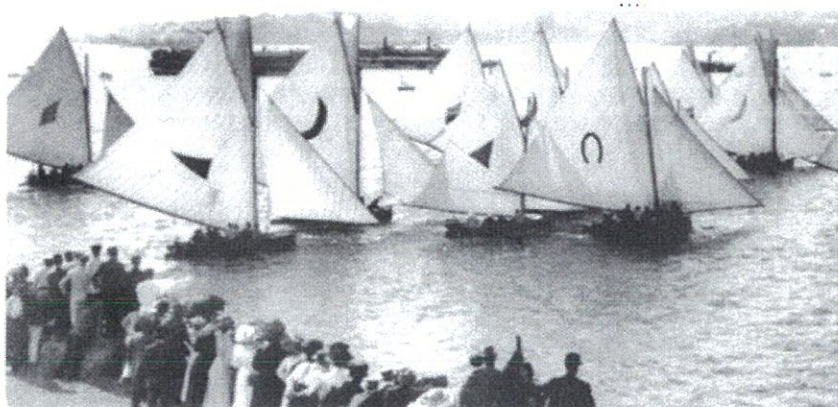


SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON

HISTORIC 18ft SKIFF AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP 2010

SYDNEY 2010

27 February 2010 to 13 March 2010



Sydney Flying Squadron, 76 McDougall Street, Milsons Point NSW 2061
Phone: 9955 - 8550

Program for 2010 Australian Championship For Historical 18 foot skiffs

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Conducted by the Sydney Flying Squadron, on behalf of the Australian Historical Sailing Skiff Association.

The winner will hold the famous “GALLOPING GHOST” Cup.

1. BACKGROUND

Whilst modern 18 foot skiffs are now sailed around the world, and a derivative- the Bethwaite 49er is in international Olympic class, this all started in Sydney Harbour.

From at least the 1890's the combination of good breezes, a spectacular and protective harbour and the bushman spirit, produced courageous sailing in open boats with unrestricted sail areas.

If bushmen could challenge each other to see how long they can stay on a wild horse or gallop flat out down a hillside, why not do the same on the water by seeing who could put up more sail and still stay up!

Fleet racing took off in various categories of size boats including 12' skiffs, 14' skiffs, 16, 18 and even 22' skiffs. The first national championship was held in 1907 – 101 years ago.

The Australian disrespect for authority took to the idea of a class with only two original rules:

- (a) The boat will be 18' long; and
- (b) The race will start at 2.30pm

The combination of unrestricted sail area and a point scoring system that gave bonus points for a win over a place, encouraging sailors to throw maximum sails up and take risks for that precious win.

Entrepreneur and Rugby League patron Mark Foy introduced to the class the innovation of handicaps being applied at the beginning rather than at the end of the race– this would be equivalent to a Sydney/Hobart with the small boats leaving 5 days earlier than the big boats and them all converging on the finish line at the same time. By the 1930's tens of thousands of spectators would crowd ferries to watch the races hoping for a spill and keen to watch a close finish.

Bookies became popular on the ferries and rivalry on the course became severe, as boats would sometimes collide, and skippers would sometimes throw crew overboard to try and reduce weight when the breeze lightened.

With the Mark Foy Rugby League connection, it was quite common to have rugby league players load up on the skiffs during the summer (in the league off season), and the crews took to wearing the jerseys of different teams.

This continues on the boats today and the idea of teamwork is paramount to success.

In the 1960's a different style of 18 foot skiff evolved involving a narrower hull, crew on trapeze and only 3 sailors rather than between 6 and 20. The

leader of the new design trend was a young sailor who later went on to fame as the Australian America's Cup designer Ben Lexen.

The new designs made the old boats uncompetitive and they languished in boat sheds, rotted and were neglected.

In 1981 Bruce Stannard wrote a book giving tribute to the old skiffs and their sailors called "Blue Water Bushmen". He noted that it was an era that had long gone.

Also in the 1980's the Sydney Heritage Fleet restored a famous 1920's skiff called *Yendys* and the Australian Maritime Museum restored *Brittania*, but to the disappointment of many these became museum pieces, not boats in active use.

In the 1990's some dedicated sailors decided to rebuild replicas and the Australian Championship will have 10 replicas racing, with all the traditions of old.

2. RACE TIMES AND LOCATIONS FOR AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP

The boats will launch from the Sydney Flying Squadron 76 McDougall Street, Kirribilli (see park and ramp adjacent).

The race commencement times will be:

- 27 February 2010 – 2.30 pm
- 6 March 2010 – 2.30 pm
- 13 March 2010 – 2.30 pm

A spectator ferry will accompany the races departing from the Sydney Flying Squadron at 1.50 pm on each race date. Bookings to the SFS on Ph 9955 8350 are advisable. Return time approx. 4:30 pm.

The start area will be somewhere between Bradley's Head, Cremorne and Kirribilli, according to the wind direction.

The most common course, the North East course, involves a sail up to Clark Island, the Beashel Buoy (near sow and pigs reef off Camp Cove), back to Shark Island (to starboard) a buoy off Clark Island (to starboard) then Chowder Bay (to starboard), Shark Island (to starboard) and finish off Clark Island.

Other courses cover similar territory, according to the wind direction.

Apart from the ferry, the best natural vantage points are Bradley's Head or Point Piper.

A favourite floating vantage point for over a century is near the Shark Island Totem Pole (Eastern side) where the boats generally have to jibe. This can often produce a spectacular capsized.

3. THE BOATS

TANGALOOMA

Sail insignia – 2 horizontal black lines

Builder – Reg Barrington

Jumpers: blue and green

Original: 1930

Built by Reg Barrington in his living room – to get it out he had to not only knock out a wall but ultimately some of the lintel, bricks above, and eave plus a few roof tiles.

The remains of the original are in the Brisbane Maritime Museum and the lines were copied off the original, to produce the design for this replica.

The skipper, Peter Legrove, is former European 18 foot skiff champion.

Launched at the Australia Day Regatta in 1994. The boat is a consistent performer in a variety of conditions and is favoured to do well on handicap.

THE SCOT

Sail sign – red lion in orange square.

Jumpers: Norths

Original: 1906

Also built by Reg Barrington from a half model provided by a fellow patient whilst in hospital.

Launched in 1997 and sailed by Reg Barrington shortly before his death. The Scot's crew have a laid back attitude and often achieve success despite older sails.

Skipper – Peter Notley (aged 80, with over 65 years experience on 18 foot skiffs), or another crew member.

AUSTRALIA

Sail sign – black rectangle.

Jumpers: Souths

Original: was the 1947 Australian Champion and it was a “break-through” with a 6 foot beam, narrower than most. The replica was built for John Winning and dedicated to his father Choc Winning and Uncle Dick Winning, who sailed on the original.

The skipper – Chris Haskard. In the right conditions and with a new rig, Australia can be particularly fast.

TOP WEIGHT

Original: 1946

Sail and jumper design – the number “1”.

Skipper: Paul Lyons

The original designed and built by Norm Wright and the replica was built by Robert Tearne. It was launched in 2001 by Daphne Russell, widow of the original skipper Bish Boulton for Grant Taylor. Grant Taylor was an architect who had sailed on the original and given up hope of restoring her so he arranged the construction of a replica. Norm Wright & Sons provided some brass fitting mouldings and authentic gear for the replica.

Top Weight is very competitive in light winds.

ALRUTH

Original: 1947

Sail and jumper design: yellow “A” on blue shield

Skipper: Jeremy Sharp, known to all as “Blunt”. Jeremy moved to the historical 18’s after a successful career in the modern 18 foot skiffs starting in the UK.

Dedicated to and assisted by the Beashel family, who were famous 18 foot sailors. One of the key rounding marks is called the “Beashel Buoy”. The name “Alruth” is a combination of Alf Beashel and his wife’s name Ruth.

Their son Colin represented Australia in sailing and was Australian Team Captain and Flag Bearer at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

Ken Beashel provided the plans and model for the 1949 design and the boat was built by Robert Tearne and launched in 2003. It is one of the prettiest and most successful boats in the fleet.

BRITTANIA

Original: 1919

Replica: 2002

Sail sign: Red Ensign (red flag with Union Jack in corner)

Jumpers : Balmain

Skipper: Ian Smith

The original was built owned and skippered by Wee Georgie Robinson, the famous Balmain footballer. It sailed for 25 years before becoming a Starters Boat and then a launch. The original was restored and is on display in the Australian National Maritime Museum. This replica was measured from plans drawn by Alan and David Paine, famous naval architects. The replica was built by the skipper Ian Smith from those plans, with additional measurements from the original boat. It has copied the planking / timber selection and details of the original and is the only true “carvel planked” replica. It was launched in 2002 and carries a crew of up to 14. She carries a large 1919 sail plan. The championship will be the first return to the water for Britannia after it was hit by a yacht earlier in the season.

Because it is the most authentic boat in design and materials, Britannia is favoured by the authenticity handicapping system applied to the finishing times.

THE MISTAKE

Original: 1933

Replica: 2005

The sail sign is the same as the original being “2 + 2 =5”

Jumpers: White with embroidery – each jumper has a different spelling mistake

Skipper: Harold Cudmore. Harold is a multiple world champion and The Mistake is expected to do well.

The boat’s name is said to have derived from the fact that the two sides of the original boat were built by different boat carpenters to slightly different shapes. There was controversy over its design and this led to the setting up of a rival sailing club to the Sydney Flying Squadron in Double Bay, the 18 Footer’s League, in about 1934. These past differences were reconciled when the Commodores of the two clubs got together in October 2005 to race the replica of The Mistake, winning the Club Championship and showing that it was no mistake.

The boat is dedicated to Bob Cuneo the original skipper (who had a model from which the replica was built), his forehand Stan Higgins and to Sam Monkhouse and his son Cliff Monkhouse. The boat was christened by Anne Higgins, wife of Stan and by Grace Monkhouse, wife of Cliff. The Mistake was also built by Rob Tearne.

YENDYS (ie Sydney backwards)

Original: The original boat was built in 1925 by Charlie Hayes of Careening Cove for the owner and skipper Norm Blackman. It was

extremely successful and the original was restored and is kept with the Sydney Maritime Museum.

Sailing insignia is a red anchor – the same symbol as the symbol for Port Jackson.

Jumpers: Black and red

Skipper: Bruce Zemanec (an 18 foot skiff world champion from the 1970's).

The replica was built by Col Bailey and Ian Perdriau and the boat was launched in March 2007. The boat was built with assistance from the Australian Open Skiff Trust.

AUSTRALIA IV

Original: 1943

Replica: 2007

Skipper: John Winning (former world 18 foot skiff champion.

Jumpers: red – so as not to show wounds!

The original of Australia IV was built in 1943 by Bill Fisher Snr and his sons Tom and Jimmy. It was club champion 1944 and 1945 and State Champion in 1945 and 1946. This replica was built by Bill Fisher Jnr as a tribute to his family, from a model owned and passed down through the generations.

The sail insignia for Australia IV is as historically it was, the Union Jack.

So we have Britannia with a red Australian Ensign and Australia IV with the Union Jack!

4. SAILORS AND PERSONALITIES

The sailors on the historical skiffs range in age from 16 to 76 and the crews come from a variety of backgrounds.

Peter and Dick Notley, twins over 80, have been competing against each other for over 70 years, and are to be found on Tangalooma and The Scot respectively. With Senior Citizens' week coming up, they prove that age is no barrier to active sport participation.

The Mistake will be skippered by Irishman, 5 time world champion, **Harold Cudmore**. Harold has a long and distinguished history in yachting including as helmsman for the British Challenger for the Americas Cup, as well as being the UK representative in many match racing championships. He has returned again to Sydney to compete in the historical 18 foot skiffs with a crack crew

including former champions from the modern 18 foot skiff era, and some new recruits.

John “Woody” Winning who is skippering Australia IV uniquely straddles both the modern and historical boats by sailing historical skiffs on Saturdays and the modern 18 foot skiffs on Sundays. He recently came 5th in the world modern 18 foot skiff championship. After trouncing the fleet for the last few seasons, John Winning and Australia IV will start clear favourites.

5. SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON – AUSTRALIA’S OLDEST OPEN BOAT CLUB

The Sydney Flying Squadron was founded in 1891 and is the birthplace of the famous Sydney Harbour sailing skiffs. It was founded by Mark Foy to allow people to enjoy skiff sailing regardless of financial background.

The club has a boatshed, wharf, balcony and “Mark Foy’s” bar and restaurant.

It is Australia’s oldest open boat sailing club and is currently working to rebuild an adjoining boatshed to house historical skiffs.

Address: 76 McDougall Street Milsons Point 2061

Phone: 9955-8350

6. RESULTS AND GALLOPING GHOST TROPHY

Results will be released to AAP on the evening of each race but may be obtained directly by contacting the Sydney Flying Squadron on 9955-8350 or phoning John Tierney on 0419 555 227.

Places over the line will be adjusted according to a historical rating system which gives bonus points for historical authenticity (e.g. wooden masts, original building methods).

The winner will be presented with the Galloping Ghost Trophy. This is thought to be the Queensland Championship Trophy originally won 3 times in the 1930’s by the original Aberdare, a boat which became known as the “Galloping Ghost”. After the 3rd win the boat’s owner Fred Hart was entitled to keep the Trophy. It was donated back by his son and now is the Australian Championship Trophy.

The presentation will occur, subject to any protests, after the race on 13 March 2010.