

Preston awarded 2012 Mitre 10 Mega New Zealand Paper Tiger National Title

There was plenty of action off the Taranaki Coast early in January when the New Plymouth Yacht Club hosted the 2012 Mitre 10 Mega New Zealand Paper Tiger Nationals from January 1 to 6.

The event saw over 50 boats from all over the country competing in spectacular fashion off Port Taranaki with the racing producing some very tight results.

The event was the overall National Title, as well as the B and C Grade titles contested meaning that every competitor throughout the fleet was fighting for every position. With a wide range of competitors participating other titles decided during the week long competition included the New Zealand Women's Title, The Junior (Under 21 Years) Title, The Veteran's (50-59 years) Title, The Grand Masters (60-64 years) Title, and the Great Grand Masters (65+ years) Title.

Bob Preston (Nelson) took the overall National Title following a magnificent performance during the entire week.

Preston finished with a 7 point lead over 2nd placed Ryan "Rowdy" Leatham (New Plymouth/Evans Bay), Mark Bell (Ponsonby) rounded out the top three in what was a enthralling battle from Race One.

The junior title was a fierce battle between Nathan Percy (Napier), Dylan Taylor (New Plymouth), past International Junior Champion Sean Syman (Wellington), defending National Junior Champion Stuart Sutherland (New Plymouth), as well as current International Junior Champion Jamie Hatch (New Plymouth). After eight tight races Taylor came out on top to win his first national title and finish 11th overall.

The Women's Title saw local New Plymouth sailor Pauline Sutherland taking on her Wellington counter-parts Lynley Manning and Jane Thomassen. Thomassen (Evans Bay) took out the title to defend the title she won last year.

Following a tight tussle at the top of the B Grade, Denis Leatham (New Plymouth) has taken the title with 13th Place overall. Leon Johnstone (New Plymouth) finished a close second and Stuart Morrish (Napier) took 3rd place.

The C Grade title was won by Dylan Taylor (New Plymouth), who took the title ahead of Jamie Hatch (New Plymouth) and Nathan Percy (Napier).

The Regatta also doubled as the selection trials for the New Zealand Team to compete at the Paper Tiger Internationals at Easter 2012 in Melbourne, Australia. This added extra spice to the event with competitors eager to finish in the "Top 10" and gain selection into the New Zealand National Team who will attempt to defend the International Team Title in Melbourne at Easter.

Overall results decided during the event include:

- 1st Bob Preston *PT 2962 Cool Cat* Nelson Yacht Club
- 2nd Ryan (Rowdy) Leatham *PT 821 Flyer* New Plymouth Yacht Club/Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club
- 3rd Mark Bell *PT 2862 Totally Wired* Ponsonby Cruising Club
- 4th Dave Shaw *PT 3084 Feral* Nelson Yacht Club
- 5th Scott Pedersen *PT 3070 Double Vision* Napier Sailing Club
- 6th Glenn Syman *PT 2922 Unplugged* Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club
- 7th Ian MacLennan *PT 2829 Love over Gold* Takapuna Sailing Club
- 8th Hayden Percy *PT 3073 Aquaholic* Napier Sailing Club
- 9th Stuart Taylor *PT 2529 Grey Power* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 10th Peter Robins *PT 3088 Runaway Train* Muritai Yacht Club

Other titles also decided during the regatta:

National "B" Grade

- 1st Denis Leatham *PT 2988 Learning to Fly* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 2nd Leon Johnstone *PT 2966 X Factor* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 3rd Stuart Morrish *PT 776 2 Elusive* Napier Sailing Club

National "C" Grade

- 1st Dylan Taylor *PT 2351 Smugg* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 2nd Jamie Hatch *PT 2634 Roar Speed* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 3rd Nathan Percy *PT 2812 Captain Morgan* Napier Sailing Club

National Women's Champion

- 1st Jane Thomassen *PT 3045 Pom Puss* Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club
- 2nd Pauline Sutherland *PT 3071 Deja Vu* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 3rd Lynley Manning *PT 2800 One Fish Two Fish* Evans Boat Yacht & Motor Boat Club

National Junior (Under 21 years) Champion

- 1st Dylan Taylor *PT 2351 Smugg* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 2nd Jamie Hatch *PT 2634 Roar Speed* New Plymouth Yacht Club
- 3rd Nathan Percy *PT 2812 Captain Morgan* Napier Sailing Club

Veterans (50-59 years) Champion

- 1st Mark Bell *PT 2862 Totally Wired* Ponsonby Cruising Club
- 2nd Glenn Syman *PT 2922 Unplugged* Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club
- 3rd Stuart Taylor *PT 2529 Grey Power* New Plymouth Yacht Club

Grandmasters (60-64 years) Champion

- 1st Bob Preston *PT 2962 Cool Cat* Nelson Yacht Club
- 2nd Selwyn Pedersen *PT 3090 Majik Blu* Napier Sailing Club
- 3rd Richard Martin *PT 2987 Butterfly* Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club

Great Grandmasters (65+ years) Champion

- 1st Ian MacLennan *PT 2820 Love over Gold* Takapuna Sailing Club
- 2nd Norm Codd *PT 2933 Panther* Evans Bay Yacht & Motor Boat Club

For full results

see: <http://www.sportsground.co.nz/clubsite.asp?siteid=5533&pageid=73760&pagetyp eid=18>

Please also find attached some photos taken by Claire Anderson.

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