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FireBug News 16

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 Build a boat yourself. Ideal for families, schools, clubs. Great fun & cheaper!



Hendrik Hasselaar



In the living room



First sail



Alongside the 'mothership'

An International FireBug Regatta?

There is considerable interest both locally and from overseas in a sponsored International FireBug Regatta. This may be a club calendar event but more likely an independent occasion at a specifically selected venue and date to ensure good fleet numbers and the best chance of suitable weather and conditions. It would be open to all Bug owners. The Regatta would be a well organised sponsored event featuring both racing and social activities and no doubt attracting considerable publicity for the up and happening new class.

Bug's on the 4th Floor

Koos Winnips of Enschede in the Netherlands has launched his new FireBug 'Tuk' after building it over the northern winter in the **LIVING ROOM!!** Koos, a sailor but not experienced at building boats, made a 1/5 scale model before attempting the full size version. He made up the components in the bicycle shed beneath the apartment block then cleared out the living room to put it all together.

Emails flew to and fro and the building experience was a pleasant revelation to Koos, "I was amazed when I made the tiller, never thought I could make something so nicely rounded, and so easily."

And later the first 'launching' ie, getting it to the ground level.. "The door is about 80 cm wide so on the side it should fit through. Only it doesn't fit in the elevator, and the staircase is going round, so i might have to let the 'Bug down from the fourth floor on a rope!"

And later again, "The Bug's finished,! It's a strange feeling. What do I do with my life now?"

The 'Bug just fitted down the staircase and the story had got around. The local newspaper was there and wrote up the story complete with a photo of the boat and smiling builder. The whole story (and about 150 photos) of building 'Tuk' is written up on the net at: <http://www.ouwetukker.nl/logboek/firebug/>

Brisbane Fleet

The Brisbane fleet gathered at Bribie Island just north of Brisbane for Queens Birthday Weekend. Fun was had by all although only 3 boats made the trip. Nic van der Walt gave the others the slip on the water. Chris Spooner reckons that Nic has obviously sailed dinghies a lot before..



Nic leads the fleet.



30 degrees and sunny, all day, every day!!



Spoooner boys living on board.



Spot doing the pre-sail checks

'Bugs on the Great Lakes

FireBug No 456 has now joined No 123 at Tobermory on Lake Huron in Canada. Built by Sally Williams 'Tofinose' chose a snowy day for her first appearance outside. Note the handles for ease of carrying around. A third boat is underway, they've caught the bug!



Sally's new boat out in the cold.

Spot Almost Ready to Go Solo!

Spot the sailor dog is really taking to sailing Tom Arthur's 'LazyBug'. It won't be long I'd suggest before she is away for Akaroa for the weekend with the aft locker full of her favourite bones!



FireBug Book a Step Closer

Over the last few months the FireBug plans and building instructions have been completely re done as a major step towards the book 'How to Build and Sail a FireBug'.



New Plans and Building Instructions

In the new documentation some changes have been made to the basic structure of the boat. These changes will make the boat even more simple to build yet retaining the exact same external shape of all the existing boats. The simplification involves changes to the central girder, centrecase, stern and bowcap. This will eliminate some areas where builders are experiencing difficulties with either buying the correct materials or the complexity of the detailing.

Cool 'Bug Trailer

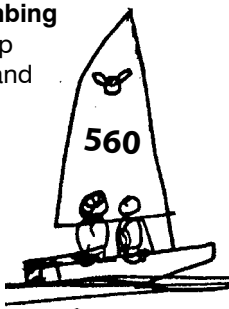
Thames High School hosted a Unitec boat building class last year and produced four FireBugs on a beaut trailer. James Bruce reports the 'Bugs are to be used by all the local schools. "Into sports not courts" James reckons.



Thames High School's 4 boat trailer

Numbers Climbing

Planpacks keep marching out and are now in 24 countries around the world.



Tuning the 'Bug and THE RULES

There is currently a lot of discussion regarding the best way to set up and sail the FireBug. That's great but it is important to remember that to be a strong class all boats must be kept the same to maintain the same speed potential, resale value and avoid obsolescence. The FireBug was designed by John Spencer, a NZer, respected world wide as a yacht designer. All the testing and development has taken place and there is no doubt that the 'Bug is a great little boat, just how it is. The class rules recognise this and indicate clearly the intention to keep the boat in line with the basic philosophy 'inexpensive and simple to sail'. **The message is loud and clear:** 'Don't use illegal gear or setups on board for speed advantage. Boats which contravene the rules will risk disqualification at any time.' The rules will continue to evolve to maintain the basic FireBug philosophy and clarity. Changes won't be notified so contact FBHQ with any queries.



Nick and Mark demo the reefed sail

Reefs in Sails

All new sails have reef points in but few seem to get used. The photo above shows a reefed sail. In stronger winds the reefed sail will be just as quick or quicker than the full sail and will be much easier to control. When in doubt reef it! Especially the inexperienced!

Epoxy Tip for Builders

Don't clean brushes, trays and rollers etc, just pop them in the fridge! The low temperature will keep the epoxy from curing BUT please don't blame me if the butter picks up an unusual taste!



Great idea! Keep the epoxy in the fridge ;-)

Regatta Dates

FireBug Regatta dates for the coming season are as follows:

Canterbury Championships:

Sailed 1st and 2nd of November 2003 at the Pleasant Point Yacht Club in Christchurch. Results, pics next issue.

South Island Championships:

27th and 28th March also at the Pleasant Point Yacht Club.



Spectacular scenery at Lake Mahinapua

Lake Mahinapua Regatta At Waitangi Weekend. For an excellent 3 days away head for Lake Mahinapua in Westland for the 60th Anniversary Regatta.

Latest on the Website

Latest improvements on the award winning Firebug website include some more boat and sailor photos (have you sent yours in yet?) and two completely new pages. One of the new pages is for scale modellers and the other for boat tests and comments. Several scale models are currently being built with one at Rotorua Boys High School soon to be launched with Radio Control. More next issue. The comments page includes all sorts, mostly rave reviews - have a read!

Thanks to Koos Winnips, Ray O'Brien, Chris Spooner, Tom and Thysje Arthur and Sally Williams for sending photos and stories, it's most appreciated.

Please let me know your email address if you have one. Also, good newsletters require photos and good stories. Please send them in now!

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BoatCraft Pacific

