

# Formula F-18 World Titles

% by WARREN GUINEA

n pics courtesy ACTIONPICS.BIZ

The Formula F-18 worlds were held at the beautiful Rydges Capricorn resort on the central coast of Queensland just outside Yeppoon. They were held from of February 19-25 with some practice races beforehand. With the fleet worldwide growing so quick it was decided that a title should be held outside of Europe for the first time to promote the class more worldwide.

**T**HE Formula 18 class is the fastest growing catamaran in the world and regular fleets of over 150 are obtained in Europe often attracting many of the world's best sailors from Olympic classes to all other makes of boats.

The Formula 18 class is a box rule, where there is a minimum weight, maximum sail area, maximum width, and other measurements but allows some variation in hull shape and rudders and boards.

Carbon fibre is not allowed, this helps keep the cost down, but is only allowed in the daggerboards and rudders to help with strength.

Over the recent years the class has developed self tacking jibs and retrieval spinnaker chutes so the boats are a lot more user friendly than other boats.

The organising committee of Australia lead by Mark Laruffa and his partner Jo Accott managed to attract many major sponsors like: Seawind, The Queensland events corporation, Creative Courts, Sunstate Hobie Sailboats, Nacra Catamarans, Win TV, Telstra, sailworld.com, Internetrix, Landenberger sails, Logistics Limited, so a full event of social activities was organised.

The Meet the Fleet was held around the pool with some F-18s placed poolside.

The theme of the night was an Australian one with local Aborigines showing their customs.

There were also crocodiles, snakes on display for people to touch. A cocktail night was held, plus a rock band on the beach which was open to the public.

The presentation night was held in the



Fleet of 78 boats on the beach. (top)

Mal Richardson using his teeth here to help pull mainsheet on. (above)

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Regatta was sponsored by Seawind - here Brent Vaughan who currently works at Seawind. (above left)

Peter Vink from Holland, who is part owner of Nacra Europe. (above centre)

Can ot get any closer. (above right)



ballroom with free drinks provided before the night began. There was a big screen where all the sailing shots from the week were displayed. Most of all the top crews arrived a week prior to the event and set about setting up their boats and testing the local waters etc.

With a 20-25kt southerly blowing all the week and big seas forming only a few

managed to test the waters out prior to the event.

The new Nacra Infusion which is only just over a year old was very keen to do well in this event. It has been winning major events through out the world over the last year and has been getting quicker all the time as the crews manage to learn more about the boat.

Nacra F-18s managed to have the largest class of any one make of boat at the worlds with 24 in total.

Crews were from all over the globe including Australia, United States, Spain, Belgium, France, Netherlands and Great Britain.

Nacra Australia organised some training days held by the top sailors

before and during the regatta. These were a great success with all sailors having some input on how to make the boat go even quicker.

Since then a tuning guide has been published which in turn will help all sailors.

These tuning sessions also help bring sailors from all parts of the world together socially and many Europeans found a liking to the Aussie Rum and Bourbon. Team shirts were also organised and made a very good impact with all Nacra sailors wearing the same team shirt to all the social events. Parts and service were also provided to all sailors from around the world by Nacra as well.

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Infusion, with all parties working together to make the boat and class much stronger. This was shown with Nacra Europe and America present at the regatta.

The series started with strong winds and massive seas, due to large tides. The first day was scheduled to have four races but after three crews were taken to hospital from nosedives the committee decided to cancel the day's racing. The next day was blown out as well, so then the next four days were going to be busy with 14 races scheduled.

The winds remained strong throughout the series but the waves managed to become a bit more manageable as the series went on.

The last couple of days racing was held in about 15-20kts of breeze.

The Nacra Infusion managed to impress all at the regatta managing to finish third, fourth, fifth and seventh overall.

They also took out the Junior award for youngest crew and first female skipper who finished seventh overall, which was a major effort.

The Nacra managed to win three races over the line during the series including the last.

The new boat has been rapidly improving its speed over the last year, with its large volume hulls, which allowed it to be pushed to the limit in the wild seas of Yeppoon.

**Carolyn Brouwer placed seventh overall, she was also winner of the highest female skipper. Note how far back both crew and skipper get to keep nose out of water. (above)**

right from top:

**Important to get spinnaker up as quick as possible; starts were important, here the top three placegetters overall win the start; top mark rounding – racing was always close here, second, third and fourth place overall are neck and neck; F-19 class allows the three manufacturers to race altogether: Capricorn, Hobie and New Nacra.**





Full sponsorship is all the go in Europe, young Spanish team sponsored by Boskalis. (above left)

Billy Besson from France with the resort in the background. (above right)



With well over 130 boats sailing worldwide and more than 80 boats on order at the current time, the Nacra Infusion will be the one to beat in coming

events as more and more top sailors convert over.

This was also present after the worlds with Nacra Australia managing to sell some boats to top sailors from other classes who competed at the event.

The next F-18 worlds are to be held in Spain in June 2008, these worlds overseas attract 160 entries.

The F-18 worlds were a great success

for sailing in Australia and the F-18 class will only continue to grow attracting the top sailors throughout the country and from other classes. A lot of sailors commented how good these worlds were, with many social events and most competitors all staying together at the resort, which made for a friendly time of the water.

The event also attracted major public

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media following with Channel 9 attending the regatta and hosting the morning show at the resort.

Sailing was shown every half an hour and was also shown the previous night during the weather segment on national television.

The Nacra camp is looking forward to the upcoming European titles to showcase the new boat and of course next years worlds which all can't wait for.

Full results of the worlds can be found at [www.2007f18worlds.com/results/f18-worlds\\_overall.html](http://www.2007f18worlds.com/results/f18-worlds_overall.html) Full specs of the boat can be found at [www.nacra.com.au](http://www.nacra.com.au) There is also a video of the boat sailing at the website. Only 14 months to go to the next worlds. v



right from top:

**Bottom mark roundings were always close; American team F-18s are growing strong in America as well. These guys finished second overall in last year's North Americans; Carolyn Brouwer leads Billy Besson.**

**Hugh styles placed fourth overall, shown here winning last race. (below)**

**Mischa Heemskerk sending it downwind. Wild rides were all the go downwind with strong winds throughout the series. (bottom)**

