

Flying Fifteen

FLYING Fifteen class racing has come a long way since the late Uffa Fox introduced this fine two-man keel design back in 1948. While the English fleet has always been strong numerically there has been little interest, at least up until this year, to hold an international Flying Fifteen class series.

Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron members, headed by energetic official Alan Brooke, showed real initiative towards future world championships, when they invited the English champion, James Flower, and the New Zealand champion, Roger Craddock, to contest the seven heat series for the Coweslip trophy donated by the Duke of Edinburgh in honour of Uffa, who sailed with the Duke on board his Flying Fifteen, Coweslip.

The series really tested the skills and tactics of the strong fleet representing WA, Vic, NSW, and Queensland as well as the overseas entries.

Ken Jenyns, a former national Gwen 12 champion and younger brother of triple Olympian Ron Jenyns, displayed an overpowering advantage in speed to win the invitation race impressively.

But his title hopes slumped when the boom, with far too much vang pressure, exploded as he sailed onto the course for the start of the first heat.

Ron Boswell and Ross Gettons, after obviously foxing in the invitation, swamped the top class fleet to win the first heat by an embarrassing six minute margin over Craddock (Phileas Fogg, Qld) and Mirage IV (Alan Brooke, Qld).

The winds continued to blow hard for the second heat, and reached 30 knots with a particularly confused Waterloo Bay slop.

Cathy B, with Boswell and Gettons revelling in the conditions with sail tailored for power down low, making their hiking easier, won the heat from Jenyns (Secret Fifteen) with the consistent Kiwi third. Craddock, incidentally, sheeted his jib inside the stays while the Queenslanders sheeted outside.

The third heat, again sailed in wild winds, proved the championship winning race for Jenyns, not because of his skills but because of some ridiculously slack thinking on the part of Boswell and Gettons. These two respected and capable open boat sailors will remember this series for a long time. They went into the third heat with a perfect score with a DNF-2. Jenyns was the only real threat while the breeze remained hard, with Craddock 3-3.

Jenyns, desperately keen to improve his score, tactically out-thought the Cathy B combination to take an early lead. While Jenyns elected to sail safe Cathy B went for the doctor on the wild downwind run, and in all probability ended her title winning chances when she bottled spectacularly. Boswell and Gettons watched Secret 15 sail safely to win the heat from Flying Fish (Herb Mitchell, Qld) and Neffertitti (John Potter, NZ) third.

Cathy B stayed in contention by winning the fourth heat in testing 20-knot



FLYING Fifteen champions Ken Jenyns and Rea Reynolds in Secret Fifteen.

south-easter. Had she finished second in the third heat she would have held the commanding score of 1-1-2-1 over Jenyns DNF-2-1-3 while Craddock continued to remain consistent 2-3-4-2.

By heat 5 the south-easter veered into the east and failed to peak 15 knots. This bought about an interesting new battle within the title. Cathy B started disastrously then hit a mark to finally finish fifteenth, which she had to carry because of her capsized.

Secret 15, with flexy rig, powered away from the fleet upwind to defeat Mirage IV and English champion James Flower (Prelude).

Realising that a big performance in the sixth heat was a must, Jenyns and crewmate Rea Reynolds made an aggressive start and picked the right side of an early windshift to draw away for a comfortable win over Craddock and Potter.

Fickle light winds brought about a remarkable change for the final heat. Jenyns went into this heat a clear leader and only had to cover Craddock but it was a race of dramatic wind switches, virtually making the race a lottery.

Craddock, like Jenyns down the drain early, fought back in the light shifting wind. He realised that with Jenyns hopelessly pocketed in the middle of the fleet he had a championship winning chance, but he missed this by the narrow margin of 11 secs on the final beat.

The race was won by English champion Flower from Dick Kennedy (Waterbird, NSW) and Super Goose (Noel Davies, NSW).

Jenyns won the championship by 1 point from Craddock, with Boswell third.

— Ian Grant

FLYING FIFTEEN RESULTS: 1, Secret Fifteen (K. Jenyns/R. Reynolds, Qld) 29.7 pts; 2, Phileas Fogg (R. Craddock/T. Hammon, NZ) 30.7; 3, Cathy B (R. Boswell/R. Gettons, Qld) 37.71; 4, Neffertitti (J. Potter/F. Johnson, NZ) 58.4; 5, Mirage IV (A. Brooke/T. Passey, Qld) 61.7; 6, Flying Fish (H. Mitchell/G. Wood, Qld) 63.7; 7, Prelude (J. Flower/Chris Barber, UK) 79.7; 8, Reliance IV (W. Shand/V. Shand, Vic) 80.7; 9, Super Goose (N. Davies/G. Cummings, NSW) 88.7; 10, Don Quizote (D. Kernod/J. Wilson) 93.0.



Australian National Championship Results

1976 - 1977 sailed the Burgee of Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron

The Championship was sailed in strong winds with 3 overseas competitors. We do not know the number of entries.

Place	Boat #	Boat Name	Helm	Crew	Home State
1	1398	Secret Fifteen	Ken Jeys	R. Reynolds	Qld
2	NZL 1232	Phileas Fogg	Roger Craddock	T. Hammon	NZL
3	1397	Cathy B	Ron Boswell	R. Gettons	Qld
4	NZL 1235	Neffertiti	J. Potter	F. Johnson	NZL
5	1205	Mirage IV	Allan Brooke	T. Passey	Qld
6	1395	Flying Fish	Herb Mitchell	G. Wood	Qld
7	1393	Prelude	James Flower	Chris Barber	GBR
8	1677	Relience IV	Bill Shand	V. Shand``	Vic
9	1718	Super Goose	Noel Davies	G. Cummings	NSW
10	1705	Don Quixote	Dick Kernot	J. Wilson	WA