

HARDY CUP 2010 - Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron

Day 2 – 9 February 2010

New Zealanders hit form in Hardy Cup

New Zealanders Josh Junior from Wellington and Adrian Short and Will Tiller from Auckland today hit winning form on a shortened day of sailing in the 2010 Hardy Cup ISAF Grade 3 under 25 match racing regatta on Sydney Harbour.

Midway through round-robin 2, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Evan Walker and Josh Junior from Wellington's Royal Nicholson Yacht Club have each had nine flight wins, sharing the leaderboard in what looks like being one of the most open contests in years.

Adrian Short and Will Tiller, both from the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron, have each had eight wins, with the next group of competitors, David Chapman and Jordan Reece from the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron, William Mackenzie from the CYCA and David Gilmour from Perth's Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club, each on six wins.

An easterly seabreeze again made life difficult for the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron's race officials and for competitors as the wind shifted in strength and direction.

Early in the afternoon, it settled in at a more or less steady 12-15 knot east-north-easterly, allowing the completion of the final four flights of Round Robin 1 and six flights in Round Robin 2.

At the completion of Round Robin 1, Evan Walker from the Cruising Yacht of Australia had had eight wins, Josh Junior seven, Will Tiller six and defending Hardy Cup champion Adrian Short five wins.

Junior had four Round Robin 1 wins yesterday and a further three today to complete the round in second place overall. So far in Round Robin 2 he has had two more wins to move to share top place of the leader board with Evan Walker, both with a total of nine wins.

Twenty-year-old Junior, who has been sailing since he was five in 'windy' Wellington, is ranked number two Laser sailor in New Zealand, coming from two third placings overall in the NZ national championships and Sail Auckland in the Olympic single-handed class.

"We are improving each day, but the competition is tough," Junior said after today's racing. "In our flight with David Gilmour we ended up with seven penalties between us; we had some huge luffing matches before we won by just two seconds."

Evan Williams admitted it had been a “tough day” on the water with just two wins in three flights. “A spinnaker tangle put an end to what had been a very close match with David Gilmour, but we also failed to pick the shift on the first beat in two of our flights.”

Will Tiller also fell foul of the in-form Gilmour who ended the day with four wins, the best overall result in round robin 2, defeating Jordan Reece, Evan Walker, Adrian Short and Will Tiller, and a two second loss to Josh Junior.

“We had our ups and downs today,” said Tiller, “ although the racing was very close. We were over the line early a couple of times, which didn’t help.”

Defending Hardy Cup champion Adrian Short, who sailed mainsheet hand for Will Tiller in his Warren Jones International Youth Regatta last week, also had a mixed day. “We lost four flights by seconds,” he said, adding that keelboat racing had limited his match-racing sailing over the past season.

Round robin 2 will be sailed tomorrow, followed by the semi-finals, with the final of the Hardy Cup on Thursday.

From Peter Campbell

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