



SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON LTD

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club
Founded in 1891

THE RINGTALE

RACE 18: RACE REPORT

SYDNEY HARBOUR REGATTA – AUTUMN SERIES HEAT 3 THE MISTAKE BLITZES THE FIELD



Photos above thanks to Christophe Favreau and the 18 Footers

Showing a touch of the class that in the past has made The Mistake one of the fastest boats in the fleet, Jerry Tickner and his crew sailed a brilliant race in which she was never headed and, at times, was up to 10 minutes ahead.

It was a big-sail easterly breeze that had been predicted to veer to the south east. Instead, it wandered around in 20 degree shifts until it backed and settled ENE. Steve Kidson, our PRO, wisely settled on the No.2 Easterly course. But it did mean that if you were in the right place at the right time, then big gains could be made.



Photo above thanks to Sydney Harbour Regatta FaceBook page

As the skiffs set off from Kirribilli, in a handicap start in 7-8 knots of breeze, it was clear that getting on to a port tack was the go. From her 16 minute handicap, The Mistake was first away and picked up the first of the northerly shifts in the breeze that enabled her to hold a course up the middle of the Harbour. She was followed by Tangalooma (Neville Turbit) off 14 minutes and Scot (David Paget) and Australia (Marshall Flanagan), both off 12 minutes. Alruth (Alan Robertson) looking under-rigged for the light conditions, followed off 10 minutes. That left Aberdare with Mike "Chappo" Chapman filling in for Michael "Flipper" Carter on 7 minutes, Australia IV (Terry Stewart), 5 minutes and Yendys (Warren "Wazza" Miller) on scratch to chase the leaders.



Photos here with thanks to our wonderful Race officer, Barley Stewart!





Photos here with thanks to Barley Stewart



In an easterly with an ebb tide, it is very tempting to head off in the direction of Clark Island in the hope that the outgoing tide that runs under the Bridge and past Fort Denison will work for you. And it does, of course. But it can mean that the breeze that splits as it rounds Bradleys Head can drag you south while you miss out on the northerly shifts in the middle of the Harbour as you carefully avoid the Bradleys Head lee. This became evident when the skiffs that kept to the northern side did well and had caught up as they rounded Shark Island. Most of the fleet that is, except for The Mistake that was by then close to 10 minutes ahead of the rest and well on the way under spinnaker to the Kirribilli bottom mark.

At the back of the fleet, Yendys had closed the gap from A4 to around 2 minutes and once underway under her red and white spinnaker was enjoying a fast, three-quarter shy run to the mark. A4 retaliated with a smart set of her ringtail but soon suffered the woes of aimless harbour cruise boats that forced her into their lee. This resulted in Yendys powering ahead to windward and approaching the Kirribilli mark at speed where the rest of the fleet, apart from The Mistake that had long gone, were parked. Yendys was able to round inside the fleet and soon resumed her favoured course on the northern side on the way to Bradleys having secured second place.



Photo with thanks to Barley Stewart

It was clear by now, that The Mistake would not be beaten unless her eponymous name led to just that! All the more so since the middle of the ebb tide meant that the Shark Island lighthouse would likely be reached – if you were in the right place at the right time, on a single port tack.

When the fleet finally rounded the top mark, The Mistake was ahead of Yendys by about 8 minutes. Yendys was followed by Aberdare some 3 minutes adrift, then Scot, Alruth, A4 and Australia in a bunch 2 minutes behind Aberdare. Tangalooma brought up the rear a further 5 minutes behind.



Image here captured from 18 footer tv live stream (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pp4uT2hK4z8&t=5597s>)

Most skiffs again enjoyed a fast run down to the finish. Most, that is, except for Alruth in particular who sailed a little too close into the lee of Shark Island and was reported to have turned circles while battling to free herself from the trap. The other skiffs were soon on the run home and this was made more spectacular as our course coincided with the modern 18s running down to their bottom mark to the west of Clark Island in the first heat of the JJ Giltinan Modern 18 Footer World Championships. It must have been quite a sight for the spectators to see the old and the new and more than a century of 18 footer history racing alongside one another.



Images here captured from 18 footer tv live stream (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pp4uT2hK4z8&t=5597s>)



By the finish, The Mistake had easily won the Sydney Harbour Regatta by 4 minutes from the fast-finishing Yendys. Aberdare came in third, 7 minutes behind Yendys. Special mention to Scot after reports that they succeeded in setting their first ever ringtail in the sailing adventure that is seeing her improve on every outing. A4 secured the Ringtail Trophy for the season with two ringtails set during the race.

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

The full results and finishing order and times are below.

Results for Saturday 7th March 2026					
Autumn Series Heat 3 and SYDNEY HARBOUR REGATTA					
Start Time:	2:30PM	Start	Course	Breeze	Strength
Fastest Time:	Yendys 1:30:40	Handicap	2	E	8-10 kts

Skiff	Skipper	Handicap (Mins)	Finish Time	Corrected Race Time	Ringtail
The Mistake	Jerry Tickner	16	3:56:50 PM	1:42:50	
Yendys	Warren Wazza Miller	0	4:00:40 PM	1:30:40	
Aberdare	Michael Chappo Chapman	7	4:07:53 PM	1:44:53	
Australia IV	Terry Stewart	5	4:10:29 PM	1:45:29	2
Scot	David Paget	12	4:10:32 PM	1:52:32	1
Australia	Marshall Flanagan	12	4:17:54 PM	1:59:54	
Tangalooma	Neville Turbit	14	4:18:33 PM	2:02:33	
Alruth	Al "Robbo" Robertson	10	4:29:39 PM	2:09:39	
Britannia	DNC				
Myra Too	DNC				
Top Weight	DNC				

On a hot and humid day, the best times are usually in the park after the race. Yendys’ crew interrupted their de-rigging and paid their respects to the victorious crew of The Mistake (and a few other interlopers) with the traditional three cheers and a few icy cold beers from their secret stash for the winners. What do they say? Winners are grinners and losers can please themselves! And Jerry and his merry crew were certainly doing that! Only two races to go.

See you next week for more of the same ...

MEET THE EXPERTS: RACE MANAGEMENT

We may do things a little differently at the Squaddie after a century or more of brute strength and awkwardness, but many of us also race in events where the Racing Rules of Sailing are paramount. For those who want to improve their knowledge of race management and to learn from international race officers and judges, Hugh Leicester and Howard Elliot, we have organised a relaxed event **this Wednesday evening at the Club** with Hugh and Howard. It promises to be an interesting evening for both experienced sailors and novices alike. Don’t miss it!

SAILING CALENDAR

Date	Day	Historic 18ft Skiffs
21-Feb	Sat	Autumn series Ht2
28-Feb	Sat	NO SAILING
7-Mar	Sat	Sydney Harbour Regatta and Autumn series Ht3
8-Mar	Sun	
14-Mar	Sat	Matthew Flinders Cup and Autumn series Ht4
15-Mar	Sun	
21-Mar	Sat	Port Jackson Champ and Autumn series Ht5
22-Mar	Sun	
28-Mar	Sat	Club Championship Ht3 and Autumn series Ht6
29-Mar	Sun	
18-Apr	Sat	Presentation Night 6pm

SQUADDIE MERCH



- **POLOS (WHITE, BLACK AND NAVY) \$45**
- **RUGBY TOP \$90**
- **CAPS (WHITE AND NAVY) \$30**

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