

Joint Services Championship  
Gosport 2018

As they say in footie, it was a game of two very different halves. Weather wise it was different and performance wise was also different. So no more shilly shallying lets cut to the chase. First the weather, Saturday was lovely, autumn sunshine, warm and a decent breeze. Only problem was that the wind came from the south and those that know Gosport will know that is not fun, its straight across the lake from the creek side. All sorts of problems with getting a suitable first beat because it's a relatively short distance from start line to first buoy and with relatively high winds there's a potential for a pile up at the first mark. More of that later, now for Sunday. Lightish North winds, yes that's in the opposite direction from Saturday, chucking it down with rain and cold with it. It could only be the UK, its no wonder we winghe on about our weather. The course was in the opposite direction of Saturday.

Back to the racing, it was a relatively small fleet of 14 boats, the usual amount of Britpops, the odd V9, Vision and Drum. The fleet had skippers from literally all over the UK from Peterhead to Somerset. Most skippers coming from a military services background and a couple from the emergency services. A couple of invited guests added to the mix. The score sheet gives the who's who, so lets have a quick summary of who did what to who. Saturday was primarily a two -orse race at the top with a very tight middle order. We sailed 16 heats using long courses with twists and turns to exploit the conditions as best we could. Richard Aucott sailed his Britpop exceptionally well to be in the top spot on Saturday night with Roy Stevens very close behind. The middle order was tightly packed with Bob Connors just ahead of the rest. Sunday was something else, we kicked off got it all underway and then the heavens opened, I mean Opened. There was only one thing for it get inside, drink tea and wait for it to pass through, which it did in about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an hour. Then it was get on with it time, Roy Stevens stepped up a gear and pulled away from Richard Aucott, Bob Connors got a move on, Vinnie, John White, Dave Alston and Lester Gilbert all had their moments. It was a high standard of sailing with no problems across the fleet. One of the great pleasures of being RO is that you get to see the big picture, which as a competitor you don't and I enjoyed watching the strategies and tactics evolving as the racing progressed.

The full set of results are there to be chewed over, analysed and forgotten, another good Joint Services event over for another year. If you have a background with HM's military or Emergency Services then give this association a go. You never know you might just like it. There is the inter service rivalry as there always will be, the banter is brilliant and they are all good mates both on and off the water. A lot to be said for all that.

Bill Green  
Race Officer