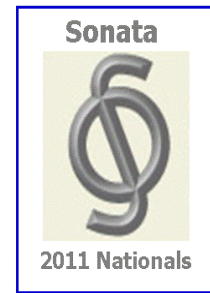




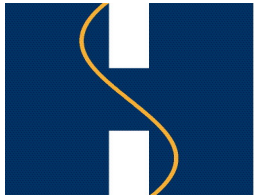
NATIONAL SONATA NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2011

DABCHICKS SAILING CLUB

Race Reports



Monday 6th June:



HYDESAILS

Persistent rain greeted the fleet on day one of the Sonata Nationals. The light fickle breeze and strong cross tides promised that the two scheduled windward/leeward races would present competitors with a significant tactical challenge. The first race was dominated by **Volante** who lead almost from start to finish. Once she had broken away into clear air she extended her lead on every leg of the course, leaving the chasing pack headed by **BFG**, **Selene** and **Camel Tow** to battle for the minor place. For the second race the breeze was oscillating through thirty five degrees. **Camel Tow** lead at the first mark hotly pursued by **Volante** and **Selene**. As the breeze gradually faded the final downwind leg turned into a close tactical battle with the leaders torn between playing the wind shifts and covering the opposition. The approach to the finish, in what had become a very light breeze, saw a slow motion gybing duel between **Camel Tow** and **Volante**, with **Selene** poised to capitalise on any mistake **BFG** recovering from a poor start was threatening to join in the battle. At the very end, **Volante** found the crucial puff of wind to cross the line a boat length ahead of **Camel Tow**, with **Selene** third and **BFG** fourth.

Tuesday 7th June:

G & G Gallo Enterprises Ltd
(The Clubhouse Brewery)



The schedule for day two comprised two short 'round the cans' races, the conditions were much improved with bright sunshine and winds varying between nine and nineteen knots. **Camel Tow** led for most of the first race and finished a comfortable winner with **BFG** in second and **Serenity** third. The second race of the day was a closely fought battle between the top four boats. The final spinnaker run to the finish saw **BOB** trying to hold off **Camel Tow** with **Selene** and **Aubie Too** not far behind. In a very close finish **Camel Tow** just got her bow ahead of **BOB** on the finish line with **Selene** third and **Aubie Too** fourth.

Wednesday 8th June:



Day three brought sunshine again although there were plenty of clouds to produce gusts up to twenty eight knots and big wind shifts. The Championship schedule called for one long race. After the first foul tide beat, **Volante** and **BOB** emerged as clear leaders with places changing amongst the chasing pack with **Selene**, **Aubie Too**, **Serenity**, **Watersong** and **Camel Tow** all prominent at different times. **Volante** rounded the final mark with **BOB** in very close company; **Camel Tow**, **Aubie Too** and **Selene** were not far behind.

BOB initiated a gibing duel with **Volante** allowing the others especially **Camel Tow** to close the gap. **Volante** held on, to cross the line first and once again **Camel Tow** just manage to edge ahead of **BOB**; **Aubie Too** finished fourth. Following the lodging of a protest **Volante** retired after finishing leaving **Camel Tow** to claim her third win of the championship.

Thursday 9th June:



Day four opened with sunshine (again) and a south westerly breeze of 10 to 12 knots. With two windward/leeward races to run the race officer was pleased to be able to set a course with no cross tide.

The first race of the day saw some of the closest racing of the week with a competitive start and hotly contested mark roundings. **BFG** and **Camel Tow** led for most of the race but **BOB**, **Volante**, **Selene** and **Serenity** were never far behind, battling hard with each other as well as trying to make inroads on the leaders. Despite very close attention from **Camel Tow**, **BFG** was able to hold on to the lead until the finish with **BOB** and **Volante** in third and fourth.

Thanks to smart work by the mark laying teams the turn-around between races was very quick. The race started in a light 6 knot breeze. **Selene** pulled out a big lead on the first beat, next round the windward mark were **BFG**, **Watersong** and **So**. On the second lap, the breeze picked up and the leading group pulled away from the chasing pack. Just as the leaders rounded the leeward mark to start the third and last lap the wind increased to over 20 knots and veered some 30 degrees leaving the race officer no opportunity to change the course and making the last lap rather one sided. Nevertheless, the racing remained close; although **Selene's** lead was never challenged. **Camel Tow**, having made up a number of places, initiated a luffing match with **BFG** approaching the final leeward mark and as a result managed to gain the inside overlap on **BFG** and four other boats to secure second place, **BFG** were a close third, **So** fourth and **Watersong** fifth.

With one race to go, the overall championship seems to lie between **Camel Tow** and **BFG**.

Friday 10th June:

Day five of the championship opened with overcast skies, a gentle southerly breeze and the threat of rain not far away. The race team on the committee boat were entertained before the start by several crews led by the crew of **So** singing the [Sonata's own version of Bohemian Rhapsody](#) (revised words by Graham Frost of **Aubie Too**).

For the final race of the championship, the course comprised a number of short legs with lots of mark roundings and plenty to keep the crews busy. It wasn't long before **Selene** and **Camel Tow** broke away from the pack and commenced their own private battle for the lead that lasted for most of the race. Prominent in the chasing pack were **Watersong**, **BFG**, **So** and **Serenity**, although **So** was to find out later that she had failed to respond to the recall signal at the start.

By the penultimate leg the wind had increased substantially and for some time **Selene** and **Camel Tow** were the only two boats to hoist spinnakers thus pulling even further ahead of the pack. Perhaps because she had an edge in downwind boat speed, **Selene** finished comfortably ahead of **Camel Tow** followed by **Watersong**, **BFG** and **BOB** who having been recalled at the start was catching up fast.

When this result was entered into the computer **Camel Tow** emerged as the new National Champion with **Selene** second and **BFG** third.