

J24 Summer Cup 25th – 27th May 2019

I might be somewhat biased, but what a regatta! Wind, sun, close racing, good banter, and a friendly dolphin off the start line creating some distraction.

PRO Brian Drake and his skilled Parkstone Yacht Club committee raced all 10 races as planned in Poole Bay, all good practice for the national fleet and the impending J24 World Championships next year. Had you heard anyone mention that the J24 World Championships is in Poole next year?! If you hadn't....the J24 World Championships is in Poole next year.

Back to the racing; a clean start by all which was very unlike the J24 fleet with Nick Phillips in 'Chaotic' leading the fleet from the start with David Cooper in 'Jawbreaker' hot on their heels and David Hale in 'Cacoon' from the steadily increasing Poole Yacht Club fleet coming in third. Race 2 saw Alan Harris-Guerrero in 'Illegal Alien' and team return to form coming in first, followed by 'Chaotic' and Duncan McCarthy in 'Madeleine'. Newcomer Sam Pearson (welcome to the fleet) in 'Hustle' is one to watch and whilst learning on the job with his team came in fifth on his second race which must be highly commended; it took our team in 'Chaotic' two boats, ten years and an obnoxious amount of protest committees to get anywhere near that sort of result at the beginning.

The penultimate race of the day saw 'Chaotic' take another bullet, and another Poole Yacht Club boat sail a stormer, with Niss Booth on 'Phoenix' sail into second place keeping fellow Poole Yacht Club member at bay, Joe Cross in 'Jambalaya'. Race 4 saw 'Chaotic' win their third race of the day, nauseating.... 'Jambalaya' sailed another superb race with a solid second, and James Torr from Saltash SC had a great race in 'MaJic' (spell check is not happy with your choice of name by the way.) So day one was over with one last beat to the chain ferry to finish off an already weary fleet of sailors as we bid farewell to our friendly spectating dolphin. Back to Parkstone Yacht Clubs new clubhouse for drinks and frivolity on what had been a classic days racing.

Sunday saw more breeze and no marine mammals of note and a few tricky wind shifts for the sailors and race committee to deal with. Praise to the mark layers who were pulling up and dropping marks at quite a rate; who needs a gym when you're a mark layer and have a perfectionist such as Bryan as PRO!

Race five, the first of the day saw William Pollock in 'Flying Colours' storm to the lead after a brilliant start holding it for most the race, whilst 'Chaotic' and 'Madeleine' fought for the top spots, having to work their way through the fleet keeping a close eye on a number of dramatic shifts. 'Chaotic' raced to their fourth win of the regatta having sailed past 'Madeleine' downwind without the aid of a protest committee this time. 'Flying Colours' came in third with Pearson in 'Hustle' close behind in fourth; didn't I say to keep an eye on him?!

Another increase in wind strength saw McCarthy and team in 'Madeleine' keep the fleet at bay as they usually do in increased winds, with 'Chaotic' in second and 'Illegal Alien' of the Royal Fowey Yacht Club in third. The wind by now had decided to stay at that annoying J24 wind strength where it's debatable whether to fly a jib or genoa, which as all foredecks know the helm will only call the sail change with minutes to spare to the start. Although the wind was up there were still a lot of wind holes to sail into and the fleet was split down the middle with half the fleet going left in search of more wind, and the other half going right also in search of more wind. Thankfully due to the wind direction the sea state was relatively flat throughout the regatta. Race seven saw 'Madeleine' back in the game again with another bullet keeping 'Chaotic' in second, and as with the previous race 'Illegal Alien' in third place. Team Impact U25 helmed by Giles Kuzyk and crewed by George Kennedy, Eden Luke, Alaric Bates and Harry Gilchrist had another good race and came in fourth proving again what a good team the youth are and we should encourage more into fleet.

The final race of the day again was owned by Duncan McCarthy and team on 'Madeleine' with 'Illegal Alien' in second and 'Chaotic' coming in third. Another long beat back to the chain ferry and then home.

The final day saw 'Chaotic' in a safe leading position only needing to get a position and thus played it safe in race 9. The rest of the fleet saw some intense racing with a black flag flying after one false start as the wind pressure increased with heavy gusts hitting the J's. Roger Morris in 'Jolly Roger' took first after a brilliant race, followed by Austen Davies and his team from Bude S.C. having a great sail in the previously red 'Jam Too' coming in second and then 'Illegal Alien' and 'Madeleine' in third and fourth. The final race of the regatta saw every team working hard for their final points, and wonderfully the usual suspects weren't in the top two. 'Jambalaya' had a stunning first beat and held it coming in first followed by 'Jawbreaker' who's last podium position was in the first race, and then 'Illegal Alien' and 'Chaotic' in third and fourth.

If the racing in Poole Bay for the J24 Summer Cup was anything to go by, it puts us in good stead for the J24 Worlds next year with incredible racing conditions in a stunning setting. Many thanks Bryan Drake and team for a great event and to all at Parkstone Yacht Club, and to the fleet for making the effort to come to Poole. Congratulations to 'Chaotic' for a convincing win and to 'Madeleine' and 'Illegal Alien' who also took the top spots.

See you in Plymouth.

Monty