

# Basic Detail Report

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## Hurricane

### Vessel number

HV000204

### Date

1937

### Primary Maker

Colin Clark

### Description

Watts and Wright built HURRICANE in their Bulimba shed on the Brisbane River. It was planked in Huon Pine with an ash keel and stringers and understood to have been painted blue inside. The designer Colin Clark came from a respected maritime family - his father James Clark had been a dominant figure in the pearl shell trade in the late 1800s and early 1900s and was also a keen and successful yachtsman. Colin took to sailing with his father and moved on to designing and racing his own 18-foot skiffs. In the 1920s he designed VISION, VIONE and TANGALOOMA which all had successful racing careers. HURRICANE shared features with his 18-foot skiff designs. It was a big boat for the 12-foot class with plenty of volume and featured a hollow keel, planked down to the heel at the transom, something he had always done on his 18s. This was considered outdated after Alf Whereat built the 16-foot skiff CLAR MELV in 1920. The bow profile had a slight hollow creating a subtle ram-bow effect, not unlike the bow of a World War I battleship. The large volume allowed it to carry a huge sailplan. It was extremely fast in light weather and generally a good boat to windward. HURRICANE carried a crew of four. Its large sail plan consisted of; mainsail (18.7 sq m/200sq ft), jib (6.1 sq m/65sq ft), peak-head spinnaker (28 sq m/300sq ft, balloon jib (3.73 sqm/140sq ft), effective ringtail area (8.4 sq m/90sq ft) and watersail (5.6 sq m/60sq ft). The sailplan was considered by some to be Clark's forte. According to legendary sailmaker Jack Hamilton from Brisbane, Clark felt the important part of the race was to get to the windward mark first, and he paid less attention to downwind sailing as a result. He followed this scheme on HURRICANE, which lacked speed off the wind under spinnaker, especially in marginal planing conditions. 12-foot skiffs were an exciting craft to sail. The class was sailed in Sydney, NSW as well as Brisbane. It was seen as a training class for younger crew before they moved onto the bigger 18-foot skiffs. However it was also a class that attracted stalwarts who stayed for many seasons beyond their teens. The 1939/40 Interstate series for 12-foot Skiffs was sailed on the Brisbane River. HURRICANE was sailed by Brian Sinclair, and in light airs he won the first heat from RESOLVE, also a Queensland boat. The second heat, another light weather race, was sailed against an ebb tide. HURRICANE was first around the windward mark but RESOLVE sailed through on the spinnaker run. In the final heat HURRICANE gambled that the wind would drop away and sailed with its big rig. However the wind strength continued, leaving HURRICANE overpowered and finishing down the fleet. RESOLVE won the heat and the title. HURRICANE was second overall. After the war Colin's son Arthur Clark sailed HURRICANE, but it was quickly outdated and only a moderate performer. The Clark family gifted the boat

to the Queensland Maritime Museum in 1990 and it is now on display in the small boat section. Text prepared from information supplied by the Queensland Maritime Museum.

### **Dimensions**

Vessel Dimensions: 3.66 m x 3.66 m x 1.52 m (12 ft x 12 ft x 5 ft)