

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Senior Constable David Upston and Brian Clague, spelt C-L-A-G-U-E, on Saturday, the 17th of the 4th, '99 at the Melbourne Water Police in St Kilda. The time by my watch is now 2.35pm and also present, seated directly opposite me, is Senior, Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray from Bega Detectives. Brian, for the purpose of the record, could you please state your full name?

A Brian James Clague.

Q2 And your address?

A 491 Stumpy Gully Road, Bittern, Victoria.

Q3 And your date of birth?

A 9th of September, 1946.

Q4 And your occupation, please?

A Consulting engineer.

Q5 Thank you. O.K. Brian, as I explained to you earlier, Detective Senior Constable Gray and myself are making inquiries in regards to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, and we're speaking to people either directly or indirectly involved in the race and, and that is, that's the reason we're here to speak to you today. So I, I understand that you own a yacht by the name of Misty. Is that correct?

A That's correct. Yes.

Q6 And could you tell me what type of vessel it is?

A It's, it's a single masted sloop, it's of fibreglass construction. It's, the design is termed an S & S 34 after its designers, Sparkham & Stevens. It's 34 feet long, approximately 10 foot beam, draws about 6 feet. It has a very high stability index, the, the, the weight of the total yacht is about 4 tonne of which 2 tonne is ballast. It has a very solid rig and mast for a yacht of that size. It has a, a diesel inboard engine, of course, for charging batteries or propulsion, whatever. Of course, during the race that was just used for charging batteries.

Q7 Mmm.

A We carry a, for racing like this we entered the Sydney to Hobart under the . . . . . measuring system. We had a crew of six, including myself. That really sums the yacht up, I guess. It's, it's a very solid, sturdy yacht. I've owned it for a period of 8 years now, of which 7 of those we've done quite a bit of ocean racing in races organised by the Ocean Racing Club of Victoria across Bass Strait, normally, to the northern ports of Tasmania, to Burnie, Devonport, Stanley, King Island and then along the Victorian coast to Port Fairy which has been very good experience, really. We've only done, prior to this Sydney to Hobart, the boat had only done one Sydney to Hobart before, and that was in 1994, which again we competed, competed very well, finished, came second in our class. So we like to think we're competitive in the smaller field of, of, of race boat

entries. We're not anywhere up with the fast boats, but within our handicap we like to think we, we keep a good boat and sail it fairly well.

Q8 O.K. All right. And from that, I gather that you're a fairly experienced yachtsman and you've done, obviously, a number of ocean voyages before?

A Yeah. You like to think you're experienced but with a race like this, when, when conditions like this come along it, it tests you a bit. But we had been caught in similar conditions to this in, I think it was 1995, coming back from Burnie. We all left Burnie to return to Melbourne and a storm blew up, again it was in the vicinity of 60, 70 knot winds from the south, so we were all running with it coming back to, to Melbourne. So to an extent we knew what would happen with our boat if we turned and ran with the wind in the, in the '98 Sydney to Hobart and our yacht, like a lot of yachts running downwind, gets quite uncontrollable. When the, the, the boat starts to surf down waves the, the rudder becomes fairly ineffectual and we found in, in 1995 coming back from Burnie that there were instances when we felt very uneasy about running with waves. And that's why in, in this race, when these conditions started to come from ahead of us, we decided to try and beat on into it and stay heading towards it instead of turning and trying to run with it, so - - -

Q9 O.K. All right. Well, let me take you now to the afternoon of Sunday, the 27th of December, 1998 when

you were participating in the race and heading down the coast from, after leaving Sydney at the start at 1.00pm the previous day, and the approaching storm. Can you tell me about that?

A Well, we, we'd had, the weather report had indicated that a storm was coming. The wind velocities weren't predicted to be as high as they actually ended up, but as, as the storm built, we saw it coming and we, as I said before, we had the, the safety gear on board as stipulated by the Australian Yachting Federation, but we didn't get down to actual storm sails that day and, well, we didn't even attempt to, to go down to them. We, by late that afternoon we'd reduced sail down to a, a triple reef mainsail which just leaves a very small triangle of mainsail on the boom and mast, and we had no headsail at all. And the, the waves were getting by the end of the day, by, by the end of daylight anyway, they were getting to be in the vicinity of probably 40, 30, 40 foot waves with, often breaking on the surface which would sweep the length of the boat.

Q10 Mmm.

A We decided that, with the sails that we had up, it was, the boat was handling it all right, the crew were handling it all right. There was, it was very violent motion down below, you couldn't really sleep, but at least you could get in the bunks and put your lee cloths up and you could rest. I had taped up, I must have known something was going to happen, I guess, I

had taped up all the ventilators in Sydney before I left with gaffer tape, you call it. So down below was totally dry, we, we had no water coming in anywhere in any of the hatches and, from crew comfort point of view, apart from the motion as it got worse and worse, we, we weren't, at least we were dry and warm. Food wise, we hadn't eaten since breakfast that morning on the 27th any food of any substance. We, we only had . . . . . drinks and, and Mars Bars and bits and pieces. But the, the wind, the wind strength was off our metre. We, we weren't quite sure what it was. Our wind metre only goes to 50 knots, but it was on that continually. It wasn't as if it was gusting past it, it was continually past that and, as it got dark, it became more and more awkward to see the oncoming waves. But we, and as the wind velocity increased, the, you couldn't look to windward anyway, the water spray in our faces of the, the crew on deck, we had three up and three down off watch at any one time. But it was a matter of the helmsman, who actually was facing towards the wind, of course, in normal seating position, he had to cover his eyes and just try and steer by the compass alone. So but again, through the night we, with, with the, with the sail rig up that we had, it, it was slightly out of balance, the boat, in, in what we thought was a good manner, in that it forced the nose of the boat to point up to the waves into the wind. When, when we were up to a crest it would, would point

us up a bit. In the valleys between the waves, there was not a lot of wind but the boat stayed controllable nearly all the time. What, we were surprised the next morning was to find that we, we had indications off our, our knot metre that we were doing 1 and a half to 2 knots through the water, but in fact we were staying dead still the next morning on the radio sched. Because of the motion, I hadn't checked the G.P.S. that night. The next sched showed us as being almost in exactly the same spot, I think we'd moved about a mile in 11 or 12 hours. So the, the wave motion was such that what we were making through the water, we thought we were making, the waves were knocking us back every time. And the waves were quite close together, it wasn't that they were a long way apart, and they were very confused too. We would often get a wave coming in from further west than the, than the sort of southerly, sorry, further east from the, from the southerly direction more than the south-westerly direction that the waves were coming from normally. So it was east of where the, the normal wave direction was coming from. But we hadn't torn any sails. During that, that night we thought it might, might be advantageous to put the storm jib up, and the, the A.Y.F. requirements for storm jibs are that they had to be set on, if they are in a foil, .... if the, your normal headsails are slid into a groove in a foil, the, the storm jib must be independent of that. So ours had eyelets in it with

lengths of rope on it that we actually have to tie around the aluminium extrusion that's on the forestay. It was actually quite a, a dangerous job for the bowman to go up and put that on, and in the end we didn't actually raise it. He got about half of it tied on and we told him to lash it to the bow rail and just leave it there and .. because we were still under, we still thought we were moving, we still were under control, we thought we'll leave it, and that was the only breakage we had. Because of the force of the waves .... it actually broke the inch stainless steel pipe of the bow rail. And the next morning when we saw it moving we, we took it away. The wind was starting to abate by then so - - -

Q11 Mmm.

A But at that time, when, when the storm came, when, and when we got the original weather report we were about 55 mile out off the coast, probably between, off Bermagui anyway, we weren't down as far as Eden. And we knew at the speed we sail that we couldn't get into shelter anyway. It would have been harder to go across the waves to get into Bermagui, we certainly weren't anywhere Eden, we didn't want to go near Narooma, but, and as I said, the only other alternative was to run with it, which we didn't want to do. So we felt it was safer to, to continue on into it, and we still think that that was the best thing to do, given that we had a solid boat that wasn't breaking or tearing anything,

the crew were in good condition, so we, we kept on into it.

Q12 O.K. And then after the storm had abated some hours later the next day, the following day, you then continued down across the Bass Strait?

A That's right, yeah.

Q13 And, and then obviously finished the race.

A That's correct, yeah.

Q14 And apart from that, that was the only breakage you had, for the stainless steel bow rail?

A That's right, yeah.

Q15 O.K. With your, the crew experience you said that, earlier that you lodged a, an application form to enter the race and you looked at the crew experience. What was your thoughts about that?

A Well, it, we, we, we knew we had enough crew experience there. They, they indicate that at least, I think, half the crew should have been or should have done the race before, and, and that is certainly a, obviously a good requirement. But you could do, you could do two races before and, and sail it in, in not more than 10 or 20 knots of wind. Crew experience is really everything when it comes to something like what happened in the '98 race, and I, I really don't know how you can, can stipulate that the crew has got experience in heavy weather. I mean, it's just, it's almost impossible to do, but certainly crews should have experience in setting stormsails and, and the



-  
safety equipment that you may take with you because I, stormsails have a habit of getting put away in lockers on boats and never, ever get used in normal racing. And when you come to put them on, it's a very, very hard job to put a storm, particularly a storm jib on, on a bow in conditions like, that we had in '98 and it would have been a very similar job, I think, to put a, a trisail up, having to take the main completely out of the track and have someone standing at the mast or two people standing at the mast trying to control a sail, the mainsail that they've taken off, because then there's theoretically nothing holding it to the, there's certainly nothing holding the, the full length of sail - - -

Q16 Mmm.

A - - - at the length of the mast. Presumably if you've reefed it down to that point it's, you're only left with a small triangle to try and control, but it is very hard to, to put sails on once it's, once it's blowing like it was in this race.

Q17 O.K. Now you say that you experienced waves 30 to 40 feet high?

A Well, that, that was before dark.

Q18 Yeah.

A But it's very hard when you're on a small boat and - -

-

Q19 Mmm.

A - - - everything looks big.

Q20 Mmm.

A And to try and look from when you're in the valley at what's behind you and what's in front of you, but our mast is about 40 foot high and we reckon it was higher than the mast.

Q21 O.K.

A And when it got dark it was hard to - - -

Q22 Yeah.

A - - - tell what was going on, so - - -

Q23 And, but these waves were constant?

A Yeah. Mmm.

Q24 For the, from the, from the 28th, 27th, 28th - - -

A 28th, yeah.

Q24 - - - right through? And that's right through til you, til you crossed the Bass Strait it was, it was like those conditions all the way?

A Oh, no, no, no. It abated the next morning really - - -

Q25 Mmm.

A - - - and by the end of the, let me think, by the end of the 28th, I think it, see, we sat off Gabo Island before we actually crossed Bass Strait and we were becalmed the next day after the blow.

Q26 Oh, O.K.

A We were actually sitting there with no wind, we couldn't believe it.

Q27 Mmm.

-

A That was a good time to get some of our gear out, dry some clothes off and things, but - - -

Q28 O.K. You also mentioned wind strengths in excess of 50 knots and your, the wind indicator only reaches 50 knots or 55 knots.

A Mmm. Yeah.

Q29 How long did it stay at that, that condition?

A Well, late, late on the 27th through all the night of the 27th and the morning of the 28th up until, up until, it's, it's hard to recollect now, until early that morning on the 28th.

Q30 O.K. And did you attend the weather briefing at the C.Y.C.A. earlier?

A I didn't, but my other watch leader, he, he did. I was flying up from Melbourne so I didn't get there til Christmas night.

Q31 O.K. Was there any concern over the weather conditions or the, the, the expectant conditions?

A Well, there was but it, it wasn't tipped to be that high. You know, it, you've got to remember that the overriding thing is that we all went there knowing that it was a race and if, particularly from an owner's point of view, and I don't want this to sound like we'd push people into it, but the, the, the majority of our crew enjoy ocean racing. That's why they do this as a sport. And if, if you're doing something as a sport and you like to think you do it well, then that includes sailing in rough weather, and when we, when we

heard the, the radio sched that, that forecast the 40 knot winds, we thought, Oh, this'll, this'll be a bit of a blow. But again that's what, I can't say it's what we expect, but it's what we anticipate that we can handle on our boat, and so we, we kept going, we didn't, we didn't turn around at that stage just because they forecast 40 knot winds.

Q32 No.

A So it's, I mean, we do this as a sport.

Q33 Mmm.

A And you, there, there are conditions and equipment set by the Australian Yachting Federation Regulations of which yachts should, if they carry it, should be able to set it and a boat should be able to use that equipment. It's no use having stormsails if you put stormsails up and then the rest of the boat can't hang together around stormsails, 'cause stormsails'll go through the winds that were there. They won't blow to bits normally.

Q34 Right.

A But it's no use hanging them on a boat that won't take them.

Q35 Yeah.

A So - - -

Q36 O.K. With regard to the safety, safety equipment and safety harnesses in particular and it, as you know, it's a requirement for you to have safety harnesses and lanyards - - -

A That's right.

Q36 - - - compliant to a, a standard, an Australian standard.

A Australian standard, that's right, yeah.

Q37 And obviously yours were checked. How old are your, your harnesses and lanyards? Are they brought on by your crew or how, how do you - - -

A No. I provide them.

Q37 - - - determine them?

A I bought them brand new for the 1994 Sydney to Hobart. The ones that were on the boat were of some age, I don't know. They were still in fine condition but I felt that it was, it's a fairly important piece of equipment and the, the, the, the tethers on the newer ones are nylon webbing instead of rope that the other ones were. The end clip was exactly the same as the older design but mine, as I said, were 4 years old this year so I knew they were in good condition.

Q38 And what brand are they, offhand?

A You got me. I think they're Bourke, manufactured in Sydney.

Q39 Mmm. And you're quite happy with that brand and that, that .....

A Yes. One, one of, one of the guys that came on board, the, the chap I think I was telling you about that was new to sailing, he bought brand new gear and he bought the, the top of the line ocean racing jacket which has got all the features to keep water out, and his lanyard

had a new type hook on it which I didn't want him to use. I, I said, Look, I would rather you use my tether. My tether has a single, single movement safety lever in it and the one that he had been given with the suit had a double movement. You had to depress an inner trigger before you could pull the safety latch back which, we have a webbing lifeline around the deck from one side right up to the bow right down the other side so you can go from the cockpit right to the bow without having to unclip. And webbing is supposed to be able to get into the little safety latch on ours and, and evidently it can open it. I, we've never struck that problem, but what I was concerned with was that it virtually took two hands to undo either end of his, this new tether, and again you, you learn by experience. When, when we came back from Burnie in the '95 race there was to an, I don't know whether, oh, you people wouldn't know about it, the, the Victorian police here probably would, there was a little bit of carnage happened. Blokes lost rudders and got towed in to Grassy on King Island. Most of us bore away instead of heading for the Port Philip heads, we bore away and came into Western Port, but there were guys with, that had been thrown around and broken ribs and all sorts of things. And one boat that headed for the Port Philip heads, a fairly small boat, it turned over and a guy got caught underneath with a lanyard he couldn't undo and he stopped breathing, and they ended up with a

-  
tanker sheltering them out of Barwon Heads and the, the boat ended up on the beach at Barwon Heads, but he, he got taken off and he, he stopped breathing. They got him back to life again but he now has brain damage and I believe he's in a, in a wheelchair and, and again it's probably because he got caught underneath and he couldn't undo the lanyard. Now with the weight on it would be hard enough to undo the type of clip that we have, let alone the type of clip that Jeff, the guy with the new jacket, brought on board. So that, that is, it's the most important part of the whole thing. We, we have a, a, a standing rule when you come out of the cockpit, we only wear them normally at night time except when there's a storm like it was, because we didn't want anyone in the water, but when you come out of our, our of our coach house, if you like, down below we have two stainless steel handles on the outside, we clip onto that before we come on deck, put the washboards back in, and then either leave yourself tied to that if you're crew. The helmsman, who's further back, clips onto the webbing line which, as I said, runs from the stern right round. So he's tethered to that, the others are tethered a bit shorter to the, to these stainless handles which are through bolted, but, so we make sure that everyone's tied on the minute they come out of the, the coach house down below. But these, these modern clips are very hard to undo. I, as I said, I, I, I think they're unsafe but you have to be

in the situation where your boat's gone over before you come to want to - - -

Q40 Mmm. Mmm.

A - - - undo it to find out, I guess, so - - -

Q41 Yeah. Yeah. O.K. I show you a, a document here which is a photocopy of an I.M.S. rating certificate. In fact, the number on the certificate is 3-1-1-6-0-0 and the name of the yacht is Misty. Is that a photocopy of the certificate that was issued to you?

A Yes. That's it.

Q42 O.K. I'll also point out to you on the document a stability index of the vessel and it's under a heading, Limits and Regulations, and the stability index is 136.0. Is that correct?

A Yeah.

Q43 And then I also point out to you under Inclining Tests a heading, The Calculated Limit of Positive Stability, of 130.3 degrees. Is that correct?

A Yeah.

Q44 O.K. What, what could you tell me about those two figures there or what, what can you tell me about those, the, the stability index and the, and the calculated limit of positive stability?

A Well, what they do, most yachts a, a test is done usually by applying a moment to the, to the boat off the mast, usually off the boom, and with a given weight they measure the, the amount of angular movement if you like of the boat. In other words, what, when it's



sailing, the, the wind pressure if you like that will heel the boat over. In other words, when the wind is really blowing, how far it will go over before the mast is in the water if you like, almost.

Q45 Mmm.

A And these figures for, for a yacht are very high. They're very, it's what's called a very stiff boat, it takes a lot of wind to blow it over because the keel is so heavy relative to the weight of the hull.

Q46 O.K. And is it the case that with the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race of '98 under a Category 2 event that the stability index, a vessel must meet the criteria of a Category 2 of 115 degrees?

A Well, it's a Category 1 race.

Q47 Oh, correction, a Category 1 race.

A Yeah. Yes. I believe that's correct, yeah.

Q48 O.K. So and, and a certificate if it's entered in an I.M.S. category should be issued for that stability index?

A Yeah.

Q49 O.K. Do you make your crew aware of the stability index of the yacht or are they aware at all? Do you ever talk about it with them at all?

A No. We don't really, but when, they know that it's a very safe boat.

Q50 Mmm.

A Safe as far as wind strength and sailability goes in, in heavy weather and they - - -

Q51 Mmm.

A - - - S & S 34s were designed in 1969, I think. The, the ex British Prime Minister brought one out in 1969 to Australia, he won the Sydney to Hobart in it and I think every year since, an S & S 34 has been in the, in the results, not, not the - - -

Q52 Mmm.

A - - - the fastest boat, but in the, the, the handicap divisions as winner so, so it has, it has a race thoroughbred breeding, if you like.

Q53 Yeah.

A And everyone usually who sails for a little while knows that an S & S 34 is a - - -

Q54 Mmm.

A - - - is a very stiff design, a very good design, very seaworthy design.

Q55 O.K. Stuart?

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q56 Yeah. Would your boat be one of the smallest boats in the race?

A Yes, it was, yeah, yeah.

Q57 Now did any of the crew at all suffer from sea sickness?

A Yes. We had two people that were sea sick.

Q58 Right.

A To a minor extent.

Q59 Right.

A As I said, they were, they could, they could get down below. If they got down below quickly and got their gear off and get in a bunk and lie down, they weren't sick - - -

Q60 Right.

A - - - but if they, they got held up at all they would be sick. And then the same, getting out of the bunk and - - -

Q61 Yeah.

A - - - their gear on and up top, often they'd be sick in that interim, but once they were up top in the fresh air - - -

Q62 Yeah.

A - - - they were usually fairly all right. And as I said there was, they stood their watches so there was really no, no problem with, as far as the crew went.

Q63 The, so the routine of the boat wasn't affected at all by - - -

A No. No.

Q63 - - - their sickness, sea sickness?

A No.

Q64 O.K. And morale of the crew was fine throughout the race?

A Yes. We had one guy that was a bit, that hadn't sailed with us before and had, he was a little bit pessimistic if you like.

Q65 Right.

A At one stage we, we discussed it between ourselves and we, as I said, we decided to go on into it. He was the only one who thought we should go to, to Bermagui or head for the coast, but he agreed when we sort of started talking turkey that to go, to head for the coast we'd have to, we'd be beam on to the waves - - -

Q66 Mmm.

A - - - which was even worse than running with them. He hadn't been with us when we came back in 1995 from Burnie, so he didn't realise what the boat would do running down a wave but he went along with our, our decision to - - -

Q67 Right. Now did yourself or any of your crew attend the life raft demonstration and, and the flare demonstration at the Cruising Yacht Club prior to the race?

A I, I don't believe they did. I, look, I, I don't know.

Q68 O.K.

A I, I could find out for you, but I flew home to have Christmas with my family and I only got back up there the night before the race started.

Q69 Right.

A Christmas, Christmas night, so - - -

Q70 Were you aware of the demonstration that was held prior to the race?

A I knew it was going to be held, yeah.

Q71 Right. O.K. O.K. has anybody in your crew deployed a life raft before?

A No. I don't believe so, no.

Q72 And you had a life raft on your, on, on your boat?

A Oh yeah, of course, yeah, we've ..... rafts.

Q73 And what sort of life raft was that?

A It's a Beaufort - - -

Q74 O.K.

A - - - six man Beaufort.

Q75 And where was that stored?

A On deck in a canister. I believe it's very unsafe to have them below deck.

Q76 Right.

A You suffer a little bit in wind, windage and what have you, and weight aloft but, to me, that's the place it's going to be needed - - -

Q77 Yeah.

A - - - if your boat's going down and you've got to get it inflated.

Q78 Was its position disturbed at all during the race?

A No.

Q79 Not at all?

A No.

Q80 O.K. Now has anybody in the crew fired a flare that you're aware of?

A We all have fired flares, yes.

Q81 O.K.

A I make sure, every year they have a, a flare firing day at Sandringham Yacht Club. It's at the start of one of the bay races.

Q82 Right.

A You can let off your old flares, so we always make sure, sure that everybody has, it, it's often hard to make sure everyone in the crew has - - -

Q83 Yeah.

A - - - on a, on a particular race like this because, like, there was one guy who'd never - - -

Q84 Yeah.

A - - - sailed with us before.

Q85 Yeah.

A But in his job, in what he, he knew how to - - -

Q86 Yeah.

A - - - to let flares off so - - -

Q87 O.K. Now if you had heard at the weather briefing prior to the race that there were going to be winds of in excess of 65 knots, would you have gone in the race?

A No.

Q88 For what reason?

A Oh, it, it's not really a nice place to be.

Q89 Mmm.

A And if you're in port, you - - -

Q90 Yeah.

A - - - why do it?

Q91 O.K. Did you at any point hear any wind speeds from other boats over the radio?

A No. I don't think we did. Because we only have three up and three people down it's, it's very hard, at one stage there they asked people to leave radios on and,

-  
and listen to them. Well, where our radio is, it's not near a bunk.

Q92 Right.

A And it's, I, I'm the only one on board with a radio ticket although one of the other guys knows how to work it, it's not that difficult. But it, it's hard to, to leave it on and in that noise that was going on, to, to listen to it. So from our bunks we couldn't really hear what was going on.

Q93 Right.

A And, and we, we really didn't think it was as bad as it was. Because, because we weren't having a lot of trouble and, and we were handling it all right we, we really thought everyone else was, would have been in the same situation.

Q94 Mmm.

A But when we started hearing I think, Stand Aside, trying to get a line from a fishing boat that had gone out to pass it a line and tow it back, and then we realised that, Oh, there, there's boats in trouble here, and we, I think we tried, we listened for another about half an hour after. That was around a sched and the sched had to be put off a little while, I think, while that was going on. But we were quite surprised the next day to find out exactly what the troubles that there, there obviously was, yeah.

Q95 Mmm.

A And then we started seeing planes flying around us - -

-

Q96 Mmm.

A - - - and helicopters and - - -

Q97 Were, did any of the crew have personal E.P.I.R.Bs?

A No, we didn't.

Q98 No?

A No.

Q99 I'll just show you this, this crew list here, Misty crew list.

A Yes. That's right, yeah.

Q100 And is that the list that actually, well, the list of crew that actually started the race?

A That's right. Yeah.

Q101 O.K. There were no additions or - - -

A No.

Q102 O.K. That's all I've got.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q103 All right. Brian, did you also carry a portable V.H.F. radio?

A No, we don't.

Q104 No, you don't. Just the obligatory radios?

A Yeah. That's right. Yes.

Q105 O.K. Is there anything you'd like to add further to this interview at all, anything about the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race that, that you feel that could be implemented or anything that you suggested on your



survey that, that you feel strongly about that should be raised?

A No, not really. It's, as long as we're ocean racing and, and Mother Nature's a part of it, we're going to have storms like this. The safety gear that we carry I feel was, was adequate but, as I said, we didn't lose anyone into the water, we didn't have anyone break a harness or anything and fall in. As, as long as the equipment that you've got works, theoretically there shouldn't be any problem with the way it is. It's when things go wrong and people end up in water that personal E.P.I.R.Bs, personal strobes, I, I make my crew carry a personal strobe each so that, if they do end up in the water of a night time, at least we could see it. But apart from that I, I don't really have any criticism of any other part of the race.

Q106 Mmm.

A We, we were given the information that they seemed to have at the time and it was up to us whether we went on or not. We were lucky, I guess, if you want to put, luck comes into everything, our boat held together, we held together and we, we got to the finish, but the radio scheds sometimes but, dragged on a bit, but given what was happening I guess that's the way it just had to be, that when, when you're cold and wet and hungry and you want to just get in your bunk - - -

Q107 Mmm.

A - - - and the radio sched's dragging on for three quarters of an hour or whatever, you tend to think, Gee, I wish this'd get over with and they'd get down to Misty - - -

Q108 Yeah.

A - - - which was usually fairly down the list, you know.

Q109 Mmm. Mmm.

A But obviously I, I have a feeling when, when we got to Hobart the, the majority of boats that made it were of, what can I say, a, a, a heavy solid design nature, and of which Misty falls into that category, but the, the, the want, if you like, on, on some skippers and boat owners to go faster creates lighter boats, taller masts, thinner masts, and as long as that's a part of sailing then there's going to be breakages. As I said before, Misty's a solid boat and we don't have that trouble. So what can you do? You, you can't really say that technology and light boats have got to be banned because that's a part of sailing, like - - -

Q110 Mmm.

A I don't know how they're ever going to control - - -

Q111 Mmm.

A - - - you can't control nature and as long as you can't, I, I don't know.

Q112 Mmm. O.K. then, the time by my watch is now 3.11pm and this interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED