

Itchenor 420 Open Meeting
11th - 12th October

16 boats took part in the Itchenor Open Meeting on 11th and 12th October.

Saturday dawned with no wind and clear blue skies; after an hour's postponement a gentle force 1-2 South Easterly set in and racing got underway.

In race 1 Nathan Batchelor and Joe Crabb led from the start with Nerissa Booth and Alison Macgregor second and Richard Mason and Chris Carden third. The race officer Alistair Shaw then changed the course to a figure of eight for race 2, which was again won by Nathan Batchelor and Joe Crabb, followed by Mason and Carden, and Sophie Ainsworth and Lucy Cripps in third.

Race 3 was a windward leeward course won by Sophie Ainsworth and Lucy Cripps, with Nathan Batchelor and Joe Crabb second and Anna Perkins and Alice Currey third.

Day 2 dawned with a strong easterly breeze and an increasing forecast. The wind was 18-25 knots with gusts of over 30 knots according to Cambermet in Chichester Harbour. All the crews swam on several occasions making good spectator sport for the cruising yachts returning to Chichester Harbour.

The race officer set Olympic courses for races 4 and 5 with excellent start lines that allowed for some brave port starts, as long as you could avoid the up-turned boats as the gusts came through! Race 4 was won by Ben Ainsworth and Ross Harvey after some impressive spinnaker work and an amazing ability to right their boat extremely quickly - they were clearly enjoying the more challenging conditions. They were followed by Andrew Shaw and Tom Price, who flew their spinnaker at every opportunity. In third place were Georgie Blaver-Mann and Charlotte Laurence. Race 5 commenced with boats again upside down near the start line and several heading home. This race was also won by Ainsworth and Harvey, with Nathan Batchelor and Joe Crabb in second and Richard Mason and Chris Carden third.

Race 6 was a very tricky figure of eight course with two testing gybes, in which only nine boats finished. It was won by Nathan Batchelor and Joe Crabb to make them the overall winners of the event, with Richard Mason and Chris Carden second, and Ben Ainsworth and Ross Harvey third.

Thanks must go to Alistair Shaw as PRO for the varied courses, as well as his assistants and the rescue boats, which were kept very busy throughout the event, towing boats to and from the racing area on the first day and rescuing on the second.

Full results are available on the Itchenor /420website.