plastic bottle takes up to 500 years to break down. Along the way, it becomes microscopic and biologically active, ingested by over 4,000 marine species. As these toxins travel up the food chain, they land directly on our dinner plates through seafood, sea salt, and drinking water. Emerging medical research reveals that microplastics are now penetrating the human placenta, altering embryonic development in the earliest months of pregnancy.

A Local Warning on Thai Shores

The crisis is not just an abstract global metric; it is visibly unfolding on our coastlines. In Chon Buri, Thailand, Saensuk Mayor Narongchai Khunplome recently sounded the alarm over Bang Saen beach. Despite around-the-clock municipal cleanups, tides relentlessly return inland canal waste back to the sand—paralyzing local tourism and coastal ecosystems.

The Verdict

Our throwaway economic model has expired. Halting this downward spiral requires strict international caps on virgin plastic production, rigorous municipal waterway policing, and an immediate phase-out of single-use items. Until we end the cycle of convenience, the tide will keep delivering our trash straight back to our tables.



Varuna Worldwide

Let's see how far the Royal Varuna Spirit can travel!

Barbara & Peter @ Ruhpolding, Germany

Greg @ The German Baltic Sea Coast



Beat @ Masters in Hamburg



David Lloyd @ Carnac France



Logan Crawford @ Eastport Yacht Club, Annapolis MD

Whether competing in international regattas, dropping anchor in hidden bays, or relaxing abroad, the Varuna spirit goes wherever members go! Here is "Varuna Worldwide", celebrating our members and their adventures across the seas.



Karl @ Denver Colorado

Introducing new members:



Royal Varuna Yacht Club is delighted to welcome our newest member, the legendary **Desmond "Des" Cousans**. A member of the Class of 1972, Des is an experienced Australian sailor with a rich background in catamaran sailing. Having sailed everywhere from Fremantle, Western Australia, to the African coast, he is now a familiar face around the club, regularly joining in on activities with friends.



More News

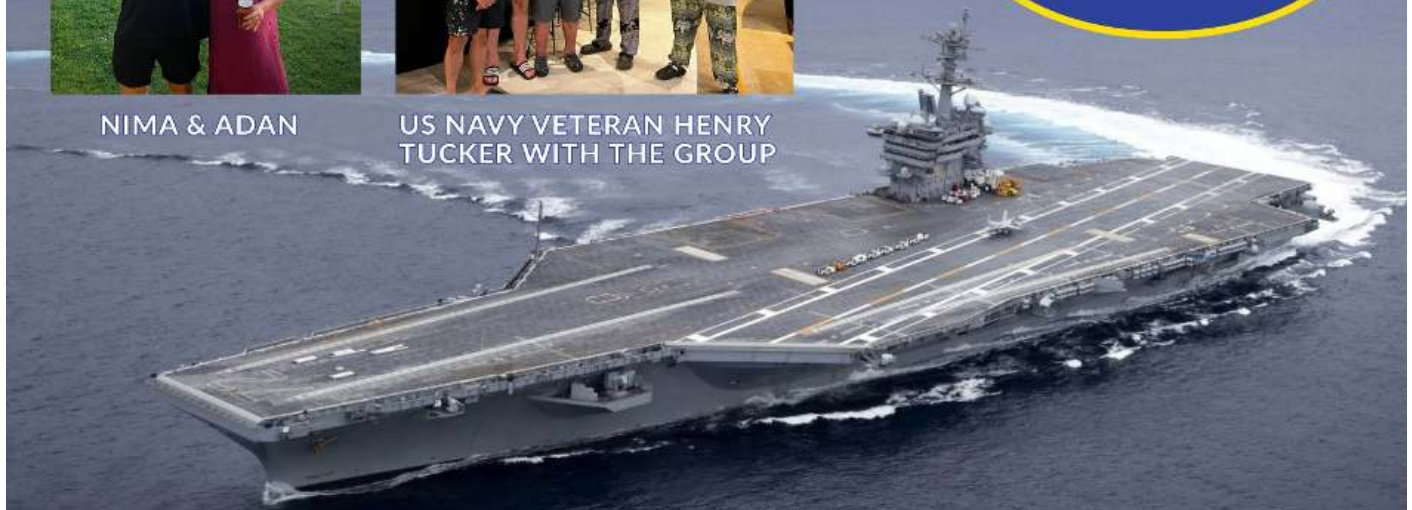
ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB WAS PROUD TO HOST A GROUP FROM USS ABRAHAM LINCOLN CVN-72, INCLUDING NIMA CHANDLER'S NEPHEW, ADAN WILL SALLQUIST.



NIMA & ADAN



US NAVY VETERAN HENRY
TUCKER WITH THE GROUP



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CONTACTS:
WhatsApp +66 936 010 199
IG: @HouseofBouquet.pattaya
FB: HouseofBouquet.pattaya
(DM for inquiries)

Latest NEWS



Maxi Racing! - Fantastic effort by Pom Greene

While most Varunians dabble in small boat racing, there are exceptions to the rule. At the Maxi yacht Sorrento Trophy, which is part of the IMA Maxi European Championship, Varunian Pom Greene saw the culmination of years of effort when the 72-foot maxi yacht North Star III won class II and the event overall. Pom was a project lead and mainsail trimmer. The yacht was only launched 3 months ago, so it was a very successful premiere.



Rumors also goes that Varunians Richard Ayre and Stefaan de Vos are getting ready for an Atlantic crossing in Richards 40 ft Rapido catamaran to be followed by a series of Caribbean races.

Inside Royal Varuna Yacht Club

Merit Making Ceremony & Staff Party at Royal Varuna Yacht Club



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OK World

THAILAND 2027



19th - 26th February 2027
ROYAL VARUNA YACHT CLUB