



Queenscliff Lonsdale Yacht Club....

The Champagne Sternchaser Trophy Saturday November 14, 2015

The build up to a great race into Lonsdale Bight!

We came to another good weather weekend with the Annual Champagne Sternchaser Trophy Race, which this year, ventured into the Lonsdale Bight as part of this "against the clock" event, when the fastest chase the front runners.

The weather looked ideal, with winds getting up from 15 to 20 knots later, and a turn of tide during the race under clearing skies

At the noon briefing Commodore Jill opened proceedings with a welcome to all and an encouraging reference to the Commodore's Champagne Reception post-race when the results were to be announced with a spray of champagne for the winner!

The Club Captain took a few minutes to highlight some points from the review of the abandoned Ray Maki #3 from last week post his report to the Sailing and General Committee over the incident and outcomes of that report.



Radio calls in an emergency, life jacket requirements and safety on the water, whilst emphasising the club's rule of "no racing in winds above 25 knots" were the key issues apart from the usual respecting of "fixed marks".

For the day's race, a simple chart was given to skippers, combined with a quick summation of the course etc, allowing skippers to think about their time, and the sequence of events under the OOD's starting orders.

The Course was Grass Beds around Bell Rock to the Inner Parks Mark, back to Swan Spit and return to Grass Beds to Swan Spit etc in a loop around those last two marks before finishing with the leader, as the winner of the race, having raced for 2 hours 30 mins, finishing at 4pm exactly!

Yachts were given start times, with the first vessel "Rosie" off scratch at 1.30pm, followed at staggered times, with the last yacht off at 2.28pm in "Terra Nova" being some 58 minutes behind the leader.

At the start Rosie got away 1.5 minutes late, followed by Tintagel almost a minute late to start. There followed Drizabone around 2.5 mins shy of the time, Wave Dancer 30 secs shy, Tiercel on time, Valentine on time and Boomaroo almost a half-minute off, Sundance on time and lastly Terra Nova a minute 30 sec behind the clock.

By the time the backmarkers were away, it was the leaders making their way into the Bight and past Bell Rock...a beautiful breeze from the south to south east quickly took the fleet along the beach.

In the Bight it was Rosie making "hay while the sun shone", in front and heading back, as the majority of the fleet headed down to the Parks "Inner" Mark.



Rosie was closely followed by Tintagel who was making ground slowly on her.

Boomaroo had been passed by Sundance coming into the Bight, and Terra Nova was trailing the fleet.



As Sundance neared the "Parks Mark" it was Drizabone chasing up Tintagel with Wave Dancer in front of Valentine

followed by Tiercel ahead of Sundance.

Interestingly, Valentine had apparently made an abortive attempt with a kite, and the result provided an opportunity for their spinnaker, and tweeker poles to slip overboard A quick retrieval of the floating spinnaker pole was made, but alas the tweeker was lost, thus delaying their ability to pass Wave Dancer.

Tiercel on the other hand was also involved (almost!), in a starboard incident with an outsider yacht trailing a trolling line, whose skipper could not be seen on deck during the episode ... as he passed under their stern.. luckily the crew of Tiercel were vigilant!



By the time Sundance had returned around Bell Rock, the leaders of the fleet were well on their way to Swan Spit.

On the transit to Swan Spit, it was around 45 minutes to the finish and the yachts were drawing closer together as the handicaps started to take hold.

At Swan Spit, it was Rosie first at the mark, followed closely by Tintagel, and as they rounded, Rosie took a little wider rounding and Ian on the helm of Tintagel decided to take the mark inside of Rosie, with the result there was a touch of hulls and a loss of paint....ever so gently...however, enough was in it that Tintagel, with a grip on the lead took two penalty turns for their trouble...Ouch!!



On the run down to Grass Beds, it was still catch up with Tintagel taking the lead from Rosie, with Valentine running down Wave Dancer, and Drizabone falling back from the front runners. Sundance had headed Tiercel with Boomaroo just behind and Terra Nova taking up the rear of the field.

With the clock counting down, and the leaders being hotly pursued, it was Sundance that rounded the Grass Beds mark, just inside of Wave Dancer and Valentine and closely following Tintagel.



The call of the OOD was about to be made for the 4pm finish time as

Sundance reached within 40 odd metres of Tintagel but the finish was announced.



Congratulations go to Colin Bishop and Ian Curtis taking Tintagel to a win over second place Sundance and third place Valentine.

A great race and a real challenge as it always is for everyone as the yachts draw closer in the later part of the race.

Thanks go to the OOD's again in Ian, Bev and Jock for managing a big afternoon on the waters off Queenscliff with all crews enjoying a magnificent display crossing through the Lonsdale Bight.

Lastly of course post-race skippers, crew, members and friends joined together at the club house to celebrate, with Commodore Jill and the committee, another champagne reception where all glasses were overflowing as another sunset settled over Swan Bay.



A big thank you, from the Commodore, to all who came and contributed to the evening at the club, and especially to our new bar person in David Millie, with the kitchen full of volunteers making life easier at the end of the day.



Next Club Racing start: Is on....

SAT Nov 21st with the Ray Maki Race 5 in the series

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

Meet at the harbour outside the QHPL Shed.....at Noon.

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"

Facebook features a number of photos of the race as well as this report.

