



RACE REPORT - 15th February 2025

Queen of the Harbour, 12 Footer Sprints and Australia IV soon back in the



Fleet

Photo thanks to Barley

The Queen of the Harbour is an annual event that, according to careful research by Coral Taylor, dates back almost a century to 1926 when the event was called Queen of Port Jackson. In 1930, it was renamed Queen of the Harbour and has carried on under that name since then.

In the age when 18 footers were almost entirely crewed by men who often played rugby league together in the winter and then sailed together in the summer, having a female on board was really something and the winning Queen was remarkably well-rewarded for her win. So, too, was the nominated charity that ensured that the event was well publicised in Sydney town. In 1930, the prize for the Queen, usually presented at a Gala Ball, included a new Austin motor car and a crystal necklace. No wonder there were 29 starters, with Australia (Ena Casey) the winner on that occasion.

For the 2025 Queen of the Harbour, seven skiffs lined up for a handicap start in an ENE breeze that had finally settled in at 8-10 knots. Hopes of a change to the SE course for a change were dashed and the late decision from the starters was that the No.2 E course would be sailed.



Photos thanks to Barley on the Gemini

All boats were out early and were led off by Mistake, still enjoying her generous handicap. After the long work up to Shark Island, Mistake rounded just over a minute ahead of Australia that had done really well to leave Tangalooma and Alruth fighting it out for third at the mark. They were followed by Top Weight, Yendys and Aberdare in that order.

Spinnakers were set for the usual colourful display down the Harbour to Kirribilli. With the breeze dropping off a bit, Yendys and Aberdare shied up and set sail for Garden Island with a gybe to the

Kirribilli mark – always a good tactic to make a gain on the leaders.



Mistake and Australia maintained their lead to Kirribilli, with Alruth pressing hard followed by Tangalooma Top Weight, Yendys and Aberdare. Top Weight seemed to be having spinnaker issues slowing her up. Bigger issues faced Aberdare who had done well to keep up with Yendys on their shy runs down the Harbour. Sadly, on her final gybe, Aberdare nearly filled up as the No. 1 sail boom swung across with the crew, perhaps, a little slow to hit the wall. Bailing furiously, she was saved by her crew and although by then well off the course, Aberdare carried on much to her credit, to finish the race.



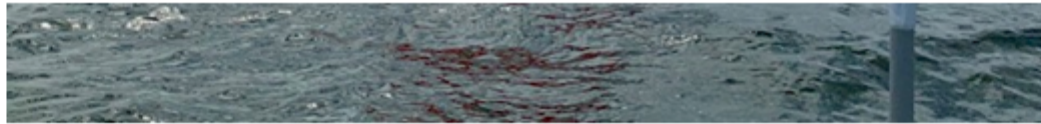
On the second work back up to Shark Island, Alruth picked the right lanes and did best of the leading boats, rounding Shark Island 3 minutes ahead of Australia. Alruth was looking good at this stage with

Australia the only real threat. Yendys had done well on the work, but was an unlikely 7 minutes adrift of Alruth, a known flyer downwind.



It is worth pausing here to mention that Kirsty, wife of SFS director, Phil Franklin and quite a sailor herself, was the Queen on Alruth this year. Phil, crewing on Australia, might have been wondering what he might have had to do if Australia were to seriously threaten Alruth on the final run home. That problem was averted, however, when Alruth stormed home under her big yellow kite for a win of over 5 minutes from Australia with Yendys 1 minute behind Australia in third.





And so, the Queen of the Harbour was crowned for another year on a lovely Sydney afternoon with a noisy crowd of sailors and supporters on the deck. Kirsty collected the crown and the prizes, but no motor car this year sadly. Vice Commodore Marshall Flanagan succeeded in photo-bombing the parade of princesses (or did he?) by standing in for his princess who had to leave and miss the festivities.



Special thanks to all of the volunteers for making it all happen and special thanks to Barley Stewart for organising the bling and making the day the special day that it always is. Thanks also to our anonymous sponsor of the BBQ (yep, we do know who you are).



Free sausages and special sailors' drinks prices always go down well on a Saturday at the Squaddie.

Queen of the Harbour and Summer Series Heat 7

Start Time:	2:30PM	Start	Course	Breeze	Strength	Tide
Fastest Time:	YENDYS 1:48:40	Handicap	2	ENE	8-10 kts	Ebb

Skiff	Skipper	Handicap (Mins)	Start Time	Finish Time	Race Time	H'cap Place	Ringtail
Alruth	Scott Spackman	10	2:21:00 PM	4:13:28 PM	1:52:28	2	
Australia	Marshall Flanagan	13	2:18:00 PM	4:18:49 PM	2:00:49	3	
Yendys	Michael van Stom	0	2:31:00 PM	4:19:40 PM	1:48:40	1	1
Tangalooma	Neville Turbitt	15	2:16:00 PM	4:21:28 PM	2:05:28	4	
The Mistake	Jerry Tickner	18	2:13:00 PM	4:24:43 PM	2:11:43	7	
Top Weight	Terry Stewart	12	2:19:00 PM	4:27:43 PM	2:08:43	6	
Aberdare	Michael Carter	2	2:29:00 PM	4:36:00 PM	2:07:00	5	
Britannia	David Paget	20		DNC			
Scot	Jamie Watt	19		DNC			
Australia IV				DNC			
Myra Too				DNC			

AUSTRALIA IV UPDATE

The word from Col Bailey is that the repairs to A4 are nearing completion with the boat expected to be back in the water in the next 2-3 weeks. It has been quite a job to get this champion skiff back into racing shape and we are all looking forward to seeing her back and racing.



Col has provided us with more pics of the work that real and budding timber boat people will enjoy as examples of the fine workmanship that the traditional 18 footers are famous for. Great stuff, Coll.

NSW12ft SPRINT CHAMPIONSHIP

Sunday at the SFS saw us host eleven 12s as they contested four exciting sprint races in 18-20 knots of a southerly breeze that wandered throughout the afternoon from SW to SE. A short windward-leeward course was set up at the head of Mosman Bay with the top mark 700 metres from the start/finish line and with the bottom mark just off the western point of Whiting Beach.

The moderate to strong southerly made for spectacular and exciting racing and with each sprint race being less than 15 minutes, there was no room for error. Inevitably, the top half of the fleet showed their class, especially with boat handling and also spinnakers gybing on the downwind legs. It has to be reported that one or two skiffs did seem to spend quite a bit of time staying afloat and learning all about heavy weather skiff sailing.

Sprint racing is a great format, especially for off-the-beach skiffs and it is clearly popular among the crews. Glenn Farquhar, who assisted with PRO duties for the event assured us that there would have been more starters had the return of the boats from NZ not been delayed for some.

12ft INTERDOMINION 2025

This is the JJs-equivalent event for the 12s and this year's 62nd event was held at the new Royal Akarana Yacht Club in Auckland with a big representation from our Aussie skiffs. If ever you get a

chance to go on a sailing tour to Auckland, be sure to be there. The Kiwis put on a great time for their guests (yes, truly!) and Auckland has a lot to offer before and after racing. The bay can be a bit choppy in a hard breeze, but, hell, that's what skiff sailing is made for!



Three boats represented the SFS in the event: Sydney Sailmakers (Josh Tasker and Brendan Jenkins), Terms & Conditions (Brad Phillips and Oscar Wilson) and Stay Connected Electrical (Jakub Ronowicz and Ben Faulkner). Six boats represented Lane Cove 12 ft Sailing Club with Abbotsford Sailing Club and Brisbane 18 Ft Club making up the eleven skiffs from Oz.

Gusty conditions greeted the fleet for the first day of racing and 4th rigs were needed to cope with the 30 knot gusts and choppy conditions. Sail Inc. (Nick Press and Noddy Hay) came out of the blocks showing their wild weather strength, followed by Josh and Brendan in Sydney Sailmakers (SFS). A great start for the Aussies!

The Kiwis were quick to find their feet though and by the second day (another strong wind day) it became evident that they were not going to let the championship slip away. Monkey Wrench, C-Tech and Dream Catcher, all from NZ, turned the regatta into a 4-horse race.

No two days were the same on the water with days 3 and 4 seeing the big rigs put in before the final day of another tough small rig day. In all, 10 races were sailed over 5 days. A massive effort for all teams and the racing committee and the team of volunteers that made it all happen.





Photos and report thanks to Glenn Farquhar

The skilled fleet meant it came down to the last day, with the final results seeing Monkey Wrench (Eli Liefting and Blake McGlashan) take out the overall championship, for the Silasec Trophy. Sail Inc. finishing on the podium in 3rd place, with Sydney Sailmakers 5th and Stay Connected 12th.

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