

The National Championships – Blackpool Light Craft Club 1996.

The Streaker National Championship was held at Blackpool Light Craft Club over the weekend of June 29/30th. The turn-out was excellent with a good number of boats attending from both the northern and southern fleets – including delegations from Jersey and Scotland.

The sea conditions on Saturday morning were something to behold, with a north-westerly gale force wind producing white horses as far as the eye could see. The race officer therefore decided to postpone the start until 15:00hrs, and the fleet occupied themselves with boat measuring and weighing – a sport which always brings a flock of people to watch. The class AGM was held in the early afternoon, and despite the combined prayers of all those present the wind showed no sign of abating and racing was cancelled for the day.

While the wind did swing round to a westerly it was still registering 40 knots on Sunday morning and the event was therefore abandoned for the year. Alan Gillard, who has ‘champ’ for the last six years therefore, retains his title until the 1997 championship at Lancing.

From the Newsletter – ‘Secretary’s Scribbles’.

On a totally different subject you will probably all know by now that our Nationals at Blackpool was totally blown off. Saturday 29th June duly arrived with a big (very, very big) onshore wind and gigantic seas. Even the heavy mob from the home club would not consider a demonstration sail to keep us amused so we decided to hold an early afternoon AGM followed by a few tubes of the amber nectar, followed by a few more tubes, and still more tubes etc. etc. Even this activity did not placate the weather gods as Sunday still produced a mere 40 knots with big seas, an early get away seemed in order. In fact the club offered us a chance to pack up the boats and move to Skipool up the river Wyre – this is the home of the Blackpool & Fleetwood YC. As it is up a river it was thought to be possible to sail there. The problem was that sailing is only possible from 1.25 hours before high water to 2 hours later. With immaculate organisation, no recalls and no time consuming rescues it might have been possible to sail three very short races. However those present thought that this would totally devalue the championships and voted against the offer. What a terrible shame for the hosts who have supported our events for so many years in such great numbers – I know that they were so keen to make their meeting a success. My thanks go to them for their efforts to host us which ended in such terrible disaster. Since then we have regrettably that not enough of you would be able to return to Blackpool or elsewhere to re-sail the meeting. As a result the Class Trophies have been returned to the 1995 holders for another year.

Vernon Penketh.

From the Shore-side

Much will be said elsewhere about the 1996 Nationals – suffice to say that we managed to find a B&B which was run by a female version of Danny La Rue! The meal on Friday lived up to all our expectations – Vernon managed to find us the only Chinese restaurant which doesn’t accept cheques but does serve seaweed (Much to Alan’s disgust), and 7 of us enjoyed a riotous meal before returning to the club to sample their ale. Blackpool LCC made us all very welcome, and we greatly enjoyed our meal there on Saturday night, with some sailors making use of the club room floor rather than pitching their tents in the gale force winds.

Jennie Clark.