

Catapults at Rutland Catamaran Open

The Race Officer summed up Gareth Ede's clean sweep admirably: "He seems to go twice as fast as the rest of the Catapult fleet!"

Indeed Gareth Ede dominated the Catapult fleet who took part in Rutland Sailing Club's Catamaran Open held over the weekend of 16-17 May, winning all six races. The races were sailed on a large course comprising one triangle and one sausage leg with an offset finish line. The wind strength both days was in the Force 3 range with rather more ups and downs and shifts on the second day.



And they're off! Gareth (91), Stuart (r) and John (behind the lens) converge on the start © John Terry

Race 1

Gareth built a large lead on the first beat, and the fleet stretched out behind him with John Terry in second, George Evans a close third, Syd Gage fourth and Damien Cooney, who later retired, in fifth.

John failed to notice that Gareth, who had been so far in front, had finished, and he mistakenly set off for another lap instead of heading for the line. If George and Syd had been on the ball, they could have snatched second and third places respectively, but they also missed the finish flag on the Committee Boat and blithely followed John. The rescue boat chased after John to point out his mistake, so he then returned followed by George and Syd thus restoring the original order they would have finished in. Despite being treated for a long term illness Syd was close enough behind the rest of the fleet to take first place on personal handicap, though he subsequently lost energy and sadly took no further part in the event.

Race 2

The first beat set the eventual finishing order as Gareth rounded the windward mark ahead of John, then George followed by Stuart Ede who had missed the first race because of rigging problems. As the race progressed, Gareth continued to increase his lead as the rest of the fleet stretched out behind him.

Race 3

John went right up the beat while Gareth, George and Stuart went left. John's tactic did not pay off, and Gareth and George led round the windward mark. John rounded just ahead of Stuart.

As Gareth built another substantial lead, John caught up with George downwind and was camped on his wind.

As the leaders went right up the next beat, Stuart, working on the basis that the right side had not paid on the first beat, decided to go left. Alas, this time the benefits were reversed, and Stuart dropped back. Meanwhile George managed to shake off John upwind to grab second place.

Race 4

For once Gareth didn't have things all his own way. John challenged hard all the way round, even getting his nose in front at times, and he was right on Gareth's tail as they crossed the line. The two of them were far enough ahead of George and Stuart for John to take the handicap win.

Race 5

John tried a port tack start, but a large, last minute header meant he couldn't get ahead of the starboard tack starters. However, he persevered up the right side of the beat, while the remainder went left. This time John's tactic paid off, as he rounded the windward mark first just ahead of Gareth. However, Gareth overtook on the next reach and drew away downwind and round the next lap, to build such a commanding lead that he won on personal handicap as well on level rating. Meanwhile George overtook John on the second beat to take second place.

Race 6

The wind lightened a touch for the last race. Gareth led up the beat, and John rounded the windward mark in second place. Downwind Gareth lengthened his lead significantly. Meanwhile George had fluffed a tack allowing Stuart to round the top mark just ahead, but George soon attacked to windward on the top reach to get ahead. Stuart kept trying to attack George, but could not overtake him. Up the next beat, George and Stuart benefited from a favourable wind shift to gain the wind gauge on John. George rounded just ahead of John, and the two of them sailed down the run side by side with first one and then the other getting the advantage. At the finish George just beat John by half a boat length to take second place.

Level rating results – Jon Montgomery Travellers Trophy Series

Gareth won the event in impressive style with a perfect scoreline. He won the Blue Pennant as event winner for the third successive time, which also strengthened his hold on the Yellow Pennant as leader of the TT Series so far.

Pos	Helm	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Pts
1	Gareth Ede	(1)	1	1	1	1	1	5
2	George Evans	(3)	3	2	3	2	2	12
3	John Terry	2	2	(3)	2	3	3	12
4	Stuart Ede	(7)	4	4	4	4	4	20
5	Syd Gage	4	(7)	7	7	7	7	32
6	Damien Cooney	(7)	7	7	7	7	7	35



Motley crew: (l to r) George (clutching his handicap trophy), John, Gareth and Syd at the prize giving
© Stuart Ede

Handicap results – Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap Series

The Catapult Class Association runs a Personal Handicap Series in parallel with the level rating TT Series using the same race results to encourage sailors throughout the fleet to improve their performance. George with two wins to his credit claimed the Lilac Pennant as event winner on personal handicap, and this result enabled him to top the leader board for the Handicap Series so far, earning him the Magenta Pennant as well.

Also noteworthy is that despite a punitive rating Gareth managed to take second place in the handicap stakes emphasising the scale of his lead in most races.

Pos	Helm	Rating	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Pts
1	George Evans	870	(3)	1	1	2	2	2	8
2	Gareth Ede	765	2	3	3	3	1	(4)	12
3	John Terry	818	(4)	2	4	1	3	3	13
4	Stuart Ede	902	(7)	4	2	4	4	1	15
5	Syd Gage	968	1	(7)	7	7	7	7	29
6	Damien Cooney	1110	(7)	7	7	7	7	7	35

Rank	Helm	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Points
1st	Gareth Ede	-1	1	1	1	1	1	5
2nd	George Evans	-3	3	2	3	2	2	12
3rd	John Terry	2	2	-3	2	3	3	12
4th	Stuart Ede	(7 DNC)	4	4	4	4	4	20
5th	Syd Gage	4	(7 DNC)	7 DNC	7 DNC	7 DNC	7 DNC	32
6th	Damien Cooney	(7 RET)	7 DNC	7 DNC	7 DNC	7 DNC	7 DNC	35

