



This is the really "busy week" on the Club's sailing calendar, with the Australian Championship for the Historic 18-footers being run over three heats; plus Australia Day when our H18s proudly represent the SFS and the tradition of open boat sailing in the world's oldest continuously run regatta, the Sydney Harbour Australia Day Regatta. And the 12 footers are back from their Interdominions in Brisbane to hold Ladies Day on Sunday.

Heat 1 of the Australian Champs was sailed in great conditions last Saturday. The day was all Aberdare's. Guest skipper, Michael Chapman, paid tribute to the crew at the after race presentation - they held off a determined challenge from team Yendys to win the scratch start race by some six minutes. And there is more excitement to come this Friday and Saturday, with the remaining two heats in the championship.



Aberdare on the final run.

Read the full race report by Bob Chapman. It will make you feel as if you were sailing the race, which indeed he was. Don't forget to purchase your Aussie Champs T-shirt - a pure cotton classic with the line diagram on the back of a traditional 18-foot skiff. It is an exclusive design - only 100 produced and a bargain at \$25.

The ferry is fully booked for the Australia Day Regatta, but there is plenty going on at the Club if you missed out on the Harbour cruise. And, of course, the final heat of the Australian Champs to be raced this Saturday could be a "throw all caution to the wind" race. The race will be followed by the dedicated spectator ferry, Regal. You

The Race Report

Chris Webb - Sailing a True Course

Images from Race 13, Heat 1, Australian Championship

SPECTATOR FERRY - FOLLOW THE FLEET!



The Rosman Ferry Regal departs the SFS wharf at 2pm

Saturdays during the sailing season.

Tickets from the Sydney Flying Squadron
76 McDougall Street, Kirribilli.

\$20 members

\$25 non members

Commentary and a race program provided.
Bookings recommended.



SAIL WELL, STAY WELL

If you are over 18, come and join us to sail on one of our wonderful 18 foot skiffs or become part of our race management team on the safety and start boats.

won't want to miss it. Book now and secure your grandstand view!

After the race, the sailors, race management volunteers and their guests will have the presentation dinner at the Club, with the exclusive use of the restaurant for this event. All those attending must book. It is \$50 a head for a delicious two course dinner. Contact Jade at jade@foyskirribilli.com.au immediately to make your booking or phone her at the Club.

In last week's newsletter, we recorded the wonderful gift of the great Chris Webb's memorabilia to the Club. This week, we include an article by Bob Chapman, giving an insight into Chris Webb's character and his astonishing sailing legacy. The "Don Bradman" or the "Phar Lap" of the 18-footers - whichever title you use, his legacy is extraordinary.

And to all who take photographs from the ferry - we'd love it if you would share them with us. The Pittwater Camera Club will be returning next month for another great day out on our spectator ferry. Let your local camera Club know - the Historic 18s are so picturesque and it is a great harbour cruise for locals and tourists alike.

Happy Australia Day to all - and see you at the Club!

Adrienne Jackson - Editor.

SFS Race Report Sat 21st January 2017

by Bob Chapman, 23 Jan 2017.

Race 13 of the 2016-17 Season and Race 1 of the Historic 18 Footer Australian Championship. 8 skiffs were on hand to contest this event with skippers and crews taking a keen interest in the weather before making the all critical rig choice. The overnight southerly change had moderated and was showing signs of moving around to the south-east, albeit a bit patchy with alternate periods of light and fresh breeze. All skiffs opted for no.2 rigs, most with the smaller no.3 jib. Good to see Myra Too back in action for the first time this season, and Michael Chapman back on the helm as stand-in skipper for John Winning on Aberdare.



The race got underway from a scratch start off Kurraba Point on the no.3 SE course and small run-in tide, with Yendys, Myra Too and Aberdare starting near the committee boat and then sailing a long starboard leg towards Bradley's Head, while Australia IV, Alruth and The Mistake tacked away early to head for the Garden Island shore. On approach to Clark Island, as they crossed tacks, Aberdare held a slight lead over Yendys and Myra Too, and then rounded in that order, for the tight reach to Taylor Bay, followed by Australia IV, Alruth, The Mistake, Tangalooma and Britannia.

Half way down the first reach Myra Too broke a rudder fitting and was forced to retire, Australia IV had some spinnaker issues and lost several places. Aberdare was first around the Taylor Bay mark followed by Yendys. With the approach of an incoming Manly Ferry, Aberdare was forced to tack onto port and head towards Bradley's Head and then negotiate an outgoing Manly Ferry, while Yendys continued on starboard tack. When Aberdare was able to tack back in clear air / water she picked up a useful lift from the south and extended her lead. Aberdare rounded Shark Island with a comfortable lead followed by Yendys, The Mistake, Alruth, Tangalooma, Australia IV and Britannia.

Aberdare carried a big spinnaker to good effect on the long free run back to Kirribilli to extend her lead, for the final beat up to Clark Island. At this stage of the race the fleet had spread out significantly, while The Mistake and Alruth continued to have a good tussle for the 3rd place.



We provide all needed training.

It's free, fun, active and exhilarating on the best harbour in the world!

Please contact us on
9955 8350, or
info@sydneyflyingsquadron.com.au

SETTING SAIL FOR THE GREAT WAR



STORIES OF THE SAILORS LISTED
ON THE WW1 HONOR ROLL OF THE
SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON AND
SYDNEY SAILING CLUB

Buy your copy for
\$35.00 for members of
the SFS or \$45 for non-
members.

Launched at the Sydney Flying Squadron by the Governor-General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, on 27 March 2016, the book sold out on the day.

Now reprinted, the book has great photos and stories of amazing lives and times. Of the men on the Honor Roll, 27 died on active service, 49 were wounded and nine died of wounds or war-related illness. The book ensures the debt to all of them is recorded, and their contribution to our great sailing legacy acknowledged. Something to treasure!

The Australian Historical Sailing Skiff Association (AHSSA)

Aberdare was first around Clark Island for the square run back to the finish running under spinnaker only. Yendys was next to round followed by The Mistake and Alruth, with all 3 skiffs setting ringtails on the final run, followed by Tangalooma, Australia IV and finally Britannia also under ringtail, and finishing in that order.

The AHSSA Rating result for the "Gallopig Ghost" trophy went to Aberdare, Yendys, Alruth, The Mistake, Britannia, Tangalooma and Australia IV. While the handicap result, for the "Raw Meat" trophy went to Aberdare, The Mistake, Alruth, Tangalooma, Britannia, Australia IV, and Yendys.
The remaining races 2 and 3 of the Australian Championship will be held on Friday 27 and Sat 28.

With thanks to our on-water support team of Barley, Rob, Stu, Russell, Peter, Adrienne, David, Chuck, Louise, Eva, Bill, and the rest of our tireless volunteers, along with the dedicated team at Rosman Ferries. We look forward to seeing you down at the Squaddie.

Results for Sat 21st January 2017.

A/C Ship R1	21-Jan-17	Scr Start	#3 Course	SE	12-16kts	AHSSA Rating Result				
Skiff	Skipper	Race Hcap	Start Time	Finish Time	Race Time	H'cap Time	New Hcap	AHSSA Rating	Rating C'Time	Rating Place
Aberdare	M. Chapman	0:00	14:30:00	15:54:45	1:24:45	1:24:45	0	0:00:30	1:24:15	1
Yendys	H. Cudmore	0:00	14:30:00	16:01:14	1:31:14	1:31:14	2	0:02:30	1:28:44	2
The Mistake	T. Stewart	0:12	14:30:00	16:07:00	1:37:00	1:25:00	13	0:03:30	1:33:30	4
Alruth	R. Tickner	0:11	14:30:00	16:07:18	1:37:18	1:26:18	13	0:04:30	1:32:48	3
Tangalooma	P. Legrove	0:13	14:30:00	16:09:55	1:39:55	1:26:55	15	0:05:00	1:34:55	6
Australia IV	D. Swales	0:11	14:30:00	16:11:53	1:41:53	1:30:53	13	0:00:30	1:41:23	7
Britannia	I. Smith	0:14	14:30:00	16:13:06	1:43:06	1:29:06	15	0:08:30	1:34:36	5
Myra Too	P. Barnett	0:08	14:30:00	DNF			8			
Scot		0:14	DNC				14			
Australia		0:06	DNC				6			



is the class association representing the replica historic 18 and 10 footers and the Taipan class. As such they keep the issues of the maritime heritage of Sydney Harbour in the public eye at events such as the Wooden Boat Festivals, intrastate, interstate and overseas regattas. It is a medium to keep heritage and sailing enthusiasts together whilst promoting host sailing clubs and their endeavours.

Annual membership is \$20 which includes a monthly newsletter delivered electronically or by post. To become a member download the application form from the Association's website <http://ahssa.weebly.com> or by email contact to ahssa@y7mail.com or write to P.O. Box 48 Drummoyne, NSW, 2047.

Also view website nswtens.weebly.com for the latest news on replica historic skiffs.

If you are visiting the Sydney Flying Squadron on a Saturday, please make yourself known to either of the following:

- Ian Smith, President - owner/builder and skipper "Britannia"
- Ian Graves, Honorary Secretary - crew member "Aberdare"
- Coral Taylor, Honorary Treasurer - crew member "Tangalooma".

CHRIS WEBB - SAILING A TRUE COURSE

The sport we enjoy today has evolved over many decades, guided and influenced by many a captain (captains of industry and commerce as well as the nautical kind), and mostly it would seem with the interest of the sport at heart.

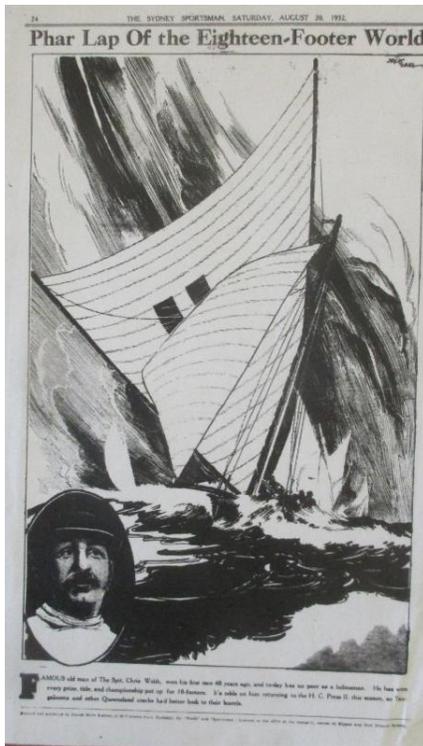
Sailing literature and race programs from the past provide an insight into the way it was - the language, formalities, race management issues of the times, and the integrity and respect of the people involved.

On Saturday 30th November 1929, the weekly newsletter / sailing program of the Sydney Flying Squadron, "S-A-I-L-I-N-G", included 2 items relating to an incident from a previous race regarding the actions of legendary skipper Chris Webb, where he ignored his allocated start signal and held his skiff back in order to start from the scratch mark.

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"H. C. Press II," with skipper Chris Webb inset.



During this era of 18-footer sailing, the skiffs raced for substantial prize money, they had a huge spectator following that included bookmakers and punters, and enjoyed a significant coverage by the news media of the time. The management, promotion and running of these sailing events had developed into a unique sporting industry within itself and those who officiated took their role seriously. Apart from championship events, club races were started using the Mark Foy system (handicap start), where the difference in handicaps could be down to a quarter minute interval, and if a boat on a low handicap gained a win it could well find itself put back on scratch and the previous scratch boat pushed out to be given a start.

The first item reads:

"The action of the skipper of the *H.C. Press II*, failing to respond promptly to his starting flag, was commented on at the meeting of the Sydney Flying Squadron on Monday evening, 18th November. Mr. W. Hedge, assistant starter, stated that he introduced the subject, not as an official, but as one of the members of the club, and in the interests of the sport generally. So far as the incident of the previous Saturday was concerned, the late start of the *Press* could have been accidental, but on Saturday last, from his position in the starter's boat, he had no doubt the action of the skipper was deliberate. Mr. Hedge then quoted Sailing Regulation No.2 (a): "From the hoisting of the first flag each boat competing shall, until it has actually crossed the line, be under the control and subject to the directions of the starter."

As this rule has been flouted, he moved that the skipper of the *H.C. Press* be called upon to explain his action.

Mr. P. Bennett, representative of the *H.C. Press*, stated that in order to remove any misconception, he wished the press reporters to state that the owner and crew of the *H.C. Press* were no party to the actions of skipper Chris Webb in refusing to accept his allotted handicap.

President J.J. Giltinan would not accept the motion as submitted, but suggested that Mr. Webb be invited to give an explanation of his reasons for not promptly obeying the starter's orders.

As there had been a lot of comment on the above incidents, and doubts expressed whether the club should take action under its constitution or sailing regulations. In addition to the rule already quoted, other regulations, etc, bearing on the question are as follows:

Sailing Regulation (f) "In handicap races, the boats shall be dispatched in order of their handicaps, each handicap to be a differently coloured starting flag, the lowering

of which shall be the signal for the boat or boats on such handicap to cross the line." (h) "Any boat committing any breach of any of the foregoing regulations shall be liable to disqualification by the starter."

It is contended that the ample powers exist under the foregoing regulation for the starter to disqualify any boat for disobeying the starter's orders, if deliberately done, such penalty being disqualification for the race concerned, but if the skipper so disqualified remained on the course after the hoisting of his programme number, a penalty of four weeks could be imposed."

(.....end of first item, from 30th Nov 1929.)

Now, before moving on to the second item, which relates to how this matter was resolved, it would be prudent to provide some background of the man in question, Mr. Chris Webb.

The following item by J.F. Black, appeared some years later in the Australian Aquatic Annual January 1938, under the heading "Chris Webb's Brilliant Sailing Deeds":

"To be at 71 years one of the most accomplished 18-footer skippers in New South Wales - that is the achievement of Chris Webb. A feature of the career of this "grand old man of the sea" is that sailing enthusiasts never found their reliance in him misplaced, even during the most tense battle for supremacy.

The whole of Chris Webb's life has been spent among boats, he is known throughout Australia as a good sportsman, a generous rival, and a careful sailor. Cool, skilful and reliable, he is a credit to the sport and enjoys a well-deserved popularity.

The veteran is keen to add the World's 18-Footer Sailing Championship to his lengthy list of success, and will steer Mr. Stan Sheldon's *Collaroy* in the classic event to be sailed this month in connection with the 150th Anniversary Celebrations. Should he realise his ambition, the veteran's speech at the prize presentation will be his favourite phrase, "It's not the first, and I hope it won't be the last." These simple words portray his chief characteristic - modesty.

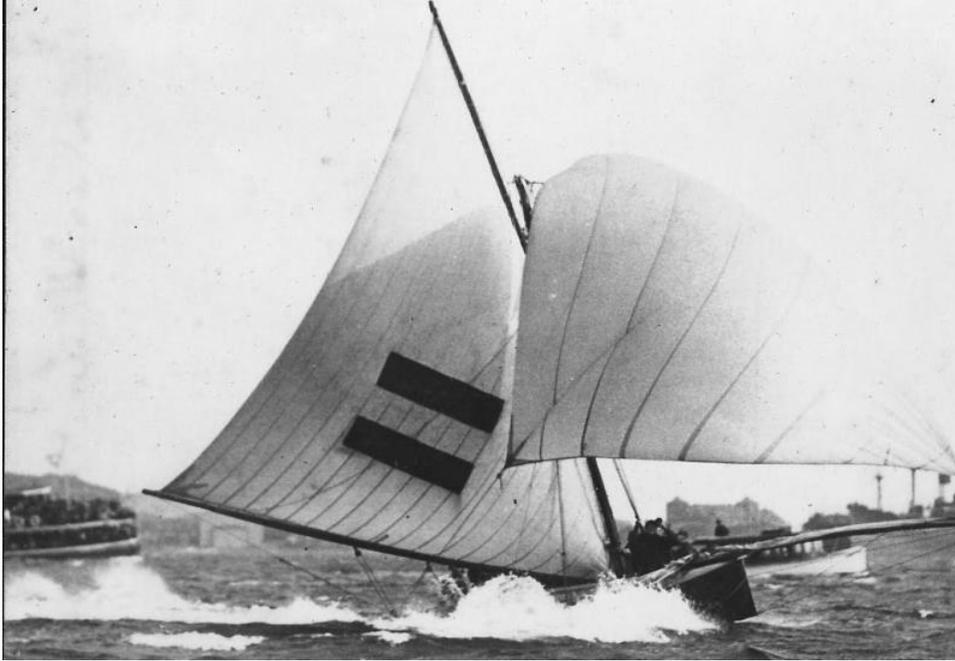
During his long association with open-boat sailing, Webb only built one boat - the 14-footer *Tomki*. His incomparable record is due to his fine knowledge of correct rigging and trimming of a craft.

Webb won his first race in 1884, when he steered the 14-footer *Latona* to victory in the race for the James Deering Cup. His next boats were the 12-foot *Raven*, and the *Julia*. In the 14-footer *Violet*, he won 12 races in addition to 12 minor places. Stepping up to the command of the 24-footer *Mantura* in 1891, Webb notched 11 wins and nine other prizes in two seasons. In addition he gained memorable victories with the *Lottie* and *Atalanta*. With Orlando Taylor's 22-footer *Latona*, Webb won 11 races in four seasons, in addition to seven second and nine third prizes.

In 1893-94 he won races in *Sydney Pearce* (25-foot) *Volunteer* (24-foot), *Our Own* (16-foot), and *Lady Loch*. In 1895 Webb won two races in the Queensland craft, *Lady Norman* (22-foot).

Webb has the wonderful record of 11 wins in the inter-colonial and interstate 18-footer championship competed for by New South Wales, Queensland and West Australia since the inauguration of the series on January 23, 1895, at Sydney. The record is 1897 (Jan) *Rosamond*; 1897 (Dec), 1898 *Australian*; 1908, 1909, 1910 *Australian*; 1912 *Golding*; 1914 *Australian*; 1924, 1925, 1927 *H.C. Press II*.

In the first *Australian*, built by S. Williams, for Mr. J.C. Gannon, Webb won 35 races, 32 seconds and 25 thirds. His record in *H.C. Press II* in the 1924-25 season includes the Australian championship, the Port Jackson pennant, the supremacy of the North Coast, and the Sydney Flying Squadron championship. His total winnings amounted to 230 pounds.



H C Press II

Webb in his last season won the Cock O' the Harbour race of the New South Wales 18-Footer League and gained fourth place in the State championship with *Collaroy*. He also represented the State in the Australian championship with *Collaroy* against Queensland. As the skipper of *Collaroy*, the veteran is still engaged in the contests of the New South Wales 18-Footer League. He says that he has not yet given any thought as to retirement."

(.....end of J.F. Black item, Jan 1938.)

Now, with the benefit of the above, let us return to the second item from November 1929, under the heading of "Why Chris Webb refused to take his start":

"The refusal of Chris Webb to answer his starting flag on two occasions recently when in the receipt of an allowance of a half minute from *Britannia*, after the latter's success in the Squadron's championship, was under discussion at the clubrooms on 25th November.

President (Mr. J.J. Giltinan) invited Mr. Webb to make a personal explanation re his action, adding that in justice to club members, handicapper, officials and patrons of the sport, it was highly desirable that the skipper of the *H.C. Press* should publicly announce his attitude.

Mr. Webb, speaking slowly and deliberately, stated that he was not a speaker, but would do his best to clear the matter up, adding: "I reckon in the interest of the sport I should not take a handicap. No man in Australia can give me a start. The game wants publicity and my action will give it that. I have sailed in this club since it was formed, and for 20 years have never taken a start. I don't begrudge *Britannia* her win, but don't think she can give me a start. I am not a one-day champion - have always been a champion, and consider I should always be on scratch."

Mr. W.F. Titchen (handicapper) then asked the speaker the following question: "As the Club rules impose certain penalties for placed boats in all races, in justice to the handicapper, do you consider that no boat should give you a start when the handicapper is applying the penalties as directed?"

Mr. Webb replied as follows: "Whilst I am boat sailing, if I can't win without a start it is time for me to turn the game up."

A motion that Mr. Webb's explanation be accepted was carried, and the incident closed."

(.....end of second item, from 30th Nov 1929.)

IMAGES FROM HEAT 1, AUSTRALIAN CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES: RACE 13



The scratch start



To Clark Island for the first mark.



Mr Michihiro Tajima, our only Japanese sailing member, was on board Rippleside.
He will be sailing with the team on Britannia on Australia Day.



The two big skiffs, Tangalooma and Britannia, fully crewed and on their way to Clark Island.



Myra Too suffered rudder damage (gudgeon pin) and retired before reaching the second mark at Taylors Bay. Australia IV in the foreground.



The business class ferry, Proclaim, followed the race and enabled all to see comfortably.



Aberdare making good speed.



The Mistake flying their photographer's friend, the red and white striped spinnaker.



Alruth around Shark Island - calling for a search for one of their spinnaker poles adrift on the harbour.



Yendys on the homeward run in second place.



The day belonged to Aberdare with six minutes in hand.



And Britannia looked to be enjoying themselves anyway.

This newsletter was written by Bob Chapman and Adrienne Jackson. Formatted by Nick Mulcahy.

Contributions sought and welcomed. Email your news, photos, opinions to: sfsnewslettersite@gmail.com. Don't be reticent. Be part of the SFS community and share your stories. It is a Club rich in history and the richer for the participation of all its members.