

BSC Takes on the Whitsunday's

Date: 10th - 17th August 2006

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Balmain Sailing club's "Breakaway" again made it up north for the Airlie Beach Race Week from August 10th to 17th 2006.



This is the second year owners Arthur King and Peter Mason have entered their boat in this event.

Balmain crew included Alan and Suzie Clark, Peter Sinclair, Doug Friis-Clark, and Max Wood. Max, being the only one of the delivery crew to stay for the races after an awful 18 day trip from Sydney.

We had six races over seven days. The Balmain boys were so keen; they won the first race thus, ruining the handicap for the rest of the series. Overall they finished in the middle of a fleet of 30.

Blue skies, breeze between 20 and 30, warm water and cold beer. It was dirty work, but someone had to carry the standard for the club up north. On one of our more indifferent days, we made up ground when Doug took the wheel on one of the island passages. This prompted sailing master Alan to comment "we did well with Doug's leg up the back passage" We are still trying to work out this was a compliment, or some sort of Oxford Street slang.

Most of the races are passage races around islands and, up to 30 miles long, tidal currents can be tricky with flows in the 3/5 knot range, making local knowledge a big help. After a days racing, a few beers and a good meal, the older crew members tended to drift off into a deep dreamless while the young muscle made some interesting friends from the deep pool of female backpackers in Airlie.

After the races, some of us had a relaxed four day cruise down to Thomas Island and back via Whitehaven beach. Definitely worth the trip north.