

The Battle of the Big Beamers, a race within a race.

by Bob Chapman, 24 Jan 2022.

Some of the chat at the post-race drinks following Race 2 of the H18s Australian Championship centered on the well-contested mark rounding at the Kurraba Point mark between Tangalooma, Britannia and Top Weight. A series of long distance / wide angled photos by Adrienne Jackson provide a good insight into what unfolded, along with an up close photo by Christophe Favreau.

Our fleet of historical 18ft skiffs is made up of a variety of hull shapes, with one of the defining features being the beam of the hull that may vary from 6ft to 8ft 6in, which in-turn dictates the volume of the hull and the number of crew they can accommodate. Clearly the widest of the hulls is that of Tangalooma at 8ft 6in, then Britannia at 8ft and since a hull makeover a few years ago Top Weight gained some additional girth at the deck that is now close to 8ft across.

At the start of the second run for Race 2 of the Australian Championship our big-beamers rounded the Shark Island mark in close company for the run back to Kurraba Point. These three skiffs along with Australia IV (7ft beam) just ahead all set their peak-head no.3 "Men of League" spinnakers to enjoy a fast ride down to Kurraba Point mark where they converged together.



Adrienne Jackson's long distance photo records the skiffs at the beginning of the run.



Christophe's close-up provides a nice photo of the group in close company down the run.



End of the run, still sailing in close company, spinnakers are stowed, “crunch time” to see who gets to round first. About 25ft of collective beam involved here.



Tangalooma takes the inside berth, Britannia the middle and Top Weight on the outside. Sorry, no sound or translation currently available.



Mark exit, great stuff, the race within a race continues, now on to the next mark.
