



Queenscliff Lonsdale Yacht Club....

Cec Anderson Series - Race 1, Sat Feb 4, 2017

A beautiful race day on Port Phillip down the bay!

Again today, as with last week it was to be a perfect forecast with light breezes moving around from East to North East swinging later to the south and strengthening.

At briefing at Noon in the harbour, it was only a small band of diligent sailors and their skippers that faced Commodore Jill as she outlined future events with the club, including a modified Maritime Weekend in March with QHPL taking a lead role and the Museum sticking to their knitting with events around "Fishy Tales" and a jazz afternoon on the Sunday.

Sorrento SCBC will maintain their own race and QLYC entertain their own, whilst an invitation to a mass dinner on Saturday night will be at Q360 with presentations.

Club Captain Brian, as OOD partnered by Commodore Jill, outlined a different course for the day, with course number 10 which due to variable winds etc, would involve a mixture of directions taking the fleet up the bay and around the Coles Light twice including a number of west channel marks before returning to Grass Beds. The course was around only 8.5 Nm.

On the course itself the line was set and a light breeze was encountered as predicted.

Unfortunately, again, it was only five yachts that had entered at briefing, with 22 sailors venturing out for racing.



In Div1 it was a lonely Nellie with Russ Watson helming along with Gary and son James giving it a try for the day, but they made a good start and headed off to Swan Spit.



In Div2 there were two challenges with Valentine under Steve Lee's captancy and Boomaroo with Tom Hinton endeavouring to keep clear air and venturing to the line right on the horn. Valentine was a shade slower having a tack on the line before following Tom.



Div3 was our usual pair of big boys with Sundance making the line as the horn sounded followed slightly behind by Imagine as Chris at the helm got it into the groove.

Nellie was well toward Swan Spit as Div3 started their journey ahead and in good touch with the Div2 lads as they laid the line.



The OOD's decided that today was a good day to follow the fleet up the bay and get a good look at proceedings as they unfolded.



Nellie had made her way toward the Coles Light when she suddenly tacked and headed back to Swan Spit passing through the tracks of Valentine and Boomaroo who were on their way after Swan Spit. Suddenly it was clear that she had mislaid the Swan Spit mark and taken it to starboard instead of port!! Not the best start, although with

a good handicap she may well come back to the fleet later.

Sundance was making good ground on the others ahead of Imagine who remained in the background trailing



Sundance but not advancing on her.



At Swan Spit the breeze had dropped to a whisper and whilst the larger yachts seemed to maintain a reasonable speed, the Div2 and Div1 yachts were struggling in their efforts against some tide and lack of drive.

At the Coles, it was Valentine first around with Boomaroo struggling whilst Valentine.

The next mark was #6 west channel before heading to #7 west channel and returning to the Coles Light.



It was here that I saw Sundance keeping an eye on the depth gauge as a sand bank provided a few anxious moments for skipper and crew.

Sundance had gathered Valentine on this leg and was taking control whilst Imagine was making her presence known just astern by a little over 100 metres.

Nellie had dropped to the back of the fleet and it was Valentine under challenge by Boomaroo on these two legs.

Rounding the Coles again, before heading off to #4 west channel and #3 west channel and with a good breeze freshening from the east to south east, the fleet simply was having a good day enjoying the competition between the Coles and West Channel marks.



The lead yachts now making toward #3 west channel were literally flying and quickly rounded heading down to the last mark before making for the finish and Grass Beds.

As the wind shifted there were some losses and some gains depending on the position of yachts on the course.

However more changes were afoot as the head of the fleet in Sundance and Imagine rounded QA on their last leg to the finish it was the breeze that started to settle to a whisper again and the three yachts in Div1 and Div2 with Boomaroo and Valentine ahead of Nellie.

These fell into a very soft patch and whilst wind was variable and light their passage slowed considerably in this transit.



Valentine had a spinnaker to contend with but this put her slightly off course coming down toward QA and whilst speed was a factor she was able to gain height with shifting breeze and over took Boomaroo rounding QA well ahead of Boomaroo.



At the finish at Grass Beds, it was Sundance taking it easily ahead of Imagine by some four minutes.

As the leaders finished and packed gear heading up the creek to their moorings some 30 minutes later an expected but strong front from the south pressed down on the finishing Div2 and Div1 yachts.

An unexpected 28 odd knots of breeze had all vessels making adjustments to ensure they

made the finish line although with a number of times rounding up in the journey.

Valentine finished third across the line closely followed by Boomaroo.



Nellie finished almost an hour behind the first finisher having to make a serious tack in order to make the line.

The OOD's had their own issues in the torrid conditions when the anchor dragged putting then a number of metres down the course.

On handicap it was Sundance with John Barry and crew that won the day ahead of Imagine and Chris Laker and crew whilst third place ended up with the lonely Couta Boat Nellie making the podium.

Valentine followed with Boomaroo managing to fill the field placings.

Congratulations go to all on a great day on the water with a pleasant if not different race around the sticks off Swan Island.

Next Club Racing start: Is on....SAT February 11th with the Cole Cup combined with the Ray Maki race 1 (a catch up event due to earlier cancellations.)

We will meet at the club house following the race which will include announcements!

Meet at the harbour outside the QHPL Office and shed.....at Noon.

