

The 2016 Season in Canterbury New Zealand

The season to date has been one of 'musical boats'. Some of our former youngsters have grown to young adulthood and sold their boats on to other generations, and not all of them are 'youngsters'. Back about 2002-05 twin brothers James and Nick Palleson were then young Firebug sailors but moved on, senior boats for James and duck shooting and whitebaiting for Nick. This season both have again bought Firebugs and co-incidentally James ended up with Nick's old boat. Club racing continued throughout the season. The 2016 Canterbury Firebug Champs were sailed at Lake Pegasus in April with sixteen entries, the largest entry since the earthquakes. Results: 1st Ian Douglas, 2nd Tom Arthur, 3rd Tony Barrett, 4th James Palleson, 6th Nathan Harbutt.



That was good racing but the highlight of the season was a regatta at Waitangi weekend on the West Coast. A fleet of 14 boats went over the Southern Alps to sail at the Lake Brunner Open Regatta.



There were sixteen 'Bugs in total from several different clubs; Pleasant Point Yacht Club, Waimakariri Sailing and Power Boat Club, Ashburton Sailing Club and the Lake Mahinapua Aquatic Club. The level of experience varied wildly - some sailors had been in the fleet a long and one of the Dads was sailing for only the third time!

The weekend was fantastic! The weather was very hot (so being in the water was always a bonus) and it was so much fun it will be a highlight of the consolidation and growth of the local Firebug fleets. All the kids - nine of them had such a good time together that they will remember it for years.



James Palleson (PPYC) won all 6 races in very consistent and confident fashion and chased by his brother Nick (LMAC), Arlia O'Sullivan (PPYC) and Nathan Harbutt from Ashburton. In 5th we had Cindy Myers (WSPBC or Waimak) who came with her whole family fresh out of a learn-sailing course the week before! Eldest son Karl did very well sailing in 5 of the 6 races after his boat had a breakage in the 5th race. The 6th sailor to start all races was Karl's dad Kelly who had missed the learn-sailing course and had only been in a boat twice before the regatta. He and I had screwed all the fittings on the boat in the morning before the first race!



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