

## **HARDY CUP 2010 – Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron**

**News update – 8 February 2010**

### **Evan Walker's strong early bid for Hardy Cup**

Sydney sailor Evan Walker has thrown down an early challenge to the strong New Zealand contingent on the opening day of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's Hardy Cup under 25 match-racing regatta on Sydney Harbour.

The 20-year-old from the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Youth Sailing Academy came through unbeaten in six flights of the first round-robin, sailed in a light east/nor'easterly breeze and clearing weather.

Walker has taken a short break from skippering an 18-footer in the big league of Sydney Harbour skiff racing to make another bid to win the prestigious Hardy Cup, presented by eminent Australian yachtsman Sir James Hardy.

He won the Hardy Cup in 2008 and finished third last year to New Zealander Adrian Short, whom he beat in flight 8 of today's first round robin by a comfortable 22 seconds.

"We had a good day, although we have not had a great deal of practice of late in the Elliott 6s, but our tactics and sail handling was good," Walker said after the racing. "I've got a good crew, too, Kyle Langford on mainsheet and spinnaker, and Ted Hackney, who sails with me on the 18-footer."

Walker had his closest race of the first round-robin against fellow CYCA Youth Sailing Academy member Will McKenzie, winning by just one second. McKenzie finished the day with three wins and four losses.

However, Walker has yet to meet the successful Kiwi, William Tiller, who last week won the Warren Jones International Regatta in Perth last week, and another New Zealander, Josh Junior. Tiller also had an impressive Hardy Cup debut, scoring five wins and two losses

"It is taking us some time to get used to the smaller Elliott 6s after sailing the larger yachts in Perth and we had a couple of losses today to the local sailors McKenzie and Reece." Tiller said.

Tiller was full of praise for Jordon Reece, representing the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. "He is sailing well and managed to get a flight-winning penalty on us," added Tiller, whose crew comprised Harry Thurston and Jerry Maloney, like their skipper graduates of the Lion Foundation Development Squad at the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron in Auckland.

Reece won four of his seven flights, one of his losses being to Hardy Cup defender Adrian Short, who also finished the day with four wins, as did Josh Junior from the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club at Wellington and Will MacKenzie from the CYCA. However, Junior has sailed only five flights and his loss to Tiller was by just one second.

David Gilmour (RFBYC), David Chapman (RSYS) and Peter Nicholas (RFBYC) each had two wins, while Maegan Ruhlman from the USA provided keen competition in each of her flights, but could not break through to get a win.

News Release from Peter Campbell on behalf of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron -M: 0419 385 028 E: peter\_campbell@bigpond.com