

West Wind

The Newsletter of the NZ Zephyr Owners' Association

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Editorial

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the West Wind. It is a little bit "last minute" as is customary with things at this time of the year - a bit of an update on class activities over the past few months.

National Championships, Akaroa

Arrangements are in place for the Akaroa event as you will see from the comments in this edition. Canterbury sailors have been determining that the venue is "fit for purpose" or attempting to gain "home advantage" depending on your point of view. After the earthquake in the region, whose consequences are detailed inside, Canterbury needs an economic boost, and what better way than to attend the Nationals. It is a "win win!"

YNZ Service Award for Alex

A loyal (and well behaved) group of Zephyr sailors attended the Yachting NZ Awards ceremony in October, in support of



Alex Aitken receiving a YNZ Service Award. Andy Knowles and Jimmy Gilpin were on the Tauranga YC table, and they were much rowdier! Master of Ceremonies, Peter Montgomery commented at some length on the class, especially the 50th Jubilee regatta some years ago. Alex handled the situation well when asked to "ad lib" on the state of

sailing in Canterbury in the wake of the earthquake by the MC.

Tauranga Update

Andy Knowles commented that Zephyrs have been turning out regularly in Tauranga, though its been a bit quiet in recent weekends. We have enjoyed some good racing & fun trips away in the first half of the season.

The highlight for the team that went would have to be the sprint racing in Rotorua. Great weather, great race management, and very enjoyable tall stories.

Most of us went to the Hamilton Zephyr weekend, unfortunately leaving behind some who had to work. Great race management again, weather not quite as good, but excellent tall stories were continued, thanks to Race Officer & host, Jim Brokenshire.

Then on to Auckland, Peter Blake regatta. Difficult weather, and a race team not quite managing to handle a combination of changeable winds, lots of marks and what seemed like hundreds of Optis, P class, Starlings, Splashes & Lasers, some with numbers of general recalls. The race results still bear little resemblance to reality, some weeks later.

In Tauranga, we have had about 5 or so boats most weeks, with different guys featuring strongly on each day. One week, Geoff Collins won just about everything. Another week, it was Pete

Stacey. Another week, Andy Knowles, but Bob Smyth has the steadiest results of all. Bill Faulkner & Hansie Echolz have been keeping the rest of us honest, with some good results.

Apart from some stories that cannot be published in this family magazine, most discussion has centred around weight. No not the weight of the centrefold ladies in Playboy, but that of some of our team members, and of course our boats. Bob Smyth & Andy Knowles are quoted: "we are too heavy to sail Zephyrs, we need more wind tomorrow, pass another steak please". Pete Stacey & Geoff Collins: "We are too light to sail Zephyrs, we need to eat more, but we cant eat or drink any more". Hansie: "I am about the right weight, but that blonde over there needs feeding up". Bill: "Is that a Tauranga Mayoral election voter? Should I tell her about my other boat? It is much bigger than this one".

We are all looking forward to some decent weather in the second half of the season, and the North Island Champs at Rotorua in mid March. Unfortunately, family commitments mean that only a small (not in stature, but in numbers) team is going to the Nationals in Akaroa.

Canterbury Zephyr Sailing so far.....

A sluggish start, no surprise. Earthquake damage has caused the closure of Pleasant Point Yacht and Power Boat Club altogether, although their season's programme has continued at a different venue, initially Naval Point (scene of the 2009 Nationals) and from here on, at Mount Pleasant Yacht Club. Apart from the clubhouse being damaged beyond repair, the slipway was also seriously damaged. Fortunately the rescue boats and equipment were able to be rescued unharmed. No serious problem appears to have been observed at the other clubs.

As a consequence of ruptured sewers and drains taking a considerable time to locate and repair, the contents, especially during periods of high rainfall, have been leaking into the Avon, Heathcote and Waimakariri rivers and pollution levels in the Estuary and Waimakariri have been high until October/November curtailing some of the sailing. Initially the south and subsequently the whole of the estuary have become available for safe sailing. Even salmon and trout fishing is now allowed in the Waimakariri, although the water is not potable; I doubt that this will deter the hardy Waimak types.

Disappointing though the club, infrastructural and sailing ground issues have been, the most serious concern has been firstly the number of people who have lost their homes completely, and secondly, the business premises extensively damaged and requiring the tenants to move. Further, though new buildings will eventually be rebuilt in time, rents and leases will be considerably more expensive and it is likely that many small businesses will simply not be able to afford them. Worse, although some retail outlets in badly hit areas like Sydenham remain open for business, shoppers are staying away in droves.



The net effect is that several thousand small businesses may be forced to close over the next year.

As expected some Zephyr owners have been preoccupied with these problems and sailing has been required to take a distant second place. At the most recent Estuary pennants (a prestige event in the Canterbury calendar) and at the Estuary Club Class Championship only 10 and 7 boats respectively competed. Things looked up for the South Island event, and we are assured by others that they will roll out for the Nationals, so we are expecting an excellent fleet.

Planning is in hand for the National Contest in Akaroa and you are reminded that entries close in early January (unless you don't mind paying a bit more), and that accommodation must be booked ahead in Akaroa at this time of the year, especially as the Sunburst National Contest is at Pigeon Bay (over the hill) on the same weekend.

South Island Zephyr Champs– Akaroa, Dec 4th/5th 2010.

Twenty boats competed for the South Island Championship, this year a truly "South Island" event instead of a clandestine Canterbury event, if only because Naomi O'Leary made the arduous pilgrimage from her current home in Gore, which she assured us remains a part of the South Island. Naomi is the Area Manager for Fonterra, so the latter are now a fair target for sponsorship applications.

Every race brought a different mode of weather, sometimes during the race as well. Shane Smith *BIL #331* emerged a clear winner in all conditions, winning four of the five races with his discard an "OCS", which for the beginner means "obsessive-compulsive sailing". Some appear to believe it means "on course side" of the start line at the gun, but this is fantasy, isn't it Shane? The generous and self-deprecating Shane is happy to trade away his secrets, especially if you pour enough beer into him, and must be secretly bemused by the fact that such wisdom makes no difference whatever to the opposition.

Fortunately Shane, even in the absence of an unwell Matt Hannah, did not have it all his own way. Don Le Page *Frontrunner #256* kept the pressure on and obliged Shane to keep a fairly tight cover on him. At least I think he did; basically, for most of the fleet both boats were hull-down over the horizon, so it was a bit hard to tell.

Richard Ineson *Mi Mistress #260* coasted home for third, watch this man because a bit more time on the water (and none in it) will render him even more formidable. Another top performance came from Mike Agnew *Bad News #325* who taught the rest of the fleet what consistency is about with a 5, 5, 3, 5 series. Naomi, *Kiwi Monograms #330*, showed the benefit of regular sailing (and high-calcium diet) in the tough Gore sailing conditions with a disastrous first race where she reputedly dead-headed for 17th, thereafter turning in a blistering 5, 4, 4, 7 for 5th overall. Murray Hay *Destiny #92*, a boat which was ready a few years ago for the maritime equivalent of the knackers' yard, demonstrated what TLC and clever and consistent sailing will do by finishing 6th.

Thereafter there were some excellent performance in individual races – Peter Stokell *Victoria #322*, 1st in Race 4 stands out – but most struggled with consistency across a range of conditions. Murray Irwin *Saunter #318* was satisfied with his seventh overall, and distinguished himself with 6th in race 4 after sailing off by himself for a short holiday and starting over a minute late. Seeing how well it worked, I tried this novel trick myself actually, but found that as a technique it didn't work for me, and Richard Ineson was constrained to point out that winning is like examinations; you have to show up to give yourself a chance.

John Foster *Chortle #314* and a Testosterosa-red boat whose number I couldn't distinguish capsized in race 2 and retired after receiving outside help, a nobility which went unrecognised and unrewarded. A white hull was also spotted upside down between race 2 and 3, with artists licence either Tim Bird *Wild Child #29* or Keiran McDonald *Holy Cow #71* shall stand accused. I believe this identification is important and suggest that it should be recorded by the race officer, because a capsize is the sailing equivalent of a "gin-shot" in golf, except that it could be called a "rum-shot" and the usual practise of standing other competitors a shot of rum should be applied. I shall ask Phil Folter (our RO for both events), brimming with enthusiasm, ideas and ability, to introduce this for the National Contest.

Race 1 in a 6 to 8kt ENE was distinguished by a slight pin-end bias at the start being exacerbated by a sudden 15 deg left shift 1 second later that, to quote Shane was "completely predictable". The wise man (and women which included Cathryn Bridges *Zephere #307* continued left, and the foolish man (who also builds his house upon the sand) immediately tacked and went right to pick up the reverse shift, converting an unfortunate windshift into a disaster when the wind progressed a further 15 deg left and stayed there. What also made the start interesting was that the hooter gave an extra "pip" suggesting that someone was OCS. Naturally we all looked around to see who else we could blame, but the inimitable Wayne Nolan on "Leda", used the ancient art of maritime signalling involving shouting, waving furiously and pointing to indicate that it was an accidental pip. Wayne was awarded his boy scout badge for naval signalling.

Race 2 piped up to 18 kts at times, coming down, like the Assyrian, as a wolf on the fold, and scattering them far and wide. Some, as above, tried swimming the course, and Alex Aitkin *Zeno #147* went home after the race for an early shower and beer. In the event the wind moderated for race 3, not due to Alex' absence as far as I know. Race 4 Sunday was delayed until the sea breeze made a tardy appearance and then only fitfully, but the final race was sailed in a modest and steady hiking breeze.

Finally to our sturdy and generous work force our very grateful thanks. Naturally I shall neglect some vital people, but to RO Phil Folter and results coordinator Wayne Nolan and recorder Cecily; ASC commodore Steve Ditmer for his constant and helpful presence and use of his boat, Kit Grigg for the use of Leda; Chris Foster for registration and lunches and whatever the boys had forgotten to do; and the able crews of the rescue boats goes a special mention in dispatches.

Postscript; For any that hadn't already noticed, the finishing times were not recorded, so we are unable to calculate handicap places. Another innovation for the Nationals, and serious apologies to those we have thus carelessly deprived of their

Townson Centreboard Regatta, Hamilton, November 2010

The traditional Hamilton YC Zephyr Weekend morphed into the Townson Centreboard Regatta this year. Several years ago, HYC invited the Mistral Class to participate, with modest success. In the wake of Des Townson's death, and in an effort to keep New Zealand's indigenous classes going, the club added the Starling class this year. It is hard to be sure but it's probably the only time all the classes have raced together.

The weekend was great success with 22 Zephyrs. The Mistral's only sailed on Saturday so Steve Pyatt and Peter Truscott had the club to themselves for their overnight stay. Despite a temporarily fenced compound for the boats overnight, Andy Knowles' boat was set adrift in the lake while Steve and Co slept blissfully on. Luckily Andy's boat was recovered un-

harmful. Down from Auckland we had Grant Beck, Steve Pyatt Bob Allen, Colin Maddren, Dave Blair, Peter T, and Murray Sargisson. Previous winner, Tim Snedden, did not like the forecast of light winds and drizzle so decided to pursue other options. In the end we had a steady 5-8 knots from the West, no rain, which developed into a nice, afternoon breeze of 8 to 10 knots (sitting on the side) covering the lake. Four races were held on Saturday. Each race was about 50+ mins so there were some tired sailors by the time we enjoyed our first beer at 6.00pm.

Sunday was fresh 10 to 18 knots SW. Some gusts were probably higher which gave some exciting rides in the two back to back races. The lake was a reasonable depth, no weed and only those with maximum length boards occasionally dragged them in the mud. The start lines were on the generous side (compared with Pt Chev) which was fortuitous as one end was usually favoured. As usual a good start (clean air, and ability to tack on the first shift) was vital. The wind shifts were large but reasonably predictable. Grant and Steve were usually able to work their way to the front if behind at the start. After day 1 Steve and Grant were close on points (allowing for a discard). Murray, Colin and Brian Smith were also close after more variable results. Grant and Murray mastered the stronger weather conditions better than most on Sunday. Steve Pyatt had boat handling problems, capsized and broke his already broken finger, withdrawing from race 6. Grant Beck was ahead in Race 6 but having touched a mark during the race, and with the contest already won, he elected not to go through the finish allowing Murray to have his second win of the day. Top Tauranga boat was Andy Knowles (4th) and top Hamilton boat was Brian Smith (5th). An excellent weekend enjoyed by all.

Wellington Warbles

Phil Williams reports that Worser Bay have achieved the hoped for growth planned for a year ago. We have 17 sailors, all persons of quality - and one Ozzie! The list of "persons of interest" drawn up by James, our founder, a year ago has culminated with the latest "big fish" being Rob Bryant a Cornwall Cup and Leander Trophy winner and more recently NZ representative in 420 class. There was hope of dragging him over the hill from Pidgeon Bay to be part of the Zephyr Nationals but we have lost out to Hot Scones.

On the sailing scene it has been a very different year. We could usually rely on strong breezes for the whole of November but have sailed in predominantly moderate and light airs that may be good for Akaroa conditions.

The Red/Burgundy division had been lonely for Phil W with Pete S dedicating all his free time to training for the Speights Coast to Coast, however the rest of the fleet, through some coaching and encouragement but mainly cunning and pure guile and determination, has achieved required pace on most legs of the course. The green fleet has been hot with very close racing and sometimes less than a boat length at the finish line. Gail has been showing blistering speed off the wind whilst Nigel, Tim, Pete H, Jamie and TC meet at the marks all too frequently making for high speed tactical racing every time. Tui has been aptly named "Rocket", albeit briefly, when sailed by the Ozzie. Craig T showed what it takes and completed all races at the Wellington Champs.

We have some new members yet to show their true form. Peter W very quick in the light airs, whilst Simon showed brilliant form right from his launching day. Marty has renovated Hauraki and it is certainly re-energized and down to weight. The Ozzie will have his boat ready for Akaroa but has not started on

it yet!

The weekly "Fizzing at the Bung" reflecting the fun and excitement of Wellington Zephyr sailing has been entertaining for our people and demonstrates what a story can be told on the possibility of a grain of near truth and generally scribed following a dose of liquid creativity. For those of you that can't work it out, don't worry, just sail.

The Worser Bay scene is most enjoyable with perfect sailing breezes and great on shore racing administration. One particular perfect day with the windows all open and the results page held down by the racing watch, the whole lot, lifted by the lovely sea breeze disappeared out the window. Funny thing though, no one cared really. It was such a great day. Two new watches held down the pages the following week!

Wellington Zephyr Team are in good heart, have heaps of fun and comradeship, regular sailing with some coaching and sailing on Tuesday evenings in addition to the usual Saturday.

Auckland Report

Tony Miller and Bob Allen have provided regular updates on the Auckland scene over both summer and winter. Currently, the Spring Series is well underway with the usual collection of light days, windy days and great sailing days. 25 sailors have sailed in the series with as many as 16 boats on a good day. Tim Snedden and Grant Beck are regularly battling at the front with Murray Sargisson and Colin Maddren close behind. The



all important social scene has not been neglected either. The 19th of Sept was Pirates day at Pt Chev. Boats and sailors were dressed in Pirates gear and a compulsory tot of rum was had before racing. A couple of long time Zephyr sailors are pictured enjoying a wee tot. Scary aren't they??

Mast Update

We are still awaiting material progress and are applying what pressure we can to get things moving.

Christmas Greetings from the ZOA

Best Wishes to all Zephyr sailors as we head into the Christmas break. Zephyr regattas around the country continue to be supported, with strong interest in well maintained second hand boats, especially in Wellington. We are also getting interest in Americas Cap campaign sailors, looking to enjoy close racing in their home waters. Approximately 14 Zephyrs are heading South to Akaroa, and that promises to be a great event once again. Have a safe and Happy Christmas and have an enjoyable 2011 in your classic Zephyr.