

West Wind

The Newsletter of the NZ Zephyr Owners' Association

Volume 45 Issue 2

Internet address: www.zoa.cjb.net

December 2000

EDITORIAL

This rather brief West Wind is to reassure you all that there is still life in the ZOA, and that we have not gone to sleep at the helm. Alex Aitken was slowed down by the intrusion of a short viral illness into his busy retirement, but he is now fully recovered. Family and work commitments, plus a more active role in administering Hamilton Yacht Club has limited my time on the water to a handful of occasions so far this year - circumstances similar to many in the Zephyr fleet over the years.

Nationally the class continues to hang in there. Traditional strong holds of Hamilton and Canterbury are either stable or growing. The Auckland area looks to be responding to the promotional efforts of Dennis Craig, Bob Allen and Co, with interest returning at French Bay and growing in the West of Auckland. Boats advertised for sale turn over quickly.

Whilst I have not been out on the water much this season, I have found time to tinker with my boat. My now not so new #257 seemed slower than my old boat, especially in light to moderate conditions, so I paid some attention to my sail battens. Frank Ward, one of our senior skippers, reminded me of one of Murray Sargisson's 1981 West Wind "Tuning for Speed" articles. Murray suggested using a standard compression of 600gms for all battens to achieve maximum camber at 35% of batten length. I found that the draft position in my current set of battens went to 50% with 500gms or less! Interestingly the Blue Streak battens from Doyle Sails have a consistent draft position at 40%, but require compressions of up to 1.5kg to induce a draft depth of about 15%. This would rate them as very stiff.

I got some fibreglass from the Christchurch supplier mentioned in last month's West Wind and have set to with the belt sander. Getting a good shape requires a bit of practice. The longer, lower battens tend to be quite flexible, so it is difficult to get the draft to move forward without making them too soft. The shorter and higher ones are quite stiff by contrast, and a lot of material needs to be ground off. It can be hard to achieve a good even shape.

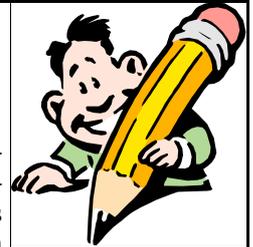
I mentioned in last month's West Wind that our Patron Noel May had built a handsome scale model of a Zephyr. We will canvas ideas on how to use this at the National Contest in Timaru, but current thinking is that it should be for the handicap winner, as we do not currently have trophy for that. We have been a bit slow in responding officially to Noel, but we would like to put it to the gathering in Timaru.

Another suggestion has been to transfer the Annual General Meeting to the National Contest each year. That is where we have the largest gathering of members, and it would save us the costs in having either Alex or myself attend AGMs.

Jason Dolores continues to maintain the Zephyr Web Site, and has an interest in developing them for other people. If you have needs in this area, we can help you contact him.

**Any ideas for the National Champs venue for next year?
Lower North Island? Back to Tauranga? Auckland area?**

FROM THE PEN OF ALEX AITKEN National President



The Zephyr fleets around the three regions seem to be in good heart. I attended the Canterbury Zephyr Owners meeting the other night and when asked for comments on the national front, Timaru 4th - 7th of January 2001 was the main topic. Canterbury, with assistance from Jon Olds in Timaru, are doing an excellent job to ensure the contest is well run. The social programme offers dinners, BBQ's, spot prizes and ample time for socialising. Your association has negotiated a major spot prize with Doyle Sails. All contestants will have their names placed in the hat and the winner will receive a voucher for a new sail valued at \$585.00. This draw will take place on Saturday evening. Jon has invited us for a social evening and BBQ at his place. Jon's hospitality at the 1999 contest was very much appreciated and we thank him for his kind offer.

Talking to Rob the other night and he confirms that three Hamilton and one Auckland entry will be challenging the mighty south. Make sure you get your entry forms in by the 30th of December. Late entries, (for an extra fee) will be accepted prior to the first race.

Have you read the article in November issue of Sailing New Zealand? Auckland Zephyr owners feature in a three page article. Thanks Dennis and Bob for your input. Interesting to read that someone is willing to make wooden spars. By the number of wooden masts around it appears that some owners like to keep their boats authentic. Judging by recent results on Hamilton Lake a good wooden spar will perform up to the standards of alloy ones. I still think it's the hand on the tiller that dictates performance. Rob says that 22 Zephyrs contested the annual event on the lake. The fleet numbers are an encouraging sign that the class is alive and well.

Canterbury is up and running with an enthusiastic number of Zephyrs out on the estuary and the Waimak river. Secretary, Russell Wenham has produced another bulletin featuring some very interesting and amusing articles. People is what it's all about. Pigeon Bay is the venue for the five race South Island Championship 9th-10th December and this usually attracts a large fleet.

National subscriptions paid to date stand at 66 with a number still to come. Auckland is a record 13 of that total. I am sure that the City of Sails has the potential to attract more financial members!! In the trading corner I have made reference to some interesting developments in the Auckland scene. It would appear that the Zephyr fleet is likely to make a come back and we need boats urgently, ready to launch or suitable for restoration.

Christmas is once again a time for strengthening family bonds. On behalf of the National ZOA could I wish you and your families all the best for this festive season and 2001.

HAMILTON YACHT CLUB ZEPHYR WEEKEND

Twenty two skippers contested the "Freshwater Worlds" held at Hamilton Yacht Club over the weekend of December 2nd and 3rd. Race Officer Peter Hutchinson, aided by now ex-Zephyr sailor Frank Lee was blessed with sufficient wind to maintain the schedule of races. However, not all of it was from the same direction at the same time!

Bob Allen, Russell Turner, Andrew Geddes and Colin Maddren ventured south for the event, with Bob taking home the silver ware with a very consistent 2,1,1,3,3 performance. Bob showed good boat speed for the whole series and demonstrated good mastery of the shifting lake conditions. Jack Ninnes was the best of the rest (1,2,7,4,1) pushed hard by Brian Smith (3,5,2,2,DSQ) until an OCS in last race dropped him down the rankings in favour of Melanie Hutchinson (4,6,10,1,9) and Roger Walker (11,3,8,7,2).

Saturday dawned fine and still, but the breeze filled in as we rigged up, settling into a predominantly westerly breeze that was very patchy at times. Big swings in direction were the order of the day, making for theological sailing conditions (the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away). Bob Allen and Jack Ninnes soon confirmed themselves as the skippers to beat, with Brian Smith coming from behind in a couple of races.

Sunday dawned to a breeze more from the north with a promise of fresh conditions. A slalom style course was laid with a gybe mark just off the club house in anticipation of some action for the spectators. The first race of the morning started in fresh conditions, but they never really settled in, with only an occasional gust allowing planing. Variable conditions again prevailed making for big gains and losses, depending upon which side of the course was selected.

This event saw a couple of newcomers to the class and the event. John de Fluiter has started in #109 this season, and took out the handicap prize. Colin Maddren in #253 sailed on Saturday only for a 5, 15, 5, DNS, DNS. Colin is an experienced sailor with a background in Lasers and keel boats. He will be down in Timaru and should acquit himself well. Russell Turner enjoyed himself in the newest boat in the fleet, the immaculately finished #255. Andrew Geddes also enjoyed himself in his refurbished boat.

Local Zephyr President Craig Peebles was absent from the sailing fleet this year, recovering from recent elbow surgery on Patrol boat duties. Frank Ward was also missing, again after recent surgery, but present amongst the spectators.

Prizes this year were exceptional, thanks to the shopping talents of Annette Fisher who was once again in the fleet. Annette managed to stretch the budget for prizes to the first eight on championship and handicap.

As an event, the "Freshwater Worlds" continue to be popular, with fleet sizes in the twenties for the last few years. The variable conditions on the lake are compensated for tight racing and good facilities for spectators. If anyone from the south wants to try out the event for a weekend away one year, we would do our best to provide a boat and accommodation.

Fleet sizes for club racing in Hamilton continue to be good, regularly in the 15-20 boat range. Locally the class continues to attract interest from folk returning to sailing, or looking to take it up in the sport as an adult.

Rob Ebert

ZOA

Trading corner and finances

Trading for this year has come mainly from the Canterbury region. To date the sale of Zephyr components stands three sails, three sets of battens, one alloy mast and boom.

There are three sails in stock. One is set aside for the spot prize in Timaru, and one is being held pending confirmation. If you want a new sail before the new year please let me know. The next batch will probably be available in mid to late January. One alloy mast is in stock in Christchurch. The Cedar Hull is stored at French Bay Boating Club.

There are some promising developments in Auckland. An email communication from Bob Allen suggests that a club in the Auckland region is very keen to resurrect a Zephyr fleet and could be interested in buying the new hull. The same club is wanting to purchase two good boats now and will consider older boats that can be professionally restored.

ZOA Finances as at 24 November 2000

ASB cheque account	957.69
ASB 50 Accelerator	4641.73
ASB 51	<u>521.31</u>
Subscriptions paid ZOA	270.00
plus received (as at 8/12/00)	720.00
Donations	<u>30.00</u>
Total admin costs to date	<u>657.49</u>

ZEPHYRS FOR SALE

#14 Karora

Wooden mast, alloy boom, two sails, beach trolley
Optional road trailer. Good all round order.
Contact: Ian Buck (07) 8541151

#215 Minx

Alloy rig, galvanised boat trailer with tool box
Beautiful red with silver stripe and well looked after
Contact: Allan Richardson (07) 856 7796
Fax (07) 8556928
email richkiwi@ihug.co.nz

#34 Pussyfoot

Contact Peter Skilbeck (07) 388 1115 (Taihape)

#116 Frith

Contact Barry Mackie (07) 849 6556

#156 Chinook

Wooden rig, beach trolley, road trailer, good sail.
Needs minor repairs
Contact Rick Cable 03 312 2667

SUBSCRIPTIONS 1999-2000

Subscriptions for 1999 are \$15.00 for the NZZOA, and \$10.00 for local associations in Auckland, Hamilton and Christchurch. If you are an "orphan" outside these areas, the \$15.00 NZZOA sub can be forwarded to Alex Aitken, President, or Rob Ebert, Secretary. Please include your boat name and number, so we can update the Zephyr Register.

We need your support for all sorts of reasons!