



2011 2.4mR Australian Championships Metung

Sponsor: East Gippsland Shire Council, Metung Yacht Club, 5-7 March 2011

by Colin Brown

Paralympic hopeful Matthew Bugg from Hobart won the Australian 2.4mR Championship at Metung on the Gippsland Lakes in Victoria from a hot fleet of 16 boats, including three former champions and two former Paralympians.

The racing took place in a wide spread of wind conditions, gusting to a marginal 28 knots in day one of the three day championships to generally light conditions on the last day of competition. The Metung Yacht Club race management team set uniformly excellent courses which gave each competitor a chance to win in the conditions. The competition was uniformly close. In all the races the fleet was generally over the finish line within one minute of the leader. In the last race, the gap reduced to 15 seconds with two ties in the overall result!

Day 1, Saturday 5 March 2011

Race 1 - The race started in a building wind at around 20 knots. Peter Russell from Canberra (a winner of 3 previous championships) maintaining the lead he established at the top mark right down to the leeward mark. The second work saw Peter Thompson (a two time paralympian and winner of 3 previous championships) take the right hand side of the course, establishing a significant lead which he held right through to the finish line. Matt Bugg came through on the last run to take second place with Peter Russell coming third.

Race 2 - The top mark was re-positioned by the Race Committee as the wind continued to build. The race was, however, started with the breeze still within the 25 knot limit for sailing the class. The fleet went to the left hand side of the course with Peter Russell and Matt Bugg rounding together followed closely by Ron Bugg. All competitors had an exhilarating run downwind and the spray was flying by the time the bottom mark came in sight. Matt, who was leading at that point lost the mark and headed for the pin end of the start line, letting in Ron Bugg and Peter Russell. The upwind leg saw Peter Thompson work the shifts to round the mark just behind a rampant Ron Bugg who had a dazzling run through to take the race followed by Peter Thompson in second place with third going to Peter Russell and Matt Bugg taking fourth place.

The day ended with the 2.4 mob dining at the hospitable Metung Yacht Club. Aside from licking their wounds, the general feeling among the crowd was that Peter Thompson had won the day with his first and second places.

Day 2, Sunday 6 March 2011

This turned out to be a most enjoyable day. As with the first day, the wind was blowing from the south east and gradually building but not to the same level as on day 1.

Race 3 - At around 10 knots, the wind provided perfect conditions for 2.4 metre racing. Matt Bugg started at the pin end of the line and played the left side of the course to establish a lead at the top mark. He held on to this all the way around the course and finished ahead of Peter Russell with Peter Thompson in third place.

Race 4 - In firming breezes, John Hosking went hard right and in two tacks rounded the top mark first to the congratulations of the fleet! Matt Bugg gained the inside at the bottom mark to establish a narrow lead over John. Matt went on to repeat his winning performance in race 3 with Peter Thompson and Peter Russell taking the minor places.

Race 5 - Matt again! He demonstrated a real core of skill, not only sailing fast but showing excellent race craft in covering the fleet which was sailing both sides of the course. Lisa Blackwood gained the first of her three second places in the championship, working the left hand side of the course and adding to the strength of her earlier places which included two fourth places. Peter Russell came in third with Peter Thompson coming in fifth after Aaron Hill.

Race 6 - As the wind firmed to about 18 knots, Peter Thompson showed his strength in the stronger conditions by leading the fleet over the finish line. He was followed by Lisa Blackwood in second place with Matt Bugg coming over the line third.

With two days now completed, Matt Bugg's performance, with three wins and a third on the second day, turbo charged him to one point ahead (after one drop) of Peter Thompson. The persistent south east wind, if maintained on day 3 of the championship, would make for exciting pin end starts as the competitors bunched at that end with first out to get the jump on the others.

Day 4, Monday 7 March 2011

Race 7 - The wind performed true to the form of the first two days. A south easterly, but coming in at a much lower velocity. Lisa Blackwood led out from the pin end scrum, went hard left and then climbed the course on port tack to round first at the top mark. On the run, she stayed right and was slowed a little by the tide. Peter Russell and Peter Thompson sailed their runs back down the left hand side, with Russell running first around the bottom mark followed by Lisa who then covered Thompson to the finish. Sydney paralympic competitor Greg Hyde took fourth place in this race, his best result for the series. Matt Bugg took a 720 penalty at the first mark rounding and came in seventh, a place he ultimately dropped in the final accounting.

Race 8 - With somewhat freshening winds, Michael Leydon (who holds a record 5 wins of the National trophy) won the pin end and showed true champions style in leading the fleet all the way to the finish. Peter Thompson was forced over the line and had to re-start the race. This let in Matt Bugg who, keeping a cover on Peter Thompson, crossed second over the line with Peter Russell finishing in third place. Thompson dead heated his sixth place in this race with Greg Hyde.

The Outcome

With a drop of his race 7 result, Matt ended the regatta with a total of 14 points. This placed him a relatively comfortable three points ahead of Peter Thompson, who dropped the 6.5 point race result from race 8 but had to include a race score of 5 points in his overall result of 17 points. Peter Russell was a popular third place getter with a final count of 18 points, making the difference between the top three places just 4 points.

Anthony Castray won the Pointscore championship in his first Nationals with Ron Bugg second and Aaron Hill third.

The overall results follow for all to examine but what emerges from the 2010 season regatta is just how competitive our paralympian sailors are against all comers in the class. This result in many ways underscores the strength of the 2.4mR class in giving all competitors a fair go!

Overall Results (drops = 1)

Pl	Sail Num	Boat Name	Skipper	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Net Points
1	33	Supermodel	Mathew Bugg	2	4	1	1	1	3	(7)	2	14
2	30	Morna V	Peter Thompson	1	2	3	2	5	1	3	(6.5)	17
3	28	Jeelka	Peter Russell	3	3	2	3	3	(17)F	1	3	18
4	27	Octopod II	Lisa Blackwood	4	5	4	6	2	2	2	(8)	25
5	31	Jitterbug	Ron Bugg	5	1	(6)	4	6	4	6	5	31
6	13	Stardust	Aaron Hill	7	(17)F	9	5	4	5	5	4	39
7	17	Polar Bear	Michael Leydon	6	(17)F	5	15	8	6	13	1	52
8	25	Futs & Fugly	Kim Williams	9	6	8	8	11	7	(12)	9	58
9	7	mRsquiggle	Anthony Castray	12	(17)F	12	9	9	8	8	10	68
10	9	Advance Australia	Peter Warren	10	8	10	10	12	9	11	(13)	70
11	32	Windsurfer	Greg Hyde	11	(17)F	13	12	7	17 F	4	6.5	70.5
12	29	Tumbleweed	Simon Dunstone	(14)	7	14	14	13	11	9	11.5	79.5
13	24	Pan	John Hosking	8	(17)F	7	7	14	17 S	14	14	81
14	10	Lilla Babs	Colin Brown	(17)S	17 F	11	13	10	10	10	11.5	82.5
15	42	The Meaning of Life	Peter Richards	13	9	15	11	15	(17)F	15	15	93
16	18	Raglan	Ted Moule	15	10	(16)	16	16	12	16	16	101



Metung Yacht Club welcomes visitors



Launching was rough on the day 1 lee shore!



Race 4, another close start



President Kim Williams goes right!



Race 4, Matt Bugg gains the lead from John Hosking at the bottom mark



Ted Moule was in the pink (yellow)!



Aaron Hill was back on the water after Beijing 2008

Photos by Marita Sanders from the Race Committee boat