



## 2010 Auckland Freestyle Champs

by Alexander Stroh

What a timing.....

the weekend of 29/30 May was the last one for the standby period set for the 2010 Auckland Freestyle Champs. The AWA end of season prize-giving party was also on for Sat 29 May. So this was the last chance to run the comp in time to hand out the trophy at the party.

After two "no-go's" the previous weekends where the forecast didn't hold what it promised we decided to try it again. Third time lucky!

A decent SW forecast made the spot choice easy, Pt Chev was chosen once again. A quick skippers meeting at 1pm and off we went for the first heat at 1.30pm. Due to a smaller fleet of sailors this year (no "out of towners") we decided to send all competitors out in the same heat, planning to run a total of four 15 min heats.

An area was marked off for the sailors to perform their best moves in and Pete Smith, the head judge, and myself had our hands full scoring the individual moves.

Gusty conditions made it difficult at times but most sailors choose to rig 5.3-5.8 as some of the squalls that came through delivered up to 30 knots.

It was such an amazing sight, watching all competitors giving it everything they had to impress the judges. Also very positive to see the level of sailing compared to the previous events, lot's of improvements on every level.

Thomas Davies, the Auckland Freestyle Champ 2009, was here to defend his title and it was obvious for the spectator as he executed a lot of very difficult moves during the heats. He landed one handed spock 540's, plenty of flakas and even waterstarted away from a forward. His sailing was very smart and he really built up his heats with lots of non-planning transitions when the wind wasn't strong enough.

The only sailor capable of taking the lead at times was Buckland Beach hotshot Ashley Palmer. Clew first spocks and grubbies were amongst his incredible repertoire for his heats and he even managed to win heat Nr. 2. against Thomas.

Tabou/Vandal newcomer Lawrence Carey was the biggest surprise this year sharing a 3rd position overall with Jebbe Unthank in the end, proving that his training throughout the season paid off. I'm sure we'll see and hear a lot more about him in coming events.

Sad to see that Jill Cooper was the only female in this years event but her persistence on the water was rewarded with a 6<sup>th</sup> place overall in the end. Well done!

Tired and exhausted the sailors were greeted back at the beach with sausages and beer kindly prepared by Tim Wood this time, who took over Jim Rodgers "job" who kindly donated his time and effort to cook the saussies the previous weekends when we were waiting on wind!

In the end it wasn't a very hard decision for the judges as Thomas stood out with a very consistent overall performance so the trophy was all his. Ash scored a well deserved 2nd place after coming 6<sup>th</sup> overall last year.

A special thanks to all the Event Sponsors:

**A'ND Distribution, Gaastra, Tabou,  
Squid Row,  
Boardstore NZ and  
Windsurfing Auckland.**

Also a big thanks to Pete Smith for his time judging, Jim Rodgers and to Tim Wood and Merylyn for their time, help and ongoing effort.

Windsurfing events in New Zealand wouldn't be happening without the effort and support of industry and individuals, you know who they are - so please support these in return!

#### Overall Results

1. Thomas Davies	4.1 points
2. Ashley Palmer	8.7 points
3. Lawrence Carey	14 points
3. Jebbe Unthank	14 points
5. Dan Thomas	22 points
6. Jill Cooper	23 points
7. Chris Tapps	25 points
8. Harre Reed	31 points