

ODE TO THE JOYS OF CRUISING

Oh to be in Adelaide,
And up on the slip,
Hanging on the pontoon,
With my trusty ship.

Where a day cost just two dollars,
You can dream away your time,
Dodging Jimmy in the Club House,
To commit the pontoon crime.

For here in Sydney Harbor,
It's a different bloomin' scene,
Where the men who fix your boat up,
Can be tough and rude and mean.

Some day I'll come back laughing,
With me parrot and me gold,
With me tales of far off places,
When SYLPH's getting pretty old.

But I'll come a whole lot poorer,
If I stay around this town,
'Cause they looks at you and chuckles,
"Here's another Adelaide clown".

So scrape your little bottoms,
In the safety of the club,
For I can't advise to come here,
Without millions in your tub!

Written from a Sydney slip where the only padding
is in their bank - there's none on the cradle.

MURRAY SWANN


1983 SOUTHERN CROSS CUP

Early in December 1983, BACARDI, MANDRAKE and RENEGADE set off for Sydney to represent South Australia in the Hitachi Southern Cross Cup Series. The result of this competition is now old news, however I am confident that the time and effort spent by the 30 odd South Australians was well worthwhile.

The series was contested by teams representing Australia, Hong Kong, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, United Kingdom, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria. Five races were sailed, three 24 mile Olympic courses, a 180 miler, and the Sydney/Hobart Race. Single points were awarded for the short races with double points for the medium race and triple points for the long race.

The Olympic courses were sailed outside the Heads, the starting lines set about four miles offshore. They were sailed in generally light and variable airs in moderate seas. The 180 miler was selected from a number of predetermined courses shortly before the start, and competitors were advised from the Official Boat on their arrival at the Starting Line. The course selected consisted of an inside harbor start, a beat out through the Heads to a mark laid about 15 miles off the coast, then north to Bird Islet, back down the coast to Flinders Island near Wollongong, then another beat back up the coast finishing inside the Heads near Rushcutter's Bay.

BACARDI was South Australia's top point scorer. She sailed well in the two long races in conditions much more to her liking than the light airs experienced in the short races. In the medium race, on corrected time she beat some well known boats such as SZECHWAN, ONCE MORE DEAR FRIENDS and HITCHHIKER. She was also South Australia's top performer in the Sydney/Hobart Race.

RENEGADE's best performances were in the Olympic course races. She also beat some of the "hot shots", actually beating BONDI TRAM, ONCE MORE DEAR FRIENDS, INDIAN PACIFIC and EXADOR (two of the Farr 40's) over the line, and on one occasion, SHOCKWAVE was amongst those she beat on handicap.

MANDRAKE, designed to perform best in heavier conditions was frustrated by the light winds experienced during the short races. She also suffered as a result of insufficient time to properly tune the boat before the series. Her crew was also relatively inexperienced having been together for only a short time before heading off to Sydney. However, she showed promise on occasions and at the end of the 1st day of the 180 miler, she was in 3rd position. Her chances of a good result in this race were lost during the work back up the coast as the shallower draft boats "rock-hopped" their way home to minimise the effect of the set. After the first 2 days of the Sydney/Hobart, she held 10th place, but was unable to hold her position as the conditions lightened.

Despite the glimpses of promise described above, South Australia was placed ninth when the final results were calculated. Although the final team placings were disappointing, some consolation can be gained from the fact that Western Australia and Queensland were unable to field teams, and both Tasmania and Papua New Guinea had to organise locally chartered boats to make up the required numbers for their teams.

Following their return to Adelaide, I spoke with the 3 skippers, and all were in agreement that South Australia would benefit from greater local competition within the 30 to 40 ft IOR rating band. A couple of new boats are known to be on the way, and at least 2 others are contemplating the purchase of new boats which could qualify for Southern Cross Cup selection. Hopefully,

this may encourage more yachtsmen to become involved in IOR racing at this level thus generating the type of competition which will contribute to this state's success in interstate events.

Two of the owners suggested a need for longer local Olympic courses set further out to sea. Competitors could then gain more experience sailing courses less affected by the wind and tidal lifts which can be gained by tacking along the shore before taking a long leg out to the windward mark. Off the Fairway, competitors would need to rely far more on their ability to handle the wave patterns and the more subtle wind shifts. No doubt the vast majority of local yachtsmen (particularly those with smaller boats) have no wish to sail 24 milers off the Fairway, nor would most suppliers of Official Boats wish to set courses out there. Therefore, in the short term at least, they could not be contemplated as part of our normal race calendar. However, it was suggested that it may be possible to conduct special events occasionally (possible on Sundays, or other days that would not clash with club events) for those who are interested. I am sure that the experience would be invaluable for any one considering participation in series such as the Southern Cross Cup.

The 3 skippers were all adamant that it is essential that South Australia continues to be involved in this type of competition. It is obvious that it is the best gauge currently available to measure the standard of this state's IOR fleet. There is no doubt that the experience gained in Sydney will hold them in good stead locally, as they had the opportunity to witness at close hand under actual racing conditions, the latest in technology and tactics. In addition to the tremendous thrill of competing against some of the world's best, those who were lucky enough to be involved in the Southern Cross Cup Series must now be better sailors as a result of being able to race at this level.

DAVE HURFORD