

## 2009-10 Australian Cherub National Championships

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### Mounts Bay Sailing Club, Perth

Alison Chapman and Rhys Mara from Lane Cove 12ft Skiff Club dominated the 2009-10 Cherub National Championships, sailed at Mounts Bay Sailing Club, in a way the no Cherub crew has done in the recent history of the class. After a shaky start to the series which included running aground and capsizing in the second race, they outshone their competitors with superior boat handling, tactical skills and mistake free sailing. With six wins in the first eight races they had the series wrapped up with a heat to spare.



*Alison Chapman and Rhys Mara get some air on their way to winning the Cherub Nationals. (Photo Andrew Burvill)*

Chapman became only the second woman to win Cherub National Championship in the class's 47 year history, the other being Nicki Bethwaite who won the honour twice in the mid 1970s. The win was also the second in a row by the Chapman family with Alison's brother Andrew having won the title last year. While Chapman came into the series as the defending Junior Champion, she and Mara, who is a former member of the Australian Development Squad, had little sailing together and there

were questions marks over their ability to gel as a crew in the fresh condition that were expected in Perth. The doubts built as Perth cousins Steven and Blake Vance from Perth Dinghy Sailing Club took the first two heats in strong sea breezes. However Chapman and Mara fought back with straight wins in each of the next six heats in conditions that varied from 12 to 24kts.



*Fresh breeze in race 9 of the Cherub Nationals led to a few less than textbook moments. Here Claire and Rolf Lunsmann managed to get a bit out of shape. (Photo Fiona Lunsmann)*

Second overall were the Vances and third was the very consistent Cam Rule and Todd Montgomery from the host Club Mounts Bay, who managed top level finishes across the full range of conditions. Rule and Montgomery also carried off the Veterans Trophy. With Chapman unable to win the Junior Championship through having won the Open Championship, the Junior

Championship went to Brennan Stead and Rob Burvill from Perth Dinghy Sailing Club who finished an excellent fifth overall. Ashley Knighton and James Walters from Belmont won the Cadet Championship for Under18 skippers.

Next year's Cherub Nationals will be held at Largs Bay Sailing Club in Adelaide.

1. *Sparky*, (Alison Chapman, Rhys Mara), NSW, 2, 6, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, 1, dnf, 8pts
2. *Serenity Now*, (Steven, Blake Vance) WA, 1, 1, 3, 6, 2, 2, 3, 2, 1: 12.
3. *The Cunning Linguist*, (Cam Rule, Todd Montgomery), WA, 3, 2, 2, 4, 5, 3, 4, 5, 3: 21
4. *Enough Rope*, (Ryan Clifton-Smith, Nigel Blatchford), NSW, 5, 4, 5, 7, 4, 6, 8, 3, 2: 29
5. *Fine Mess*, (Brennan Stead, Rob Burvill), WA, 7,8,6,2,6,5,2,7,6: 34
6. *Alchemy*, (Claire, Rolf Lunsmann), NSW, 13, 13, 12, 3, 3, 4, 5, 4, 13: 44,
7. *Rita's Garden* (Matt Jahn, James Garnaut), WA, 4, 5, 4, 20, 14, 16, 7, 10, 4: 48
8. *Dark Horse*, (Tom Batt, Chris Jahn), WA, 8, 3, 7, 11, 10, 9, 6, 12, dnf: 54
9. *Getcha Cans Out*, (Simon Blatchford, Liam Doyle), NSW, 10, 10, 14, 10, 8, 11, 11, 9, 9: 67
10. *Back in Black*, (Todd McVee, Steve Fryer), WA, dnf, 7, 8, 17, 11, 12, 15, 14, 5: 72