



Access Dinghy Telltales

Official Newsletter of the Access Dinghy Foundation

November, 2000

Volume 2, Issue 2



PATRON of the Access Dinghy Foundation: The Governor General of Australia, His Excellency the Honorable Sir William Deane.

The "S" is Launched – a new era in accessible sailing

In a ceremony at Darling Harbour on October 12, the new Access 303 Single Seat Dinghy was launched by NSW Minister for Sport & Recreation, The Hon John Watkins MP. Addressing an international audience, Mr. Watkins said, "With Sydney being the host city for the 2000 Paralympic Games, it is an ideal opportunity to show the world the technology that Australia has when it comes to sport for people with a disability".

The Access 303S has all the design features of the other Access models including roller-reefer furling sails, concave hull, servo assist control option. New design innovations of the Access 303S will enable anyone to sail solo in safety. The new features of the "S" include:

- Wide side decks, high coamings and top-side buoyancy.
- Two high aspect rudders, ensuring directional control when heeling.
- Self-tacking jib.

The "S" (standing for SINGLE) can also



accommodate the Access Dinghy servo assist controls, with the joystick also controlling the self-tacking jib. For those who require a ventilator to breathe, a rear hatch can be added, complete with a clear perspex dome cover. Pictured below, "The Pantha" – is equipped to allow 20 year old ventilated quadriplegic, Nava George to sail solo. Read Nava's story

LEFT The "Pantha" — Sponsored by the NSW Sports Council for the Disabled, with additional funds donated by Foundation Trustee, Neil Anderson. Unfortunately the photos are not in colour, otherwise the name of the boat would be obvious – the PINK Panther. The spelling of "Pantha" has been adjusted so our friends from North America will get the pronunciation right.

In this Issue:

Nava can Sail	2
Read the second article in a series of three, on 20 year old ventilator dependant's quest to sail.	
500th Access Dinghy	2
Was launched by round the world solo paraplegic yachtsman – Vinnie Lawers.	
US & International Access Dinghy Regatta Miami, Fl	3
UK National Access Regatta	4
Sailability Japan Nobi Nishii	4
Upcoming Regattas	4

HERB WINS 2000 ADF International Traveler's Award



In keeping with Access Dinghy Foundation's philosophy of "sailing for everyone", ADF was pleased to present this award for the second year. The award comprises:

- Return airfare to Canberra Australia to compete in the 2001 Aspect Australian Access Dinghy C'ships on 24 & 25 February.
- 5 nights accommodation in Canberra.
- 2 nights accommodation at Clark Bay Farm on the beautiful NSW South Coast, donated by Barney Barnbrook, proprietor of Clark Bay Farm.
- Saturday night Regatta Dinner

Herb Meyer of BAADS in San Francisco, California was awarded the Award for this year at the recent USA Access Regatta. We look forward to welcoming Herb and fiancée, Carolyn to Australia in February.



Horizon Sailmakers

78 St Kilda Rd
St Kilda VIC 3173

PH: +61 3 9537 1233 FAX: +61 3 9537 2907

Email: sales@horizonsails.com.au

Web: www.horizonsails.com

"Dread Supporters and official supplier to Access Dinghies"

YES, I CAN SAIL !

20 year old Nava has been a ventilated quadriplegic since an accident when just 4 years old. Here is the second of three articles written by Nava in her quest to discover freedom on the water.



The day finally arrived! After months of preparation i.e seating fittings, boat being built and sailing lessons with Graham, it was well and truly time for me to put my skills to the test.

It didn't actually hit me that I was going sailing until I was at the waters edge getting my seat sorted out and into the boat. I was so excited, although at the same time a little scared. Before being pushed out from the pontoon I suddenly thought "what if I can't do this". I was then faced with the water and thought "it's too late now".

Sailing for the first time was unbelievable! It was amazing, I absolutely loved it! I just love the feeling of the wind through my hair and splashes of water on my face. The freedom of gliding across the water felt unreal and without thinking about it, I had conquered all my fears and doubts. When off the water I always look forward to getting back on. Sailing definitely is a dream come true. I never imagined that I would be able to achieve any involvement in this sort of sport.

In the future I hope to travel overseas to sail and maybe eventually compete in the Paralympics. Who knows what the future holds for me and sailing but I know one thing is for sure, I think it's fantastic and will be doing it for a long time!!!

Nava's Mum: I felt very emotional seeing Nava sail by herself, it's something I never thought possible. I am amazed by the courage she has. I would like

500th Access Dinghy unveiled AUSTRALIA

In September 2000, the 500th Access Dinghy was unveiled at the official launch of Sailing for Everyone Docklands. The boat was unveiled by Vinnie Lawers who is the first paraplegic to sail solo, unassisted, non-stop around the world. Vinnie is particularly interested in helping all disadvantaged kids and his organisation, Parasail, together with Sailing for Everyone, will hold various events to include people from all walks of life enjoy the freedom of sailing.



Vinnie Lawers unveiling the 500th Access Dinghy

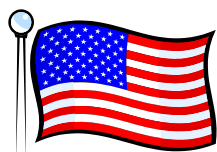


Safety Issues

- To facilitate a ventilator dependent sailor, various additional precautions are necessary to enable fool-proof safety for the sailor.
 - 1. Strobe lighting mounted on the rear of the "ventilator dome" to indicate correct function of ventilator.
 - 2. "Panic Button" for the sailor to activate alarms if in need of assistance.
 - 3. A bank of additional batteries to provide backup power supply for ventilator.
 - 4. A dedicated safety boat manned by a licensed driver, an experienced dinghy hand and a suitably medically trained carer (eg RN).
- **A safety overkill ? We don't think so. Afterall, it's better to be safe than sorry.....**

Sailing Seat

- Dr. Bill Fisher, Bio Medical Engineer at Royal North Shore Hospital worked closely with Chris Mitchell to ensure that Nava would gain the optimum enjoyment from her sailing experiences. A special "sailing seat" with chin controls was developed for Nava. Bill's issues of concern were:
 - To provide a supportive seat to maintain head position effective to the boat at a heel of 45 deg.
 - Pressure care.
 - Incorporate principles embodied in the sailor's wheelchair seating in a boat friendly fashion:
 - lightweight
 - easily adaptable for special application



USA & International Access Championships

Shake-A-Leg Miami, Florida USA. 8-12 November 2000

Margie Sherman, the Coordinator of the USA & International Access Dinghy Regatta writes the following report of the fun-filled weekend.



The Australian Team at the presentation ceremony

THE REGATTA WAS THE BEST ! There was such a wonderful mixture of participants; from the old to the young, from the disabled to the able bodied, from near and afar. And they all came together in the spirit of good will and competition to race in Shake-A-Leg Miami's first North American International Access Dinghy regatta. We are so proud to add these wonderful colorful sailboats to our existing fleet, and what better way to do it than to start off with such an exuberant and fun filled event.

Everybody who participated, and all the observers who went out on the spectator boats to watch the races, had smiles on their faces. That's what the Access Dinghies do!

Shake-A-Leg Miami looks forward to making this an annual event and hope our future Access Dingy Regattas will be as successful as this one. And last, but by no means least, our thanks to Chris Mitchell and Jackie Kay for all their help, and our appreciation to all the wonderful sailors from Australia, Japan, and Canada who truly made this

FAST TACKING An excerpt from Alder Allensworth's recent communication on the spirit of Access Dinghies.

RESULTS

USA – Open to Nth American sailors only.

Division 1

- 1 Ashley Sullivan (Florida)
- 2 Allan Fiske (Florida)
- 3 Harry Horgan (Florida)
- 3 Marc Landy (Canada)

International Results – For all competitors.

Top 10 Placings

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Marianne Ireland | AUSTRALIA |
| 2. Dale Williams | AUSTRALIA |
| 3. Herb Meyer | USA |
| 4. Ashley Sullivan | USA |
| 5. Chris Swain | USA |
| 6. Allan Fiske | USA |
| 7. Harry Horgan | USA |
| 8. Marc Landry | CANADA |
| 9. S. DeZinna & H Rameriz | USA |
| 10. Calah Williams + crew | USA |

..... Well, things worked out for me to go to Shake-a-Leg, Miami to participate in the International Access Dinghy Regatta. I was scheduled to race in the experienced fleet. I went out there in that little boat, with a serious racers' attitude. Everyone was expecting me to do well. Well, I couldn't make it go. I became very frustrated. The more frustrated I got, the more intense I got, and it was not pretty.

I came back in from my race and asked the designer, Chris Mitchell, how to make it go. He said you must be childlike when you sail the boat. It won't behave like a performance boat and that's where most experienced racers get stuck. He said, "feel it, let go, and have fun".

One of the organizers of the race came up to me and said that they really needed someone to sail with a 10-year-old girl who is blind and would I crew for her. I said, "Sure, if she doesn't mind being last." The organizer grinned and said; "she'll never know it unless you tell her." So off we went. It was one minute before the start and I could feel the race intensity starting to take over my body. She asked me for a hug. My first thought was, "the race is starting we don't have time for that nonsense," though common sense prevailed and I said "SURE!!!, A good luck hug for the race." We had a great start.

On the way up to the weather mark, she asked me to lean the boat to weather, which is usually the wrong thing to do, but she wanted to trail her hand in the water. She

couldn't reach the water with us heeled in the correct position. It was important to her to experience by touch, what she couldn't by sight. We got a second and third place for the day and that put us in first over all. The message to me is very clear. I know what tack I need to be on.

A couple of months ago, I was asked to be on the board of an organization called S.H.A.R.E., Inc. That stands for the Society of Handicapped Achievement, Rehabilitation and Empowerment. A subcommittee is dedicated to getting people of all ages and abilities in the community on the water. There are two sailing sites, one in Southwest Florida, and the other in the Greater Tampa Bay Area. We now have the means to get people on the water all in a very short three months. It is amazing things just keep falling into place almost effortlessly. It is very hard sometimes to "let go and trust". The reality is, that that is the way I need to live my life.

Regatta Statistics

At this regatta various important issues were addressed including:

1. integration of disabled and able bodied,

2. gender equity imbalance ,

3. introduction of youngsters to competitive racing,

4. Diverse inter-racial and socio-economic participation.

Total competitors = 45

Disabled	= 49%
Female	= 36%
Children	= 55%

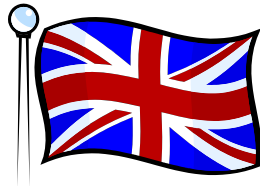
Competitor breakdown

Afro American	= 18%
Asian	= 2%
Hispanic	= 33%
Caucasian	= 47%





2nd UK Access Dinghy C'ships Sailability Rutland at Rutland Waters

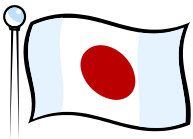


An eager band of sailors keen to show off their sailing skills gathered on the 19th and 20th August for the 2nd UK Access Dinghy National Championships held at Rutland Sailing Club. Some of the competitors had only been sailing for one year, yet won major prizes. One such sailor Simon Harle, won two awards which are particularly



meaningful for anyone who knows him. Simon has Cerebral Palsy, on land he totally depends on other people, but in a boat away from the jetty, he says: "I'm my own man, I have control of what I want to do, where I want to go".

"Something is Beginning" Nobi Nishii, President Sailability JAPAN



The history of Access Dinghy in Japan is only one year and some months, but we have done many things in this short time. Three sailors with disability, joined to the 2000 Australian Access Dinghy C'ship, in Canberra and are very proud that they could sail in foreign country. Sometime they teach sailing to other new sailors. When people watch their sailing they understand that everyone can sail without the concern of ability and age. They want to join again to next regatta in Canberra.

Now, we have 19 Access Dinghies in all Japan, and I can believe that these boats are working well. The biggest fleet Sailability Osaka has eight Access Dinghies and they have fifty sailors every come 'n try. Another local volunteer group have only one boat but she work very hard. Two boys with no experience sail the Inland Sea for 3 1/2 hours by Access Dinghy, guarded by three big boats. They want to send the two sailors to next regatta in Canberra.

Japan Sailing Federation (JASF) helped sponsor the first yacht regatta by Access Dinghies in Japan in Osaka on 20 July. Grahme Rayner help us again, he bring the cup from Melbourne and All Nippon Airway help with the air ticket to visit Osaka. Most sailors came from Osaka Sport Center. Some were blind, two CP (they use electric wheel chair but they can sail by single hand) and some were disabled intelligence.

Thirty-five sailors join to regatta with fifty volunteers, family and friend join to us. So it was very busy day. All sailors can bring back trophy or medal, they were proud of themselves and it make us all as volunteer happy.

You know the yachting is very minority sport in Japan. Almost all Japanese cannot find the op-

portunity to sail. They think yachting is for only rich and young people, not for them. But I met many people who change their mind after only one time sailing by Access Dinghy. Yes, the sportcenters which are not interesting to yachting already have many Access Dinghies and many new sailors. Many people said to me "something is beginning".

Upcoming Regattas

January, 01

6 - 7 **Sail Melbourne**
Victorian Access C'ships
Sailing for Everyone Ballarat
Ballarat, Victoria

February, 01

24 - 25 **Aspect Australian Access**
C'ships
Sailability ACT
Lake Tuggeranong, Canberra
Australia.

24 - 25 **ADF 2nd International Access**
C'ships

Sailability ACT
Lake Tuggeranong, Canberra
Australia.

2002
TBA

3rd International Access
C'ships
Japan.

Please contact Jackie with the dates of State and National events.

