OPUA CRUISING CLUB

FREE MAGAZINE

THE FRIENDLIEST CLUB IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

tell tales

Bay of Islands Sailing Week 2025.
A division start.
(Photograph by Jacob Fewtrell Media.)

FEBRUARY 2025

A few words to acknowledge and thank Ōpua Cruising Club for the opportunity to tell the Club members about Seapower and how we can help.

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COMMODORE'S REPORT

BY TERRY DUNN

Well, Christmas has gone, New Year's Eve has gone, *Tall Ships* have sailed the Bay, and the *Bay of Islands Sailing Week* started on Wednesday, 23 of January.

Another Summer in the Bay of Islands. Great to see so many boats around. The strong SW winds kept everyone on their toes; especially, with their anchoring skills. Hopefully, the traditional sea breezes will now kick in.

It looks like a good turnout for *Bay of Islands Sailing Week* with 91 boats entered so far. The main venue is the OCC Club area. It is shaping up to be a good week thanks to the massive effort of the Sailing Week committee and volunteers led by Evita and Chairman Ian Clousten.

It's nice to see plenty of people using the Club Bar and *The Galley Bistro*, and great compliments on Peini's new menu, especially, the Salmon and Pork Ribs dish. Also, thanks to our bar staff of Nicole, Sarah, Michelle and Gwen who never know if we are going to have 20 guests or 100 in the bar for the evening...

On the 20th of January, we had Matt Rutherford in as a guest speaker. Matt was the first person to sail single-handed, non-stop, around North and South America and is in Ōpua selling a donated boat and promoting his book. Great story if you feel inspired to sail past Roberton Island and over the horizon.

On Friday night, 31st January, we have kids and parents from the BOI Yacht Club coming to crew boats for the *Friday Night Rum Race*. Hopefully, they won't be able to teach old dogs new tricks.

Thanks again to our sponsors for the current race series: Warren and Evita from *The Chandlery* in Russell and Bruce from *Seapower*. Please support these businesses, as they make running the programme a lot easier and rewarding.

I hope to see you out on the water. If there's anything you think we can change or improve to encourage more involvement in the Club, please contact me.

Happy boating.

Cheers, Terry Dunn, commodore@opuacruisingclub.co.nz

FEBRUARY RACING REPORT

Recent Congratulations to all the OCC boats participating in the *Bay of Islands Sailing Week*; it's good to see so many out there waving the OCC flag.

Our Club racing is back in full swing this month, with ***The Chandlery Wednesday Night Summer Series*** running through to February 19th and
The Chandlery Autumn Series commencing on Wednesday 26th.
Our ***Friday Night Pursuit Races*** continue through February with the ***Seapower Summer Persuit Series*** concluding on the 21st and ***The Chandlery Autumn Pursuit Series*** commencing on Friday 28th.

Please show your appreciation for our sponsors when you can.

The sailing committee is looking for a computer-literate volunteer to run the SailSys software, this can be done from the OCC Race Office or remotely.
If you can help, please get in touch with us:
racingopuacruisingclub@gmail.com

Remember the ***OCC Ōtehei Bay Cub Weekend Sailing Festival*** is now Friday 28th March to Sunday 30th March; this is different from the printed calendar as the current date clashes with several other key sailing events.

BY JULIE KIDMAN - RACE OFFICER

When you are out cruising over summer fly your club burgee – if you don't have one, you can purchase one from the Club Bar or office.

Keep up with the sailing and racing news on the OCC Website, OCC Facebook Page, via the WhatsApp Group, and you can always get in touch with us via email – racingopuacruisingclub@gmail.com

See you out on the water or up at the Club.

Julie, OCC Race Officer

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Find the Yot hidden in the trade directory and then let us know what you think of Tell Tales to go into the draw to WIN!

The DEC/JAN WINNER is: Adele Pudney: "I particularly liked the piece by Nina Kiff about the Ōpua Cruising Club Record Book."

If you would like to go into the draw to win a handy Burnsco Dry Bag email publicity@opuacruisingclub.co.nz and let us know, in which advert you found the little yacht, as well as what you like best about our monthly newsletter before 22 Feb 2025 to go in the draw.

The winner will be announced in the March edition.

OPUA CRUISING CLUB

Are you planning a special Family Occasion, a Wedding or a Birthday Party?

Ōpua Cruising Club's deck is the perfect place.
You have sole use of the deck with bar access.
Food can be specially organised by our lovely Chef, Peini.
What better place can there be but your local Club with its fantastic views!

Contact Sheila - 09 402 6924 or secretary@opuacruisingclub.co.nz

Simon & Niki Barker on Alice II.

We arrived at Airlie Beach, the jumping-off point for the main, central Whitsunday Group. The whole area reminds me of Paihia and the Bay of Islands, though it's Australian-sized. Airlie Beach is full of old people from cruise ships, young backpackers from every country, families on beach holidays and every activity, tour and experience needed to entertain them.

There is a vast anchorage off the town, but it's like anchoring in Russell, lots of boat movements and is very exposed to wind from the wrong direction.

Airlie Beach is perfect for us. We get rid of all the rubbish and recycling, stock up enough for about 10 days from the very convenient local stores, then head out to the islands for as long as we can, until the beer runs out. Then we come back and do it again.

Provisioning at Airlie Beach.

The Whitsundays are, without doubt, the best cruising area we have ever been to. There are no huge distances to go. The nearest gorgeous island is only 6 miles from Airlie Beach and the rest are equally close. The islands are wild and beautiful, most of them uninhabited. There are some great reefs on some of the islands too. Luckily, we got 4 days of flat weather (very rare) and were able to get to the Great Barrier Reef itself. Hook

Reef was fabulous, flat, still and blue, with great visibility. The coral is patchy as it was damaged by a severe cyclone about 6 years ago. Where it's recovering, it's stunning.

There is such a choice of where to go, being aware of the tides, which run very strongly and the tradewinds, which can blow hard, but we've managed to find calm anchorages most of the time. There are great walks on some of the islands, lots of wildlife, ancient rock paintings and one of the best beaches in the world. Now, sailing Northland's east coast has made me a total beach snob, but Whitehaven Beach is really the best and the water is a lot warmer. No wonder this is a huge place for charter boats.

It's not all blue skies, hot, sunny weather and perfect sailing. We have our mishaps too. Our genoa refused to furl as we were flying into an anchorage one day; we must have tacked at least five times while trying to get it in and entertained the whole anchorage. On another occasion, leaving an anchorage, our clew outhaul snapped while raising the main in 25 knots. This left the reefing lines flapping about, and they managed to wrap around one of the solar panels and then around the wind generator, too. Luckily, it was off! We have had similar experiences with our cruising chute both refusing to go up and also refusing to come down!! We are very good at picking up mooring buoys as *Alice II* normally lives on one in Waipiro Bay; but we have managed to overshoot here a number of times due to the current and EVERYONE is watching!

Our windlass and autohelm died, but we have been able to get them sorted quite easily. *Alice II* is 20 years old, so we expect things to fail, though not so dramatically or expensively!

Crocodile sign.

Also, it appears that you may have some unwelcome company in the water. The signs say it all! We have only had whales, dolphins and turtles visit us. There are no stingers at this time of year.

We won't go any further north than the Whitsundays. They tick all our sailing boxes. Wherever we go, we have to get back down south before cyclone season, a tricky journey against the trade winds. We hope to be in the Sydney area for Christmas then look for a weather window to come back home to the Bay. So, we'll join the whales again on their southward migration in November then make the long trip back home.

Triumphs and Memories at Bay of Islands Sailing Week 2025

Blue Dude *hoisting kite. (Photograph by Jacob Fewtrell Media.)*

The 2025 Bay of Islands Sailing Week delivered another unforgettable event, with participants echoing a common sentiment: "Why wouldn't you come back? Just look around!" Three days of racing wrapped up on Friday, 24 January with Northland's stunning coastal waters creating the perfect backdrop for another year of competition and camaraderie.

Light morning winds built to afternoon sea breezes on all three race days, making the sailing both tactical and enjoyable as crews enjoyed a mix of light airs and consistent winds.

A total of 92 crews entered this year including the 10-strong Flying Fifteen fleet who also held their national championships within the regatta.
A standout story was Lieutenant Emma Barry from the British Royal Navy, who won the *SheSails NZ* Top Female Helm trophy.
The two *SheSails NZ* trophies, introduced last year, aim to celebrate and encourage female sailors to take on helming roles. They are awarded to one female in Island Racing and one in the Windward Leeward courses.
Competing aboard a Chico 40 training vessel, Barry and her crew finished second in their division, with local boat *The Racoon*, skippered by Buddha Smith, taking first place.

Speaking about the experience, Barry said: "Sailing up the coastline before the event allowed us to bond as a crew and get comfortable with the boats. The close competition has been a thrill - yesterday, we were on the hip during a long final leg - they are really evenly matched."

The Flying Fifteen fleet's national championships, which doubled as a World Championship selection event, demonstrated the class's commitment to competitive and inclusive sailing. With three female helms in the fleet, the competition was notably tight. Ben Lowe aboard *Ffettucini* claimed first place, followed by Murray Gilbert's *Ffrenetic.* The top five boats earned selection for the World Championships in Weymouth, UK, later in the year.

The Sports Boat division saw the Kiff family's impressive performance, with brothers Tom and Richard alternating at the helm of Shaw 7 *Angry Dragon*. They dominated both line and handicap results, attributing their success to strategic sailing and new sails. Their sister Sarah competed in the Flying Fifteens on the same racecourse, underscoring the family's deep sailing roots.

Other notable division winners included:
- Mount Gay Y88: *Young Magic*, helmed by Matthew Mason
- North Sails Division A: Bakewell-White 52 *Wired*
- Open Division A: *Sassinate* among the Melges fleet
- Non-Spinnaker Division: Elliott 1850 *Zindibar*, with Melissa Logan's *Aeolian* claiming handicap wins

A unique highlight was the crew of *Tongue Twister* in Island Racing Division B, featuring a wide age range from 11 to over 70 years old. Skipper Brian Hutching credited their success to smart sail choices and favourable reaching conditions, with an added bonus of dolphin sightings.

Regatta Chairman Ian Clouston reflected positively on the event, acknowledging slight fleet reductions due to economic conditions while remaining optimistic about future participation. He emphasized the Bay of Islands as an exceptional sailing venue, praising its clear waters, minimal wakes, and well-organized racing.

The Flying Fifteen class president, Sally Garrett, highlighted the incredibly close racing, with ten boats finishing within just 1 minute and 20 seconds of each other.
As the regatta concluded, organizers were thankful to sponsors and participants, celebrating another successful year of sailing that brought together diverse crews, fostered international friendships, and showcased the exceptional sailing arena of the Bay of Islands.

Full results can be found on the Bay of Islands Sailing Week website.

NEW CHAIRS & MORE

BY TERRY DUNN

Paul and Emma Doidge helping to unload the new chairs.

Many thanks to Pub Charities for a grant that enabled us to purchase 80 new chairs for the Club. Derek did a great job with the grant application, and thanks to the team for unpacking and setting up.

We also steam-cleaned the carpet and installed new glass doors on the chiller so that those of us with declining eyesight can now easily see our preferred choice of beer before spilling it.

For anybody looking to have a birthday, wedding, divorce party, or funeral, **the Club is a great venue.**

On members' suggestions, we removed the Sky subscription from the TV; it was costing $3,500/year and was getting minimal use, but we have replaced it with a **Dish TV** setup **connected to the Club internet**. Hopefully, this will be entertaining enough and costs a lot less.

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Test your crew!! Test yourself with these five quick questions.

1.	On the Beaufort Wind Scale a wind speed of 41-47 knots with a wave height of 7-10m is described as a Force 9 and is called a. Gale b. Storm c. Near Gale d. Strong Gale
2.	 If you saw a vessel flying this flag, what should you do, and why? a. Keep clear – they are carrying dangerous cargo. b. Stop your vessel instantly. c. Keep clear – they are on fire d. Call them on the VHF or contact by other means.
3.	Falling barometric pressure is a sign of fair weather coming. True or False? a. True b. False
4.	You are tacking and the boat loses momentum and gets stuck pointing into the wind with the sails flapping. What is this called? a. In irons b. Fluffed c. Taken aback d. Running
5.	In most places there are two tidal cycles every day, comprising two high tides and two low tides, and this phenomenon is known as a: a. Lunar tide b. Solar tide c. Semi diurnal tide d. Double diurnal tide

If you struggled with any of the questions or you want to expand your knowledge of sailing theory take the free eLearning courses at International Yacht Training.
https://www.iytworld.com/courses/course-types/elearning/

ANECDOTES OF A YOTTIE

PART 1

BY GEORGINA PORTER

Final Overseas Voyage on *Noridiam*

Our final overseas voyage on *Noridiam* was in the winter of 2000. We had moved ashore into a house in Ōpua. We decided we wanted to settle in New Zealand and be a permanent part of the community. We made plans to spend a last winter in the islands and wanted to explore a few of the ones we had missed. We wouldn't be completing our around-the-world trip as we had found paradise in the Bay of Islands. A stray dog we named *Sheba* had adopted us having smelled the aromas of the BBQ we had been having, so we recruited Paul Karl, the then Commodore, to house sit and look after her while we were away.

Noridiam *on the sealift.*

We hauled out on the sealift, run very efficiently by the McGlashans, to be cleaned and checked before leaving. There had been much toing and froing to stock the boat before setting off.

We planned to visit Niue first having missed it on our way to NZ. On the 26th May, we cleared customs and left the OCC dock.

Passage to Nui.

On passing Nine Pin, the seas were bouncy, and the wind on the nose, so set a course as comfortable as possible, being cruisers not racers; this pattern continued for a week.

One day, it was 35 knots, so hove to and decided to open a goodie parcel from some friends; it is amazing how the spirits are lifted on opening the thoughtful gifts inside. Our fridge had decided to pack up, but being only small, we had consumed most of the food in it. The wind continued to blow and the seas unruly, so I spent most of the time reading. Roger was debating whether to put another reef in the main when a squall hit us, the wind screamed and the main halyard broke.

He struggled to tie the main down; the jib was in, but the staysail was difficult to secure with the force of the wind. It sounded like a freight train bearing down on us, the cacophony was horrendous. With the storm shutters in, we retired below feeling quite relieved as the moments outside had been really scary. The squall was short-lived thankfully, and we were soon left wallowing; it was like being in a tumble dryer. It amused me to think we had had difficulty sleeping when we first moved into the house due to the traffic noise.

After surviving the night, we both felt tired and looked haggard. Roger put up the trysail and decided to attach a fishing hook to the topping lift and try to fish for the main halyard. By some piece of luck he snared the line, as if to join in our jubilations the sun came out and we were soon sailing in the right direction for Niue. To celebrate I made a loaf of bread but the dilemma had been whether to drink the beer or use it in the recipe. After a week of pleasant sailing but not catching one fish, which seemed a bit mean after all the money we had spent on fishing tackle, we started sighting bird life. One booby bird was determined to sit on the top of our mast, he eventually gave up, a tropic bird investigated our lure but after much determination flew away.

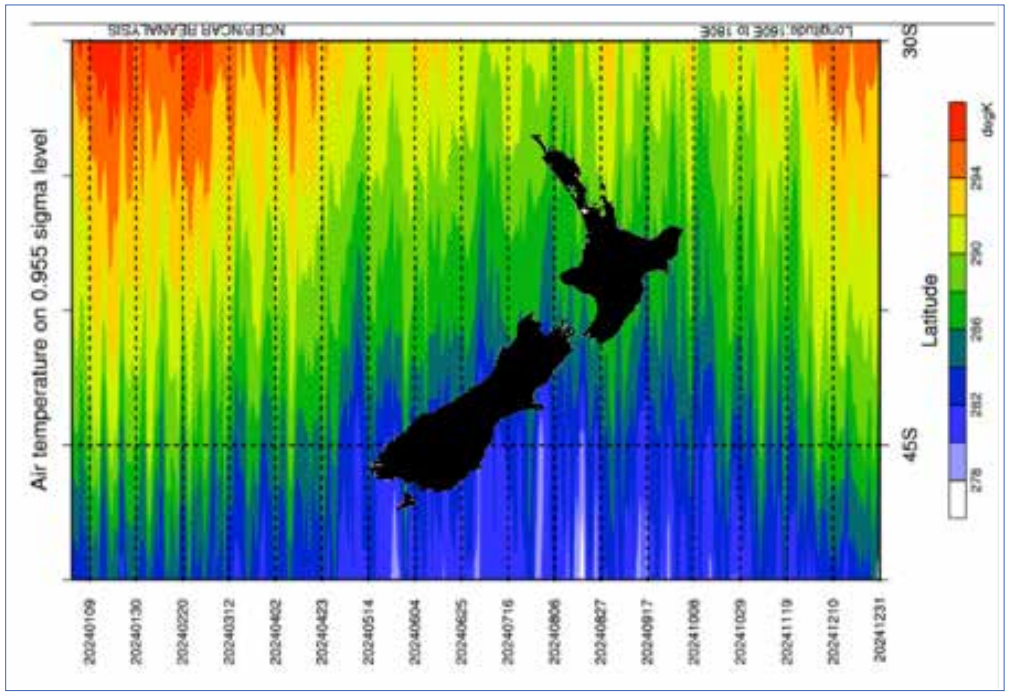
Anchorage at Alofi.

On the 10th June we thought we could make Niue before dark, we kept searching the horizon for any sight of land, eventually land was spotted. Niue is only 68 metres above sea level and is one of the world's largest coral islands. The waves were quite high, and the anchorage at Alofi is open to westerly winds. We passed the headland just as the light was fading and it was difficult to make out the mooring buoys in the swell. Twenty-five buoys had been laid by the Niue Yacht Club as the depth of the water was around 28 metres, there is no shallow water close in. We were beginning to give up hope when a buoy came in sight, and it wasn't long before we were tied up and able to go below and relax. The swell was uncomfortable, but after two weeks at sea, we slept peacefully, New Zealand approximately 1,300 nautical miles away.

LAST YEAR'S WEATHER

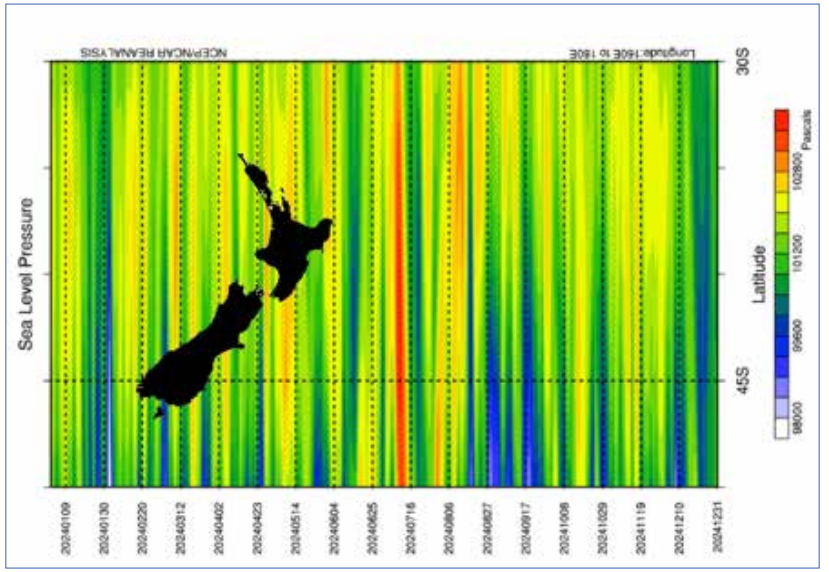
BY BOB MCDAVITT

Here is a time-latitude plot of the air temperature measured over a north-south slice of Aotearoa/ NZ as it travelled through 2024.



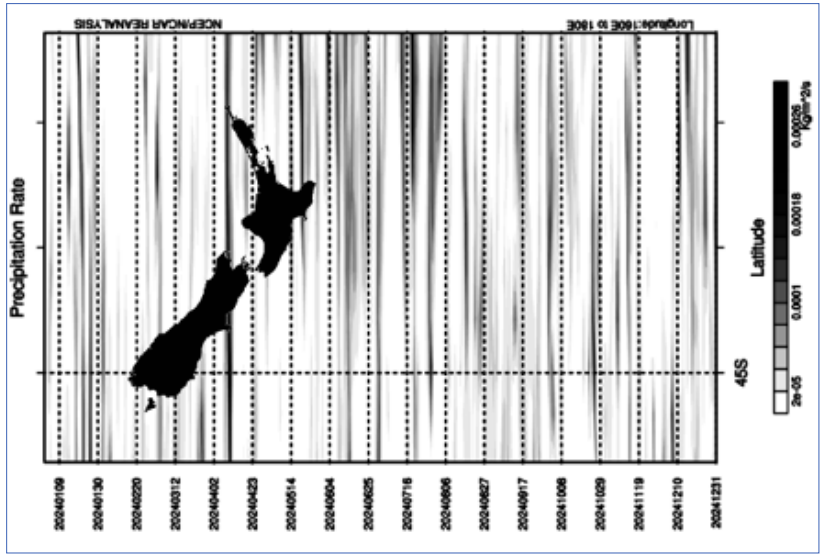
It clearly shows that the temperature is cooler further south and during winter. This time section makes a "bar-code" graph that reveals the annual trend and the daily variation. It gives a rough indication of the extremes and provides a visual image for quick comparison with any other year to see seasonal variations. The land silhouette is provided to help relate the latitude axis to your place.

Looking at a similar diagram for the barometric air pressure provides a graph that combines all the daily weather maps into one image.
This produces a more random-looking barcode. The yellow and red lines correspond to passing HIGHS on the weather map, and the blues show the LOWS or depressions/storms. The "HIGH JULY" stands out (see https://blog.metservice.com/node/1192) The scale is in Pascals, divide this by 100 to get hectoPascals/millibar.



Note the swing to blue low pressure that started from 20 December. This continued into January 2025.

The rain image is probably the most interesting as it highlights the dry periods in Northland last February, April and late November to early December.



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ANSWERS TO QUIZ February 2025 (p 13):

1. d. Strong Gale

2. d. It's the K flag which means 'I want to communicate with you' when flown on its own.

3. b. False - It is sign of precipitation and often bad weather coming.

4. a. In irons.

5. c. Semi diurnal

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NEW ZEALAND HYDROGRAPHIC AUTHORITY TIDE PREDICTIONS

Opua

Lat. 35°19'S Long. 174°07'E

February 2025

N.Z. Local Times and Heights of High and Low Waters

	Time	m		Time	m		Time	m		Time	m
1 Sa	04:10	0.6	**9** Su	05:35	2.2	**17** Mo	05:20	0.8	**25** Tu	06:11	2.2
	10:34	2.6		11:38	1.1		11:39	2.4		12:07	1.1
	16:42	0.7		17:49	2.2		17:49	0.9		18:17	2.2
	22:49	2.5					23:59	2.3			
2 Su	04:55	0.6	**10** Mo	00:06	0.9	**18** Tu	05:57	0.9	**26** We	00:34	0.9
	11:19	2.6		06:37	2.3		12:14	2.3		07:04	2.3
	17:29	0.7		12:44	1.0		18:26	0.9		13:02	1.0
	23:37	2.5		18:52	2.2					19:14	2.3
3 Mo	05:41	0.6	**11** Tu	01:08	0.8	**19** We	00:37	2.2	**27** Th	01:26	0.8
	12:04	2.6		07:33	2.3		06:38	1.0		07:52	2.4
	18:16	0.7		13:42	1.0		12:50	2.3		13:54	0.9
				19:48	2.3		19:06	0.9		20:05	2.4
4 Tu	00:26	2.4	**12** We	02:01	0.8	**20** Th	01:18	2.2	**28** Fr	02:14	0.7
	06:30	0.7		08:23	2.4		07:22	1.1		08:38	2.5
	12:52	2.5		14:33	0.9		13:31	2.2		14:43	0.8
	19:05	0.7		20:39	2.3		19:49	1.0		20:55	2.5
5 We	01:18	2.4	**13** Th	02:48	0.8	**21** Fr	02:06	2.1			
	07:23	0.8		09:07	2.4		08:11	1.1			
	13:43	2.5		15:18	0.9		14:16	2.1			
	19:57	0.7		21:24	2.4		20:38	1.0			
6 Th	02:15	2.3	**14** Fr	03:29	0.8	**22** Sa	03:02	2.1			
	08:20	0.9		09:49	2.5		09:06	1.2			
	14:38	2.4		15:59	0.9		15:10	2.1			
	20:52	0.8		22:05	2.4		21:33	1.1			
7 Fr	03:19	2.3	**15** Sa	04:07	0.8	**23** Su	04:07	2.1			
	09:23	1.0		10:27	2.5		10:06	1.2			
	15:38	2.3		16:37	0.8		16:11	2.1			
	21:53	0.8		22:44	2.4		22:35	1.1			
8 Sa	04:27	2.2	**16** Su	04:44	0.8	**24** Mo	05:12	2.1			
	10:30	1.0		11:04	2.4		11:07	1.2			
	16:43	2.2		17:13	0.8		17:16	2.1			
	22:59	0.9		23:21	2.3		23:37	1.0			

Times listed are N.Z. Daylight Time

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OPUA CRUISING CLUB

February 2025

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2
3	4 Darts 7.30pm	5 THE CHANDLERY HENRI LLOYD Race 4 – 6pm Summer Series	6 Waitangi Day	7 SEAPOWER Race 4 – 5pm Summer Pursuit Series	8	9 School Holiday Ends
10	11 Darts 7.30pm	12 THE CHANDLERY HENRI LLOYD Race 5 – 6pm Summer Series	13 Thirsty Thursday BINGO	14 Valentine's Day SEAPOWER Race 5 – 5pm Summer Pursuit Series	15	16
17 Committee Meeting 5.30pm	18 Darts 7.30pm	19 THE CHANDLERY HENRI LLOYD Race 6 – 6pm Summer Series	20 Thirsty Thursday QUIZ	21 SEAPOWER Race 6 – 5pm Summer Pursuit Series	22	23
24	25 Darts 7.30pm	26 THE CHANDLERY HENRI LLOYD Race 1 – 6pm Autumn Series	27 Thirsty Thursday BINGO	28 THE CHANDLERY HENRI LLOYD Race 1 – 5pm Autumn Pursuit Series		

Please note, the calendar entries are correct at the time of printing; please check www.opuacruisingclub.co.nz for any changes.