



The Mistral Tiller Issue 26: May 2016 Champs wrap-up Edition

Hi Mistrallers,

Well after a long, warm and relatively windy summer the weather has finally turned and for most boats will be safely tucked away – although there is winter racing for the (fool) hardy. It's been a bit of a struggle to get the numbers out on the water on a regular basis but those that did enjoyed some competitive racing and after match revelry (including shouting a few refreshments as pay back for on the water misdemeanours – sorry again Andy). Most of us require a lot of time on the water to hone our boat handling, tactics and crew work – for #101 it's been a matter of trying to learn from our many mistakes. After reading a few articles on the Interweb I even resorted to writing down some notes on what worked and what didn't (both tactics and boat set up) after each weekends racing – sounds naff to us old timers – but I'm sure it helped. Also the sad reality is most clubs are struggling for numbers so it is important to support them (and the Mistral Class) into the future by regularly getting out.

It was suggested to me that we record the previous winners of the champs – so attached is the winners list taken directly from the trophy - it makes for interesting reading – so many former winners (boats and skippers) still going strong. I for one would love to know the background to the prevalence for naming of boats 'Mist' back in the early days, some of the stories behind the no doubt fierce battles for victory including the tied winners back in 1985 etc. A pity crews weren't recorded until relatively recently – I'm sure a few went on to skipper their own boats to success. I recall Mike Norton regaling stories of Stephen Cox at a prize giving of the trophy in his name – it would be good to record these stories and save them to the website. In the meantime can the current various Champ trophy winners provide me with a list inscribed on the trophies – thanks.

Class Champs Wrap - up

One week out from the Champs reigning holder Scott Blakey lamented 'we are due a blow'. All forecast sites agreed (for a change) – in fact during the week Santa looked to have over-delivered on my Xmas wish (see Tiller #24) and the organising committee had even started discussing contingency plans for rescheduling the series as some forecasts were predicting 30+kts. Fortunately it all worked out and we had a solid 17-25kt series over both days and completed all 7 races. As a heavyweight it's easy for me to say it was perfect conditions – but winds were fairly steady in strength and direction so it made it a bit easier especially for the aged and tactically challenged amongst us. The rain even stayed away until after racing! Fleet numbers were down on past years, some no doubt put off the forecast but those who made it enjoyed some fast and furious rides.

It was a heavyweights contest with the first three place getters all weighing in at over 120Kg – that must be a record for more recent times. However I was so impressed with the young light weights such as Ollie Stone and James Blakey who completed all 7 races including a bit of kite work (and of course their dads who stacked hard all weekend!). New comers Daryl and Luka Senn lasted a few races – but with Luka taking shelter in the cockpit dad was never going to last. Luka was in good spirits at lunchtime so no doubt still keen for next season.

A special mention to Ross Davis who turned up from Wellington a week before the champs for a bit of practice. Naively a few of us gave out a few tips on setting up the boat – little did we relative new comers to the class realise that Ross is a previous 4 time Champ (as skipper and a few more as crew), his Blue Mist is the most successful boat ever and that they would push us so hard throughout the champs for a well-deserved 2nd overall. A tacking duel in 25 knots to the finish line was not appreciated! Ross and Alvaro Dodd weighed in at an impressive 150kg but lost nothing on the reaches and runs. Alvaro obviously was made to work hard though – he sailed the second day with one functioning leg before being admitted to hospital overnight with suspected cellulitis!! Another fantastic effort from young William Beauchamp and stalwart Matt O'Maigh who kept us all honest throughout and finished a credible 3rd overall. Matt put a second ratchet block to help William play the main, although as you can imagine it did make it a bit harder to dump main quickly in the gusts! If you hadn't guessed yes we, the seemingly perennial bridesmaids, finally cracked it – to the relief for all (including her-in-doors). Retirement finally beckons – so if you are interested in a fast boat crying out for a decent skipper get in touch.

A big thank you to our sponsors **Smart Marine** who donated numerous prizes including the kayak spot prize won by Matt Connolly & Will Scott and **NZ Sailing** who donated the wetsuit won by class President Rob Mason. At the risk of repeating Rob's comments below thanks too to Tamaki Yacht Club (Meg, Alex, Mike and Garth and co) for another well run series. A special mention to Eleanor and Angela who helped arrange Saturday's pizza night. Last but not least the organising committee, Scott and Rob.

Champs Results

Spinnaker Division

1st #101 Brett & Darcy Black (Mistral Championship Cup)

2nd #20 Ross Davis & Alvaro Dodd (Gordon Patrick Trophy for second crew on line)

3rd # 60 William Beauchamp (Bryan Mee Cup 1st skipper under 17yrs) & Matt O'Maigh

Non - Spinnaker

1st #92 Stephen & Tasman Rowntree (Leo Holden Memorial Trophy)

2nd #100 Mike Norton & Aiden Beacham

3rd #77 Rob Mason & Fred Burrage

Handicap

1st #4 Wade Tresadem (T Wild Cup) & Matthew Brewer (Peter Crotty Cup)

2nd #100 Mike Norton & Aiden Beauchamp

3rd #92 Stephen & Tasman Rowntree

Other Awards

Kerikeri Cup (heavy weights) – Ross Davis & Alvaro Dodd

Frank Davis Trophy (most persistent crew) – James Blakey

Masters Cup – Brett Black

Junior Crew trophy – Ollie Stone

Book Prize (technical crewing) – Darcy Black

Presidents Comment

Hi Mistrallers,

Here we are, almost at the end of another Mistral season (except for those keen souls who venture out for winter racing). What a hard fought event was the Mistral Class Championships at Tamaki Yacht Club 18 -19 March. The moderate to fresh conditions challenged the keen adult child combinations, but even the youngest of crews Lucca Senn, James Blakey, Ollie Stone, and Guy Gager, showed remarkable courage and resilience. This certainly bodes well for the future of Mistral racing. Congratulations to Brett and Darcy Black (Mistral 101 Marksman) for putting together such a highly disciplined campaign to win this year's class championships, after years of being pipped at the post. Darcy thoroughly deserved winning the prize for technical excellence in crewing given the many years he has been down, practically every week, at Tamaki Yacht Club training and crewing for his Dad. What a hard fought contest it was, though, with former national champion Ross Davis (Worser Bay Club, Wellington) and crew Alvaro Dodd (Glendowie Boating Club) pushing Brett and Darcy all the way to take second place in the renowned Mistral number 20, Blue Mist. The late Gordon Patrick, a legendary life member and multiple class champs winner, would have been delighted to see his former teenage crew helming his boat again.

It was wonderful to see Gordon's wife Anita and his son Bruce on the yard with Ross and old friends Frank and Fay Davis on Saturday. Congratulations also to Stephen and Tasman Rowntree winners of the Non-Spinnaker Division and Wade Tresadem and Matthew Brewer winners of the Handicap prize. Other highlights of the Championships included the phenomenal performance of Opti sailor William Beauchamp from Glendowie skippering Number 60 Mana with Matt O'Maigh crewing to third place, after a very focused build up campaign. Thanks Matt for coming down so many weeks from Whangarei to Tamaki Yacht Club to facilitate the Beauchamp-O'Maigh campaign.

A huge thanks for Richard Beauchamp, Vice-Commodore Glendowie Boating Club, for all the effort organizing Glendowie crew to combine with experienced Tamaki Yacht Club skippers at both the Auckland Championships and the Class Championships. This interclub co-operation was so much appreciated.

It was great have Tony Dalbeth-Hudson down from Kerikeri, and Kelcey Gager from Manly Sailing Club with his 7year old son Guy. Congratulations, also to Kelcey for his amazing win in the Zephyr Nationals. It was very fitting at the beginning of the prize giving to acknowledge of great ongoing contribution to the Mistral Class of Life Member Don Grayson.

I wish to thank Brett Black and Scott Blakey from the MOA along with Angela and Eleanor who covered catering from the MOA, who worked so hard. I also thank Tamaki Yacht Club hosts; Bob Blakey, Mike Knowles, Garth Briden and the team on the Committee boat and Patrol Boats, and Meg and Alex. All these folk helped to make the Championships a success.

All the best as over winter you do all those odd jobs on your Mistral and encourage friends to buy a Mistral. Olivier Marthe will be only too keen to assist you in advertising or purchasing Mistrals on the Class Website.

Warm regards

Rob Mason

Top Tips

At the risk of reading like a know all, I thought I'd share my thoughts on what makes a Mistral go forward;

- Seek help on setting the boat up – stalwarts Matt O'Maigh and Andy Stone are more than willing to share their knowledge or for you to take a few measurements of their set ups
- Make sure your set up works – no point being 1st at the top mark if your self-launching pole always gets snagged
- Sail flat (guilty here of not consistently doing this!) – don't be afraid to depower incl dropping the traveller upwind or bear away on a reach in a gust
- Sit forward – don't drag her stern upwind and downwind not a nose diver but can get skittish if weight too far back in a breeze
- Pinch up in a heavy breeze upwind or strong gusts – feels slow but faster overall
- Pre bend – the main is a bag down low and the mast too stiff – chock the mast forward at deck level particularly in light or heavy conditions
- The two bottom mainsail battens should be very stiff and put them in loose for all conditions (don't want to introduce any added shape)
- Mast rake – doesn't seem to have a huge effect for varying breezes – the heavier the crew the more upright
- With a traveller system sheet the main hard in moderate + winds – use your leech woollies – but it's pretty hard to choke the main in these conditions.
- With a traveller system bring the cars way up to windward in light & moderate winds – its difficult to bring the boom close to centreline in a moderate breeze
- Have a grunty kicker and don't be afraid to use it in a breeze to flatten the mainsail and also esp when you are playing the main (ie lost leech tension from traveller system)
- Use the jib woollies to check correct sheeting angle – top, middle, bottom should break together when luffing
- Sheet jib in hard for moderate and breeze – but check leech, slot
- Many are running way too heavy ropes – crew size influences but have a look at what the top boats are running
- Crew morale and maintenance – esp the young ones – keep well fed and warm, for the older ones – keep calm!
- Experiment (and record results) – jib sheeting angles, mainsheet tension etc etc – the above may not work for you
- Practice, practice, practice
- Enjoy

Well that's about it from me – next newsletter/notice will be for the AGM – the Association will be looking to members to step up and assist. All going well you will have a better wordsmith to take over the Tiller.

Cheers

Brett

