



## Australian Optimist Sailing Team

**AOST** An Optimistic Opportunity

***AOST has been set up to assist our topmost and up and coming Optimist sailors to reach their full potential in Optimist sailing.....***

***....and to have fun doing it !***



The **AOST** Programme

The Australian Optimist Sailing Team (AOST) programme, which was introduced in 2006, encompasses specialised coaching throughout the year at AOST nominated regattas; these include State, National and International regattas. With the assistance of Yachting Australia (YA) funding, we can optimise the spread of the fund dollars beyond the five Optimist Worlds' Team sailors who may be about to leave or age out of the class .

By spreading it over *fifteen* sailors we can focus this coaching, not only on the top five, but on up and coming sailors who are likely to continue in the class for several more seasons. With the AOST programme we are lifting the standard in the Optimist class, not only lifting the sailors, as they move on to 420's or other classes.

The AOST in its first year has worked well. AOST sailors have formed into a tight knit group transcending State borders. They are eager to travel, to sail and train against and with their friends, who, like them are working hard at improving their own skills. They are also becoming aware that they are a part of something special and are gaining the respect of many other class associations, be they Junior, Youth or Senior. AOST members have competed in up to 4 or 5 high level regattas since the Nationals. This is the equivalent of sailing 2 or 3 seasons had they only been doing the Nationals and their home States. How can they not be better sailors!

AOST is not about burning out our young sailors or even creating Olympic Medallists and World Champions. Even so, we have many outstanding Optimist sailors and undoubtedly some of our AOST members will indeed go on to be Champions. AOST is about training and developing their sailing skills, using their initiative, thinking and acting for themselves, and above all enjoying the sport of sailing. Belinda Stowell, Olympic gold medallist, Sydney 2000, began sailing in Optimists. To quote the words of one of our most dedicated sporting sailing and coaching icons, Huck (Malcolm) Scott, Olympic silver medallist, Melbourne, 1956, "if you're not having fun you're not doing it right". The benefit for each state is to have those sailors lead by example when they return from AOST training. Their focus will be directed to acknowledge and share their experience with their home state friends.



### *How to get into the Australian Optimist Sailing Team*

**Qualification:** A top 15 placing at the Optimist Nationals (other criteria per NOR). 2008 Nationals, January 6-11, at Frankston Yacht club, Port Phillip, Victoria

**The cost:** \$1,000 of which YA funding reimbursement is approx 50%. YA funding is allocated for coaching for all nominated AOST regattas.

**Nominated regattas:** Adelaide International Regatta, New Zealand Nationals, WA State Champs, Singapore Nationals.

**Compulsory Participation:** The Adelaide International Regatta and one other nominated International regatta.

**Boat Ownership:** Registered Optimist owner after 30 days

**AOST** *Be part of it!*

***The International Optimist Dinghy is sailed in over 110 countries by over 150,000 skippers and is the only yacht approved by the ISAF exclusively for sailors under 16.***

***At the Athens Olympics over 60% of the skippers and 70% of the medal winning skippers were former Optimist sailors.***



International Optimist Dinghy Association

# Regatta Reports:



## New Zealand National Optimist Championship 2007

A total of 16 Australian sailors drawn from four states competed this year at the New Zealand National Optimist Championship, at Napier, including 12 members of the Australian Optimist Sailing Team.

The championship, conducted over Easter, drew 221 contestants of which 167 competed in the Open Fleet with the remainder in the Green Fleet. The 16 Australians were joined by sailors from Singapore and Noumea taking the overseas contingent to a total of 33 sailors. The regatta was held in unusually light wind conditions of less than 10 knots. These light conditions placed great importance on starting technique and boat speed skills.

The regatta was conducted over 5 days with 3 races per day. No invitation race or lay day was included in the program. The main fleet was divided into groups of 4 with each group distinguished by a particular colour. Each group then raced another colour making a start line of 84 boats. The course sailed was the Optimist Worlds course, a trapezoid with a gate at mark 3.

The championship was won by Logan Dunning-Beck, of Wakatere Club near Auckland. Logan sailed superbly in the light airs of Hawkes Bay, previously winning all the major regattas in the lead

up to the Nationals. 2nd was James Turner from Murrays Bay S.C. 3rd (on a count back) and first female for the second year running was Alexandra Maloney, also from Murrays Bay. 4th overall and 1st international competitor was Luke Tan from the National Sailing Centre in Singapore. Best of the Australians was Sean Ott, Southport Sailing Club in Qld, placed 38<sup>th</sup>. (Sean was 2nd in the most recent Sabot Nationals and 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Australian Optimist Nationals).

The organisation of the event was first class and it drew many big name sponsors including naming rights sponsor, Toyota. Napier, located on the east coast of the north island, renowned for its Art Deco architecture, was an excellent venue.

## Singapore National Optimist Championship 2007

Two hundred and seventy two boats, including thirteen excited Australians. That was the Singapore National Optimist Championship in June, this year. All they had to bring was their sails, charter an Optimist from the Singapore Sailing Centre and off they went. The Asian hospitality was impressive and the experience gained invaluable. Overall a great success.

Singapore has some really good Optimist sailors with our sailors enjoying the high level competition. As expected, they had to get used to sailing in large fleets, and thus gained plenty of starting line experience. The best AUS result was Sean Ott in 20<sup>th</sup> followed by Mat Wearne 50<sup>th</sup> and Shelley White 58<sup>th</sup>.



<b>International</b>	<b>2007 Venue</b>	<b>2008 Venue</b>
Worlds	Cagliari, Italy	Cesme, Turkey
South Americans	Niterói, Brazil	Paracas, Peru
Europeans	Athens, Greece	Riva del Garda, Italy
N. Americans	Nueva Vallarta, Mexico	Curacao, Netherlands Antilles
Asians	Singapore	Doha, Qatar
Africans	Algeria All Africa Games	Grande Baie, Mauritius
Oceanians	None (alternate years only)	Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea



**International Optimist Dinghy Association**

Contact: [AIODA official website:](http://www.aioda.com)

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