



SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON LTD

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club
Founded in 1891

THE RINGTALE

SFS RACE REPORT: HEAT 3 – SPRING SERIES

SUNDAY 25th OCTOBER 2026

**THE BALMAIN REGATTA
(HOW GOOD IS SAILING ON SYDNEY HARBOUR?)**



© Andrea Francolini | BSC

Sailing on Sunday

Having to get off the beach by 11.00 on a Sunday was a bit of a challenge - made a little easier for those crews who spent a couple of hours late on Saturday at the Club to get ahead of the rigging and manage a bit of a sleep-in on Sunday morning. But with coffee sustaining the effort, five skiffs were ready on time: The Mistake (Jerry Tickner), Tangalooma (Neville Turbit), Scot (David Paget), Australia IV (Terry Stewart) and Yendys (Michael van Stom) had accepted the invitation to sail in the Balmain Regatta and to score points in the Spring Series since this was to be a race within a race for the Squaddie.

Sailing on a Sunday has its challenges. For some it is a dampener on a big Saturday night and a Sunday sleep-in. For others, it is the thought of work on Monday and no rest day before to recover. Either way, most of us agree that the Squaddie sailing on a Saturday has got it right

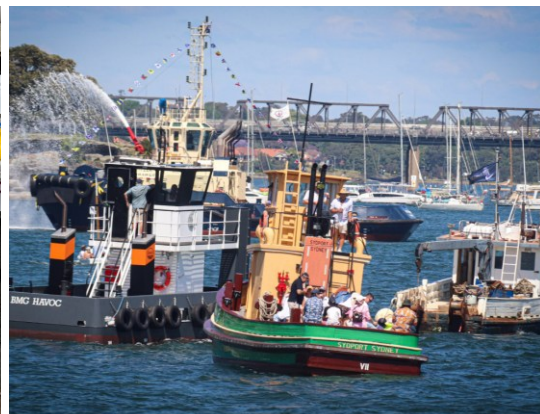
Sailing up the River

There was a time when the 18s sailed west of Dawes Point (before the Sydney Harbour Bridge). And they were certainly there in the war years when the Navy discouraged social sailing on Sydney Harbour. But there is a really good reason why sailing on Sydney Harbour (properly defined as the main Harbour east of the Bridge) was much preferred by skiff sailors. Last Sunday provided some really good evidence for that.

With the breeze officially NNW, the geography of the land mass up the River means that you can get wind from just about any direction and when it funnels out of the coves and around the land mass, it can go from practically nothing to 20 knots. If your eyes are not out of the boat, you are in big trouble. (It's no wonder that skiff sailors who learned the ropes at Balmain, Drummoyne, Lane Cove and Greenwich are in demand).

The Balmain Regatta

Every year, it seems, Campbell Reid and his merry band organise a fabulous parade of steam, sail and commercial vessels of every description on a course from Balmain and up to the Harbour and back. It's a great piece of history and a certain grandeur – and long may it continue. And then there is the sailing ... lots of yachts of every class and description turn up for the day and stay for the party. It's an annual event that just seems to keep on growing in its popularity.



Images courtesy of Balmain Sailing Club

Last to get away, there was about a 15 minute delay to the advertised starting time for the 18s when A4 and Scot were late to get away from the BSC dock. When the “gun” finally sounded, it was the Mistake first away after having fouled Yendys in pre-start manoeuvres and been forgiven. Scot also got away well, leaving A4, Yendys and Tangalooma on the chase. The breeze had backed to the NW and strengthened meaning a two-sail port hand reach to Long Nose Point where The Mistake had set up a good lead from Scot, Yendys, Tangalooma and A4 in close order. From there it was mostly a square run to the buoy (or was it a girl?) west of Goat Island. Yendys opted for a small peak head kite to cope with the oscillating breeze that ranged from very little to around 18 knots in the gusts. And in doing so made-up good ground on The Mistake.



These photos taken from Balmain Sailing Club FaceBook page



At the mark, The Mistake sailed past before rounding up and heading back to foul Yendys (again). A few choice words were of little help as the following pack arrived and took advantage of the mayhem. Of these, Scot faired best and was soon in the lead and sailing high towards Long Nose Point. Spectators remarked, as they often do, how well the mighty Scot sails on a wind even in squirrely conditions.

But it was the squirrels that soon had Scot going the wrong way allowing Yendys to take the lead which she never surrendered from then on. Squeezing up to the northern side of Cockatoo Island, Yendys rounded first and set off around the Island with scarcely a thought about a spinnaker due to the dangerous conditions with the gusts coming from everywhere.

The course was then down the eastern side of Cockatoo and back to Long Nose Point before running back to Goat Island and then back again to the finish opposite the BSC clubhouse. As luck would have it, Tangalooma succumbed to the conditions when a whirly-gig gust just after rounding Long Nose caused a gybe (of Chinese or some other nationality) that in spectacular fashion caused a nose dive and a capsized. Thanks to our terrific safety teams on the three RIBs looking after the fleet, a tow into a convenient Snails Bay was a fortunate option when you consider how few the beaches are up the River.



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AUSTRALIA'S OLDEST OPEN BOAT SAILING CLUB
Eleven historic 18-footers, coloured sails, a handicap start and a thrilling finish, every summer Saturday on Sydney Harbour since 1891.

OPENING HOURS
The Flying Bear Cafe
Seven days, 7am to 2pm, walk in
Foys Kirribilli Restaurant and Bar
Sun to Thu 12pm to 8pm
Fri and Sat 12pm to 9pm
[Venue details - Book a table](#)

ON THE HARBOUR NOW
9 kn SE, gusts 14 kn, at Fort Denison
17:20
Sea at the Heads 0.4 m from the E, tide 0.40 m.
[Harbour conditions](#)

NEXT 12 HOURS

Time	Wind	Gusts	From	Temp	Rain
6pm	8	19	S	19°	8%
9pm	2	4	WSW	17°	0%
12am	3	8	WSW	15°	0%
3am	4	8	WSW	14°	0%

Forecast for the harbour from the ECMWF 9 km model, in Sydney time.
[Harbour conditions](#)

NEXT 18-FOOTER RACE
Race 4, Spring Series Heat 4
Saturday 31 October 2026 - handicap start, 2.30pm
2 days 20 hours to go
[Handicaps and start times](#)
[Race 3 results](#)
[Racing calendar](#)

THIS MONTH AT THE CLUB
Cherub sprints
Saturday 21 November 2026
[Christmas party on the deck](#)
Saturday 19 December 2026
[Sail Back in Time, mid-season course](#)
Saturday 9 January 2027
[Everything that's on](#)

BELONG TO THE CLUB AT THE END OF CAREENING COVE
Membership is open to everyone and offers the best value of any Sydney sailing club: Sailing \$200, Club \$90, Social \$35, and Deck Membership free.
[Join or renew](#)

The North course as set for the Balmain Regatta and the new SFS website!

If you haven't yet done so, check out the SFS new revamped webpage:

<https://www.sydneyflyingsquadron.com.au/>

Thanks to SFS member (and Yendys crew) Greg McKenzie for the fantastic job.

AND

Thanks to SFS member, Neville Turbit for managing the old website for the past decade and generously giving his time to assist with the hand-over to the new guard



Photos above thanks to Barley Stewart in command of The Fergy.

In the end it was Yendys first across the line, followed by Scot, Australia IV and Mistake. On handicap, Scot had a good win by 6 minutes from The Mistake, Unfortunately, due to a mix-up in finishing times, The Mistake had been awarded first place on the day. Jerry will need to wipe the smile off his face and hand over the victory medal to David Paget and his crew. Third was Australia IV followed by Yendys, who again gets no credit for her handicap in a short race.

Following the race, and with the threat of a thunderstorm looking likely, some of the skiffs abandoned the famous hospitality of the Regatta back at the BSC and headed for home. With better weather next time, we shall be there to make up for this year.

Thanks to Campbell Reid and the BSC members for the invitation to the Balmain Regatta. We look forward to having you over for a sail at the Squaddie ... and did we mention? ... on the best part of Port Jackson that there is for sailing skiffs.



A4 and Scot being towed by the Fergy and being rigged at Balmain (Photos on this page taken by Scot crew)



.... and the return trip



Winners are grinners!



Thanks to the volunteers – we can't do this without you!!

Final results can be found in SailSys: <https://app.sailsys.com.au/club/15/profile?tab=results>

RACE 3, SPRING SERIES HEAT 3, BALMAIN REGATTA

Sunday 25 October 2026 - scratch start under [rule 26](#) at 12.25pm - also a handicap race - [Balmain Regatta North course](#)

BOAT	HANDICAP (MINS)	SKIPPER	FINISH	SAILING TIME	CORRECTED TIME	HANDICAP PLACE	SCRATCH PLACE
 Yendys	0	Michael Van Stom	13:27:47	1:02:47	1:02:47	4	1
 Scot	12	David Paget	13:30:14	1:05:14	0:53:14	1	2
 Australia IV	8	Terry Stewart	13:32:40	1:07:40	0:59:40	3	3
 The Mistake	16	Jerry Tickner	13:40:35	1:15:35	0:59:35	2	4
 Tangalooma	14	Neville Turbit	Did not finish				

Road Closures in effect this weekend ...



Get your body to the Squaddie!

SYDNEY FLYING SQUADRON LTD

Australia's oldest open boat sailing club
76 McDougall St, Kirribilli NSW 2061