



SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON LTD

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club
Founded in 1891



THE MAINSHEET



RACE REPORT

MARK FOY DAY 11 OCT 2025

The Clubhouse was festooned with colourful code flags to celebrate the opening race of the Season. And a bright, warm, sunny day greeted sailors when they arrived in the park. The jacarandas in McDougall Street were just beginning to bud – a sure sign that summer was on the way and that it was time to go sailing.

Really though, it did not feel like Opening Day. The highly successful Sail Back in Time program to introduce newcomers to sailing had been underway for the previous three weeks and only last week, an early Opening Season party took place on the deck after the sail training. A shout-



out is definitely deserved for Selwyn Black, Ryan Paget and all of those sailors and volunteers who gave up their weekends to run the program. And a very warm welcome to the new sailors who have already shown their newfound skills on the water. But more of that shortly ...



Images (above and below) of the Sail back in time pre-season training days



Ongoing repairs and a shortage of experienced skippers and crew meant that there were to be seven skiffs to race on the day. Australia IV was back and looking a treat thanks to the work of Col Bailey and his team of craftsmen. So, too, was the mighty Scot with lots of off-season TLC from skipper Jamie Watt down at his lovely coastal retreat in Bermagui. Tangalooma, Mistake, Australia, Alruth and Yendys were rigging and ready for the day too. Well, sort of rigging ... Australia succumbed to a failed attachment of the gaff halyard not long after leaving Careening Cove and was a sad sight and non-starter as the rig collapsed on to the skiff resulting in early showers for the crew and a DNC for Australia. Not to be repeated!

It looked like it was to be another westerly, although the Sydney Offshore forecast hinted at a sea breeze coming ashore during the day. As it turned out, the nor'easter triumphed initially, only to be blown away by an angry westerly in the middle of the race, seeking revenge for its rude displacement by the nor'easter.

Early season hassles were the order of the day with the troublesome committee boat, Killo, needing even more repairs to the steering before heading to sea. Most everyone is agreed that the Killo either needs major work, or must be replaced, before too long. (The Sailing Committee and the Club Board are very aware of this). This, plus the arrival of the nor'easter meaning a Clark Island start and the fact that there were plenty of new crew learning to rig for their first race, meant that the start needed to be postponed for 15 minutes to give the boats a fair chance to get in the water and down the Harbour to Double Bay. A word of warning though ... the Starter is less likely to be so accommodating in the future and skippers will need to plan to be in the water much earlier in coming weeks.





Photos here with thanks to Phil Franklin





The Race Committee had decided that with the westerly now being dominated by the nor'easter, we would

sail the No.1 Course. Some of the old salts said they would have preferred the No.2 easterly course because there was an awful lot of east in the strengthening breeze. As it turned out, it would have hardly mattered since we ended up with wind from just about every point on the compass by the end of the race.

In a Mark Foy handicap start, Scot (Ryan Paget) and Mistake (David Paget) were first away with 20 minutes start, followed by Tangalooma (Neville Turbit) on 15 minutes, Australia IV on 12 minutes, and Alruth (Michael Carter filling in for Alan Robertson) on 11 minutes. Yendys (Michael van Stom), off its usual scratch start and giving 20 minutes to the limit boats, was able to watch as most of the fleet looked like making the top mark in almost one tack. At the Beashel Buoy, Scot had done best to round a minute ahead of Mistake with Australia IV having made excellent time to be less than 3 minutes behind Scot. Alruth followed a minute and a half further back, followed by Tangalooma, yet a further minute behind. Yendys followed, making up 7 minutes of its 20 minute start given to the limit boats by the time it reached the top mark.

Scot took off under a masthead kite on the downwind run leaving Mistake struggling with a peak head spinnaker that was objecting strongly to the east in the breeze and proving hard to handle. Perhaps this is the reason that the following skiffs delayed hoisting after seeing Mistake's fun and games ahead. Yendys, with most of its experienced crew on board, had decided to give its No.2 peak head kite a chance and in a very shy run, just managed to hold it to the Shark Island rounding mark gaining valuable time on the fleet.

But then, everything started to change. The lead boats found themselves headed by the revengeful westerly that was, for a short moment, calmly exerting its influence over the upstart nor-easter. After rounding, most of the leaders found themselves in a deep hole where what breeze there was seemed to be coming from every possible direction at once. Meanwhile, back at Shark Island, Yendys was gybing - a little too early as it happened, but was finally underway to join the traffic jam at Clark Island. – and not just with our fleet. The little insect-like Lasers were swarming in large numbers in and around their nearby course marks that meant that there were more than a few interesting conversations as the 18s finally got going in far too close comfort with the little single-handers.

Sadly, having tacked over towards Shark Island (perhaps to avoid the insect-like swarms at the rounding mark) Tangalooma succumbed to a combination of misfortunes in the light, crazy wind shifts, and sank. Rescued by Ben Powell and towed to Lady Martin's Beach at the Royal Prince Edward Yacht Club, Neville Turbit was able to introduce the newbies on board, not only to Careening Cove Swimming Club membership, but also to the tradition, still being maintained by the Edwards, of shouting the occasional visiting capsized skiff to the remedial generosity of a tot or two of rum.



Photos here with thanks to Michelle (volunteer on the BRIG)





Missing out on much of the fun back at Clark Island, Scot had meanwhile taken a good lead in the gusty westerly, to round the Chowder Bay mark with the race looking to be in her keeping. Even after risking a small shy kite for the run to Shark Island (and failing to hold it), Scot looked to have maintained a winning lead. But, as the westerly was strengthening, Scot lost ground and then compounded the loss by sailing in too close to Shark Island where a westerly lee had established itself. Mistake, unwisely, had followed Scot into the trap and both were left to watch Alruth, Australia IV and Yendys stay out and steam past to harden up around the mark into what was by then a very hard breeze. Australia IV, now in the lead, tacked off towards Point Piper, pursued by Yendys that had managed to round ahead of Alruth. And it was hard going with the hard westerly now having resumed its normal pattern, backing and veering along with hard bullets keeping the sail trimmers on their game.

Pointing higher than Australia IV, Yendys did best in a tacking duel between the two skiffs. The question has been asked as to whether the result might have been different had the finishing line been set in its traditional location to the south of Clark Island (where the duelling boats were initially heading). But once it was clear where the finish line actually was, Yendys took the lead from Australia IV when it tacked inside that boat and was able to cross 28 seconds ahead and take the chocolates.

After a hard and long work back to the safety of Careening Cove, with sore bodies finally undergoing the

cure of complimentary drinks from the Club, there was plenty of agreement that the day had been one of

the more difficult days on Sydney Harbour for the fleet. Along with that, it has to be said that it is a real credit to the new sailors that most of them were able to do so well in those conditions. We want you to know that it is not always as tough as that!

Final results can be found here: <https://app.sailsys.com.au/club/15/profile?tab=results>

Place	Sail No.	Name	Skipper	Club	Start	Finish	Elapsed
Overall							
1	REDANCHORANDCHAIN	Yendys	Michael Von Strom	SFS	15:30	16:46:10	01:16:10
2	UNIONFLAG	Australia IV	Terry Stewart	SFS	15:18	16:46:38	01:28:38
3	2+2=5	The Mistake	David Paget	SFS	15:10	16:48:17	01:38:17
4	BLUESHIELDWITHGOLD"A"	Alruth	Alan Robinson	SFS	15:19	16:49:27	01:30:27
5	LION	The Scot	Ryan Paget	SFS	15:10	16:50:58	01:40:58
DNF	 BLACKOBLONG	Australia	Marshall Flanagan	SFS	15:18	-	-
DNF	 TWOBLUEHORIZONTALBARS	Tangalooma	Neville Turbit	SFS	15:15	-	-
DNC	 BLACKDIAMOND	Aberdare	Jerry Tickner	SFS	15:19	-	-

It's on again next week. Not to be missed!





Our fabulous volunteers – Longy, Angry, Rob S and Bruce on the Killo, Bentley on the grey RIB and Barley on our fantastic new BRIG (yet to be named)

RESULTS OF THE AGM

The 136th AGM of the SFS was held on Sunday. The Board provided updates on the financial position of the club and Patton's, as well as recent developments and proposals for the future. Special resolutions were passed unanimously to bring the club Constitution in line with current legislation. Your board members are shown below, elected unopposed. Life Member nomination of Selwyn Black was approved unanimously. The President's drinks were well received by the members upon completion of the meeting.



Back Row (L to R) Phil Franklin (Vice Commodore), Ann Prosser (Assistant Treasurer), Marshall Flanagan (Commodore), Kerrie Boyd (Assistant Secretary), Rolf Cohen (CEO)
Front Row: Tim Magee (Treasurer), Rusty Debney (President), Don



Selwyn Black accepting Life Membership from SFS President, Rusty Debney

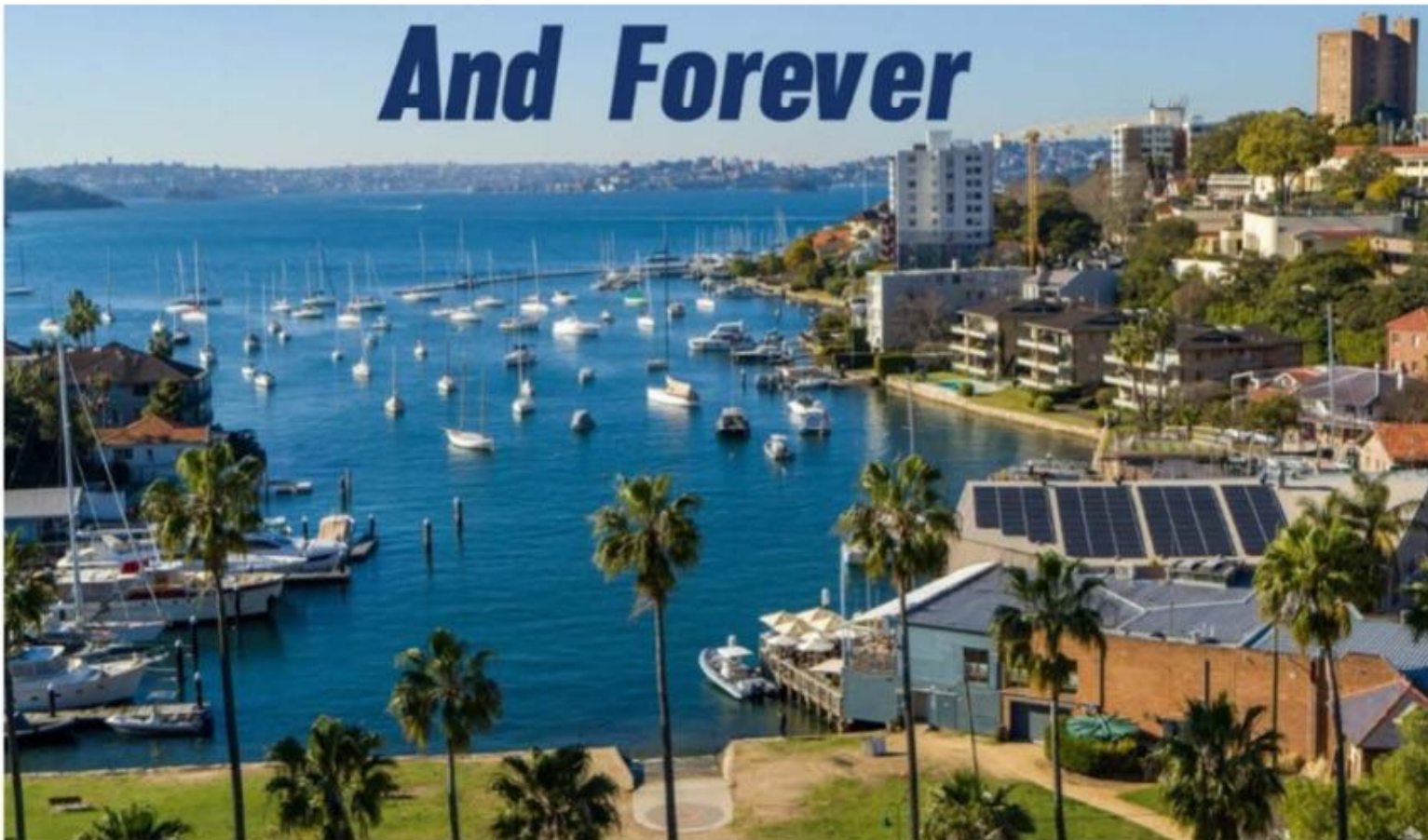
JACARANDA SEASON IS HERE

Council will be implementing road closures during the Jacaranda season to ensure pedestrian safety. The closures are expected to start mid-October and normally run for 6 weeks. Updates will be provided.



Opening THIS Monday

And Forever



Member Monday Nights from 6 Oct 2025

20% Off for Members & Plus One Guest on Food & Drinks
Offer ends on 27 Oct 2025

Sydney Flying Squadron Ltd

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club

Our mailing address is:

