



Barker more than matches

BY LAUREN BARTLETT ■ PHOTOS BY CHRIS CAMERON



Dean Barker and his Emirates Team New Zealand crew cruised through the Auckland Match Racing Cup, receiving a \$20,000 silver trophy and their fair share of the \$100,000 prize pool.

Ten of the top skippers in the ISAF were invited to compete in the inaugural event, held during the Auckland Harbour Festival. It is hoped it will become a regular event on the international match racing circuit.

The races were sailed in the Farr MRXs, formerly used in the Steinlager



and Line 7 Cup regattas.

Dean Barker was "thrilled" with his win, beating world number one and Alinghi skipper, Ed Baird, who finished in seventh place. The final was sailed between Barker and Bertrand Pace of BMW Oracle Racing.

Throughout the Grade 1 regatta, Barker sailed consistently, winning all five races on the first day, and continued to hold the lead throughout the following days of racing in patchy conditions on Auckland's inner harbour.

"It was pretty much all smooth sailing," the Team NZ helmsman smiled after the final bout. "The crew just did a fantastic job." Barker's team consisted of Don Cowie, main; Jared Henderson, pit; Grant Loretz, trim; and Terry Hutchinson, bow.

On the final day of racing, Barker required three wins from five to take the title. During the first of five he began on a good note. The New Zealand team began with an early advantage, Pace receiving a penalty and Barker achieving a "beautiful start" on the pin end of the line. Barker,

and line 7 Cup regattas. ABOVE: Emirates Team New Zealand skipper Dean Barker and tactician Terry Hutchinson celebrate their teams win in the Auckland Match Race Cup 2006.

OPPOSITE TOP: Dean Barker and his Emirates Team New Zealand crew of Terry Hutchinson, Jared Henderson, Don Cowie and James Dagg, sail in the final against Bertrand Pace of BMW Oracle racing.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Emirates Team New Zealand crosses ahead of Bertrand Pace in round robin one.

on port, then crossed back in front of Pace, and by the bottom mark of lap two of four had a huge lead, crossing the finish line well ahead of Pace's Oracle team.

There was then a 20-minute break as they switched boats, a practice which occurred throughout the regatta as the teams swap at the end of each odd race to ensure all were equally advantaged. A further delay occurred as the course was altered due to a wind shift. The breeze picked up steadily, making the second