

By Mike Senior and Vanessa Devereux

The GP14 fleet made a welcome return to South Caernarvonshire Yacht Club for their 2019 UK Nationals, following an 8-year absence with a fleet, of 56 boats. Unfortunate weather conditions throughout the week meant only 6 out of the scheduled 9 races were completed. However, there is probably no better place to find alternative things to do when racing is cancelled.

First out of the blocks on Day 1 (Sunday) were Russ and Ali Cormack from Budworth Sailing Club, mastering the light to moderate SW breeze, to win Race 1 which was sponsored by Ginger boats.

Sam Watson and Andy Thompson resumed their season winning form on day 2 with two bullets in Race 2 sponsored by English Braids and Race 3 sponsored by Gibson Sails to catapult themselves to the top of the leader board in an increasing moderate SW breeze.

Day 3 (Tuesday) – Racing was cancelled by excessive wind, although some of the sailors couldn't stay out of the water and went surfing down at Hell's mouth.

Day 4 (Wednesday) was originally scheduled as a rest day, but tactically used to catch-up from Day 3. A further race was also held due to the very light and very windy forecasts for Thursday and Friday respectively. A breezy day resulted in lots of opportunities for significant downwind gains and regrettable periods spent upside down for some.



Jim Hunt and Liz Senior won the opening race of the day; race 4 of the championship sponsored by Pinnall & Bax, leading from start to finish. Mike Senior and Chris White continued to recover from their habitual early week brain fart and won the remaining 2 races; Race 5 sponsored by Dinghy Shack and Race 6 sponsored by Impact Marine. Sam Watson and Andy Thompson had another solid day to consolidate their overall position with a 6, 2, 2.

Day 5 (Thursday): following a 2-hour postponement and subsequent rounders match, the fleet launched into a rather pleasant force two south westerly. Following two general recalls and a black flag the fleet eventually got away. However, 50 minutes into the race the wind decided it had had enough. The race officer had no other choice but to abandon race 7.

Day 6 (Friday) – Cancelled, like pretty much every other event in the UK that day. The class cleaned the beach in the rain as the ever hopeful packed away their boats.

Therefore, Sam Watson and Andy Thompson are the new GP14 UK National Champions, following a very successful 2019 campaign and an impressive championship performance.

Silver fleet was won by Peter and Stephen Boyle from Sutton DC with Peter also winning first youth helm coming 7th overall. In second silver were Jack Lewis and Szymon Matyjaszcuk from Welsh Harp SC; whilst in third place were Paul and Tom Simes from Cardiff Bay YC.



Bronze fleet winners were David Johnson and Collie Delaney from Sutton DC in 32nd place, followed in second by Les Burns and Alice Morris from Hollingworth Lake SC. In third place was James Ward and Richard Whitehill from Papercourt SC.

Competing in their first championships the last two boats who were both from Frensham Pond has received one days coaching from the class. Bruce Craven and Tim Farnell-Watson in 55th and in 56th place Kate Whyatt and Jon Denyer.

Next up is the Irish Nationals (16-18 August) at the 2020 World Championship Venue, Skerries Sailing Club.



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Full results <https://scyc.co.uk/scyc.co.uk/Sail-100/GP14%20UK%20National%20Championship%202019.htm>