

Basic Detail Report



Idler

Vessel number

HV000475

Date

1909

Primary Maker

Charlie Peel

Description

IDLER was built in Port Melbourne for Mr H.Hall of the Royal Brighton Yacht Club, along with its sister vessel NAMOI which was Peels own boat. They shared characteristics of the John McKenzie-designed 24 ft. square-sterners DOREEN and THETIS which raced on Port

Philip at the time. They also shared characteristics of the structure of the local workboats including the well-known couta boats. Frames were light but closely spaced, with additional intermediate frames running part way up the bilges supporting the planking where the internal ballast was located. The framing structure, the internal ballast, centreboard and half-decked arrangement were all characteristics of the region's workboats. In 1913 the Victorians created their own class around IDLER and NAMOI, calling it the VYRA 21-25 foot Restricted Class, but it was also known as the IDLER Class as well.. Using the basic scantlings and proportions of the two yachts, they created a rule which allowed designers some latitude in shape and displacement within maximum and minimum dimensions. All craft were to share an almost identical structure. The rule marked a step toward racing boats having a structure, which would eventually become quite independent from the more robust scantlings of a work boat. IDLER is first mentioned in the press on 20 December 1909 when the Argus carried a race report for the Port Melbourne Club. "This was the Idler's maiden contest, she being this season's boat, having been built by Peel Bros of Port Melbourne who sailed her. She proved to possess a fair turn of speed." It was enough speed to come second on handicap to the champion boat S.J.S. - a good start to its career. Subsequently, although the Victorians created a new class, IDLER and NAMOI raced in mixed fleets for many years. World War I restricted yachting activities and yacht building and the severe loss of life amongst young Australian men even affected the number of yachtsmen available when the war ended. The SPORTING GLOBE in October 22 1932 noted the following which helps confirm its connection to the class started in the early 1920s - " Idler, the original boat of the 21ft. class, and the boat from which the type was supposed to be taken, has moved to St. Kilda. It is not likely that she 'will figure "prominently in the racing." In the early 1920s the major national clubs joined together to support a new yachting class that would attract young adults to sailing and help build crew numbers. The VYRA 21-25 Foot class was chosen, and renamed the 21 Foot Restricted Class. New boats were built in NSW and Queensland almost immediately. The first three craft in NSW were

from a Peel design which shared many similarities to IDLER. IDLER took part in some of the early Victorian 21 Foot Restricted class fleet racing but its subsequent history is not well recorded. At some point in its history IDLER found its way to Goolwa in SA, and then in the early 2000s was taken to Melbourne for restoration. That project did not eventuate and the craft was abandoned for a period. In 2011 Seaworks in Williamstown, Victoria, moved IDLER undercover and have built a supporting cradle to stabilise the hull structure, allowing time to consider a management and interpretation plan.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 7.62 m x 6.4 m x 2.44 m (25 ft x 21 ft x 8 ft) as built