

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray and Mr Richard Purcell at the CYCA in Sydney on Friday, the 29th of January, 1999. Also present and seated to my left is Senior Constable David Upston from the New South Wales Water Police. As I already explained to you, Mr Purcell, we are making inquiries in relation to the 1998 Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race and part of our task is to speak to various members of crews and other people who were involved in the race. Basically I want to speak to you today about an incident in relation to flares which were fired by a boat known as Sword of Orion.

A M'mm.

Q2 If I could just first get you on record with your full name?

A I'm Richard Purcell, Richard Gordon Purcell of 22 David Street, Mosman.

Q3 And your date of birth?

A 14th of November, '51.

Q4 And your occupation?

A A builder.

Q5 O.K. Can you firstly give me some background in relation to your sailing experience?

A Well, I've been sailing since the age of 15. I started sailing in dinghies, I transferred into skiffs, I bought my first ocean racing yacht in 1979, it was an

SS34 and I've done five Hobarts and I've done numerous Lord Howe Island races, many offshore 90 milers, three Montague Island races and Sydney/Mooloolaba Yacht Race, all in my own boats except for one Hobart when I sailed south with John Jones on Good News to Hobart.

Q6 O.K, now what was the name of the boat that you were in for the 1998 race?

A The name of the boat is Margaret Rintoul II, which I own.

Q7 Right. Can you give me some dimensions in relation to that boat?

A Margaret's a 48 foot, she was launched in '68, she was commissioned by Syd Fisher, built by owned by Syd for four or five years then owned by Stan Edwards for five or six years and then Roger Jackman for eight years and I've had it since 1987, I think, '88.

Q8 Are you aware of the IMS rating on that boat?

A Not very competitive, yeah I know my rating, it's 617 GPH.

Q9 Right.

A Is my, is my rating, my, my, my ILC rating is, I'm not sure what the ILC rating is but I know my GPH is 617.

Q10 O.K. Now, I'm under the understanding that IMS is, rating, is actually a degree figure, like a 114 or a 110 or, is that right, could you correct me if I'm wrong, or?

A No, I read the rating is a time correction factor.

Q11 O.K. So, how does that, the figure you've just given me, how does that relate to degrees, or does it relate?

A Degrees of what?

Q12 Writing?

A yeah, it's based, there's a lot of formula that goes into the - - -

Q13 O.K. Well, if I was to say this to you, the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race requires that the rating of a boat to go in is 115 or between 115 degrees to 110, between 110 to 115 degrees.

A Yes, it's to do with the index stability of the, of the hull.

Q14 Right.

A I understand that, what mine is, I don't know.

Q15 Right.

A But I, I look at the time as opposed to the writing although I, I know what my boat can do.

Q16 Right.

A Because I know the boat's history and I always wanted to own the boat and I bought the boat for that reason, I know she's been through a lot of sea ways, she did three Admiral's Cups, she did the '71 Fastnet which she won and that was a tough storm.

Q17 Yeah.

A And I bought it for security and safety, as much as the want of wanting to own that particular vessel.

Q18 Yeah. O.K.

A And I was never concerned about going to sea in

Margaret.

Q19 Right. O.K. Now, on this occasion for the race, how many crew did you have?

A Myself and 10 other men.

Q20 O.K. And you were the skipper of the boat?

A Yes.

Q21 O.K. Can you just sort of give me a summary of your race, your view of the race from the time you left Sydney to the time you got to Hobart as far as weather and conditions?

A O.K, we started the race very ordinary, we had, had a plan, we stuck to our plan, we were, we were late for the start so we wouldn't get caught up with the, with the mess of a big start, we cleared the heads well and we cleared the rounding mark and we headed south with a, what I thought, was a north, would've been a north, easter, I think, could've been a bit of north in it. Anyway we sailed into the evening and the breeze swung, we knew there was a storm coming, we could see the storm, there was a lot of lightning, we, we prepared for that storm fairly early, we got rid of our spinnaker, jibed across at about 11.00 and we basically sat in closer to the shore than I would have liked but knowing what was going to come from the west, sou-west, we were ready for that and I normally have a lot of times I have Richard Hammond on board with me, however he went down and when he's on board I often consult him as to what I'm going to do and when

we're going to do it but on this occasion I was pretty much on my own, so I, I, I made all the decisions on that boat and for that, for that reason I just remember Richard saying always be a lot earlier with your sail changes and we were never caught out with sail change. We got into Bass Strait at 1 o'clock the following day which we knew was a fast ride down the coast and we'd basically done, done 200 miles in 24 hours and we knew for our vessel that was quite fast. I knew the seas would be big, we were warned about those conditions and we, we knew that having travelled 12 and a half knots across the ground at various times that we had a fast current running south, like, it was fast, it was four knots at times, and we knew, and I have experienced Bass Strait in the past with that, with that current coming from the, coming down the coast of New South Wales and meeting an ebbing tide coming across the Strait, so we knew it was going to be fairly big seas. So I say we get into Bass Strait about 1 o'clock, 2 o'clock in the afternoon and the seas had become quite, quite big, I, I can't really put any size on the seas, I just knew they were big, but I knew my boat was going to handle it and I wasn't particularly worried. We, we had experienced blokes on board, we had, except for two of the guys, they were all experienced yachtsmen, boys that had sailed with me a lot of times so, to Lord Howe Island, various Hobarts, I had a which was an international off a yacht called

Exile and I was never worried about what was going to happen on the boat. We had a, had a rule that when we were making changes everyone would go into a position and stay in that position and that's how we sailed the race, but, at about 5 o'clock in the afternoon we, I thought we were in the height of what the storm was, we were carrying a, a storm sail only, I decided against dry sail, the boat was travelling at seven and a half to eight knots of speed which the boat felt comfortable, we had three steerers at the time, one of our steerers decided he wasn't capable of steering or didn't want to, but then my navigator, Col Betts, filled his spot, predominantly Col's position was only to navigate the yacht and to help me with tactical decisions. Col stepped in and helped in, in the place of the fourth steerer. One of my steerers also, Dick Norman, an elderly guy of 67, experienced yachtsman of 34 Hobarts, was a bit concerned and concerned me at the time and I said to Col, "You better go up and talk to Dick because he's making too much noise at the helm and he's starting to frighten me", and I thought that he was getting spooked out by the size of the sea. Col went and had a yarn to him and things settled down. We got through the night, I think the only thing that happened to us during, during that night that, apart from the size of the seas breaking over the boat, was that we broke a topping lift which held the storm sail in place and that was fixed up pretty quick

and we came out of that storm 12, probably 12 hours later, although I thought at the height of the storm we were only in it for about eight hours, 9 hours then when we came out of the storm I think on the 29th we ended up running out of wind, so we parked off the top of Tasmania for about six hours and that started at 2 o'clock on the 29th, we got going again about 8 o'clock on the 29th, 8.00pm and we sailed to our planned course, well that turns out to be not the right course now, but we stuck to our plan and we got down off Mariah Island probably about 30 mile off Mariah Island and ran out of wind again and that was on the, that must be, sorry, go back to 28th, 28th is when we parked for the first time off the top of Tasmania and we parked again off Mariah on the 29th at about the same time again. We, we finished the race at 11.30, approximately I think, on the 30th. 11.30 in the morning on the 30th. We had, we had some sea sickness on board, even I was sick, I was steering the boat at times sick but I've been there before and I know, I think I know how to get over it. We had a chemist on board who helped a couple of us, gave us the right drugs, although we knew what to take but he had a little brew of his own, he gave me some of that and he gave the forward hand some of it. I think the only dilemma we had was the fact we didn't have an engine. Going to the, going to the Sword of Orion incident, at about 6.30, or I thought 6.30, Colin Betts, the

navigator, now tells me it was more like quarter to 7.00, on the 27th, I was in the cockpit looking to leeward, Bill Riley, who you're going to interview soon, was steering the yacht, and Dave Wiggin, who hasn't done a Hobart before, was sitting in the cockpit on the leeward side, facing, facing myself. I sighted, I sighted a hand-held orange flare and it's hard to tell how far he was down, this boat, but, without the flare I wouldn't have sighted him because he blended in so well with the water, the water was sort of white-ish, blue-ish, with a lot of veins running through it 'cause of the speed of the wind and I reckon I had that yacht in my sight for about five seconds and the flare, the flare went out. I then said to Bill, "I've sighted a yacht down below", and I asked Dave Wiggin who was sitting in the cockpit with me, to find a torch, he found a torch and I stood up and I flashed a torch back in the general area I thought the yacht was. I then yelled out to Col, who was in his bunk to get, to get a fix on where we were, then I, I'd sighted a yacht, a yacht to leeward of us and I said, he asked me what sort of yacht it was, I said I thought it was a Far 37, it was laying at an angle, it was laying, it was trying to lay head to wind but it couldn't, it also had drogues out the front of the boat, I think it must have had drogues because otherwise he would've been facing, his stern would've been facing us. I could see men on deck in the cockpit, how many I can't remember, I can

remember the one person with the flare. Col got on the radio, but with the dramas that were happening I think at the time with Team Jaguar and I'm, I'm not sure whether Winston Churchill was involved, we couldn't get through. He didn't make the report until about five past 7.00 of our then position, our position at 6.45 is what he tells me. He gave our position then. I estimated that the yacht that I sighted was 500 metres to leeward of me, I, I did say to Col when he got through, to advise Telstra that we could not render assistance, that we didn't have a motor and I felt that it was too dangerous to make an, an attempt to, to turn the boat in those conditions. It wasn't until I got to Hobart that we, that we found out that it was Sword of Orion, in fact it wasn't until we got to Hobart that we realised how much carnage there was out there. We knew that, we knew that Winston was in trouble and had sunk because a couple of the boys in that boat we know well and, anyway we didn't, we didn't know until we got to Hobart that it was Sword of Orion and what, we can get it on tape.

Q22 Yes, certainly.

A What, what annoys me is that a crew member of that boat has tried to defame the name of Margaret Rintoul II.

Q23 Right.

A I know who the crew member is and I know why he's trying to do it.

Q24 Please.

A I don't know how long he's sailed on the Sword of Orion.

Q25 Yeah.

A No doubt you will be interviewing him, I don't know whether he was running the boat, I don't believe he was running the boat, I believe that way the list has been given on Sword of Orion the owner has Steve running that boat, I don't know how much experience the owner's got, but looking at the, the position of his name on the list, he was a, a new boy into the scene of yachting. Nonetheless, this person's name is Carl Watson and he's had an axe to grind with me for four years over an incident that had nothing to do with me, it was all to do with him, and that incident was that he lost a position with a major sail maker in Sydney, the sail making company called North Sails and, and in front of witnesses in Hobart he said he's been trying to get me for four years and he reckons now is the time he's going to get me because he felt that we should have turned our vessel and rendered assistance to them. I don't know what he expected us to do when we got there, he didn't know, he probably doesn't know now that we didn't have a motor, the fact is we didn't have a motor, and the fact is I think even if we had a motor I may not have, I may, I still may have held my position that I render assistance, as it turns out I find the guy that did render assistance in this race, got into trouble, now

the seas were fairly big, I have been in bigger seas, in '79 I was in bigger seas in Bass Strait, but I made that, I made that judgement, I had a couple of crew members who were concerned and I had to show them that I was leading this boat the best way to lead it and I couldn't, I was concerned myself for the conditions but I knew deep down that Margaret was so well prepared, we'd get through it without any major drama, now major drama could have been trying to turn that vessel either tack it or jibe it, I only had, I had my storm sail up, we could've lost the storm sail, I don't know, I don't know, this is all hindsight now, it's all, it's all guessing but deep in my heart I'm convinced I did the, not knowing that it was Sword, it didn't matter what boat it was, I didn't know the condition of Sword, I didn't know whether they were sinking, or what their problems were, I had no idea they had lost a crew member a couple of hours earlier, from what I've been told, but I made a decision and I said to Colin, "Am I making the right decision?", and Colin has done 35 Hobarts and these guys know what they're doing, no more than I do, but I said, "Am I making the right call?", he said, "You are making the right call". So we got on with it. The best we could do for them is to try let them know we sighted it, whether they had radio contact I don't know, but we, we got their position through to Telstra and I don't know how much longer after that they got air lifted or whether it was through our call

that they got air lifted but there is, there is some bad talk on the waterfront and, to the point where somebody's even phoned Triple-M last week, on two occasions and, you know, we don't like it, Margaret Rintoul II has got a good name, she's a, and is well sailed.

Q26 Was there an incident which occurred in a hotel down there where there was a bit of to-ing and fro-ing that you - - -

A Yeah, there was.

Q27 Would you be -?

A Yeah, well, the incident was I, I asked the commodore of the yacht club when I got to Hobart after hearing that there was some badmouthing of, of the yacht's name, to try and sort it out with the boat owner of Sword of Orion.

Q28 Yeah.

A I did ask the commodore to convene a meeting at 6 o'clock on the, on the 2nd of January where I would present myself with Bill Riley who was steering the boat at the time, if he could co-ordinate that meeting with the boat owner who I understood was in Hobart and I knew that Carl Watson was the owner of the boat 'cause I'd sighted him at the memorial service, to resolve the matter, so there wasn't any cause for defamation, because I had warned the commodore if it continued I would take out defamation but I didn't want to get the thing blown out of proportion. I wanted

them to understand what our position was.

Q29 Yep.

A In total. That meeting, that meeting didn't eventuate and I saw the commodore, I think with card, I saw the commodore at the presentation on the 3rd and he asked me did the owner contact me 'cause he had spoken to the owner.

Q30 Yep.

A And I said, "No, he didn't ring". Very early in the morning of the 4th, was it the 4th, 4th, it might have been the, yes, it was the 4th, I think, I, I spotted Carl Watson outside the House Hotel and went up and fronted him and asked him what was his ideas of trying to defame our, our boat's name and the crew on the boat and at that there was an attack on us from him as to why he was doing it, which I've explained previously and the witnesses overheard the reasons why he was, he was planning to get, get me, was Bruce Kerride, who was with me and another bloke called Teddy, don't know Ted's last name, he's off She's Apples Two, I don't know Ted, I know Bruce, 'cause Bruce has taken Ragamuffin home and he just bumped me that night in the pub and he heard what Watson said to me.

Q31 So was there any physical exchange?

A No. He, in fact, I, I'll, I'll state this, Watson asked me to smack him in the head, so he could sue me.

Q32 Right.

A And I laughed and walked away.

Q33 O.K. During that time were you aware of any other Maydays called by boats in the area over the waves, airwaves.

A No. No, only, see I wasn't, not myself, a lot of the, I spent a lot of time on deck - - -

Q34 Yeah, certainly, but I was just wondering if there was anything which was relayed to you of there's been a Mayday?

A No, well Colin would've.

Q35 Yeah, that's what I'm asking.

A I think Winston Churchill was, was the, was the only one he said that she's in trouble.

Q36 All right. Did you hear anything in relation to Business Post Naiad?

A No.

Q37 Was there ever, did your navigator ever mention to you that he, heard a Mayday from Sword of Orion?

A No.

Q38 You weren't aware of a Mayday from Sword of Orion?

A No, I wasn't, and, am I allowed to ask any questions?

Q39 Yes, certainly, I wanted to ask you if you were aware if there was a Mayday from Sword?

A Did Sword have a radio when she, after she rolled?

Q40 No.

A 'Cause they got too much water in the boat? 'Cause they ripped the top of the cabin off. Right.

Q41 But there was a transmission made prior to that.

A The only time we heard Sword and I didn't, I might have heard Sword or Col came and said to me, and this was after the 2 o'clock SKED on the 27th, and by the time we all got through our SKED it must've been about 3.30, Sword came in and said' "We just want to let the fleet know that," we're experiencing knots, 55 or 60 knots of wind down here, "we were experiencing 70 to 80" and I thought, shit, O.K, it's going to get a bit tougher, but the highest reading we saw on our gauge was 58 and I rang Stan Montgomery this morning before I came here to say, "Stan, do you reckon my instruments would be reading right?", and he said, "They would be, your rig is about 15 foot shorter than most of those lightweight boats and you might have been in a different stratosphere of wind", but we never saw, although Dick Norman when he was steering the boat felt we were getting 70 knots and only, only gave a 58.

Q42 O.K, were you aware of the boat Sword of Orion prior to the race?

A Yeah, I was, I was, but I thought it was a Melbourne boat.

Q43 Right. So you had seen it before?

A Yes, I had, yeah.

Q44 When you say that you saw this boat at some stage, was it dismasted?

A It was dismasted.

Q45 Now, you said you sighted an orange flare.

A Mm.

Q46 You're assuming that's from the Sword or you know
 that's from the Sword?

A Now, I believe it was from Sword of Orion.

Q47 At the time -?

A We didn't know, I didn't, we didn't know who it was,
 I'd said to Col, "It looks like a Far 37".

Q48 Right.

A That's what I thought it was.

Q49 If I was to say that there were in excess of five
 flares fired, would you agree with that or -?

A No. I'll tell you why I don't agree with that, Watson
 said to me, in fact, he said to my brother in the bar
 and he didn't approach me, he approached my brother, in
 the bar the night before and I wasn't told about this
 until after the, the service, and that's when I
 approached Hugo about it. Watson
 apparently said to my brother, "We, we fired five
 effing flares at you, and the sixth flare we fired
 could, we could've shot it in your, in your cockpit".
 We saw one flare. Now, I'm sure if they're firing
 flares, Billy would've seen them.

Q50 Yep.

A But Bill didn't see anything.

Q51 Yeah, O.K. What does an orange flare mean in -?

A It's a distress flare.

Q52 O.K. Now, you mentioned the word leeward before.

A Mm.

Q53 What is leeward, can you explain that to me, to the

layman?

A Well, the wind comes from the weather side.

Q54 Yep.

A And it travels to the leeward side, so they were to leeward of us.

Q55 Right. Now, who, who passed on the radio message to Telstra control insofar as not being able to render assistance?

A Col Betts.

Q56 Was that under your direction?

A Yeah.

Q57 Right. Are you aware of if Col tried to make contact with the Sword?

A I don't know. We were, we were locked up, latched up.

Q58 Yeah.

A And I'm, I'm yelling at Col through the, through the air vents.

Q59 O.K. Now are you able to tell me when your motor broke down?

A this one too. Morning of the 27th we reckon it broke down.

Q60 Right.

A We couldn't, she wouldn't go at all on the 27th, we got it going, I'd have to check with Lars 'cause he was helping me get it going. 18 hours after the start we got it going and then we said, it's too long a break but I had new and batteries in it so I wasn't too worried, in fact, our batteries lasted all the way,

I put emergency lights on and the four new batteries lasted the distance.

Q61 Right.

A No, I can't, I, I think the last time we had the motor running, 18 to 24 hours into that race.

Q62 O.K, so what was the purpose of turning the motor on?

A Charge our batteries for communications, navigation lights and our fridge runs off the same system.

Q63 So, that's a, a common practice to do that in those sort of races?

A Yeah.

Q64 O.K. I've got nothing else.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q65 When the, after the sighting of the orange flare and the call was made to Telstra control to the fact that where unable to render assistance, do you know if that call was actually answered and you got a reply?

A No, I don't know that, I, I understand that Col put it through to Telstra at 5 past 7.00, he said, "I got through to 'em", at 5 past 7.00, now I didn't know at the time, I've asked him since, I asked Colin that since.

Q66 And, and we will ask Colin, but what was your, what's your idea of what Colin told you?

A That he, that he managed to make contact with Telstra.

Q67 O.K.

A Did he?

Q68 I don't know.

A Right.

Q69 That's what I'm - - -

A They must, they must have, they must have - - -

Q70 We'll check that out - - -

A Lou Carter said, who was running the relay, radio, he said they, they got our message.

Q71 Yeah.

A 'Cause I asked Lou on the dock after the scufuffle, I said, "Can I have a look at your -", he said, "No, the Coroner's got the lot", when Endeavour entered - - -

Q72 Yeah, we got it all.

A They came and picked it up.

Q73 Yeah, O.K.

A So he couldn't tell me.

Q74 O.K. No, that's fine, well I'll just check on that. It's just that I, I was just trying to make it clear in my mind at this stage whether you knew that that call was answered.

A I believe it was answered.

Q75 O.K. Now, in your - - -

A Not until, not until 20 minutes after we sighted them.

Q76 O.K, so it was some, it was some time down the track anyway?

A He couldn't get through, he said there was so much concern about two other boats.

Q77 O.K.

A And I take it one of them was Winston.

Q78 All right. Now, you're fully aware of, of your

obligations as a seaman, no doubt, when you, when you sight a distress flare?

A M'mm.

Q79 And obviously your decision as you indicated was to maintain, weigh and look after your vessel and the safety of all those on board.

A M'mm.

Q80 So you're quite convinced that was the reason why you maintained course and could not render assistance?

A That's the only reason we didn't render assistance, if I have of made, I believe if we had of turned, tried to turn that boat I would've been without, without a what I call a which is the, the storm sail and without a storm sail I had no motor which meant I would've been asking crew to go forward with a five, and a five's a lot bigger sail, and she hangs off the front, whereas a storm sail, unlike a lot of the light weights, my storm sail hangs off and it's, in fact, when, when the topping had broke I though we'd blown the staysail we had she just came straight to the deck, now if it had of been on a foil, like most of 'em are on foils, she would've been floating around on the foil and would have lost it, so there's a lot of inbuilt characteristics of the boat which helps you when you get into trouble like that.

Q81 Just, just explain for us on tape, what the meaning of the terminology foil.

A Foil is the piece of equipment that runs on the, on the forestay, which hold the sail to the forestay and that's called a foil and we, we sail always on foil but in, in the case of our, our storm sail we sail it on hanks which are little brass clips that you pull a pin out and it gets fed onto the inner forestay and it's, it's the same principle, same action but slightly a different principle, so, and I know the Sword are probably annoyed and were browned off that here was a boat so close to them, that we actually sailed past them, that would've been frustrating for them, I'm sure it would've been frustrating for me, but when, common sense and logic would've said to me, well, what can they do for me, I couldn't do a thing for them, I couldn't two.

Q82 How many sails are carried on board the, your vessel?

A Sixteen.

Q83 O.K, and none of them would have, in losing the storm sail, none of them would've been able to, to carry out the same rate of movement ahead or something like that in those conditions?

A No, not one, the trysail would have come into play but the trysail is an alternative to the mainsail, now in, in you don't want your power in the stern you want your power in the head. We weren't sailing with a trysail, didn't need the trysail, we needed power in the head, like, they all need power in the head because you're steering from the stern and your

rudder is underneath you, you, what you try to do is drive your boat around, around the front of the sail, you, if you've got something over the middle of the steering, like the centre of effort all changes, yeah, we could've gone into a trysail but it's a big effort getting a trysail up and we decided earlier that we're not sailing with a trysail.

Q84 So, in, in the event of that, do you feel that, that if you would have turned to assist the Sword, you may have lost your storm sail and it would have been probably life threatening to then go ahead and put up the trysail?

A I don't know whether it would have been life threatening, it would have been, it would have been, it would have been a very difficult exercise just to, to change what we were doing.

Q85 Were all, were all your crew members on deck wearing life jackets and/or safety harnesses?

A No, they were always wearing, some of us wear, wear, wear inflatable vests, some of us have got them, otherwise they have to use what's provided on the boat, for example I've got my own inflatable, my brother Kerry's got his own inflatable, Steve carried his own, there's about five guys there inflatables on, the other six would have been wearing a mae west which is something I suppose the safety committees are going to look at, because I think everybody should have an inflatable, whether it's an automatic or not is

a question I would raise, I think it's unsafe, particularly if they go off, everybody had a harness on at all times, whether it was built into their jacket or it was taken out of the safety box we've got down below before they come on deck, a lot of us carry strobe, I carry a personal EPIRB, not many guys carry a personal EPIRB, though there's four or five strobes on board, apart from the two you've got to carry anyway.

Q86 No, I have no further questions.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q87 Where did you blokes come in the race, in your class or category?

A We were 15th or 16th on line, we were 8th overall and we won our division.

Q88 Has there been any attempts at reconciliation between yourself and the Sword or further attempts?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q89 Is there, is there major drama now, is what I'm saying to you?

A I, I don't know, last week when there's, somebody rings Triple-M on, on two occasions within 24 hours saying that they were off the Sword and that a boat, no mention of the name of the boat, sailed very close past, I'd like to get with the owner of, of Sword and, and talk to him.

Q90 Yeah.

A Tell him how sorry I am he lost his boat, it was a damn good boat, the Sword.

Q91 Did you hear that - - -

A Beautiful boat

Q91 - - - did you hear that phone call on Triple-M?

A No, my brother's, my brother's stepson heard it on, on the Tuesday and then when, when my brother rang on Wednesday to talk to Triple-M about it, they said, "Well, which call are you talking about, the one yesterday or the one this morning?", he said, "What, there's been another one?", and the girl said, "Yes, there was one this morning".

Q92 Right.

A So if you guys could get the tape - - -

Q93 Yep, yep, no doubt about that. Are you aware whether the person actually identified themselves as being a crew member of the Sword of Orion, or that's what you've been told?

A That's what I've been told.

Q94 O.K.

A But I would, I'd like to get with Bob, Bob and have a yarn to him, I don't, I really don't want to get together with Watson because there's no point, he's had this grudge for four years and its', it's not going to go away. I feel sorry for him, he's lost, he's lost a good yachtsman and he's lost his boat.

Q95 Mm.

A He's got to live with that.

Q96 Mm.

A I wouldn't want to live with it.

Q97

O.K. Is there anything further you'd like to say, any ideas you have on the race or any opinions you have apart from the safety gear that you've mentioned, any views, communication problems that you'd like to discuss or mention, anything else that you think is relevant?

A

Well, I think, I think the event has been saddened by those six guys, one of which I knew. I think the event is an event that shouldn't be, shouldn't be, shouldn't be postponed, should continue to be the great event it is, I hope to sail in it again one day. I think that the, the club which I've been a member of on and off for since '79 does a good, does a good job. I know that there's probably a lot of criticism floating around about the club, how it's been, how this particular race, or the race is handled, I mean the club handled this race no different to the way they handle every other race they have, I think they're professional. They just got caught out by one of those freak storms, it could've been a week earlier and you only would have been in Hobart having a good time. I think that, I think the Young Endeavour and, and the relay ship Young Endeavour and the crew on that boat did all they could do, they're only a relay ship, there's one of the girls on the boat said, we weren't in a position to help anybody and, and that brings me to what I think we've got the, we've got the navy sitting at port, somebody must know the admiral of the

fleet and say well we want one of your boats out there that's got a helicopter on it, flying the fleet down in any major event, the boys are being paid to sit, sit at dock, why not pay a bit more money and have them, have them out there training, perhaps there wouldn't have been as much time lost, I don't know, but, I, it wouldn't be a bad thing to see someone like the Newcastle out there, flying the fleet down, perhaps get to the top of Tasmania then turn around, but the Strait is the big problem, there's nowhere to run, but I've got nothing more to say, I just think that my, my biggest, my biggest concern is someone running around there trying to defame the name of the boat and the crew, whether it's me or the name of the boat, the crew is all mixed up with it, our crew aren't very happy that, that it's taken shape that way.

Q98 That's fair enough. O.K. O.K. Time is now 12.44.
This interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED