

Thorpe gets lucky on 13th attempt

SAILORS are notoriously superstitious but Les Thorpe can now thumb his nose at the old wives' tales after winning his first national title in the Moth class on his 13th attempt.

Thorpe, from Dee Why, began his national title campaign in the early '90s, soon after graduating from the Spiral class, but always finished up being bridesmaid to his elder brother Mark, a boat builder and multiple world, national and NSW champ in the innovative Moth dinghy class.

It was close in 2002, when he missed out to his brother by one point.

Some might say Les's win on Port Phillip Bay this year was made easier by his brother's absence from that regatta, but Les put paid to that theory when he cleaned up against Mark in the recent NSW title series on Port Stephens.

In any case, his chief rival in the national event was defending champ Rohan Veal from Victoria, who subsequently won the world series. Veal was sailing a state-of-the-art dinghy in conditions that suited this latest development.



WHEN a contingent from Sailability Australia travels to Hyderabad in October for the launching of a sister association for disabled sailors in India, they won't go empty-handed.

Thanks to the collective generosity of several community and commercial organisations, they'll have at least six vessels in tow to get Sailability India's fleet of a healthy start.



SAILABILITY OF THE CENTURY: At the presentation (back row left to right) Danny Flynn and Evan Delfabro, John Brogden, Ed Horton, John McCausland, Allan Jones and Glen Brown, with (front row) Carol Emerson and Liz Pumpa.



scuttlebutt Marj Belessis

These include Sailability Pittwater's first Access dinghy *Motty*, a 303 Access dinghy donated by the Access Dinghy Foundation in Victoria, and two two-person kayaks, courtesy of Samantha Williams of Canoe Sports.

Last Thursday, another two kayakers were handed over to Sailability Pittwater president John McCausland by Ed Horton, managing director of Brookvale company Lifestyle Working, which donated the craft to augment the local Sailability group's gift to India. Also present at the presentation was Sailability Pittwater patron John Brogden, who facilitated the handover, the group's commodore Allan Jones, who will lead the Aussie contingent to India, and disabled kayakers Carol Emerson and Liz Pumpa, who will give the new kayaks a good workout before they are packed for export.



LAST year father and son team Mitch and Taylor Booth won the Hobie Tiger world championships in fine style in Singapore.

Defending their title last week at Santa Barbara, California, the pair swapped places, 17-year-old Taylor steering the boat while his dad, who won the silver medal for Australia in the Tornado class at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, played second fiddle.

They didn't win but Taylor did a grand job, their boat finishing a close second to Puerto Rico's Enrique Figueroa and Jorge Hernandez.

In the final tally, the Aussies were just two points adrift.