

## Vane A National Championship

The 2018 Vane A National Championship, sponsored by Dean and Reddyhoff, is being held at Gosport Model Yacht and Boat Club, beginning on Sunday the 29<sup>th</sup> July. Yes, that is the day the heatwave ended! The 20 strong fleet were greeted by winds gusting to 40 knots, and driving rain, which lasted all day. Boats ranged from the ultra-light 17.5 lb Mike Dann designed Fusion 107 of Peter Hopkins, to Peter Whiteside's venerable 49 lb Simpson design 'Bluenote'.

In the strong, damaging reachy winds of Sunday's general fleet day the boats which came to the fore were Rob Bell's lightweight Simpson Lightning, closely followed one point down by Graham Butler's heavyweight Shield, by Graham Bantock. In third, and again only one point down was Derek Priestley's VC2.

On Monday and the Tuesday the fleet splits into two halves, so meaningful results have to wait until the end of Tuesday. Both days were warm and mercifully dry, with winds changing through the day from light in the mornings to moderate in the afternoon when the sea-breeze kicks in, often giving good beats but with a tendency to back to the south at times. By the end of Tuesday, and after 15 heats, Martin Robert's mid-weight Simpson lead the field with 63 points, followed three points behind by Graham Butler's Shield. The lighter-weight Simpson of David Bell was 6 points behind. In the windward legs, Martin Roberts led Graham Butler by 3 points, while Mike Dann was ahead on the down-wind legs, leading Graham Butler by 2 points.

Tomorrow, Wednesday, the knock-out competition for the Yachting Monthly Cup is held. This is a separate competition from the main championship, raced for the Scrutton Cup. The weather forecast to be warm and light.

On Thursday the fleet returns to championship racing. With so few points separating the top positions, there is all to play for!

Mervyn Cook