

Comet Nationals 2023 – Ogston Sailing Club

Ogston provided the perfect venue for the 2023 Nationals.
Set in the beautiful Amber Valley in Derbyshire

35 boats entered with a strong competitive fleet featuring 5 previous National Champion winners!

Day 1 started with sunshine and light variable winds making it very challenging for the race officer to get the regatta under way.

With a South Westerly wind direction, the racetrack was moved to the South part of the reservoir.

Ogston is blessed with a dog leg shape sailing area which enables a favourable sailing area to be found for most wind directions.

In shifty and variable light winds Pete Coop (Winsford Flash) came out on top followed by Eddie Pope (Ogston) and Guy Wilkins (Chipstead)
All 3 are ex – National Champions.

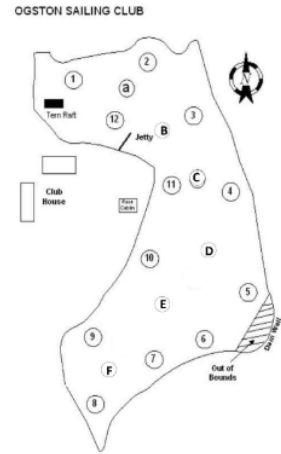
Race 2 – Following lunch Race 2 got under way, again light, variable and challenging conditions for both the race team and the competitors.
Eddie came out on top with Pete second and Alan Bennett 3rd (Staunton Harold)

Approx 10 boats (mid fleet) sailed the wrong course, missing a small leg out. By the time they had corrected their error many on the edge of the top 10 places found themselves at the back! John Copenhall took the credit for the scenic route!

No more races were possible so day 2 was all to play for with 4 races scheduled and a lot more breeze in the forecast.

Race 3 – produced a different winner with Guy followed by Eddie and Pete.

Race 4 – Wind built to 15 knots (occasional 20 knot) gusts making for fast off wind legs and tough beats. Pete secured another win, Chris Robinson 2nd (Burghfield) and Guy was 3rd.



Following lunch conditions ramped up again – big breeze and plenty of very strong gusts. Many people described being in ‘survival mode’ with multiple capsizes, especially at the gybe marks. Avoiding upturned boats became the new skill!



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Race 5 – Start and first beat dominated by Toby Hancox, led the first full lap before an unfortunate capsizing on a gybe – huge gust. Pete won again closely followed by George Coop (Pete’s Son) in second with Guy third.



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Race 6 – Very challenging conditions –

Pete got out in front and built up a substantial lead to win the race.

Ben Palmer (Baltic Wharf) moving up the field took 2nd with Alan getting another podium in 3rd.

The strong winds took their toll as the day progressed with only 25 boats finishing,

With 4 firsts, a 2nd and a 3rd, Pete Coop had secured the championship with a day to spare.

Day 3 – The race officer did a great job in getting 4 races on Sunday which meant just 2 scheduled for the final morning.

Race 7 – Despite a lighter wind forecast the conditions were still a lively 15knots with 20 knot gusts. By the finish 3 boats crossed the line within 30 seconds of each other. Ben came in first (clearer enjoying the stronger winds), with George and Pete completing the podium. George’s first victory over his Dad!



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Race 8 – After a battle with Andy Dale (Eyott Sailing Club), Pete got into the lead and extended to take the win. Andy and Eddie had a great fight to the finish with Eddie just taking 2nd and Andy 3rd.

So final podium scores –

1st Pete Coop – Winsford Flash SC

2nd Eddie Pope – Ogston SC

3rd Guy Wilkins - Chipstead SC

Local sailor Isobel Hedley Fenn finished a very credible 9th overall to take out the Ladies Trophy.

The team Trophy went down to the wire with Winsford Flash coming out on top.

The Comet chair thanked Ogston Sailing Club for their great effort in producing a memorable and exciting championship in particular Andy and his race team, Craig the commodore, all the rescue crews and Andrea's team for keeping everyone well fed throughout the regatta.

Pete Coop also thanked Ogston for putting on a great regatta in challenging conditions and shared some final tips with the fleet before a final whole of regatta photo shoot.

Pete Coop



Pete Coop receiving the Championship awards
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