

Strong finish secures OK title for Wilcox

by Rose Brier

Wellington's Greg Wilcox had a strong finish on the last day to secure victory in the OK Dinghy Nationals held in Napier, February 1-6.

Wilcox was in third place after five races, but consistent sailing in the sixth and seventh races ensured a good winning margin for him.

Wilcox is a previous national title holder, but has not been on top form in recent years. He managed to finish all of the races well placed, and had two wins.

The series was sailed through a mixture of wind conditions, from light races at five knots, through to one race of winds up to 30 knots — a true test of skill for the 19 competitors.

Final placings changed dramatically toward the end of the seven-race series, with the first and second placeholders dropping back to third and fourth, while Wilcox and Napier's Lachie McLean moved into the top spots.

McLean sailed well on the last day of racing, to collect a first and a third and finish second overall.

Wellington's Joe Porebski and Napier's Adrian Mannering who had been early contest leaders, dropped back to third and fourth respectively. Little separated Mannering and Porebski on the points' table at the end of the fifth race but both of them failed to perform in the last two races to hold their positions.

Porebski failed to finish the sixth race and picked up a fourth in the seventh while Mannering was placed sixth and third.

Wilcox excelled in the lighter conditions, but maintained reasonable placings in the heavy weather. His speed downwind kept him near the front.

For McLean, his final position of runner-up was a personal best.

The first two placegetters will receive \$2000 travel sponsorship each from the national OK Association to help them get to the World Championship in Sweden in July.

Other competitors finishing in the top six also plan to travel to the Worlds.

An attempt by Porebski to have the sixth and seventh places thrown out for not complying with the sailing instructions was unsuccessful.

OK results

Race 1: Adrian Mannering (Napier) 1; Joe Porebski (Wellington) 2; Greg Wilcox (Wellington) 3.

Race 2: Greg Wilcox 1; Joe Porebski 2; Adrian Mannering 3.

Race 3: Joe Porebski 1; Mark Berry (Wellington) 2; Nigel Mannering (Napier) 3.

Race 4: Adrian Mannering 1; Lachie McLean (Napier) 2; Greg Wilcox 3.

Race 5: Lachie McLean 1; Greg Wilcox 2; Nigel Mannering 3.

Race 6: Lachie McLean 1; Greg Wilcox 2; Adrian Mannering 3.

Race 7: Greg Wilcox 1; James Stewart (Napier) 2; Lachie McLean 3.

Overall: Greg Wilcox 1, 19.7 points; Lachie McLean 2, 27.4; Joe Porebski 3, 32.3; Adrian Mannering 4, 33.1; Nigel Mannering 5, 60.5; Mark Berry (Wellington) 6, 62; James Stewart (Napier) 7, 62.7; Peter Weymouth (Auckland) 8, 73.7.