

# THE MOTOR BOAT CHAMPIONSHIP.

## ANOTHER WIN FOR TORTOISE.

### CENTURY TIRE SUFFERS MISHAP.

Excitement ran high at the Outer Harbour on Saturday when Messrs. A. G. & E. S. Rymill's Tortoise II, romped home an easy winner from the New South Wales representative Century Tire, thus retaining the title of the champion motor boat of Australia and the handsome Griffiths Cup. Each of the contestants suffered mishap. The Tortoise bent her propeller shaft badly half an hour before the start, but was able to straighten it sufficiently to race. The Century Tire struck an object, blew out two spark plugs, and limped over the finishing line. The Lady Sid, in attempting to round the northern beacon in the first round, ran aground, and was damaged to such an extent that she could not continue.

The course was over a measured distance of 20 miles, beginning from an imaginary line between the judge's boat (Isis), and a mark on the Outer Harbour Wharf, up to and around No. 4 red beacon, down to and around a mark near No. 1 green beacon and back to the starting point, five and a half times round.

The draw for positions in the first heat resulted:—Tortoise II, Century Tire, Lady Sid.

#### THE RACE.

It requires a great amount of ingenuity and judgment to get away evenly in such a race, and the hydroplanes have to be kept manoeuvring so as to be as near the starting line as possible when the gun goes. Taking everything into consideration, therefore, Saturday's start was a very good one. At the firing of the gun Tortoise II, got away with only a two-length lead on Century Tire, while Lady Sid was about five lengths behind the second boat. The others were from the start perceptibly drawing away from her, making it evident that if she had any chance at all in the race it would be on the question of reliability. Failing a breakdown with the other boats it appeared that she was hopelessly outclassed on speed. It has been demonstrated in this class of racing, however, as in other matters, that the race does not always go to the swift, and praise was general at Mr. Birks's sportsmanship in coming into the event at considerable expense to help make it more interesting by swelling the entries and the possibilities of the contest. Starting from off the judge's launch, the contestants had to go up river and round a mark near No. 4 beacon, return

round a mark near No. 4 beacon, return past the judge's boat, and down to and round a mark near No. 1 green beacon, the lap finishing on reaching the judge's boat again.

It was with concern and regret that on Tortoise II, and Century Tire getting back and passing the judges on the half of the first lap the spectators saw there was no sign of Lady Sid, and when there was still no sign of her on the completion of the first round of the first heat, it became evident that she had practically dropped out of the contest almost at its commencement. Later it became known that Lady Sid had run aground while widely rounding the mark near the No. 4 red beacon. As she had to complete each heat that put her out of the running.

At the return to the judge's boat on the first half of the first round Century Tire had lost ground, and was fully 50 yards back, and on completing the round had gone back another hundred yards. On coming back again from No. 4 and Century Tire had picked up slightly, but she seemed to be making poor steering, and losing some ground, so that on passing the judges again her distance behind Tortoise II, was about the same. On the completion of the second lap, however, Century Tire seemed to have reduced the distance by about 25 yards. On the return from the beginning of the third round she had held the distance, but at the completion of the third lap had dropped back

again to the rear slightly to fully 150 yards.

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Then the Rymill brothers, who had held their own right through, apparently decided to let their craft out a bit. On she raced past the judges on the first half of the fourth round fully 250 yards ahead, Century Tire's engines, by the sound, running far from sweetly, in distinct contrast to Tortoise II. On completion of the fourth round the Rymill brothers were visibly drawing ahead, and had a lead roughly of from 600 to 700 yards. Century Tire's engines now seemed to be missing fire, and it was apparent, even to

the novice, that there was trouble with the engine. Her crew held grimly on, however, but on the completion of the fifth lap Tortoise had the best part of a mile lead, and when Century Tire completed the fifth round she could be heard knocking down on the water in an ominous manner. On the return of Tortoise II to the judges' boat on the half-lap that completed the five and a half laps that went to make up the 20 miles of the heat, Century Tire had barely rounded No. 4 beacon, so that the heat was won by about a mile, to the accompaniment of the blowing of ships' sirens and rounds of cheers from spectators.

Tortoise completed the course in 24m. 4s., and was ahead of Century Tire by 1m. 6s., her average speed being 49.55 miles per hour. She had 12s. lead at the end of the third lap, and seemed beautifully timed and running as smoothly as could be desired. She was equipped with Champion spark plugs. The race began at 3.150, and the finishing time 3.25.54. Century Tire finished at 3.27, the actual time taken being:—

Tortoise	24m. 4s.
Century Tire	25m. 10s.

#### The Second Heat.

When the second heat began Tortoise II was the only starter, and it was soon evident that the trouble Century Tire was suffering from had put her out of the contest. To retain the cup it was necessary for the winner to complete the course. There was as much sympathy with Messrs. Rymill Brothers as with Messrs. Walder and Doyle in this unsatisfactory turn of events, for with such sportsmen as Messrs. Rymill brothers it would be the last way of all they would

desire to win the contest. Moreover, it was evident they had never let their boat out fully, and they had her in perfect condition to make a scuffling race. On the completion of the heat, Tortoise II was proclaimed the winner.

#### Fastest Time.

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The fastest time of Tortoise II was made in the first round of the initial heat, when she averaged 53.8 miles per hour. In the second heat the South Australian boat averaged 44.7 miles per hour, her average speed in the final lap being 46.7 miles per hour. Century Tire's average speed for the heat was 47.7 miles per hour. Mr. Walder's hydroplane averaged 52.7 miles an hour in the fourth lap.

#### Previous Times.

In the last contest on the Port River for the Australian championship on February 23, 1924, Century Tire had the fastest time—35.30 miles per hour.

In the previous year (1923) the fastest time made by Tortoise was 49 miles per hour.

#### Mishaps and Congratulations.

Mishap early overtook the boats. Half an hour before the start the Tortoise, when making a trial run and travelling at a high rate of speed, rushed through the wake of a passing tug. Caught on the crest of a wave the boat jumped right out of the water, and when the propeller struck the water again it caused a serious jar, resulting in the propeller shaft being bent badly. They returned to the barge Vulcan, lited the boat with the derrick, and with the help of a few willing hands and a crowbar straightened the rod sufficiently to allow the boat to race. After

the completion of the heats, Mr. A. G. Rymill stated that if his boat had been hard pushed she would never have lasted the race.

Mr. Rymill, who was showered with congratulations from every passing boat as the winner made back to Port Adelaide, was naturally elated with his victory, but said he would have been more satisfied if his opponents had been able to finish with their boats in good order. Personally, he considered the result would have been the same. After the first lap he was able to ease down considerably and nurse his engine. The water was ideal for hydroplaning. The motor was doing 1,500 revolutions when they held the Century Tire and the engine was capable of more than 2,000 revolutions when fully extended. To use a horse-racing term they never exceeded a good working gallop. No one was more disappointed than he and his brother that they had to run the second heat alone, and regretted that the Century Tire had been put out of action. He felt sure that even before the mishap the Tire's form was not up to that of the Tortoise.

#### Century Tire Damaged.

General regret was expressed that the

General regret was expressed that the Century Tire had found it necessary to retire, as there is no doubt that the mishap robbed her owner of any chance of victory, and the public were debarred from viewing the fine spirited finish that had been anticipated. The Tire jumped into the yacht squadron landing stage with a large, gaping wound along the waterline on the starboard side, commencing from the step and running forward about a yard. Commenting on the mishap, the pilot (Mr. Stuart F. Doyle) said that the boat had been going well until the third



A view from the stern of the Century Tire, the motor boat of Mr. R. Walder, and of the right of the Century Tire, pilot of the boat.

to warm up to the business. She was round, when the engine had just begun picking up the Tortoise, when they passed through the wash of their rival, and struck something hard. At first they thought it was only the impact of hitting the water, but they quickly realized it was something else when water began to rush in from the forward end. They then opened up the engine in the hope of picking up the Tortoise, and trusted to the bailing holes in the step to let the water out, but it was coming in too fast for them to deal with. It was at this stage that two plugs blew out, and the uneven firing of the engine not only slowed down the pace, but set up more vibration. The boat was only able to complete the course and steam to the landing stage, with a foot of water over the floors. She was immediately placed on a slip and drawn out of the water. Mr. Doyle expressed the opinion that had their boat been in good order she would have finished neck and neck with the Tortoise. He complained that the start was not a good one. The contestants had mutually agreed to approach the starting line at 35 miles an hour, but they did not receive the signal that the race had begun until 20 yards over the line. The result was that the Tortoise went ahead, and they had to keep in her wash. If it had only been the plugs, they could have been fixed in a few minutes, and the boat would have had a good chance of winning the second and third heats. He enjoyed the race thoroughly, and it gave every prospect of being a splendid tussle.

#### New Boat for Next Year.

Interviewed after the race, the owner of Century Tire (Mr. R. Walder) naturally expressed disappointment that his chance of victory was snatched away by accident.

of victory was snatched away by accident. He cheerily remarked, however, that he would come back to Port Adelaide with a new hull built to the design of the Century Tire, and with the engine reconditioned, would make a big bid for the cup next year. It was their intention to have extended the Century Tire in the third lap, but the defective plugs prevented them from doing so. It was a clean race, and the course was kept clear. They were delighted with their reception in South Australia, and could not speak too highly of the way they had been treated. Every one had gone out of their way to assist them, particularly the motor trade, and they wished to thank all their helpers. It would be a pleasure to return to South Australia next year and attempt to wrest the cup from the Rymills with the new boat.