



QLYC Pivot Carnival Sternchaser. Sat February 23 2013.

“Neptune Has Some Fun.”

Three quarters of the Club's big boat fleet were on the High Seas or on the Slip, but the treasurer's face was beaming at the sight of eleven vessels and thirty seven sailors attending the noon race-briefing at the Queenscliff Harbour for the Pivot Carnival Sternchaser.

Club Captain Ian Curtis (here having a personal groundhog day) and OOD Ian Lee briefed the assembly.



Once again, it was a beautiful day with the promise of a weakening easterly to be followed by a sea breeze, sometime. There was no doubt about the tide: an ebb of up to three and one half knots began about half past twelve and continued for more than the duration of the race.

This race, once The Pivot Sprints but now The Pivot Carnival, was to be sailed as a sternchaser. That is, the slowest vessel, by performance handicap, starts first, and faster vessels start later, in turns, according to a performance handicap determined delay. Theoretically, after starting widely separated, all competitors collide on the finish line, but that did not happen in this race.

The Club Captain and the OOD (Ian Lee) explained that the race would finish at four o'clock and the winner would be whichever vessel was in front at four o'clock. All competitors were asked to sail by *Swan Rescue* so that times could be taken to assist with future handicapping.



Drizabone Sailing By.

For some mysterious reason, possibly to do with The Astronomer Royal, *Fancy*, one of the larger cuta boats, was scratch boat in this event. As you can see in the photo, there was not much of a breeze, but as the first starters struggled against the ebb towards the **QA Pile** (Course Seven), *Fancy*, appearing to have borrowed *Zen's* jet engine from the previous race, soon developed a commanding lead over *Nellie*, *Drizabone*, and *Indulgence*.

Back at the line, *Maud* was the first of the mid-speed vessels to start and was only fifty two seconds late at the line, up-staging *Lion Heart* (three minutes late) and *Tiercel* (a staggering nine and one half minutes late).

The last to start was *Imagine*, only two minutes late for a delay of forty six minutes and thirty seconds, showing a praiseworthy resolution to resist the tempting opportunity to enjoy “The Cruise Before The Start”.

Meanwhile, **King Neptune** had switched the wind off. None of the later starters could reach **QA**. *Fancy*, having sensibly put hundreds of up-tide metres in hand before tacking north of **QA**, drifted past the right side of **The Wedge**, and began a tide-assisted reach towards **Drapers**. *Indulgence*, *Nellie*, and *Drizabone* all lay becalmed near **The Stones**, between **Grassbeds** and **The Wedge**. A seaman-like move by *Indulgence* saw that vessel anchored while *Nellie* and *Drizabone* drifted towards **The Heads** and into a new breeze from the south east.

The later starters were also granted a new breeze. They rounded **QA**. *Imagine* sped through the fleet in pursuit of *Zen* and *Fancy*. *Nellie* and *Drizabone* rounded **The Wedge**, but *Indulgence* continued to wallow in her chosen hole of windlessness.

Fancy rounded **Drapers** ahead of *Zen* and *Imagine*, but then the spinnakers came out (see below) on the reach to **Grassbeds**, where the OOD, in response to the calm, had shortened course.



Imagine (see above) overtook *Zen*, but could not overtake *Fancy* who was first across the shortened course line by one minute and eighty seconds.

After the popping of champagne corks had died away, the killjoys moved in.

First it was realised that the race had not lasted two and one half hours; in fact it had only lasted one hour fifty three minutes and thirty two seconds.

In a race of this duration *Imagine* would have needed more than *Zen's* jet engine to have any hope of a finish line collision with *Fancy* after having started forty six minutes and thirty seconds behind. So the start delays and the finish times had to be amended to reflect the shorter racing time.



Nellie and *Drizabone* (above) had a close tussle towards the finish line. *Nellie* won by a few seconds.

Tiercel and *Lion Heart* enjoyed a similar struggle (below) with *Tiercel* finishing just in front, but *Lion Heart* slightly ahead on corrected time.



Seaman-like performances by Wave Dancer and Christabelle saw them take fourth and fifth places respectively.

Last, by hook or by crook, came *Indulgence*, Geoffrey Mathews is the human downhaul, struggling with the spinnaker.



Thanks to Ian and Bev Lee, and to Jennifer Gilbert for officiating on *Swan Rescue*. Photographs by Jennifer Gilbert and Ian Lee.

Some competitors did not recognise Swan Rescue's flag displays. All those flags are explained in Wikipedia's "Racing Rules of Sailing".

The Next Club Event is The Cec Anderson Series Race 4. 2/3/2013.

Sunday 10th March will be the last of the club's messabout or dinghy/catamaran sailing days for this season. The event will be held at the club house, includes a BBQ lunch, and begins at 11 AM.