

Irish Nationals 2004

This year's Irish Nationals were held in Dublin Bay from Friday 28th to Sunday 30th May.

Turnout was excellent with three boats from Strangford Lough Yacht Club (SLYC), four from the National Yacht Club (NYC) and six from the Dun Laoghaire Motor Yacht Club (DMYC).

Racing was very competitive in heavy conditions. Entertainment ashore was equally strenuous with a post sailing barbecue hosted by DMYC on Friday, an evening dinner hosted by NYC on Saturday and various other visits to local "watering holes" to quench the endless thirst.

The final race, on Sunday, consisted of a 15-mile distance race. The Sonata fleet had their own start as part of the annual, DMYC hosted, Kish Race. Total entry this year was 90 boats across all classes.

The first race, windward leeward, commenced on Friday evening after a briefing session in DMYC.

Saturday morning saw flat calm conditions. The wind eventually filled in from the SW and strengthened continuously during the day. Three races were sailed on Saturday, all Olympic courses, in conditions ranging from F5 to F7 by the late afternoon.

Sunday's race was sailed in ideal conditions with a gentle F3 to 4.

Race 1: Friday, Windward Leeward

Most boats pushed hard for a perfect first start. Having received the "all clear" Bad Company (Robbie Richardson) quickly tacked to port, followed almost immediately by Close Action (Ken Dumpleton). Further back in the fleet Ceol Na Mara (Eugene Lawlor) fought it out with Gladiator (Phillip O'Dwyer) and Thingummyjig (Peter Martin). The windward mark saw Bad Company leading Close Action closely followed by Asterix (Caufield, Counihan, Meredith), Miss Money Penny (Geoffrey Murdoch), Jabiru (Martin and Sandra Renick) and Jammie Dodger (Jerry O'Neill).

The race quickly settled into "races within the race" with Entertainer Too (Joe and Eddie Melvin), Cacciatore (Mairead, Ni Cheallachain), Jimminy Cricket (Mona Tyndall) and Sonata in Sea (O'Regan and Downes) exchanging position as the group rounded the Gibe Mark.

True to form a flawless race saw Bad Company extend the lead and cross the line with room to spare. Second place was claimed by new addition to the fleet Close Action on their inaugural race.

Race 2: Saturday, Olympic

10.30 on the water but no wind. Eventually, after much discussion, praying and various other exhortations the wind obliged with a F5 SW springing up with great speed. The race started with the same players leading the fleet, Bad Company, Close Action and Miss Money Penny. Heavy conditions demolished Thingummyjig's boom and forced her to retire. The usual jostle for position continued down the fleet with Ceol na Mara and Cacciatore recording good results.

Race 3: Saturday, Olympic

With Thingummyjig's departure the fleet was reduced to twelve. Close Action and Bad Company led the fleet and fought neck and neck through two full circuits of three. Bad Company just managed to hold off Close Action and claim a 3rd consecutive 1st. Jabiru and Asterix claimed joint 4th as they crossed the line simultaneously after three hard fought circuits with constant exchange of positions. Jamie Dodger came close behind in 5th. Jimminy Cricket and Gladiator recorded good results after their own two-boat battle. Sonata in Sea also recorded their own place in the records for their exceptional display of seamanship. (Can we have the mark back now please?)

Race 4: Saturday, Olympic

Late afternoon saw the SW wind gusting up to 28 knots. Some boats decided that discretion was the better part of valour and retired, most reduced to No. 2 headsails and a few "hard cases" stayed on No. 1. Once again Bad Company and Close Action led the way with Asterix fighting hard to close the gap. Miss Money Penny had several "interesting" moments in the heavy conditions and was forced to "regroup" as Jabiru and Jamie Dodger overtook them. True to form Bad Company crossed the line to maintain a perfect score despite their short trip on the scenic route (wrong mark!!)

Race 5: Sunday, Distance Race

A bright Sunday morning with less wind but several sore heads, due to overindulgence in non-aquatic sports, saw Thingummyjig return with new boom.

The local boats were sure that this was "payback time". "the visitors will definitely get the notorious Kish tides wrong.....won't they??"

As expected Jammie Dodger lead the way after a flawless start. The long reach to the Kish saw the fleet break into two sectors, those who knew the tides and stayed North and those who were unaware of the strong tides and kept South. As the fleet neared the turning point it was clear to see that those who knew the tides were totally wrong and those who did not were perfectly placed (who has been selling local secrets to the visitors???)

The return leg saw a close competition between Jammie Dodger, Jabiru, Bad Company and Miss Money Penny. Somehow the usual culprits, Bad Company and Miss Money Penny, managed to just squeeze over the line ahead of Jabiru and Jamie Dodger. The rest of the fleet crossed the line very soon after the leaders with Gladiator and Sonata in Sea recording their best performances of the event.

Overall results

Place	Boat	Club	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Tot	Disc.	Net
1	Bad Company	SLYC	1	1	1	1	1	5	1	4
2	Close Action	NYC	2	2	2	2	14	22	14	8
3	Miss Money Penny	SLYC	5	3	3	5	2	18	5	13
4	Asterix	DMYC	3	4	4	3	5	19	5	14
5	Jabiru	DMYC	4	8	4	4	3	23	8	15
6	Jammie Dodger	NYC	7	5	6	6	4	28	7	21
7	Ceol Na Mara	DMYC	8	6	7	7	7	35	8	27
8	Entertainer Too	DMYC	9	9	11	8	8	45	11	34
9	Gladiator	DMYC	10	11	9	9	6	45	11	34
10	Cacciatore	NYC	12	7	10	10	9	48	12	36
11	Jimminy Cricket	NYC	11	10	8	14	10	53	14	39
12	Thingummyjig	SLYC	6	14	14	14	12	60	14	46
13	Sonata in Sea	DMYC	13	12	12	14	11	62	14	48