

Catapult National Championship August 2024 YDSC

John Terry took the title in a hard fought battle against second placed George Evans and a fight with the sometimes survival gusts of 25 mph. in the 2024 National Championship hosted by the Yorkshire Dales Sailing Club on Grimwith Reservoir over the weekend of 24-25 August.

The event was to be held over 2 days with 4 races back to back on the Saturday and 2 races back to back on the Sunday. The Saturday forecast was for winds of force 4 to force 5 gusting 6 with the Sunday forecast increasing to force 7 and the forecast did not disappoint.

The event was shared with the Vortex fleet which was first to start. The race officer set a windward-leeward course for the Vortex fleet with a triangle course for the Catapults. With the wind blowing from the SW the committee boat was set close in to the shore to get as long a beat as possible. The leeward mark (11) was some 150mts to leeward of the committee boat.

Race 1

The start was 5 minutes after the Vortex start which gave plenty of time to get settled in the high winds and choppy water. Damien did not make it to the start, having problems with his boat once he had launched. John and George got away cleanly with John taking the lead up the first beat closely followed by George. The challenge was to keep the boat upright and dodging the several foiling wing surfers crossing the reservoir as we approached the shore line before we tacked. Now that was the next challenge. Tacking the boat in those conditions is not easy and places are easily lost due to a bad tack, of which there were several during the event for both John and George. John extended his lead up the second beat but losing ground on his tack to the windward mark.

The first leg of the downwind triangle was pretty much dead downwind. The wind was shifty and care had to be taken not to get caught out with an unforced gibe. Rounding the wing mark and heading for the leeward mark gave an opportunity to George to catch John. Rounding the leeward mark had to be timed with care ensuring once round that the next tack was successful with the risk of ending on the rocks if fluffed. George was able to catch John but not get past. Thankfully the start line/gate was set wide so the point at which one tacked was not critical.

The second and third lap followed a similar pattern to the first with George pushing John all the way round the course. John crossed the line 57 secs. Ahead of George to take the win but George won on handicap.

Race 2

The wind by the start of race 2 had built up a steep set of waves around and between the committee boat and the shore. Before the start John heard a tearing sound and noticed a sinking feeling. Looking down at his tramp. he noticed that the stitching holding the tramp. to the bolt rope tape had come away and was in danger of splitting and leaving a gap for him to fall through. So for the rest of the racing he had to be careful where he sat and placed his weight. In addition he also noticed that his sail had developed a tear in the bottom panel close to the clew.

Both George and John started the second race on Port. George got the drop on John and pulled away. At the first tack John managed to overtake and led the race to the finish but again having to fight hard to keep ahead. John finished 51 secs. ahead taking the win and George gaining first on Handicap.

Race 3

By the third race the winds were gaining strength and the waves were building further. The pattern for race 3 followed race 1 but with the added challenge of rounding the leeward mark having to not only deal with the increased waves but manoeuvre around upturned Vortex boats. John finished 27 secs. ahead taking the win and George gaining first on Handicap.

The intrepid two had a discussion after race 3 and decided to give race 4 a miss and headed to the shore for a well-earned rest.

Sunday started with a fair wind but with the forecast was still showing standing winds of 20mph and gusts up to 35 George and John agreed to sit out the final two races which was the best decision as the Vortex fleet were reduced to only 3 boats.



National Championship results

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Total	Nett
1	John Terry	1	1	1	(DNC)	7	3
2	George Evans	2	2	2	(DNC)	10	6

Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap Series results

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Total	Nett
1	George Evans	1	1	1	(DNC)	7	3
2	John Terry	2	2	2	(DNC)	7	6