

West Wind

The Newsletter of the NZ Zephyr Owners Association

Volume 4 Issue 2

April 1997

Editorial

This newsletter marks the end of another season. It saw a successful contest in Pigeon Bay, thanks to the efforts of the Canterbury Zephyr Association, and the skippers that attended. Nationally, there has been a revival of the NZ Zephyr Owners' Association, due largely to the efforts of Alex Aitken, National President. We are hoping that the activity at an administrative level will result in greater participation out on the water. Canterbury and Hamilton are probably the strongest fleets numerically at the moment, with renewed interest at Waiuku. French Bay continues to be the Auckland base.

To those skippers with intentions of upgrading hulls, foils and gear over the winter, I offer my encouragement! I always start off with good intentions, but many is the season where my boat is dragged out on Opening Day with a few touches of enamel over the dings and a mental promise to do better next winter!

Winter sailing beckons those of hardy disposition, with many centres now offering a chance to sail all year round. Zephyr skippers, who often sail in more than one class anyhow, can be found on keel boats and trailer yachts over the winter months.

Next season will see a new set of Racing Rules in operation. Advance publicity so far suggests some significant changes. I accessed the International Sailing Federation (ISAF - the International Skiing Federation is ISF) home page on the Internet for some advance comment on the philosophy behind the new rules, and have included it in this issue.

The next issue of West Wind is planned for July, with details of the AGM and any other topical issues. If you have any comments, we'll be pleased to hear from you.



Pigeon Bay Pile Up! A mass rounding in the National Championship. Don le Page (256) and Richard Ineson (254) flank the pack. *Photo courtesy of Christchurch Press.*

From the pen of Alex Aitken *National President*

Greetings. Rob and I have been putting another newsletter together in the hope that you will find the articles and comments interesting. As with any voluntary organisation it is sometimes difficult to maintain a satisfactory level of progress and interest. There are Zephyr sailors keen to get out and compete at club and regional level at every opportunity. Some like to get out on the water to relax and enjoy the fellowship during the race or contest and afterwards in the club house. Some like the cut and thrust of racing while others prefer to do their best and don't worry about placings. Wherever you are at, it boils down to the fact that you enjoy sailing a Zephyr yacht. Clubs are winding up for the season and most of you are no doubt storing the boat away for the winter or doing much needed renovation. There is a winter series of races on the Estuary, and probably a similar opportunity to sail in the winterless north.

Since the last "West Wind" our national subscription has climbed to 52, which means ZOA funds will show a smaller deficit this year. Your National Executive is pleased with the positive attitude and advice shared over the past season and is looking at ways of enthusing those part time sailors in 97/98 season. It is my hope that we can double the membership at local and national level. This has the benefit of being able to channel more resources into developing the class. The more Zephyrs we have on the water, the more likelihood of attracting youth to the class.

Over the winter months the executive will be contacting a number of you to help in all sorts of ways. We have the Canterbury Zephyr Owners Association AGM in May which will, I hope, prompt some good debate. The end of June signals the finish of the ZOA financial year and we hope to have our AGM in August.

Results Corner

South Island Championships

1	Don Le Page	256	Front Runner
2	Bill Beere	69	Echo
3	Richard Ineson	254	Wave Dancer
4	Murray Hay	212	Silver Shadow
5	Glen McKenzie	102	Kahu
6	Ron Mackie	39	Windbag
7	Russell Wenham	323	Exception
8	Alex Aitken	147	Zero
9	Peter Stokell	322	Victoria
10	Ron Cameron	4	Why

Canterbury Championships

1	Don Le Page	256	Front Runner
2	Richard Ineson	254	Wave Dancer
3	Glen McKenzie	102	Kahu
4	Murray Hay	212	Silver Shadow
5	Bill Beere	69	Echo
6	Andrew Brown	253	Ebbtide Express
7	Ron Mackie	39	Windbag
8	Peter Stokell	322	Victoria
9	Ron Cameron	4	Why
10	Andy Holland	71	Irritate

Auckland Zephyr Class Championships

A small but enthusiastic fleet contested the Auckland Championships over two weekends, April 5, 6 & 12 at Tamaki Yacht Club. The first weekend saw lighter conditions on the Saturday, with fresher 15-20 knots breezes on Sunday. Alan Retter, Dennis Craig, Don Waterer and Bob Allen all took line honours at various stages, with Alan in venerable Zephyr No 1 taking overall honours. The Mistral Class also held their champs at the same time, with both classes being discretely observed by Des Townson, aboard *Talent*.

Alan Retter was presented with a wooden trophy featuring an inlaid Zephyr insignia made by Fred Elley, who must have taken time off from completing his new Zephyr hull!

Canterbury Inter-Club Match Racing

Don Le Page, runner-up in this year's national championship, took out the Canterbury Inter-Club match racing title for the second time since it was introduced in 1990. Don has been a semi-finalist since the contest's inception, and this year headed off a strong field that contained National Zephyr Champ, Andrew Brown; NZ Finn Champ, Ian Baker; NZ Moth Champ, Warren Thomas and National Phoenix Champ, John Kennett. The event has always used the Zephyr, and has become a popular fixture in the Canterbury racing programme.

The Waimak River offers good spectator vantage points for what has traditionally been tight, close racing.

Canterbury Zephyr Owners Association

Annual General Meeting

Christchurch Yacht Club

Tuesday, May 13th 1997

1930 hours

General Issues

- Construction of new Zephyrs
- Sails
- Class Rules
- Venue for National Contest
- General

Please bring a supper plate!

Comings and Goings

The Zephyr Class has relied on the voluntary efforts of many people over the years. **Rhys Burton**, of the Auckland Association has indicated he wishes to reduce his involvement with the ZOA. Rhys has had a long association with yachting administration. He was instrumental in the formation of the Auckland Zephyr Owners group after the National Association moved south to Christchurch. The emergence of the AZO prompted the revival of the National Association.

Bill Ackland, from Lower Hutt has refurbished No 92 and has sailed locally, and on Lake Taupo. He's likely to be found at Heretaunga Boating Club next season.

Vicki and Trevor Drew-Cotterill, with 172 *Elma* and 22 *Gae* between them, are helping to boost numbers in Waiuku.

By Association...

The last few months has seen steady progress on a number of issues before the National Association.

NZZOA Constitution

A copy of the NZZOA Constitution was reclaimed from the Registrar of Incorporated Societies, who informed us that we were several years behind in filing our annual financial returns, as required under the Act, and in danger of losing our registration as an Incorporated Society. Alex Aitken had to set to and provide the required documents.

Cedar Hull

The last remaining cedar hull built by Noel May, has been purchased by Fred Elley, currently sailing No 64 Mystic. There was some confusion around the time of purchase, as two people were interested in it at the same time. We are indebted to Rhys Burton and Dennis Craig for sorting that out.

Official Zephyr Builder

We have an Auckland Boatbuilder interested in taking over the mould and continuing to build Zephyrs. Under the Class Rules he will need to be appointed as an official builder, quite how that should be handled is unclear at the moment. Again, thanks to Dennis and Rhys for their work on that. We will keep you posted on that.

National Contest

Possibilities for the 1998 contest are still being worked on. New Plymouth, Whitianga, and Waiuku emerge as possibilities. The decision on this will need to be made by the end of May, if we want the dates and venue included in the YNZ programme of events.

NZZOA Annual General Meeting

Looks like it will need to be held in August, probably in Christchurch. Alex and I will attempt to get the agenda out in a July edition of West Wind, and try to consult on the matters we need to discuss.

CZOA Annual General Meeting

The CZOA AGM is to be held in May, and will also serve as a bit of a forum for national issues. We will keep you posted on that.

Revised Class Rules

I have completed a draft revision of the 1990 rules for discussion. There is only one change, a 1993 amendment on deckposts that has been incorporated. The measuring form has been revised to incorporate all the measurements contained in the class rules and arranged to reflect a logical measuring sequence. The *Guide to the Class Rules*, produced by Brett Blakewell-White in 1991 has been revised for inclusion as an appendix.

National Championship 1998

I outlined the options for the 1988 National Championships in the last newsletter. The current possibilities would appear to be:

New Plymouth: The possibility of sailing with the Starlings in order to promote interest in the class has been mentioned. The Starling National Championships will be held at New Plymouth Yacht Club in mid-January (approximately 11-18), according to Yachting New Zealand's recent announcement. We would have to approach the New Plymouth Yacht Club and request our Championship be sailed in conjunction. No approach of this sort has been made yet.

Whitianga: Sailing in conjunction with the Waikato-Thames Centreboard Regatta at Waitangi Weekend (February) remains a possibility. Whitianga offers an inshore and outside course venues, and has a variety of accommodation. It is a considerable drive for those travelling to get there. The 1999 Starling National Championships are to be held in Whitianga, with the P Class nearby at Tauranga.

Waiuku: The Waiuku Club have offered to host an Easter 1998 Championship, having determined that the tides will be suitable. We have sailed a successful contest there in the early 1980s. The area is tidal in similar fashion to French Bay.

Decision Time Frame: We will need to decide on this by the end of May if we want the event listed in the YNZ programme, but also to give any host club ample warning.

For the Armchair Sailor...

Positioning-The Logic of Sailboat Racing, Stuart H Walker, Norton and Company, NY 1991.

Those of you who enjoy reading about yachting, may be interested in this book by Stuart Walker. Stuart Walker has a methodical and analytical approach to yacht racing, and explains his approach in this book. He divides all races into Categories. Category I - Oscillating Winds, Category II - One Side is Obviously Advantaged, and Category III - None of the Above. Each leg of the course in each category is explored and illustrated with examples from Walker's extensive competitive experience. He offers a coherent and rational framework for tactical decision making during a yacht race. It doesn't work all the time, as his examples reveal!

A paediatrician in Maryland, Walker has authored a number of books, including *Winning, the Psychology of Competition*. He is one of the more thoughtful, but perhaps lesser known yachting authors.

Tactics and Strategy Simulator, Posey Yacht Design.

I was tempted into the purchase of this simulator by the growing availability of all sorts of sailing simulators. This one has lots of features, different courses, classes, a choice of fleet or match racing and a variety of degrees of difficulty. Weather, course and current conditions can be varied, as can the fleet size. The races can be executed at variable speeds, depending on the phase of the race - slow (real time) at the starts etc. I spent a good bit of time at it initially, but I soon tired of forgetting to take the spinnaker down at the bottom mark, and I seemed to be forever hitting the marks on rounding them. Worth a look if you are into simulators and games.

The 1997-2000 Yacht Racing Rules

Racing Rules on the Internet

Those of you who subscribe to the popular sailing magazines will have got wind of the rule changes leading up to the next Olympics. I visited the ISAF (International Sailing Federation - as the IRYU is now known) World Wide Web home page for a browse in the rules area. For those who Net surf as well as sail Zephyrs, it is possible to peruse the new rules and some of the preliminary comment on them.

David Dallenbaugh, editor of the informative (and expensive) *Speed Smarts* devoted the Jan/Feb edition to the implications of the new rules, and made it available on the ISAF home page (<http://sailing.org/rules>). In that edition, Bill Bentsen, a key member of the US and ISAF racing rules committees for

many years, explained the developmental philosophy behind the new rules, and I have summarised some of his comments.

Rules Philosophy

The main philosophy behind the rule changes appears to have been simplicity and clarity, in response to a perception from both judges and competitors that the rules were becoming too complicated. In addition, changes to the rule book had accumulated in patch work fashion over the years, making it difficult to understand. The new rule book aims for greater clarity with attention to how each sentence is put together and an attempt to make the entire rule book a more coherent whole. It is hoped that the practical effect of increased

clarity that the rules will be easier to learn - and if they are easier to learn, they will be easier to remember.

Changing the Sailing Game

Changing the rules changes the game of sailing, and there are some important changes to the game! Mast abeam was eliminated because it allowed simplification of the sailing game. New limitations on tacking at the windward mark (new rule 18.3) were introduced to make life better at

crowded windward marks. While simplicity was sought, it remained more important to have a rule that worked well, rather than to have just a simpler rule.

To directly quote Bill Bentsen, “

Fundamentally, the biggest change is that the boat itself is no

longer a legitimate physical weapon; that is, it's no longer acceptable to think of the boat as a piece of equipment that can be used to apply physical force against an opponent. Sailing is no longer a contact sport like it used to be when you could luff suddenly and rapidly and hit another boat. That wasn't good for the sport. Now I think sailing is more respectable because no one will be trying to hit other boats.”

According to Bentsen, there are four or five places where the new rules bring notable changes. These include: Avoiding Contact (rule 14); Changing Course (rule 16), which may allow more "hunting" than before; On the Same Tack - Proper Course (rule 17), which is a big change because there's no more mast abeam and there's no more unrestricted luffing; and Tacking at Marks and Obstructions (rule 18.3), which puts limits on a boat that tacks near a mark.

Learning the New Rules

As always, the best way to learn the new rules is to buy the book (or the disk) and read them up, then sail, talk with fellow sailors, read some more, and repeat the cycle. Discuss rules situations that come up during races, especially anything you don't understand. Then go back and read the rules again. After a while, the new rules become totally familiar.

Specific rules for special attention

There are three definitions to look at very carefully. The first is keep clear, which is related to rule 16 (Changing Course) and to the elimination of sudden luffing. The second is room, which has a lot to do with how much you can hunt as a right-of-way boat. Note that room includes not only space but the notion of time (due to the word "promptly"). The third thing to study is the last sentence in the definition of obstruction. This will come into play in three-boat situations where one

Are you a member.....??

If you have received a copy of this newsletter, and you're not a member of NZZOA, it is because we are hoping you will join us. Subscriptions are \$15 per year. Consider it an investment in your recreational future, and the resale value of your boat. A popular class creates a demand for Zephyrs, as well as giving you someone to sail with and against. Put it in your budget for next season.

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