



2019 Nationals 11th to 16th August

Welsh National Sailing Academy Pwllheli North Wales

Report by Brian Jones

Hosts for this year's Miracle National Sailing Championships were Plas Heli, the Welsh National Sailing Academy in Pwllheli, for a combined Nationals with the SigneTs and this year the Kestrels were also racing.

Saturday

On arrival day everybody was storm bound, so most helms sensibly parked up their boats and left rigging and setting up to the following morning. The wind



howled all night long and it wasn't even a good night to be camping!

Day 1: Sunday

The practice and first points races were postponed by three

hours on the Sunday to allow both the sea and the weather to settle down, a wise decision on the part of the race officer as the fleets then enjoyed offshore winds of Force 2-4 plus the bonus of a bit of sun.

The practice race was a one lap affair won by Ian Fryett crewed by Katie, both new to the fleet and making an early mark, they then went on to come second in the first points race. This was won by Andrew and Michela Mifsud visiting crews from Malta seeking to gain the title from Dave and Ross Southwell (last years National Champions). These two came a close fourth behind Dave Butler and Ross Fleming.

The first Youth and Juniors race attracted three competitors and was won by Michela Mifsud ahead of Morgan Rogers. Young Lilly Brown made a good stab at the first beat. So a great start to a promising week.

Day 2: Monday

While the fleet continued to be dazzled by Simon and Mark's lime green spinnaker on 4007 and the grandeur of our setting among the Welsh mountains, there was some serious racing to be done.



We are sharing the venue with the Kestrels and SigneTs so with a general recall for the over keen Kestrel fleet there was more time to assess the conditions: an offshore breeze with a flat sea and with shifts and lulls as the land approached. Dave Butler went right while most went off to port. Ian and Katie Fryett had trouble rounding the windward mark on the second beat as the tide played its part. Significant gains and losses could be made on the beats, plus a very tight reach to the wing mark. Dave and Ross Southwell made the most of it and took first place ahead of Dave Butler and Ross Fleming.

Sailing back to back the second race started in similar conditions with the fleet splitting 50/50 either side of the lay line, with most of the Gold Fleet choosing to go right. But it was port that paid leaving a lot of work to be done and some very happy helms up front. Ian and Katie made up for the earlier race by taking the bullet with Eamon and Thomas Cuthbert a close second. The Mifsuds and

Southwell's fought back through the fleet for third and fourth respectively. Graham Watts and Helen Jacks were next over the line with their best result of the series so far.

Lilly Brown enjoyed sailing a complete Youth and Juniors race.

Best news of the day though was that Paul and Nathan Robinson had managed to source another boat after theirs was badly damaged on day one.

Day 3 Tuesday

Another sparkling day sailing in Cardigan Bay, and once again the Kestrels delayed our start until they were put under the black flag.

On the gun we suffered a significant temporary lull and shift causing lots of angst for those caught out,

Miracle Nationals 2020
Netley SC, Southampton Water
Monday 3rd to Friday 7th August
(5 days)

Miracle National Championships 2019 (cont.)

but as the race got under way it paid to sail left towards greater pressure. Paul and Nathan Robinson, happily back on the water in a borrowed boat had two good mid fleet results.

David Herbstritt and Josie Airns decided to stamp a large hole in the floor of their boat and Dave Butler needed a knife between races, not to prod Ross his crew but to cut free a jammed spinnaker. They had come third in the first race and still came a credible tenth without their kite.

The wind had shifted into the West and strengthened for the second race with Graham Watts and Helen Jacks being first round the windward mark and then

nearly sailing off to the wrong buoy. The crew saved the day, so I'm told, and they ended with two fourth places. Dave Southwell however ignored his crew and ended the day with a fifth and sixth. Both Andrew & Michela and Ian & Katie sailed very consistently to take two firsts and two seconds, but they had to fight for it and battle their way through the fleet. Ian Southwell sailing with Michelle Raines in David's old boat came in 5th and 8th, a fitting tribute to David.

As I write Marcel and Giulia Neuteboom, our regular visitors from Holland have their boat on its side trying to fix a leaking centreboard case in an effort to keep up their reasonable

rankings so far. On Wednesday it's going to rain!

Day 4: Wednesday

The forecast rain and wind arrived so racing was abandoned.

Day 5: Thursday

Grabbing the gap between the gales our fleets sailed after a two hour postponement to fit in the last three championship races.

Could the Mifsuds hang on to their lead while being challenged by both the Fryetts and the Southwells?

It was a day with a few capsizes, individual recalls and hot competition through the fleet. Dave Butler was suffering from breaking his ribs trying to fix a spinnaker halyard so wasn't sailing. Hannah Smith and Tom Metcalfe had their best result of the week with a third in race 8, with Sam and Tom Donaldson 5th in the same race. Ian and Lilly Brown sailed well to win the bronze fleet and Carolyn and Nick Smith took a fourth place in race 7 to win the Silver fleet. Back at the sharp end Ian and Katie Fryett scored two firsts and a second to win the championship, Andrew and Michela Mifsud came second with a 1, 3, 2 and David and Ross

Miracle National Champions 2020

Ian and Katie Fryett



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Southwell third with a 3, 2, 4.

Huge thanks go to Henry and his race team for running a good week in difficult weather and to the Welsh National Sailing Centre for hosting us.
Brian Jones, Miracle 4021



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2019 Nationals Top 6

- 1st Ian & Katie Fryett
- 2nd Andrew & Michela Mifsud
- 3rd David & Ross Southwell
- 4th Eamon & Tom Cuthbert
- 5th Graham Watts & Helen Jacks
- 6th Wayne Atherton & Angela Sweeney

