

1974-1975 Australian National Cherub Championships

By Rob Vaisey

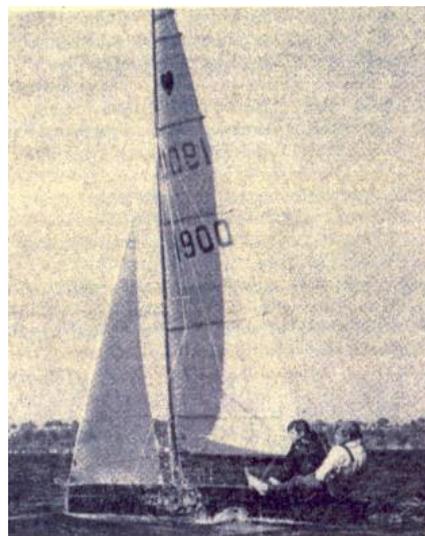
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South Perth, Western Australia

One could be excused for thinking it was ladies' day at the South of Perth Yacht Club on the afternoon of the final heat of the Australian Cherub championship; Sydney girl Lyndall Coxen had won the best and another Sydney girl, reigning national champ Nicola Bethwaite, had retained her title.

Miss Bethwaite, who sailed *Slithy Tove*, with her brother Julian, made few tactical errors and was always on the right side of the course for the shifts. In the first heat she came from sixth to second by working the southern shore. Later in the series she was to use her ability to pick shifts to outsail WA's Rodney Beurteaux, who was lying second overall.

Beurteaux won two Flying Ant national titles before moving into Cherubs this season. His boat, *Ajax*, was also a Bethwaite design and fitted with Bethwaite mast and Elvstrom sails. Beurteaux and crewman Peter Shack had an all-up weight of 19 stone, giving them a downwind advantage. Greg Hilton's *AD73*, another WA boat, was third overall. NSW boats filled five of the next six placings. The first Victorian boat was *Beethoven* sailed by Andrew Bullock (10th) and the best South Australian was *Albatross* (Scott Watkin) which finished 15th in the 60-boat fleet. The Tasmanian crew damaged their boat in the invitation race and retired from the series.



Julian (forward hand) and Nicola Bethwaite on their way to winning the Australian Cherub championship in Slithy Tove on the Swan River.

Nicola puts much of her success down to the training and help her father Frank gives to her. Nicky added that he helped win this title in a most practical way by financing the trip to Perth, buying the boat and gear, and lending her and her brother a near-new car to drive across Australia.

Their boat was sold in Perth after the series to Trevor Kenworthy. It is a standard Bethwaite design with maximum vee under the mast and a lot of round on the underwater section at the stern. There was not a lot of gadgetry. It was fitted with Elvstrom sails. The red and white (halved) light and moderate weather spinnaker really pulled the boat along and the Bethwaites were sorry to part with it as they felt it would be hard to get another as good. Miss Bethwaite intends to stay in Cherubs.

The trend to radial-head and starcut spinnakers at the series provided a lot of colour to the fleet, and these were among the gear innovations. An interesting mainsheet system was fitted to the WA boat *Seraphim* (Tony Moore). A three-quarter pulley system was fitted inside the boom and led out at the gooseneck, down to the cockpit floor and back to the central cockpit pulley. A connecting stainless wire came out the other end of the boom and down to a traveller fitted on the transom. Traveller adjustment was controlled by a separate system. On each side of the cockpit a line came through a cam cleat and a two-purchase pulley system then connected to a stainless wire which went back to the traveller. The system, according to Moore, works as a normal mainsheet and traveller but has three purchases, less windage and does not clutter the cockpit.

Moore led all around the course when he won the first heat, sailed in very rough conditions. The Bethwaite won the second and third heats which were sailed in light winds and dominated by the NSW crews. The series became very open after the fourth when the Bethwaites took two 12-place penalties for infringing the port and starboard rule and were placed 27th, after finishing third.

Their run of bad luck continued into the fifth heat when they broke the start line and lost many places re-starting and finished fifth, in the heat which was won by *AD73*. The sixth heat provided a great tactical battle between *Slithy Tove* and *Ajax*. In a light west wind the two skippers put their boats ahead of the fleet and with Bethwaite going faster to windward and Beurteaux faster downwind the race became a see-saw tussle. The Bethwaites won the heat to give themselves an overall lead of four points. In the final heat *Slithy Tove* was third and *Ajax* ninth. Miss Bethwaite won the national title, the woman's championship and the junior title. Hilton won the Cadet championship.

Next season the world and national titles will be held at the Henley Sailing Club in South Australia.

Results

1	<i>Slithy Tove</i>	(Nicola & Julian Bethwaite, NSW)	2,1,1,27,5,1,3	18.7pts
2	<i>Ajax</i>	(Rodney Beurteaux, Peter Shack, WA)	5,4,2, 1,2,2,9 27	
3	<i>AD73</i>	(Greg Hilton, Kim Norgard, WA)	4,31,10,2,1,4,4 43	
4	<i>Scomac GTR</i>	(Max Scheafee, Ian Hobbs, NSW)	7,9,3,13,3,8,6 64.1	
5	<i>Seraphim</i>	(Tony Moore, Peter McQuiod, WA)	1,7,6,5,11,10,13	67.7
6	<i>Seawings</i>	(Tony Scali, Chris Messenger, .NSW)	13,2,28,15,8,7,2	73
7	<i>Dial A Prayer</i>	(Bren Taylor, Mark Stratton, NSW)	2.3,11,9,8,4,6,10	81.7
8	<i>Tachycardia</i>	(David Pfeiffer, Tony Nicholson, NSW)	21,3,5,10,12,3,20	82.4
9	<i>Gillman's</i>	(Lyndall Coxen, Richard Dreverman NSW)	15,12,13, 11, 19, 11, 1	92
10	<i>Beethoven</i>	(Andrew Bullock and Ron Burkitt, Vic)	12,40,4,7,Ret,,5,22	23

<i>Slithy Tove</i>	(Pamcraft hull, Bethwaite spars, Elvstrom sails)
<i>Ajax</i>	(Bethwaite hull and spars, Elvstrom sails)
<i>AD73</i>	(Kenny hull, Bethwaite spars, Blue Peter and Cassidy sails)
<i>Scomac GTR</i>	(Elvstrom design hull, Chivers spars)
<i>Seraphim</i>	(Philips hull, Superspar spars, Lucas & Whitton sails)
<i>Seawings</i>	(Bethwaite hull and spars, Elvstrom sails)
<i>Dial A Prayer</i>	(Henderson hull, Stewart spars, Tru-Flo sails)
<i>Tachycardia</i>	(Bethwaite hull and .spars, Elvstrom sails)
<i>Gillman's</i>	(Homebuilt hull, Chivers .spars, Miller & Whitworth sails)
<i>Beethoven</i>	(Homebuilt hull, Bethwaite spars, Elvstrom sails).

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