

OKI 24-Hour – NZ's Toughest Dinghy Race next Weekend

Auckland (March 3, 2015): The North Shore's beloved OKI 24-Hour Race begins this Saturday 7 March at 2pm. Olympic-hopefuls and local heroes young and old will be sailing through the night in this iconic event with past winners including Dean Barker, Ray Davies and Peter Blake.

"The OKI 24-hr sailing event is New Zealand's toughest dinghy race and we have teams from all over the country as well as international sailors competing," says Murrays Bay Sailing Club Commodore, Scott Leith.

Andy Maloney and Nick Heiner (Laser World Champ) and Blair Tuke (49er World & Olympic Champion) are heading the entry list for the race with stiff competition expected from the large contingent of local male and female crews.

The OKI 24-Hour Race is a competition for laser sailors held on Lake Pupuke and run by Murrays Bay Sailing Club, a club with a rich history of sailors recognised through Round the World races, national championships, America's Cup regattas and the Olympics.

"Last year's event was held in stunning sailing conditions with over 90 teams spread across the OKI 24-Hour and OKI 6 hour race for Optimists," says Leith. "The start of the race is quite unique and really exciting with the sailors in a Le Mans-style mad dash down the hill and launching themselves into the boats."

Auckland
8 Antares Place
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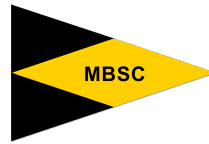
www.oki.co.nz

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Level 30
Grand Plimmer Tower
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There's a major prize of \$2,000 available for the sailor/s who do the most laps in the 24-hour timeframe. The best solo sailor will also win \$1,000 and have a chance to win the major prize as well.

"The solo sailors race non-stop through the night, so it's a mental as well as a physical challenge, making it the ideal training ground for sailors run up to the World and Olympic regattas" explains Leith.

This year will see Blair Tuke, 49er Olympic medallist team up with James Sandal, to test their mettle in the 24-hour open division.

Scott Leith, 4 times World Master Champion and his team will be looking to defend their title in the Masters race.

Entries from Nicholas Heiner, Dutch World Champion and local sailors Andy Maloney, Sam Meech and Mike Bullot will ensure there is some stiff competition and that the OKI 24-Hour will live up to it's reputation.

From howling 30-knot southerlies to 2 knots of shifting breeze in the middle of the night and everything in between, the OKI 24-Hour Race is a test of man, woman and boat against the elements.

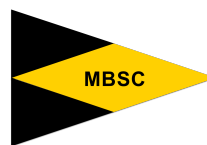
Timings:

OKI 6-hr Race: (7:30am – 1.30pm Saturday)

OKI 24-hour Race: (2pm Saturday – 2pm Sunday)

The events are fundraisers for Murray's Bay Sailing Club to develop youth sailing and local business Comworth Technologies, distributor for OKI Print and Panasonic Toughbook products, has been sponsoring the race since 1989.

www.murraysbay.org / www.comworth.co.nz

**For further information please contact:**

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About Murrays Bay Sailing Club

Murrays Bay Sailing Club (MBSC) has a proud history and enviable track record of producing performance sailors. We firmly believe that sailing is a sport for life and it teaches our sailors great life skills and builds lifelong friendships. The club's history is rich with names of sailors recognised through national championships, America's Cup and the Olympics.

Our success on the international stage is underpinned by the value we add at a community level. The local Waterwise programme is located at our clubrooms and is utilised by many of the schools in the area. MBSC in turn runs a progressive training programme ranging from Learn to Sail (LTS) in our "plastic optimists" through our Optimist, P class, Starling, Laser, 420's, 470's, Techno sailboards, 29er's and Zephyrs fleets. www.murraysbay.org

About Comworth

Comworth Technologies has been the exclusive distributor for OKI since 1985. A family business, Comworth has a long tradition with sailing sponsorships. Founder David Charlesworth is a past Commodore of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron (RNZYS) and many RNZYS events have been supported, as well as the Auckland BMW sailing regatta. Both David and his son Mark, who works in the business, are both still actively involved in yacht racing through RNZYS.

About OKI

OKI specializes in the design, development, manufacture, and marketing of business printing solutions that empower organizations to communicate more effectively. A subsidiary of Tokyo-based OKI Electric Industry (established in 1881 as Japan's first telecommunications manufacturer), OKI Data fields representatives in 120 countries to offer innovative, leading-edge products and services worldwide. For more information, please visit <http://www.oki.com>

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