



# Race Report Supernova Winter Championships

**Bowmoor Sailing Club, Lechlade, Glos**

**Saturday 27th February 2016**

'The North wind doth blow'... and on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2016, Bowmoor Sailing Club played host to the Supernova Fleet for their Winter Championships sponsored once again by Oxford Carriers. The inaugural event of the year and, a special year as this is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Class Association! With 120 boats already confirmed for the Nationals at Llandudno in July, there was an expectation that the season might start with good numbers.

Expectations were satisfied as 39 sailors braved the bitterly cold weather to make the start line at Bowmoor Sailing Club in the heart of the Cotswolds. The North wind had a touch of East and provided tricky conditions for Mike Tustin, the Race Officer, and his team of merry helpers (for merry read freezing but enthusiastic). The cold breeze was shifty and gusty and provided a real test of sailing for this friendly and competitive fleet. The fleet comprised just 5 Mk1 boats and 34 Mk2's including a 'fresh from the packet' grey hulled boat with lime green non-slip floor and foils belonging to Robin Kirby from neighbouring Cotswold SC. Robin was there to be noticed!

A clean start for the first race provided advantages for those able to tack early onto port. Alex Collins travelling all the way from Bolton and the only Youth sailor on the day, took the first race from Richard Pakes, Haversham SC. Cliff Milliner, the 2015 National Champion also from Cotswold took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Whilst our top sailors battled it out at the front of the fleet, there was strong competition to be found for everyone and simple mistakes or missing the shifts proved costly to many.

The second race was held back-to-back around the same course. The breeze freshening more as the day went on. This time Cliff Milliner resumed the top spot, with Tim Hand from Sutton-in Ashfield in second place. Youngster Alex Collins still chasing the top spots finished 3<sup>rd</sup> to share the overall lead with Cliff at lunch.

After a warming curry lunch provided by Bowmoor's Pat & Stan, sailors headed-out for the 3<sup>rd</sup> and final race of the day. Mike Tustin made a change to the course as the wind moved slightly further to the East. At the top, everything was to play for with 4 potential winners. Another clean start and Richard Pakes found a gap to make a bold port end flyer and gain the early lead. Richard, Alex and Cliff pulled ahead of the chasing pack and enjoyed a close race until the penultimate lap when Cliff's rig lost a fastpin and Cliff quickly dropped his main to save the mast and ended his bid for the Championship. In the end, Richard Pakes took the final race to claim the top spot overall (and first Master) with Alex Collins on equal points having finished second in the last race. Cliff Milliner was forced into overall 3<sup>rd</sup> place with his premature retirement in the last.

Other notable finishers included Alan Birch from Bartley SC as first veteran (16<sup>th</sup> overall), Brian Smith from Bowmoor SC as first Mk1 (19<sup>th</sup> overall) and Serena Stewardson from Emberton Park SC as first lady (31<sup>st</sup> overall).

A great start to what promises to be an exciting season for this growing fleet. Well done to all sailors and thank you to Mike Tustin and his duty team. The next event and the first Noble Marine Travellers event for 2016 is at Girton SC on 12<sup>th</sup> March followed by Cotswold on 19<sup>th</sup> Mar and a return to Bowmoor on 9<sup>th</sup> April (with a Class Training Day the previous day).

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