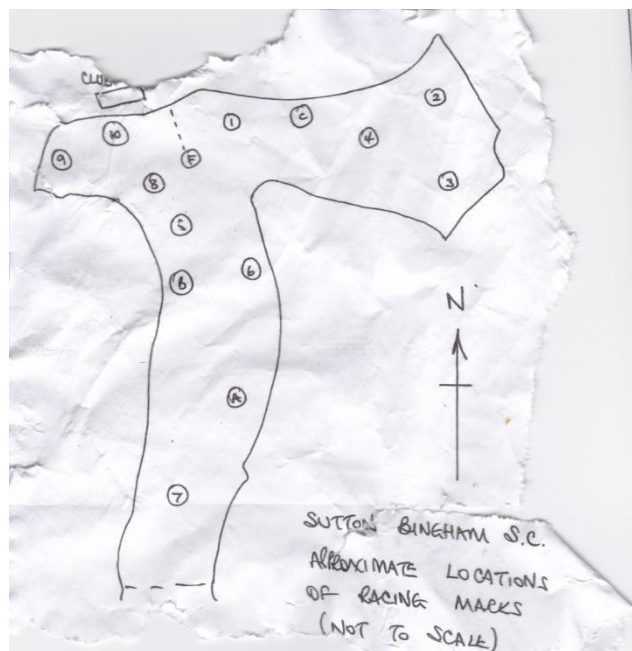


Association Championships 2016

Sutton Bingham Sailing Club



Courses sailed (underlined marks rounded to Starboard)

Race 1	4	1	<u>5</u>	<u>10</u>	Gate		
Race 2	C	1	<u>5</u>	10	9	Gate	
Race 3	3	C	10	5	<u>1</u>	Gate	
Race 4	C	2	<u>4</u>	9	F	1	Gate
Race 5	C	2	1	<u>F</u>	10	9	Gate

The Start line for all of the races was between the Committee boat moored off the 'promontory' opposite 1 and an Outer Limit Mark that was moved to suit the wind direction that over the two days was from ENE to E.

For race 4 mark C was moved nearer to mark 3 and also mark F SBSC's usual outer limit mark for 'box' starts was used as a mark on our course.

On day one the wind was swinging significantly and each race had a different windward mark as the Race Officer tried to get a true beat.

Race 1

As the wind finally filled in from the east, we all set out onto the water in a F2-3. The fleet got a clean start with an even line suggesting a fair, true start line. Eddie Pope and Chris Jones got an early lead and pulled away from the fleet. Chris Hatton was hanging around in third slowly catching and leaving the rest of the fleet behind. On one of the beats, Chris took a minute out of the front runners and was right with them to take the lead on the downwind leg. There was a three way fight for the lead for about 3 laps until he managed to stay ahead and make a small margin to Eddie and Chris J.

Race 2

The race was started in a F3 but picked up to F4 later on. Chris Hatton had a poor first windward leg and was nowhere thus he doesn't know who was where. However, on the downwind, as he was 4th from last, he decided there was a gamble on offer. As everyone went dead downwind, he took the opportunity to do 2 broad reaches, he sailed past 8 boats planing rather pleased with himself. However he became unstuck when he managed to come storming into the leeward mark planing. He leant in to grab the control lines, but he misjudged his speed and realised he had to gybe for the mark immediately. He did it as a gust hit, and somehow, he missed the toe straps and his race was thrown out of the window with a spectacular capsize. He gripped onto the boat, and surprisingly, held himself on top of the boat. There was lots of laughter from the boats he had just overtaken, especially from fellow Severn SC sailors; Paul Hinde and Dave Harris. And he knew he would be in for a lot of ribbing after the race. He brought the boat back upright and went on a charge. He went from 17th to 7th in about 10 minutes and was catching on the leaders, being the fastest Comet on the water and remained there until the end. Throughout the race, he was planning his excuses for his disaster, most people believed him until photographic evidence worked against him. Was good or bad luck that Norah always has the camera in the right place at the right time!

At some point in this race Nigel Fern (845) was reaching from 5 to 10 and converging on Nigel Austin (875) and Ben Palmer (597) who were beating back to the gate. Nigel F realised that he could clear Nigel A but there was a distinct chance of hitting Ben. So Nigel F told Ben to hold his course and he bore away down the slot between the boats and as soon as Ben had passed regained his course. After the race Ben informed Nigel F that during the manoeuvre 845 was rocking quite badly and he thought he was lucky to avoid a dunking.

End of Day 1

Meanwhile up the pointy end of the fleet local expert Chris Jones showed the rest of the fleet a clean transom by avoiding the wind shadows that were developing on the upwind legs around the gate area.

There were three different winners of the first three races. Chris Jones was leading, with three good results including a race win. Behind him was Eddie Pope with three good results, but no race win. They would have to watch out for Michael Ettershank, who had a first and second. However, he would need two good results on the final day to allow him to discard his 10th place from race 1. Chris Hatton was out of the running as he had two low results following his first in race one.

Day 2

The wind had settled down in direction enabling the Race Officer to set the same windward leg for the final two races.

Race 3

Chris Hatton and Eddie Pope both got it all wrong and were 2nd and 3rd from last around the windward back. Eddie recovered to 3rd or 4th by the 30 minute mark. Chris H was back in 6th or 7th hunting down Dave Harris, as he knew he wouldn't live it down back at Severn SC if both Paul and Dave beat him. He was pushing hard and on seeing black water on the windward mark plus the safety boat with a camera so he thought he would have an awesome mark rounding and be on the plane with lots of spray. However, the boat went the wrong way, instead of doing what a typical boat does, it decided it wanted to make him look like a fool and pitch pole despite him sitting as far back as he possibly could. To finish it off, it death rolled resulting in him injuring his left leg.

Nigel F had a good start for once, at the windward mark was at the front of the 2nd pack, as they started the long run from C to 10 he heard a boat come up his inside (Ben Palmer in 597), he moved over to cover him but on looking to his right he was concerned to see the rest of the 2nd pack almost alongside and virtually in line abreast! "Rounding 10 will be interesting", he thought but they all managed it. Ben rounded first and Nigel followed but a navigation error cost him dear as he headed for what he thought was 5 but was B, he only realised when he saw Ben and Henry side by side almost at 5. Henry had swept round from virtually the outside of the group to put Ben under pressure. This error was compounded later in the race by a self inflicted capsize after C – his feet got caught up in the main sheet to such an extent that he couldn't move and the boom hit his shoulder and in he went!! Race over!

After being royally fed we were entertained with a quiz, as is usual there was much banter over the team names but suffice to say that "50% upright" – relating to the capsizes suffered by Peter Mountford and Nigel Fern plus Paul Hinde and Dave Harris walked away with the box of chocolates first prize! Rumour has it that the '50% upright' tag changed hands overnight due to Paul and Dave sampling the local brew(s)!!

Race 4

The Race Officer set a long downwind leg. This led to some rocking and rolling at times. Even Chris Jones looked wobbly once. However, he kept upright and pulled away to win, which gave him the Championship. However, second place was

still wide open, with four sailors in contention: Michael Ettershank, Eddie Pope, Chris Robinson and Nigel Austin. However, as they all had a poor race they would need a good final race.

The wind had picked up overnight and Nigel F was really regretting not using the Xtra sail. The long beats were taking their toll and he slowly slipped back. The one highlight was a good well balanced plane from C to 4. Once ashore he decided that enough was enough and took 845 off the water.

Race 5

For the final race the Race Officer removed the long downwind leg and replaced it with a series of reaches. Although this removed the long dead run, it replaced it with a series of gybes instead! The wind got up at the beginning of the race and this encouraged several competitors to retire. This made it easier for the remaining sailors to improve their results overall.

Eddie Pope was very keen to get a good start at the favoured end of the line, which was by the committee boat moored close to the shore. If he performed really well in that race he could have been 2nd overall, however it was a disaster! He misjudged his approach and there was no room for him to get between the committee boats and fellow competitors (he remembers seeing Henry Jagers and Chris Jones in the space that he wanted). His misjudgement continued when he could not tack away in time to avoid hitting the committee boat, then to add to his woe the mainsheet and sail became entangled with the committee boat when he capsized. It was not possible to sort this out without help from people on the committee boat. Having received their help he was obliged to retire, and ended up 5th overall. Not the way to end a Championship, and he still feels upset about it.

Chris Jones led the race to get another race win. Nigel Austin sailed into second place, which put him on equal points overall with Michael Ettershank, who could only manage sixth in the last race. However, Michael's win in race three meant that he took second place overall.