

B14 World Championships – Day 1

The 5th B14 World Championships, hosted by Circolo Vela Torbole on Lake Garda, Italy opened with two races on Monday, July 19. Pre-event discussion was that this was as wide open a championship as the class had known with as many as eight potential champions and many teams capable of winning races. The first two races confirmed that this event will probably go down to the wire.

The Southerly Ora was blowing at 10-15 knots for the first start but was showing signs of instability. As is usual, there were two strategies for the first beat; hard right into more pressure or left up the shoreline to 'Lucky Point'. This time it was the left that played big time with a massive port lift in the second half of the beat bringing defending champions, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber, through to an early lead.

The conditions remained shifty for the next 2 laps, regularly shuffling the pack. Fells and Barber defended aggressively, particularly from the flying Australian team of Kieran Livermore and Karen Wiseman who were showing great speed. Fells / Barber (GBR 758) held on to take the first gun, Livermore / Wiseman (AUS 371) second, Nils Jolliffe and Jon Branch (GBR 764) third ahead of another quick Australian team, Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (AUS 367).

For race two, the Ora was becoming more variable with significant pressure differences and big shifts. Current UK and European champions, Dave Hayes and Sean Dwyer found the best route up the left bank to lead down the run. However, they were not able to hold back Jono Pank and Rich Edwards who came through on the second beat to take a comfortable lead. Behind them the snakes and ladders continued to make it hard to maintain places. At the finish Pank / Edwards (GBR 771) took the gun from Hayes / Dwyer (GBR 767) ahead of the leading Australian's, Peter Ray and Gareth Wells (AUS 370) and the consistent Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (GBR 725).

So a day when consistency was hard to find ended with the 5 strongest British teams holding the top slots.

Overall after 2 races:

- 1st GBR 771, Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (6,1) 7 points
- 2nd GBR 725, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (5,4) 9 points
- 3rd GBR 758, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (1,9) 10 points
- 4th GBR 764, Nils Jolliffe and Jon Branch (3,8) 11 points
- 5th GBR, 767 Dave Hayes and Sean Dwyer (10,2) 12 points
- 6th AUS, 371 Kieran Livermore and Karen Wiseman (2,11) 13 points

B14 World Championships – Day 2

For the second day of the B14 World Championships, the Southerly Ora was late arriving and although filling in to 12-14 knots, had sufficient shifts and holes to make racing interesting. As for the first day the left hand bank was

the place to be but with occasional big gains for those brave enough to take a wider line.

Race 3 started with a crowded pin end and a second gun. Jono Pank and Rich Edwards, the overnight leaders, sailed fast and smart to establish a good lead at the top mark. Tim Fells and Shaun Barber chased hard and had closed sufficiently by the last beat to initiate some close covering. On the final run Fells / Barber attacked and managed to find some extra pressure to take the gun. Dave Hayes and Sean Dwyer who had never been far behind, also took advantage of a strong gust to grab second with Pank / Edwards crossing to silence having been OCS. Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (GBR 756) were promoted to third.

With a less biased line, the fleet started race 4 cleanly. Andrews / McDonald having been rolled at the start, tacked out right and found lifting pressure to bring them back across the fleet. They established a lead that they extended throughout the race despite the wind starting to break up. Fells / Barber pulled their way up to second but were rolled by Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan (AUS 368) on the last lap who went on to take second. Pank / Edwards followed Fells / Barber home in third and fourth. The Australian team completed an excellent race with 5 boats in the top 10.

Overall after 2 races:

1st GBR 758, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (1,9,1,3) 5 points
2nd GBR 756, Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (9,6,3,1) 10 points
3rd GBR 771, Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (6,1,OCS,4) 11 points
4th GBR, 767 Dave Hayes and Sean Dwyer (10,2,2,9) 13 points
5th GBR 725, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (5,4,4,6) 13 points
6th AUS, 367 Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (4,13,5,7) 16 points

B14 World Championships – Day 3

Day 3 of the B14 Worlds brought classic Ora conditions with 16-18 knots, much more steady in direction and strength than the first two days. It was definitely a boat speed day and the Aussie team showed their colours with some exceptional all round pace. The Sydney fleet based at Woollahra, have been working with their local sailmaker to develop a flatter, straighter rig that seems rocket ship fast in a breeze. The European rigs are more tuned for moderate conditions with coastal chop and are more punchy, pointing higher. It is an interesting contrast in styles and if the wind continues to build, the end result will be hard to predict.

In race 5, Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan gained the upper hand up the left hand bank and rounded first ahead of the leading five Brits in the overall standings. Sailing a composed race strategy they steadily extended their lead to win, Lissa becoming the first girl crew to win a B14 world championship race. Overnight leaders, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (GBR 758) crossed second to further strengthen their title challenge. Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (GBR 725) added a third to their impressive set of top 5 results and Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald strengthened their score line with fourth.

Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (GBR 771) who had led the regatta on the first day, were disqualified for a windward mark incident with Andrews.

At the start of race 6, the Ora was well established and the fleet split to both sides of the course. Fells / Barber, leading the regatta were doing turns off the start line and were last to start. Searle / Ramus took the early lead but were soon struggling to hold back the flying Aussies. Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (AUS 367) flew past upwind and extended their lead to win by a stunning margin from Searle / Ramus. Peter Ray and Gareth Wells (AUS 370) took third ahead of Reynolds / McMillan (AUS 368) to complete a great day for team Australia. Meanwhile the leading 3 Brits were doing themselves no favours with Andrews / McDonald 10th, Fells / Barber 12th and Pank / Edwards seeing their title challenge slip away in 13th.

Overall after 6 races:

1st GBR 758, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (1,9,1,3,2,12) 16 points
2nd GBR 725, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (5,4,4,6,3,2) 18 points
3rd GBR 756, Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (9,6,3,1,4,10) 23 points
4th AUS 368 Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan (11,17,6,2,1,4) 24 points
5th AUS 367 Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (4,13,5,7,7,1) 24 points
6th AUS 370 Peter Ray and Gareth Wells (13,3,13,5,5,3) 29 points

B14 World Championships – Day 4

The fourth day of the B14 World Championships was another classic Ora day, this time at 18-20 knots. The Aussie team continued as they had finished day 3 with some devastating pace around the course. Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (AUS 367) followed up their win in race 6 with another start to finish win in race 7. Marrk Barnes and Tom Pygall (GBR 768) were one of the few teams to pioneer the right hand side of the track and were rewarded with second ahead of Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (GBR 771) and overnight leaders Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (GBR 758).

Race 8 started with a bit more pressure and again the Aussies jumped into the lead with Johnson / Halkes leading fellow countrymen Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan around the first two laps. However Matt Searle and Andy Ramus (GBR 725) never gave up the chase and picked up some great shifts on the third beat to take the lead which they held to the finish. Pank / Edwards followed the two Aussie boats in fourth with Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (GBR 756) keeping their hopes alive in fifth. Fells and Barber struggled for an 8th place that was a counter and closed the gap on the chasing pack.

With two races left, the overall result could not be closer with five boats in with a realistic shot at the title and only 1 point covering the first three teams.

Overall after 8 races:

1st GBR 758, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (1,9,1,3,2,12,4,8) 19 points
2nd GBR 725, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (5,4,4,6,3,2,10,1) 19 points
3rd AUS 367 Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (4,13,5,7,7,1,1,2) 20 points

4th AUS 368 Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan (11,17,6,2,1,4,9,3) 25 points
5th GBR 756, Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (9,6,3,1,4,10,7,5) 26 points
6th GBR 771, Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (6,1,OCS,4,DSQ,13,3,4) 31 points

B14 World Championships – Final

With five boats in with a realistic shot at the title and only 1 point covering the first three teams, the final day of the B14 Worlds was set for a classic battle of nerves. Conditions looked promising for a strong Ora but as the start gun went for race 9 in 12 knots, there was a big storm building in the mountains.

The fleet were tightly bunched close tacking up the left hand shore line and it was Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (GBR 756) who rounded first and led the fleet down a flat out run. By the second beat, Jamie Mears and Micro Machine (GBR 646) had taken the lead closely pursued by championship leaders Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (GBR 758). Both of the other two main championship contenders, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (GBR 725) and Marty Johnson and Spike Halkes (AUS 367) were struggling outside the top ten.

As the leaders rounded the top mark it was obvious that the wind was beginning to drop as the storm moved out of the mountains. The PRO made a smart decision to shorten at the leeward gate with the Mears team taking their first championship gun followed by Fells / Barber, with Jono Pank and Rich Edwards just getting the better of Andrews / McDonald.

The fleet were sent ashore with lightning crashing around the mountains but as the back end of the fleet were making their way to the finish the storm hit with winds in excess of 40 knots. Fortunately no damage was done and everyone got home safely, if a bit scared!

With conditions unsail-able, the abandonment flags went up and Tim Fells and Shaun Barber were crowned 2004 World Championships. This highly experienced team – both previous winners of the World title – although not always the fastest in the fleet, demonstrated all-round skills to keep their challenge going in all conditions.

This championship, brilliantly hosted by Circolo Vela Torbole, has been unanimously viewed as the most competitive in the class history. The emergence of strong Australian challengers bodes well for the next Worlds on Sydney Harbour in January 2006.

Overall - Final:

1st GBR 758, Tim Fells and Shaun Barber (1,9,1,3,2,12,4,8,2) 21 points
2nd GBR 725, Matt Searle and Sandy Ramus (5,4,4,6,3,2,10,1, 6) 25 points
3rd AUS 367 Martin Johnson and Mike Halkes (4,13,5,7,7,1,1,2,DNF) 27 points

4th AUS 368 Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan (11,17,6,2,1,4,9,3,5) 30 points
5th GBR 756, Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (9,6,3,1,4,10,7,5,4) 30 points
6th GBR 771, Jono Pank and Rich Edwards (6,1,OCS,4,DSQ,13,3,4,3) 34 points

Day one at the B14 World Championships was held on Lake Garda, Italy today. Conditions were a shifty 10-15 kt breeze. The first race saw the fleet spread right across the course, with those on the eastern shore gaining significantly. Current world champion Tim Fells and Sean Barbour from the UK gained the lead early, and then had to closely defend a challenge from Australian's Kieran Livermore and Karen Wiseman. Fells took the gun from Livermore.

Race two started in similar conditions with the fleet firmly fixing their strategy to the favoured eastern shore. Jono Pank/Rich Edwards and David Hayes/Sean Dywer from the UK battled for much of the race, with Pank winning. Australian crew Peter Ray and Gareth Wells were a fast finishing 3rd.

Results after Day One

1 Jono Pank/Rich Edwards- 6,1 - 7
2 Matt Searl/Andy Ramus - 5,4 - 9
3 Tim Fells/Sean Barber - 1,9 - 10
4 Nils Joliffe/Jon Branche - 3,8 - 11
5 David Hayes/Sean Dywer - 10, 2 - 12
6 Kieran Livermore/ Karen Wisman AUS - 2, 11 - 13
9 Peter Ray/ Gareth Wells AUS - 13, 3 - 16
10 Martin Johnston/ Michael Halkes AUS - 4,13 - 17
11 Guy Bancroft/ Rhys Bancroft AUS - 12,12 - 24
14 Richie Reynolds/ Lissa McMillan AUS - 11,17 - 28

Karen and I were obviously pretty happy with race one. Unfortunately the tack let go on our jib at the end of the second work. Managed to almost get by him up the last work but our extra tacking was bringing the rest of the fleet closer, so discretion won the day.

Pete and Gareth took the batten in the second race with a really solid performance for a third.

Boat speed is good. As always pressure and angles will win the day. Hoping for some more consistent performances tomorrow.

Day Two saw more consistent sailing from the AUS fleet. The Nude had some trouble at the start in race 1 and broke a mainsheet in race 2. Races 3 and 4 were more the performance we are used to from Richie and Lissa. The went within a whisker of winner race 4 after reeling in a runaway leader. Marty and Spike are finding their feet. After bad and mediocre starts in races 3 and 4,

they managed to pick their way through the fleet in good style. Gareth and Pete are looking solid, but are craving a little more pressure...in fact a lot more would suit them fine. Karen and Kieran were over the line in race 3 and battled back half way through the fleet. In race 4 we sailed in a shabby fashion to get an 11th place....oh, what could have been. Guy and Rhys are yet to find their speed, but we know they will soon. Race four saw five AUS craft in first eleven to finish.

It is Wednesday morning and the sun is shining with the wind heading south. This indicates more pressure is likely coming back up the lake this afternoon

Day Two at the B14 World Championships was held on Lake Garda, Italy today. Conditions continue to be a 10-15 kt breeze. In the two races, the fleet still concentrated on the shifty eastern shore. Current world champion Tim Fells and Sean Barber from the UK consolidated a series lead with consistent sailing scoring a first and third. Jason Andrews and Joel McDonald (UK) put in an impressive performance to score a 3rd and 1st today.

Australian crews had good results, several consolidating their position in the top ten, in what is still a very open regatta.

Series results after Day Two (one drop included)

- 1 Tim Fells/Sean Barber - 1,9,1,3 - 5
- 2 Jason Andrews/Joel McDonald - 9,6,3,1 - 10
- 3 Jono Pank/Rich Edwards- 6,1,OCS,4 - 11
- 4 David Hayes/Sean Dywer - 10, 2,2,9 - 13
- 5 Matt Searl/Andy Ramus - 5,4,4,6- 13
- 6 Martin Johnston/ Michael Halkes AUS - 4,13,5,7 - 16
- 7 Nils Joliffe/Jon Branche - 3,8,7,18 - 18
- 8 Richie Reynolds/ Lissa McMillan AUS - 11,17,6,2 - 19
- 9 Peter Ray/ Gareth Wells AUS - 13, 3,13,5 - 21
- 11 Kieran Livermore/ Karen Wisman AUS - 2, 11,18,10 - 23
- 13 Guy Bancroft/ Rhys Bancroft AUS - 12,12,12,8 - 32

To say the least, the AUS team are feeling happy this evening. Richie and Lissa did a great job and lead for much of the race. Marty and Spike were equally impressive. Gareth and Peter with a 5, 3 thought they could have gained a point or two here and there, but have smiles in their faces and are wishing the breeze to come on in a big way. Karen and I are happy with the way we sailed, just a case of not getting the first beat right. Guy and Rhys seem to be attracting trouble, losing their jib sheet just before the first start. We have four in the top ten.

Day three racing at Torbole was held in 15-18kts. The Australian crews have finally found their feet with wins in both heats.

Race 5 for the series saw Richie Reynolds and Lissa McMillan AUS breakthrough for their first win at a World Championship regatta. After

constesting the lead in the first half of the race, they drew clear and took the gun with a comfortable victory. Tim Fells/Sean Barber UK were 2nd and Matt Searle/Andy Ramus UK 3rd.

Race 6 started in a solid 18kts, which encouraged a majority of the fleet to head towards the western shore for the first time. With the fleet spread right across the course, Matt Searle/Andy Ramus UK and Martin Johnson/ Michael Halkes AUS, emerged ahead of the fleet. Their battle continued until late in the race when the two boats split, leaving the Australian crew with a significant advantage and a comfortable win. Peter Ray and Gareth Wells AUS placed 3rd, and Reynolds/McMillan AUS placed 4th.

Series results after Day Three (one drop included) protest pending

- 1 Tim Fells/Sean Barber - 1,9,1,3,2,12 - 16
- 2 Matt Searl/Andy Ramus - 5,4,4,6,3,2, -18
- 3 Jason Andrews/Joel Mcdonald - 9,6,3,1,4,10 - 23 - 10
- 4 Richie Reynolds/ Lissa McMillan AUS - 11,17,6,2,1,4 -24
- 5 Martin Johnston/ Michael Halkes AUS - 4,13,5,7,7,1 - 24
- 6 Peter Ray/ Gareth Wells AUS - 13, 3,13,5,5,3 - 29
- 7 David Hayes/Sean Dywer - 10, 2,2,9,8, DNF - 31
- 8 Jono Pank/Rich Edwards- 6,1,OCS,4,9,13 - 33
- 9 Nils Joliffe/Jon Branche - 3,8,7,18,10,5 - 33
- 10 Kieran Livermore/ Karen Wisman AUS - 2, 11,18,10,11,11 - 45
- 13 Guy Bancroft/ Rhys Bancroft AUS - 12,12,12,8,20,7 – 51

Day four was another great day for us here. Marty, Spike, Richie and Lissa stepped up a gear today, and now they are both in reach of a World Title crown.

Conditions were much as they have been for the week. Almost on queue between the two races, the ora came in which made the second start fast and furious. The regulars in these parts are scratching their heads a bit, trying to work out why marty, spike,richie and lissa are sailing so fast....wish they would tell me. Spike is taking Marty by the hand at present, leading him out of the pub while he can still walk (nothing that his mother should be ashamed of though).

Guy took Pencil's advice last night and graced us with his presence in the boat park approx. 20 minute before launching.

Tomorrow will be a very exciting day, Tim Fells on leaving the boat park this afternoon suggested he would like a light weather day tomorrow....little does he know what that might mean.

Day Four at the B14 World Championships was held on Lake Garda, Italy today. Conditions continue to be a 10-18kt breeze. In the race 7, the fleet continued to work the shifty eastern shore. At the first windward mark, Mark Barnes and Tom Pygall (UK) lead from Martin Johnson and Michael Halkes

AUS. By the bottom mark, Johnson/Halkes had secured the lead which they extended during the race. Barnes/Pygall were 2nd, Pank/Edward UK 3rd

Race 8 started with the 18kt Ora in full force, encouraging half the fleet to head for the western cliffs from the start. Australian crews Richie Reynolds/Lissa McMillan and Johnson/Halkes lead at the first mark, having persisted with the shifty eastern shore. On the second work, Johnson and Reynolds split tacks and by the second windward mark Johnson and Matt Searle/Andy Ramus UK had a comfortable lead over the Reynolds. It was not until the top of the 3rd work after a furious tacking duel that Searle passed Johnson and then went on to take the gun.

Two Australian crews are now placed in the top four with only six points separating them, and only two races to complete.

Series results after Day Four (two drops included)

- 1 Tim Fells/Sean Barber - 1,9,1,3,2,12,4,8 - 19
- 2 Matt Searl/Andy Ramus - 5,4,4,6,3,2,10,1 - 19
- 3 Martin Johnston/ Michael Halkes AUS - 4,13,5,7,7,1,1,2 -20
- 4 Richie Reynolds/ Lissa McMillan AUS - 11,17,6,2,1,4,9,3 - 25
- 5 Jason Andrews/Joel Mcdonald - 9,6,3,1,4,10,7,5 - 26
- 6 Jono Pank/Rich Edwards- 6,1,OCS,4, DSQ,13,3,4 - 31
- 7 David Hayes/Sean Dywer - 10, 2,2,9,8,DNF,5,9 - 35
- 8 Peter Ray/ Gareth Wells AUS - 13, 3,13,5,5,3,12,11 - 39
- 9 Nils Joliffe/Jon Branche - 3,8,7,18,10,5,6,DNF - 39
- 11 Kieran Livermore/ Karen Wisman AUS - 2, 11,18,10,11,11,17,10 - 55
- 13 Guy Bancroft/ Rhys Bancroft AUS - 12,12,12,8,20,7,8,13, - 59

A better report later.

The regatta has been run and won. Race nine started in about 10kts, then just after the second work the wind dropped out and it was a case of roll your dice and pick a direction to sail. The race was shortened. I am not entirely sure who won the race, but the ever reliable Tim Fells did more than enough to secure the title. We were ordered ashore and soon after a wild breeze came from across the lake amid claps of thunder and lightning. Race ten was cancelled.

Series Results:

- 1 Tim Fells/ Shaun Barber
 - 2 Matt Searle/ Andy Ramus
 - 3 Martin Johnson/Michael Halkles AUS
 - 4Richie Reynolds/ Lissa McMillan AUS
 - 9 Peter Ray/ Gareth Wells AUS
 - 11 Kieran Livermore/ Karen Wiseman AUS
 - 13 Guy Bancroft/Rhys Bancroft AUS
- Kelvin and Rachel had the most points and are hereby noted as the winners

Just to add my congrats to all the Aussie team for making it such a superb event both on and off the water. I can tell you there was a lot of head

scratching from the Brits on how we were going to stop your guys if the breeze held in. Looks like 15 knots plus you have a speed advantage - a bit to do with the rig but a lot to do with how well you are sailing the boats. The reverse is true under 12 knots where we seemed to have an edge, particularly in height, which made it tough for the Aussies to hang in off the start.

It's a massive step forward by the Aussie fleet and we know you have a lot of talent that you left at home. We will definitely have to lift our game if we are to stop the cup staying down under in Jan 06.