

2012 Fred's Big Toephy

There was great enthusiasm to get racing after a fortnight of ice on Guildford Model Yacht Club's Abbey Meads Lake near Thorpe Park, Chertsey. This caused the postponement of the first Footy open of the year to 19 February 2012. Although still cold it was a sunny day with a very variable north westerly wind from between 2 and 12 mph. 10 entries from 5 clubs took part and 15 races were sailed over a simple windward leeward course taking on average 11 minutes per race. Guildford's race team of Mark Mortimore and John Townsend handled the event with authority yet gave skippers time for changing battery or rigs etc and everyone enjoyed the racing with some close finishes at times.

The morning racing

Racing started with boats in a variety of rig sizes because of the gusty conditions, but later most settled for a 500 millimetre high rig. Trophy holder Rob Vice started his defence with a win with his ICE beating Roger Stollery's SUPABUG and Scott Wallis's RANGER. Leading Footy skipper, Hugh McAdoo, who had technical difficulties in the first race, stamped his authority on Race 2 with a win from Roger and Rob. These three skippers continued to master the variable wind strength and direction to take the podium places with Rob winning Races 3 and 4. The rest of the fleet began to read the wind better and in Race 4, Jim Vice scored his best result of the event finishing fourth. Hugh did not let Rob monopolise first place and won Race 5 and not to be outdone Roger took Race 6, in which recent Footy enthusiast, Peter Shepherd got his best result of the event with a fifth. From here on Rob sailed really well and won all the remaining races before lunch, leading overall with a score of 8, with Roger and Hugh tied with 14.

Racing after lunch

The wind became slightly more westerly and even more variable and gradually eased off towards the end of the event allowing the use of the biggest competition rigs. The same pattern of results followed the morning's racing with Rob continuing to sail well being chased by Roger and Hugh. However they didn't have it all their own way and David Wilkinson, who was racing his SUPABUG for the first time, was going better with a third in Races 11 and 13. In the penultimate race Alan Viney had his best result with a second behind Rob, who retained Fred's Big Toephy by a big margin.

The prizegiving

This started with the award of the 2011 Footy Travellers' Trophy traditionally presented at the first event of the following season. GMYC Commodore, Hugh McAdoo presented this to David Wilkinson who had competed in the most events last year. On receiving the beautiful wooden, Fred's Big Toephy, Rob Vice thanked the race team of Mark Mortimore and John Townsend for running another very good event.

The boats

Footys are by far the cheapest way into competitive sailing and the whole fleet of 10 boats this year may have cost no more than £700! Apart from the Stollery

Swing Rig powered ICE and SUPABUG, the most interesting designs were American, from the board of Bill Hagerup. Relative newcomer Peter Shepherd had built an elongated RAZOR 3 which fitted in the measurement box double diagonally, a nice looking boat except that the Swing Rig was high up off the deck to clear the top of the box. Dinghy sailor, Scott Wallis had made a very nice example of RANGER, a very narrow hard chine hull in Depron with a balanced Una Rig. This was very fast at times off the wind, but the wider and more stable designs continue to dominate the results.

Results

(place, name, sail number, club, design, score)

1st Rob Vice (41) Clapham 'ICE' 14, 2nd Hugh McAoo (87) Guildford 'ICE' 30, 3rd Roger Stollery (117) Guildford 'SUPABUG' 30, 4th Scott Wallis (84) Clevedon 'RANGER' 68, 5th Alan Viney (17) Guildford 'ICE' 72, 6th David Wilkinson (46) Cotswold 'SUPABUG' 78, 7th Jim Vice 'ICE' (48) Guildford 82, 8th Peter Jackson (30) Wickstead 'SUPABUG' 90, 9th Keith Parrott (31) Frensham Pond 'ICE' 91, 10th Peter Shepherd (52) Wickstead 'RAZOR 3 extended' 98.

Report by Roger Stollery, 2012-02-22