

The Last Gasp

Wednesday Wonders Race 26 Winter 2017

27/9/2017



The Pre-Race prep

Checking the forecast: no strong winds were shown, and no strong winds were on the maps coming from the west. There was a 20-knot wind forecast for mid afternoon. So for the small yachts and early starters most chose full sails.

This race was critical for the final positions in the series. Any one of the top ten yachts did have the possibility of winning the series.

The Start

The start was delayed to 13:45 just after the squall came through but not quite enough time for the small yacht to change the sails.

There was no warning of gusts coming down the bay. No BOM warning and only sketchy messages from Brighton Yachts that were unclear. No SYC warning of a strong wind, but it was soon evident something was happening. One small yacht tried to unhook their No 1 genoa and put up a smaller sail but ran short of time. Another yacht preparing to start, withdrew from starting due to the strong wind.

The larger yachts with small handicaps took off and stayed in the front of the fleet the whole race. Only Alliance made significant gains during the race. Getting from 4 to 7 required one or two tacks at the most, and that was the only major alteration to sails and gear as the rest of the course had no down wind or windward work. The soldier's courses are becoming a feature of Wednesday Wonders and make it difficult for handicappers along with the unpredictable wind. As one sailor said "Wednesday Wonders was anything but tacky".

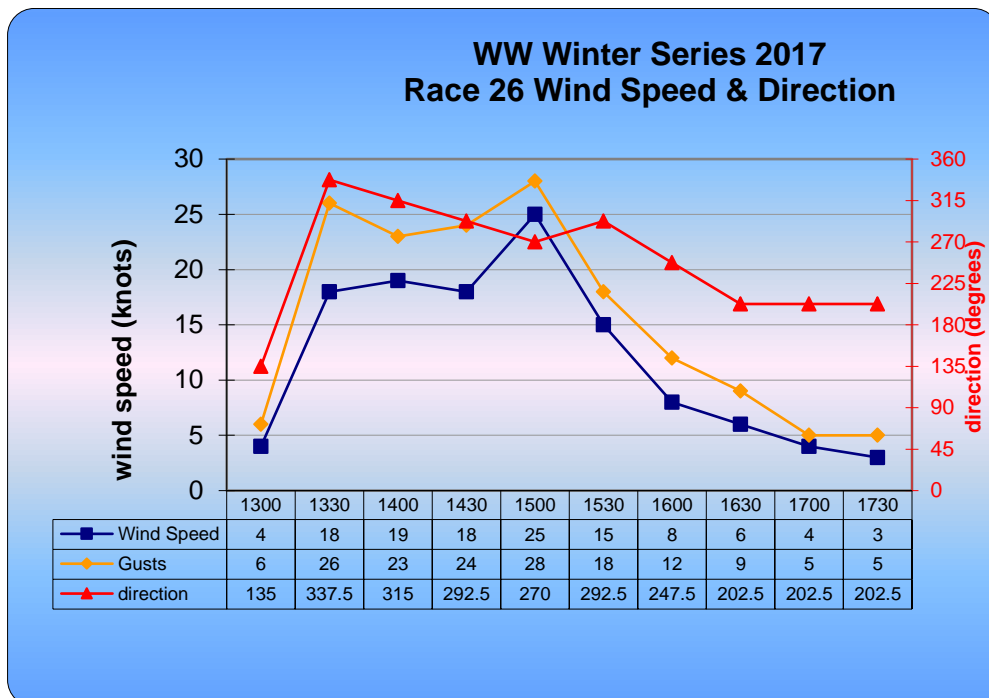
Times

Start times from first to last equalled 56 mins.

Halfway around at No 4, first to last 32.34 mins. The leading yacht, Summer Wind was 4 mins ahead.

Finish – all yachts finished within 37.00 mins of Summer Wind

The smallest yacht did not make it around the first mark before Summer Wind. Pippa was at No 4 first time round when the wind was at 25knts, gusting 28 at 15:02:01 in 8th place. She was 10mins behind the big yachts designed for reaching i.e. Summerwind off 11mins, Andante off 2mins.



Note the gusts at 1:24 NNW 7knts gusting to 26knts

At 1:30 NNW 18 knts gusting 26knts

And at 15:00 West wind 25knts gusting 28knt.

Pippa recorded an average of 6knts for the course, and if you can believe a GPS hand held reading 9.4 knts max. Her elapsed time was 1:45:44

NOTE On the website the elapsed times are incorrect and maybe have been taken from the Race official start time and not the delayed time i.e. about 15 mins longer times are recorded.

So all yachts in the race completed the course in a time of just on 1:45 min. A record?

The Top Ten Winners for the winter season 2017

Place	Ties	Sail Num	Boat Name	Skipper	From	Sers Score
1		SM1147	CASSANDRA MELBOURNE	Bob Reeves	SYC	90.5
2		SM3535	WHITE NOISE	Daniel Edwards	SYC	96.0
3		SM354	VANTAGE	Darren Hunter	SYC	97.0
4		SM303	PIPPA	Jeffrey Woolhouse	SYC	98.0
5		SM367	LEBROK	Theo Korbel	SYC	101.0
6		SM6161	SECOND NATURE	Paul Mentiplay	SYC	103.0
7	1.0S	SM616	MAGIC	Phil Spry-Bailey	SYC	107.0
8		SM3639	WIND SPEED	Les Browne	SYC	107.0
9		SM355	BON VIVANT	Russell Keays	SYC	109.5
10		SM6530	NUTCRACKER II	Rob Davis / Andy Bak	SYC	111.0

Four of the top ten yachts counted their scores in this race in their series scores - Cassandra, Vantage, Pippa, and Bon Vivant.

Century Class Winners for this race, Number 6 in the Century Class series, were 1st Cassandra, 2nd Bon Vivant, and 3rd Pippa ahead of Salt Shaker and Magic 6th.

You will have to wait until Presentation Night for the Winter Century Class Winner to be announced.

The results

First Summerwind Sm580

Started 3rd off a handicap of 11 mins and was 8 seconds late. She was 4:24mins in front of second place. She has three first places to her credit, the others being race 21 a 6 min win, and race 19 a 7:21 win. At least the winning time is reducing. She has not sailed enough races to score well in the series but perhaps this helped her handicap.



Second Alliance Sm4646

Started 11th off a handicap of 20mins (which was 12 min last race.) She was into 3rd at the halfway mark 5mins off the leader. She crossed the finish line just a minute from 3rd. She too has not sailed enough races to score well in the series. But watch out for this big yacht next season.

Third White Pointer Sm430

Tom started off 16 mins 7th across the line only 4 seconds late, even though they spent the race thinking they would get a 5 min being early penalty). White Pointer was 4th first time past 4 just 10 seconds off 3rd. At the finish White Pointer was ahead of Andante across the line by a safe 3 mins. This race counted in White Pointer's series score and she finished in 15th place with 125 points.

The Season Of Winter 2017 from Sandy Capper's perspective

"It has been a challenging Wednesday Wonders Winter what with the crazy weather and the burden of expectations from my decreasingly few admirers. I tried to fulfil my stated goal of giving everyone a shot at coming last.

There was the odd mumble and grumble but most skippers seemed at least moderately comfortable with my philosophy, which also incorporates the sharing of the glittering prizes as widely as possible. I confess this was what partly inspired some of the more controversial handicap adjustments.

I feel the SYC glasses went to worthy recipients by and large, with the odd yacht getting more than their fair share. This precipitated a fierce response from Sandy Capper, much to their skippers' chagrin. C'est la guerre.

After this season I have a better understanding of who goes well in what weather, and hope to press on in the coming Summer Series unless a popular uprising deposes me and some aspiring Mensa member takes on the not-particularly-onerous task of keeping everyone unhappy.

Mark Windward's very aptly and very politically incorrect naming of the Wailing Wall should be well and truly justified. All I can say is 'suck it up' as sheep stations are won and lost in the Great Struggle, which is the Wednesday Wonders Series."

Cheers Sandy Capper

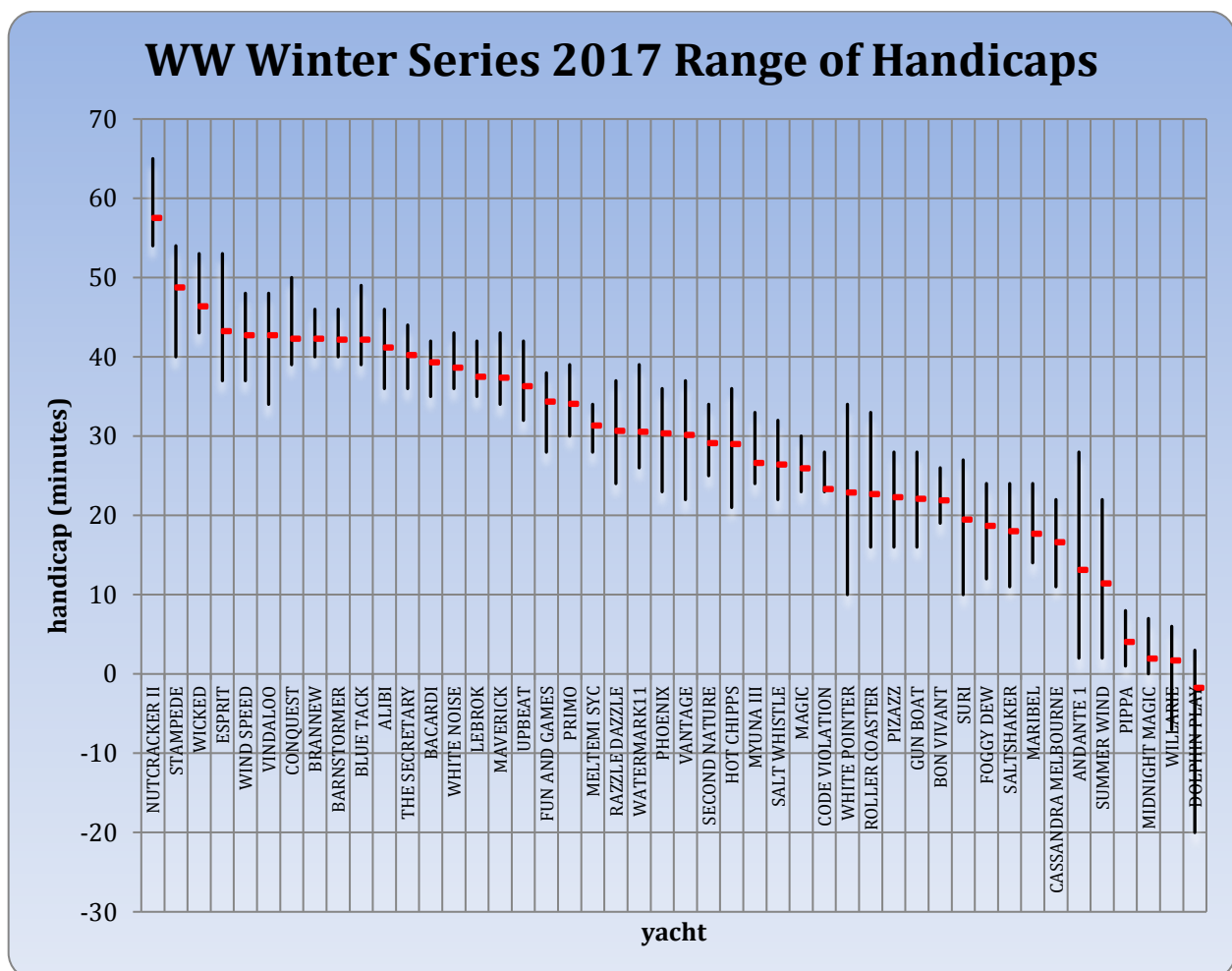
Ta Muchly Herr Windward BUOY and more power to your arm. Your weekly musings are a highlight for many people.

Windward Buoy's Summary of the 2017 winter series

It is always beneficial to check the handicap before the start of a race. This has been particularly true for this winter series where handicaps have been more volatile. Changes have been frequent and often by significant amounts. For example WHITE POINTER (Tom Raft) received 13 different handicaps throughout the series. These varied from 34 to 10 minutes - a 24-minute range. ANDANTE I (Keith Woodruff) was allocated 10 different handicaps within a 26-minute range whilst CASSANDRA of MELBOURNE (Bob Reeves) was allocated 11 different handicaps ranging from 11 to 22 minutes. The average handicap range for the winter series has been almost 12 minutes. This is significantly more than the average range of 4 minutes for the 2016-17 Summer Series.

This series produced 15 different winners from 19 completed races compared with 15 winners from 23 completed races in the summer series. On average 27 minutes 11 seconds separated the first from last yacht across the finish line in the winter series. In the summer series the first and last yachts were separated by an average of 25 minutes 27 seconds.

The chart below shows the range of handicaps allocated to various yachts. The small red horizontal bar represents the average.

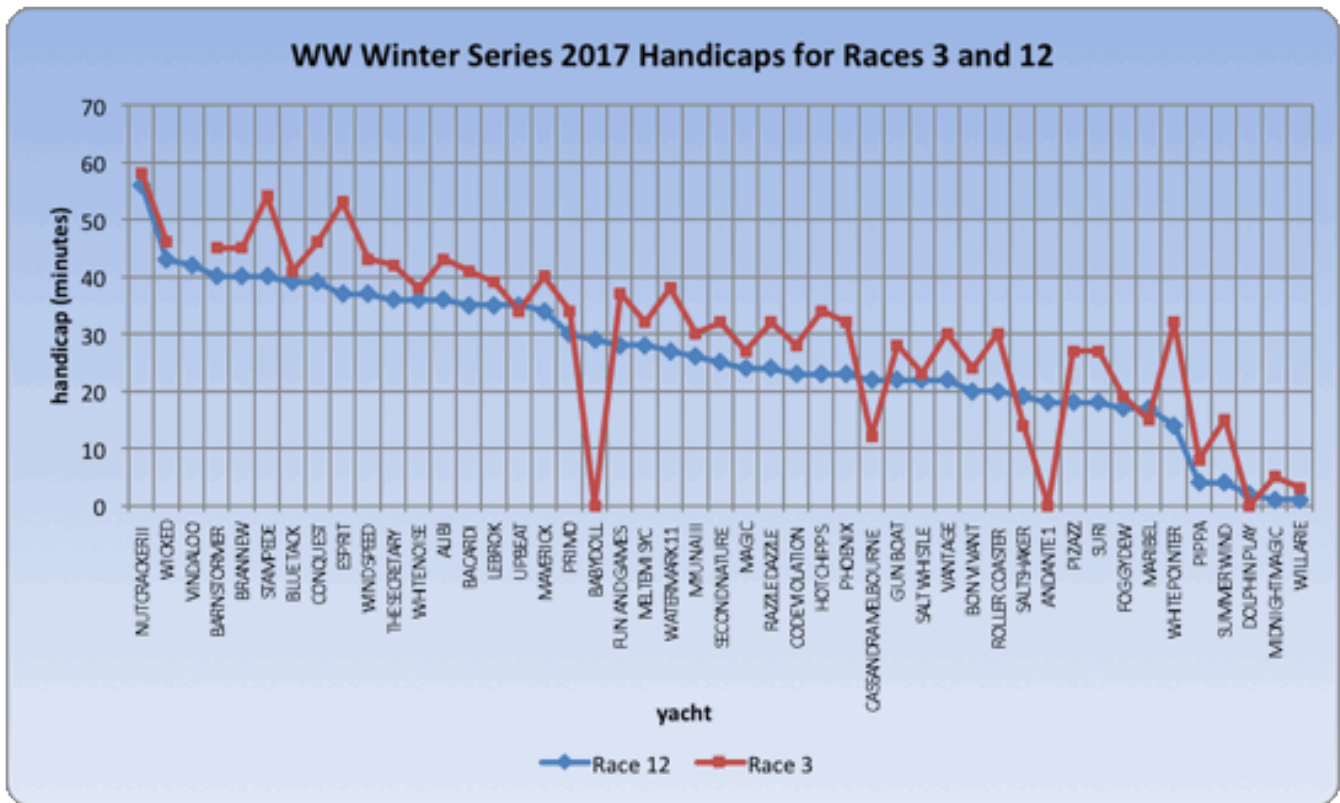


Summer Series Do not for gets:

To enter the **Wednesday Wonder Series** before Wednesday. It can be done on line. Enter the Summer 2017-18 **Century class Series** before October 25th. Applications are available from the Boating Office. Open to any Wednesday Wonders skipper whose age and the age of his or her yacht adds up to 100 years or more.

Your MOB declaration will need to be renewed by 31 October 2017.

Book a date with Wendy Wonder to make your experience realistic and satisfying.



ANSWER TO RACE 24 Question – Winner: Chris Furey

The Endeavour 24 sailing sequence was shown on Countdown on the ABC in 1974-5 and featured Sherbet lead singer Daryl Braithwaite singing “You’re my World”. The ABC are showing re-runs of original Countdown episodes on Sunday nights at 6pm for those interested in reliving their misspent youths.

The footage showed Daryl walking along our old wooden marina and then sailing the yacht. I was particularly fascinated to see the scene where Daryl stood at the bow feeding the spinnaker out of its bag while the sail was magically hoisted to the masthead and trimmed for speed, all while sailing single handed. That man surely has exemplary sailing skills.

Not sure who Sm 155 was, possibly “Masumi”, Bill Whelpton, who was one of few SYC Endeavour owners as most Endeavour 24s were sailed up at the northern end of the bay with big fleets at RMYS, Hobsons Bay and Royal YC of Vic.

For my sins I did my very first ‘ANA Weekend” (as it was called back then) passage race to Geelong on an E24 as a 17 year old in 1969 and was a crew member of the 1974 State Champion, winning Endeavour 24, Aphros, in a 20+ boat fleet.

Distant but fond memories these days. Chris Furey (38 South)



LONESOME GEORGE by Windward Buoy

In centuries past whalers and sailors enjoyed eating giant tortoises. They were easy to catch and made a refreshing change from the usual ships rations. It is thought that there could have been a tortoise population of millions in the Galapagos Islands but these were reduced to a few thousand. They completely disappeared from some of the Islands.

In 1971 a biologist working on Isla Pinta saw a hitherto unknown tortoise which was captured the following year by the Galapagos National Park. They moved him to a paddock on the island of Santa Cruz and hoped to find him a mate. None materialised.



For the next 40 years George lived a celibate life in captivity and was just not interested in females from other islands. The thought of starting a family at age 65+ was just too daunting for George. George, the last known Pinta tortoise, died in 2012. However he went to New York for a taxidermist overhaul and returned to the Galapagos in February this year. Striking something of a regal pose George is now the main attraction at the Faust Llerena Breeding Centre on Santa Cruz. He resides alone - the only resident of a specially constructed climate controlled building.

Windward Buoy visited the Galapagos July 2017 courtesy of Blue Flyer (Hugh Pilsworth)

This is a pen ultimate farewell epistle from Windward Buoy (Alias Graham Furness) This report ran out of space , so another article from Graham next race. You will still see Graham sailing on Magic with Phil. He has decided not to provide comments on the races for the forthcoming series. It is just taking up too much time.



Of course you can pass Pippa to windward and take all her wind but don't expect to get good photos in the process. Think what a good photo this would have been if Alliance passed to leeward.



This photo needs some explaining. It is included in an effort to get skippers to write about their own yachts and reduce the work load for Mark. Yes it is No 4 marker. Your comments are welcome Chris.

Many thanks to Windward Buoy who has contributed many hours over quite a long period - about six years. Thanks for sharing your insights and support.

Please send comments and contributions to [Mark Windward](#)

Thanks for contributions to this report go to Dawn, Chris Furey, Bruce Parry, Sandy Capper

Graham and Sue Furness Margaret and Di