

John Baynes takes Golden Galleon Trophy



The Elizabethan Worlds in Poole Bay were a great success and produced a surprise, but well deserved, victor in the form of John Baynes in his well prepared Elizabethan 23 "Lizzie B". The event organised by Kemp Sails on behalf of the Elizabethan Owner Association took place in almost perfect racing conditions, SW, top end, Force 3 and slight sea conditions.

Following a somewhat confused start, caused by Mistweave, the Hare boat, passing the Committee boat a little late, a number of yacht charge starts were baulked. However the fleet was soon sorted out and quickly the Elizabethans got up to speed on the first long windward beat. With a cross section of Elizabethans from the Webster designed 23, C R Holman designed 29 and the David Thomas designed 30, 31 and 33 there were a number of different race strategies in deployment. Crew experience was also a key factor with only the Way family confident to use Spinnaker on "Owaissa", a regularly raced Elizabethan 33.

Not surprising "Owaissa" took line honours but was ultimately placed 4th, defeated by its high handicap. Other placed boats were "Mistweave" E30 (Ian Stockdale) 2nd and "Tabard" E31 (Peter Lewis), 2nd over the line, was 3rd on handicap.. Although pleased with the boats performance on the day Peter had not realised the E31 is a faster boat than the E30 on paper and had initially felt that he had done enough to secure 2nd overall.

The pre race favourite "Snowbird" E30 was a disappointing 5th. Her owner Cad Cust said after the event "I'm gutted, I felt so sure I would be taking the Golden Galleon home; all the pre race preparation and we were defeated by a power glitch when we turned off the engine power as we approached the pre brief start area. The radio went off and we missed the announcement of change of leeward buoy and start position. By the time we cottoned on the race was underway and we were some way downwind of the start line. However, I am very glad for John and his crew".



In a statement to the EOA John revealed some secrets of his success:

"Lizzie B arrived in Poole in safe cruising mode, having sailed up from the river Exe and spent a week at the Fleet Review and cruising around the Solent.

We arrived in Poole mid afternoon Friday and immediately set about getting her into racing trim – rapidly reducing weight by a concerted attack on our drinks cabinet: at least an inch up on our marks!

Lizzie is in reasonably good tune as we race regularly at Topsham - although the River Exe is hardly a match for the open sea off Poole, she still didn't need too much doing to her rig to prepare her for the anticipated hot competition at the Elizabethan Worlds.

Mistweave kindly opened the gate right in front of us, so having nothing better to do we charged through and got a better start than we ever do at Topsham!

Lizzie loves a good beat in F3/4 when she really gets the bit between her teeth and charges along with only the slightest weather helm and, with the centreboard fully down, making less leeway than expected.

We rounded the weather mark in 4th place (if memory serves), but thinking we would have at least two rounds we opted to boom out the genoa and leave the spinnaker for the final round when we could fly it through the finish without having to rebag it – there being only two on board which would have made repacking a little difficult.

On the final downwind leg we managed to hold off a '30' for much of the run, but lost ground rapidly when we were no longer able to boom out the genoa and had to harden up to cross the line.

One thing this race showed is that the 23 is more at home in the open sea, where she can really lift her skirts and tramp to windward with long tacks rather than the short tacking duels we have on the upper reaches of the Exe Estuary, where her slow tacking loses ground against much of the competition."

I don't know where we shall be next year (rumour is of Bembridge), but all being well Lizzie will be there to defend her title and the Golden Galleon is being polished up, even as I write this, to urge on all Elizabethans to join us next year!

Many thanks to Ian, Kemp Sails and PBO for a really enjoyable day and weekend – as always a great reason for joining the EOA!