

Basic Detail Report



Acrospire IV

Vessel number

HV000545

Date

1929

Primary Maker

Charlie Peel

Description

ACROSPIRE IV was commissioned by Joe White soon after his unsuccessful challenge for the Sayonara Cup with the Peel designed ACROSPIRE III (HV000541) in early 1928. He was determined to try and win the cup for his state, and whilst building his new boat in 1929 Lance Randerson challenged for the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria with EUN-NA-MARA rating around 10 metres, but was beaten by VANESSA, a new Fife designed 8 metre. The Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly magazine reported on ACROSPIRE IV in August 1929: 'Definite proof of his earnestness in furthering the interests of Victorian yachting (if such proof is necessary) is manifested in a beautiful creation of builder's and designer's art, which reposes in a large shed in Collingwood - to wit, Acrospire, which will be the fourth. The Commodore has had her built in a spot close to his business premises, and he may frequently be seen admiring Chas. Peel's handiwork, for Peel, the designer and builder of the new boat, has excelled himself.' Peel and fellow shipwright Jack Gutierrez built ACROSPIRE IV in suburban Melbourne in a shed on land adjacent to Joe White's malt house in Collingwood. The hull was 16.3 m long, planked in kauri on Blackwood frames. It was rigged as a gaff cutter with spruce spars and rated 9.25 metres. The choice of gaff rig was unusual as the NSW yachts had been using the more efficient Marconi or Bermudan rig plan since the mid-1920s, however the Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly magazine report from August 1929 indicated that the yacht could be changed to the newer rig if the gaff rig is not satisfactory. The name ACROSPIRE is taken from the term that relates to a stage in the grain used in brewing. When it has grown its first shoot it is the right time to use the grain, and that shoot is called the 'acrospire'. Moving the yacht from Collingwood to the water was a challenge, accomplished overnight with the yacht in a solid cradle on a jinker or trolley. It was craned into the Yarra River from the North Wharf near Docklands on the morning of 17th October 1929. First trials on Port Phillip went well, and ACROSPIRE IV sailed north at the end of 1929 for the races scheduled to begin in mid-January 1930. It was to be a best of five races series, and once again the defender was the Fife designed 8 metre VANESSA. However as with ACROSPIRE III, ACROSPIRE IV was once again a big boat rating 9.31 metres. ACROSPIRE IV was no match for the well sailed VANESSA, and only needed its considerable handicap advantage to claim victory in one of its three straight victories. Joe White still had faith in his yacht and increased the sail area with a new Bermudan rig, while making other alterations to ACROSPIRE IV in an attempt to gain more speed for another challenge in 1931. However ACROSPIRE IV's handicap increased further with no improvement to its speed and VANESSA won again in three straight

races. ACROSPIRE IV then retired from Sayonara Cup sailing, and the Victorians through Lance Randerson were able to purchase VANESSA in 1932, which subsequently defeated NORN in 1933 and the Sayonara Cup finally returned to Victoria. At an unknown date ACROSPIRE IV was sold to WA, and raced there for many years. In 1980 it was sailing out of Fremantle on Gage Roads. One owner put a cabin on the previous flush deck with only hatches and skylights. The current owner removed this and replaced it with a lower, rounded front cabin that was more appropriate in design and style for the yacht's late 1920s vintage. In 2012 it remains in good condition sailing in WA.

Dimensions

Vessel Dimensions: 16.31 m x 10.21 m x 2.82 m x 2.12 m, 10.87 tonnes (53.5 ft x 33.5 ft x 9.25 ft x 6.95 ft, 10.7 tons)