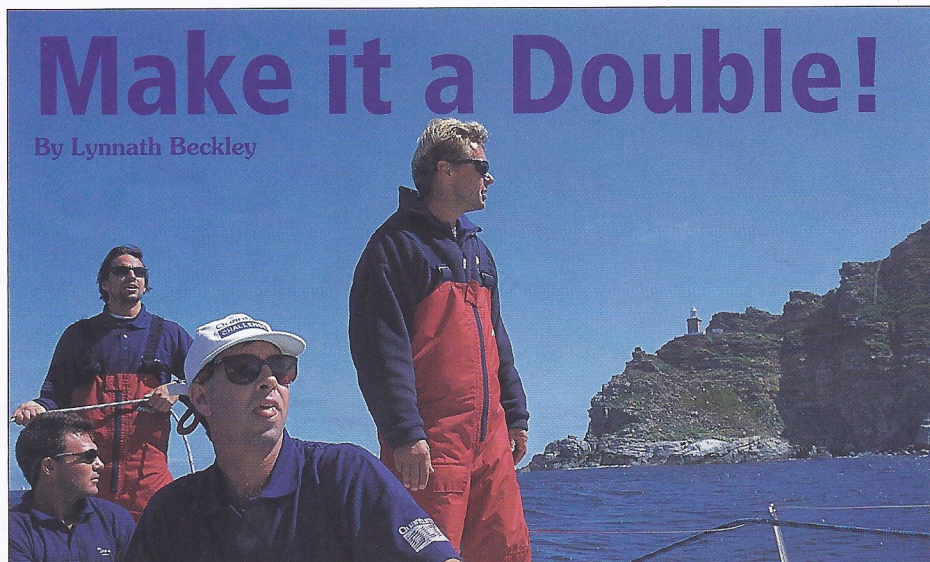


Scratch boat, *Merlin*, clinched a great double with line honours and PHRF victories in the 1999 Surfside Double Cape Race. Skippered by Craig Middleton, the big red RCYC boat and its enthusiastic crew, led the 50-strong fleet around the track and finished in a new record time of just under fifteen hours.

As in all previous Double Cape races, most of the fleet headed out from Table Bay although there were a few starters in each of False Bay, Gordon's Bay and Hout Bay.

Light south westerly winds at the 08h00 start on Saturday 23 October had the RCYC fleet short tacking past Sea Point and Camps Bay en route to Hout Bay. *Merlin* and *Maxtec Wizard* (Jan Reuvers) led the pack up to Duiker Point but then a lull in the wind allowed many of the smaller boats to catch up. *Ballyhoo Too* (Ian Park-Ross) sneaked up between the bricks as *Merlin* made an offshore tack. This proved to be a match winner as they picked up a steady breeze again whilst *Maxtec Wizard* wallowed without breeze between the shore and Vulcan Rock. *Merlin* steamed away, rounding the Hout Bay mark 24 minutes ahead of *Maxtec Wizard* with *Ballyhoo* just five minutes behind. On the beat up to the point, *Maxtec Wizard* sailed aggressively, attacking *Merlin*'s lead by short tacking behind the breakers and giving their visiting international crew members a close up view of the Cape Peninsula. Catching up with Hout Bay boat *Fast Forward* (Ken



Maxtec Wizard rounding Cape Point.

Pic by Lynnath Beckley

Pollard) at Cape Point, they were rewarded by having closed the gap on *Merlin* to just five minutes. On the kite run down to Simonstown in the now freshening southerly wind they gained further to round Roman Rock three minutes off the pace.

The beam reach across to Gordon's Bay saw the big red boat start to stretch its legs and *Merlin* once again built their lead to five minutes over the two-metre smaller *Maxtec Wizard*. As the wind had piped up to around 20 knots, smaller headsails were needed for the tight fetch back to Cape Point. *Merlin* gained again and rounded Cape Point for the second time at 19h35 with *Maxtec Wizard* following in her wake, ten minutes behind. Under the full moon, the two boats sped north along the peninsula with spinnakers as the wind freshened and swung more to the south east.

As per usual there were the windless holes in the lee of the mountain off Camps Bay and Sea Point but as the two big boats came round the corner to the finish off Granger Bay they were greeted by gusts of up to 30 knots and there was much flogging of mainsails. *Merlin* finished at 22h54 followed by *Maxtec Wizard* at 23h13, both inside *Wizard*'s previous record of 15 hours 19 minutes set in 1995.

Next boat in was Joe van der Westhuizen's *Nina* three hours later followed closely by *Ballyhoo Too*. The two Mount-Gay 30s, *DMKC Insurance* (Brent Gray) and *Taz* (Mark Sadler/Marion Cole) had a close race finishing less than a minute apart around 03h00. They were followed by a flurry of *Awesome* (I Kvale), *Tenacity* (E Stern) and *Didi* (Dudley Dix). A steady stream of boats rollicking along with the fresh south easter kept Jackie Low and her bridge crew busy all morning and the final boat *Wavedancer* (R Sher) completed the course in mid-afternoon during the World Cup quarterfinal rugby match!

Only four of the False Bay boats finished the course and *Lady Lorna* (Billy

Leisegang) led them home. *Fast Forward* was the only finisher from Hout Bay and, unfortunately, no-one from the host club Gordon's Bay made it round the track.

Merlin (Craig Middleton) deservedly took the Double Cape Trophy for PHRF honours followed by *Lapwing* (Jennifer Burger/Alan Keen) and *Didi* (Dudley Dix). Trophies for the best handicap performances on individual legs went to *Lady Lorna* (RCYC to HBYC), *Maxtec Wizard* (HBYC to Cape Point), *Foord & Meintjes* (Cape Point to FBYC), *Sensation* (FBYC to GBYC), *Lusty* (GBYC to Cape Point) and *Good Golly Miss Molly* (Cape Point to RCYC) – a fine spread of boats. *DMKC Insurance* won the IMS prize and *Nautiash* (Peter Ashwell plus two sons and one son-in-law) the family participation prize.

All in all, a good race with many boats managing their best times for the event which has steadily grown into a classic. Standby for the 20th edition of the Double Cape in 2000! ♫

Results

Line Honours

Merlin Craig Middleton

IMS

- 1 *DMK Insurance* Brent Gray
- 2 *Taz* Marion Cole/Mark Sadler
- 3 *Ballyhoo Too* Ian Park-Ross

Non-IMS

- 1 *Merlin* Craig Middleton
- 2 *Lapwing* J Burger/A Keen
- 3 *Didi* Dudley Dix

Overall PHRF

- 1 *Merlin* Craig Middleton
- 2 *Lapwing* J Burger/A Keen
- 3 *Didi* Dudley Dix

Fastest Point-to-Point

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| CP - RCYC | <i>Good Golly Miss</i> | Ben Gildenhuys |
| GBYC - CP | <i>Lusty</i> | Klaus Schade |
| FBYC - GBYC | <i>Spilhaus</i> | Ted Kuttel |
| CP - FBYC | <i>Foord & Meintjes</i> | Dave Foord |
| HBYC - CP | <i>Maxtec Wizard</i> | Jan Reuvers |
| RCYC - HBYC | <i>Lady Lorna</i> | Billy Leisegang |

Interclub Overall

RCYC *Merlin, Lapwing, Didi*

Club Overall

- | | | |
|------|---------------------|-----------------|
| RCYC | <i>Merlin</i> | Craig Middleton |
| HBYC | <i>Fast Forward</i> | Ken Pollard |
| GBYC | no competitor | |
| FBYC | <i>Lady Lorna</i> | Billy Leisegang |



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