

West Wind

The Newsletter of the NZ Zephyr Owners' Association

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December 2009

Editorial

The fifty-fourth season for the class is well underway with good levels of activity around the country. Preparations are in hand for the Tauranga Nationals. We are hoping for a good attendance, recognizing (albeit reluctantly!) that the current economic climate may have an impact on Zephyr sailors recreational plans.

ZOA Web Site

On the ZOA front, Tim Sadler has transformed the ZOA web site. The old site has been "decommissioned" and will no longer be maintained. The new site can be updated from computer with Internet access and regions can maintain their section of interest. The whole process has not been without the odd hitch. The Hamilton Yacht Club, Mistral Owners' Assn and the ZOA have been sharing the same site and same CityDesk application for all their sites. Now they have all done different things in a way that the ISP is not easily able to support. We may have to review our hosting arrangements in the near future.

ZOA Technical Committee

There was considerable rules discussion at the last AGM about the current state of our rules and the need for greater scrutiny of boats at National Championships. A sub-committee has been convened to look at the issues, with a degree of consultation with the regions. The results are published inside - just remember it is a discussion document circulated so that we can talk some of the issues through in the National Championships environment. There is general support for a Technical Committee as a sub-committee of the ZOA and I have proposed a Constitutional amendment to appoint a Chief Measurer.

Scrutiny at Tauranga

The degree of scrutiny intended for National Championships should be signaled in the Notice of Race and practical arrangements for measuring sorted out with the host club. We have not had the time, or given precise thought to the arrangements needed for Tauranga. However, the intention is to check foil dimensions and to re-weigh boats that have initially measured underweight. As Murray Sargisson has pointed out, the class has traditionally relied on sailors ensuring their boats comply with the rules and it would be great to see this tradition continue to dominate, supplemented by some measurement practices at Nationals. What the class wants or needs, we still need to determine.

National Championship Venue, 2011

There has been some discussion about where to hold the 2011 Nationals. Worsler Bay have been keen to host them as a "South Island" contest, however Canterbury have expressed interest in retaining the strict North Island/South Island rotation and to host them in the South. That would make any contest in Worsler Bay a "North Island" event with potentially a three year gap between Auckland hosted contests. Clearly, there is more discussion and horse trading to be done on this issue.

President's Report

Now that the warmer weather has arrived more Zephyr skippers are coming out of winter hibernation. It's great to see new active fleets developing in Tauranga and Wellington. Our current boat register shows Tauranga with 16 Zephyrs and Wellington with 14. With the Nationals in Tauranga in January we expect a significant number of visitors from other regions to make this a great event. Tim Snedden will be arriving in Tauranga in style with "Pilatus" perched on the top deck of his 17m launch Moanalua II.

Compliance to the measurement rules continues to be a hot topic. A rules/technical committee is being formed and at this stage consists of Rob Ebert (Hamilton), Matt Hannah (Christchurch), Don le Page (Christchurch), Shane Smith (Christchurch), Steve Pyatt (Auckland), Russell Turner (Auckland), Don Currie (Auckland) with myself in the chair and Grant Beck as technical advisor. It is important to have this group functioning and agreeing on technical/measurement issues as soon as possible as there are many uncertainties regarding rule interpretation and implementation. Some members would like to see key measurements enforced when at the 2010 Nationals. However the onus at this event will be, as in the past, on individuals to ensure they have a valid certificate for presentation on registration. I expect the new rules/technical committee to be functioning early 2010 and to present its recommendations to the ZOA Executive by the second quarter.

The Zephyr class has survived well for many years relying on the honesty and integrity of the owners ensuring their Zephyrs comply with the measurement rules. This has been one of the attractive aspects of the class which we are keen to retain. However we do recognize that the class is now attracting a high calibre of sailors used to pushing the limits as they may have done in other classes they have sailed in. Measurement at National contests is inevitable and, with the support of the rules/technical committee, will be introduced in 2011.

I would like to wish all Zephyr Owners and their families a very Merry Christmas and enjoyable sailing in the New Year. I look forward to sharing with you memorable sailing experiences in 2010.

Murray Sargisson



Trading

Alex Aitken reports steady activity on the trading front. We have sold a considerable number of the new sails now. Most of the active fleet are using them. Now that the batten pocket Velcro's have been sorted out, we are pretty happy with the outcome. It took a while, but we worked steadily through the issues as they arose.

Treasurer/Trading Role

Alex is in his last year in the Trading Corner. We need someone else to take on this vital roles. If you have a mind to contribute, please make yourself known to us.

Rob Ebert

Canterbury News

Canterbury Club sailing opened in early September at most Clubs, with club sailing dominating the early calendar.

The weather was slow to warm up and the Zephyr entries at Champs and Estuary Pennants have been down a little. The racing has been very close, which is reflected in the variety of names taking 4th to 6th placings, although the top placings are still tightly held by a few. Matt Hix is now primarily sailing a laser.

The Canterbury Zephyr Championship is sailed through the season with four days at different clubs making an eight race series.

Canterbury Zephyr Champs race 1&2 were at Waimak WSPBC 17th Oct. 18 boats entered with a steady north easterly. Racing was very close, especially in the middle of the fleet. On the restricted Waimakariri river a good start was important, those coming 4th, 5th & 6th in first race were at the back in the second race. First equal were M Hix & M Hannah, 3rd S Smith, 4th R Ineson.

The South Island Championship was held at Pigeon Bay 5th&6th Dec. This is a popular venue with an attractive grassed rigging area for socializing, and good sailing waters. Unfortunately entries of 17 were less than normal. We had excellent racing on Saturday with a building easterly breeze. The old hands were given a wake up call, in the first race, Thomas McKellar WSPBC, a student sailing at Pigeon Bay for the first time, led at the top mark and comfortably retained his lead to the finish. As the wind built in race 2&3 Matt Hannah, Murray Hay & Richard Ineson were the dominant sailors.

Sunday was warm and still! A delayed start meant some seven boats elected not to race. Those that stayed enjoyed a great sail in the 4th race. The 5th race was shortened as the breeze started to fade. Final placings in the South Island Championship were; 1st M Hannah, 2nd M Hay, 3rd R Ineson, 4th T McKellar. Handicap placings; 1st G Bird 2nd T McKellar.

The CZOA has had two well attended meetings with a lot of interest in the proposed rules/tech committee, and the venues for future Nationals. The Chairman's affair with "Mistress Overdone" is creating interest, members are waiting with anticipation to see her on the water as she will be the first 500 series hull in Canterbury.

John Foster CZOA



Mark rounding action at the South Island Zephyr Champs in Pigeon Bay, Canterbury. Must be time we had another Nationals there!

Rules Discussion

In the wake of comments at the last AGM a group of Auckland ZOA members met at the invitation of the ZOA Chair to consider issues raised at the AGM. Their comments and ideas were circulated to Canterbury members, who met and added their own comments. What follows is the outcome of these discussions.

Observations

The Zephyr class was a mixture of philosophies. Its stated aim is that of a one-design class by virtue of standard hulls, sails and foils and spars. Variability from changes in suppliers and technology was recognized. However, foils, cockpit and sail control layouts were unrestricted and essentially "open".

Standardisation of hulls was initially achieved by there being only one builder. The very first set of rules has an introductory paragraph stating: *The following rules are designed to keep the class uniform and of a high standard, therefore no weight restriction should be necessary.* Control of hull weight was therefore attempted by specifying the finishing timbers in these initial rules.

This was eroded by the establishment of a minimum class weight, set at 57kgs, the lightest of the boats weighed. Establishing a class weight then created an incentive for owners to review their use of "recommended" finishing timbers in an effort to save weight, and to undertake remedial modifications to remove weight.

The meeting accepted the "determinants of speed" philosophy - that hull shape, hull weight, spars and sails were the major determinants of performance. It was therefore felt that the Class Restrictions could "lighten up" on the rules specifying finishing detail now that a minimum weight was in place. Arguments for increasing the minimum hull weight a small amount to reduce pressure to lighten boats were felt to be compelling, though controversial.

To this end, a list of rules/issues that could be reviewed was generated - see page 3, opposite.

Technical/Measurement Committee

Most classes have a dedicated group looking at the rules and compliance. Large international classes retain paid technical "officers" who may fulfil a technical function for more than one class. Competition within the Zephyr class is now such that this is highly desirable. General provisions for forming sub committees within the ZOA Constitution would enable a Measurement/Technical Committee to be established by the Executive. It could be formalized by a change to the Constitution, if this was felt to be desirable.

The committee would organize measurement at national championships, among other things.

Measurement Certificates

The current rules require boats to have a valid measuring certificate, without making it clear what this is. "Peculiarities" are noted on the measurement form, but how rule transgressions are handled is not apparent. This is undesirable. I would prefer to see Certificates issues on behalf of the technical committee, with judgements made about how transgressions should be handled.

Recommendations

That a technical committee be formed, chaired by the ZOA President in the first instance. It could subsequently be formed by the ZOA Exec, who may elect to call for nominations. Constitutional changes to support the Technical Committee could include the appointment of a Chief Measurer at the AGM. Obvious tasks for the Technical Committee are to:

- Progress the issues above outlined herein
- Organize measuring for National Championships in conjunction with the host club.
- Sort out precisely what is meant by a valid measuring certificate, and how noted "peculiarities" should be handled.

Issue	Comment
Carbon and Exotics	Fibreglass and carbon fibre are acceptable for patch reinforcing and hull coatings. Current rules prohibit hull construction in these materials. Variation in opinion as to whether fibreglass coating of hulls only is acceptable, or whether both carbon fibre and fibreglass coating of hulls should be allowed. Acknowledged that this rule will be difficult to police.
Curved Traveller	Already fitted to a number of boats and felt to be acceptable. Recognised need to clarify if it can extend past the cockpit carlin.
Curved Centrethwart	Curved refers to fore and aft radius, as all centrewarts are curved otherwise. Centrewarts must conform to the finishing plan, in that they go “straight” across the boat.
Reduced deck beams	Some disagreement here. Reducing the profile of deck beams, provided they remain “adequate” – especially where there is an adjacent bulkhead is a means of weight reduction, albeit small. Alternative view is that they should conform to the plans.
Strong Back	Strong back forward of the centrecase is an historic feature of some Zephyrs, seemingly those completed in Canterbury. This should be deemed acceptable.
Floor Battens	Recommended for hull strengthening. Suggested that construction must be in clear timber as per rules.
Centrecase	Shape of the case is a feature of the class and must be retained. Minimum case height to be established. Centrespacers between the fore and aft toes can be omitted. Old rules establish that the minimum case height is 11”. Suggest adding this to the class rules and measurement form.
Mast Collar	Not strictly necessary now that coamings have moved forward, but a feature of the class. Suggest height to be reduced 18mm, to reflect common timber sizes.
Coamings	A distinctive feature of the boats. Ideally, should have a minimum distance from the gunwale and a specified “sweep” angle aft. Sweep angle of 60 plus or minus 10 degrees to be specified.
Gooseneck	Acceptable to step them back as is currently happening. Distance to the pivot point to be established to prevent extremes – though there may be a “natural” limit. Suggested that the goose neck pivot point to be restricted to 65mm (no current restriction)
Centreboards	General agreement that gybing boards need to be explicitly banned. Current rules do not make the relationship between case and foil sizes clear, in that the maximum foil size and the case width are the same. Centrecase sizes have also changed with wear over the years. Suggested that maximum board thickness be 22mm, but case dimensions be increased to 23-24mm. This would be relatively easy to sand out for most boats.
Hull Weight	An increase in the class weight to 59kgs, would remove much of the impetus to get weight down, though this may be difficult. Understanding achievable weights at various stages of construction to guide an accurate final weight highly desirable. The controversial nature of any weight increase proposal was acknowledged.
Buoyancy	Must comply with ISAF rules on volume and be configured as per the finishing plans. ZOA needs to clarify this.
Hull Shape	Obtensibly a one design hull, but a measuring jig was desirable. Could be taken off the CAD plans. However, this would raise questions about how any variation in shapes would be handled.
Mast Step Height	Current maximum to remain. Suggestion that deck stepped masts may not be specifically excluded if any increase in mast step height can be deducted from the mast length.
Mast Step Floor	Mast step as per finishing plan may be strengthened, but not reduced.
Gunwales	To be retained as at present.
Mast length	Standardize measurement of mast length to top of sheave. Limit dimensions of any block at the base of the mast to 25mm.
Sidestays	No change recommended.
Mast Hole	Two dimensions and shape to be retained as per current rules. Suggestion that packing to restrict mast movement be permitted.
Renovation changes	Alterations permitted to hulls being refurbished to permit weight reduction, as long as compliance with finishing plans remains. Initial fit out of new hulls from a builder cannot be changed without permission of the ZOA. Suggested that this requires clarification as to what might be included in “alterations permitted to hulls being refurbished”
Correction of building flaws	Owners who want to make good any defects, must have the ZOA’s permission. In addition, the ZOA needs to know about any building flaws.
Rudder Gudgeons	Existing restriction is that the pivot should be not more than 100mm off transom. This should be replaced with a restriction that the forward face of the rudder blade should not be more than 100mm off the transom. The existing rule would allow extreme placement of the rudder blade well aft of the transom.
Mast Step	The maximum fore and aft movement of the mast in the mast step should be 20mm. The existing rule mentions 20mm but is not clear.



**THE 2010 ZEPHYR CLASS
NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS**

Wednesday 20th January 2010 to Sunday 24th January 2010

Organising Authority:

TAURANGA YACHT AND POWER BOAT CLUB (Inc)

PO Box 14352, Tauranga. NEW ZEALAND

Phone (64) 07 578 5512 Fax 07 578 5595

Email zephyrs@yacht.org.nz

NOTICE OF RACE

4 SCHEDULE

4.1 Registration	Wed, 20 th Jan Thurs, 21 st Jan	1000-1800hrs 0830-0945 hrs
4.2 Briefing	Thurs, 21 st Jan	0945 hrs
4.3 Dates of Racing	Thurs, 21 st Jan Fri 22 nd Jan Sat 23 rd Jan Sun 24 th Jan	Invitation Race Race 1 & 2 Race 3,4&5 Race 6,7&8 Race 9

A sharp eyed reader noted an error in the racing schedule, so I have republished it here.

Auckland News

The Spring series is drawing to a close. 24 sailors took part over the course of the series with 17 racing regularly. The biggest fleet of 19 sailors took part last weekend at Murrays Bay. A great series was enjoyed by all with strong shifty holey westerlies prevalent at Murrays Bay and shifty SE and NW at Pt Chev and Manly. Most races were closely fought with this series being notable by the number of capsizes to be seen. This is a function of how hard most are pushing down wind especially in the fresh. The entire fleet is much more competitive shown by the close racing throughout the series. One mistake and 3 boats are past. With one race day to go Tim Snedden appears to have the series wrapped up. His worse counting race so far is 3rd. Greg Salthouse is currently 2nd with Steve Pyatt 3rd. The rest of the results could still change depending on race results for the last race of the series on the 20th Dec.

The Auckland Zephyr fleet is in great shape with several sailors battling for the top spot on any given day. The rest of the fleet seems to be closing up and enjoying much closer racing than in previous years.

Hamilton News

A quick update from Hamilton. A quiet start to our season, with fleet numbers down a bit. Rob Ebert has rejoined the fleet with his newly fitted "Zimmer Frame" attracting some interest. Initial results are promising, so count on a few more appearing in the Hamilton fleet. The Zephyr/Mistral weekend was a great success. Strong, shifty breezes challenged all competitors and those Mistral sailors brave enough to fly spinnakers turned on a great sight.

HYC and Hamilton Zephyr sailors are reflecting on the future of this event. We are looking at the Townson Memorial Centreboard Regatta concept - essentially including the Starlings in the weekend. This would give Starling sailors the idea that can sail for the remainder of their a careers in a Townson design!

Dubai Sojourn

I was fortunate enough to be asked by Dean Barker to be the non professional helmsman aboard the RC 44 'Artemis' for the fleet racing portion of the Sea Dubai regatta in Dubai in late November. The RC 44 series is run over 6 regattas during the northern summer, with Dubai being the finale and counting for double points.

The boats, which are a high performance one design created by Russell Coutts, are 44 feet in length, with a beam of 9 feet and a displacement of 3500kg. They carry a huge fractional rig with a square top main and are designed to be able to be sailed at the lighter air venues in the Med and on the European lakes such as Lake Garda. They are fully powered up in around 7 knots of breeze, and the crossover to the number 2 headsail is at 12 knots! They run asymmetrical spinnakers flown from a retractable prod, and need to be sailed at very hot angles downwind, particularly over 10-12 knots of breeze when the boats will slip easily onto the plane. We saw a top downwind speed of 18 knots on one of the practice days in a wind strength of about the same level, and 14-16 knots is the norm when the breeze is up at around 15 knots! They are sailed by a crew of 8, of which 4 are professionals, and the remainder, including the owner or substitute helmsman, must be amateurs.

The owner of 'Artemis', Torbjorn Tornqvist, is a Swedish national who also owns a TP52 of the same name. My involvement came because Torbjorn's partner was due to give birth to their first child at around the same time as the regatta. Our crew were all New Zealanders, with the "pros" being Team NZ's Dean Barker who called the tactics, Don Cowie (main) James Dagg (trimmer) and Jeremy Lomas (bow). All these guys have sailed with me in the past which made it very easy for me to slip into my helming role, despite not really having done much keelboat helming for over 10 years. The other non professionals were Derek Seward (pit), Kip Stanley-Harris (grinder) and Brett Elliott (trimmer) who are all excellent sailors.

The series consisted of a match racing series, where the professional (in our case Dean) steers, followed by a fleet racing series (with the owner steering) consisting of 10 races run over 3 days, with 9 windward leewards of 5-7 miles and a slightly longer harbour course. The fresher breezes which we saw in practice did not stick around for the regatta itself and day 1 of the match racing was abandoned without racing so that they were forced to run a shortened round robin on day 2 to constitute a series. We had a bad day with only 1 win in our 4 flights, which meant we came 9th overall, dropping for 1st to 4th overall for the season's match racing.

We sailed consistently in the fleet racing to finish 2nd for the regatta behind Team NZ's tactician Ray Davies who was the professional skipper aboard 'No Way Back' and who sailed an excellent regatta. This result meant that 'Artemis' retained its overall 1st place for the season's fleet racing championship and ended up 2nd overall (for the combined fleet and match racing) for the season behind 'No Way Back'.

I thoroughly enjoyed the whole experience and it was a real privilege to sail with these top level professionals who make the job of the helmsman relatively easy and who have the boat handling down to perfection. The RC 44 website www.rc44.com has some excellent video of the boats racing.

Tim Snedden