

Sailboats.co.uk UK National and Open Laser Championships, South Caernarvonshire Yacht Club, 29 July–4 August 2017

Day One Reports by Craig Williamson, Jon Emmett and Tom Mitchell

Today saw the first day's racing at this year's Sailboats.co.uk UK National and Open Laser Championships. These are being held in the stunning location of Abersoch in North Wales. A fleet of 21 Standards, 74 Radials and 47 4.7s were warmly welcomed by South Caernarvonshire Yacht Club.

Standard

The forecast for the day of 20–25knts was accurate and gave the Standard sailors a tough day on the water. With the wind coming from the southwest, this gave the waves a chance to pick up as the fleet sailed out into the bay, resulting in some exciting downwind sailing.

In the first race, the long start line allowed some boats to port tack the fleet off the line and by the top mark it was Matt Howard (Stokes Bay) in the lead, which he managed to extend throughout the race to take the win. Behind him there were several position changes, with Craig Williamson (Hayling Island) taking second from David Saunders (Hill Head) in third, Joseph Drake (RN&SYC) in fourth and Jack Hopkins (Delph) in fifth after recovering from a capsize on the final run.

In Race 2, it was again Olympic Finn coach Matt Howard who led from the start to take the win followed by Craig Williamson. Joseph Drake and David Saunders, recently out of Radials, finished third and fourth respectively, followed by Jack Hopkins in fifth.

Standard results:

<http://www.kbsuk.com/laser/events/showrace.asp?EventID=99&RaceURL=%5Bresults%5D/stdnats.17nh.html>

Radial

For the first day's racing, the competitors were greeted with big waves and big wind, probably 18–24 knots, with more of the same forecast for tomorrow.

Ben Whaley made his mark on the first day of the Radial Nationals moving past the whole leading pack on the second beat of the first race to lead at the top mark and take the race win. He looked set to repeat this in Race 2, but a control line tangle cost him dearly.

So in the end it was Jordan Giles who took the day by consistency with a second in Race 1 and, by holding off Jon Emmett on the final downwind, a first in Race 2.

Radial results:

<http://www.kbsuk.com/laser/events/showrace.asp?EventID=99&RaceURL=%5Bresults%5D/radnats.17nh.html>

4.7

With winds forecast to gust to 30knts, a number of competitors who had entered the Radial fleet changed their entry to the 4.7 fleet making a total of 48 boats in the smaller rig. In Race 1, Matt Beck, after finishing eighth at the recent 4.7 World Championships opted for the pin-end and gained an early lead to round the windward mark first, followed by James Percival Cook and Nick Welborne. With strong winds, boat handling was crucial as James Percival Cook found out when he capsized at the bottom mark. Results from Race 1 were a first for Matt Beck, second for Nick Welborne, third for Thomas Parkhurst, fourth for Tom Mitchell and fifth for James Percival Cook.

Race 2 mapped out in a similar way with Matt Beck first, Nick Welborne second, Flo Nichollas third, Thomas Parkhurst fourth and Tom Mitchell fifth.

4.7 Results:

<http://www.kbsuk.com/laser/events/showrace.asp?EventID=99&RaceURL=%5Bresults%5D/4.7nats.17nh.html>