

UEC BOATS THROUGH THE YEARS – DENNIS STUBBERFIELD

The first UEC Boat was bought early in 1984 for I believe about \$8000 and a further \$4k renovating the engine and minor other stuff. She was originally named "Bombo". The picture shows her tied up at the Nedlands jetty where "Jo Jo" the restaurant used to be.



We had just launched her from Royal Perth YC (We kept some pretty high end Company back in those days!!) after an annual slipping probably late 1985 and went to pub up the road - "Steves Place" I think. We had not yet put the anchor box up front.

We sold her for \$10K in September 1991, Pat Troy and I taking her for her last voyage with UEC, the new owner on board. I wrote an emotional eulogy to her in the Club magazine, probably October 1991.



I was the boating officer at the time and for a couple of years after. As Boating Officer I was hell bent on getting us a boat asap and led the Club on a merry dance looking at every conceivable floating monstrosity in the quest to get one - given that it was the Club's lifeblood.

Finally, Madam President (no prizes for guessing who) and I went to Geraldton early Jan 1992 and saw "Roxanne III" up on the hard at Geraldton Crayboats Pty. Ltd. She was at the time the 100% ideal

boat for us. She had been there since the end of the 1990 - 1991 cray season and advertised for \$52k. After a week or two of intense effort We got her for \$35k and half the Club went to Geraldton on the weekend of the 19/1/92 to sail her home. Four sailors and six support crew following us down the road. It took two weekends. We left Geraldton at 4am in a blustery Souwester instead of the normal summer Easterly. I knew as I navigated out we were in for a hard time. We made Jurien Bay by 4pm, somehow, in a screaming southerly Gale. I personally have never seen the like of those seas, before or since. (about 70 years and that includes a couple of Pt Lincoln to Adelaide yacht races.)!

We got her Home on the Saturday of the OZ day week end, rigged her for diving by Monday, then took her up river with 23 people on Board for the Sky Show! She was (as our normal practice) renamed 'Underwater Explorer'.



When the time came to upgrade we advertised her for \$45k and she was bought by a group of doctors operating out of Carinya hospital in East Fremantle for \$42k, fairly quickly.

"Roxanne III" is now on a mooring just downstream from the Leeuwin boat ramp in Fremantle and renamed "Lazy Bones". Currently for sale she is totally indestructible and will last forever. Even in the roughest seas she felt safe and you could not tip her over if you tried. I well remember her bashing home from Rotto in a 25 - 30 kt sea breezes virtually submarining home with the radar just above the wave tops showing us where we were!



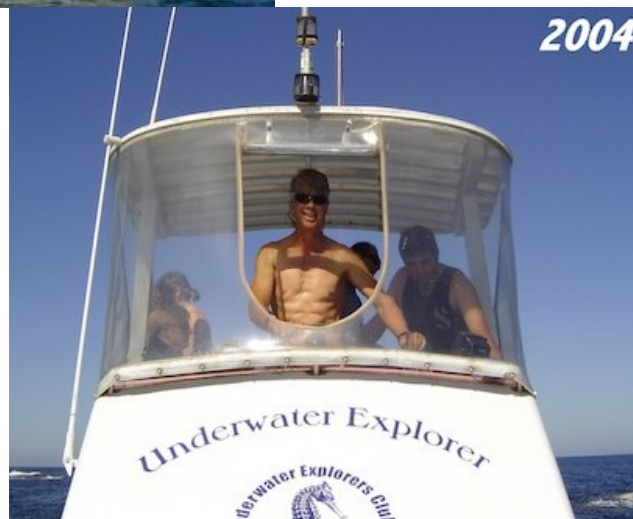
The UEC's 3rd boat was bought for \$154k in mid 2002 and financed by the sale of the Club rooms and a small member loan.

She was called 'Dawn Star', a Star Boat with a semi deep Vee hull and not one but two Bravo 3 legs and MTU 200HP engines both which had quite a few dead horses in the team. By Xmas she

was renamed "Underwater Explorer" but irreverently nicknamed 'Death Star' by those who manned and maintained her.

Not renowned for her reliability, the one saving grace of Dawn Star was that she made us a fortune in social outings which went a long way to paying for a couple of blown up engines and legs and the final replacement of the MTU's with twin Steyrs! These were "a few bob short of a quid" too.

She eventually sold in December 2009 for \$75K to an aboriginal corporation and went to Wyndham. She was originally built for dive/fishing charter and spent most of her useful life in Darwin and brought to Perth by Harry Whellmick of "Dive Surf and Ski". My guess is she has been sold for scrap long ago.





Following the sale of 'Death Star' the club set up a boat committee to find and purchase a new boat. There were two schools of thought for the replacement boat. One school wanted to go big and Fibreglass. The other wanted a similar sized aluminium boat as Death Star, just something more reliable and easier to handle.

After looking at a lot of boats the committee recommended the purchase of Cape Cruiser and it was

bought in July 2010, partially funded by club member loans.

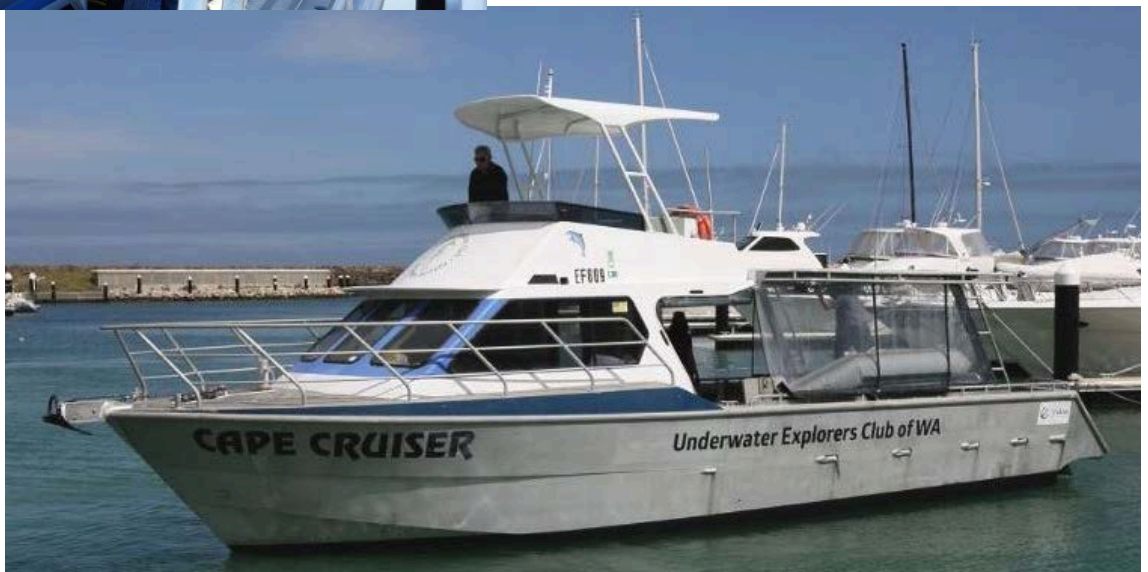
Cape cruiser had been a dive boat down in Geographe Bay and also spent a few years with Malibu Diving on Rottnest Island. This meant she came ready fitted out for diving with tank racks and so needed little modification for use.



After a brief spell on the hard stand to be cleaned up and antifouled she was off on her maiden voyage with the club on the 14th August 2010.



Since her acquisition she has been fitted out with full clears downstairs (now on their last legs and in need of replacement), a proper Bimini canopy upstairs, a redesigned anchor/chain locker and of course her name and club name on the side.



Whilst not the fastest boat on the water, she has proved to be a reliable and trusty dive boat, just about the right size and should hopefully do the club for many years to come.