



The Scotchman's Hill Cup, 1928, in its found condition



The Scotchman's Hill Cup, 1928, fully restored sitting on its new plinth



The hand-crafted sterling silver model of Aberdere held at Sydney Flying Squadron

# THE SCOTCHMAN'S HILL CUP

**H**eld in the showcases of many Sydney sporting clubs are magnificent antique trophies. Over the years, W J Sanders has had the pleasure of both crafting and restoring many of these historic pieces. One such club is the Sydney Flying Squadron, the 18 foot skiff club at Kiribilli, which has in its trophy cabinet a beautifully made Australian sailing trophy – a 1930s hand-crafted sterling silver to scale replica of *Aberdere*, one of the most famous 18 footers ever to sail on Sydney harbour.

So when the club president of the Flying Squadron, John 'Steamer Stanley' rang and said he had been given another very special antique 18 footer trophy that he would bring into the W J Sanders workshop for restoration we were somewhat expecting another magnificent trophy. In fact, what came in was not quite magnificent; it was a battered, oxidized old EPNS trophy that over time had lost its plinth and all its silver plating.

On examination we could not even find a maker's mark. It had probably been lost to rust many years ago. 'It may not look like much but this is a very historic trophy,' John stated while pulling out some old documents. In the March 1928 *Flying Squadron Magazine* there it was an article on the history of the cup.

'In season 1924-25 a movement was started on Bradley's Head to enlist the sympathies of the patrons of this natural grandstand, and get some tangible evidence they were prepared to help the 18 Footers financially. Mr. James J. Giltinan and Messrs. Ted Bridgewater and Ted Trickett put their heads together, the first-named donating a handsome Cup.'

Essentially, the winner over three seasons racing would receive a cup, gold shield, honour cap and prize money of £100. The article went on to say how the name of the cup had come about.

'Jim' had rather unpleasant memories of another "Scotchman's Hill", situated at the back of the Agricultural Ground about 21 years before when he had organised the Giltinan's All Blues to play Baskerville's N.Z. All Blacks—this being the original movement to start the great Rugby League of today. The crowd on this hill was large and 'Jim' thought hard how he could entice them through the turnstiles. The re-christening of Bradley's Head may have been a bit of satire on his part—who knows, for he has a dry humour all of his own.'

By 1928 three boats were contenders for the cup: *Furious*, *Cutty Sark* and *Rosetta*. To

decide which boat should be awarded the cup a sail off was ordered. In a very hard fought race Bob Gourlay sailing *Furious* won the Scotchman's Hill Cup. Bob Gourlay kept the Scotchman's Hill Cup in a room along with his many golfing trophies. It was only recently discovered and generously returned to the club.

### RESTORATION Process

The cup has now been fully restored by W J Sanders. The work on the cup was extensive and required several stages. Firstly, it had to be chemically treated to remove any oxidation and then machine hand-polished back to the base metal without taking out any of the original engraving. The stem was then straightened. The next stage in the restoration process was for the cup to be plated with a heavy coating of silver and finally put on its new plinth.

This very special trophy, the Scotchman's Hill Cup, will now once again be raced for by the replica wooden 18 footers – including boats some from the 1920s – that now compete on Sydney Harbour ●

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Furious, the eventual winner of the Scotchman's Cup racing on Sydney Harbour, c. 1928



Wooden 18 foot replicas racing on Sydney Harbour, 2004