

Australian Nacra Titles

provide exciting racing

■ by **DON BOLDISTON** ■ photos by **IAN GOUGH**

The 28th Australian Nacra National Titles were held at Royal Queensland Yacht Squadron over the first week in 2007. Being held by an influential Yacht Squadron may have caused some doubts amongst 'off the beach' catamaran sailors but any doubts were quickly overcome once they checked out the location. The facilities the club could offer from great security coupled with the ability to camp on their grounds made the effort of competing much easier on all competitors and their families. The easy travelling distance to all the tourist attractions of the Gold and Sunshine Coast coupled to being in a capital city ensured the non sailing members of the visitors were provided with plenty of satisfaction.

THE launch of the new Nacra F18 Illusion during 2006 ensured that there was tremendous interest in the class. Two boats were just assembled on the day before the series while the latest one was only put together during the series. These international class boats are the main interest of the top catamaran sailors as they provide the opportunity to compete not only against other Nacra sailors but the best representing the Hobie and Taipan Capricorn classes in both Australia and worldwide. The similarity between them and the slightly larger Olympic Class Tornado ensured all were very interested both in the cats and how they competed. Perhaps the knowledge of the world F18 championships being held in Yeppoon, Queensland in February was

another reason for the intense interest.

Not to be outdone by the F18 attention the other Nacra classes led by a large number of entries in the 16 square class were all ready for some great racing. As all boats were launched from a cement ramp, the club provided a team of mermaids and assistants to help the launchings and the storage of the beach

rollers. This was particularly beneficial in the single sailor classes as it is a bit hard to hold your boat on the water's edge while taking the beach roller up out of the way. The presence of two monohull classes racing at the same time provided no problem as their courses were to the south of the catamarans and their races were at different times ensuring no crowding at ramp or in the channel sailing out to race.

As I was racing in the 5.8 class I will refer to it first and I have relied on members of the other classes for extra information naturally as we started in a flowing sequence the weather conditions for all fleets were identical. The first heat saw light breezes and the familiar answering pennant until there was enough consistent wind to race. The light breeze was oscillating so the oscillations had to be considered as well as the tidal effects which were varied by the location

Close starts highlight 16 squares.





Nev and Don were always close whoever has spinnaker up first is always in control.

of the islands in Moreton Bay. The light conditions required a lot of planning even more so when your race is divided between the older pre 1500 numbered 5.8 and the newer ones. The course chosen for this race and subsequently for the remainder of the races was the windward return type now an essential part of Olympic competition. Sadly the elimination of the high speed shy reaching leg would bring disappointment to many sailors as the sheer speed of catamarans in this direction was probably a force that motivated many to sail these speed machines. In practice however not many passing moves are made on the shy leg so its elimination has provided more passing opportunities.

The second heat saw a steadying of the breeze and a gradual increase in strength, this change was well received by those who could get the most boat speed as there were few variables. This pattern continued for the final race of the day where all experienced perfect sailing conditions. With the breeze at around 13 to 17kts and a few patches where wind against tide created a wind chop all boats were fast and all could return to shore with feelings of sailing enjoyment even if others had gone faster.

The day was so pleasant many were disappointed the next day was New Years Day and was a scheduled lay day as the weather was as good as it was on Sunday for the first three races. To add to the overall interest the Maricat 4.3 class of catamarans were holding their titles also and had joined Nacra to sail at the same time and course for the next eight races.

On Tuesday morning when it was calm again it looked like another perfect day, the start was delayed until the breeze found a direction just from a little north of the previous races. Again the right choice of line could see big gains. For the afternoon the breeze became a good steady perfect sea breeze. Again excellent sailing conditions and the results going to those who could produce that extra bit of speed and who did not make any silly mistakes. The wind again was in the 15kts area and those who wanted heavier conditions went home hoping the wind would come.

Their prayers were answered and heavy rain fell overnight accompanied by a strong morning breeze. As two morning races were scheduled most had thought they would have light races but now the conditions had changed. The wind against tide at the entrance to the harbour made conditions look even worse than they were. Many decided to give the race a miss hoping the committee would have to cancel the event while others found it too rough going out so elected to return. While the first windward was rough the close competition saw many capsize and retire thus only a small number of most classes finished the race. This led to a reduced number of entrants for heat eight. Those that started had a good race as the conditions improved, the breeze eased and waves reduced as the wind against tide improved. It was a good quick race.

After the strong winds of Wednesday

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some competitors had damage and with a similar forecast they decided not to sail. Once out on the course the wind again was light and oscillating giving a big 50° shift as some of the boats were finishing. This resulted in a delay until the committee could get a real wind direction to start race 10. Finally it settled and all were racing again, the breeze freshened and a good fast race ended a little late due to the delays.

In an 11 race series with two eligible drops often the last race has no significance but in almost all classes the last race would decide the winner. Again it was a race with shifting wind and tide and a windward mark right where the tide was strongest making it testing to round. Again certain boats performed a little better than during the series and the results were decided.

CLASSES

Nacra 5.8:

The Nacra 5.8 saw a great start by Jayson Jenkinson and Cameron Newbold taking four of the first six races on *Village Idiott* but they were closely pressed by Daniel Tandy and Josh Mortensen on *She's the Boss* and Martin and Gerald Horder sailing *Yukka II*. The heavy wind saw several try too hard and capsize out giving a victory to both *She's the Boss* and *Yukka II*. Sadly Jason Jenkinson

***Marrikala* was the oldest 5.0 and still competitive especially in heavy breezes. (above)**

Paul Neeskins quickest in strong winds but still good in lighter breezes. (above right)

Righting after capsizes slowed many on heavy days. (right)

decided to retire leaving the battle to the previously second and third boat *Smoke on the Water*.

Don Boldiston and Michael Forbes displayed good reading of the conditions to finish and place well in the heavy races and to move up the board and get to an unbeatable position for the pre 1500 5.8's before the last heat. David Jorgensen and Lisa Bolger showed consistent form to be in distance of the two leaders who now were on totally identical points with one race to go. It meant either Daniel Tandy or Martin Horder would win if they finished sixth or better and beat the other. Daniel got it right and sailed a perfect race to take the heat and the title from Martin Horder and David Jorgensen. Despite a bad last race *Smoke on the Water* came fourth and took the pre 1500 class and the handicap. Again the races saw many new to 5.8 Australian Title competitors which can only lead to more keen people sailing next year.

14 Squares

Sadly, despite their strong numbers

particularly in NSW, only one competitor faced the starter. Fortunately the Maricat sailors were sailing so he could start and race with them so naturally Chris Blackford took the title.

Nacra 5.0

For the first time in four years a fleet of over five boats competed and the 5.0 continues to be the family class of sailing with five out of the eight entrants sailed by family skipper/crew combinations. Current champion and winner for the last three years, Ian Walls, had a brand new boat and a 12-year-old lightweight skilled crew Daniel Smith dominated the series. In the light to moderate days *Fierce Creatures 2* was unbeatable bringing great credit to his Humpybong Club. On the heavy day he was the first to capsize leading to a fourth place in that heat and keeping him out of the next heat.

The Neeskins family dominated the competitor list with five members on the water. Husband and wife team of Paul and Clare Neeskins continued their on water rivalry between *Duck Duck Goose*





Fierce Creature 2 shows windward power. (above)
The winners Nev and Mal. (below)
Close racing. (bottom)

and *Ruby*. Paul sailed with youngest son Tim while Clare sailed with long term Hervey Bay Sailing Club member Terry Thompson. Peter Neeskins with sister Connie raced a Queensland University of Technology 5.0 *Marikala* which was the oldest boat in the fleet and managed to finish all 11 races starting in the heavy ones and coming fourth overall. Paul

Neskin's victory in the two heavy races allowed him to claim second place from Clare. The increase in numbers especially the arrival a several brand new boats and the efforts of the new sailors again indicates good fleets for future races in the class.

16 Squares

As the biggest class in both numbers and experienced sailors there was no doubt that every position in the over 20 boat fleet would be hotly contested. Starts were critical as clear air on that first windward was highly desirable. This led to several boats being over early and occasionally not realising their error,



yielding a DNF, while others had to re-round the start line and fight their way forward from the back of the fleet. Thus it was no surprise that after three races there were three different winners. Michael Guinea on *Team Magic Marine*, the current champion, made every effort to continually finish second or third if he could not win so a DNF in race four encouraged the rest. A first and second in races five and six put him back into the commanding position as the only sailor to win two races.

The heavy wind for races seven and eight saw the heavy weather specialist Scott Sandilands sailing *Big Rig* displayed his skill winning both races but Michael Guinea kept his lead alive with good places. Capsizes were the order of the day as all tried very hard to go quicker in the stronger breeze. Race nine saw both the leaders over early forcing them poor results and a natural race to drop but for the second race the breeze was still good and Scott put in another win. Thus with one race to go *Team Magic Marine* had to finish better than six places behind *Big Rig*. Scott was determined to make it hard for Michael by winning the race but a fourth place ensured Michael Guinea retained the title from Scott despite his winning five of the 11 heats, with Lloyd Bradshaw sailing *Dog*, third.

F18

With all six competitors obtaining their new boats in very recent times no one had much time to fine tune their boat. 'Goose' Cornall had the misfortune to damage tendons in his hand and in order to be fit for the worlds could not sail at the nationals so invited leading South





Australian F18 sailor Rob Stewart to sail his boat with his Western Australian crew Ryan Duffield. Port Douglas skipper Mal Richardson arranged for leading Hobie sailor Nev Thompson to skipper *Ice* for him while he took over the crew roll. Top Capricorn sailor Don Dull brought a new Nacra F18 and with a top Capricorn sailor Matt Homan as crew would be hard to beat. Warren Guinea had former top 16 square sailor Jason Bennett as crew. To this impressive list add Port Douglas's Luke McDonald with Adam Beattie and Andrew Holden with top skiff sailor Jake Mortensen and one could expect with

identical boats some very close racing. The two boats carrying minimum weight sailors did better in the light breezes but suffered on the stronger days once again, in such even boats, the power to weight ratio is critical. The starts in every race became critical as the boat which won the race to the first mark was hard to pass so it was no surprise that there were five different race winners and the sixth was just a whisker of winning one heat. Only seconds separated the four leading boats in most races. Nev Thompson won five races which was enough to allow him and Mal Richardson to take *Ice* to victory in

Smooth windward work by Warren and Jason. (above left)

Spinnaker racing is as close and competitive as upwind. Here Nev takes a small lead over Warren. (above right)

the series from *Fat Choice*, Don Dull and *Magic Marine.com* Warren Guinea. The performance of the *Illusion* was very encouraging for the eight Australian Nacra F18 contesting the world F18 titles in Yepoon in February. To add to Nacra representation nine top overseas teams will be transported there to compete. ❖

Maricat & Sloop Australian Championships

Sail No	Yacht Name	Skipper	Total Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	5555 Sandwich Action	Michael Colecliffe	7.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00
2	5000 Zax	John Merl	16.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
3	3919 Prima Facie	Wayne Barry	17.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	11.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
4	5009 Pixie Dust Express	Mark Colecliffe	29.00	8.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	4.00	5.00
5	500 Down Bubble	Leon McNeill	35.00	6.00	6.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	6.00	11.00	6.00

Nacra 16sq Australian Championships

Sail No	Yacht Name	Skipper	Total Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
333	Team Magic Marine	Michael Guinea	21.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	22.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	2.00	10.00	3.00
219	Big Rig	Scott Sandilands	23.00	11.00	3.00	1.00	10.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	1.00	22.00	1.00
270	Dog	Lloyd Bradshaw	37.00	1.00	5.00	2.00	22.00	3.00	7.00	4.00	6.00	5.00	4.00
271	Undone Fly	Brendan Whalley	40.00	22.00	6.00	4.00	1.00	6.00	5.00	9.00	22.00	1.00	5.00
309	Sneary	Leigh McNally	52.00	8.00	2.00	6.00	11.00	4.00	1.00	7.00	10.00	7.00	7.00

Nacra 5sq Australian Championships

Sail No	Yacht Name	Skipper	Crew	Total Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2205	Fierce Creature	Ian Walls	Daniel Smith	11.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00	9.00	1.00	1.00	3.00
2123	Duck Duck Goose	Paul Neeskens	Tim Neeskens	20.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	9.00	9.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	1.00
2119	Ruby	Clare Neeskens	Terry Thompson	24.00	9.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	3.00	9.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
2133	Marrkala	Peter Neeskens	Connie Neeskens	36.00	9.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	4.00	6.00	2.00	2.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
2106	L Plates	Col Baillie	Max Baillie	40.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	5.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00

Nacra 5.8sq Australian Championships

Sail No	Yacht Name	Skipper	Crew	Total Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1636	She's The Boss	Daniel Tandy	Josh Mortensen	17.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
1639	Yukka II	Martin Horder	Gerald Horder	20.00	2.00	4.00	15.00	5.00	3.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	4.00
1641	Black Jack	David Jorgensen	Lisa Bolger	24.00	4.00	2.00	15.00	3.00	2.00	3.00	15.00	3.00	3.00	2.00	2.00
527	Smoke on the Water	Don Boldiston	Michael Forbes	63.00	6.00	15.00	6.00	8.00	10.00	12.00	3.00	4.00	8.00	7.00	11.00
1644	Flat Chat	Ben Graham	Graham Dicker	64.00	3.00	15.00	15.00	6.00	7.00	6.00	15.00	15.00	6.00	3.00	3.00

Nacra F18 Australian Championships

Sail No	Yacht Name	Skipper	Crew	Total Pts	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
619	Ice	Mal Richardson	Nev Thompson	15.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	1.00
616	Fat Choice	Don Dull	Matt Homan	17.00	5.00	1.00	4.00	3.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	1.00	3.00	2.00
618	MagicMarine.com	Warren Guinea	Jason Bennett	24.00	3.00	4.00	2.00	4.00	2.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	2.00	4.00	7.00
594	Fat Cat	Luke McMullen	Adam Beattie	34.00	6.00	3.00	5.00	6.00	4.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	6.00	2.00	3.00
640	Catsailor.net	Andrew Holden	Jake Mortensen	37.00	4.00	5.00	3.00	1.00	5.00	5.00	7.00	7.00	5.00	5.00	4.00