



Niña racing upwind

# Invisible yacht wins Langkawi Regatta trophy

We won! That is we won six out of our 10 races. We won the regatta series trophy. And we won the 'Malaysian Multihull Challenge' Cup. Oh... and we also won the coveted 'Tunku Abdullah Sportsmanship Award', voted by participants for competitiveness, fair racing and comradeship on and off the water (although in our case more likely because of our 'clown' makeup...). Not a bad haul, really.

And we did all of it while invisible – or at least, invisible to the Royal Langkawi International Regatta's (RLIR) official photographer, who took thousands of photos but (on most days) none of the leading multihull, Niña. Multihull racers are accustomed to the invisible nature of their chosen yacht style when it comes to racing. The glamour boys and girls in those big, can't-stay-upright, racing yachts get all the glory – and the photo gallery haul.



Peter Ahern's Oil, looking like the winner she is



Too windy for some – unfortunate sportsboat with broken mast

Niña's crew picking up the Malaysian Multihull Challenge Cup from former Malaysian Prime Minister, Dr Mahatir Mohamad and Princess Soraya Dakhlah



Bob Mott collecting the Tunku Abdullah Sportsmanship Award



The colours that helped Niña win the sportsmanship award

Multihullers, however, take comfort in the fact that, unlike their monohull counterparts, the dry martinis don't need lashing down when there's a bit of breeze.

Of course there are always exceptions and, had the recalcitrant photographer been around, he'd have got some prize-winning shots of Niña's unseemly acrobatics (bum high in the sky) in a particularly strong gust on the home run from the Round-the-Island-Race. But, of course, we were still invisible...

Joking aside, RLIR takes the prize as our favourite regatta; we can live without the snapshots. We compete each year in four regattas: RLIR (January), Bay Regatta (February/March), Phuket's Multihull Regatta (July) and Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek (CPHPRW) (July). After a few entries, we ditched Phuket's biggest regatta, King's Cup, as too tedious, too expensive and remarkably down-market onshore. Let's run through what makes or breaks the rest...

Action on Niña's foredeck



Malaysia's marine police provide the start boat



Our competition – Galeforce and 2Fast4You



Bristol Channel Cutter *Evelyn* – last year's Ocean Rover winner but merely third this year



Racing Class winner, Peter Ahern, besieged by the media. (*Niña's* crew were in the bar discussing tactics)

**Bay Regatta**, the cruisers' live-aboard event, races through great scenery in Phang Nga Bay but often struggles for wind and, to be frank, the parties do leave a lot to be desired. It has also become, in 2015, the most expensive regatta on 'our' circuit.

Phuket's **Multihull Regatta** is the one where the photographers have no choice but to shoot multihulls and has great racing in usually good breezes. Ashore, to say it's laid back would be an understatement; let's call it the 'no-party regatta' in a region where regatta parties are traditionally part of the 'deal'. Nothing wrong with the event, which sets out to be 'low key', a fact reflected in the cost of entry.

**Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek** is an outstanding event with great racing and a standard of party catering (food and drink) that leaves all the others standing. It is, however, something of a two-dimensional event – same race area every day and same party venue every night.

So what makes **RLIR** different? What puts this one head and shoulders above the rest? First it's run out of a marina with free berthing for participants. That alone is hard to beat, while part of the benefit is a REAL yacht club bar for post-race refreshment.

A couple of those 'sexy' monohulls that tend to hog the photographer's time



On the water, RLIR offers three completely different options for racing: in the harbour, offshore and around the islands. Clever race management makes the most of all three to provide five days of incredibly varied courses. Onshore, regatta management is getting to grips with its parties, too, and the standards (including a reserved-seat system for the final night) are improving every year.



IMAGE asia is proud to support Royal Langkawi International Regatta as a Media Partner as well as providing copies of Southeast Asia Pilot for the daily 'regatta lucky draw' prizes.

But what really makes the difference for Phuket-based boats is that *it's not here!* How many of us have a yacht in Phuket, but rarely find time to take it out of Phuket waters? I see a lot of hands raised... RLIR provides the perfect excuse, following hard on the heels of the over-indulgence of the festive season, to get on board and get away – cruising down and back through some of the most beautiful and peaceful islands in the area. The regatta is five days of sailing, but the journey down and back can be as long as you want (if you're retired) or as long as you can get away (for those of us still earning the bucks).

This year we stretched a five-day regatta to 10 days; next year, we've promised ourselves that we'll turn it into a two-week adventure.

For stopover options, check out [www.southeastasiapilot.com](http://www.southeastasiapilot.com). This magnificent regional cruising guide is available in print or e-book versions.

Next year's dates are 11-16 January 2016. [www.langkawiregatta.com](http://www.langkawiregatta.com) for more info.



All the winners together – some heavy trophies on display!

### And the winners were...

**Racing:** Peter Ahern (AUS), *Oil*, 5th RLIR victory. Clean sweep, 9 points clear of second placed *Utarid* (MAS).

**IRC1:** Bill Bremner's (SIN), *Foxy Lady VI*. 13 points clear of Mick Tilden's (HKG) *Fujin*.

**IRC2:** Vincent Chan's (MAS) *Mata Hari*. 10 points ahead of Stuart Williamson's (MAS) *Old Mutual International EOW*.

**Sports Boat:** Kevin Yong's (SIN) *RSYC Setia West*. 9 points clear of fellow Singaporean Collin Lim Han Yang on *SMU*.

**Multihull:** Grenville Fordham (UK) and Bob Mott's (AUS) Phuket-based *Andaman Cabriolet Niña*. 4 points ahead of another Phuket boat, Kirill Stashevskly's *Galeforce*.

**Club:** Phil Auger & Astrid Graham's (NZL) *Sophia*. 4 points ahead of Gavin Welman's (GBR) *Rascal*.

**Ocean Rover:** Wulf Henning Lenz's (MAS) *My Toy*. 4 points clear of John Ormiston's (GBR) *Invictas Reward*.

**Ocean Rover (B):** Adale Hakin, A Lunker's (MAS) *Chantique*. Only 1 point ahead of Ramasemy Menon's (MAS) *VG Offshore*.



Lunchtime anchorage at Koh Liang on the way home

After lunch, go through the passage between Koh Liang Nua and Koh Liang Tai

*Niña* is available for charter [www.chartercatamaran.com](http://www.chartercatamaran.com)

*Andaman Cabriolet Niña* under spinnaker in one of the coastal races