

Another successful Sth Island Champs and a first for Lake Benmore was held on the weekend of 16th-17th Nov.

The fleet was rather diminished compared to previous years due to a plethora of unfortunate circumstances but with Dave and Sue Shaw coming from Nelson and Murray turning up for breakfast from Christchurch on Sat. morning the quality was high.

Class new-comer Shayne Galloway also turned up with newly acquired Blowfly Jam hoping to learn a few things about A-class. The 'Jam', as expected, wasn't without issues so the learning curve for Shayne was quite steep. Although he didn't race, he'd clearly come to the right place so went home much wiser and undaunted in his enthusiasm. I'm sure we'll be seeing more of him in future.

The Dickey family from Wanaka took over race control duties to fill in for Bren Nelson who couldn't make it for the first time in 12 years due to an untimely knee op. We wish Bren a speedy recovery and no doubt he will be back next year.

With a forecast of 3-5 knots for the weekend we were pleased to be greeted with a building NW breeze late on Sat. morning. Benmore turned on some classic lake sailing conditions with a fresh if rather patchy breeze with gusts up to 18 knots and steadying later in the afternoon, which provided some exciting sailing with plenty of challenges. The racing was tight with everyone enjoying a bit of time at front of fleet but Dave Shaw showed his 3rd place debut in A-class at the Lyttleton nationals was no mistake and made a clean sweep taking out all 5 races for the day with Murray a consistent 2nd, despite some close tussles at the front, and myself 3rd.

After a very convivial evening on Sat. night we turned up on Sunday hopeful of a bit more of the previous offering but were met with a 3-5 knot southerly. We got another 2 races in before calling it quits and Dave proved just as quick in the light with 2 more wins giving him a perfect score of 7 out of 7 for the weekend. Murray was 2nd with 16 points and I managed to save a little dignity with 2 2nds on Sunday, a total of 19 points for 3rd.

A superb weekend with all the right ingredients for a good regatta; good breezes, spirited competition, flawless organisation and a stunning venue with the majesty of Aoraki Mt Cook in the background. I'm sure Lake Benmore will see more A-class action in the future.

| Results: | R1 | R2 | R3 | R4 | R5 | R6 | R7 | Total |
|----------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------|
| Dave Shaw NZL270 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 7 |
| Murray Philpott NZL1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 16 |
| Ken Urquhart NZL260 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 19 |

(kindly submitted by Ken Urquhart)