

# 3-7 News

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## Andrew Brown New National Champion



*Andrew Brown making ground upwind – either about to tack, or in a rare lull... (Crouching was pretty rare in those afternoon races!) Crossing behind him is the world's best Belgian 3-7 sailor – Julien Pilate.*

Just one day's sailing decided the outcome of the 2010 Nationals.

Andrew Brown's dominance was pretty convincing. He says that Derek Scott made two vital adjustments to his sail to adapt it to his Willetts wing mast – and this improved his boat speed. The other factor was Andrew's pretty-near faultless sailing and tactical skills. Even when he thought (wrongly) he was OCS and went back to re-start, he fought his way back up to second place.

Andrew's claim to the Farr Cup for this season cannot be disputed.



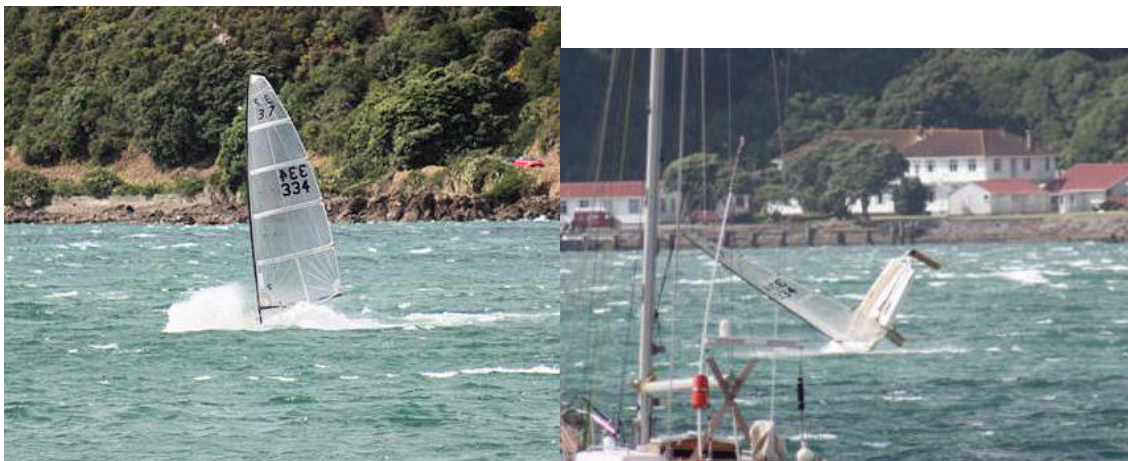
All 20 entrants sat around for the first two days, while gentle Wellington breezes (!) gusting close to 40 knots made racing impossible. (What a place – there was apparently little wind anywhere else in NZ!)

Well, not all 20 entrants sat around....

Toughest luck story is that of **Chris Mitchell**. Chris missed many contests this season so that he could do the Nationals. He drove all the way down from Auckland, and pitched into helping with measurement. Lifting somebody else's boat to the scales, he injured his back, had to go on painkillers, and withdraw from sailing. A great pity..

Some others of the 20 did not sit around waiting, either. They saw 30+ knots as a great opportunity...

1) **Nick James** and **Kevin Holland**, both from Lyttleton, relished the chance, and went out for some practice. They handled it well, but it would be boring to show photos of them sailing well. In the age of the digital camera, one cannot get away with much... The following two photos are separate incidents. (We will save Kevin's photos for later.)



As you can see, Nick doesn't just check out conditions above the water – he also checks them out underwater. (I gather that in the 2<sup>nd</sup> photo Nick is submerged in front of the bow. The perfect cartwheel....)  
*Hard out... He sailed ashore smiling.*



*Hamilton's intrepid Jonathon McMullan boldly heads out to join in the mayhem....*

2) Two hardy young sailors from Hamilton (not a venue noted for hurricane-force winds and huge waves) decided that they too needed to try the conditions.

**Tim Griffiths** and **Jonathon McMullan** followed Nick and Kevin out to do some sailing and submarining... It looked dire for a moment when both were capsized in the worst-looking area, but they managed to recover. Did they wisely return to shore? No, they carried on, blasting and swimming. When satisfied, they also came in smiling.

Our class needs guys like these four!

**So we waited** all Friday and Saturday, fearing we might get no series at all. Especially since the forecast was dire for Monday morning reserve time.

On Saturday afternoon, Race Officer **Neil Gibbons** predicted that Sunday would be OK. We should, he said, get 2-3 races in the morning with the easing Northerly, have a lunch break when the Southerly change started, and do the remaining 2-3 races in the afternoon. He was right.

We got 1½ good races in the morning: using a Lyttleton-style 'M' version of the ellipsoid course (6 gybes per race, and no flat-off). Almost 20 knots at times... Fun and entertaining, but during race 2 the wind dropped to a fluky drifter. Ashore we came for lunch.

**3 Afternoon races: Cold, very brisk Southerly breeze, nearing 30 knots at times. This was hard-out sailing:** less experienced skippers who took a lot of swims tended to get tired... a number withdrew, as the results show.

But it was a fantastic triangle – windward-leeward course, giving us great reaches where those who wanted to trapeze could – at high speed! Exciting sailing upwind and flat-off as well. Relatively steady, fair wind.

**3 hard-out races.** And a fair, 5-race series, all in one day. I think that a lot of us will remember this contest after we have forgotten many of our 3-day ones of recent years.

## **PEOPLE:**

Defending Titleholder **RHYS JOHNSON** and 3-times former Champion **LANCE O'CONNELL** both showed that they are still in the Champions' league, taking second and third places well clear of the rest of us. Lance took out the **VETERANS' CUP (over-45 yrs)** for about the tenth time...

South Islanders **KEVIN HOLLAND** (Champion 2007) and **NICK JAMES** had a close tussle for 4<sup>th</sup>, with Nick slightly ahead until he had a rare and costly swim on the final flat-off leg. **JULIEN PILATE** (International Brigade) was also in the battle for 4<sup>th</sup>, but had struck some bad luck in the flukier morning races.

There looks to be a big jump in points between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, but this is purely due to the first race. Small wonder: **BENNY BUTCHER** was sailing a borrowed 3-7 for the first time. He learned quickly, and did so well in subsequent races that he easily won the **GIL GALLEY CUP (Under-21 Division)**. With so little time spent in a 3-7, many other people would have spent the afternoon climbing onto the centreboard to pull the boat up again, and again... With any luck, Benny will now get a 3-7 of his own – watch out for him if he does!

Evans Bay local **DOUG ROBERTS** was another who borrowed a boat and improved greatly as the contest went on.

**THE AGED:** David Cook (64) and John Elliott (63) both showed senile stubbornness by finishing all races! (I must admit that I was getting pretty tired towards the end. If I had suffered a capsized, I would probably have had to withdraw after getting the boat back up...)

**THE YOUNG** have heaps of energy and can pull their boats up many times.... but some did eventually get worn out, while others suffered gear problems. **Tim Griffiths** was heading for a good placing of about 8<sup>th</sup> overall, when in the final race he accidentally bumped a porthole cover open during a capsized. His hull filled with water, and his DNF pushed him down the ladder by at least 10 points. An unfair twist of fate.

**Katie de Lange** also suffered some injustice. The lightest skipper in the contest, Katie had done very little 3-7 sailing in such strong winds, and took quite a few swims. But, to her credit, she was hanging in there, and consistently finishing races. UNTIL her centreboard snapped clean off when she stood on it. This misfortune caused Katie to carry a DNF and a DNS.

**Gavin Auld** cunningly withdrew from Race 3 to reef his sail. He finished the next two races OK, but says his reefing points blew out. There is something ironic about reefing points that blow out... Gavin got '**CAN OF THE CONTEST**' for combining some good capsizes with imaginative gear damage. (There were too many capsizes for us to judge it on capsizes alone.)

**THE POTTY:** In the conditions, most people could not really be blamed for the mishaps they suffered. However, **KEVIN HOLLAND**, normally controlled and competent, drew attention to himself for some very strange and unorthodox manoeuvres when leaving and approaching the ramp. Apparently Kevin was the only guy in the fleet to leave the ramp and promptly steer straight towards the rock wall... Other people headed the other way out into the harbour. So the Potty has gone to Christchurch for a year. Kevin will bring it up to Manly next year, and try not to win it again.

There was, actually, another nomination that was kept very quiet... David Cook churlishly refused to nominate himself for sailing all the last 3 races without his bungs in his boat. Luckily, in the strong breeze, he must have spent as much time with the water flowing out of the bungs as he spent with it coming in. He certainly had some water in his boat afterwards, but he may have got a lot of that while slowly coming in to the ramp at the very end. Two lucky escapes for David:

- 1) It was so windy that his boat did not take a lot of water, and
- 2) He avoided all those 'friendly' chortles, sniggers, and hoots at prizegiving!

## **THANKYOUS**

At prizegiving we profusely thanked Demian Dixon and all the people of Evans Bay – especially the Race Officer – who put on a great contest for us in nearly impossible conditions. Good food, etc onshore, too! I repeat those thanks now.

Thanks also to **Brad Griffiths** (DESIGN) and **DAVID COOK** (PRODUCTION) for organising the neat T Shirts: after I send away the ones ordered by guys not at the contest, I think there will be about 4 left over. Emails will follow.

**FROM THE AGM:** Chris Mitchell and I are swapping jobs: this means that Chris will be Secretary and Newsletter Editor. I will still make contributions, but it will soon be Chris's address, etc at the top, and his name signing off at the end.

This newsletter is to get the Nationals news out quick. There will soon be another one to give other sailing news (backlog). Cheers in the meantime - John Elliott