

SAIODA

NEWSLETTER

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THE INTERNATIONAL OPTIMIST DINGHY IS NOW IN S.A.

The establishment of the International Optimist Dinghy Association of South Australia is underway and will soon be included in the fold of the Australian International Optimist Dinghy Association.

The class began last season when 6 Optimists were brought in to South Australia by Yachting SA to provide our junior sailors with the opportunity to sail in this international strict one-design class and compete in national and international regattas. Last season, Adelaide Sailing Club and St Peters College leased 3 boats each and they were sailed from Adelaide Sailing Club. Two Adelaide Sailing Club junior members subsequently competed in the Australian Championships at the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron in January 2006.

Next season, Sail Melbourne is hosting the Pacific Rim Open Championships at Mornington Yacht Club after Christmas. In addition to the Open event they have organized

“green” sailing races for the younger beginner sailors and a fabulous social programme. Soon after this regatta will be the Australian Championships at Sandy Bay Sailing Club in Hobart, Tasmania. Invitations are given to Australian sailors to compete internationally. Regattas are planned in Bali (ASEAN), the Cook Islands (Oceania) and Uruguay (World Championships) next season.



“the sea monster”
Stuart Kirkwood (age 7) learning to sail the Optimist Dinghy from the West Lakes Aquatic Centre in May 2006 with his father.

“There is just enough room for both of us in the Optimist. The flat hull shape provides stability and the rotating mast allows the mainsail to be fully eased to de-power the rig. Stuart wants to learn to sail her so he can win prizes.”

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2006 Australian Championships - Andrew Howe

The 2006 Australian Optimist Dinghy Championship sponsored by Wallace Bishop Jewellers and Sailone came to a close on Friday 13th of January. The regatta was held by the Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron (RQYS) and was regarded by all as a great success.

Australians from every State met with competitors from New Zealand, American Samoa, New Caledonia and Vanuatu to make a fleet of 44 sailors.

Despite the invitation race being held in 28-knot winds the 12 race series was sailed in favourable breezes of 7-12 knots. The Waterloo Bay course provided the challenge of a breeze with unpredictable shifts in direction and velocity and strong tidal influences.

It was a credit to the sailors that all penalties were taken on the water resulting in no formal protests at the regatta and despite the keenness of the competitors the start boat only once resorted to the black flag.

The final result was: Maxime Mazard placed first with his New Caledonia teammate Nicholas Poree second and West Australian Mark Whittington third.

Mark Whittington is National Champion for the second year running congratulations mark.

For some sailors one National regatta is not enough; Optimist sailors were joined by several RQYS Sabot sailors. Nick Peate the National Sabot Champion in his first taste of international class racing gained a commendable 7th place.

Most improved sailor went to Milly Bennett however a great effort by Josh Richards who was the youngest sailor at 8 years of age and completed all 12 races.

The five top placed Australian sailors will gain selection for the 2006 Optimist World Championships to be held in Uruguay.

Australian Open Results

1. Maxime Mazard (Noumea)
2. Nicolas Poree (Noumea)
3. Mark Whittington (AUS)
4. Declan Burn (NZ)
5. Etienne Le Pen (Noumea)
6. Roch Della Patrona (Noumea)
7. Nick Peate (AUS)
8. Edward Campbell (AUS)
9. Sean Ott (AUS)
10. Horvath Laszlo (Noumea)

Australian Championship Results

1. Mark Whittington (WA)
2. Nick Peate (QLD)
3. Edward Campbell (WA)
4. Sean Ott (QLD)
5. Thomas Kennedy (TAS)
6. Tahali Kikuchi-Miller (SA)
7. Carl La Macchia (WA)
8. Erin Gallagher (QLD)
9. Mathew Wearn (WA)
10. Sanne Koelemij (WA)

2006 New Zealand Nationals - Tim Hannah

Back in February I won the Victorian Optimist Champs and first prize of a trip to New Zealand to compete in their National Championships thanks to Steven Bond at OziOpti.

OziOpti lent me a boat to practice in, but the timing of Sabot State titles in the two weeks before New Zealand did not help, and I had only done 6 Opti races before leaving for NZ

There were 230 boats from NZ, Noumea, Tahiti and 5 from Aus.

The schedule included four races a day, with lunch on the water. Up to 8 hours on the water. Which was OK except when each boat I asked denied having my lunch!

Target times were 50 minutes, with a maximum of 80. Apart from the first race where no boat finished in time conditions were generally in the 10 to 20 kts range, increasing through the day. The wind was on-shore, bringing some large waves,

which made down wind lots of fun.

It was crowded on the water. Much bigger than anything in Aus. The gate marks were very close so there was barely enough room for every one to fit. Lots of yelling. I should learn French.

I think my sail was a bit flat and had the fullness too far forward or may be its my upwind in waves in an Opti technique, but I couldn't point as high as others, and if I started in the middle of the line I fell into dirty air. So I kept to the pin, and got some really good starts (and one OCS). In the last race I crossed the fleet on Port. I couldn't really keep up with the top boats upwind, unless it was quite windy. I got to the first mark in the top 10 once and in the top 20 quite a few times. I went better in the stronger breezes. There was plenty of starting practice with 15 races and a lot of general recalls. Most races were started using the "Z" flag. Jury boats were right in the start, blowing their whistles. Optis seem to skull up to the line, go backwards and skull up again. There were more than 60 on the water penalties handed out.

I had a few top 20 and top 25 finishes, but an OCS, a capsized and a couple of not so good races, finishing in the 50's.

I would like to do the regatta again. It was a great experience.

Next time I would be more familiar with the boat and the equipment and have more time to practice Opti techniques.

I would organise a support boat. There were about 50 support boats on the course. I was lucky the people from Kohimarama YC took care of us. Major clubs all turned up with large tents as home base, with their coaches and up to six Ribs

Junior sailing in NZ is taken very seriously. The sailors I met trained with coaching support four times a week. Lots

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had taken time off school in the weeks prior. They have fitness programs, on the water training and sports psychology all for Optimist sailors.

Nearly all of the top 20 had been to overseas regattas before.

Next time I would make an arrangement with a well-known local coach. I tried this but the people I knew were all at the NZ Youth Regatta.

I was lucky to have met Laurence Fauchelle from NZ Sailing Academy on the first day and he helped with my rig set up each day and on the water.

The NZ Optis sail in club fleets of 30 plus. They get over 100 in the Auckland Champs and again at the North Island Titles. They have lots of experience at big fleet racing and in performing in big races. That is something we cannot do in Victoria in any class.

I knew that with my lack of time in an Opti I would not be at the front. I aimed to get some good starts in the big fleets and to improve my big fleet sailing. I think I succeeded. I was ranked 163rd and finished 71st, having learned heaps on the way.

All in all it was great fun and a worthwhile experience. I am grateful to VIODA and Ozi Opti in particular for this opportunity.

2005 World Championships - Nick Howe

In August I represented Australia at the 31st Optimist Dinghy Worlds in Switzerland. Sailed in over 110 countries by over 130,000 sailors the Optimist dinghy is the only dinghy approved by the International Sailing Federation exclusively for sailors who are under-16 years of age.

The Optimist World Championship was sailed at St. Moritz Switzerland. It was a selective regatta with only the top 5 sailors from each country eligible to attend. Fifty-two countries were repre-

sented.

The Worlds was like an Olympics complete with an opening parade with flags and a huge opening ceremony. Being Swiss, Alinghi, was a big supporter of the event with several sailors on hand. We got a ton of giveaways like Musto shirts, gear bags and great Swiss watches.

The regatta was sailed on Lake Sils, which is at 1800 metres. The wind there is called the Majola, which is generated by convection currents from Milan and came in at 15-20 knots at 11am every day for the first 3 days. We had 3 one-hour races each day with lunch on the water so we were kept very busy. After day 4 of racing the winds went light and shifty and the regatta was concluded at 11 races instead of the planned 15.

Team racing was held over 2 days in the middle of the fleet regatta. Fifteen qualifying teams of 5 boats took part.

It was quite different sailing on fresh water and with the thin air and it took a lot of rig adjustment for the conditions.

The starting lines were huge and the standard of competitor meant that there is only one place to be on the line and everyone was. The finishes were amazing with 80 boats in each flight finishing within about 1 minute of each other after 1 hour of racing.

My best place was a 27th, which I was really pleased with. At the end of the regatta I was ranked 200th in the world but more importantly 19th in my age group, I was pleased with that as I still have another 2 years in the class. I also beat all the Tahitian sailors who beat me at the Oceania regatta last year and I even managed to beat a Kiwi's in one race.

It was fantastic to meet all the other sailors from around the world. I was billeted with the teams from England, Ireland and New Zealand, so there was no problem with communication among

the group at the hotel.

On the water I trained with the Irish team, as my Dad knows the official measurer from Ireland. At the beach my boat was stored between the Austrian and Belgium teams and I found out that these kids learn English at school so I could talk to them as well.

One Belgian sailor asked if I knew where Belgium was and was quite surprised when I replied that my great-grandfather was wounded in action there in the First World War.

Many of the teams had official coaches and really take their sailing seriously with 25 hours a week sailing training.

The closing ceremony was also huge the eventual winner was a 15-year old German sailor second Trinidad with China third. The Teams racing was won by Argentina second Malaysia and New Zealand third. They played the National anthem of the winners and raised the flags it was fantastic.

I was fantastic to represent Australia and I am training hard to qualify for Uruguay 2007

In closing I would like to add Optimist sailors are the world-class sailors.



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Int'l Optimist Dinghy

The International Optimist is sailed in over 100 countries by over 150,000 young skippers, & is the ONLY dinghy approved by the International Sailing Federation exclusively for sailors under 16.

Quite simply, it's the dinghy in which people of the world learn to sail.

It's worth noting that at the Athens Olympics, 70% of medal winning skippers were former Optimist sailors.

The International Optimist is the ideal introduction to sailing. It enables sailors to easily and quickly gain confidence on the water, whilst developing the essential sailing skills and techniques for the future. The Optimist is safe, un-sinkable, easy & fun to sail, and readily transportable on car roof racks.

The Optimist is a true International One Design class, made of a durable GRP Hull, which means minimal maintenance, with a new boat ready to sail costing around \$3,000, it provides a very affordable entry into sailing.

Training and Coaching

Adelaide Sailing Club offers youth training on Saturday mornings during the sailing season and Optimists are very welcome to join in.

SA Youth Sailing runs two "Shoot the Breeze" coaching clinics each season which will include Optimist sailors.

2006/7 Events

- Jul 28: SAIODA AGM - 7:30pm at Adelaide Sailing Club
- Aug 16: SAIODA meeting
- Oct 1 - 6: YSA "Shoot the breeze" Youth Coaching Clinic - ASC
- Nov 4: Come'n'Try - ASC
- Dec 10: YSA Youth Championship
- Dec 17 - 19: YSA "Shoot the breeze" Youth Coaching Clinic - BSYC
- Dec 29 - Jan 3: Pacific Rim Optimist Champs, Mornington YC, Vic
- Jan 7 - 13: Australian Optimist Champs, Sandy Bay SC, Tas
- Mar 25: Fisher, Peterson, Tillett Regatta - ASC
- Apr 14: S.A. Optimist Champs - ASC

SA Optimist Championships

At the end of next season, we are planning an exciting series of short races in round robin format utilising the Yachting SA fleet of Optimists and privately owned Optimists. Junior sailors from other classes will be invited to participate and enjoy single handed one-design competitive racing in the Optimist.

Optimist Class Specifications

- Length: 2.3 m
- Beam: 1.1 m
- Draft: 0.8 m
- Sail area: 3.2 m²
- Weight: 35 kg
- Hull: fibreglass
- Spars: Aluminium
- Racing: crew 1
- First built: 1947
- No. built 500,000 + worldwide
- Designer: Clark Mills 1947, modified by Axel Damgard 1954

SAIODA contact details

For more information on SAIODA and events for 2006/7 season contact Ian Kirkwood on 8431 7447 or email: ian.kirkwood@internode.on.net

Optimist dinghy websites

IODA www.optiworld.org
 AIODA www.aioda.com

Sailing websites

Adelaide Sailing Club
www.adelaidesailingclub.com.au
 Yachting SA
www.sa.yachting.org.au