

*2022 Inaugural Hobie Dragoon Nationals,
Hobie 14, Women's and Youth NSW State Titles.*



24 of our keen Somers Hobie Sailors hit the road just after Christmas for a Road trip to NSW. Loaded up with many double decker trailers, 14 Hobies, many travelling in convoy up the Hume, to our destination of Vincentia, Jervis Bay. As we drove up the highway, the emotion and excitement built inside. Finally freedom to cross the border, escaping Victoria and all the lockdowns, with anticipation for the fun ahead with our Hobie family.

The Vincentia Sailing Club is nothing but a big shed, with a massive tarp rigged up for shade and rain if it came. You could say it was a perfect place for a covid safe regatta. Hobie regattas are never just about the racing, but just as important are the on water and beach fun activities.

As a warmup we had strong winds of 20-25 knots for a Rally around the Bay on New Year's Eve. A BBQ lunch on Long Beach was a stunning place to break with some fun making human pyramids, handstand competitions and spike ball games. It was a sight to remember with 60 colourful Hobies parked on a white beach. It was not a race, but when two boats are heading in the same direction it becomes a race anyway. From lunch we had an off the beach running start to our boats, and an exhilarating downwind run surfing the swell back to Vincentia sailing club. Spectacular capsizes were seen along the way. Our Dragoon fleet looked after each other well on the home run, and our very own Matilda Morris and Emily Chiu were awarded the sportsmanship award for their efforts in staying close to and helping others when they needed help on the water.

When the racing started, it was tight. With heavy winds on the first day and then light breeze for the next 3 days, positions kept changing at the front. It was certainly a thinking game, pulling out all the tactics possible to get ahead of other boats on the course.

Downwind sailing became a game of catching waves to get your boat that little extra lead. This was the inaugural Hobie Dragoon Australian National Championships and was a glorious success. With 4 boats from Somers Yacht Club and 2 from Vincentia, our very own Matilda and Emily blitzed the field with first place. They stunned others with how they powered up their boat and controlled it so well in all types of breeze. A NSW skipper James ended with Silver, and he had Victorian crews on board Abi Morgan and Jack Cassano. Nikki Briggs with seasoned crew, her old man John took out Bronze.

Our Victorian powerhouse Zak Rowden brought home bronze on countback on the Hobie 14 in an awesome fleet of 35 boats. Big Daddy Geoff Rowden also made the top ten.

The Somers Disco DJing Dancing Man, Giddi Segal took out silver for the youth Hobie 14 fleet.

Zoe Morris with Tom McCracken, the singing sensations around the course won the youth division on the Hobie 16.

Other Hobie 16s raced well from Somers, with Naomi Chiu coming in third.

Many fun activities were had off the racecourse, and one awesome event was the Hobie Wave Challenge. There were two identical Plastic Hobie Waves which sailors performed time trials on. One boat was missing a tiller, so the easiest way was to take the other tiller off and make them even. Pairs signed up for an exciting ride. It was blowing 25 knots plus,

and afternoon racing was cancelled, so it was perfect weather for these small resort boats to entertain us. The start line drawn in the sand and one crew lying face down ready for the count down. It was a race along the beach to your boat and then off around a mark and back. No trapeze, just hiking out. It was hard to get the crew back far enough to stop the short 12-foot boat nose diving. A common occurrence was the boat stopping dead from the hull digging into wave and the crew flying forward hitting the hull. It was like hitting a brick wall and was not helpful to get a decent time. It was exciting for spectators and the sailors involved, a very memorable part of our regatta.

With Beer on tap from the local Vincentia Brewery at the beach, New Year's Eve became a dance party outdoors with our very own Dancing DJ Giddi. All ages were boogying together all night long and enjoying the freedom and socialising that has been missed so much over the last 2 years.

Looking forward to the same destination for next year's Hobie Nationals.

Link to full results <https://hobiecat.asn.au/2022/01/07/the-vincentia-sailing-clubs-match-report-nsw-hobie-14-women-youth-states-w-dragon-nationals/>

Written by Emma Morris





Below is a list of all our Somers sailors who journeyed to Vincentia.

Hobie Dragoon Sailors

Matilda Morris
Emily Chiu
Jack Cassano
Harry Chiu
Will Morgan
Max Casalaz
Abi Morgan
Dominic Briggs
John Briggs

Hobie 14 Sailors

Geoff Rowden
Zac Rowden
Giddi Segal

Hobie 16 Sailors

Emma Morris
Tim Chiu
Simon Morris
Zoe Morris
Tom MacCracken
Luke Crouch
Arija De Leeuw
Nigel Beddoe
Abi Beddoe
Conor Greagsbey
Joey Thomas
Naomi Chiu