

NEPTUNE ISLAND RACE, 1970.

We can sure pick our weather, or is it that the weather picks us?

WEATHER REPORT - Perfect conditions, slight S.W. change, 15-20 knots. Eleven starters, best Neptune Island Race fleet for many years. All is set for a record race with perfect conditions.

Friday night saw the eleven starters gliding around the starting line with warm conditions, slight S.E. wind, and a beautiful sunset. Spinnakers broke out at the breakwater, and 'Kiandra', 'Cedalion', and 'Caravel' led from the river, hotly pursued by the balance of the fleet.

Perfect conditions prevailed until Troubridge Light was well in sight, and then - quietly but firmly at about 2.00 - 3.00 a.m. the Westerly made its presence felt. Spinnakers were replaced by Genoas. These were replaced by working jibs, mainsails were reefed, and soon after rounding Marion Buoy at first light the wind still freshened, and storm jibs were set with deep reefed mainsails.

The cautious weather watchers noted that the wind went south and then backed to the west. We were for it! The first of the withdrawals started. 'Bindi', we later found out, headed for Port Vincent. 'Kareelah', 'Caravel', 'Julie-O' and 'Cooinda' felt that discretion was the better part of valour and surfed homeward.

At mid-day, off York Point, 'Kiandra' was leading by 4 miles from 'Cedalion', 'Cooroyba' and 'Samantha', the latter sailing a magnificent race and breathing down the necks of the leaders. 'Adele' and 'Tekin' headed for home, and on board 'Cooroyba', even though Jim Taylor kept saying the worst was over and it would soon clear up, we decided by democratic vote to call it a day.

At 4.00 p.m. 'Kiandra' was 3 miles from Althorpe Islands with 'Samantha' 6 - 8 miles astern. 'Cedalion' had already pulled out. David Judell in his own "Stephen Potter" way endeavoured to convince the 'Kiandra' boys they should carry on. However, on board 'Kiandra' they had had enough so David conceded, and with 3 'hoorays' from his

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We did receive a pasting with head winds of 40-50 knots and short nasty seas. However, no yacht received any major damage, an excellent sign of well found yachts. One incident did mar the Race. One of the yachts was believed missing through failing to report her withdrawal, and Adelaide Radio had been notified and an ariel search about to commence. Squadron Safety Officers rang through to Port Vincent in case someone had seen the yacht. Fortunately Doug Cameron had seen the yacht come in the previous day and noted her Sail No. The Squadron could have been faced with an embarrassing publicity, and yacht owners must endeavour to make every possible effort to notify if they have withdrawn.

I believe there will be a move to hold the Neptune Island Race later in the year in future.