

9.6. 77th Bunbury Return Race

Organising Authority:	Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club
Partner Club:	Koombana Bay Sailing Club
Date:	Saturday 8 February 2025
Warning Signal:	0855 (all fleets)
Start Area:	In the vicinity of Hall Bank Beacon
Distance:	170 nautical miles
Safety Category	Category 3+ (plus):
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 crew must have a valid Sea Safety Survival Course qualification and the following items in the Australian Sailing Special Regulations to comply with Cat 2:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3.24.1 (permanently installed inboard propulsion engine).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.19 (Life rafts).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.18.2 and 4.18.4 (EPIRB).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.20 (Grab Bags to Accompany Life rafts).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.01.1 (f) (Spare Lifejacket).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.05 (Personal Locator Beacon).
Additional:	<p>Crew lists, including PLB HEX ID/UIN must be submitted to the OA by midday on Wednesday 5 February 2025 by signing on all persons on board in the online entry system for the race.</p> <p>All yachts must carry a tracking device supplied by the OA.</p>
Recommendation:	<p>A personal MOB AIS locator is recommended for all competitors, and we encourage the details to be added to the boats race entry using the online system.</p>
Trophies	IRC & PHS
Series	ORWA Bluewater and Siska series
Entry Fee	\$250
Entry Close	1700 Friday 31 January 2025
Briefing:	1830 Thursday, 6 February 2025
Race Control	RFBYC Radio Room, 9286 8204
Email	offshore@rbyc.asn.au

9.6.1. Course

Mark	Pass	Comment
Start		
Day buoy		
Western south passage transit beacon	PRT	
Mark boat Bunbury	STB	Approximately 33° 18.703'S 115° 38.883'E
Western south passage transit beacon	STB	
Hall bank beacon	STB	
South mole finish		

9.6.2. Race history

The Bunbury & Return was first raced on 24 February 1948. The start line was inside Fremantle Harbour, opposite 'B' shed on Victoria Quay. The course was around Bell and Fairway Buoys, then the west end of Rottnest with its two lighthouses, one manned, then south to Bunbury. Moorings, tenders and a mayoral reception at the golf club awaited them. Fifteen yachts entered for this initial overnight offshore race. From 1949 onwards the race became Bunbury and return, along with a mid-morning start.

The 169nm race grew steadily in popularity. By the 1960's this major offshore event was attracting considerable media coverage. From 2016 there was a lap in Koombana Bay and a Friday evening start which saw most of the fleet turning in Bunbury during daylight hours to connect the race with the locals. In 2018, a spectacular Fremantle Harbour start celebrated the 70th race.

The Bunbury and Return is not the longest, but it is the oldest offshore race in Western Australia, it will always have a special place in history.

9.6.3. Race record

The race record was set in 2023 by David Davenport and Crush in a time of 16h 26m 21s.