

The Pool starts to get busy.



RSAYS 1996 OPENING DAY

Irene's Endeavour and Miss Robyn await Official Guests.



Squally Winds and Hard Aground!

Vicki J IV racing in the Port River. Even today, skippers must watch closely to see they don't run aground. (Zenon Oniszk)



Len Walter sometime Vice-Commodore of the Squadron, had *Norallie* built by B Weir in 1906, and subsequently acquired *Alexa*, the largest vessel in the racing fleet until the arrival of *Stormy Petrel* in 1922. *Norallie* passed to Tom Hardy. In later years Len and his wife continued to sail their lovely cutter *Endeavour* until they were quite old and frail. He was notable for always wearing immaculate whites, as well as for his gentle courtesy. Somewhere about 1965 he remarked that we latter day yachtsmen didn't know what true Squadron racing was like — for that we should have undergone an apprenticeship on the shifting sandbanks of the Port River before it was thoroughly dredged for the first time in the thirties. A newspaper clipping of 15 November 1920 gives a good idea of what he meant.

Extraordinary weather conditions marked the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron's first race of the season on the Port Adelaide River on Saturday afternoon. Apart from rain squalls, the wind, alternating from light to strong, blew from all points of the compass, causing the yachtsmen to exercise the utmost care and skill in handling their craft. Of the ten entries received, nine were starters, but only five completed the course, which was from the Club's sheds at Birkenhead down to No 5 beacon and back.

When the starting gun was fired, there was a light north-east breeze, against which the competitors made good headway. Rounding the bend at Cruickshank Corner a severe rainstorm and changing winds swept over the harbour. Thence to the North Arm the wind chopped in various directions from the east to the south-west, and it took the boats a considerable time to reach the Arm. After having cleared Luff Point, the breeze came from the north-east, but before Schnapper Point was passed it blew hard from the north-west. There was another lull before No 5 beacon was rounded.

On the run downstream the *Norallie* grounded three times, and *St George* (Powell and Brice), flying her new suit of sails, was capsized by a sudden change of wind when abreast of the four-mile post. The *Alexa*, which was in the leading position, had the misfortune to strike the bank hard near the north end of Torrens Island between No 6 and No 7 beacons. She remained aground for a long time, in consequence of which she had to retire from the race. *Reverie* took up the lead when *Alexa* grounded, and rounded the beacon at 4:47 pm.

On the return run *Reverie* maintained her lead. An idea of how the wind varied may be gauged from the fact that *Reverie* finished when it was north, and when the other craft finished it was east and south-east, while the homeward run was marked chiefly by west and north-west winds. Had the *Alexa* not grounded, there would, no doubt, have been an interesting finish between her and the *Reverie*.

Mr WH Porter in his motor launch *Ariadne* went to the rescue of *St George's* crew. The 14-footer was hauled ashore, and after she had been emptied of water, was towed back to her moorings by the motor launch. The *Nirvana* (H Wheaton), which was the last to finish, secured the second prize on her handicap, beating the *Weeroopa* (JE Osborne) by five minutes and the *Miranda* (LG Haselgrove) by seven minutes. [Others named were *Norallie* (TM Hardy), *Eltrym* (CS Inkster) and *Valmai* (F Haselgrove).]

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