

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q1 This is an electronically recorded interview between Detective Senior Constable Stuart Gray and Mr Tim Edkins at the Adelaide CIB office on Friday, the 23rd of April, 1999. Time by my watch now is 18 minutes past 11.00. Also present, seated opposite me is Senior Constable David Upston from the New South Wales Water Police. Just for the record, Tim, I wonder if you could just please state your full name?

A Timothy Evan Edkins.

Q2 And how do you spell Edkins?

A E-D-K-I-N-S.

Q3 And your date of birth?

A 12th of the 3rd, '54.

Q4 Your current address?

A 208 Young Street, Unley, South Australia.

Q5 And your occupation?

A Carpenter.

Q6 O.K. Could you give us some background in relation to your sailing experience?

A I've done probably 100,000 ocean miles now. I've competed in three races to Japan, one of them two-handed. I've done two expeditions down into Antarctica with my own boat, and I've done deliveries across the Pacific to America through the Panama and things like that. And I've done, this is only my third Sydney Hobart.

Q7 Right.

A But a lot of ocean, ocean miles.

Q8 Now, your, you entered on the boat Ausmaid last year, is that correct?

A Yes.

Q9 Can you tell me what your role was on that boat?

A During the race, basically sail trimmer and I do helming as well.

Q10 O.K. Now you might like to sort of, I believe there's a bit of art to helming.

A Yeah, definitely.

Q11 Can you sort of give us some sort of background on that? I mean, what's - - -

A It's very much a, a what you'd call a feel, it's, it's, it basically comes from experience. I mean, obviously, some people are better than others and will excel at it more than others. But it's a relationship between feeling the waves, feeling the boat and what you see, and then the wind pressure, and in between all that working the boat through that. It's sort of, sort of almost like, in some conditions it's almost like the boat's dancing and you just, you guide it through. I mean, basically, the idea of helming is to put the minimum helm on at any time, 'cause that's like a giant brake. So, you're trying actually to put minimum helm on, yet keep it in the same, keep it in the right direction. So if you put the helm on early, and then the wave puts it back on course, that will require less helm than putting it on later to hold it on course.

Q12 Right. And so far as your two, your two-man crew you went to Japan

A Yeah, one race for two-handed, yeah.

Q13 Right. How far is that race, or how long duration?

A Five and a half thousand miles.

Q14 And what's the duration of that sort of time?

A 40 days.

Q15 All right. Is that the Melbourne Osaka race?

A Yes, that's right, yeah.

Q16 O.K. Now far as, I mean, you've got a wealth of experience in relation to all different seas in the world. Are you sort of able to, from your experience, and you've done three Hobarts, are you able to sort of give us a bit of classification for Bass Strait compared to the seas that you've sailed in?

A I've been in considerably worse.

Q17 Yeah.

A But I think, you know, the reason Bass Strait is as bad as it was and in particular this year as bad as it was, was related to the 5-knot current. I mean it was peaking at five knots, but we had a current running down the coast to a maximum of five. We had, there was a slight sou'-east swell, then we got a northerly, you know, that 35-knot northerly that built up swell, and that went round to the west-sou'-west at 50-odd knots, and that had another swell. So, I think the combination of those three things is what made it so dangerous. And that's sort of semi-typical for Bass

Strait, it's shallow water.

Q18 Mm.

A And you can get those situations turning up. I mean, that was a particularly bad one, but because it's shallow water, and that current, that's really, and I mean, being a racing boat, you have to be in the current. You could elect to get yourself out of the current, but if it's travelling five knots south, that's where you've got to be.

Q19 Mm.

A So you're putting yourself in the worst wave action that you could find.

Q20 O.K. Now, if I could take you to the 27th, you might like to relate your experiences in the race last year to us?

A Yeah. On the morning of the 27th, it would have, you've got to think, getting foggy and all that. By then it had come round into the, that was actually, the 27th was the day of the storm, wasn't it?

Q21 Yeah.

A Yeah. So, in the morning, it still hadn't peaked out then, it was blowing but it was, it was more in the, from memory, sort of the nor-west, I would have said, west, west, nor-west somewhere there, from memory. We really got the front proper at about midday, it would have been, around 12 o'clock. And that was when it came in at 50 or whatever it was, and that's when it went into about west-sou'-west, about that time. I

mean, the night before it had been blowing northerly and slowly back through into the nor-west. I can't really quite remember what time that actually went into the sou'-west, but it, certainly when we really got hit was around midday. And the waves were, you know, steep. I mean, that's really the dangerous thing, it's not so much the size of the waves at all. When the faces are vertical and breaking - - -

Q22 O.K. Can you explain why that's dangerous?

A Well, it's the breaking water that gets you into trouble. Generally, when you get a big ocean swell and that's not Bass Strait when you get a big ocean swell, it opens out, and also if you get a prolonged storm, the seas open out, they get wider apart. They might be like football fields across, and they might be huge, but that's not dangerous at all. It's just like moving up a giant lift. But when the seas close up, and that's typical when you get a sudden increase in wind strength, the seas build quickly and they're unstable. And in shallow water. That's typical. So the seas are closer together and they're steep and breaking, and with that current running down, that makes them break even worse, so. So, you know, the first 30, 40 foot of sea is not a problem, it's the last 20 foot on the top of the breaks.

Q23 Yeah.

A That gets you into trouble.

Q24 O.K. So, carry on if you like.

A Yeah. I mean, we didn't, I didn't feel we were in any danger at any point, but whether, and talking to other people, I feel we must have been a little bit further south of the worst wave action. I think we got the wind, probably similar wind strength, but because we were actually beyond the current a bit, I think we probably missed the worst of the, the wave action. I mean, talking to a few people, I feel what was actually happening and what got a lot of people caught out, was people got lulled into a sense that you could go for half an hour or an hour and not see a particularly dangerous wave. But then with a combination of those swells, all of a sudden two swells would come together and stand up.

Q25 Right.

A And then you've got a dangerous one. So people were lulled into a feeling, you know, you assess the sea for 15 minutes and say, oh, this is O.K, we can handle this, we can sail bang-on back to Eden, or we can, 'cause this is safe. And then an hour later, something stands up which is, you know, just, it's nothing you've seen like that. So I feel, that's what put a lot of people in trouble. Like, in our position, I felt the direction of the swell was perfect, in terms of going through a storm or sailing, not hard in to the wind, we were cracked up probably about 50 degrees apparent, which is a very good angle to sail in, in, I mean, that would be the preferred angle if you were having to

weather a storm.

Q26 Mm.

A So we could actually still keep racing, 'cause it means you've got speed on the boat and speed gives you manoeuvrability and when you see a bad wave you can steer the boat up into it and go over it, and I didn't honestly see any waves that I felt were going to be disastrous for us. Not everyone, you know, there were some big waves. If you had an inexperienced helmsman, you could get into trouble. But there were, everything we saw, I believe, was under control.

Q27 Right. O.K. Now, can you tell us in relation to what happened to the young chappie that injured himself?

A Yeah. I think Scott was going down to have a leak or something.

Q28 Yeah.

A And he got thrown, fell, whatever, and landed on a mainsheet winch on his ribs, and I think he broke four ribs and punctured a lung.

Q29 All right.

A Which we didn't know about the lung, obviously, at the time. He was short of breath and I looked after him for the rest of the race, and he said he was short of breath, but we sort of, all we could really do was really monitor him.

Q30 Yeah.

A And, and I was just giving him painkillers every four hours, and making him, 'cause, I mean, he's a pretty

determined sort of character, he was trying to keep on doing jobs and - - -

Q31 Yeah.

A - - - I said to him, no. Jammed him in his bunk and said that's it.

Q32 Who was - - -

A I was worried about that because I knew that a punctured lung can basically kill you.

Q33 Yeah.

A And then I was worried, at that stage I didn't realise he had a punctured lung, but I felt that if he'd cracked his ribs or something, if he fell again which he was, he'd lost strength in his hands, so with the chance of falling again was now bumped up, obviously.

Q34 Yeah.

A So I was worried that if he did fall again he could actually puncture his lung. That's what I was thinking.

Q35 Right. So where was he treated?

A He was, he went to the Hobart Hospital.

Q36 O.K. It was definitely a punctured lung?

A Yeah.

Q37 Did he mention whether the lung deflated at all or -?

A Yeah, it did, it was partially deflated when he was in Hobart, but they said it must have collapsed pretty seriously at the time, gauging by the amount of deflation in it in Hobart.

Q38 And is he fully recovered from that?

A Yeah, about now he is.

Q39 Right.

A He's just started sailing back on the boat again.

Q40 O.K. As far as the weather itself, are you able to tell us the highest wave that you saw, or estimate it?

A It's a really hard one that, when you've got nothing to, put another boat alongside you, it's so much easier. I think in feet, I'd put it at 50 feet.

Q41 Right.

A Something like that.

Q42 Now, what about wind speed?

A I'd say we were, we might have peaked at 70 gust, you know, gusts.

Q43 Yeah.

A But I would say the weather forecast was pretty right. It was, means, you know, mean wind strength was 50.

Q44 Right. Now, so far, were you aware of a life raft and flare demonstration held at the CYC prior to the race?

A No, 'cause I flew in on the morning of the race.

Q45 Right, O.K. But you had no knowledge of that - - -

A No

Q46 You had no knowledge of that demonstration?

A No.

Q47 Have you deployed a life raft yourself?

A Yeah.

Q48 You have. And have you used flares?

A Yeah. I did a elements of shipboard safety some years ago.

Q49 Right.

A Yeah. And I've played round, yeah, well, in fact in that we did a life raft.

Q50 Right. Dave?

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q51 Are you aware of the, the IMS rating of a vessel?

A Yes, I mean - - -

Q52 Yeah.

A - - - not the intricacies, like.

Q53 No, no, but you're aware that there's a, a category of, in the Sydney to Hobart which is the IMS division - - -

A Yes.

Q53 - - - or division and it - - -

A Yeah.

Q53 - - - it's, it must rate at a stability index?

A Yeah.

Q54 Do you, are you aware of the stability index of a category 1 race?

A From memory, the minimum is around 110 or something.

Q55 Well, if - - -

A The stability, that's the angle of - - -

Q56 Yes, angle of, of view and riding.

A Yeah.

Q57 Let me tell you, for a category 1 race, it's 115.

A O.K.

Q58 O.K. Category 2 is 110.

A O.K.

Q59 And so on, category 0 is 120 degrees.

A Right, O.K.

Q60 Are you aware of the stability index of Ausmaid?

A Yeah, she's, I don't know the, well, I'd guess at the number as being 130, 100-and-something, in that order, I know she's a stiff, she's a stiff boat in relation to most of the boats.

Q61 Would you be surprised if I said 134 degrees?

A Well, no, I mean it's - - -

Q62 Yeah, but you, you - - -

A Yeah.

Q63 It's a very stiff, stiff vessel.

A Yeah.

Q64 Do you think that stability rating, as far as the vessel's concerned at its moment of righting is what assisted you in the race?

A It would for sure.

Q65 In those conditions?

A Yeah, definitely. I mean, I think the big difference with a light boat is, and stability being less, is you rely more heavily on the crew. So, it burns crew out, as the boat gets thrown more, it's more difficult to work on, it's harder to steer. So, the more unstable the boat basically, you've got to compensate for that in safety by putting better crew on board. You know, I don't believe that you should, you know, some people come down you know, these boats are too light for these conditions, or, I think it's much more you

have to say well, this boat requires, and I don't know quite how you do that, but you have to back it up.

Q66 You've mentioned that you sailed in the Melbourne to Osaka - - -

A Yeah.

Q66 - - - race, twice?

A I've done that one once, the Auckland once.

Q67 Well, let's talk about the Melbourne Osaka race. Were you an owner of the boat or were you just crew at that time?

A I was the owner.

Q68 O.K. Are you aware of, of any stability index for the Melbourne Osaka race?

A It's a few years ago now.

Q69 Yeah. How long ago was that?

A It was the first one.

Q70 All right. that's probably a bit of an unfair question. Are you surprised that there's no stability rating for that race?

A Um - - -

Q71 Being a long ocean race?

A Yeah, I think that's, yeah, that's probably, yeah, I think that's silly. I mean, basically, that race, in defence of the race, that race is basically a light air race.

Q72 What do you mean by that?

A You know, the majority of races sail in probably less than 12 knots, but in saying that, you can also have a

cyclone, you know. So - - -

Q73 Yeah. I was just going to say to you, and pardon me for laughing there, but I mean, you travel through the, through the equator and cyclonic conditions can happen.

A That's right. I was just saying, you know - - -

Q74 A little bit later in the year, but still.

A Yeah, you can certainly get one.

Q75 Yeah.

A They happen.

Q76 Yeah. Do you think the, the rating of the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race, being a cat 1 race, should be increased?

A (NO AUDIBLE REPLY)

Q77 Or what are your thoughts on that?

A As in increased category 0 or something?

Q78 Yes.

A It's not - - -

Q79 As far as stability's concerned, not safety.

A I see - - -

Q80 There's not much difference between the safety aspects of the race.

A Stability. I don't really know whether I'm qualified to comment.

Q81 All right.

A I haven't sailed on one of those boats - - -

Q82 Mm.

A - - - in those conditions. Yeah. I think that clearly boats that enter in the Hobart who know that if it's

going to blow too hard, they're going to pull out.

Q83 Mm.

A And I think that is probably a serious question as whether you should enter a race with the idea that there's certain conditions that you can't endure.

Q84 Mm.

A I think there's a question in that.

Q85 That's a fair comment, isn't it?

A And people to enter with that notion. If it's a light race, we've got a good chance; if it's going to blow like hell, we'll pull out.

Q86 So far as, so far as light boats are concerned, what would you consider is a light boat, weight-wise, and what -

A Such a relative thing, you know. I mean, and it's changed over the years - - -

Q87 Yeah.

A - - - automatically, what's classified as a light boat now, years ago would have been ultra-light.

Q88 All right. What weight would that have been, approximately?

A Well, again it depends on the, on the boat. You know, the size of the boat. Golly. See, the, I mean, the IMS is something, a new rule that's come in - - -

Q89 Yeah.

A - - - and that's favoured the, the rule itself has allowed lighter boats.

Q90 Yeah.

A The IOR rule was much stiffer, heavier boats, just the way the rule worked.

Q91 Yeah.

A So there was a bit shift there.

Q92 Yeah. I mean, there's four tonnes, four to six tonnes a light boat, and eight to 10's a heavy boat, or, those figures - - -

A Yeah, well, obviously working on the size of the boat.

Q93 Yeah.

A Yeah, I mean, Ausmaid was a, and I'm guessing a bit, Ausmaid would be, must be around five I would have thought. You know, it's really a bit of a guess, it's more that, the feel of the boat, you know - - -

Q94 Right.

A - - - when you're on it, you know what I mean when you're on it.

Q95 O.K.

A I don't know whether I can comment on - - -

Q96 Well that leads me to my next question.

A Yeah, sorry.

Q97 You're right, mate.

A Right.

Q98 So one, someone with your experience can actually hop on to a boat and sail it and can, by experience, work out that this is a stiff boat or a light boat?

A Yeah, yeah.

Q99 O.K. And is that determined by a number of factors, how it leans and how it goes through the water?

A Yeah.

Q100 So you could get the feel for it?

A Yeah.

Q101 Right. So, from your experience, you could hop on a boat, go out sailing and say, mm, this is a pretty stiff boat?

A Yeah. I mean - - -

Q102 Generally.

A - - - definitely, yeah.

Q103 Definitely.

A Yeah.

Q104 O.K. Now, so far as communications during the race, did you at any stage hear any distress calls from yachts?

A No, not at all. I mean, we, our radio went down, so - - -

Q105 Yeah.

A - - - we were a bit out of communication. We, we knew the Winston Churchill was in trouble, but that was slightly, I just heard it come up - - -

Q106 Right.

A - - - that they were sinking. I can't recall now whether it came up on the sked, it might have come up on the sked - - -

Q107 Right.

A - - - that they were sinking.

Q108 O.K.

A We didn't actually hear a distress call from another

boat, no.

Q109 O.K. Now, is there anything, you sailed two previous Hobarts?

A Yeah.

Q110 Did you sail in conditions similar to this in those previous two races?

A No, not in the Hobart, no.

Q111 O.K.

A Both previous ones were easy ones.

Q112 From your point of view, from your experience when that front came through, in your mind it really wasn't a problem for you guys?

A No. It wasn't, and I think that's partly where we were.

Q113 Right. position.....

A Yeah, 'cause I mean, you can look back through the fleet and clearly there were some experienced boats, good boats, good people, who got into trouble.

Q114 Yes.

A So you have to say that they got something different to what we got.

Q115 Yeah, certainly. O.K, look, do you have any, any suggestions or ideas or views that we can take on, on deck in our inquiry for future, so far as the Hobart

- - -

A Well, my only, I've been very critical of safety equipment for a long time.

Q116 Right.

A And I've had dealings with RFD and tried to - - -
Q117 Yeah.
A - - - tried to work with them and really they're a
closed shop.
Q118 Right.
A They won't, they're not interested. I'll relay a full
story to you of what happened to me.
Q119 Yeah, certainly.
A And give you an idea. I was in the southern ocean and,
what, two years ago, away south of New Zealand, and
we've got a, a similar bomb came through, you know, it
was peaking at 90 knots, and we got rolled on the boat.
And a guy got crushed under the wheel as it went round.
The bottom line was he had to have a helicopter lift
out, so we had Orion and the whole bit was we lost all
our electrics, everything went down. But, I actually
had a drogue out which is like a large, it's not a sea
anchor, it's what you trawl behind which is to slow the
boat down. We were running with the storm, with no
sail up, and just slow the boat down so it doesn't
surf. And that was an RFD product which, it failed, it
just tore to pieces when we got rolled, which, you
know, I can understand that happening. It's hard to
get the numbers right when you build something like
that. But my attitude when I came back was, I rang RFD
and said this had happened and that I'd had in the line
joining the drogue, I had a thimble, stainless steel
fitting, which had elongated and I said to them, "O.K,

what I can do is I can take, buy a new one of these and take it down and get it load tested, and I can tell you what load went on the drogue, so that we can get it right". And they just did not want to know about anything to do with that. They just argued black and blue that, you know, they tank tested it and they've done all these things and basically saying that I didn't know what I was talking about. And it was just so frustrating, and letters went backwards and forwards and I argued and argued, and then they said they'd make me a special one-off one, and I said I don't want a one-off one, I want mark 2, I want one that's going to work that everyone buys, you know. And their attitude was, and that's the problem with safety equipment, is, people say, "We've sold thousands of these".

Q120 Yeah.

A "And you're the first person that's complained." The problem is people don't use it.

Q121 That's right.

A So, safety equipment generally, in my opinion, is of a lower standard of the equipment that you use every day, because it only gets stuck in a locker and it doesn't have to be used.

Q122 Yeah.

A So, you know, like the little lights you clip on, there's no reinforcing where the, where the wire comes out the back of the light, which even on a little transistor radio's got, but the safety equipment

hasn't. You know, you use it three or four times, it snaps off. All those little things.

Q123 Yeah.

A It's not that we need more safety equipment, but I really think, you know, the man-overboard lights are, I've said this for a while, you know, I've said to safety people that what they should do is, the end of the Hobart do a safety inspection, and actually see what equipment is still working. Because you'd find that I would estimate that 80 per cent of the boats after a rough Hobart would not have man-overboard gear any more. The lights wouldn't be working, probably wouldn't have a down-buoy.

Q124 Why wouldn't they have - - -

A They'd be gone, they'd be washed over.

Q125 Yeah.

A We lost ours. It's really common, and the lights fill up with water. That is not, there's really not a lot more cost in making them properly, but they're just not made properly. Because it's, doesn't get used. And yachties are to blame as well, because, you know, a yachtie will buy a mainsail, he'll crawl over it in detail, make sure it's perfect. But he goes in the shop and buys a piece of safety equipment, bops it on, 'cause the mentality is not there that if I use this, where is the best place to locate it?

Q126 Mm.

A Where is the, how is this going to work? You know,

it's about yacht racing, it's not about those other things.

Q127 Yeah.

A Which is, I think, you know, the manufacturers are to blame, but you can certainly put some blame on the yachtie as well.

Q128 Yeah. But back to that race you were just talking about, what sort of boat were you in?

A That was an old IOR boat.

Q129 Right.

A In the Melbourne to Osaka, no, down south?

Q130 Down south, yeah.

A Down south is my boat. It's a 50 foot steel, round bilge steel boat.

Q131 Right. And what rolled it, a wave or -?

A Yeah. We got sort of almost pitch-poled I suppose.

Q132 Right.

A Yeah, it was, it was a similar condition to Bass Strait if you like. We were on what's known at the Campbell Plateau which is shallow water, and we got a, a really severe storm came through, barometric pressure dropped 40, 30 millibars in 18 hours, and it just stood up, just, and it was breaking, and because it came so quickly, the sea was very and there was, it was too big for us. It was as simple as that.

Q133 They were wind-generated waves, not swell waves?

A Yeah, they were just wind-generated waves, so they were very unstable. And then on that plateau they were just

all breaking and -

Q134 What was the stability rating of that vessel, do you recall?

A It'd be, it'd be very high.

Q135 You think in excess of 120?

A Yeah, it'd be higher than Ausmaid.

Q136 Right. Now, when she rolled, did she do the 360?

A No. She went pretty well, she went to 90 because there was, some people were down below standing on the cabin top

Q137 All right.

A So she went to 90 and there was certainly a few holes through where stuff had fallen at 90.

Q138 Mm.

A But she came back the same way, it was very fast.

Q139 She come back very fast?

A Yeah, she was only over for, I was in the cockpit, and it was, I didn't have any problem holding my breath.

Q140 Yeah. So you lay over, you didn't actually roll, as such, to 180 degrees?

A Sorry, 90, 180.

Q141 Yeah. Right, you went 180?

A Yeah, we went 180, sorry. Completed 180 and then straight back the same way, it didn't go right over.

Q142 O.K.

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Q143 Right, O.K. And you were obviously impressed with that roll-over, you know, rising capacity, rather quickly?

A Yeah. Well, I mean I knew that - - -

Q144 Would happen.

A - - - that boat, I mean, I wouldn't venture in the southern ocean with a lot of other boats. I mean, I just wouldn't go down there.

Q145 Yeah.

A I mean, that boat is, it's only 12 foot beam, it's 50 foot long, it's very stable.

Q146 Yeah.

A It's got a reasonable coach house on it which, you know, also tends to stop, you know, a boat, you know, a boat's sort of very flat on the deck and of course will be quite stable when they're upside down.

Q147 Do you still own that boat?

A Yeah.

Q148 O.K. Is there anything else? Have you got any views on last year's race, anything you'd like to sort of, apart from that safety gear.

SENIOR CONSTABLE UPSTON

Q149 Just one thing before you go on to that. Your lifeline, your harness.

A Yeah.

Q150 Was that your own you took on board Ausmaid this year, or was it one you used that was supplied by Ausmaid?

A Yeah, it's a good point, and it was my own. And it's, it wouldn't be approved.

Q151 What brand is it?

A It's a Mustay, built into my jacket. So, whether they

-
can come up with a better, and I don't know how you'd do it, a better harness, because I've always maintained the best harness that you can wear is one you've got on. And basically, when you put your wet weather jacket on and the harness is there - - -

Q152 Mm.

A It's effortless to clip a line on and you're clipped on. But when, as sea conditions build and things, to actually go down below, one's feeling a bit squeamish, go down below, get a harness out and that, really difficult to put on and awkward and, you know, people feel seasick after they've got them on. So, you know, there's a reluctance to do that. So when there's a harness in your jacket, you can just go, clip.

Q153 Yeah.

A It's a good system. But no one approved.

Q154 And you are aware of the, the 2227 Australian standard of, that must comply with the race?

A I mean, obviously, they were all on board the boat.

Q155 Yeah.

A But strictly speaking - - -

Q156 Mm.

A - - - should be wearing them.

Q157 All right. Stuart just gave you then the opportunity to say anything else. I apologise for cutting

A No. I think, in my mind, one of the really important things in a gail like that is helmsmen.

Q158 M'mm.

A And helmsmen is what get a boat through those conditions. And I don't think two helmsmen's enough on an ocean race.

Q159 M'mm.

A 'Cause, I mean, basically if one gets injured you can't
- - -

Q160 Mm.

A - - - you can't keep helming for, indefinitely. So I reckon that, I would think myself, and again it's a very relative thing, that somehow I'd like to see a mandatory of three helmsmen and somehow they're experienced at helming, because basically, when you get down to those conditions, other people's abilities become minimal. I mean, we ended up with most people down below during the gale, because it's the safest place for them to be. You've got three people on deck, and the only person that's saving the boat is the helmsman.

Q161 Mm.

A And if he gets one wave wrong.

Q162 Mm.

A So.

Q163 So you had three on deck at the time?

A Through the height of the gale.

Q164 O.K.

A Early on, as it came in - - -

Q165 Yeah.

A - - - as it came in, we were, you know, when it was, I don't know, 40, round the 40s or something in the north, west, but around midday when it really punched in - - -

Q166 Mm.

A - - - we went down to three on deck and everyone went down below just because it was, it was dangerous.

Q167 Yeah. But prior to that, most of them were on deck.

A Yeah.

Q168 Yeah, O.K.

A Just 'cause of the stability, I mean, we're yacht racing, so, weight on the rails, faster.

Q169 Yeah.

DETECTIVE SENIOR CONSTABLE GRAY

Q170 O.K. Anything else?

A No, I think that's all.

Q171 O.K. Time by my watch is now 11.50. This interview is now concluded.

INTERVIEW CONCLUDED