



Australian 2.4 Metre Yacht Championships, Sail Melbourne 2005 by Peter Russell

Congratulations to Michael Leydon – now a four time winner of the Australian 2.4 Metre Yacht Championships. Michael also won through to the final four of the Access Challenge against the best Australian Olympic sailors.

The Melbourne weather provided challenging light and variable conditions in almost total contrast to last year's storms! With five different heat winners, and both Pam and Mick also very competitive with a second place each the racing was close for the small 7 boat fleet. Aaron Hill was impressive in his new boat Stardust – with a bit of luck he could have been the top boat. Kathy and Michael McLean celebrated their anniversary with a win each on the day.



Race 1 – with Peter Russell and Aaron Hill over at the pin Michael Leydon set the pace but was chased hard by both early starters, with seconds gap at the top mark Aaron separated sailing to the wrong finish line leaving Michael to win by 4 seconds from Peter with Aaron dropping to last.

Race 2 –with the wind shifting right Mick Lemon was ahead early, but Aaron Hill and Peter Russell found pressure on the right clearing out with Aaron sailing a great race to win by 4 seconds from Peter despite breaking his tiller at the top mark. Close racing was enjoyed by all boats during the championships; race 2 saw all boats finish in 1.10 minutes.

Race 3 – Michael Leydon and Pam Murray led up the right side but Yngling traffic gave Peter Russell a break coming into the top mark on port with leader Michael carried past the starboard layline, Peter hung onto win by 2 seconds from Michael to finish a close days racing on top. Aaron Hill was not able to fix his tiller and was forced to retire. Racing was abandoned the next day with winds over 35 knots making the Art Gallery more interesting than Port Philip Bay.

Race 4 – light winds saw the 2.4mR fleet catch the Ynglings at the top mark – faster by 7minutes - IMPRESSIVE PERFORMANCE! Michael Leydon was first just behind Nicky Bethwaite, but Kathy McLean followed by Aaron. Hill found pressure on the left to win, and then Peter Russell went right around Michael with his wind indicator stuck relegating him to fourth in the shortened race. Beijing 2008 practice?



DASH-FOR-CASH

The dash for cash was great fun – not everyone could race access dinghies – but the 2.4mR Class acquitted themselves well with Michael McLean and Aaron Hill sailing well in their heats and Michael Leydon doing exceptionally well winning through to the final four.

Race 5 – freshening winds saw Michael Leydon in phase but Michael McLean picked up a shift on left to record a clear win. A win for both Kathy and Michael McLean on their anniversary!

Race 6 – light and choppy conditions saw Michael Leydon at his best keeping ‘Gunboat’ going for a clear win. Mick Lemon sailed a great race to finish second.

Race 7 – a repeat of race 6 with Michael Leydon again a clear winner.

Race 8 – Kathy McLean suffered a pre-start collision with a 470 and was forced to retire. The wind swung left of the line with a drag race to the mark won by Michael Leydon with Pam Murray following. Michael McLean passed both Peter Russell and Aaron Hill on the run but Michael Leydon recorded his third win of the day with Pam sailing a great race to finish second.

Race 9 – a right shift in freshening winds saw Michael Leydon first at the top mark from Michael McLean with Peter Russell recovering after being caught on the left. Michael McLean and Peter drag raced across the bay leaving Michael Leydon stranded on the right; Peter just failed to catch Michael who recorded his second win for the series.

The second race was abandoned as 30knots swept the bay swamping two Ynglings but providing some memorable rides for the 2.4mR’s. Aaron Hill was clear ahead after benefiting from a right veer followed by Peter Russell and Pam Murray. Michael Leydon surfed down the run closing on the leaders but the expected shorten course was not implemented as the race committee was busy with boat rescues.

Race 10 – in a drifting race for the last day media, Aaron Hill picked up a breeze on the left to win and Michael Leydon recovered for second. Michael McLean and Peter Russell languished at the back in no wind fighting for second place overall. Race 11 was started in no wind but then abandoned with the wind shifting right then left and evaporating.



Well done Michael Leydon – FOUR TIMES NATIONAL CHAMPION

Surrounded by top Aussie sailors Darren Bundock (Tornado), Nicky Bethwaite (Yngling), Krystal Weir (Laser), Elise Rechichi (470) and many others Sail Melbourne is a great opportunity for 2.4 Metre sailors to enjoy being part of the sailing community. Race management under Kevin Wilson was excellent with races starting like clockwork and early decisions being made on no race days. Thanks also to Sam Maffett for onshore support. Click <http://www.sportlibrary.com.au/> for event photos (name = sail, password = Melbourne).

Photos by ‘Jeff Crow, Sport the Library’



Series Results for 2.4mR up to Race 10 (1 Drop)

Place	Sail No	Boat Name	Skipper	Total Score	Race 10	Race 9	Race 8	Race 7	Race 6	Race 5	Race 4	Race 3	Race 2	Race 1
1	37	GUNBOAT	Michael Leydon	16	2	3	1	1	1	2	[4]	2	3	1
2	28	JEELKA	Peter Russell	26	[7]	2	5	3	4	4	3	1	2	2
3	10	GRETEL II	Michael Mclean	28	5	1	3	4	3	1	[6]	3	5	3
4	24	STARDUST	Aaron Hill	33	1	4	4	5	6	3	2	[8]	1	7
5	101	GRETEL	Kathy Mclean	37	3	5	[8]	2	7	5	1	6	4	4
6	12	SOUTHERN CROSS	Pamela Murray	45	6	6	2	6	5	[7]	5	4	6	5
7	18	N/A	Mick Lemon	50	4	7	6	7	2	6	7	5	[7]	6