

5th Cherub World Championships 1978

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As published in *Australian Sailing*, April 1978

Milford, NZ

Aucklander Mark Paterson and David MacKay in Queenie Sarah Jane Blucher IV won the fifth World Cherub Class Championship at Auckland, New Zealand, where the first Cherub was designed and built by John Spencer in 1951. Another Kiwi crew, Mark Bell and Simon Daubney in *Bad Sneakers* was second and Australia's Andrew Pearson and Tony Hannan in *Stardust* third. There were 30 entries from New Zealand, six from Australia and five from UK. All the visiting crews except one brought their own boats.

Paterson's race record was a remarkable 1, disq, 1, 2, 1, 1, 1. Both he and Bell were ruled to be over at the start of the second heat and failed to answer their recall. They protested the sailing committee, claiming that there were so many boats crossing the line at the time that it would have been impossible to have narrowed it down to two, and therefore there should have been a general recall. They lost the protest. As Paterson crossed the finishing line in fourth place, it would still have been his worst performance and his discard. The same was true for Bell who crossed in ninth place.



Cherub worlds runner-up Bad Sneakers shows how the Iain Murray designed hulls sliced through the Auckland chop. Note the two-ply leech on the loose-looted main and two-ply jib.

Paterson's only other fall from grace, his second in race four, came after a close battle with Pearson who he passed in the final beat and seemed to have well covered as they approached the line. However a lift right at the finish put Pearson ahead again to cross first by an official two seconds.

Mark Bell was as consistent as Paterson, finishing one place behind in every race they counted, for a final score of 2, disq, 2, 3, 2, 2, 2. The only other boat to win a race was another New Zealand entrant Fluid Drive, sailed by Philip and Colin McNeill who finished fourth overall, with Australia's Firecracker, Graeme Ferguson and Bruce Painter, in fifth place to win the under-18 Cadet title.

Although the top places went to New Zealand crews, the first five boats were all Australian designs, Paterson and Bell were both sailing Iain Murray Cherubs; Pearson's was a Ferguson as was Firecracker, and Fluid Drive was a Bethwaite. The first New Zealand design was the sixth-placed Hercules GT which was a Bruce Farr. Paterson also had Australian sails made by Mike Coxon and Kevin Wadham and ordered when they were in Auckland for the Interdominion Twelves in January.

Paterson won the New Zealand Cherub title and the selection trials two weeks before the world's with a suit of local sails which were cut rather full, as was the custom with most New Zealand Cherub sails. His Australian ones were much flatter, particularly in the lower part of the main, and in the jib which was sheeted well inboard. This suited Paterson's style well as he always sails as high as possible on the wind. In the conditions that reigned throughout the contest, with generally more sea than wind, this paid off for both Paterson and Bell who went so much better than those who tended to pay off over the seas and go for boat speed, and there was usually a good gap from these two back to the rest of the fleet.

The hull shape of the Murray Cherub with its deep and fine forefoot was also well suited for cutting through the chop and the boats were well balanced with an easy motion. They were definitely the best all round design. The weather conditions were as consistent as the top boats - there was an on-shore nor'easterly every day with the wind strength varying throughout the contest from five to 18 knots. The on-shore wind was fairly true and favoured no-one, but had it been off-shore in that area, local knowledge would have played a big part.

Second-placed Bell and Daubney had two suits of Hood sails, one for up to 8 knots which had a 9 in roach in a two-ply jib and a two-ply leech on the main, and a heavier rig for over 8 knots. They had loose-footed mains with a jumbo foot. Their sails were as flat as Paterson's but they sheeted their jib about 3 in further out. Generally their boat speed was in no way inferior to QSJB's but their starts were seldom as good. Where Paterson often led at the first mark, Bell and Daubney usually had to work their way past several boats before they got into their accustomed second place and once there, they could never break through Paterson. Mark Paterson, a 30-year-old veteran of New Zealand and international small boat sailing, had far too much experience for his eighteen-year-old rivals, but Bell and Daubney won the Junior Cherub World Championship (18-20).

Paterson was third in the last World 470 championship, and in the 1976 Olympics, he looked certain of the 470 Gold after the sixth race, but blew it in the final 'neat. A week after the Cherub contest he won his fourth New Zealand 470 title.

The English contingent didn't fare very well - their best placing was David Finch's Hot Dog in 10th position. Their hull designs looked out of date but they had some

good-looking sails. They gave the impression that the class is still nowhere near as competitive in the UK as it is in Australasia.

- 1, *Queenie Sarah Jane Blucher IV* (M. Paterson, D. MacKay, NZ), 1-dsq-1-2-1-1-1, 3
- 2, *Bad Sneakers* (M. Bell, S. Daubney, NZ), 2-dsq-2-3-2-2-2 20.7;
- 3, *Stardust* (A. Pearson, T. Hannan, NZ), 16-2-4-1 4-3-8, 38.7,
- 4, *Fluid Drive* (P. McNeill, C. McNeill, NZ) 4-1-dnf-10-5-4-3, 47.7:
- 5, *Firecracker* (G. Ferguson, B. Painter. Aust), 7-26-3-3-47-7-4, 60.7
- 6, *Hercules GT* (A. Cadwell, R. Hawkms, NZ), dsq-4-8-5-3-9-15, 73.7;
- 7, *Willy Again* (S. O'Connor, C. Crawford, Aust), 6-24-5-17-6-5-14, 86.4;
- 8, *Freedom Express* (M. Jones, A. Knowles, NZ), 12-3-6-9-14-2810, 86.9,
- 9, *Hot Dog* (D. Finch, P. Lavender, NZ), 15-9-11-12-20-6-5, 92.7,
- 10, *Kwanza* (P. Stacey, J. Welch, NZ), 18-5-12-15-1711-7, 102.