Northland Champs Report 26/27 Sept.

A new event on the 3.7 calendar, the Northland camps were held at Oakura in conjunction with the Wakatere OK Dinghy fleet.

For the uninformed, Oakura is a very laid back beach settlement on the shores of Whangaruru harbour. About 50km south of the Bay of Islands. The Whangaruru Yacht Club was created by Travis (surname unknown) and some like-minded mates to teach kids boating and water skills. Over the eight years the club has been in existence they have had several hundred kids go through the learn to sail programme.

Club facilities consist of a wooden sign and a great attitude.

Whangaruru harbour itself is a glorious spot on the east coast. Launch off the sandy beach, sail in crystal clear water in picturesque surroundings. We even had a pod of dolphins accompany the fleet during race one. Fantastic.

Whangaruru is a bit of a trek to get to but worth the effort.

Racing was scheduled for two days, Saturday and Sunday. Three races per day. However, the forecast for Sunday was dire. Gale force winds and torrential rain. As a result the plan changed at race briefing to six races back to back on Saturday with a “likely no racing” Sunday.

No Sunday racing was confirmed Saturday afternoon. I think most sailors not complaining too much after a long day on the water in plenty of breeze.

The 3.7 fleet numbered six. Jeff Christensen and Peter Sharp from BOI, Derek Snow, Chris Hawkins from Wakatere, Mike Jones and myself.

Conditions were ideal really. 8 - 12 knots early on rising to maybe 15-18 later. Pretty stable breeze from the North.

Similar to recent regattas Derek in #88 put in a solid effort, winning 5 of 6 with a 2nd place drop in race two. He has boat speed and can recover from a mishap or poor start, of which he had at least one.

In the rest of the fleet boat speed was pretty similar (at least in my opinion). A poor start or capsize was difficult to recover from. No matter how quick the righting, typically a capsize dropped the capsizer to tail end Charlie, from whence there was no recovery.

Just ask Mike. In race six he was in a three way tussle for the lead, canned at the bottom mark on the first triangle, (my recollection) righted fairly quickly but still ended up last. He wasn’t really gaining on the rest of us at all. Getting a good start was paramount. There was bit of argy- bargy on the line and a “sort of” general recall race one. Apparently 5 of 6 were over early (I wasn’t!), three re-started but we all recorded a finish, no OCS. Hmm?

There were not a lot of passing opportunities.

At the end of the day another clear win for Derek with Mike, Chris and Peter pretty close behind for 2nd to 4th.

Jeff and I were close a lot of the time but not when it mattered, at the finish.

Gross Nett

1st #88 Derek Snow 1/2/1/1/1/1 7 5

2nd #379 Mike Jones 2/1/2/4/2/6 17 11

3rd #364 Chris Hawkins 6/3/4/2/3/2 20 14

4th #192 Peter Sharp 5/4/3/3/4/3 22 17

5= #372 Jeff Christensen 3/5/6/5/6/5 30 24

5= #187 Donald King 4/6/5/6/5/4 30 24

At prizegiving BBQ Derek was presented with a hand made very nice totora perpetual trophy for “guest class”.

3.7 class will get the first inscription.

This is a series worth supporting and should be a regular on the 3.7 calendar.

Apparently there are a few keen juniors at Keri Keri sailing club wanting to get into 3.7’s.

If anybody knows of a boat or boats for sale give Peter Sharp a call.

Donald King

#187