

This Sporting Life

Historic Win in 6th Great Bar Race

The 6th Great Bar Race was sailed in perfect conditions on Sydney Harbour on Monday 18th December, 1989. There was a good weight of breeze at 15 knots from the NE and the harbour turned on yet another glorious day.

It made for an exciting and fast race but there was little to indicate that the event would provide an historic result that would capture the imagination of the 43 skippers and the hundreds of crew and spectators.

The winner of the "Law Book Company Sailing Trophy" was Curtis in "Xanadu", a long time campaigner in the race, who had commissioned a brand new Adams 10 for the event. It was said, in his entry, that the boat had not performed well in its shake down races as the result of the inexperience of crew and skipper. There was little evidence of any lack of expertise in either crew or skipper as Curtis went to the line a convincing winner. There is no doubt that he will be heavily handicapped in future years. Mr. Brian Crane, the National Sales Manager of the Law Book Company was kindly on hand to present the trophy.

Second place went to Gruzman in "Anthanta VI" and third to Wheelhouse in "Wunderbar".

"El Presidente" O'Keefe Q.C. made a grand entry to Store Beach via water taxi in good time to present the Bar Association pewters to the place getters. He has promised that for this year's race he will hopefully be able to arrive as the skipper of his small steamboat which he is presently in the process of refitting. We will look forward to a majestic arrival!

There was an air of expectation as to the winner of the "Chalfont Cup" for Judges and Silks. It was ultimately determined that the winner was Davidson J. of the Compensation Court of NSW Bench in "Golden Era" and that this was the first occasion, in the history of the race, that this cup or any other trophy had been won by an all judicial crew.

Post race reports indicated that the crew of O'Meally J. and Moroney J. of the Compensation Court Bench and Freeman DCJ, formerly of that Bench, put on a fine display of precision crew work that would have gladdened the hearts of America's



The all judicial crew



"El Presidente" and Des Kennedy celebrating....

Cup Veterans. There was a reliable report that Davidson J. as he surged for the line, was able to squeeze additional knots out of the boat as his crew engaged in a heezy and robust rendition of "Hail Glorious St. Patrick", which had the effect of literally lifting the boat out of the water as it flew for the line. It was thought by many that this superb effort had made them a hot favourite for the "Gruff Crawford Memorial Panache Trophy" but, alas, Wheelahan Q.C. and his committee of O'Connor and Al Willis of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, in accordance with the Deed of Gift, which confines competition for this trophy to the Junior Bar, felt that Petrie in "Following Sea", who had circled all of the course buoys on several occasions, should receive this cherished trophy.

Those on board "Freight Train", the largest boat in the race, a Freya 63 skippered by Mooney were fortunate to experience the exhilaration of a sail along the NSW coastline after the race in the excellent sailing conditions. The boat again performed exceedingly well in the race. Morris Q.C. put in a fine performance in his gaff rigged sloop "Careel".

The race, yet again, provided a wonderful day for all skippers, crew and spectators. The traditional post race celebrations on Store Beach provided a perfect finishing touch to a great day's sailing.

Thanks to O'Keefe Q.C., for being on hand to present trophies, to Wheelahan Q.C. the Officer of the Day, O'Connor for the Start Boat, Emeritis Professor Al Willis, the Official Starter and the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron for their assistance in handicapping.

Thanks also to Walsh for his brilliant design of the Official Race Pennant consisting of a white wig on a turquoise background and to my secretary, Maggie Jennings, for her dedicated assistance in the organisation of the race. □

Des Kennedy