



67th SKATE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SPANNER'S RACE REPORTS

Thanks to Alan (Spanner) Spencer for these reports that provide the details behind the racing results.

67th Skate National Championship – Final Results

67th SKATE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP - Ceduna, SA - 30 December 2025-08 January 2026																
National Championship																
Boat		Points							Series		Drop	Result		Crew & Club		
		H2	H1R	H3	H4	H5	H6	H7	Plc	Pts	Pts	Plc	Pts	Skipper	Crew	Club
986	Last Tango	8	2	1	2	1	4	1		19	8	1	11	Gavin Caporn	Matt Couch	StGSC
987	Mystery Road	1	1	7	1	3	2	3		18	7	2	11	Steve Hudson	Bodhi De Freitas	EFYC
937	Gobstopper	3	3	3	6	2	1	2		20	6	3	14	Silvio Fico	Mick Minutillo	EFYC
969	Natural Juices II	4	6	2	5	4	3	6		30	6	4	24	Ken Davies	Lachlan Schrode	TASC
977	Take it Easy	2	5	6	3	6	6	4		32	6	5	26	Mick Winney	Emma Edwards	StGSC
980	Double Decker Dog	7	9	4	4	5	7	5		41	9	6	32	Ray Simpson	Peter Howard	StGSC
978	Megasaurarse	5	4	5	7	7	5	8		41	8	7	33	Paul Shiner	Phillip Shiner	EFYC
973	On the Road Again	6	7	8	8	8	8	7		52	8	8	44	Peter Fannon	Brett Andrews	EFYC

Tuesday 30 December 2025 - Heat 1 Abandoned

Racing today was abandoned due to strong south to south-easterly winds gusting over 30kts.

In the finest Skate class tradition, coasters were prepared just in case they were needed for a coaster draw to decide today's results.

At present, the forecast for tomorrow is for less gusty conditions, and weather permitting, Regatta Management is planning to run Heats 1 and 2 tomorrow.

Wednesday 31 December 2025 – Heat 2 and Heat 1 Resail

After yesterday's race abandonment due to strong winds a double header was proposed with Heat 2 commencing at 11.40 am followed by the resail of Heat 1 as a back to back heat.

Heat 2 - Wednesday 31 December 2025

Starting with a south easterly at 15knots gusting to 18 knots the Skates were away in the relatively flat water.

Huddy sailing Mystery Road 972 got the jump early and powered into shore with Silvio on Gobstopper 937 close behind, Pete Fannon on One for the Road come from the middle of the course and was at the top Mark first but during the rounding he went backwards with Huddy and Silvio passing him. Mick Winney was ever lurking back in 5th The guys that came to shore after the bottom mark were smoking but turning the corners was bit hairy.



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Wind shifts also played a huge part up the second work with Megasaurarse 978 getting to the top mark 1st followed by Take it Easy 977 then Huddy, Pete Fannon then Silvio. Natural Juices 969 and Double Decker Dog 980 with Last Tango 986 all languishing at the rear.

Bottom Mark last time it was Huddy, Mick Winney, Pete Fannon, Pau; Shiner, then Sivio, Ken, Ray & Gavin. It was probably the closest finish I have witnessed for a long time with Huddy 972 winning by 9 secs from Mick Winney 977 then another 2 secs to Silvio 937, Ken 969, Paul 978, Pete 973, Simmo 980 and Gavin 986 bringing up the rear.

Heat 1 Resail - Wednesday 31 December 2025

The start was another south easterly in 17 knots gusting 23 knots.

Huddy in 972 once again blitzed the start and with massive boat speed gets to the front, Gavin in 986 is showing better boat speed this heat and is adjusting to the conditions. At the top mark it is 972, 986, 937, 977, 973, 978 and 969 bringing up the rear. Simmo on 980 decided 2 races in the one day was a bit much and did not start this heat.

At the bottom gate its once again Huddy in a commanding lead, followed bt Silvio, Mick, Pete, Paul, Gavin and Ken.

Most boats went left as the breeze swung south at 17 knots and and water and wind waves increased, At the top mark Huddy was out in front with a bigger lead but when the spinnaker went up he had a wineglass that wouldn't come out had to gybe off to try and clear it and managed to stay afloat just!

Silvio come around the top mark in 2nd place but hit the piss allowing Mick to sneak past but on the gybe he hit the piss in sympathy, then came Gavin who wasn't flying his kite. Pete was next but he also hit the piss on the gybe allowing Paul to come through. Ken also had his fair share of drama downwind the last time.

The final placings in this heat were Huddy 972, Gavin 986 2.5 mins behind then Silvio 937 a further 2 mins back. Next with a great result was Paul & Phillip Shiner 978 then Mick & Emma 977, Pete 973 and Ken 969 in last place.

Friday 02 January 2026 - Heat 3

Well, what a difference a couple of days can make.

Start time was 1pm with a lot of competitors only just making the start line. The race got under way in a 11knot SSE gusting to 15 knots.

At he top mark the 1st time Matt & Gavin 986 had powered away with a commanding lead followed by Lachie & Ken 969. Just behind them was Pete & Simmo 980, then Mick & Sivio 937, Emma & Mick 977, followed by Bodhi & Steve 987 with Brett & Pete bringing up the rear.



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The 1st run was quite tame with the calmer waters forcing sailors to try different tactics but it didn't pay off. Out to the left, gybing down the rhumb line appeared the go. 1st time at bottom gate its Matt in 986 extending the lead then Lachie 969 then Pete 980 and 978 Phillip followed by Mick on 937 Bodhi on 987. Emma on 977 and Brett on 973.

The swinging breeze is showing that the tactics is the most important part of sailing today. At the top mark the 2nd time is Matt 986 continuing to increase margin, Lachie 969. Pete 980. Phillip 978. Emma 977 Mick 937 Bodhi 987 and Brett 973.

Not much changed the next leg but Mick & Silvio on 937 found some pace and got up to 4th at the top mark the last time, and down the final run managed to get past Pete & Simmo who were right up there most of the race. Kenbar & Lachie had a good day out, so did Phillip & Paul whilst Bodhi & Steve alongside Pete & Brett had days they would like to forget.

Final placings 986, 969, 937, 980, 978, 977, 987 & 973.

Saturday 03 January 2026 - Heat 4

It's good to see I ruffled the feathers of the tiller wigglers yesterday by acknowledging the crews in the report but as the self-appointed president of the forward hands union I reserve the right to promote the crews ahead of the tiller wigglers so toughen up you princesses.

Now to today's Heat 4

All the boats left the shore in plenty of time to reach the start before the starting sequence, WELL DONE!!! It was a good start by all in the shifting breeze with no right or wrong way to go but up the middle tacking on all the lifts and knocks.

1st to the top mark was Simmo (yes that is correct) in 980 followed closely by Huddy 987 then Gavin 986 then Paul 978, Mick 977, Silvio 937 Ken 969 and then Pete 973.

Nice kite work down the run saw Huddy take the lead from Simmo followed by Gavin. Silvio also found some pace downhill. At the bottom gate it's 987, 980, 937, 969, 986, 977, 978 & 973. Gavin appeared to have Kite issues on the drop losing a couple of places.

Huddy powers away uphill whilst Simmo stays in the hunt along with Gavin who has recovered from his issue. Silvio must have had an issue himself as he has dropped places

At the top mark the 2nd time its Gavin who has recovered all the lost ground and just beats Huddy to the mark, Ken has gained ground on Simmo who is then in front of Mick Winney next is Silvio and then Paul with Pete.

Another interesting kite run to the bottom mark sees 987 still in front, then 986, 980, 977, 937, 969, 978, 973.



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Heading to the top mark the 3rd time its still Huddy maintaining his lead followed by Gavin then Mick Winney who has picked up a good lift to overtake Simmo up the work. Next is Ken then Silvio followed by Paul & Pete.

Down the run Huddy continues to extend while Gavin appears to have another issue setting his kite and in the meantime Mick passes him.

The final result is Steve & Bodhi 987, Gavin & Matt 986, Mick & Emma 977 and in the closest finish the old bandit Simmo & Pete 980 snatched 4th place from Ken & Lachie 969. Next was Silvio & Mick 937 followed by Paul & Phillip 978 then Peter & Brett 973.

Monday 05 January 2026 - Heat 5

The Fleets away in Heat 5 in a 15knot SSW as the drone above records the action thanks to Sean Leonard, with on water photos and footage by Ceduna's Brad Bowman.

Huddy powers off the start from Gavin who has a lot of height, Silvio is right behind them with Mick and Simmo, Paul is following them with Peter next. Ken had to restart so ended up last off the line.

At the top mark its Gavin who came further into shore whilst Steve had gone out off the shore earlier chasing breeze only to knock on the way back in. Silvio was next around then Mick Winney, Simmo, Paul then Ken and Pete. Gavin has a good lead down the run and after gybing Silvio has picked some good pressure closing the gap on Steve.

At the bottom mark its Gavin 986 by nearly a minute followed by Steve 987 then Silvio 937. Ray Simmo 980 had a steady downwind leg with Mick 977 up his clacker, next was Paul 978 then Ken 969 followed by Peter 973.

Everyone started the next work by coming to shore except Ken who went left for a short tack that helped him recover some ground. Gavin is continuing to work the sailing club shore. Huddy and Silvio (who has done some numbers on his rig) are having a great battle for the minor placings, Mick and Ray are also in the good battle with Ken continuing to gain ground on them. Paul is ever lurking unsuspecting waiting for a Steven Bradbury moment whilst Pete brings up the tail end.

At the top mark the 2nd time Gavin 986 has a commanding lead by 1'40" from Silvio 937 who has passed Steve 987, next Mick 977, Ken 969 who has passed Simmo 980, then Paul 978 and Pete 973.

Silvio and Steve are still having a close race downhill with some nice kite runs. Mick has hit the piss on the gybe which allows Ken and Simmo to pass him. Paul looked like he was on a good kite run ahead of Peter. At the bottom mark the 2nd time its Gavin 986 stretching his lead to 1'50" from 987, 937, 969, 980, 977, 987 & 973.



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Gavin is consistently sailing up the shore on the 3rd work with Steve and Silvio having a great battle, Ken has recovered from his bad start to now be in 4th place, followed by Simmo having a good race as well.

At the top mark the last time Gavin 986 has extended the lead out to 3mins then Steve 987 and Silvio 937 right behind. Some more nice kite work between these two is a pleasure to watch as they continue their battle for the minor placings. Ken 969 has beaten Ray 980 to the top mark with Mick 977 a minute or so behind them next is Paul 978 followed by Peter 973.

At the bottom mark the final time Gavin has extended it by another 17" from Silvio who came out ahead of Steve by the narrow us of margins, Ken is still 4th, Simmo 5th, Mick 6th, Paul 7th and Peter 8th.

The final placings are:

- 1st Gavin & Matt 986 Last Tango by 3'45"
- 2nd Silvio & Mick 937 Gobstopper
- 3rd Steve & Bodhi 987 Mystery Road
- 4th Ken & Lachie 969 Natural Juices
- 5th Ray & Peter 980 Double Decker Dog
- 6th Mick & Emma 977 Take It Easy
- 7th Paul & Phillip 978 Megasaurarse
- 8th Peter & Brett 973 On The Road Again

Thanks to all the Ceduna start crew and support boat skippers and crew for the great work you are all doing, it is really appreciated.

Tuesday 06 January 2026 - Heat 6

On a very hot 38 degree day on calm waters at 4 knots from the north the sailors hit the water. The wind direction in the totally opposite direction to all previous heats would throw a bit a skill element into to the race.

A slow start with next to no breeze had all boats searching for breeze to get any sort of pressure. Tacking on what bands of breeze existed was difficult as they were few and far between. 1st to the top mark was Steve then Silvio and Gavin followed by Paul, Ken, Mick, Ray and Peter.

Downwind was slow with Steve and Silvio battling away chasing a band of breeze before sailing into a massive hole, Paul & Mick were also following them out but Gavin had gybed and was heading towards the shore, Ken had done the same earlier off the top mark and appeared to have gained. There were plenty of holes downwind creating a frustrating sail for most. At the bottom mark Silvio has come out in front of Gavin then Ken and Steve who lost a bit of ground, followed by Mick then Paul, Ray and Pete.



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Off the bottom Mark Ken came left along the shore and seems to be moving better through the lack of breeze than the other 3 boats that went right and have found another hole. Mick has also come to shore to follow what Ken has done.

After a rather slow boring work up to the top mark the 2nd time it's Silvio in front from Steve then Mick Ken, Paul and Gavin and finally Ray. About this time Pete had decided to retire from the race.

At the gate the 2nd time due to race time restrictions a shortened course flag was displayed with the competitors to go straight to the finish line. Silvio rounded first then Steve, Mick, Gavin, Ken then Paul with Ray a long way back.

Final placing were:

- 937 Gobstopper
- 987 Mystery Road
- 969 Natural juices
- 986 Last Tango
- 978 Megasaurarse
- 977 Take It Easy
- 980 Double Decker Dog
- 973 DNF

Thursday 08 January 2026 - Heat 7

Well it comes down to the last heat to decide the overall winner between Steve Hudson, Gavin Caporn & Silvio Fico all with a chance depending on how the results crumble.

Silvio gets the jump with Pete Fannon then Huddy and Simmo, Mick & Paul. Ken & Gavin had a shocker start. The breeze is shifting from SSW to SW still around 8 knots. At the top mark it's 937 Silvio, 980 Simmo ,987 Huddy ,986 Gavin ,973 Peter .977 Mick .978 Paul, and 969 Ken brings up the rear.

On the downwind leg Silvio is still in front. Gavin has overtaken Steve & Ray who are neck and neck as they come to shore before gybing out. Mick & Pete are having a good tussle with Paul just behind them. Ken in last place gybed just after the mark and went out. Apart from Silvio having a good run with a commanding lead it's anybody's guess for the minors at this stage. Placings at the bottom gate will tell the story.

At the gate the 1st time it's Silvio by about 1.5 minutes from Steve closely followed by Gavin, Ray, Mick, Paul, Pete & Ken.

Up the work Silvio's still in front with Gavin gaining height on Huddy and Silvio. All came to shore not wanting to go out on that long tack to oblivion. The shifty breeze has seen the backmarkers make huge ground on the leaders who were in a persistent knock. At the top mark the 2nd time it's Silvio, Gavin, Mick, Steve then Paul, Ray, Pete and then Ken.



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Not a lot of breeze downwind with Silvio coming to shore before gybing whilst Gavin went out earlier for a short kite run before gybing back with a band of breeze, Luck appears to have favoured Gavin in this section of the race as he takes the lead from Silvio with Stev on another band of breeze closing quickly.

At the gate the 2nd time it's Gavin, Silvio, Steve, Mick, Ray, Ken then Paul and Peter.

Up the next work Gavin, Silvio & Steve are maintaining about 60m separation before Huddy goes out to cut off Mick who has picked up a bit of a lift off the bottom mark. Trying to find some breeze has seen Steve lose out to Mick & Ray.

At the top mark the final time it's still Gavin who heads straight to the left of the course followed by Silvio, Mick, Ray then Steve, Ken then Peter and Paul. A rather slow boring downwind leg prevails to the gate where the places don't change except Steve has got back ahead of Ray.

Final race results are:

- 986 Last Tango - Gavin Caporn & Matt Couch
- 937 Gobstopper - Silvio Fico & Mick Minuttillo
- 987 Mystery Road - Steve Hudson & Bodhi De Freitas
- 977 Take It Easy - Mick Winney & Emma Edwards
- 980 Double Decker Dog - Ray Simpson & Peter Howard
- 969 Natural Juices - Ken Davies & Lachie Schroder
- 973 On The Road Again - Peter Fannon & Brett Andrews
- 978 Megasaurs - Paul & Phillip Shiner

And the overall winner is 986 Last Tango – Gavin and Matt, on a countback from 987 Mystery Road – Steve and Bodhi.

A huge THANK YOU to the whole Ceduna Sailing Club, it's committee, members and volunteers for once again organising and conducting another fantastic Skate National Title series.

The work that you all put in cannot be understated to make our series the success that they've been.

The lifelong friendships that we have developed are truly amazing and on a personal note I love coming back to Ceduna and renewing those friendships and our conversations each time.

Congratulations to all the competitors and the prize winners. The entertainment provided was sensational. The closeness of the result was amazing with only one winner - the sailing. The camaraderie and your continued commitment to keep our class alive is special and you all should be acknowledged.

Regards

Allan "Spanner" Spencer
National President
Skate Sailing Association