

1993 1994 Australian National Cherub Championships

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As published in *Australian Sailing* magazine, April 1994

Frankston, Melbourne, Victoria

In common with all fleets which raced their national titles on Port Phillip Bay over the past summer, the Cherub class experienced severe disruptions and only completed five of seven scheduled races. The truncated series resulted in the leader at the conclusion of the fifth heat, *Screamin' Seamen*, sailed by NSW team Matthew Wren and Luke Mortlock, winning the title. Second place went to NSW pair John and Gary Boyd on *Genetic Misfortune*, while third was taken out by another NSW combination, Marshall and Trent Harrington.

Three of the five heats were sailed in strong winds while the others were relatively light. A difficult weather pattern which resulted to onshore breezes and tough sailing conditions made the victory by Wren and Mortlock all the more impressive. During a number of races, just getting off the beach and back on shore afterwards was a major feat for all sailors, most of whom displayed excellent seamanship. Breaking surf pounded the shore along Frankston YC for up to 100 metres to seaward and further out the wave pattern, often pushed by gale force westerlies, was short, steep and broken.



Sue Ebling and Rebecca Scott (NSW) won the women's trophy at the Cherub nationals.

In their second season together in the class, Wren said he and Mortlock approached this regatta with much more respect for the quality of the opposition than they had last year. "The class is far more competitive than we thought it was" he said. Wren, a former Flying Eleven national champion, said the competition in that junior class was good, but the Cherub fleet, despite its relatively small size (32 boats) was another step up in standard. He said that during the previous national regatta in Perth they had been light weather specialists. "This year we won in the heaviest stuff," he said.

The three leading hulls were all built and designed by Sydney builder Julian O'Mahony, the winner being his Mark II design. The slab-sided, relatively flat bottomed, boxy shapes owe their origins to the *Wop* and *Foreign Affair* hull shapes of the early eighties, and are refinements from these prototypes. (The original *Foreign Affair* competed in the series and finished a creditable seventh).

Screamin' Seamen had an unusual teardrop shaped gunwale line when seen in plan view. Wren and Mortlock used Concept Sails and a "home made" aluminium mast with a fibreglass and carbon top. They trained hard, sailing every couple of days for six months off Cronulla in Sydney to get used to the conditions they expected on Port Phillip Bay.

Wren was particularly happy with their heavy weather performances. "In heat five it was gusting up to 40 knots and we were airborne to windward. We're light weather specialists, so for us to win in heavy weather was pretty good. Winner of the Women's Skipper trophy was NSW's Sue Ebling, crewed by experienced Rebecca Scott. Veteran's Trophy winners were Victorian Cherub legend John Floyd and crew Andrew Rodriguez.

- 1, *Screamin' Seamen* (M. Wren, L. Mortlock, NSW); 3- 47-2-1, 16.7;
- 2, *Genetic Misfortune* (J. Boyd, G. Boyd, NSW); 17-1-1-8-2, 17;
- 3, *Dry Reaching* (M. Harrington, T. Harrington, NSW); 4-2-5-1-4, 19;
- 4, *Groin Strain* (J. Roberts, J. Jordan, NSW); 1-dnf-2-3-6, 20.4;
- 5, *Smoke My Peg* (G. Searant, A. Jackson , NSW), 16-3-3-9-3, 32.1;
- 6, *Rocky'N'Bullwinkle* (B. Smith, G. Stivano, NSW), 2-6-6-15-7, 39.4;
- 7, *Foreign Affair* (D. Ewings, G. Bauchop, NSW), 127-4-5-8, 45
- 8, *We're No Angels* (J.Floyd, A. Rodriguez, Vic); 8-8-10-4-5, 46;
- 9, *All Mixed Up* (J. McLaren, A. Senn, SA). 10-5-9-10-dnf, 57;
- 10, *Dive Hard* (A. Kelaher, A. Burke. NSW); 6-14-15-6-9,58.4