

SCOTTISH SOLO NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP AT ST MARY'S LOCH

The weekend of 20th and 21st May saw the biggest turnout of Solos for the Scottish Nationals for many years, with 37 entries arriving at the picturesque setting of St Mary's Loch in the borders.

Race 1 started in a gusty force 4 with the Solos making a fine sight as they beat up the loch. The racing was very tight on the first lap with Martin Honnour, Tony King, Chris Brown, Keith Milroy, Andy Fox and Dave Mitchell all in the mix and showing good speed. Andy Hutchinson and Pete Mitchell were battling it out at the front, with Pete doing turns after clipping the windward mark allowing Andy a little breathing space. Kevan Gibb sailed some canny downwind legs to make the most of the gusts and recovered well from a capsize early on to come through to second. Pete fought back to take third using every ounce of his 74kg to good effect in the increasing breeze.

The wind had increased slightly for Race 2 and it was Kevan Gibb who led from early on, with Ian Hopwood, Dave Mitchell and Andy giving chase. There were some fruity gusts coming through which made the downwinds interesting with many competitors testing the water temperature at some point.

After a close last lap with Kev and Hoppy battling it out, Hoppy sailed a blinder of a last beat to just pip Kev and take the win on the line, thereby ensuring the English visitors didn't let the Scots have it all their own way. Andy recovered from a swim earlier in the race to come through to third.

The fleet was slightly depleted by race 3 but the racing was no less competitive. With plenty of St Mary's Loch shifts there was lots of place changing upwind, and with gusts coming through downwind the racing remained tight.

Keith Milroy came out very strongly and sailed well to lead for most of the race, with Andy Hutch just managing to sneak in front after another very close battle on the final beat. Hoppy was clearly enjoying the breeze, coming in third to cement his position as top English boat overnight.

Unfortunately Sunday dawned with no wind, and after a two hour postponement racing was abandoned for the day. Having been glassy calm all morning, within 2 minutes of the abandonment flag being hoisted, the wind arrived and the loch was covered in white caps. Who would be a race officer?!

Thanks to the team at St Mary's for laying on a great weekend, our sponsors SailingFast.com and The Scottish Soup Company who kept competitors well fed with pies and delicious soup throughout the weekend.

Next stop for the Scottish Solos is North Berwick on Saturday 4th June.

RESULTS

Position	Sail No	Helm	Club	Points	R1	R2	R3
1st	5605	Andy Hutchinson	RYA	2	1	3	1
2nd	5645	Ian Hopwood	Nantwich & Borders	4	7	1	3
3rd	5656	Kevan Gibb	Largo Bay	4	2	2	7
4th	5651	Pete Mitchell	Warsash	9	3	6	DNC
5th	5643	Chris Brown	Draycote	9	6	4	5
6th	5602	Keith Milroy	St Mary's Loch	10	10	8	2
7th	5363	David Mitchell	Warsash	11	5	17	6
8th	5595	Andrew Fox	Leigh & Lowton	13	11	5	8
9th	57	Martin Honnor	Ogston	15	4	11	DNC
10th	5613	Stuart Gibson	CCC	17	8	9	14