

Such a Jolly good time

The Waiheke Boating Club-hosted Sealink Auckland Jollyboat Championship tested boats and sailors to the max with some extreme winds.

But it was such a great success the NZ Jollyboat Association have asked Waiheke to host the Nationals in 2008.

looked like Stu Farquhar in *Baldrick* was giving an overturned Ian Gratz a hand at the top mark. It wasn't quite so. Ian had been flipped by another and as he went upside-down his mainsheet trapped the completely innocent Stu's underwater stuff.



Fifteen boats lined up on the western end of Oneroa Beach Saturday with about eight to 10 knots of sou'westerly putting an alluring pattern on the bay's water.

Entries included five times national champ Roger Hall expecting a good tussle with Matt Hall-Smith, who does his Jollyboating at both French Bay and Maraetai; and Waiheke's Paul MacIntosh who has won the prestigious Leander Trophy for the more highly powered 14 R-class skiffs more times than most people can remember.

Three other town entries came over and Paul was joined by nine other locals.

By 11am the wind had strengthened to a blustering 12-18 knots and that was on the limit for some. Roger, in *Peppermint Planet*, had no problems as he pulled away from Matt in *Snorter* to have a 50-yard lead after the first triangle and stretched that to 100 yards at the finish.

In the two-handed division Paul, with son Harry crewing, took his first win.

For race two the wind was just up a bit more and the capsizes started. Drama at the start saw Murray Robertson having a coming together with the start boat in which *Hot Shot* came out very second best and was out of the champs.

While Matt got, and stayed, ahead of Roger, there was some blue language in their collective wakes. From the vantage of MacIntosh Road lookout it

By race three the wind was in fine song and so was Roger for his second win. The race also claimed another withdrawal when Adam Cotes suffered a knee injury trying to keep *Outrageous* on her feet.

The last race of day one had the wind well over 25 knots and the sailors tiring. The fleet was temporarily down to seven and as they screeched from the windward mark to the wing on a broad lead it was helter-skelter stuff.

The New Zealand champ showed his class with by far the best wipe-out as he jybbed around the buoy. *Peppermint Planet* stopped and Roger carried on. Matt carried on for the win ahead of Paul and son with Gordon Dyer in *Plan B* next. Roger recovered for fourth. All up the day's conditions had taken out five entries.

Sunday was scheduled for three races and conditions were lighter.

Alex Stone picked the pressure and holes better on the first windward leg, and on a two-up two-down course held



Above - Five times national champ Roger Hall made it look easy in race one.

Left - Stu Farquhar in *Baldrick* leads Gordon Dyer in *Plan B* around the wing mark in race one.

on to beat Mark Winters in *Weapon* with Roger third. Waiheke's Peter Woolf and Ian Gratz had good boat speed while on their feet but too often went on their sides.

Paul and Harry left all behind in the last race and that secured the pair the Auckland Jollyboat Pairs title - a first for Waiheke Boating Club. Second in the pairs was Gordon with Rory and Wendy Bavistock and crew took third.

Roger secured his second Auckland title with Matt second and Mark third. Waiheke's Stu Farquhar was fifth in *Baldrick* and Ian was sixth.

The Auckland Champs were set up two years ago to give the fleet an emphasis before Christmas and some big competition other than the Nationals which come around in March.

Roger Hall had intended to retire last year but Waiheke changed his mind. "This fleet is going so well it's good to stay in and its growth on Waiheke was what really swayed me," he said.

"We had a talk last night (Saturday) and we're going to ask Waiheke to host the next Nationals. This is great."

Words and pictures : Rick Hillman

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