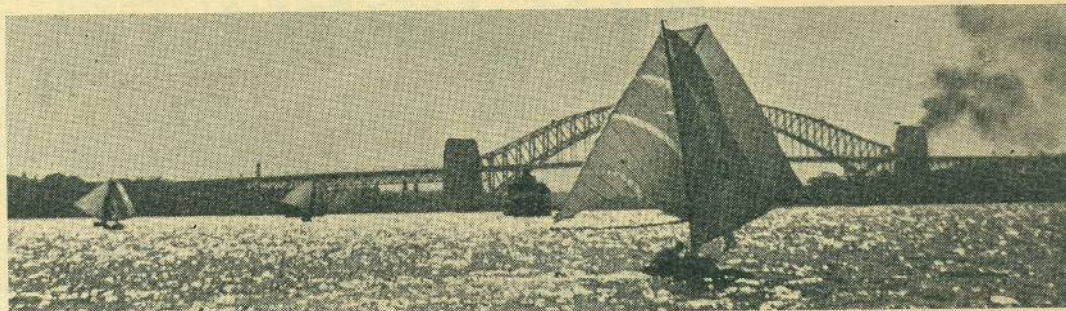


SYDNEY TWELVES SWEEP BOARD

Nearing Cremorne buoy in 2nd heat. Third placegetter "Query" in foreground; craft at left are Queenslanders "Desire" and "Return", who shared fourth place in series.



A powerful New South Wales fleet played havoc with Queensland's hopes of retaining the Australian 12-ft. skiff title last month, when it walked home with the first three places in a hotly-contested series on Sydney Harbor.

Top honors went to young Greenwich skipper Don Barnett, who sailed *Ajax* to brilliant victories in two of three heats, adding his first national title to a string of other successes. Earlier this season he collected the N.S.W. championship for the second year running.

Barnett's recent performance takes him to the top boughs of a famous family sailing tree. Cousin Billy is renowned for his State, Australian and World 18-footer victories with *Myra Too*; his grandfather Sid was one of the best-known early 18-footer champions; his father, the late Sid Jnr., was a top 12 and 18-footer helmsman, and Uncle Ben is still ranked as one of the best 18-footer crewhands.

His greatest critic; however, is "Granny" Barnett, who despite her 80-odd years watched *Ajax* sail to victory from one of the flagships. Granny makes a point of seeing all of Don's major races, and Don is the first to admit that her brilliant analyses of his sailing tactics have enabled him to straighten out many "kinks" and were largely responsible for getting him where he is today.

Barnett's victory, in his fifth year of 12-ft. skiff sailing, culminates as many seasons of relentless striving. His first 12-footer had scant success in open racing, and although *Ajax* was recognised from the start as a potential champion, Barnett had to swallow a number of disappointments before he reached the top.

Ajax just missed out on State selection in her first season, but was untroubled to take the Greenwich Club title; some say she was unlucky not to win last year's national ribbon, when she suffered a capsize on the Brisbane River while fighting for the lead in the deciding heat.

In this year's national series (the 25th) *Ajax*' win was outstanding in that she performed brilliantly under all three suits of sails. In contrast to last year's baby champion *Estrellita*, *Ajax* has a big-sectioned hull carrying correspondingly big gear. Crewed in the series by Don's brother Les, Noel Taylor and Bill Budnick, she scored 37 points from her two wins and one second place.

Runner-up, with 25 points, was Double Bay skiff *Toogara II*, skippered by Cliff Monkhouse. *Toogara II* gave *Ajax* a run for her money by winning the second heat, leaving the two boats with equal points as they lined up for the final race. *Ajax* won this, but not before trailing *Toogara II* during most of the first work. It was her superior running downwind, due partly to a lighter crew, that clinched the title.

Colin Ryrie's *Query* added to the Double Bay club's score by taking third place in the series; she gained 9 points from one second place and two fourths.

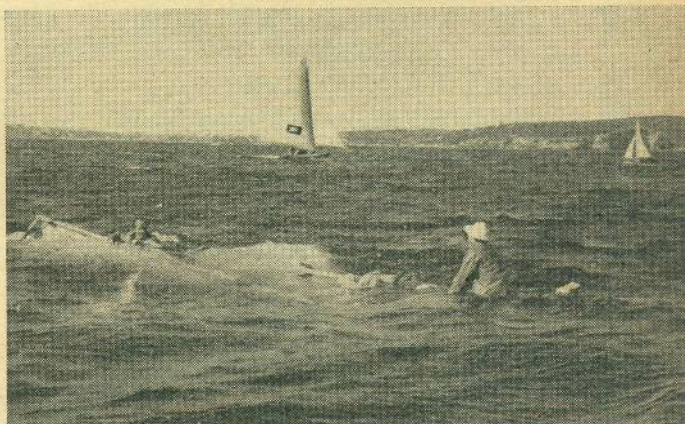
Best Queensland performers were *Return* (K. Martin) and *Desire* (G. Collins), who shared fourth place

with 3 points. Only other skiff to open a score in the series was Ken Barrett's *Viking* (N.S.W.), with one point from a fourth place. *Viking* finished third in the second heat but was disqualified for a breach of the port-and-starboard rule.

Unluckiest boat in the series was John Winning's *Yandoo* (N.S.W.). *Yandoo* split her mainsail from leech to luff at start of the first heat, was hopelessly under canvassed during the second, and capsized while on the tail of the leaders in the final race.

It was worse than a capsize, for *Yandoo* was washed onto the Sow and Pigs reef, smashed in a plank after Winning had ordered his crew to remain on top of the craft rather than risk serious injury by trying to free her. As it was, one of the crew ripped his sweater to shreds on the oyster-infested rocks.

"Chick" Ware's diminutive *Estrellita*, strongly favored to retain her title, lost her only chance of scoring



"*Yandoo*" suffered smashed plank when she pickled in final heat, drifted onto Sow and Pigs Reef. Skipper "Chocko" Winning told crew to stay aboard, avoid injury.

points in the series by capsizing on the first run of the third heat, while in third place behind *Query* and *Ajax*.

New South Wales has now won 11 national titles compared to Queensland's total of 14. The home State also recaptured the Interstate Pennant for the highest-scoring team.

The two handicap races of the Carnival also resulted in wins for New South Wales. *St. George* (H. Tutt) won the Colin Clark Memorial on December 26, with three Sydney boats *Beryl* (J. Olsen) *Toogara II* and *Query* filling 2nd, 3rd and 4th places.

The Services Memorial Handicap re-sail on January 2 was won narrowly by *Query* from *Monarch* (J. Pearce,