

# 36" National Championship 2016

What a fantastic championship! The wind blew hard on Guildford's Abbey Meads water, straight down the lake and was strong enough to give some exciting planes off the wind as well as wipeouts in the strongest gusts. Close racing throughout the fleet was thoroughly enjoyed by both competitors and spectators alike, as much as the battle for superiority at the top.

The GMYC race team set a simple two lap beat and run course with a windward mark, spreader and leeward gate that took about 13 minutes. The windshifts in the 8-20 mph winds gave plenty of opportunity to demonstrate skipper ability, both tacking on the beat and gybing on the run.

18 races was sailed with Dave Andrews, sailing a RAPTOR 5, kicking off with 3 wins in the first four races, only interrupted in Race 2 by Martin Houlton and his special, beautifully moulded, narrow RAPTOR 6 design. Then Peter Stollery sailing his 33-year-old swing rigged TAXACHUN found his form, winning the next 4 out of 5 races, only interrupted by Dave winning Race 7. At the lunch break Peter was top of the leaderboard with 17 points followed by Dave with 21 and Peter Moore sailing a Martin Dovey designed SABORA with 31.

After lunch the gusts became stronger and most skippers changed down to a smaller suit of sails. Dave's sail change was slow and he started Race 8 a whole windward leg behind the fleet, but such was the speed of his new set up, he pulled past all but the two Peters to finish 3<sup>rd</sup>. For the next 6 races he remained unbeatable, except in Race 12 when Peter Moore got his 2<sup>nd</sup> win.

The dull greyness of the day turned to drizzle, which became more persistent and heavier as the afternoon wore on. After Race 16, RO Roger Stollery called all skippers together to ask them whether they wanted to continue racing, as there was three quarters of an hour left before the official end of racing. However it was agreed by all to sail a further 2 races, each of which was won by the one of the two Peters.

At the prizegiving, the smile on Dave's face was a picture, as he was quite delighted to have won his first 36" national championship. The winning competitors thanked the race team of Roger, Hugh McAdoo, Martin Crysell, John Townsend and Alan Viney for running a very good championship. 36" Class Captain, Alf Reynolds, who had a few technical problems during the racing, on receipt of his 'Guildford traditional last prize', said that he would love to bring the class here again for further events. As well as the prizes for the top 3, every competitor was pleased to take home a specially commissioned GMYC mug.

These boats are built to the 36" class 'box' rule, which is very simple as the hull, keel and rudder just have to fit into the special measurement box, 37 x 9 x 11 inches. There is plenty of opportunity to experiment with design and what is really good about this rule and the more recent Footy 'box rule' is that good designs stay competitive for a long while.

The current designs from designer/builder Martin Houlton are the RAPTORs weighing in at 8 pounds. His latest RAPTOR 6 has only a 7" beam as opposed to the full 9", but it still displaces 8 pounds. Although quick off the wind it suffered from a lack of power to windward in the strongest gusts. The Austin/Stollery swing rigged TAXACHUN designed in 1983 is still very competitive at 10 pounds despite its age and well used sails.

The latest rigs have big jib areas and equal booms, compared to the one third jib area swing rigs, but the jury is out as to the merits of each, as the ragbag of 30-year-old TAXACHUN sails was not a fair comparison in this fleet of beautifully made Houlton sails.

**Results:**

1 <sup>st</sup> Dave Andrews Hampton Court RAPTOR 5	26
2 <sup>nd</sup> Peter Stollery Guildford TAXACHUN	30
3 <sup>rd</sup> Peter Moore Bournville SABORA	37
4 <sup>th</sup> Dick Jobbins Eastleigh RAPTOR 5	60
5 <sup>th</sup> Martin Houlton Solent RAPTOR 6	73
6 <sup>th</sup> Dave Kent Dartmoor RAPTOR 5	73
7 <sup>th</sup> Martin Hunt Hampton Court RAPTOR 5	88
8 <sup>th</sup> Rob Walsh Fleetwood TAXACHUN	103
9 <sup>th</sup> Alf Reynolds Chelmsford RAPTOR 5	139

Novice Bowl - Dick Jobbins

Report by Roger Stollery 2016-05-28