

1978-1979 Australian National Cherub Championships and

by Robert Keeley.

As published in *Australian Sailing*, March 1979

Wynyard, Tasmania

NSW boat *Stairway to Heaven* skippered by Ian Boyle with Mitch Miller crewing, won the 16th national Cherub championship sailed from Inglis YC Wynyard, Tas. Second was local boat *To Go* skippered by Steve Walker crewed by Liz Vincent and third, *Black Friday* (Scott Morphett, Ian McGilvray, ACT).

A friendly small-town atmosphere pervaded the championship with the locals doing everything to make the interstate competitors feel welcome. And Inglis YC, despite its small size, ran the series in a very professional manner.

Forty-seven boats, comprising eight from NSW, 24 Tasmanian, six SA, five Victorian, two WA, and two ACT boats, competed in the series which was sailed in mostly moderate and heavy winds.

Heat one was a 25-30 kt gear-buster - 20 boats did not finish, and many of those that did had broken gear. *Silk Degrees* (NSW) sailed by Matt Hayes and Tony Hannan won from *Stairway to Heaven*, and WA entry *Mephisto* (Peter Kovesi, Mark Hannaford).

Heat two was resailed after Graeme Ferguson and Brad Rogers in NSW boat *Short Fuse* protested the Race Committee for starting 30 seconds early. Ferguson had sailed from near the end of the fleet to fourth place. In the resail, with light to moderate winds, *To Go* won from *Black Friday* with *Mephisto* third again *Short Fuse* finished sixth.

Heat three was sailed in. 18-22 kts from the west. *Stairway to Heaven* won well, and ex-national champion *Nix* (NSW) sailed by Phil Smith and Vicki Weeks took second. *Stoned Crow* (Craig Nicholls, Ian Taylor NSW) finished third. In heat four the winds gradually increased to 25 knots. *Stairway to Heaven* won convincingly from *Stoned Crow* and *Short Fuse*.

After the Race Committee abandoned heat five due to strong winds, it was resailed with heat six on one day. These races were both light. Steve Walker revived his title chances by winning heat five. *Black Friday* and *Nix* came second and third. In heat six, *Nix* won comfortably, with *To Go* second.

Three boats could win by the final heat; *Stairway to Heaven*, *Nix*, or *To Go*. A short course was laid and half the fleet overlaid the first mark by 300 yards. *Stairway to Heaven* found it, led for most of the race and finally eased sheets to let *Stoned Crow* in at the finish. Victorian boat *Last Chance Power Drive* (Robert Keeley, Dale Collings) was third.

Over the series Boyle and Miller outclassed their opponents in medium and heavy winds. Walker and Vincent did not have enough all up weight in these winds, but were better in the lighter conditions. The next series will be at Chelsea Yacht Club in Melbourne.

- 1, *Stairway to Heaven* (I Boyle, M. Miller, NSW) 2-4-1-1-5-2, 24;
- 2, *To Go* (S. Walker, L. Vincent, Tas) 5-2-9-1-2-5,41;
- 3, *Black Friday* (S. Morphett, I. McGilvray, ACT) 1-7-8-2-4-7, 51;
- 4, *Stoned Crow* (C. Nicholls, I. Taylor, NSW) 7-3-2-8-10-1, 51.7;
- 5, *Nix* (P. Smith, V. Weeks. NSW) 5-2-5-3-1-19, 53.7,
- 6, *Silk Degrees* (M. Hayes, T. Hannan, NSW) 1-12-4-6-6-10,6, 54,
- 7, *Short Fuse* (G. Ferguson, B. Rogers, NSW) 6-6-5-3-4-17, 70.1;
- 8, *Mephisto* (P. Kovesi, M. Hannaford, WA) 3-3-7-9-9-12. 72.4
- 9, *Last Chance Power Drive* (R. Keeley, D. Collings, Vic) 413-8-10-8-3, 76.7
- 10, *More Sting* (E. McDonough, T. Woods, NSW) 10-8-6-4-11-6,78.4

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