

Interstate Challenge 1909

Thursday, 24th September, 1908 – The Sydney Morning Herald

YACHTING.

RACING PROSPECTS.

A new season has dawned, and soon the harbour will again be a delight to yachtsmen. That no yachts of importance are being built is a matter of regret, as new vessels always create fresh interests, and generally stir up the spirit of rivalry. But there is sure to be some good racing. There are sufficient yachts, and the racing spirit will be found as keen as ever.

The Sayonara Cup will probably be again competed for. The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has written to the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria offering to race on such terms as are likely to be accepted by the southern yachtsmen, and it is confidently expected that satisfactory arrangements will result. Although originally no time allowance was provided in the scheme of the new international rule (and this was the stumbling block in the former negotiations by the Prince Alfred Yacht Club), matters in this respect have been altered, and there are now embodied scales of time allowance, by which the different classes can compete together, and by which the older boats can race with the newer craft.

Wednesday, 30th September, 1908 – The Sydney Morning Herald

ROYAL SYDNEY YACHT SQUADRON.

SAYONARA CUP.

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron has received a reply to their letter to the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, related to a challenge for the Sayonara Cup.

A vital point was whether the Victorians would waive the point that the challenge should have been made last April.

This they have agreed to do, the outcome being that the "Royals" will send a challenging yacht to Hobson's Bay.

On the question of time allowance, the Victorians say they must adhere to their original contention, and the races will be sailed boat against boat, and no allowance.

Mr. Saxton is prepared to send Awanui to Port Phillip to represent the "Royals" but as an opinion is held by some that Mr. C. Lloyd Jones's Thelma would be better suited to the ruling conditions in Hobson's Bay, it has been decided to sail a series of test matches between these two yachts, the first of which will probably be sailed on the 10th prox.

Thelma will unfortunately be at a disadvantage in only having an old cut down racing mainsail, but a new Laphorne and Ratsey one is to be cabled for.

Friday, 30th October, 1908 – The Sydney Morning Herald

SAYONARA CUP.

THELMA THE CHALLENGER.

The committee of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron regard Thelma's performances in last Saturday's race as so satisfactory that they have decided without holding any further tests to nominate her as the challenger to represent this State in the coming contest for the Sayonara Cup to be held early next year in Hobson's Bay.

The wisdom of so early a decision will be questioned by the adherents of Awanui as they are of opinion that she will beat Thelma nine times out of ten "off the mark." Probably this question will be set at rest during the coming season.

Saturday, 31st October, 1908 – The Australian Star

THE SAYONARA CUP

Why Thelma Was Chosen

VICTORIANS REFUSE TO EXTEND THE TIME

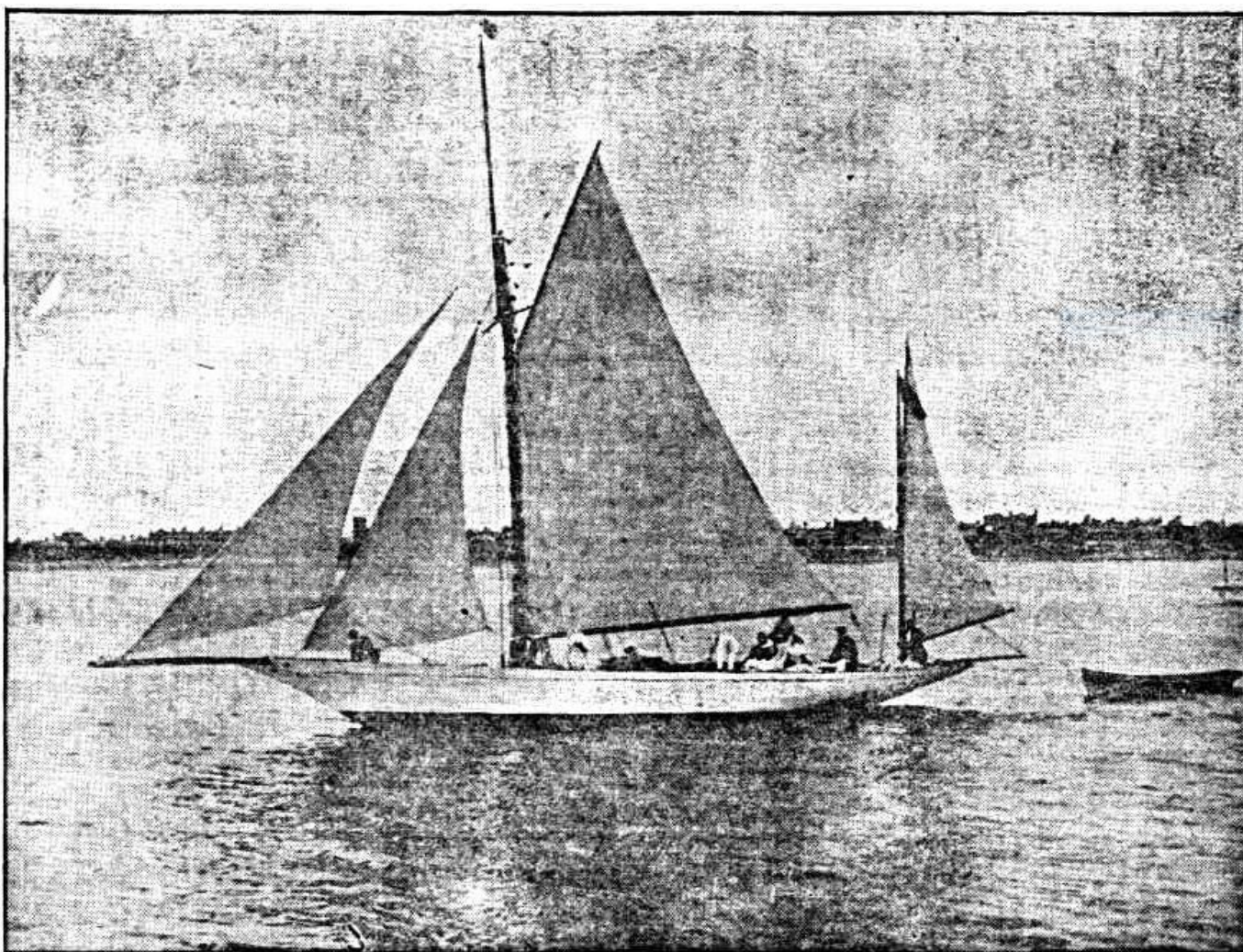
The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron Committee sprung a surprise on the aquatic community by deciding that the old yacht Thelma should, without further tests, represent New South Wales against the Victorian yacht Sayonara this season in an endeavour to recover the Sayonara Cup.

The promised series of test races between Thelma and the modern yachts was being anxiously looked forward to, as under equal conditions Mr. A. C. Saxton's flier Awanui, the fastest of the newer craft, was expected to give an excellent account of herself. She has, in fact, proved a boat of exceptional speed, and much confidence was expressed in her ability to lower the Victorian yacht's colours had she been chosen to go south. Some important things, though had to be considered by the committee in deciding upon the challenger. The Sydney yacht has to sail around to Melbourne and risk all kinds of weather, in which stability and seaworthiness are important factors, and, moreover, the races are to be sailed on Hobson's Bay, which is equal to an ocean course. Thelma undoubtedly is the best yacht we have to face these conditions, notwithstanding that she is 20 years old. Besides, she rates larger than Awanui, carries more sail, and, in a seaway will more than probably give the modern yacht a sound dressing down. When the first races for the cup were held off Sydney Heads, in 1904, Sayonara won the rubber because of her immense sail spread running before the wind on the 10-mile stretch to the finish, leaving Bona well astern. Thelma will be able to meet Sayonara under equal, if not superior, conditions in this respect, whilst at going to windward in any sort of a rough sea

she will be a hard nut for the Victorian yacht to crack. Still, with so much in her favour, even the test races between the best of the Sydney boats would have given a lot of satisfaction.

Thelma's only performance this season is to beat Awanui, with a liberal handicap — 6min. Mr. Walter Reeks, vice-commodore of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, who is one of the committee, was sought for an explanation of the hasty action of the club in nominating Thelma. He said: "The Victorians would not give us time to hold the test races and insisted upon us nominating the challenger by November 4. We sent along the necessary deposit of £50 a fortnight ago and told them we would name the Sydney representative as soon as we held the test races. The Thelma's new sails will not arrive until November and would be some few weeks afterwards before the tests were decided. The Victorians refused to extend the time, however, and because Thelma is considered the best sea-boat, and to have the best chance of winning, we nominated her at once."

Mr. A. C. Saxton, owner of the speedy Awanui, when interviewed this morning, took a very sportsmanlike view of the Royal's action. "I am quite satisfied, under the circumstances," he said, "the Royals could not have done anything else. When the Thelma gets her new sails, and has some alterations made, they consider she will be 10 minutes faster. In moderate weather, or on Sydney Harbour, it would be just a question of which was the speedier vessel, but under the rough conditions they usually get in Victorian waters I really think Thelma, being the more powerful boat, is the better one to send. You see, she carries about 11 tons of lead, against Awanui's five tons and a half, and she rates about 43, as against Awanui's 37 and she would stand a better show against the Sayonara should the weather be rough."



Victorian Yacht, Sayonara; with Lord Dudley (the Governor-General) at the Tiller. She is to defend the Sayonara Cup in a series of races with Thelma.

Friday, 12th December, 1909 – The Daily Telegraph

SAYONARA CUP.

From a telegram which appeared in yesterday's "Daily Telegraph" it is gathered that the dates of the races for the Sayonara Cup will not be altered by the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria. The dates asked for by the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron were the end of January and beginning of February, but those fixed by the gentlemen comprising the committee of the southern club were February 20, 27, and March 1. At that period of the year the breezes are, as a rule, light and fluky, and as the old-timer Thelma is essentially a hard weather boat, the date fixed by the Victorians does not enhance her chances of victory.

Thursday, 7th January, 1909 – The Melbourne Age

THE SAYONARA CUP.

A meeting of the committee of the Royal Yacht Club was held last night to consider a letter received from the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, in continuation of the correspondence which has been passing with respect to the wish of Mr. Lloyd Jones, owner of Thelma, who has challenged the holder of the Sayonara Cup to have that race sailed in Melbourne at the beginning of next month, instead of the end of February. The letter in question really conveyed an ultimatum that if the race were not pre-dated as requested the challenge would be withdrawn. During discussion it was mentioned that the race had originally been fixed for the end of February to suit the Sydney people, as it had been requested that they were getting out new sails and gear from England, which were not expected to arrive soon enough to allow of the contest being held earlier. Messrs. Robb and Newbigin, the owners of Sayonara, stated that it would put them to some inconvenience to have their boat riggered and otherwise made ready for the race at three weeks' notice. Furthermore, other yachting fixtures would be affected by the proposed change. But rather than have the race fall through, they were willing to sail against Thelma in the first week of February. The committee therefore resolved to inform the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron that their reiterated request will be acceded to.

Friday, 8th January, 1909 – The Daily Telegraph

THE SAYONARA CUP.

Third Series of Races.

The dates for sailing the inter-state yachting contest for the Sayonara Cup have now been fixed definitely, as February 5, 6, and 8, as originally asked for by the challengers, the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, on behalf of Mr. C. Lloyd-Jones, owner of the New South Wales representative yacht, Thelma. Intimation to foe effect that these dates were suitable to the Royal Victoria Yacht Club was telegraphed to the R.S.Y.S. yesterday, and today's mail should bring full particulars.

In view, therefore, of Thelma's trip to Port Phillip, preparations for her departure are already in hand, and it is expected that she will leave Sydney a week hence, on 15th inst. With ordinary weather, this will give her racing crew a chance for two or three good spins over the course prior to the first event. The owner, Mr. C. Lloyd-Jones and two friends, will sail round in the yacht and in addition a navigator and two professional hands will be aboard.

This will make the third series of races between New South Wales and Victoria for the possession of the cup. In the first, our representative, Bona, was beaten by the Victorian Sayonara in two out of three contests, while Sayonara defeated Rawhiti (N.S.W.) in Hobson's Bay in the second races.

Friday, 15th January, 1909 – The Australian Star

The yacht THELMA

SAILS FOR MELBOURNE TO-DAY

Mr. C. Lloyd Jones's yacht Thelma, which is to represent New South Wales against Victoria in the races for the Sayonara Cup, left Sydney to-day. Quite a number of yachting enthusiasts accompanied her to the Heads, where farewells were exchanged.

Those aboard the Thelma making the trip south are Mr. C. Lloyd Jones, Mr. Q. Henry, Mr. Walter Moore, and Mr. D. Dawson. Captain Feast has gone as navigator and has one professional hand with him. On the eve of the yacht's departure the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron entertained her owner at dinner. Many eulogistic speeches were made, and Mr. A. C. Saxton's sportsmanship in withdrawing his yacht Awanui to allow a presumably more suitable boat to represent the State was highly commented upon.

Mr. Jones stated that but for the time allowance having been waived he would not have made any attempt to recover the Cup. He had fitted the Thelma out to the best of his ability and had no doubt as to her giving a good account of herself in Victorian waters.

Mr. Walter Reeks is to steer the Thelma in the races, but he will not leave for some days yet. The Thelma, with favourable winds, should make the trip to the southern capital in about five or six days. The yacht cleared the Heads and bowled away south to the tune of a fine fresh easterly breeze and a calm sea.

Friday, 22nd January, 1909 – The Daily Telegraph

THELMA REACHES WILLIAMSTOWN

MELBOURNE, Thursday — The Sydney yacht Thelma, which has challenged the Sayonara as holder of the Australian yachting championship, arrived at Williamstown this afternoon. The crew report a very fair passage from Sydney.

Wednesday, 27th January, 1909 – The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser

The America Cup of Australia.

By FORWARD HAND.

THE THELMA is the second of the little vessels which have left this port for Port Phillip in quest of the Sayonara Cup, the unassuming but important trophy which has, for the last five years, found a resting place in the headquarters

of the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria.

And Mr. Jones is the second of our boatowners to undertake the comparatively big task of taking his ship over the heavy, long, miles that lie between the two ports to support the challenge of his club for this Cup and endeavouring to bring back to us the lost laurels of interstate yachting. It is the one unalterable condition of the deed of gift which regulates challenges for the Cup — which, by the way is really a bowl — that the boat nominated as challenger by her club shall proceed, on her own bottom, to the port of the club for the time being holding the Cup, and as the Victorian Club has always been the guardian of the trophy- the custodian of the ashes, as it were, of interstate yacht sailing — it became necessary for the *Thelma* to up-stick and away for southern waters. It is not a long voyage when one does it in a huge liner or a big interstater, with all the comforts of an up-to-date hotel, and with complete independence of the uncertainties of wind and weather; but it is an entirely different matter when looked at from the point of view of a little 15-tonner, which has only the breath of heaven to rely on for her motive power, and only the muscles of six pairs of arms to bring her through her difficulties. And an enjoyable lounge on the upper deck of a large, comfortable steamer, which is not sufficiently disturbed by a gale to spill the tasty soup that forms an item in her elaborate menu, is quite a different place from which to contemplate the mighty powers that old Father Ocean can exhibit when he rageth, to the dripping, jumping deck of a small weather worn yacht, riding under bare poles to a sea anchor in a wash of wicked, curling, trembling sea. On our coast there is weather to be found, and sea to be met, which can try the endurance of a big, deep sea ship.

The *Thelma* went to sea prepared to face all these difficulties and perils, but Fate has favoured her, and she has made what is certainly an excellent passage and arrived in good order at Williamstown. Notwithstanding this, however, it is to be remembered that the task she has just completed was no small undertaking. As the matter now stands, she faithfully fulfilled the first condition necessary to the carrying out of the contest. The *Thelma* is a small boat but can always be relied on to give a good account of herself, whatever comes her way.

Interstate contests for yachts date back to the adventurous voyage in 1882, of the little *Doris* from Sydney to Port Phillip. Although this little craft measured only 4½ tons, she fought her way against exceptionally heavy weather to Melbourne, which she made after twelve days of hard battling. Her company consisted of a skipper and a crew of one boy, and report hath it that he was a very fat boy — that is, when he signed on; he was certainly a very thin boy when the *Doris* arrived off Port Phillip Heads. Dr. Milford — that enthusiast of enthusiasts, who, alas! is no longer with us — was then the owner of the *Doris*, and to him, therefore, belongs the honour of being the pioneer of intercolonial racing. He sailed his boat to easy victory against a large and representative fleet of Victorians.

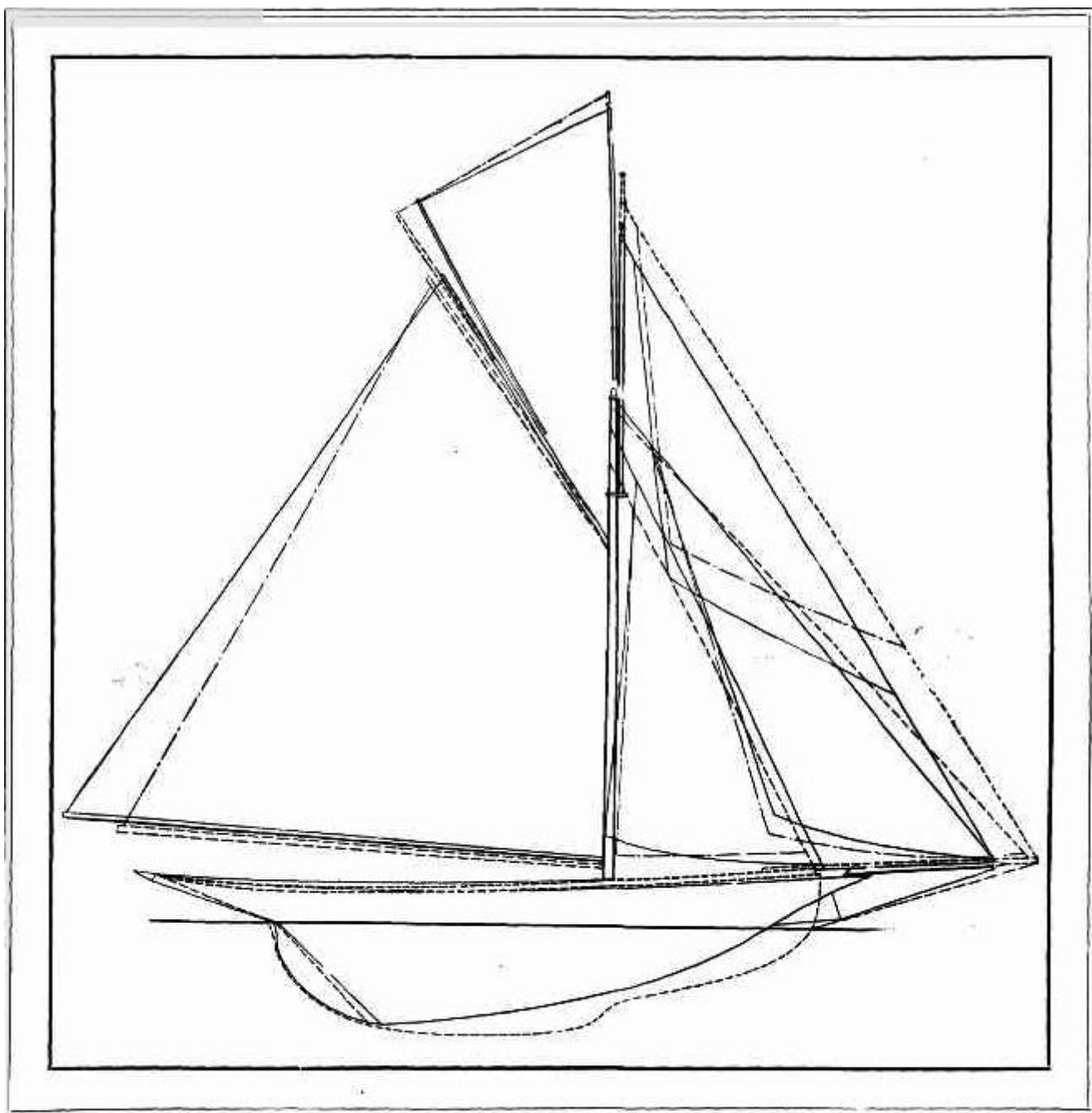
Five years later, in 1887, our southern sister made a bold attempt to retrieve her lost laurels, and found a champion in Sir W. J. Clarke, who sent his 34-tonner, *Janet*, to Port Jackson to meet the best of our yachts. Mr. A. G. Milson's *Waitangi*, 21 tons, and Sir James Fairfax's *Magic*, 28 tons, represented this colony in a series of three races. The *Waitangi* was originally a product of New Zealand, but was, to a large extent, remodelled in Sydney by Mr. Walter Reeks, who then found his first opportunity of showing that his was no 'prentice hand. The *Magic* was a remarkable boat in her day, and for many years after she had been launched from W. Langford's yard, she had been practically unbeatable; she was, therefore, looked to as the more likely boat to beat the *Janet*. The *Waitangi*, however, showed a great turn of speed, and, well-sailed by her owner, won the first two races of the series; the *Magic* was unable to beat the *Janet* in the third race, which was held for the purpose of deciding to whom second place should be awarded.

The intercolonial Regatta of 1888, given by Victoria, was too tempting a feast to be missed by Mr. Milson, whose enthusiasm for the sport was inherited from his father, the late James Milson, who, a little more than 50 years previously, had, in his boat, *Sophia*, won the race for first-class sailing boats at the first Anniversary Regatta held in Port Jackson. Accordingly, the well-known *Era*, 40 tons, which had been built by Mr. Reeks for Mr. Milson, made her way to Melbourne. She was followed a day later by the *Volunteer*, 32 tons, another of Mr. Reeks's creations; both boats made the passage in about nine days, after encountering some heavy weather. The *Miranda*, 40 tons, built for the late 'Jack' Want, of lovable memory, was unable to get through, and returned to port after a very severe experience. The Sydney boats met South Australian as well as Victorian yachts, and among the latter was the *Iduna*, which Mr. Reeks had designed for a Victorian enthusiast, and which subsequently returned to Sydney, and was sailed in many races by her owner, Mr. Wallace Cameron. The *Iduna* won the first race, but a re-sail was ordered on the ground of some informalities, and the *Era* then won easily, and took the trophy — a handsome golden anchor — provided by Sir W. J. Clarke, and the substantial prize of £400.

The late years of the eighties were days of prosperity, and big boats, like dukes in the Kingdom of Barataria, were 'two a penny,' but the clouds of bad weather were even then visible on the horizon to the cautious navigators of financial waters, and in a few years the storm broke, and so it happened that the early years of the next decade found this colony on the lee shore of bad times; the yachting market was dull and depressed, and intercolonial contests were only happy recollections of days which to many seemed a long way back in the depths of the past.

Brightness, however, broke across the gloom when, in 1904, that good sportsman, Mr. Alfred Gollin, opened up negotiations through his club, the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, with the two Sydney clubs — the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and the Prince Alfred Yacht Club — with a view to a revival of interstate contests. He was successful in this attempt, and a series of three races was appointed for a Cup presented by the two local clubs. Mr. Gollin was then the owner of the good ship *Sayonara*, and in her he made his way to Port Jackson to meet Mr. Herbert Binnie's

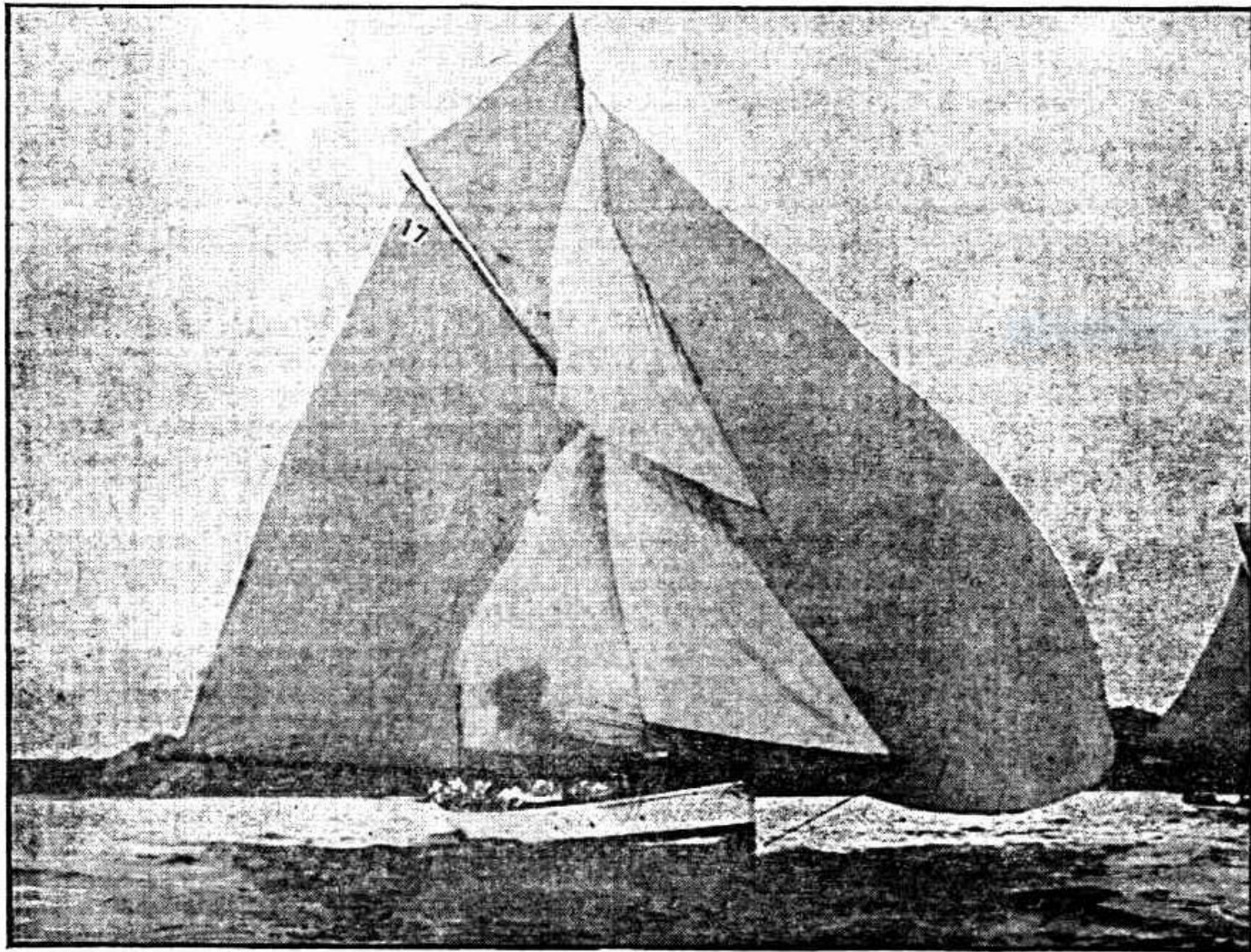
Bona, 42-rater, designed and built by Bailey, of Auckland, in 1900, which had been nominated for the defence by the squadron. Sayonara won the first race, but local hopes rose high when, in the second race, the Bona, well-sailed by Mr. S. Dempster, showed some of the speed that was in her. It was not known then what a good boat Sayonara was, but the third race proved that she was a hard boat to beat, and that the Cup was hers.



The continuous lines indicate a fore-and-aft section of the Sayonara, and the dotted lines a similar section of the Thelma.

On his return to Melbourne, Mr. Gollin donated the Cup as a perpetual challenge Cup, under the name of the Sayonara Cup, to be raced for by boats belonging to his club and the two Sydney clubs. Further proof of her capabilities was given by the Sayonara in 1907, when she met Mr. C. T. Brockhoff's Rawhiti in the races which followed the first challenge for the Cup. The Rawhiti, which is still in active racing trim, is one of the good boats sent us by Logan, of Auckland, but the reliable Sayonara was too much for her and won the first two races of the series, of three provided for by the deed of gift; the first race in a moderate south-easter, and the second in a howling north-wester. Great interest in both ports was taken in the race, and it was a disappointment to Sydney that the coveted silver bowl was not to find a new resting-place here, although the Rawhiti did not bring back in her locker the trophy which she had gone so far over the waters to win. Mr. Brockhoff had done his best to keep alive the interest in interstate contests, and, although his name has not appeared on the Cup, it will be remembered of him that he was the first to make an attempt to retrieve the first defeat suffered by this colony in intercolonial contests for yachts. The Rawhiti, which had already proved herself a good sea boat on her passage over from New Zealand, made an excellent run of seven days to Melbourne, of which four and a half only represented her actual sailing time. Her owner found some consolation,

however, for his defeat by winning the Carabine Cup, which was sailed for a few days previously to the Sayonara Cup races and provided the unusual case of three boats winning the same number of points each after sailing three races, necessitating a fourth race to decide the matter.



Thelma, Challenger for the Sayonara Cup, and whose chances in the races are greatly fancied by some prominent Victorian Yachtsmen.

In founding the Sayonara Cup, Mr. Gollin executed a deed of gift on the lines of the American document, which regulates contests for the celebrated 'America' Cup, and, provided that the Cup shall be open to challenge by the above mentioned Victorian and local clubs on the conditions laid down in the deed. These conditions may be varied by mutual agreement between the clubs interested, except that, as above stated, the challenger must sail to the waters of the club holding the Cup at the time of the challenge. The Cup itself is to remain with the club, whose, nominee, after challenge, wins it or becomes entitled to it after default on the part of the defending club. The deed also provides that challenge must be sent in before the first day of April in the year preceding the holding of any contest, and that a series of three races shall be held, in open waters free from headlands, the first of these races to be ten knots to windward or to leeward and back, the second over a triangular course of which each side shall be about seven knots, and the third, if such an event becomes necessary, over a course similar to the first. It is also provided that, failing agreement as to dates, the races shall be held in or about the month of January. All races are to be sailed under the British Yacht racing Association rules and regulations, and time allowance scales as in force in England during the English yachting season, prior to that of which the match is sailed. The maximum size of eligible yachts is stated in the deed to be 52 feet linear rating, according to the formula adopted by the British Yacht-racing Association on the eighth day of November, 1900, or some approximation to this size. Under any alteration of the linear rating rule under the present international rule of measurement, known as the metre rule, the maximum is, approximately, about 15 metres.

It is a matter for consideration whether, under conditions now existing and likely to exist, for many years to come, it would not be more conducive to the interests of the sport, and more likely to ensure a continuance of these contests in the future, if these maxims were reduced somewhat, so as to bring challenging and defending boats more within the practical politics of racing. Probably, 12 metres would be found to be a more workable limit; it would provide a vessel quite large enough to take the sea and make the passage between the two ports with a reasonable degree of safety and comfort to her crew; but not too large to be outside the ken of all but the comparatively wealthy of our yachtsmen. It

does not need the wealth of a millionaire to build a 15-metre boat, but, nevertheless, she is a sizeable craft, and costs a fairly large sum of money, in addition to which she would probably find herself the only one of her class, and too large for the racing which is likely to be provided in our waters for a good many years. So far, we have not yet discovered the Australian Lipton who is prepared to build a big boat for a single contest. It, therefore, seems likely that the reduction of the maximum size specified in the deed to one approximating that of the Sayonara would make for a continuance of these contests which have during the last five years provide such good sport. In any case, it seems desirable that the matter should at least be considered by those interested.

The Sydney representative is the longer on the waterline, but the Victorian is more drawn out, giving her a greater over-all or deck measurement fore and aft. The respective draughts stated in the table published in our Aquatic Columns are only approximations, as they, depend, of course, on the trim of the vessel.

There is a difference in favour of the Thelma of only 72 square feet in the sail areas, but the Victorian has more in her mainsail than the Sydney boat, which takes up the deficiency and a little more in her fore triangle and her top sail.

Under the metric system, the system of measurement of yacht hulls now in force in all yachting countries, other than America, the Thelma works out approximately at 12 metres, and the Sayonara at 11½ metres; and the former seems to fit the present rule better than the Sayonara; both were of course, designed without the least anticipation of this.

In size, the Thelma has the advantage of the Sayonara, but, on the reading of the deed of gift, which the Victorian club has adopted, no time allowance for this difference will be given to its representative, and the first boat over the mark twice out of the three test races will be the winner.

In the forthcoming contest, the Victorian Club generously waived the clause in the deed providing the last date for sending in a challenge for this year, and accepted the squadron's challenge, although not sent in till October 30 last. The local club was placed in some difficulty and found an embarrassment of riches in the way of challengers in the persons of Mr. Jones and Mr. A. C. Saxton, owner of the well-known Fife-designed Awanui.



Walter Reeks at the helm. The mizzen has been removed and Thelma is in racing trim.

The boat to go was the boat which was more likely to win, and here lay a hard nut to be cracked. The time for electing was very short, and only one trial between the two boats was possible. When this trial was held the Thelma, which had been out of racing commission for many years, and was almost a forgotten name in the sport, gave such a good account of herself as to make the decision of the matter one of great difficulty for the committee. Mr. Saxton, who is nothing if not a good sportsman, expressed his opinion in favour of Thelma, which, he stated, was the more likely, in his opinion, to lift the cup when the probable conditions of wind and water in Port Phillip were considered. After full consideration it was ultimately decided that Mr. Jones's boat should go. And so it has come about that the handsome

little Thelma is now in Port Phillip, with the burgee of the squadron flying aloft, in quest of the trophy which Sydney boating men think has rested far too long in the headquarters of the premier club of the sister State.

The Victorian club has again nominated Sayonara, now owned by Messrs. Robb and Newbiggin, as defender, and the good old ship is well worthy of the trust that has been reposed in her. As above stated, she has already represented her club in interstate contests on two occasions, and has, so far, won four out of the five races which have been sailed for the Cup, which fittingly bears her name. Built in 1892 for Mr. Gollin, by Mackenzie, of Adelaide, from designs by Fife, the Wizard of Fairlie, she is a beautiful and worthy example of the great art of the yacht designer, and the wonderful powers of her creator. As a pleasure boat, she has provided many happy hours for many people, and, as a racing craft, she has nobly upheld the honour of her club; whether or not she successfully defends the present attempt to win back the laurels, which five years ago she won for her club, she will be entitled to a well-earned rest from the strenuous life of a Cup defender, and to take her otium cum diquitate while even her timbers hang together.



The Thelma is a well-known boat to those who went down to the sea in racing craft in the late eighties and early nineties. She is perhaps the best boat Mr. Reeks has designed and is a fine specimen of the vessel evolved by the measurement rule of the day. She was built in Sydney for Mr. J. F. Hoare in 1889 by 'Geordie' Ellis, who put the same excellent work in her that he had previously put into the Era and Iduna. The Doris referred to above as the first intercolonial challenger was also his work. He was among us up to a few years ago but was at the latest reports in Canada teaching the young idea the gentle art of small-boat sailing, of which he was, probably, one of the best exponents we have ever had in Sydney waters. It takes an old boat to show the soundness of a builder's work, and the Thelma is an excellent example of this. Although put together so long ago, she is still, after many years of racing, as 'tight, staunch, strong, and well-fitted to meet the perils of the sea' as ever she was. She did a good deal of racing for Mr. Hoare, and later for Dr. M'Cormick. Mr. Jones bought her from the latter during last year.

The Thelma made her passage to Port Phillip under comfortable cruising rig as a yawl, and, in addition to her owner (Mr. C. Lloyd Jones), was manned by a crew of five, including two well-known amateurs and enthusiasts, Messrs. W. E. Moore and G. W. Henty.

The rest of her racing crew of 10 will follow her to Melbourne this week. The coming contest is being watched with much interest by yachtsmen in both States, and if Mr. Jones is successful in the work he has put his hand to, his reward will be all that a good sportsman can desire; if, on the other hand, Fate looks on him unkindly, and he comes back empty-handed, it will not be forgotten of him that he had the enterprise to undertake the good work of bringing back to his State the laurels of interstate yacht racing, which the Sayonara took away with her five years ago.

The Thelma cleared Sydney Heads at 12.15 a.m. on Friday, 15th instant, and came to an anchorage off Williamstown at 2.30 p.m. on Thursday last, the 21st instant. She proved herself a good little ship and made an excellent passage. Apparently, she was off Port Phillip Heads on Tuesday, four days out, but as night had come down when she arrived her owner wisely decided not to enter the heads, and accordingly put back to Flinders. She went in the next day in a

light air and made Mornington that night. Leaving next morning, she made her last port at the time stated. Her owner and crew met with a hearty reception from the Sayonara men, and the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria generously placed their sheds and lockers at Williamstown at their disposal. The following table of dimensions shows the differences in the vessels at a glance: —

	Thelma	Sayonara,
	ft	ft
Length Over All	...52.0	...57.10
Length on Waterline	42.0	39.27
Beam	10.68	...10.74
Draught	8.10	8
Rating in Metres	12	11.5
Sail area	Sq. ft	Sq. ft.
Mainsail	1004	1079
Forehead triangle	852	735
Topsail	268	257
Total	2,144	2,071



Thelma



Syonara

Saturday, 6th February, 1909 – The Evening News

Exciting Yachting Race.

FOR THE SAYONARA CUP.

THE SYDNEY BOAT WINS.

After an exciting race, Thelma, the Sydney yacht, defeated Sayonara in the first event for the Sayonara Cup (as was announced in the cricket edition of Friday's 'Evening News'). The challenger wants another win, and the cup will come back to Sydney, and enthusiasts here hope that Thelma will finish first in the second race.

There was a delay in starting the first race, because the officials were not able to make up their minds where the wind was coming from. It was necessary for them to do so, as they had to put down a rounding mark ten miles to windward from Gellibrand Light. After a delay of 15 minutes a light breeze made itself felt from S.S.E., and it blew all the afternoon; but increased in strength as the hands went round the clock.

Thelma was first over the line, a few seconds ahead of her opponent. It was soon apparent that Thelma was holding very nearly as good a wind as the Victorian boat and was at the same time getting through the water faster. But a piece of good fortune put Sayonara ahead. It was after she had made for the eastern shore of the Bay along Brighton Beach. She got an easterly puff; while Thelma missed it, and instead of being about 200 yards behind, Sayonara was about that distance ahead. Then the yachts had a hard struggle, which gave delight to those who were watching from along the Sandringham shore.

The times at the rounding mark was taken as follows: — Sayonara, 4 hours 17 minutes 20 seconds; Thelma, 4 hours 18 minutes 8 seconds.

The Victorian was 48secs to the good, but soon afterwards she lost all her advantage. She had trouble with her spinnaker. The stops had been made too strong and would not break. Thelma, though slower in getting her kites set, had no difficulty, and, while the Victorians were still worrying with their sail, the Sydney boat went ahead. And to the end Thelma was in front, crossing the finishing line 45sec ahead of her rival. From start to finish one boat was hardly ever more than 200 yards ahead of the other, and it was admitted that, on the day, the better boat won.



Aboard Thelma

Saturday, 6th February, 1909 – The Arrow

SAILING.

(By 'FREE-SHEET'.)

WITHOUT wishing to throw cold water over the little enthusiasm evinced in the present competition for the Sayonara Cup between Thelma, of Sydney, and Sayonara, of Melbourne, one cannot do otherwise than criticise, in these days of the improved and speedy type of yacht, so primitive an affair as the present contest must necessarily appear, when a twenty year-old boat like Thelma meets another old fogey of a somewhat different design like Sayonara. What can

such a contest avail whichever way the result goes? The bringing together of two obsolete boats like these two does not say much for the enterprise of the yachtsmen of either State. One could understand such a match where rivalry had been keen in the past, but to enthuse over two yachts of bye-gone days, which had never met before seems a little bit off to say the least of it. Had each State tried to outvie the other with up-to-date new boats of an equal size and of local production, what a different complexion the whole thing would have worn. Now that the Inter-State sailing carnival is over racing will be in full swing again to-day, the various clubs having a big programme of events down for decision.



Heading out to the boat



Rigging the boat

Monday, 8th February, 1909 – The Sydney Morning Herald

SAYONARA CUP.

THE SECOND RACE.

SAYONARA WINS.

FAVOURED BY A LIGHT BREEZE.

(FROM OUR SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE.)

MELBOURNE, Saturday.

The second race for the Sayonara Cup has been sailed and won by the Victorian representative. The challenger and the defender have each a win to her credit, and the fate of the much-coveted bowl still hangs in the balance. Monday's race will be the crucial test, and when that is over the matter will be at an end. The big question which has been agitating the yachting communities of the two States for several month's past will have been answered, and the work which has been in hand for so long will have been finished. The result of the two races already held seems to point to the conclusion that the weather will be the determining factor in the coming trial on which so much depends, and if deductive reasoning has any value in matters of this kind it is not difficult to form a conclusion as to what the result will be; if the nature of the wind that will prevail during the race is stated as a premiss. If there is anything to be learnt from the contests which have already taken place, Sayonara must win if the wind is light. Thelma may win if it is at all heavy. In to-day's race the defender proved beyond the shadow of a doubt that in a breeze that has little weight in it she can walk away from her opponent with ease but yesterday the Sydney boat showed that when it blows hard enough to get her lee rail just under the water, she is fast enough to beat the more modern Sayonara to the windward mark. Certainly, the actual rounding times of the first race do not show this, but, on the other hand, indicate that the defender did better work on the passage up the wind to the turning mark than the challenger. But, notwithstanding this, it is generally admitted by those who critically followed the race that the big lead which the loser picked up off the eastern shore, and the soft patch which held the winner in its grip for several minutes, made all the difference in rounding times at the buoy. Clearly on merit Thelma should have had a comfortable lead at the windward mark and should have won the race not only on the run back, but also on the beat out against the wind. While, however, it can be stated with confidence - the element of accident and misfortune being excluded - that the cup will remain in Victoria if the wind does not on Monday exhibit more life than it did to-day. There is, on the other hand, in the case of a hard breeze a factor to be considered which is yet undetermined and may possibly be sufficiently important to upset the reasoning to be drawn from yesterday's race. This factor is the behaviour of Thelma in a seaway as compared with Sayonara. So far, the two boats have met together in a fairly hard and a fairly light breeze, but in neither case has there been anything considerable in the way of a sea. The practice trials of Thelma have shown that the peculiar waves of Port Phillip do not disconcert her very much, but it may, after all, be merely a question of degree, and it may be found that Sayonara takes even more kindly to a heavy sea than her opponent. The difference between the two boats may not be much, but it may be just enough to tip the beam of the balance on the side of Victoria. This consideration seems to be the only element of uncertainty in arriving at the conclusion that if the wind blows with anything like its average strength, the silver bowl will travel northwards, and find itself a welcome guest in the headquarters of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron.



Syonara

To-day's race was over a triangular course, having equal sides of seven miles, laid down on the chart with a view to providing an equal amount of beating to windward, leading, and running. This object was hardly achieved in the race, as the wind came almost directly out of the south and gave less than a dead beat to the first rounding mark, while over the other two sides of the triangle it gave a lead. Neither boat was sufficiently before the wind to use a spinnaker. On the homeward run a start was made over the same line as was crossed in yesterday's race.



Thelma

Thelma led the defender, when the starting gun sent them off on their 21-mile journey; but Mr. Robb had placed his charge in a good position, and his windward position equalised the lead of the Sydney boat. It was a beautiful mild afternoon, and the two boats made a striking picture with their tall white sails gleaming in the sunlight. The wind was soft and light, with small heart in it. It did little more than give the boats a slight list. Sayonara, with her big topsail aloft, seemed to rejoice in the light air, and after a few minutes' sailing had clawed out well to windward of the challenger, which could not and did not try to hold the same wind. Both on the starboard tack they crept along, Thelma travelling through the water slightly faster than her opponent; but the latter, rating up to windward all the time, and widening the triangle which their courses were making. The hopes of the challenger's supporters rose as the wind slightly increased in weight, but it was a false hope, and after giving signs for a little while of settling down to a

healthy breeze, it died away again, and left the well-wishers of the Sydney boat forlorn and discouraged. A few long starboard tacks and a few short port tacks brought Sayonara, which had been sailing in her very best form, to the first turning point, which she rounded after a little more than one hour twenty-two minutes of windward work. Thelma followed her, nearly eight minutes and a half later. It was a broad reach over to the second buoy, seven miles across the bay to the western shore, and balloon foresails and big jib top-sails were the sails appropriately carried for such a journey. The wind lightened somewhat and Sayonara closed her hand tighter on victory. She led her opponent by ten minutes thirty-six seconds round the buoy, having picked up two minutes eight seconds on the trip across the bay. Both boats jibed and brought their booms over to port. Leading to the finishing mark with the wind well aft, but not sufficiently so to allow of spinnakers, Sayonara crossed the line with a lead of 9 minutes 57 seconds, having negotiated the whole course of 21 miles in three hours eleven minutes and a half. Thelma saved a little more than half a minute over the last side of the triangle, but this was due to the fact that she was bringing up a better breeze with her. She finished in the wind she had been looking for all the afternoon, but the race was over, and it had come too late. As compared with yesterday's contest to-day's race was uninteresting. There was little doubt what the result would be when the two boats crossed the line at the start, unless the wind strengthened as the afternoon wore on; but to hope of this occurring was a false one, and finally died out before the first turning mark had been reached. Sayonara sailed a great race, and won as she deserved to do, while Thelma probably did as good work as she has ever done in a breeze which, during nearly the whole race, was little more than a zephyr.



Thelma and Sayonara

The finish presented an animated scene. The line was surrounded by boats of all kinds and all sizes, and the centre of this gathering was the two champions of their States. The reception given to Thelma, as she crossed the line was a solace to the feelings of her skipper and crew, and the hearty cheers that greeted her made it perfectly clear that the men who sail boats in Melbourne waters are the best of sportsmen. The old boat had done her best, and was beaten, and these enthusiasts of the water recognised it, and gave her the credit that was due to her.

On Monday the third race will be sailed over a course 10 miles to windward and back and it will then be seen if Mr. Lloyd Jones's enterprise in taking his boat so far over the waters in search of the lost laurels of interstate yacht-racing will be rewarded in the way he deserves. If the fates are not with him, he will nevertheless have done much for the sport, and will have renewed interest in those contests, which are not by any means without their value in the matter of interstate relationship.

MR. SAXTONS OPINION.

R.S.Y.S. COMMITTEE JUSTIFIED.

"The result of the first two races fully justifies the action of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's committee in choosing Thelma as the boat to represent New South Wales," said Mr. Saxton, owner of Awanui, to-day. "So far," he continued, "she has done remarkably well." "How would Awanui have shaped in the two races that have been decided?" was asked Mr. Saxton. "Well," he replied, "the possession of the cup would have been determined by this,

because my boat would have been defeated on both occasions. On Friday we could not have hoped to have done as well as Sayonara, while on Saturday, though we might have done the journey some minutes faster than Thelma, we could not have got within five or six minutes of the Victorian boat's time."

Tuesday, 9th February, 1909 – The Melbourne Age

THE SAYONARA CUP.

RETAINED BY VICTORIA

A DECIDING CONTEST.

Sayonara wins by 56 seconds

A most exciting race.

BY SAILLOCKER.

For the third time Sayonara has proved herself the champion yacht in Australian waters. To do this she has sailed, in races, close on 200 miles, and has won six times out of eight starts. Her triumphant career began in 1904, when her then owner, Mr. A. Gollin, sailed her round to Sydney and won the cup presented by the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and the Prince Alfred Yacht Club. This cup he presented as a perpetual challenge cup between boats on the register of those two clubs and on that of the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria. Since then, Sayonara has been twice selected to defend Victoria's supremacy in Australian yachting — the first time, when Mr. C. Brockhoff brought round Rawhiti in 1907, and had to sail home unsuccessful, having been defeated in the first two heats; and the second in the races that are just over, when Mr. Lloyd Jones's Thelma has all but' been successful in her quest. It would be difficult for the oldest yachtsman in Victorian waters to recall two more exciting races than the neck for neck battles of Friday and yesterday. Thelma's owner and her skipper and designer, Mr. W. Reeks, since their arrival, have made no secret that she needed a stiff breeze to show her quality, but that with light airs Sayonara, bar accidents, would not be beaten. The three races that have taken place have shown this to be true, but Sayonara, in addition, has undoubtedly proved that, though light airs suit her best, in a stiff breeze there is no boat of anything near her class than can claim to be her superior.



Walter Reeks at the helm

Yesterday she had the hardest fight she has in these inter-State contests had to undertake, and it is a big feather in the cap of her designer, Mr. W. Fife, of Finlee (apart altogether from skipper and crew), that he should have produced a boat capable of such speed in light weather, and at the same time able to more than uphold her own against a boat of such remarkable pace and weathery qualities as the New South Wales challenger. Being unused to boats of her type amongst their flyers, many Victorian yachtsmen underrated her, and have also, on the other hand, with a not too accurate recollection of the past, come to think that Sayonara's success was a foregone conclusion. That she is a

phenomenal boat in many respects has always been recognised, and especially by her New South Wales opponents. That Thelma has been nearer beating her than any other of her inter-State opponents must be that sweet drop of comfort that takes bitterness from the cup defeat. '

THE RACE.

A flat calm in the early morning by 8 o'clock had changed to a gusty northerly, that as the morning wore on gathered strength and viciousness. But a gentle change came up from the south-west about 10.30, and the probable result of the race looked all in favour of Victoria. As the sun rose higher the wind hardened, till by midday, a good stiff breeze was blowing. Both crews were aboard early, and shortly before 1 o'clock Sayonara left her moorings with full mainsail, No. 2 jib and foresail set, and with her topmast on end. Beating out to the Gellibrand pile light, the wind freshened, and her mainsail began to assume its corrugated outline. There was tight strip a bit beyond half-way towards the leech, followed by a hollow that extended right out to the aftermost cloth.

To remedy this the old-fashioned method, of wetting the slack part was adopted, with a small amount of success, but the primary cause being the buckling of the gaff with any extra weight of wind it was impossible to cure the defect entirely. Thelma did not leave her moorings till half an hour later, and before doing so discovered that the yoke of the topmast was showing signs of weakness, so instead of setting a jib-headed topsail she housed her topmast. As the wind was hardening, she also put a reef in her foresail. Otherwise, she was rigged like the Sayonara. When the preparatory gun fired at 1.55 p.m. a stiff breeze was blowing almost due south, and a nasty lumpy sea had already got up, so that both boats were taking aboard a good deal both of spray and solid water as they manoeuvred for position. The starting gun saw Thelma close on the line, which she crossed on the starboard tack at 2 hours 0 min. 15 sec. Sayonara, as she approached, a short distance astern, got under the lee of the pile light and tossed a few seconds, her starting time being 2 hours 1 min. 3 sec. She, too, was on the starboard tack, but very shortly afterwards threw about on to the port and stood out to the westward. Whilst on this tack a heavy breaking sea struck her and unshipped the fore hatch. Its two mates, following, broke on board, and sent buckets full of green water below. It took her some little time to repair the damage, and then she went about again on the starboard kick, and shortly afterwards crossed Thelma's bows, the latter having previously followed Sayonara's lead. There was a nasty sea running, and with the freshening breeze Thelma's and Sayonara's crews were both finding the passage a wet one. Thelma's long bowsprit time after time disappeared under water, but this did not seem to make any very great difference to her pace, the weight of wind driving her through it. The waves being short and steep had not much body at the top of them. After holding on to the westward for about a mile, Thelma put about and followed Sayonara astern and to weather.

As the breeze continued to freshen, Sayonara's mainsail became worse and worse, and at times only the forward half of it was drawing, the rest flapping about like a bag. The two boats kept hard at it, and as the breeze gradually worked round to the west, each was able to hold a more direct course in the wake of the Childers, that had gone ahead to lay the turning buoy. The further they went the more westerly it blew. As the mark was approached the breeze eased up noticeably, and directly it did so Sayonara shot ahead of Thelma, who during the puffs had been holding as good, if not better, a wind, besides getting through the wafer faster. This change and slackening was Sayonara's opportunity, and her skipper made the most of it. When it was fresh, he had had to ease his main sheet, and with the set it had was practically working with a leg of mutton sail, but in the lighter weather, he could safely haul in his sheet. Thus, they raced to the buoy, which Sayonara rounded at 3 hours 35 min 27sec. Thelma was 1 min. 5 sec. later. rounding at 3 hours 36 min. 32 sec. Sayonara, immediately on rounding, set her balloon foresail — the wind being too much on the quarter to permit of a spinnaker being carried - then her jack yard topsail, over which she had some difficulty owing to the halyards getting off the sheave. Next, out went her big jib topsail, and she raced along at her fastest. Thelma, meantime, had got her topmast on end and a balloon foresail set, but was some while in getting her small jack yarder and big jib topsail set. Sayonara then tried her spinnaker, but the wind was not far enough aft. After running about a third of the way home, however, the wind shifted more astern, and both boats set their spinnakers, and came tearing down before the wind. On the run home Thelma improved her position, but could not get up to the defender who, getting her gun at 4 hours 47 min. 7 sec., won a most exciting and fast race by 57 sec., Thelma's time being 4 hours 48 min. 3 sec.

The Sayonara Cup will thus remain in the keeping of the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, and to the club's walls will be added another trophy, Messrs. Robb and Newbiggin's racing flag that Sayonara has been carrying at her truck during these races. It is a light blue flag, with white diagonal spear head across it, Mr. Jones's being dark blue with a crimson waratah. To yachtsmen and the public alike these races have been attractive and exciting, and the close finishes in two of the races have only served to make the New South Welshmen even yet more determined to take the Cup as soon as possible back to Sydney and make us go there to get it. Though defeated, Thelma, her owner, skipper and crew are anything but disgraced, and Mr. Walter Reeks is particularly to be congratulated on having got the most out of his boat under each and all of the varying conditions. Though Mr. Robb lost the first race, he amply made up on Saturday and yesterday for any mistakes his most captious critics may have credited him with. The mere fact of having won three inter-state contests at the tiller of the same boat is a performance any man might be proud of.

Wednesday, 10th February, 1909 – The Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser
SAYONARA CUP RACES.

BY FOR'ARD HAND — SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE 'SYDNEY MAIL.'

The yachting men of Sydney and Melbourne have been waiting for many months past for the important contest that recently took place on the waters of Port Phillip, and interest in the event has been increasing as the date for the first race has been drawing closer.

To the man who takes his pleasure on the sea, who regards a boat as if she were a live thing, instead of an assemblage of wood and metal, who is able to drink in the joy of a well-fought race, these interstate contests are the big things of his beloved recreation and provide him with a broader field in which to pursue his glorious sport. Surely, this desire to go forth and engage in battle even though it be the battle of sport, for the credit of his country or his State, cannot be without its value in national character, implying as it does a feeling of patriotism for his fatherland, and a willingness to do much when the eyes of his countrymen are upon him, and they have need of him. True it is, that these contests now under notice are not of an international character, and that the subdivisions of the several states constituting Australia are mere geographical or political accidents, but the same spirit is there, the same spirit which may some day be called on when something more serious than sport is before this land of ours, when the question of national existence is the one to be determined. If a man's enthusiasm for a sport is sufficient to lead him to take the sea in a small yacht, and cover the many long and hazardous miles that lie between Sydney and Melbourne in order to take part in a race for a cup which is of small intrinsic value, and which he will not himself receive, even if he is successful in his quest, if there is the enterprise and pluck in him to do this, will there be any need to call him a second time when a national enemy is knocking at the door, and demanding an entrance? The day may, perhaps, be far ahead when the necessity for such a call arises, but it is on the perpetuation of that spirit which exhibits itself in this inter state warfare for yachting honours, which asks nothing more than the laurels of honour as the reward of success that the future of our land must rely if that day ever does arrive. And, perhaps, this is the reason why all contests in sports, whether of an international or interstate character, are matters which create so big an interest not only in those incidentally concerned in the particular recreation involved, but in the people generally, whose representatives the combatants are. The analogy between the 'America' Cup and the Sayonara Cup is a clear one; the differences between the two are only differences of degree, not of principle. One is a bigger and more expensive thing than the other, but the big underlying cause is the same in each; the *raison d'être* of both is the desire to win supremacy for the fatherland, which is the vital force of a nation and the life-blood of a people.

The history of the Sayonara Cup has already been told in these columns, and the growth of the goodly tree has already been traced from the small seed, planted more than a quarter of a century ago by Dr. Milford, than whom no better lover of a boat ever existed.



Thelma

This attempt which Mr. C. Lloyd-Jones, with the co-operation of Mr. Walter Reeks, made to win back the laurels which passed from our keeping a little more than five years ago, is the second that has been made since the Sayonara beat the Sydney representative, and took back with her to Melbourne the cup which now fittingly bears her name. To Mr. C. T. Brockhoff lies the honour of having made the first attempt in his fine ship Rawhiti.

The contest was the result of a challenge sent by the Royal Sydney Yacht Club in November last to the present custodians of the cup, the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, a challenge which that club was not slow in taking up, with the good ship Sayonara, who is now figuring for the third time in an interstate contest. The Thelma, the challenger nominated, was considered by the Sydney Club the more likely of the two boats available to it for that purpose to be successful in the undertaking when all the conditions of wind and water expected to obtain were taken into consideration. Mr. Lloyd-Jones carried out the preliminary requirement of the Deed of Gift regulating contests for the Cup by making the passage from Sydney to Melbourne in seamanlike fashion in the remarkably short time of five days. Two of the members of his amateur crew accompanied him, these being Messrs. W. G. Moore and G. Henty, and also his two paid hands. J. Evans and J. Mulgannon, and a navigator. As soon as she reached Melbourne the Thelma was put under a course of preparation for the business in hand, and, as the result of the enthusiasm and zeal of Evans, assisted in his good work by Mulgannon, she was fit and ready for the coming fight, when her skipper, Mr. Reeks, and the remainder of her amateur crew, including Mr. Lloyd-Jones, arrived in Melbourne on last Monday week. Her full company in the races which have already taken place were Mr. Reeks, at the tiller, Messrs. Lloyd-Jones, Moore, Ross, Creagh, Muston, Henty, Meyer, and Dawson and J. Evans and an assistant. The former of the two professionals is a whole ship's crew in himself, a man possessed with a single thought for many weeks past to do all that lies within him to help the little ship he knows so well to prove herself capable of the big undertaking which is now before her. In his assistant Evans he has an intelligent and capable hand, to whom a trip to the head of the topmast or the end of the gaff is a pleasant interlude.



Thelma's crew

Hard work was the standing order for each day, and a practice sail every afternoon served to settle the crew down to their work. Each day's sail provided something fresh in the way of information and accustomed the ship and her company to the peculiar wave formation to be found in Port Phillip. The short, steep, wedge-like sea which is characteristic of the bay in days of much wind was studied in its native haunt, as it were, and was found to be less

formidable than it really appeared. The *Thelma* seemed but little disturbed by what she met in the way of seas, which appeared to stop her to a comparatively small extent and did no more than thoroughly soak the crew. Thursday last was a day of rest for the ship and her crew, who needed some change from the hard work of the three previous days. Friday, the long-expected day, broke fine and clear, with but little sign of the good, hard breeze which the Sydney representatives were asking for, and the *Thelma* left her moorings with the prospect of meeting a light weather boat in a zephyr-like breeze. All arrangements for the series of three races had been made by the defending club, and all the necessary officials had been appointed. In accordance with the conditions of the Deed of Gift, the first heat was from a starting line ten knots to a turning mark and back across the finishing line, the turning mark to be left on the starboard hand. The starting and finishing line was between a flagstaff on the Gellibrand Light and a staff on a mark boat, moored to the eastward. When 2 o'clock, the time appointed for the start, arrived, the rear commodore of the defending club, Mr. C. Hack, who was the officer in charge of the day, was faced by a difficult problem. His duty was to go ahead and lay a mark 10 miles dead to windward or to leeward of the Gellibrand Light, but to do this presupposed that he would know where the wind was coming from. But neither he, nor any other man, knew at that moment in what quarter sat the breeze, and so he decided to give it a quarter of an hour to make up its vacillating mind. Within this time the difficulty disappeared, and the wind settled down to a moderate south-easter. *Thelma* led the defender over the line a few seconds after the starting gun went, but there was not very much to choose between the two boats in this respect. Both stood over on the port tack for about a quarter of an hour when the Victorian representative went round, followed almost immediately by the challenger. The behaviour of the two boats could then be judged, and it was clear that the *Thelma*, with her lee rail nicely down to the water, and the white foam bubbling under her lee bow was getting through the water much faster than her opponent, which was holding a better wind, but gradually dropping back. As the eastern side of the bay was approached, the wind drew more ahead of the boats, which were broken off in their courses. Round again on the port stretch, *Sayonara* picked up a stray draft from the east, and lay along the shore, while *Thelma*, which was further out from the shore, after being suddenly laid down hard, and then struck back by a small cyclonic puff, ran into a patch of absolute windlessness, in which she hung for some minutes. The net result of these happenings to the two boats was that the Sydney representative, instead of being ahead by about two minutes or more, found herself approximately the same space of time astern of her opponent. Then the challenger settled down to her work of again catching the *Sayonara*. A magnificent race ensued; tack for tack they went, hard at it, the *Thelma* slowly but surely catching the Victorian all the time. When they approached the windward mark, there was but a small distance between them, and, at the moment of actual rounding, the *Sayonara* had only about 45 seconds in hand.

Clearly, the Sydney boat had proved herself the better boat on the beat to windward, and she would have rounded with a comfortable lead if she had not lost so much time in the patch of calm above referred to, and her opponent had not gained so much when the breeze freed and allowed her to lie up along the eastern shore. The *Thelma* hung slightly as she rounded, and then, bearing hard away, sped down the wind after the defender, which was having lots of trouble with her spinnaker. This sail was soon up, and, drawing on the challenger, and dragging her along with the speed of a steamboat. Jib topsail and balloon foresail were set on her to catch any stray puffs which escaped her mainsail and spinnaker, which spread like two white wings, on either side of her. Before a third of the journey hack had been negotiated, the defender had been passed, and was being dropped astern, and, for the second time in the race, the challenger was ahead. *Sayonara's* spinnaker was making itself most objectionable all this time, and she was about half-way home before it made up its mind to get down to work. When it once did so, it seemed that she almost held the leader, but by that time the race was over, unless some accident overtook the Sydney boat. As this did not happen, she crossed the finishing line at 6 hours 26 minutes, the winner of the first race by a margin of 46 seconds. Her finishing time showed that she had taken 8 hours 26 minutes to get over the 20-mile course, one-half of which represented windward work.

The second race took place on Saturday last, and was over a triangle of seven knots a side, from the starting line above referred to, thence round a mark off the eastern (Sandringham) shore, thence round a mark off the western (Werribee) shore, and thence back across the finishing line, all turning marks to be left on the starboard hand. This course was intended by the Deed of Gift to provide an equal amount of windward work, leading and running down the wind, but, in the southerly breeze, which blew in a soft and lady-like fashion during the race, the work to the first mark was by no means a dead heat, and the third side of the triangle provided, in place of the intended run home, the same form of sailing that obtained along the second side. The supporters of the Sydney boat called for a breeze like that of the preceding day, or even something a little harder, but the Fates were against New South Wales, and the race was started in a soft, feathery zephyr from the south, which was hardly sufficient to give the boats a list. At times, the hopes of *Thelma's* company rose as the breeze appeared to make, but they were but false hopes, and the afternoon wore on without any real change in the wind until the race had been finished, when it puffed up into a smart breeze, which would have suited the challenger nicely. It came about four hours too late. At the start, *Thelma* led her opponent over the line, but the latter had a good windward berth, which equalised matters. The result of the race was foreshadowed within the first quarter of an hour. The *Sayonara*, with her big topsail aloft, seemed to revel in the light air, and at once began to show her superiority over her vanquisher of the previous day. As every mile was covered the defender drew further away to windward, the angle between the courses which the two boats were making gradually opening out all

the time.

The Thelma was going as fast through the water, or at times perhaps a little faster, as the wind occasionally showed a little more heart, but she was a beaten boat all the way. As compared with the race of the previous day, the contest was an uninteresting one, and the only way that it could be improved from a spectacular point of view was by something extraordinary taking place in the matter of weather. The challenger never showed at any time the life that is in her when there is anything like weight in the wind. She was dull and listless, and quite unlike her bright self of the previous day. At the first rounding mark, after seven miles of the total journey had been negotiated, the defender was 8 minutes 26 seconds ahead, and the second race of the series was safely in her grasp. It was a broad reach across the bay to the second mark on the western shore, and both boats utilised their balloon jibs and jib topsails. This part of the journey only served to add another 2 minutes 10 seconds to Sayonara's lead, she rounding with a total lead of 10m 36s. Both boats jibed and moved their booms over to port, but the wind was not sufficiently far enough aft for them to get their spinnakers aloft. The only relative change in the positions of the two boats was that, under the influence of a freshening breeze, the challenger wiped about 40 seconds off the big debit balance appearing against her. The winner crossed the line, and took her gun at 5h 11m 31s, showing a little less than 3 hours 11½ minutes for the 21 miles of working and leading. So finished a race which was never in doubt from the start, a race which belonged to the defender before the starting gun was fired. Every praise must be given to Mr. Robb, who sailed her well, and deserved his win. No doubt he got the wind that suited him, but he made the most of it, which is all the best of skippers can do. On the other hand, the Sydney representative was sailed by Mr. Reeks, perhaps as well as she has ever been in her life on so light a day, and though she was beaten she was not disgraced. A noticeable feature of the race was the cordial reception she received as she crossed the finishing line. If she had been a winner she could not have been greeted with heartier cheers from the many hundreds of people gathered about the line in all sorts and conditions of craft. No clearer proof of the sportsmanlike instincts of the men who sail upon the waters of Port Phillip could have been given than those open-hearted cheers and those encouraging wishes for 'better luck next time,' which helped to soften the disappointment of the supporters of the Sydney boat, which, like many another good boat, had been vanquished by the redoubtable Sayonara. Each representative having one race to her credit, a third and decisive heat became necessary. This took place on Monday. Thelma led her opponent over the line, but in this case by a bigger margin. As they proceeded on their course the wind gradually increased in strength, until it was blowing with sufficient weight to lay the lee rail of the Sydney boat down in the water. Sayonara turned the mark just 1 minute 5 seconds ahead of Thelma in a breeze which was falling lighter. Neither boat was able to carry a spinnaker for the first half of the homeward course, clearly showing that as far as that part of the course was concerned the mark was not dead to windward as provided for by the deed, but as they entered on the second half of the journey northward they were able to send their big spinnakers aloft, and as they drew nearer the finishing line they were able to carry them well aft. When the line was actually reached the wind was dead astern, or even, slightly on the starboard quarter, and both boats were running somewhat 'shy.'

The challenger made up some little part of her lost time, and saved about 9 seconds in the return journey, finishing 56 seconds after her redoubtable opponent, which crossed the line at 4h 48m 3s. This is no long time for a journey of 20 miles, of which one-half represented windward work, and by this narrow margin of 1 minute the cup was lost by New South Wales. The Sayonara thoroughly earned her victory, and the challenger put up a splendid race.

Friday, 12th February, 1909 – The Australian Star

MR. WALTER REEKS RETURNS.

The Thelma's Defeat.

Only by the barest margin.

Mr. Walter Reeks, the designer and skipper of the Sydney yacht Thelma, which was beaten in the Sayonara Cup contests at Melbourne recently by Sayonara, returned to Sydney this morning. When seen by a 'Star' reporter he said, "Thelma did everything she was asked. She never sailed better, and I have no fault to find with her at all. She did not make a single mistake, and as for the crew they were absolutely without fault and worked like one man."

"Sayonara? She is the most wonderful boat for her size I have ever seen. But if you look at the nett result of the two races which were sailed in good breezes — that is, the first and last — you will find that we were beaten by the barest of margins. We sailed 40 miles in those two contests 20 miles to windward and back, and as we won the first by 45sec., and were beaten by 56sec. In the final race, Sayonara was left with a margin to her credit of only 11sec. for the distance.

"The second race was sailed in a very light breeze indeed, and we had no chance with Sayonara, whose sails did not set too well in the first event but were all right afterwards. In the final race we were racing neck-and-neck all the way. We led twice and Sayonara did the same. It was anybody's race from start to finish, as we were less than a quarter of a mile apart all the time — it was the race of the century."

Would Awanui have a chance with Sayonara? Well, as you know, Mr. Saxton has offered to take Sayonara and defeat Awanui with Mr. Robb at the helm. I feel certain Mr. Saxton would win although Sayonara would have to allow Awanui nearly 9min.

Mr. Saxton by the way, says Awanui could not have done as well as Thelma against Sayonara.

"How do Thelma and Sayonara compare? Well, in the underbody the boats are very much alike, but on the topsides and bow sections Sayonara is vastly superior to Thelma. Of course, Thelma is 20 years old, but she surprised everybody.

"What about another Challenge? Now, I am sure the Sydney yachtsmen are not going to sit down under their defeat. You'll find that the licking has made them keener on securing the cup. No! I don't think the next challenger will be Sydney designed, at least, not as far as I am concerned.

I've spent about five months getting the Thelma into trim, and the call on my time is too great."

"Satisfied with the racing at Melbourne? Yes. We had an absolutely fair go a very fine sporting event, and we are all perfectly satisfied. We were beaten by a very small margin by a better boat."

Friday, 19th February, 1909 – The Daily Telegraph

SAYONARA CUP.

MELDOURNE, Thursday. — Whilst Thelma was recently in Port Phillip, advantage was taken. of the presence of several leading New South Wales yachtsmen in Melbourne, for holding an informal meeting with some of the better-known Victorians interested in the sport, to discuss the desirability of limiting the size of boats eligible to compete in future contests for the Sayonara Cup to 12 metres.

Under the original deed of gift, the size was limited to a yacht of 52 linear ruling. This, under the present system of measurement, is equivalent to 15 metres. Following on this meeting, a joint letter was forwarded to the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria from the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and Prince Alfred Yacht Club, stating that at a meeting of representatives of those two clubs it was decided to recommend that the maximum size of yachts eligible to compete under the deed of gift be reduced from 52 linear rating, or its equivalent rule, as stated in the deed to 12 metres, under such rule, or its equivalent under any future rule. The flag-officers for the time being of these clubs are the trustees of the deed of gift and such alterations as are by the deed itself permitted, must be made with their unanimous consent. To-night the Victorian representatives sought the opinion of members of their club. After discussion, it was decided that the suggestion of the Sydney Clubs be adopted for a period of three years, that is to say, the alteration should not apply to any race held after March 31, 1912, and that at the expiration of that period the original conditions of the deed shall be reverted to. Should the Sydney Clubs agree to this proposal it will give Sydney men a chance of coming over during the next three seasons with a boat somewhat larger than the Sayonara, whilst Victorians can defend with a boat of the same class.

At the expiration of three years, however, should any challenger or defender desire to compete with a boat up to the limit of 15 metres, he will be entitled to do so.

Wednesday, 24th February, 1909 – The Sydney Morning Herald

SAYONARA CUP.

WELCOME HOME TO THELMA'S CREW.

At the clubhouse Carabella on Friday evening the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron entertained Thelma's crew at dinner in recognition of the splendid work they had done in equipping and in sailing the Sayonara Cup challenger to Melbourne in the endeavour to wrest the coveted cup from the Victorian yachtsmen. There was a large attendance, some 60 sitting down. Mr. C. P. Bartholomew proposed the owner skipper and crew of Thelma. Mr. Saxton in supporting the toast gave a short account of the race from a spectator's point of view.

Mr. C. Lloyd Jones (Thelma's owner) thanked the members for their flattering reception and said nothing had been left undone in their endeavour to lift the cup. Mr. Walter Reeks (Thelma's skipper) gave the company a concise account of how the race was won and lost. Mr. W. J. Creagh replied for the crew. An interesting story of the voyage down to Port Phillip was given by Mr. C. Henty.

Saturday, 27th February, 1909 – The Daily Telegraph

RETURN OF THE YACHT THELMA.

BUFFETED BY SQUALLS.

"MAN OVERBOARD."

The Sydney-owned yacht Thelma, which went to Melbourne to compete against the Sayonara in Hobson's Bay for the Sayonara Cup, returned to Sydney yesterday afternoon, and took up moorings in Mosman's Bay.

The yacht was brought round by Captain A. Scott, who had with him as sailing master, Mr. J. Cheel. The crew comprised five hands all-told. The seagoing capabilities of the yacht were severely tested during heavy weather on the run round, but she came through the trying ordeal in capital style and proved herself a splendid sea boat.

The Thelma had to seek shelter in Oberon Bay, near Wilson's Promontory, owing to adverse weather, and while proceeding to the anchorage there an exciting incident occurred. The yacht was howling along before a fresh breeze, when suddenly the cry of "Man overboard" was raised. One of the hands (R. Henley), who was working forward at the foresail sheets, was knocked overboard. Luckily, he managed to grab the jib sheet, which was hanging to leeward, and hung on until the yacht was rounded to, when he was hauled on board none the worse for his immersion. The yacht started from Queenscliff on the 15th instant at noon, with a fresh south-westerly wind and nasty sea. That night the

conditions became so bad that the vessel was hove-to, and she remained so until daylight next day. The wind then hauled to south-east and east and forced the yacht into Oberon Bay for shelter. She remained there four days. She resumed her voyage on Saturday last, and next day rounded Wilson's Promontory, the wind having shifted to the westward. Later the wind became light and variable and continued so up to Cape Everard. On rounding this point, a westerly squall struck the yacht. It was short and severe, but the yacht came through it unharmed. Subsequently the vessel bowled along merrily with a westerly breeze to Gabo Island. She rounded the Island at midnight on Wednesday, and shortly after another squall of hurricane force burst on the little vessel. Its approach was noticed, and the vessel being snugged down weathered it out safely. There was a nasty sea with the squall, and the yacht pitched about a good deal. The wind afterwards came away from south-west and south, and gave the yacht a slant along the coast, the Heads being reached at 3.30 p.m. yesterday.

John Maclurcan

June 2023



Thelma hooning