



2017 Nationals Netley Sailing Club, Southampton Water

in

Royal Victoria Country Park

<http://www.netleysc.co.uk/>

6th to 11th August

Hosts for this year's Miracle Nationals were Netley Sailing Club which is set in the lovely surroundings of the Royal Victoria Country Park fronting Southampton Water. Launching was easy, straight off the shingle beach and the racing just offshore provided excellent spectator viewing.

Day 1: Sunday

Graham Watts and Hellen Jacks managed a slick port end start and led the practice race until the final mark when they let Dave Butler crewed by Ross Fleming through. It wasn't to be their day as at the start of the first points race they allowed



themselves to be luffed into the committee boat.

It was a superb sailing day with clear skies and a fresh breeze, conditions in which the Simon Reddicliffe / Mark Atherton combo excelled to lead from start to finish. Yvonne and Brian Mumford were a good second followed by the Butler/ Fleming boat.

Tracy Amos crewed by Hannah Mumford had been lying third until they rolled the boat on top themselves during a big wind shift. Marcel and Giulia Neuteboom visitors from the Netherlands had a consistent day with two fourths while the Mifsuds, newcomers from Malta were also doing well in a borrowed boat coming in fifth.

Day 2: Monday

Slightly lighter conditions and with the wind more from the south west set the scene for a close fought battle with frequent place changing among the top five boats.

Graham Watts and Helen Jacks led to

the windward mark but gave the lead away on a tight attempt to round from port. Marcel and Giulia Neuteboom capsized in second place with the kite up on the first reach, a feat repeated next time round by Brian Jones and Abbey Mumford (moral: beware of being in second place).



Andrew and Michaela Mifsud lying third, thinking out of the box, left the committee boat to starboard and rounded first on the run, only to have problems stowing the kite so losing a hard won advantage.

Graham and Helen having led narrowly for much of the race allowed Tracy Amos and Hannah Mumford through at the leeward mark leaving them to go on to a well deserved win.

The third points race was dominated by Dave Butler and Ross Fleming (making up for a second race error of trying to sneak in at the leeward mark with no room, hence incurring penalties) They were hotly pursued by Andrew and Michaela and safely followed by Brian and Abbey In third, quietly determined not to throw away another top placing. Paul and Nathan Robinson gaining confidence in their brand new boat also had a brilliant race.

Day 3: Tuesday

Drizzle and a breeze from the North West blowing down Southampton Water set

the scene for races 4 and 5.

Tide was more of a factor today, but despite the flood the fleet got clean away with the port side favoured and Dave Butler / Ross Fleming clean away into the lead. There was some tight racing on the final short beat for sixth place with Paul and Nathan Robinson just pipping both Graham and Helen and Brian and Abbey.

With the wind veered slightly and the tide now flowing out factors were slightly different for the next race with lots of boats struggling to find good boat speed as they plugged up the beat against the tide. The Mifsuds from Malta were first at both the windward and wing marks but then failed to take full account of the tide and lost out to Tracy Amos and Hannah Mumford who led to the finish. Miracle 124 "Hot Dog", the oldest boat in the fleet crewed by Steve and either Laura or Pauline Fischer continues to score consistently with a 12th, two 13ths, a 14th and an 11th.

The second Youth and Juniors race took place in miserable conditions with both the Robinson boats leading at the

start but the Maltese boat coming through to win and Hannah and Ellen fourth.

Day 4: Wednesday

The forecast of strong winds, heavy rain and possibly thunder caused some soul searching in the run up to today.

Yes, the rain came and it was a soggy bunch coming off the water, but there was a good breeze down Southampton Water, more northerly, so the windward mark was tricky in the shadow of the shore, and the tide was flooding. Interesting conditions. After a late postponement and a general recall the fleet got clean away and it paid to be on the port side of the course approaching the windward mark.

A group of five boats were battling it out for first place with Cathy Goodwin and Lea Murphy going really well to gain a sixth

place. Line honours went again to Dave Butler and Ross Fleming with Graham Watts and Helen Jacks second. The Mumford sisters shared third and fifth.

The start line for the second race was very biased to the pin end which resulted in another postponement. But with a reset line and the fleet under the black flag we were clean away. The flood tide had slackened but it still paid to stay out to port and approach the windward mark from that side. Graham Watts and Helen Jacks were first and stayed just out in front while sisters Abbey and Hannah Mumford battled it out crewing in different boats for second and third place. It was birthday girl Tracy Amos crewed by Hannah who triumphed with Yvonne and Brian Mumford (mum and dad) fifth. The Mifsuds with two good results to retain third place overall.

Geoff Weir crewed by Colin Lown in



his brand new home built boat was so excited on gaining an eighth that they capsized on the finish line (well, just after so they kept their hard won place).

The thunder and the squalls never showed up.



Day 5: Thursday

Another day of tricky conditions with an offshore gusty wind, bright sunshine and flat seas. Despite the flood tide the fleet was clean away on the first start but which side of the course was favoured was an open question.

There was considerable place changing as the top end of the fleet approached the windward mark followed by a tight reach out into the centre of the channel with the breeze improving as the shore receded.

Yvonne and Brian Mumford rounded first after the second beat and attempted to hold off the two boats vying for National Champion, Dave Butler & Ross Fleming and Andrew & Michaela Mifsud.

It went to the wire with the Butler boat just pipping them on the finish line,

but they stayed ahead of the Mifsuds. Ian Brown decided to tangle with the committee boats anchor chain and ended up giving his daughter a swimming lesson instead.

Race 9 was more of the same but with a stronger tide and a lumpy sea, Paul and Nathan Robinson had to retire with an injured crew and Ian Brown redeemed himself with best place ever.

Meanwhile up front the Mifsuds took the bullet ahead of Butler & Fleming with Tracy Amos & Hannah Mumford consistently fourth.

The crews race (won by Peter Mifsud and crewed by Tracy Amos) provided some entertainment with a random Hovercraft entering the race course and disturbing the wind pattern somewhat.

All round great racing and a great venue, just one more day to go.

Day 6: Friday and overall

Different conditions with an onshore wind and bright sunshine. First place was sewn up yesterday but there were still places to vie for and a keen fleet tacked out into the channel, trying to work out the shifts and the tide.

The two Mumford sisters were first at the windward mark, helmed respectively by Tracy Amos and Brian Jones. Tracy was trying to move up to second overall and Brian from seventh to sixth. Close watch was kept on some of the following boats. Tracy and Hannah never needed to look back as they sailed away into an unassailable lead.

Miracle Champions for 2017 are Dave Butler and Ross Fleming, congratulations on a well deserved win. Runners up after a brilliant campaign are Andrew and Michaela Mifsud, youngsters from Malta in a borrowed boat, Tracy and Hannah maintained their third and naturally won the Lady Helm as well.

This last points race was followed by a combined single handed, non Spinnaker and the final Youth and Juniors with a good turnout to end an excellent week. Thank you Netley Sailing Club.

Brian Jones

