‘Wraith of Odin’ 1951 to 1997

The 1952 Hobart Race

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YACHTS STRIKE GLASS-CALM
Sydney Cutters
Share Lead

Yachts in the Sydney-Hobart race made only slow progress yesterday in conditions of fog and glass-calm broken only by puffs of wind from all round the compass. From early morning and throughout the day the two Sydney cutters Nocturne and White Cloud, shared the lead across Bass Strait. Again and again, as a puff of wind filled the flapping sails, one or other of the yachts would take the lead, only to lose it a little later.

Reports to station 2SM from the radio mother yacht, Launana, said that not more than a mile had separated the two at any time during daytime. Further out to sea and slightly behind the leaders, a similar struggle was waged between the big NSW yawl Ruthcan and the Victorian yawl Landfall. Behind them and strung out across Bass Strait followed Solveig, Kurrewa III, Moonbi, Ingrid, Kintail, Fortuna and Nirvana.

Further back in a group were, Pavana and Wraith of Odin. No news was heard yesterday from the two Sydney sloops, Ripple and Kurura, and the Tasmanian cutter Terra Nova. All three are believed to be "searching for a wind" out to sea from the rest of the fleet.

Experts said yesterday that of these three yachts, Terra Nova was probably well in front. They pointed out that she was a light displacement yacht like her sister-ship Nocturne, and under the prevailing light conditions should be well up with the leaders.

PILOT’S REPORT

The assistant mother yacht Kurrewai 111, reported last night that most of the yachts were still sailing in very light winds or were becalmed, and that fog was general. Fog prevented aircraft on the Tasmania Sydney run sighting or identifying any of the yachts. Captain T W Harrison, pilot of a T A A Convair air-liner, who flew over Bass Strait at 12 30 p m and again at 4 45 p m, said a bank of cloud so low that it could probably be called fog stretched across the strait from Flinders Island to the Victorian coast.

"There was not a breath of air from the mainland to Tasmania," he said. "The only yacht we saw a single master - had its sails flapping as we flew over " Captain Harrison said he had never seen Bass Strait so calm before.

FORECAST

A special forecast issued by the Sydney Weather Bureau for the 12 hours from 3pm yesterday said the yachts would meet light variable table winds chiefly NE to easterly, from S to 10 knots from Gabo Island to Lat 39 degrees S. South of the mainland, the winds would become SW to south except in the vicinity of the Tasmanian coast where they would continue light and variable but chiefly north to NE. Seas would be smooth to light.