

**‘Simply better’ –**  
Price crowned 2016  
**SHARP** Australian Youth  
Match Racing Champion

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Harry Price, Ben Robinson, John Cooley, Harry Morton & Hugo Stoner have won the 2016 SHARP Australian Youth Match Racing Championship, defeating longtime rival, Will Dargaville from the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club 3-1 in the finals. This marked back-to-back national titles for Price who won in Mooloolaba last year.

Over the past four days, nine teams from Western Australia, Queensland, Victoria and New South Wales battled a predictable Sydney sea breeze on the opening two days. This was followed by a strong southerly change for the last two days, which ended the event with some fast and sometimes out of control downwind runs with the Elliott 7m asymmetrical spinnakers proving to be a hot ride for the Under 23 year old competitors.

Showing their professionalism and expertise, the CYCA Race Committee team led by Denis Thompson completed a staggering 123 races across the Championship, a new record for the club. With winds averaging 20 knots over the Championship, it was when we experienced gusts at 35

knots on Sydney Harbour on Sunday, that the fleet were held ashore for the majority of the day. At 1315hrs, a call from Race Management to “give it a crack and see what we might break” was decided. In the end, the young sailors proved their skill by handling the Elliott 7s effortlessly in the breeze which shifted through 40 degrees and ranged from 14-28 knots in the finals.

With the morning lost to high winds, the remaining races in the semi-finals were scrapped with the call from Race Management to jump straight to the finals, seeing Harry Price and Will Dargaville advance after finishing in the top two in the qualifying stage. Tom Grimes and James Hodgson, falling victim to the strong breeze, were therefore relegated to the petit-final.

The battle for third place needed all three races to decide a winner but the action could not be described as close. The lone non-New South Wales team to qualify for the semi-finals, James Hodgson from Mooloolaba Yacht Club nailed the first race with a comfortable 90 seconds winning margin. Race 2 saw an even bigger delta between the boats when Grimes handed Hodgson a double penalty in a ruthless pre-start and squared the petit-final with more than a 3 minute lead. Not rattled by this loss, the Queenslander bounced back to push Grimes over in Race 3 and sailed away to the bronze medal position.

In the Finals, Harry Price and his team were simply better. Throughout the finals series Price had the better starts and controlled his opponent for the majority of the race course, only stumbling briefly in Race 1 after leading for 75% of the race. Races 2 and 3 saw Price again get the better start and from there his team managed the shifty and puffy southerly, bouncing the RPAYC to the wrong side of the track to take out both races and take the lead in the series. Race 4 saw Price sink the biggest blow when he handed out a double penalty to Dargaville, sealing the title before the race had even begun.



“The boys did a great job all week and kept me in check. We executed our starts well and it made a big difference in the final to have that controlling position early on. We always have a good battle

with Will. He's a great competitor and we love being pushed hard by him. To come away with our second National title in the way we did was just great." Commented Price back at the CYCA.

At the Presentation, Sharp Australia Sydney & Canberra B2B Branch Manager, Ed Gaete, acknowledged that Sharp's involvement with the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia and this event came about for one major reason; the expertise and experience of competitors, race management, event planning and branding is 'Simply the best'.

All attention now turns to the CYCA's big 2016 match racing finale with the World Sailing Grade 2 Musto International Youth Match Racing Championship being held from the 21-25 November 2016.

**Captions for photos:**

Price and his team, comfortably handles the Musto sponsored Elliott 7 downwind

Sharp's Ed Gaete presents the Australian Youth Match Racing Championship cup to the champions