

AWKR 29½

Race report from David Taylor (dtayls)

This year's 30th anniversary of the Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta (AWKR) was postponed until 2021, but thanks to Sail Online (SOL) the 29.5th was held as a virtual race.

A simultaneous Zoom chat was hosted by Kristen Buckland (AWKR Chair) and Monica Jones (RMYS Club Captain) for a couple of hours during which they chatted with AWKR founder Gai Clough, 27-time competitor Sabena Rosser (sabbi on SOL), and many others.

A few SOL sailors dropped in too including Rainbow Chaser who gave everyone a great introduction to the SOL platform and what it means to her and others in virtual isolation around the world today.

During the race I was a little distracted due to my role as 'Boat Bouy' supporting our Zoom hosts. "What's that?" you ask. While the AWKR is the largest all-female keelboat regatta in the world, the guys play a part behind the scenes as 'Boat Buoys' helping those unfamiliar with the marina get in and out safely; making sure that any breakages or small damage is repaired ASAP; and perhaps most importantly running the Boat Buoys Barbecue at the end of each day's racing.

The Royal Melbourne Yacht Squadron will hold the AWKR's 30th Anniversary next year with 50 to 60 (mainly borrowed) boats competing in real life and involving some 350+ competitors from all around Australia, New Zealand, and beyond. Hopefully next we can make it a full buddy-up event where virtual sailors can race side-by-side against the real-life competitors. So if you are a female sailor (or know one) who is likely to be in Australia at this time next year then make contact via the [AWKR web site](#).

Cheers,
David (dtayls)