



SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON LTD

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club
Founded in 1891

THE RINGTALE

SATURDAY 8TH NOVEMBER 2025

RACE 5

A HARD DAY AT THE OFFICE



12 knots from the nor'west the weather forecasts all said. A bit of a blow predicted for later in the evening was the only clue that 18 knots of NNE wind, gusting to 25 knots, was about to hit the fleet just prior to the start. Most skiffs cautiously rigged with a reef in the main nonetheless – and it turned out to be much needed.

This time of the year, we enjoy the Spring Tides when our hemisphere is nearest to the sun. A two-metre spring tide means that a lot of water comes in and out of the Harbour. And when the wind and the tide are against one another, Sydney Harbour becomes a very rough racecourse indeed. All the more so on a busy Saturday when power boats impart even more energy into the chop, oblivious as they usually are to the trials of sailors. So, more wind than expected with a lot of north in it coupled with big seas had combined for a challenging day.

Scot made an early decision to withdraw ahead of the start. There is no shame in good seamanship and a H18, over-canvassed and with new crew on board, certainly justifies the decision.

The rest of the fleet, led by The Mistake (Jerry Tickner), Tangalooma (Neville Turbit), Australia (Marshall Flanagan), Alruth (Scott Spackman), Aberdare (Michael Carter), Australia IV (Terry Stewart) and Yendys (Warren Miller) did set off in a handicap start in the increasing wind and building seas. It was very wet coping with the rough water and the wind and once past Bradleys Head it paid to dive into the bays on the western shore to take advantage of the smoother waters and the lift off the shore.

The top mark, as always on the No. 1 course, is the Beashel Buoy, almost directly south of the Sow & Pigs reef. To the south-east of that is another AS buoy, the Eastern Channel Mark, with the same yellow colour and shape as the Beashel Buoy. It is best to know which is which, especially when the crew is battling to keep the ship afloat and have their mind on other things.

On the work up to the top mark, Australia had done by far and away the best of the skiffs. Mistake and Alruth were in pursuit followed by the rest of the fleet as they set off on the very square run down to Shark Island, contemplating what looked like at least two jibes to get to the mark. Spinnakers were in short supply in favour of wise decisions to stay afloat.

At Shark Island, Australia, looking well rigged for the conditions, had increased her lead and led The Mistake by 6 minutes. They were followed by Alruth a further 3 minutes back. A4 and Tangalooma followed 2 and 3 minutes respectively behind Alruth leaving Yendys well back in last place and almost 17 minutes behind the leader. Yendys had been waylaid by a discourteous, or inexperienced schooner that prevented Yendys from sailing her preferred course - and then motored far too close when Yendys needed to jibe to the mark having been taken out into the middle of the course.

Aberdare was missing, having foundered in the conditions and was under tow to the Edwards Beach.



Photos here with thanks to Michelle – who was on the rescue boat with Barley



Back in the race, Australia and The Mistake continued to hold their lead down to Clark Island and on the second tough work up to Chowder Bay. It should be recorded here that the crews on the boats remaining afloat were showing great boat handling skills in the conditions. Alas, Tangalooma did succumb sadly, after having done the hard yards.

With the breeze now easing slightly, firmly in the north, but backing slowly to the nor'west, the spinnaker run from Chowder across to Shark Island was a little less tight than usual. The fleet

had closed up, but only a little and Australia and The Mistake already had the taste of victory in their mouths with the rest of the field in their wake. Over the finish line, Australia was followed by Alruth with Australia IV and Yendys 2 minutes and 3 and bit minutes behind and bringing up the rear.

In a day that had everything, it was a slow run back to the Squaddie with thunder and lightning, a rain storm and the boats becalmed before sunshine eased the pain as the boats made it to Careening Cove and were hauled back on to the park.

The traditional cheers for the winners were, however, soon replaced with condolences as it was revealed that Australia had rounded the wrong mark (Eastern Channel Mark instead of the Beashel Buoy) on the first leg of the course - and The Mistake had blindly followed her in the process of living up to her name. Both boats owned up to the error and did the right thing announcing to the Race Committee their retirement from the race. A bitter pill to swallow after having sailed so well on a really hard day. There was some solace perhaps in that even though the incorrect rounding probably shaved a couple hundred metres off the course, the margin to the rest of the fleet at the finish was considerably more than that! It is however likely that the tacticians on Australia and The Mistake will never mistake the Beashel Buoy and the Eastern Channel Mark again!

So, in the end, it was Alruth the winner by 2 minutes from Australia IV with Yendys, in an unlikely place on the podium in third and a further minute and a half back.

Special thanks as always this week to the volunteers, especially on the RIBs, who worked hard to rescue Aberdare and Tangalooma and bring their crews safely back to the Squaddie after their swims. And thanks also to Longi and Angry on “Buster”, a potential candidate for our new start boat.



“Buster” - the potential candidate for the new SFS start boat

Heat 1 of the Club Championship is next week. The challenge and the spectacle of a scratch start and not to be missed!

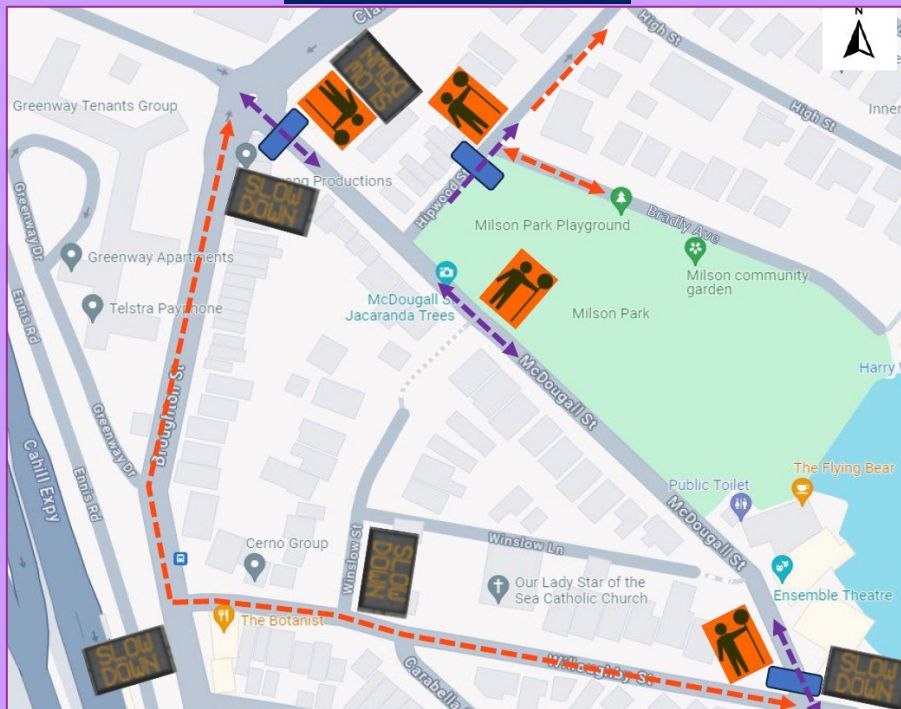
Final results can be found here: <https://app.sailsys.com.au/club/15/results/series/5054/races>

Place	Sail No.	Name	Skipper	Club	Start	Finish	Elapsed
Overall							
1	BLUESHIELDWITHGOLD"A"	Alruth	Alan Robinson	SFS	14:20	16:07:15	01:47:15
2	UNIONFLAG	Australia IV	Terry Stewart	SFS	14:22	16:09:17	01:47:17
3	REDANCHOR	Yendys	Warren Miller	SFS	14:34	16:10:42	01:36:42
DNF	BLACKDIAMOND	Aberdare	Michael Carter	SFS	14:21	-	-
RET	BLACKOBLONG	Australia	Marshall Flanagan	SFS	14:20	-	-
DNF	TWOBLUEHORIZONTALBARS	Tangalooma	Neville Turbit	SFS	14:14	-	-
RET	2+2=5	The Mistake	Jerry Tickner	SFS	14:10	-	-
DNC	LION	Scot	Ryan Paget	SFS	14:11	-	-

Jacaranda Season is still here...

**THE ROAD CLOSURES WILL CONTINUE ON
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY FROM 7AM TO 7PM**

Cars with trailers/boats must only enter and exit
via Willoughby Street



Please follow the directions given by the Traffic Controllers and
Drive slowly and give way to all pedestrians on the road



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