

SOUTH AFRICAN

35c

Yachting

**POWER
WATERSKI
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DINGHIES

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places were held by "21-year-olds or younger", showing a vast improvement on previous results.

Geoff Meek and Felix Unite taught everyone a lesson in winning five of the six races. Working as a team throughout, they hardly made a mistake. Usually leading from just after the start, they built up impressive leads on the second boat.

Heading the large bunch of Sprogs that tried in vain to hold Meek was John Samual, with four seconds to his credit. Merle Sterling of Worcester held the hosts' name high when she finished third overall ahead of 32 strong, strapping young men.

Bryan Visser of Imperial Yacht Club rounded off his finest provincial performance to date with a good win in the final round.

Extras

Peter Forster chalked up four straight wins and then relaxed with a third to beat Stan Midlane and Eric Budd for the title. Budd sailed an excellent series in a clapped-out boat tied together with string, wire and car tyre rubber. He ended up with three second places, but this would have been better had he sorted out the problems of a trapeze on an Extra.

Andies

The Andy Class was won once again by *Rebel*, Albert Bruins' old boat that had an almost unbeaten record when by him. Her new owner, Sasie van Tonder, seems

to be keeping this record intact and achieved a "grand slam" by winning every race. Crewed by his wife, Van Tonder had *Rebel* going a great deal faster than the opposition. George Meek came back to the class with the ageing *Elf* to secure a good second place.

Dabchicks

Charles Bongers won a hard-fought battle with Frank van Baarsel, who won the National title a week later. Bongers had three firsts, a second and a third to Van Baarsel's two firsts, two seconds and two fourths.

"Lucky" Bouckaert was third with a good win in the final race.

RESULTS

TEMPOS

(1) G. Ross (*Trius*); (2) R. Meek (*Tresang*); (3) R. Nankin (*Tac-au-Tac*).

SPEARHEADS

(1) J. Price (*Con Brio*); (2) G. Warren (*Admetus VI*); (3) P. Zink (*Vixen*).

FINNS

(1) Pezula (G. Paterson); (2) Selfin (S. Sterling); (3) *Flamefin* (L. Fridjohn).

SPROGS

(1) *Seagoon* (G. Meek); (2) *Selaw* (J. Samual); (3) *Seluki* (M. Sterling).

ANDIES

(1) *Rebel* (C. van Tonder); (2) *Elf* (G. Meek); (3) (*R. Laughton*).

EXTRAS

(1) *Lucky X* (P. Forster); (2) *Xebel* (S. Midlane); (3) (*E. Budd*).

DABCHICKS

(1) *Stormking* (C. Bongers); (2) *Mustang* (F. van Baarsel); (3) *Misty* (L. Bouckaert).

DABCHICKS AT ZEEKOEVLEI...

THE first official National Dabchick Championships were held at Zeekoevlei over the week December 15 to 20. A satisfactory entry of 47 was received and six races were sailed in fairly strong breezes. The weather was extremely kind to the sailors (unlike the F.D.s in False Bay) and they had three days of perfect Cape weather, sun shining with The Dabchick Nationals took the hard blows in their stride. Typical of the thrilling sailing is this fine study of a heavy-weather screaming reach by two I.Y.C. competitors on *Dux*, skippered by E. Floyd. Photo: David Baker

not a cloud in the sky and with the typical Cape southeaster being quite kind and blowing steadily between 10 and 20 knots.

The very high standard of varnish and paintwork and the excellent condition in which the majority of the Dabchicks are kept was very pleasing.

Before the regatta Gordon Burn Wood, Geoff Myburgh and John Sully, three of South Africa's most experienced

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DINGHYDOM

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yachtsmen, gave a talk on rules and tactics to the 90 young yachtsmen and girls. This proved invaluable in the regatta, and there were few troubles in sorting out the new "hitting the buoy" rule, which several of the competitors were very pleased to be able to use.

Geoff Myburgh gave a talk on the sailing instructions, and this served its purpose very well with few starting and recall problems. The organising committee, consisting of Jim Simpson, Geoff Myburgh and Paul Zink, did a thorough job in organizing this successful regatta. There was also an outing to the top of Table Mountain, which was by courtesy of the Mayor of Cape Town. On the Wednesday, a perfect Cape evening, 109 yachtsmen went by cable-car to view the lights of the city and the floodlit mountain.

The first race was held in light airs, which seemed to suit the Highveld and upcountry sailors, though the Cape's main hope, Frank van Baarsel, managed to slip in and take the gun ahead of Loch Vaal's Brian Downham, who is at present tops in that part of the country. R. Thorpe was third, followed in by Steven Meek of Zeekoevlei. Meek was one of the most consistent entrants and was placed in the first five in every round.



Crack Sprog crew Felix Unite sailed his Dabchick once again and finished fifth.

The south-easter had come through for the second round and the fleet had to contend with a big chop and a wind of about 20 knots.

Western Province Champion Charles Bongers sailed a superb race to lead Van Baarsel and Meek at the finish, Downham capsized when he was well up and dropped to fifth, while "Lucky" Bouckaert of Vogelvlei was fourth. It was a pleasure to watch the leading group sail in these trying conditions. They coped with the choppy water like true experts and carried out their gibes and tactical moves perfectly.

Luck was not with one of the hot favourites, David Herridge of Natal, who broke his gooseneck fitting. He lashed this up and fought through to fifteenth after starting seven minutes late.

Herridge's luck returned for the following two rounds, which he won in good style. These two rounds were sailed in about 15 knots and the course was laid in "Home Bay", in front of the clubhouse. Herridge looked as though he might follow up his elder brother Louis' performance in 1964, when he won the title—but he faltered in the next two rounds and slipped into second place.

Steve Meek was second in the third round and third in the next, while Van Baarsel had a fourth and a second to lead at that stage of the regatta.

Downham and Bongers continued to sail consistently, with places in the first five, and were lying third at this stage. It was evident now that either Van Baarsel, Herridge or Meek would win the trophy and the majority of people were backing Herridge as the wind was there to stay. However, Van Baarsel put in a neat bit of sailing in the final two races to round off a brilliant performance with two more wins. Herridge was second in both but just that much behind Van Baarsel all the time. Meek had another third and a fifth, to end up third overall with Charlie Bongers fourth and Brian Downham fifth.

The standard of sailing improved tremendously over the six races and towards the end, the fleet was starting well, going at top speed and right on time. The top seven or eight were always together and a shade above the rest of the fleet in boat speed and sailing ability, and would lap the backmarkers on the Olympic-type course.

One of the most exciting races was the fourth round when Van Baarsel led from Herridge, with Bongers and Meek about 100 yards farther back. On the final reach of the last triangle, Herridge slipped through by gaining "water on the mark" and Meek and Bongers crept right on to the leaders' tails. Bongers split tacks at the leeward mark while Herridge was able to cover the other two for the whole beat. These four finished within 45 seconds of each other to show the present high standard in this class.

Many of the Dabchicks sported bendy masts made of very thin aluminium alloy tube and sliding mainsheet tracks across the width of the boat. Van Baarsel used a home-made jib in the final race and seemed to "walk" everyone with this lovely looking sail made by former Western Province Dabchick Champion, 16-year-old Billy Strauss—well done, Billy!

Credit must go to Robbie and Geoffrey Meek and Ken Been on the excellent courses that they laid throughout the regatta and on the efficient rescue service that they ran with the club's launches.

This was a most successful regatta and I think we can be sure that, with training in the Dabchick class, our yachtsmen of the future will be able to compete with success against the best of overseas skippers.

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The future internationals will almost certainly come from the Dabchicks.

TOP: Here is some of the fine raw material . . . Jeremy Walter and Ross Holing came from the False Bay Yacht Club.

MIDDLE: Two crews from the Victoria Lake Club were Garry Calderwood, Peggy Pearson, Ingrid Pearson and Ronald Calderwood.

BOTTOM: Wilfred Braunlich and Michael Chase who both sailed for Z.V.Y.C.

Photos: David Baker