

2017 6 Metre National Championships

17 sailors from 10 different clubs and as far away as Dartmoor and Fleetwood attended the 6 Metre 2017 National Championships at Norwich Model Yacht club this last weekend. Interesting fact was that there were 8 different designs taking part.

As a sign of respect for Mick Shillington, who as we all know has recently passed away, and who was a great supporter and douane of the 6M class, Mick's personal number of 28 was carried on all competing boats. He will be sadly missed in the class.

Saturday morning dawned with a light SW wind which meant that PRO Vinnie Zammit had to set a starboard rounding triangular course, knowing that conditions would be tricky especially when approaching the windward mark.

As there were 17 boats at the start of the competition HMS was used with 4 up 4 down promotion/relegation.

The seeding races were completed and all had a taste of how fluky condition could be when the wind is in this direction. Unfortunately, this only allowed for 3 races to be completed before lunch. However, as the day went on the wind increased and went further to the west which allowed for a reasonable beat to windward.

By lunchtime the fleet positions were 1st Terry Burton (winning the first 3 races), 2nd Shaun Holbeche and 3rd Bernie Guest. In fact, only 13 points covered the first 5 boats.

The afternoon racing was carried out in more favourable conditions and all sailors enjoyed the sometimes-testing wind shifts, plus the occasional severe gusts which kept the spectators entertained.

At the end of the day the first 2 positions were Terry and Shaun and local sailor John Hanton moving into 3rd place.

Principle winners on the 1st day were, Terry (5 races) and Shaun (3 races). This set up the Sunday rivalry between the 2 of them.

That evening most of the sailors and race committee met at the local hostelry to take on some beer and buffet and put the 6M world to rights.

The only thing that marred the day was one of the competitors deciding to go home without informing the Race Committee, who ended up wasting a load of time trying to find him.

Sunday morning arrived with a fresher Westerly wind which slowly increased throughout the day.

Unfortunately these conditions also caused some breakages and despite most sailors reducing sail area, by lunchtime the fleet had been reduced to 13 boats.

These conditions seem to suit Shaun who won 3 of the 4 races that morning. That moved him in front of Terry by 2 points. John Hanton was still in 3rd.

With the fleet being reduced to 13 boats, (2 of them held together by Cable Ties), after Lunch PRO Vinnie decided to race the boats in 1 Fleet.

This produced some of the best sailing of the event, in lovely sunny conditions and with a stiff breeze blowing.

Both Shaun and Terry continued to dominate the proceedings, with the conditions seeming to suite Shaun better, who ran out a convincing winner in the end. Mention must be made of the Gentlemanly attitude both these sailors had towards each through some very tight racing and their attitude to other competitors. Well done, a good example to all sailors. In 3rd place overall, after a late charge, was Class Captain Mike Ewart, well done Mike

Only hiccup of the afternoon was race 15 which had to be abandoned due to a Dinghy sailor losing control, then charging into the sailing area and decimating a third of the fleet. Luckily no real damage was done to the boats, but their positions in the race were severely compromised after they managed to untangle themselves.

With 19 races completed the RO called it a day, much to the relief of some very tired sailors.

Well done to all competitors on their conduct on the water, and a big thank you to all the helpers from the Norwich club in running the event.



Shaun Holbeche, winner of 6M National Championship, receiving trophy from Mr Harry Ellis, chairman of NMYC and Vinnie Zammit, secretary of NMYC and Race Organiser.

Vinnie Zammit

Event Organiser & PRO