

Enterprise Glides To Victory

Enterprise New Zealand's racing debut was a slow-boat-to-China affair when the round-the-world racer took 21h 36m to cover 145 miles for line honours in the Auckland-Tauranga race.

Enterprise crossed the finishing line at 1.46 pm yesterday, 1h 31m ahead of the 51ft Laurie Davidson design, Night Raider, sailed by Neil Bunting.

Two multihulls, Mohiki (M. Purnell) and Krisis (D. Stuart), revelled in the light airs persisting throughout the race to finish third and fourth respectively.

Split Enz, the stripped-out catamaran thought most likely to give Enterprise a race for line honours, pulled out of the race in choppy waters off Channel Island on Thursday night.

While Enterprise skipper Digby Taylor did not get the fast passage he had hoped for, the yacht lived up to expectations sailing in light winds.

Enterprise was quickly into the lead sailing under spinnaker out of the Auckland harbour. While there was a challenge from Night Raider as the wind dropped away during the night, Enterprise pulled ahead when a 15-knot breeze from ahead settled in as the yachts rounded Channel Island.

The wind dropped away in mid-morning until a sea breeze started puffing at eight knots, allowing Taylor to up spinnaker and head for the finish.

The smaller yachts were still finishing last night and race officials could not post handicap placings in the Malcolm Fowler-sponsored race.

Light airs in the Rangitoto Channel yesterday allowed only one race in the Epiglass Olympicsail for the Olympic classes.

Australian yachts showed their superiority in light conditions taking the first two places in the invitation race for the world Cherub class championship sailed off Mission Bay.