

2011 Wilson Trophy for the British Team Racing Championship at West Kirby Sailing Club - Day 3 Press Release



NYYC Team Extreme defeat West Kirby Hawks on a wild and windy final day.

Day 3 of the 2011 Wilson Trophy for the British Open Team racing Championship saw some extreme conditions for the final day of racing, with a series of weather fronts bringing prolonged gusts up to 30 knots. With last year's two finalists, West Kirby Hawks and NYYC Extreme, both assured a quarter final place, there were as many as 16 teams involved in the scramble to secure their place in the final eight, making every match in final rounds of the Swiss League qualification absolutely vital. By late morning, as the twentieth and final round began, it was becoming apparent that 12 wins were going to be required to make it through to the quarter finals. From here on, for the teams still fighting for a place in the elimination rounds, it was a case of win or go home.

RSGYC Knights won their final round match against Spinnaker with a last ditch attack on the approach to the finish line, to move them on to 12 wins and give them a place in the knock out rounds. Despite a loss to West Kirby Hawks, Buns & Ammo's 12 wins total also assured them of a place in the next round. Woonsocket Rockets defeated Southampton to move to 11 wins and give themselves a realistic chance of getting into the final eight. NYYC Team Extreme won out over West Kirby SC to leave the host club team hoping that 12 wins would be enough to keep their hopes alive. Southampton Male Voice Choir, needing to win their match against Dream Team to have any chance of staying in the competition, took the fight to their opponents right from the start, and after a dust up of a match, Southampton finally managed to get themselves into a winning position on the final beat. This result put both teams on 11 wins and still in with a shout of a quarter final place.

At the end of the 20 round, 320 race, Swiss League competition, West Kirby Hawks (17 wins), BUSA Lads (14), NYYC Team Extreme (14), Spinnaker (13), Buns & Ammo (12), RSGYC Knights (12) West Kirby SC (12), were all confirmed as quarter finalists. Giving some indication of the closeness of the racing in this year's Wilson Trophy, there were then no less six teams tied on 11 wins, left to await the outcome of the scorer's mathematics to determine whether they had earned a place in the quarter finals. Ultimately, the count back calculations went in favour of Oxford & Cambridge, meaning that their 11 wins were good enough to give them the one remaining quarter final place.

Conditions were absolutely perfect for the quarter finals, with sunshine and 10 - 12 knots of breeze. In the first flight, West Kirby Hawks made quick work of Oxford & Cambridge, dismissing them 2 - 0, to secure the first of the semi final places. NYYC Team Extreme also overpowered Royal St. George YC Knights by two wins to zero to take the second semi final place. The quarter final match between Spinnaker and Buns & Ammo went to Spinnaker by two races to nil. Having won a race apiece, West Kirby SC and BUSA Lads, needed a final deciding race to establish who would take the last semi final place. After a closely fought race, West Kirby SC got themselves into a winning position on the final beat to close out the race and claim the last semi final slot.

The semi final pairings pitched West Kirby Hawks against Spinnaker and NYYC Team Extreme against West Kirby SC. With a place in the final at stake, all four teams knew they needed to be at the absolute top of their game, and from the very first race the hordes of spectators now lining the shoreline and packing the grandstand were treated to a simply breathtaking display of the highest quality team racing. In the match between West Kirby Hawks and Team Extreme, the Hawks took first blood after a full on fist fight of race. In the second heat West Kirby Hawks took control on the penultimate leg with a 1,2 combination, but a umpire penalty for their second placed boat then threw the advantage back to Spinnaker, who took the win with a 2,3,4, to even the match. The final race was another classic with West Kirby Hawks eventually prevailing to win with a 1,4,5 combo. A redress request for gear failure on one of the Spinnaker boats in the first race resulted in that race being re-sailed, but the result remained unchanged when the Hawks clocked up another win.

The match between West Kirby Hawks and NYYC Team Extreme was similarly thrilling, with the host club narrowly taking the first race. NYYC Team Extreme struck back in the second race, rounding the final mark holding first and second, a position they were comfortably able to maintain to the finish. The deciding race of this match hung in the balance until the final beat, when the NYYC Team Extreme turned on the team racing style, to take the win and set up a repeat of last year's Grand Final against West Kirby Hawks.

By the time the Grand Final got underway the wind had risen considerably again and with the boats still on full rigs, the crews had some real boat handling challenges to deal with. As expected, the Grand Final was a spectacular affair, with the two teams putting on a full bore team racing masterclass, much to the appreciation of the hundreds of delighted spectators, who loudly cheered every maneuver. The first race went to NYYC Team Extreme after West Kirby Hawks squandered a potentially winning position on the final beat. Quickly regrouping, the Hawks struck back in the wild and windy second race, to level the score. NYYC Team Extreme then took the next race to establish a 2 - 1 advantage. With the wind now topping twenty knots in the gusts, the race committee in the interests of fair team racing, made the sensible decision to send the teams ashore to change to the smaller rigs. Given the extreme conditions, the pre-start action in the third

race was surprisingly intense, with the two teams hurling themselves at each other like a couple of street gangs in a turf war. However, from the moment the start gun sounded, the Hawks knew they were in trouble - with two boats over early and forced to restart. NYYC Team Extreme are simply too good a squad to hand such an advantage to, and given control so early in the race they rocketed away to close out the Grand Final with a comprehensive win.

Official Overall Results:

Quarter Finals

West Kirby Hawks beat Oxford and Cambridge
West Kirby beat BUSA Lads
NYYC Team Extreme beat RSGYC Knights
Spinnaker beat Buns & Ammo

Semi Finals

West Kirby Hawks beat Spinnaker
NYYC Team Extreme beat West Kirby

Grand Final

Team Extreme beat West Kirby Hawks (3-1)

NYYC Team Extreme (USA):

Zach Brown and Emmet Smith
Thomas Barrows and Marla Menninger
Stuart McNay and Michael Hession

West Kirby Hawks (UK):

Ben Field and Tom Foster
Dom Johnson and Debs Steele
Andy Cornah and Hamish Walker

Full results and video from the day can be found at the regatta website www.wksc.net/wilsontrophy

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