

# Basic Detail Report

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**00037815**

**Title**

Trophy for the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's  
Commodore Handicap

**Date**

20 January 1883

**Medium**

Silver, wicker

**Dimensions**

Overall: 38 × 19 × 23 mm, 1.6 kg

**Name**

Trophy

**History**

The Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, initially known as the Australian Yacht Club was formed in 1862. Within a year it

was granted an Admiralty warrant and Royal patronage as the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. In 1881 the RSYs introduced a system of handicapping, based on tonnage modified by performance, in order to promote club racing. This enabled all yachts in the RSYs to be eligible to race for the Commodore's Cup, donated by Commodore Gilchrist. The inaugural race held on 22 January 1881 was won by MAGIC with OITHONA second and PLEIADES placed third. PLEIADES was a 9-ton cutter designed and built by W Langford at Berry's Bay, Sydney in 1874. It was owned by E W Knox, son of the manager of Colonial Sugar Refining Co Ltd (CSR). In 1883 it was owned by RSYs member FB Lark. Regattas were central to competitive boating in the 19th century and functioned as a social and sporting occasion as well as a marker of official anniversaries in a public aquatic spectacle. Civic leaders, politicians and merchants offered patronage and sponsorship. Community regattas often featured several races, including rowing, sculling and sailing events usually for professional watermen and amateurs. The regatta was not just a means for exercising competitive sport but also a focus for social and recreational entertainment in Sydney. Sites around the foreshore provided a place for spectators to gather and have picnics, while night time entertainment was provided with dances and recitals.