

OPENING RACE OF THE 2024-2025 SEASON

Despite a strong southerly blowing a cool and gusty wind across the park, there were a lot of smiling faces with crews gathering early on Saturday morning for the first race of the season. The colourful presence of our beautiful boats and their crews in the park, along with the jacarandas beginning to bloom in McDougall Street, is a sure sign for sailors and locals alike that Spring has arrived and Summer is on the way.



Photo courtesy Micheal Van Stom



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Photo courtesy Barley Stewart



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18-25 knots of breeze was already blowing as predicted and it was obvious to everyone that it would persist into the afternoon. By 11.00, all skippers indicated that they were keen to race and with a pleasing number of new crew, who participated in the H18 Training Program over the last few weeks, five boats signalled that they would race. One or two reefs was likely to be the order of the day.

The first race in every season seems to result in delays in getting boats into the water and it was no exception on Saturday. By the time of the scheduled starting sequence, not a single limit boat was in sight of the start in Athol Bay. Rusty and Ben, standing in for our legendary starter, Chuck Goodfellow who is on leave, held a hastily convened conference and decided to postpone the start, so as to make a race of the first event of the season. A word of warning to skippers though – this is unlikely to be a regular concession and plans to get off the beach on time will have to be tightened up, or you will be left behind.



After a 20 minute delay, the red and white pennant was finally dropped and Tangalooma led the fleet away on the first leg to Clark Island, followed by Australia and Top Weight. Yendys and Aberdare were left to wait in the cold southerly until finally sent away with Yendys getting the best start of the two scratch boats.

The fleet rounded the first and second marks in their starting order and it was obvious that with no sign at that time of the southerly abating, a cautious approach was the order of the day.

The work to Shark Island from Chowder Bay is always hard going in a blustery southerly. It is wet and cold, especially in a flood tide, and as you approach the Island, the breeze tends to back and shift in the gusts. Australia suffered a broken forestay on this leg and did well to save the mast and to jury rig the jib and keep going. Top Weight took advantage of Australia's misfortune and sailed past to be second around Shark Island with Tangalooma sailing well and still holding a handy lead.

The run to Kurraba was uneventful, with signs that the southerly was finally abating. On the final upwind leg to Clark Island, Top Weight managed to sail into a hole allowing Australia and Yendys to slip into second and third places behind Tangalooma.

Around Clark Island for the run home, it was Tangalooma, Australia, Yendys Top Weight and Aberdare that, unusually, had failed to make a move on the leaders as might be expected of Woody in harder than usual conditions where he excels.

With the breeze dropping further on the final spinnaker run to the finish, Australia paid the price for its small rig and was overtaken by Yendys. It was Tangalooma's day though and she crossed the line first 4 minutes ahead of Yendys with Australia a minute and a half behind in third. Top Weight and Aberdare followed with the very pleasing result that all boats were well sailed and survived the tough conditions. It was also very pleasing that the new crew members on the boats all did remarkably well in their first race in the open skiffs.



Tangles in the park. Photo courtesy Barley Stewart.

Back at Careening Cove, the flood tide near its peak made hauling out a lot easier for tired crew. But not before Aberdare, in the interests of science of course, tested out the structural integrity of the new deck with a direct hit with their bumpkin after rounding up.





Thanks to the team of volunteers, David, Stewart and Dom on rescue boats. Rusty and Ben on the Killo and Rob Gordon on the 379.

So, the 24-25 Season is underway. The task now is to get the rest of the fleet out and racing. It really is too much fun not to share with your mates!

Results for Saturday 12 October 2024

Spring Series Heat 1

Start Time:	14:38		Start	Course	Breeze	Strength	Tide
Fastest Time:	Yendys 1:30:43		Handicap	4	S	18	Flood

Skiff	Skipper	Handicap (Mins)	Start Time	Finish Time	Race Time	H'cap Place	Ringtail
Tangalooma	Neville Turbit	0:18:00	14:38:00	16:22:46	1:44:46	3	
Yendys	Bazza Watson	0:00:00	14:56:00	16:26:43	1:30:43	1	
Australia	Marshall Flanagan	0:14:00	14:42:00	16:28:05	1:46:05	4	
Top Weight	Terry Stewart	0:13:00	14:43:00	16:30:32	1:47:32	5	
Aberdare	Woody Winning	0:00:00	14:56:00	16:34:26	1:38:26	2	
Alruth			DNC				
Australia IV			DNC				
Britannia			DNC				
Scot			DNC				
Myra Too			DNC				
The Mistake			DNC				



In memory of Belle Stewart who left our shores on Saturday.
Our thoughts are with Barley and Terry.
We will miss seeing Belle out on the gemini with Barley and trotting around in the park.