

## 10th World Cherub Championships 1991

By John Mallitte

As reported in *Australian Sailing* magazine, April 1991

### Auckland New, Zealand

The 1988 WORLD CHERUB junior champions Geoff Laws and Andrew Stone won the 10th World Cherub titles held in their home waters of Auckland, New Zealand. Laws, 22, has to cope with a heart valve replacement and being dubbed the "bionic man" by local newspapers but, despite this setback, his worst heat performance and discard was a fourth. He also had to cope with a 23 to 16 advantage in boat numbers to the Australians.

Laws and Stone were sailing a new boat and were pre-race favourites. Laws' handicap, however, would have daunted a lesser man. Four years ago he had an artificial heart valve implanted. But, according to his father Geoff Laws senior (also NZ Cherub president), his son's attitude is: "I'm going to do all I can while I can, in case this bit of plastic packs up."



*Laws' winning boat (above) has different hull shape to the Australian style (below). (Mallitte).*



Australia's team included 13 boats from NSW, four from SA, three from WA, two from Victoria and a single ACT representative. Missing from the team were current national champions Andrew Hewson and Greg Stivano who stayed at home to contest the Australian 470 championship. In the absence of the national titleholders, the lone ACT skipper, Hugh Stoddart, was given the best chance of success. Stoddart has nine years of experience in the class and was sailing with fellow university student Rebecca Scott. Unfortunately for Stoddart he did not get enough of his preferred light weather and finished runner-up overall.

A good omen for the class in Australia was the junior and cadet results. Greg Searant, 20, and crew Chris Pomfret, 16, of Sydney won the World junior Cherub title for under 21s.

They finished fourth overall with a 4-2-4-8-7-2-8 score. The cadets title for under 18s was won by Kane Sinclair and Martin Plentinger in fifth overall. They sailed an immaculate boat appropriately called *Go Hard Go Home* and had placings of 10-9-5-4-4-5-2.

Top WA skipper Maria-Luisa Ojeda, who was second at the last nationals, had a disastrous series. She had an infected eye and could not wear her contact lenses, lost her spinnaker halyard before the start of the stormy fifth heat and could not start. Ojeda had good boat speed but could not use it. She put up a gutsy effort to finish a disappointed 16th overall.

"Most of the Australian team - 20 out of 23 - are *Foreign Affair* designs," said team manager David Venning. "The original was designed by Julian O'Mahony and it is still the best all-round Cherub in Australia. The original *Foreign Affair* is now over 10 years old and still places well in local competition."

The New Zealand team consisted mostly of boats built off an association mould in an effort to get flagging class numbers into competitive shape. The original design was *Rebel* designed by Kiwi class secretary Brett Black and Bruce Trotter. It was then modified by Geoff Laws and Andrew Stone into *Tasman Express* in which they were third in the 1988 Worlds on Botany Bay and also won the World junior crown. These boats have finer for'ard sections, when compared with the Australian hulls, which allows them to cope with the Auckland chop. They also have more topside flare, stiffer mid-sections and appear more stable.



Start of the final heat of the Cherub worlds; light and flukey breeze. INSET: Winners Geoff Laws (right) and Andrew Stone. (John Mallitte pictures).

- 1, G. Laws, A. Stone, NZ 1-4-1-1-1-4-4,16;
- 2, H. Stodart, R. Scott, Aust 2-1-3-7-3-3-1, 20.1;
- 3, B. Black, N. Cave, NZ 3-20.2-3- 5-1-3, 30.1;
- 4, G. Searant, C. Pomfret, Aust 42-48-7-2-8, 49;
- 5, K. Sinclair, M. Plentiger, Aust 10-9-5-4~5-2, 54;
- 6, A. Kensington, D. Lieffng NZ 5-18-8-5lr6-6, 69.1;
- 7, J. & G. Boyd, Aust 8-6-13-6-2-9-19, 74.4;
- 8, A. McGlashan, P. Lieffing, NZ 17-5-7-2-10-20-15, 86;
- 9, D. Corey, M. Duffield, Aust Cr110-11-11-22-20, 93.4;
- 10, R. Livingstone, G. Bauchop, Aust 12-25-6-13-9-10-13, 97.8.