

TEAM WORSER BAY AT THE NATIONAL OPTIMIST CHAMPIONSHIPS

Over the Easter break a team of twenty optimist sailors made the trip to Picton to compete in the 2003 National Optimist Championships. The regatta was sailed in Queen Charlotte sound, past Wedge Point which was at least a three quarter of an hour sail or a quarter of an hour tow from the yacht club.

Day one dawned with a Southerly building in the channel off Queen Charlotte Yacht Club. The wind built and built until water spouts were seen regularly moving down the channel, and the bay was a complete wall of spray on more than one occasion. A number of boats were picked up and blown off the grass area onto the car park. Needless to say there was no sailing on day one!

Day two dawned a whole lot better. A southerly of about 7 knots greeted the sailors as they rigged their boats for the day. It was off to the race track where three races were held with ease. The breeze was predominantly between 7 – 9 knots but the odd gust made it above 20 knots while on more numerous occasions the breeze dipped to under 2 knots. Josh J had the best of day one recording a 2nd and a 4th in his scores to see him placed in the top five at the end of the day's racing. Ben was also looking good at the end of day two with Rowan, Aaron and Cushla sitting close behind.

Day three dawned with no wind and stayed that way all day. We all went out to the race area in the forlorn hope of a breeze coming in but it was to no avail. Mermaid (our mother ship) had kids climbing all over her. At one point half the Worser Bay yachts were anchored together while their jockeys went on a sightseeing trip up the sound. On another occasion we had fourteen Wellington Optimists hanging off the side of the RPNYC Sailing Academy tender.

Day four dawned with some breeze again. Rowan must have eaten something pretty good the night before because he came out firing in the 7-9 knot shifty breeze. He scored a 2nd and a 4th in two of the four races of the day to move up the ladder board. Jono also had a consistent day as did Elvin. Ben saved his best race for the last race of the day finishing in 7th place, which was an outstanding result given the caliber of the overall fleet.

Day five dawned with absolutely no breeze!! Once again we moved out onto the race track and began the long wait. Once again the wind did not come and the race officer reluctantly called it quits at 2.30 pm. We had sailed enough races to get a result but everyone felt a little let down by Hughie for not providing us with enough wind.

The Worser Bay team, with 20 sailors, was the largest from the twenty eight yacht clubs who attended the championships. There were twelve clubs who had five or more entries in the championships. If you total the top four, five and six places from each of these clubs then Worser Bay had the fourth best overall result at the championships. Queen Charlotte Yacht Club is to be congratulated for running an excellent event. We look forward to the possibility of some of the QCYC sailors sailing on our waters next season.

Some high points from the regatta

- Nine Worser Bay sailors had their first experience of sailing in an Optimist National championships – well done Kristen, Emma, Sarah, Elvin, Josh P, Ethan, Hayley, Stacey, and Matthew.
- The profile of Worser Bay has been raised high by the good results and general behaviour of our sailing team and by the excellent use of the Mermaid as an on the water billboard – thanks PD and Jenny!!
- Josh Junior has made the New Zealand team to compete in the 2003 North American Championships to be held in Valle de Brava, Mexico in July.
- The weather team has developed an efficient and effective way of gathering and passing on weather information to our sailors, which we will be able to use in future regattas – well done Matt, Eng Chai, Bruce & Terry.
- The towing clips and centerboard plugs, put together by the Berry's, worked exceptionally well and I am sure they will become standard issue with optimists in the future!
- Greg Wilcox gave up his Easter to help coach the team – thanks Greg for your great support.

Overall placings for Worser Bay members in the 2003 Optimist National Championships

10	JOSHUA JUNIOR
13	ROWAN SWANSON
24	BEN HANNS
33	ARRAN WHITEFORD
45	SIMON McVEAGH
51	JONO HANNS
55	CUSHLA HUME-MERRY
70	MATTHEW STEVEN
73	FENGYI LEI
76	CHRIS JONES
77	SETH PRICE
103	STACEY SWANSON
107	HAYLEY HUME-MERRY
110	ETHAN PRICE
113	JOSH POREBSKI
123	ELVIN ELS
127	KELLY-MARIE SAUNDERS
149	SARAH BERRY
154	EMMA BERRY
157	KRISTIN DE LISLE