

# Catapult Northern Championship August 2024 RYYC

Eamonn Cotter took the title by one point from George Evans in a close fought Northern Championship hosted by the Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club at Bridlington over the weekend of 10-11 August.

## Race 1

Racing got under weigh in a brisk Force 3 to 4 with prolonged spells of Force 5 under the passing clouds. The course comprised two laps of a triangular course with a bottom gate offering a tactical choice for rounding. Typically the first downwind leg was a tight reach and the second much broader.

Mike Gough got a cracking start at speed right on the gun. He used his superior height and weight to sail low and fast, powering through the waves. The much lighter Eamonn Cotter was in pursuit on his trapeze, quite quickly overtaking Stuart Ede. Mike and Eamonn stretched out their lead upwind, while Stuart and George Evans fought their own duel. On Lap 2 Mike increased his lead over Eamonn to take first place, while Stuart managed to pull away from George to claim third place.

## Race 2

The forecast large westerly shift in wind direction came earlier than expected and turned the upwind leg into a close fetch drag race. Stuart had led the charge off the line with George close behind, but as they approached the windward mark Mike and Eamonn sailed over them. A fortuitously timed puff enabled these two to stretch out their lead on the next reach. Approaching the bottom gate Stuart put himself well out of contention by rounding the seaward mark, as the rest of the fleet rounded the inshore mark. The tactical advantage he hoped to gain upwind was wiped out by two large headers as the wind direction wavered before finally settling. Meanwhile Eamonn overtook Mike who was struggling to tack cleanly in the bumpy conditions. And George claimed third place over Mike by better gauging the lay line for the last windward mark.

**Sparkling performance:** George Evans (behind the camera) chases Eamonn Cotter, the new Northern Champion [© George Evans]

## Race 3

Mike and Eamonn climbed to windward of Stuart and George to round the windward mark ahead, George, who had been on Stuart's tail, tacked earlier for the mark and picked up a gust that carried him round in third position. On the second beat Eamonn overtook Mike by trapezing at speed out to sea and in the process built a sizeable lead of 3¾ minutes which he held to the finish.

Meanwhile George had caught up with Mike on the last downwind leg and just pipped him to the gun by a few boat lengths.

## Race 4

Sunday dawned with light airs. After a postponement of 1½ hours to let the wind fill in, Race 4 got underway in a Force 2 that gradually increased to a sparkling Force 3. The courses were the same as the previous day.

George dominated the first beat by being able to point higher and foot faster. Mike would have rounded next, but Eamonn caught him on port next to the mark, which led to Mike hitting the mark and having to do a penalty turn thereby allowing Stuart to overtake. Eamonn set off in pursuit of George, but George's better upwind performance on the next lap opened up a 50 second lead that he held to the finish. Meanwhile Stuart in third place worked hard on the last downwind leg to increase his lead over Mike who had been challenging strongly upwind.



## Race 5

George again led the way up the beat, but the margin over Eamonn was much less than before, as Eamonn was able to use the strengthening breeze to trapeze to good effect. George held on to win by 20 seconds at the finish. Mike took third place, as Stuart attempted unsuccessfully on the downwind legs to close the gap that Mike had opened up upwind.

## Race 6

By now the breeze had piped up to the top end of Force 3. As Eamonn remarked, he did everything right for once, and this was underlined by the strong lead he took by the first windward mark. George and Chris Upton were next to round, as Stuart rued going right up the beat (a fluffed tack soon after the start not having helped). However, Stuart came in fast to the mark and was able to sail over Chris as they started the reach. Thereafter the field stretched out considerably with Eamonn trapezing into a 2¼ minute lead over George at the finish with Stuart another 2 minutes back.

## Northern Championship results

Eamonn's third race win gained him the title of Northern Champion by margin of one point over George. Mike, despite having had to skip the last race, claimed third place.

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Total	Nett
1	Eamonn Cotter	(2)	1	1	2	2	1	9	7
2	George Evans	(4)	2	2	1	1	2	12	8
3	Mike Gough	1	3	3	4	3	(DNC)	22	14
4	Stuart Ede	3	(4)	4	3	4	3	21	17
5	Chris Upton	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNF	5	4	41	33
6	Damien Cooney	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNF	6	DNC	46	38
7	Syd Gage	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	48	40

**Podium finish:** Northern Champion Eamonn Cotter (second right) and runner-up George Evans (far left) are presented with their trophies by RYYC Commodore Joe Franks (far right) [©



## Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap Series results

The Catapult Class Association runs a Personal Handicap Series in parallel with the level rating Travellers Trophy Series. Remarkably the finishing order mirrored the on-the-water results with Eamonn taking the Lilac Pennant for winning on handicap. Other highlights were Damien Cooney winning Race 5 and Chris Upton claiming second in Race 6.

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Total	Nett
1	Eamonn Cotter	2	1	1	(3)	2	1	10	7
2	George Evans	(4)	2	2	1	3	3	15	11
3	Mike Gough	1	3	3	4	5	(DNC)	24	16
4	Stuart Ede	3	(4)	4	2	4	4	21	17
5	Chris Upton	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNF	6	2	40	32
6	Damien Cooney	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNF	1	DNC	41	33
7	Syd Gage	(DNC)	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	48	40