

**SFS Race Report 23 March 2024  
Club Championship Race 3 and Autumn Series Heat 6**

**FINAL RACE OF THE 2023-2024 SEASON**



***Photo courtesy SFS Life Member and Volunteer, Barley Stewart on the gemini.***

**TONY WEBER**

Black flags were flown on the boats to mark the passing of SFS Member Tony Weber who left us on 25 January this year. Tony was an active member of the Club, served on the board and was a champion sailor. We were lucky to have known him.



Tony with Suzie and Chuck at the club.

***Photo courtesy Suzie Conway (Facebook Feb 7, 2024).***



Image of Merle, 10foot skiff.

2003 N.S.W Champion. Ribbon aloft. Owner: Tony Weber.  
Skipper: Len Heffernan. Sheethand: Bob Sawyer.

For`Hand: Tony Weber

***Image from Facebook page: Phil Boyd May 10, 2019***



Tony sailed with Ron "wrecker" Johnson in the ICL Computers 18 Footers in the early years

***Photo courtesy Suzie Conway (Facebook Feb 7, 2024).***

A scratch start is always great to watch – and to be part of. And so the final Heat 3 of the Club Championship saw the starters get the entire fleet away in another light easterly, with a flood tide just beginning to exert its influence on choices to be made. The Easterly No 2 course was chosen with a Kirribilli start.

Australia and Yendys hit the line together, with the usual animated calls from Australia (Marshall Flanagan) as the leeward boat, hoping to extend her luffing rights after the gun. Britannia, back with David Paget on the helm, seemed to have timing problems and missed the start by quite some distance, giving the other boats a head start before getting into her stride with her massive number one sails set and looking a treat. There really is no better sight on the Harbour than Britannia with all gear up and with that massive bumpkin offering a warning to errant lasers and others to keep clear.



Gearing up for the start of the final race of the 2023-2024 Season.  
**Photo courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo**

Yendys and Australia went left on starboard towards Cremorne Point while the rest of the fleet, making the correct call, tacked early on to port and went right where the best of the breeze outweighed any adverse tide effect. Seeing this, Australia tacked back ahead of Yendys to cover the fleet and that proved a good move. At this point Tangalooma, well steered by Neville Turbit, had capitalised on his choice of going right and led from The Mistake (Jerry Tickner) with Australia, Yendys, Top Weight (aka A4) and Britannia now in hot pursuit. It was hard not to recognise the potential in the skiffs at this point, with three of them ahead of the champion, Yendys, after 15 minutes of racing.

Marshall Flanagan and Neville Turbit have provided their valuable input on the rest of the race (thanks Marshall and Neville):

*The right side of the course remained favoured with Yendys and Australia both tacking to lay Shark Island comfortably, with Yendys enjoying a comfortable lead by the Shark Island lighthouse, followed by Australia in second, then Alruth, Britannia, Top Weight, Tangalooma and The Mistake.*

*The run to the bottom mark saw Yendys reaching out to Garden Island and then gybing back and opening up a considerable lead with Australia maintaining second.*

*With Yendys well ahead by now and Australia having rounded, approaching the bottom mark it was, Alruth, Top Weight, Tangalooma, Britannia and The Mistake, until Tangalooma had to put in an extra tack which allowed Britannia and The Mistake to sneak through. From then on, it was anyone's race up the windward leg for the minor placings.*



Photos of the Start (above and below).  
**Photos courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo.**



*Early observations were that Yendys was on another south-easterly shift to the right and keeping a loose cover on the fleet while enjoying a commanding lead. Australia tacked early to take advantage of the shift. However Alruth, never to be underestimated and steered again this week by Scott Spackman, continued left to Cremorne Point (a favourite course for Robbo when he is calling the shots) sailing into an easterly shift with pressure in the oscillating breeze. When they tacked on to port, Alruth had made good ground and crossed slightly ahead of Australia. The two parted again when Australia went right looking for the line of breeze to Shark Island, while Aruth went left. When both boats tacked back Australia was laying Shark Island with Top Weight closely behind.*



What a way to end the season! **Photo courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo.**

*Alruth in the meantime had tacked early and while it appeared at first that she would not lay Shark Island, a southerly shift to the right allowed Alruth to make the Island while Australia and Top Weight, now overlaying, approached with slightly sprung sheets with Alruth marginally ahead of Australia followed by Top Weight.*

*With Yendys in the distance and heading to the finish after another gybe with the red and white ringtail left up and drawing on the windward side of the main,, the last leg started as a drag race for the minor places on the podium with Alruth carrying her big red kite. Top Weight was about 2 minutes astern of Australia with skipper, Terry Stewart steering higher and looking to take advantage from the breeze that had shifted slightly south. However this was short lived. The twist in Top Weight's ringtail would not have helped.*



The finish line (above and below).

**Photos courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo.**



Alruth in 2<sup>nd</sup> place



Australia finishing 3<sup>rd</sup>.



Top Weight with ringtail 'set'.  
**Photos courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo.**



Photos of the finish (above and below).  
**Photos courtesy Jamie Watt taken from the Killo.**





Winners are grinners.

**Photos courtesy Chris Booth.**

Yendys, sailing six up and with Andrew “Bucko” Buckland on the helm due to the late withdrawal of Grant “Kiwi” Wakefield due to a nasty virus, again showed her dominance in the lighter Autumn breezes and secured the chocolates and the Club Championship. Alruth finished well into second place, 9 minutes adrift, with Australia only 1 minute behind in third. They were followed by Top Weight, Britannia, Tangalooma and The Mistake.

And that was it for the 23/24 Season! Except, of course, for the great camaraderie on the Deck of the Squaddie to follow. Reflecting on the Season, it has to be said that the absence of John Winning and the crew of Aberdare after Woody’s hip operation left a big gap in the competition. It is to be hoped that Woody makes a full recovery and is back and out there again by October for the 24/25 Season. We would also like to see at least a couple more boats out of the shed, well crewed and sailing regularly – something for the Sailing Committee to work on.

As always, the commitment and skills of the volunteers were on full display during the Season and for that, and for their excellent contributions socially as well, the sailors are most grateful. Thank you. We couldn’t do it without you!



The Race officers on the Killo.  
**Photo courtesy: Jamie Watt**



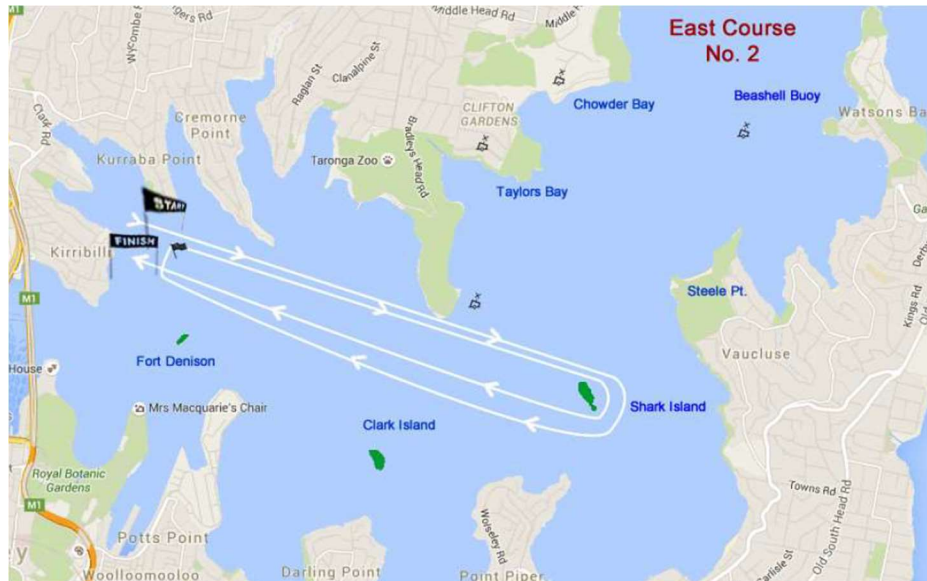
The Race officers keeping a close eye on the race  
**Photo courtesy: Barley Stewart on the gemini.**



The 'ferry'  
***Photo courtesy: Jamie Watt***



Barley and Dom on the gemini.  
***Photo courtesy: Jamie Watt.***



The No 2 course was selected by the Race Officers.  
Wind Direction on the day ESE 6-10 knots

**Results for Race 20 Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> Mar 2024.  
Autumn Series H6 and the Club Championship Race 3  
Start time: 14:30. Fastest time: 1:50:41**

Skiff	Skipper	Handicap (Mins)	Finish Time	Race Time	Handicap Time	Handicap Place
Yendys	Andrew Buckland	0	16:20:41	1:50:41	1:50:41	5
Alruth	Scott Spackman	9	16:29:05	1:59:05	1:50:05	4
Australia	Marshall Flanagan	14	16:30:14	2:00:14	1:46:14	1
Top Weight	Terry Stewart	13	16:32:45	2:02:45	1:49:45	3
Britannia	David Paget	17	16:35:37	2:05:37	1:48:37	2
Tangalooma	Neville Turbit	18	16:38:56	2:08:56	1:50:56	6
The Mistake	Jerry Tickner	15	16:38:59	2:08:59	1:53:59	7
Aberdare	DNC					
Scot	DNC					
Australia IV	DNC					
Myra Too	DNC					

**Note: Australia IV crew sailing Top Weight due to damage to A4 during the season. Top Weight made available by the generosity of SFS ex-Commodore, John Tierney.**