



Queenscliff Lonsdale Yacht Club....

The Around Mud Islands Race Sat February 20, 2016

Another great race around the lower bay in a day!

An early start for all of us but this promised to be another great day and an even better race with a lovely dawn and the promised tides and breezes to suit!

At 9.30 in the harbour we all gathered having had a fistful of information emailed to us in NOR and Si over the past week with a weather report that showed us just what a perfect place we were in to take on a full day race alongside a large Couta Boat fleet.

The opening comments by Acting Commodore John Barry echoed our expectations and with a short and sharp briefing by the Club Captain ensuring all skippers and crew knew the drill for the starting of four (4) divisions in:

- 11.00 am Div2 - Small Couta Boats,
- 11.10 am Div 1 - Small Keel Boats,
- 11.20 am Div 1 - Large Couta Boats, and
- 11.30 am Div 2 - Large Keel Boats.



It was off racing, under the guidance of experienced OOD's Ian, Bev and Jock Lee with Jill Golland assisting as reqd and capturing the action.

It was a fabulous sight that greeted all skippers as the assembling fleet arrived both out of the Creek and from Sorrento filling the entrance and Grass Beds with a myriad fleet of almost 30 boats.

As race start approached it appeared that anxious skippers and crews hovered very close to the start line which was set perfectly by our OOD's but quite crowded under the circumstances.

At 10.50 there was a radio message that the start was about to commence and ...

At 11.00 am the first of the Couta Boats in Div2 passed through the line with Defiance from QLYC handling it perfectly ahead of C81 and C21 with two others trailing them. Defiance pulled smartly to the lead and took the field toward No3.



At 11.10 the first of the keel yachts in QLYC Div2 took to the line...with Valentine making a big play closely followed by Boomaroo which took the lead followed by Valentine, Tintagel and Tiercel following. Tintagel made an error of judgement

and almost collected the start buoy having tacked to make the line which resulted in her now mid field in Div2.



Finally after three good minutes it was a lonely "League of Gentlemen" who made the start in the Blaze looking to make ground by some miracle known to Antony and Rob only!

By 11.20 it was the Couta Boat main fleet in Div1 going hard at the line. The leaders pushed down the line from the Committee Boat "Swan" with jostling and a few heated suggestions of the others parentage coming into play before the leaders passed the line and others quickly followed. Each looked to gain an advantage on the other and windward boats obviously doing better in the push toward No3.

Leaders appeared to be among C08 leading, closely followed by C2003, C2014, C41, C86 and C97 to view a few from down the line.

C95 appeared to almost touch the buoy (pin end) whilst a follower in C03 got into some issues with the pin behind them tacking across toward C82 in the process.



C2011 took her time and trailed the fleet early in this division.





At 11.30 it was the last division away with QLYC Div2 and the two traditional rivals in Imagine and Sundance taking to the line with Sundance holding height on Imagine at the line and toward the trek to No3.

By this time it was the Div2 Couta's having a great time out front heading north east and passing No3, heading down the Symonds Channel toward the tide gauge, passing the Orange Buoy 100 metres to the east, closely followed by the QLYC Div1 keel boats, easily lead by Boomaroo ahead of Valentine, Tintagel and Tiercel. The larger yachts took a wider passage through here as the shifting sands at the gauge can make life difficult.

The Div1 Coutas were flying but not making great strides on the front markers who now took a number of tacks making their way toward the Yellow Buoy, situated almost southerly direction from there.

Many found this a little tough going and a number of vessels went very close to touching the bottom as well as the sand banks looking ominously close and shallow as they passed or tacked closely.

The breeze had picked up around here, and whilst shifting, it also set a few off their designated tack, and rounded up a number, who might not have seen them coming.

The tacks of all were diverse as they sought advantage in the breeze and its shifts as well as the tide which was in the process of change.

Boomaroo kept her head making good time on all these legs whilst holding off Imagine who was always going to run her down.

The fleet had spread out across the channel but in approaching the No.6 Mark it was the consolidation of yachts preparing for the rounding or in the case of SSCBC boats a finish mark viewed as a "Shortened Course" with the SSCBC committee boat sitting to starboard of No.6 and looking to confuse the SSCBC fleet.

The QLYC fleet had moved through the Couta fleet in their march from Symonds to the Pinnacle Channel with Imagine making a real meal of the race being followed by Sundance although the Blaze in League of Gentlemen" had stubbornly held on until around No.6 when both these took over.

The fate of Valentine, Tintagel and Tiercel looked sealed as they trailed the others with Defiance proving her worth amongst the fleet (at least on handicap) and flew toward No.4 and finally No.2 before heading home to Grass Beds.



With the QLYC fleet now on their own, it was Imagine that took a clear line ahead of the fleet, boasting with a short spinnaker run, before taking their line honours finish at Grass Beds, ahead of Boomaroo in a good second with Sundance third. Others followed in League of Gentlemen, Valentine, Defiance, Tiercel and finally young Tintagel.

On handicap it was Tintagel taking first place ahead of Defiance in second with a good third by Boomaroo. Others followed in Imagine, Sundance, Tiercel, Valentine and lastly League of Gentlemen.

A disappointing aspect to the race for QLYC was their only competitor in the Couta Boat divisions, (with Defiance), was the finish in the Couta Boat Championship at No.6, which had been agreed by both clubs to be a Starboard Mark of course, when at the finish for SSCBC boats, the committee boat sat starboard of the rounding or finishing mark, forcing skippers into a contrary decision, which has inflicted on the finish of Defiance providing them an initial DSQ!



This has resulted in a SSCBC Sailing Committee initial decision of redress, to be discounted, and lead to a number of protests, which the SSCBC committee will deal with during this week.

For all of us, apart from this protest, it was a truly great race with a beautiful course combined with perfect winds and tides allowing the best in this annual event for both clubs.



Our thanks to SSCBC committee for their assistance and commitment to holding this race particularly as part of their championship series.



**Next Club Racing start:
SAT Feb 27 for the Commodore's Cup Race
Meet at the harbour outside the QHPL Shed.....at Middy....And
following the race at the Club House the Commodore's cocktail
party will be observed in traditional style...be there!!**

Note to all: A number of Skippers are looking for Crew and if you would like to be part of our unique racing in this part of the Bay ...call us or email via the website ...or contact us via "Facebook"



Some more shots of the fleet



Special thanks for photographs of the competitors and their vessels to Past Commodore Jill Golland as part of the crew of Swan.