



The Tattersall Cup - Overall Winner's Trophy

The Tattersall Cup is the most significant and historic perpetual trophy awarded in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race and was presented in 1946 by the Executors of the Estate of the late George Adams, the founder of Tattersall Lotteries in Hobart. The name of the 1945 winner was added retrospectively.

Outside the bluewater sailing fraternity, few people probably know that the handicap honours trophy for which the Rolex Sydney Hobart fleet competes is The George Adams Tattersall Cup.

In 1945 William Adams (great nephew of Tattersall Lotteries founder, George Adams) tracked down what he believed to be a suitable trophy for the fledgling event.

Designed by silversmiths at Prouds of Sydney, the Cup was originally struck for a trans-Tasman yacht race that never eventuated. Prouds described the trophy to William Adams in the following manner... *Hand-wrought 288 ounces sterling silver cup and plinth – 25 inches high under a glass dome. Decorations of mermaids, grapevine and seahorses at base. Lid surmounted with mermaid on crest of wave calling up winner. Entirely Australian origin.*

George Adams died in 1904, leaving a rich legacy from his Tattersall lotteries. Born in 1839 in Hertfordshire, the son of a farm labourer, he came to Australia in 1855, where he tried his hand at gold mining, working on sheep stations, running a butchery and then owning several pubs. A chunky, chesty, fiery-whiskered man with a good head for business, his Sydney hotel was a favourite watering hole for Tattersall Club members, from which they could subscribe to sweepstakes on race meetings around the country. New restrictions on gambling saw him move to Queensland, and then to Tasmania, where his Tattersall empire thrived in more permissive legal environments. Adams's public image was that of a sporting identity and a patron of horse racing.

Having begun life in Australia as a penniless immigrant, George Adams learned early the lessons of fair play and the level playing field. That a trophy bearing his name would come to acknowledge the bluewater battlers of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race seemed fitting and appropriate.

The George Adams Tattersall Cup was first presented to the handicap winner of the second Sydney Hobart in 1946, but *Rani*, the original race winner's name, was later engraved on the plinth.

For the past 64 races, the Tattersall Cup has been awarded to the overall winner on corrected time of the 628 nautical mile race. Currently the IRC handicapping system is used to determine the overall winner.

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia retains the magnificent trophy in its magnificent trophy cabinets, with the owner of the winning yacht receiving a suitable memento of their victory.

Since 1945 the Tattersall Cup has been won by some of the finest yachts and outstanding yachtsmen in the world, yet in that period only six yachts have won the Tattersall Cup more than once. *Freya* won three successive races in the 1960s, *Love and War* has won it three times between 1974 and 2006, while *Westward*, *Siandra*, *Solo*, and *Ausmaid* have each won it twice.

The Halvorsen brothers, Trygve and Magnus, designed, built and sailed three winning yachts, *Solveig*, *Anitra V* and *Freya* (three wins), while the late Jock Muir skippered the Tasmanian yacht he designed, *Westward*, to two successive wins in the late 1940s. The late Vic Meyer sailed the Alan Payne-designed *Solo* to two overall and two line honours wins in 1956 and 1962.

Graham Newland won twice with *Siandra* in the 1958 and 1960, Peter Kurts did so twice with his Admiral's Cup yacht *Love & War* in 1974 and 1978, and in 2006 Lindsay May skippered the Kurts family-owned S&S 47 to its third win, . Lou Abrahams became the first Victorian yachtsman to win the Tattersall Cup when he skippered *Challenge II* to victory in 1983, winning again in 1989 with his new boat *Ultimate Challenge*.

Ausmaid won the Sydney Hobart Race in 1996 when owned by Melbourne yachtsman Georgio Gjergja and again in 2000, sailing as *SAP Ausmaid* and skippered by Adelaide yachtsman Kevan Pearce.

Apart from these yachtsmen, and the winner of the inaugural race, Captain John Illingworth RN with *Rani*, among the notable international yachtsmen to have won the Tattersall Cup have included British Prime Minister Edward Heath (*Morning Cloud*), US media tycoon and America's Cup skipper Ted Turner (*American Eagle*), American Jim Kilroy (*Kialoa*) who also held the race record for 19 years, New Zealand winner of the Whitbread Race, the late Sir Peter Blake (*New Zealand*), the doyen of Australian ocean racing, Syd Fischer (*Ragamuffin*), America's Cup skipper and yacht designer Iain Murray (*Bumblebee 5 and Raptor*).

The names of their yachts are recorded for posterity on the base of the magnificent Tattersall Cup, the symbol of supremacy in Australian ocean yacht racing as winners of one of the toughest races in the world.



The George Adam Tattersall Cup, credit David Colfelt

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