

2017Q4 SRC Review

Q4 saw the start of the Ocean legs of the Sailonline World Race with our first leg (leg 2) being a 'free' leg from Lisbon to Cape Town, free in terms of not requiring the rounding of Fernando de Noronho off the Brazilian coast. This freedom proved illusionary for those who tried it soon learnt that West was Best. The second leg (leg 3) was the Southern Ocean in all its glory being Cape Town to Melbourne whilst avoiding a generous Southern Ice Limit. From some views expressed by sailors in the real race, where the real Ice boundary was located further North, this boundary proved to be a real frustration, some un-lady like language being heard! Also we were fortunate not to suffer the physical injuries and serious gear failure experienced by some of the real racers.

In parallel the 40' series continued to its Q3&Q4 conclusion with a splendid rounding of the southern coast of Ireland, a boring drag race off Brazil (we do not plan to use that one again) and a tricky first leg for a race out of Tasmania. Overall and viewed as a series of six races this 40' Series has raised new challenges for the fleet, much of it being when to use the light air, heavy air or powerful reaching boat. SRC views the challenge of selecting a yacht design as augmenting the task of sailing and will be looking to expand that challenge in 2018 by using four designs over a single 12 month series.

The Timed series offered a variety of locations with an interesting challenge being set around Cape Horn in SC52 yachts that in real life may have found the conditions quite a bit too heavy for comfort. It is noticeable that these timed races seem to have the top twenty starting closely together as if there is a calculated optimum time to start. A change has been introduced for 2018 with longer races involving at least one weather change and permitting a longer period of time to run the course. Let's see if this changes things at all.

The Sprints provided a range of Pick Your Own Courses (PYOC) and round the islands. As a nice way to pass a day indoors sailing dry and comfortable it has been a disappointment to note how regionalising these three series for 2017 has not elicited more involvement from the Southern hemisphere. Accordingly to provide the most pleasure for the majority, the sprints will now be located and timed to benefit those that use them most.

Finally the standard 'Other Races' have been run and the opportunity was taken to trial our new 40' yacht Farr400 on a 488 nm 'Sprint' in the Mediterranean. To our eyes she proved to be a good performer on most points of sail and so a good bet for the 2018 series. Regrettably the annual Christmas to Christmas race between sister islands in the Pacific and Indian Oceans suffered a technical server hitch when a small adjustment led to a major transportation of all yachts first to the western boundary, then to the eastern boundary and then to just west of the International Date Line. Naturally all rankings of the race were discarded but some yachts are plugging on regardless. SRC's compliments to the Tech Team and OPS for the rescue efforts and we hope that all will run smooth when next our yachts approach the time barrier of the International Date Line as we will as we progress around our planet in 2018.

The Notices of Race for the Championship Series will shortly be posted on the Home page so take time now to plan for 2018.

With Season's greetings to all and our best wishes for an enjoyable 2018 sailing in the real and our virtual world.

Richard / Go4iT
Chair – SRC

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