

# The Irwin Trophy.

Reported by John Barry and David Hatton

John Barry wrote,

We awoke on Saturday morning to be greeted with torrential rain and the distinct possibility of a cancelled race.



A check on the weather radar indicated that the storm front should move quickly to the east. This proved to be the case and by 11.00 the sky had cleared and crews gathered at briefing for a much anticipated race, starting in light winds.

Our Commodore and Club Captain were unavailable to as they had a wedding to attend up state. The club's briefing was graced by 3 visitors who decided to take up the offer of a try-out sail with the club. These visitors were allotted spaces, two on Sundance and one on Imagine

Ian Lee (OOD) indicated the possibility of two short races, the course to be advised at Grass Beds. Crews were advised to watch for the shorten course flag to indicate the finish of the first race and the preparations for the start of the second.

Eleven yachts faced the starter at Grass Beds to sail course 11 of the blue sheets, with the usual 3 divisions. The postponement flag flew from SWAN due to light winds.

About 20 minutes later division 1 was away with yachts heading out into the channel to make the most of the ebb tide.

David Hatton wrote,

Div one got away with good starts from Tintagel, Pequita, Drizabone, and Rosie. Nellie (great to see her out again) was forced by Tintagel's bellows of, "Windward boat keep clear," to tack away from the line and go around for another try. With the ebb tide most elected to sail well offshore on the upwind leg to Drapers.

Div 2 got away with a mostly well bunched group including Valentine, Maud,

WaveDancer, and Fancy, following the div 1 boats offshore on the 1<sup>st</sup> leg to Drapers. The wind was still no more than 8 to 10 kn at this time; the fleet started to spread out with the lighter boats moving up through the fleet at the expense of the 5 heavier cuta boats.

Turning downwind on the long leg to Swan Spit, Pequita popped the kite 1<sup>st</sup> whilst, Tintagel, in the lead, opted for a poled out headsail to GB then set a kite, to help maintain her nice lead.

By this time, Div 3 boats Sundance and Imagine have started.

In the Div 2 boats, Valentine was 1<sup>st</sup> to set her spinnaker, followed closely by Wave Dancer nipping at her heels then stealing wind and slowly overtaking her by the Creek Mark.

Briefly, Valentine tries to return the 'favour' but it doesn't work and she is squeezed out and moves off inshore to leeward, to try getting out of the tide. However this more down wind course combined with the longer distance sailed cancels any benefits, and they round the bottom mark with Wave Dancer still in front now and within striking distance of the Div 1 leaders.

Meanwhile, the div 3 boats, Imagine under spinnaker and Sundance with a large headsail, have crept through the fleet. The strengthening wind has helped to fire-up the big boys and cuta boats alike. On the long upwind leg from Swan Spit to Grass Beds and then to Drapers Wave Dancer gets into a less favourable wind patch and ends up well to leeward of all but leader Tintagel, who is still well in the lead approaching GB. Valentine and the div 3 boats slip through well to windward.

The second half of the race is the 'sausage' between GB and Drapers. JB had a better view of that.

Back to John Barry.

Division 3 had only 2 starters, Imagine and Sundance. Pre start light hearted banter between these Yachts heightened expectations of a close contest. This expectation was

realized as the two yachts jockeyed for advantage. Sundance broke contact and headed for the pin end, the start signal seeing Sundance lead Imagine out into the bay.

The race settled down with a light South Westerly of 7 kts to the first mark at Drapers. First to the mark somewhat earlier had been Tintagel followed by Pequita, Nelly, Drizabone and Rosie.

By the second rounding of Drapers Valentine had taken the lead. Those yachts that flew spinnakers on the downwind legs made great gains on the fleet.

The wind increased to a 10 to 12 kts for the final legs of the race. By this time Imagine and Sundance had taken the lead swapping positions till the last rounding of the Grass Beds mark. The second last rounding of Drapers (with Imagine well ahead) saw a fishing boat make a hasty retreat; she was anchored close to the Drapers mark. Imagine made her intentions plain, rounding between the mark and the fishing boat. Sundance, close on Imagine's heels (plus the cloud of yachts approaching) was too much and the fishing boat accelerated away before Sundance rounded.

At the last rounding of Grass Beds Imagine inexplicably continued northwards still under spinnaker, allowing Sundance to slip inside, round the mark, and take the lead.

Sundance maintained this lead till the finish followed by Imagine, Valentine, Wave Dancer, Tintagel, Fancy, Drizabone, Maud, Pequita, Nellie, and Rosie. On handicap the win went to Drizabone with Wave Dancer second and Valentine third. For all the times see the results on our web page. The result sheet is now enhanced with new performance handicaps for the next race.

All competitors' reports of the afternoon were positive and the club hopes for another big fleet for the next race.

**Once again the crew of the committee boat did a great job; our thanks to Ian, to Bev, and to Jock Lee, a great family combination.**

The next race is the 4th of the Cec Anderson Series. 21/2/15.

Plus

Mark the calendar for 28/2/15 - The Champagne Sternchaser.

Which will be followed that evening by

**The Commodore's Champagne Reception.**