



OKDIA NEWSLETTER

January 2012

From the Secretary

KEY DATES

2012

Spring Cup – Medemblik Holland

Sailing dates: 4 – 6th May

Kieler Woche

Regatta Dates: 16 -24th June

OK Dinghy World Championship – Vallensbæk Denmark

Pre-Worlds regatta: 14 – 15th July at Hvidovre (the week after Warnemunde Week)

World Championship: Measurement and registration Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd July

Practice race Monday 23rd July

World Championship regatta: Tuesday 24th - Saturday 28th July

As it is the 50th World Championship the meeting will be an Open Championship, with numbers not restricted to 80 competitors. All are welcome!

2013

OK Dinghy World Championship at Royal Varuna Yacht Club Thailand

Dates: 26th March 2013 to 5th April 2013. Website: www.varuna.org

Please look at this website <http://www.thaicatregatta.org> for information about the area and accommodation ideas.

OK Dinghy European Championship at Carnac in France

Dates: 22nd -26th July 2013.

2014

OK Dinghy European Championship in Steinhuder Meer, near Hanover

The event will be held in July on a very large lake.

OK Dinghy World Championship – Melbourne, Australia

Nationals 26 – 28th December, Worlds commencing on 30th December

50th World Championship – an update



Photos: Jacob Nybroe

These photographs are of the Vallensbæk venue. We will be based in a large tent, which will act as the meeting point for all. Ideal for families, there is free camping 40 metres from the beach. Toilets will be erected and showers will be available in the clubhouse. There are also caravans nearby which can be rented. More information will be available on the website.

The entry fee will include breakfast, after-sailing snacks and beer (hopefully). The Danish Association are kindly hosting a dinner on Wednesday evening and there will be a final night Championship dinner on Saturday.

The website will be going live in the next couple of weeks, the NOR will be available then. For the first time each sailor will be fitted with a tracker so everyone can follow the racing! If you would like to see more photographs from the Finn Gold Cup in 2009, please follow this link:

<https://picasaweb.google.com/Jakob0606/OK?authuser=0&authkey=Gv1sRgCN-0ksTMu4Kp7AE&feat=directlink>

International OK Dinghy celebrates 50 Years of National Championships in Australia

Reports by Mark Roberts

While 10 times national winner and former world champion, Roger Blasse, will not be sailing, a very strong fleet will be vying to win the famous trophy, including defending back to back champion from Victoria, Michael Williams, and fellow Australian champions Mark Jacksons (2003) and Bruce Ashton, who in fact won his second of two Australian championships in Adelaide back some 32 years ago. Joining them is International OK Dinghy President, ISAF measurer and multiple Australian Champion, Andre Blasse, who first won the championship in 1993 and has since taken the title a further three times, with the last being in 2009.

What makes this class a true enigma is the longevity of those who sail the OK. Bill Tyler is in Adelaide competing at his 32nd nationals. Bill is 70+ years and is showing few signs of slowing down, although he does threaten to hang up the sailing boots each year. The Blasse brothers and Bruce Ashton have all surpassed 25 national appearances, as has Adelaide paediatrician, Dr David Ketteridge.

International OK President Andre Blasse shows early form

In a building 8-10 knot southerly, a fleet of 27 OKs ventured out onto St Vincent's Gulf, South Australia for their traditional practice race for the International OK Dinghy Australian Championship.

In near picture perfect conditions, the fleet was sent on a triangle windward return course by PRO, Malcolm Hughes. A bit of local knowledge was evident early with local Adelaide sailors Todd Hughes, Mark Roberts and Brent Williams first, second and third respectively around the windward mark. It was not long though before former Australian champions Andre Blasse, Mark Jackson and Mike Williams started to make their way through the pack and by the end of the triangle were well in contention.

As the breeze started to build to a more constant 13-16 kts, the race between the front markers continued with frequent position changes. Ultimately it was Andre Blasse who was able to prevail over last year's champion Mike Williams with Todd Hughes third, Mark Jackson fourth and Mark Roberts rounding out the top five.

The sailors return to the beach was greeted with a welcome function at the picturesque Adelaide Sailing Club.

Magnificent sailing for the OK dinghies at Nationals in Adelaide

With temperatures finally abating from the 40 degree oven-like conditions experienced earlier in the week, the first day of racing brought tough 20-25 knot sailing.

While some of the fleet found the steep southerly waves extremely challenging, sailors from Black Rock and Adelaide Sailing Clubs, more used to the big surf, appeared to relish the conditions. With neither side really favoured in the first race, Andre Blasse was able to best master the conditions to record his first win for the championship over Mike Williams, Mark Jackson and Brent Williams.

By the start of race two, the left had become heavily favoured and those able to get to the pin were able to take full advantage. With the wind also reducing to a more manageable 17-22 kts, Mark Jackson was proving to be extremely quick, as was fellow former Australian Champion from 1979, Bruce Ashton. While deep early in the race, by the final windward work Andre Blasse had managed to work his way back through the fleet to finish a very respectable third. Mister consistency, Mike Williams, again finished third, with the win going to Mark Jackson.

Day two of the championship brought similar conditions to day one, with one exception - better surfing conditions! With a second day of gradient southerly breezes, the OKs loved the 15-20 kts. With friendlier conditions, the racing was also much closer with the top ten shadowing each other at times around much of the course. Ultimately though Mike Williams proved to be the quickest and was a well deserved winner of race 3, followed very closely by Mark Jackson, Tim Davies, Andre Blasse, Brent Williams and Mark Roberts.

The second race of day two of the championship saw an increase in the wind to 17-22 kts. Again Mike Williams proved to be untouchable at the front with only Andre Blasse truly able to challenge. The racing immediately behind was extremely close with Mark Jackson, Tim Davies and Mark Roberts swapping regularly positions for third, fourth and fifth with those 3 ultimately finishing the day in the same order.

Hughes dominates day 3

Well what a difference a day can make!

Having sailed the past two days in big southerly breezes of 20-25 kts and waves to match, day three of the championship showed little promise of producing any breeze whatsoever.

With the BOM forecast 'predicting' a breeze from about every possible point of the compass during the course of the day, PRO Malcolm Hughes decided to hold the fleet on shore to see what might develop. After not more than an hour waiting around a gentle breeze of 5 knots began to develop out of the south west.

The conditions on the water proved to be extremely fickle with the breeze shifting between 5 and 20 degrees without apparent rhyme or reason. While these conditions were despised by the big men of the fleet who had dominated the first two days, they were relished by the 'light weights'.

Ultimately it was Adelaide local and former Laser SASI sailor, Todd Hughes, who was able to best master the conditions recording two bullets for the day. In race 5 he was followed by Mark Jackson in second, another Adelaide local, Brent Williams, in third and 1979 National Champion winner, Bruce Ashton. Race 6 had Bruce Ashton second, Brent Williams third and last year's champion, Mike Williams in fourth.

Tic-tac-toe three in a row for Mike Williams at the OK Nationals



For a third year in a row Geelong based sailor, Mike Williams, has won the Australian Championship of the International OK Dinghy class held in Adelaide. It is a feat that has only happened three other times in the 50 year history of the class with Williams joining an elite group including Bill Bell, Glen Collins and Roger Blasse (who having won the championship an unprecedented 10 times, amazingly won five of those championships back to back).

After a difficult day 3 of the championship, the OK fleet were met on the final day of the championship with a 17-22 kt north westerly (with the BOM forecast predicting thunderstorms and 30-35 kts later in the day).

What was to make the final day of racing even more interesting was the fact that only four points separated the top three with former national champion from 2003, Mark Jackson, only a single point behind in second and multiple national champion, Andre Blasse, a further three points back in third.

With a stronger tidal influence than in previous days and perhaps an overly eager few, PRO Malcolm Hughes decided to pull out the black after the first general recall. The fleet got away cleanly and thereafter Michael Williams showed early dominance in upwind speed to be the first to the

windward mark followed closely by Andre Blasse, Mark Jackson and Todd Hughes. The rest, as they say, was history, with Williams increasing his lead throughout the balance of the race to record his third bullet for the regatta and to take the coveted national championship. He was closely followed by Blasse and Hughes with Jackson fourth, but doing enough to retain second overall and two points ahead of Blasse.

In accepting the national champions trophy, a humble and emotional Williams recounted that he had started sailing OK Dinghies 20 years earlier as a teenager when he had first met and subsequently forged a strong relationship with fellow Black Rock sailors Andre Blasse, his brother, Roger, Peter Milne and Mark Jackson, who had gone on to coach Williams during a Finn campaign in 2008. He thanked them for their ongoing support and friendship and for the fantastic competition that had continued between them for so many years after.

A well deserved Brent Williams was the winner of the Patrick Whittington Handicap Trophy having sailed an excellent regatta to finish in fourth. Andre Blasse was unanimously elected as a life member of the Australian association for his many years of dedication to the national body.

The Australian Association thanked its sponsors Zhik, Icebreaker Boats and Binks Marine for their support in holding this event.

Results

- 1 730 Time Machine Michael Williams BRYC 11.0 1.0 4.0 [5.0] 1.0 1.0 2.0 2.0
- 2 735 TBA Mark Jackson BRYC 15.0 4.0 [6.0] 2.0 3.0 2.0 1.0 3.0
- 3 729 Knot 4 Sail Andre Blasse BRYC 17.0 2.0 5.0 [13.0] 2.0 4.0 3.0 1.0
- 4 754 Gunboat Diplomat Brent Williams ASC 26.0 6.0 3.0 3.0 [11.0] 5.0 5.0 4.0
- 5 739 Dont Poke the Bear Todd Hughes ASC 29.0 3.0 1.0 1.0 9.0 7.0 [9.0] 8.0
- 6 732 Dune Buggy Tim Davies WASC 30.0 5.0 8.0 [8.0] 4.0 3.0 4.0 6.0
- 7 750 Broken Arrow Peter Robinson DSC 44.0 11.0 [13.0] 6.0 8.0 8.0 6.0 5.0
- 8 747 Jumbo Mark Roberts 46.0 8.0 [15.0] 7.0 5.0 6.0 13.0 7.0
- 9 728 Bowfinger Bruce Ashton BRYC 53.0 13.0 2.0 4.0 12.0 14.0 8.0 [28.0F]
- 10 719 Dilligaf II Glenn Williams BRSC 58.0 9.0 [17.0] 10.0 10.0 9.0 11.0 9.0

An excerpt from:

Nick Craig talks about winning the Yachting Journalists Association Pantaenius Yachtsman of the Year

“Surprised, but delighted,” is how Nick Craig described his win at the annual YJA Pantaenius Yachtsman of the Year awards. The announcement was made at the awards ceremony at Trinity House, London on 10 January.

Craig overcame two household names to win the coveted title - Ben Ainslie and Dee Caffari, both former winners of the Yachting Journalists Association's highest award, were also nominated - and is arguably the first amateur dinghy sailor to win the award in more than a generation. He was presented the trophy by Geoff Holt MBE, the 2010 YJA Pantaenius Yachtsman of the Year winner.

Craig was nominated on the basis of an outstanding 2011 season, which included winning the OK Dinghy World Championship for the fourth time, the OK Dinghy National Title for the eighth time, the OK Dinghy Inland title for the sixth time, the RS400 National Championship for the fifth time, and the D1 Nationals at his first attempt. To cap off an outstanding year he won the Endeavour Trophy, the champion of champions event, for a record equalling fifth time. In his sailing career he has now won seven world titles and 22 national titles.

How did he expect to do compared with the other nominees? “I had an inkling that I had a chance because it's a non-Olympic year and Ben and Dee have won it several times before, but I was kind of hoping I wouldn't as I didn't really fancy giving a speech in front of all those legends.”

Then when his name was read out? “I thought, oh no, I've got to give a speech! But of course I was also very delighted.”



Photos: OnEdition
Text: Robert Deaves

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