

Team *MaxSamizer* Report

What a massive summer it has been for us! Since Max's last Year 12 exam we have sailed five major regattas against arguably the best sailors in the world. We have been very lucky with the 470 World Championships coming to Melbourne the year before the Olympics.

470 Nationals (Manly 16 footers)

This was our first proper regatta in the 470 and our first real opportunity to race other 470's in the 8 months we had been sailing them. We used this regatta to see what level we were really sailing at! With 36 of the best 470 sailors in the world competing it turned out to be a rather tough regatta. We had a setback on arriving in Sydney with our new mast (used maybe 5 times) getting bent on the tow up from Melbourne. We tried straightening it but as soon as we put tension on the mast, the bend came back so we bought another new one off a fellow Australian and got on with preparing for the regattas. Once we had the mast sorted we spent the next few days just copying other people's setups and watching how they executed their manoeuvres.

With it being our first big fleet regatta since the previous Christmas we needed to get back into the fleet sailing frame of mind, and also getting used to sailing around in or at the back of the fleet. With a race in the top ten and a few races where we were up in the top ten we proved to ourselves that we were on the right track. We finished 21st overall (4th Australian) which we were a bit disappointed with, but we did learn many lessons. The regatta was an eye opener to how much harder the racing is in the 470 compared to anything else we had sailed.

SIRs (Sydney Harbour)

We had another setback a few days before the start of SIRs. After training one day we came in and found we weren't able to ease tension off. The Jib forestay had slipped down the side of the sheave at the top and the wire was jammed. We ended up having to pull the fitting off while still under tension causing the wire to rip through the mast wall. We definitely weren't having much luck with masts. It wasn't pretty but we ended up getting it fixed up and hoped it would still hold up under tension.

With the course for SIRs being in the same area of the harbour as Nationals we had a bit more knowledge on what to expect. More international teams were arriving everyday so the men and women were split into separate fleets for the regatta. There were 35 men so a very

similar size fleet to nationals. The racing again proved tough and we had one day where it blew over 25 knots which was our first truly heavy wind 470 sailing. We managed to keep the rig out of the water unlike many others so were fairly happy with that. We ended up 20th overall and 4th Australian again.

420 Nationals (SYC)

It was back into the good old 420 after Christmas to compete in the nationals as they were being held at our home yacht club. We were using the regatta to get some more fleet sailing experience before the Worlds. With only getting back into the boat a few days before the regatta we needed to quickly get used to the boat. It is amazing how a 420 just feels like a 470 with the bow chopped off. We got what we wanted out of the regatta and came away with the win giving us the hat trick with three 420 National wins in a row. We were very proud to achieve this especially at our home Yacht Club.

Sail Melbourne (SYC)

Sail Melbourne was crunch time. Virtually the whole world's fleet was competing with 78 men's teams sailing. The conditions didn't suit us with it being a windy qualifying series. We ended up in Silver Fleet. We thought the racing would be a lot easier in silver fleet but in 470's unfortunately that's not the case. The racing in Silver Fleet is still ridiculously hard to do well in. We ended the regatta on a high, finally getting some good starts and being able to play the game at the front of the fleet as opposed to getting played in the pack. We got a 2nd and an 8th which moved us up to 9th in silver fleet (49th Overall and 5th Australian). It was great to finally show ourselves what we were capable of and gave us a confidence boost going into the Worlds.

470 Worlds (MSC)

The Worlds at Mordy would by far be the biggest and toughest regatta we have ever competed in. The last Olympic country spots were up for grabs and countries that had already been qualified were using the regatta as selection regatta for whom they should send to the

games. There was a lot on the line for most of the 94 Men's teams! We got through measurement with no problems. The conditions suited us with the wind generally staying under 10 knots. We had a great Qualifying Series with a few top ten races, just missing gold fleet due to a critical mistake in the last race which hurt us a lot. We knew that staying in the front of Silver Fleet would be a mighty task, a task which unfortunately we were not able to manage slowly dropping back through the fleet to end up 21st in Silver Fleet (53rd Overall and 3rd Australian). We were a bit disappointed to drop back so far in Silver Fleet but overall we were happy with our first 470 Worlds.

This long summer has come to an end. We probably won't see one as big as this in Australia ever again, if not for a long time. We have been ridiculously lucky to have the best sailors in the world travel from all over the world to sail at our doorstep. We now, for the first time, have an ISAF World Ranking of 91 in the 470 Men's class. We have learnt a lot and now have a large number of areas we know we need to improve on. From here we hope to make a trip or two to Europe this year as there will be some big regattas before the Olympics where we could learn a lot. We would like to give a big Thank You to all our supporters, particularly Mordialloc Sailing Club, Sandringham Yacht Club, Ronstan, Zhik, our coach; Glenn Collings, Yachting Victoria, Yachting Australia, the Sports Australia Hall of Fame, and of course our parents.

Until next time, Happy Sailing

Regards Sam Kivell and Max Taylor, aka "Team MaxSamizer"