

# The British Finn Association



## **PUMP** 2012



### ***Drama Down Under***

Full report from the 2011 Finn Gold Cup in Perth...

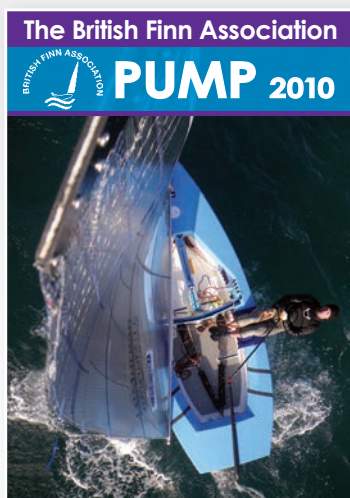
Finn results : 1st Northern area Championships  
1st UK Inland Championships  
2nd USA Sugar Bowl



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# Chairman's letter

PHOTO: ONEDITION



British Finn Association Chairman, Andy Denison

Welcome to this 2012 edition of PUMP. The coming year is all about a combination of events that have been in the melting pot for a number of years, and in 2012 their coming together will create a monumental time in the history of Finn sailing in the UK with three truly world class events taking place.

In May 2012, we have the fabulous Falmouth Finn Festival incorporating the Nationals and Finn Gold Cup. The Gold Cup returns to the UK shores for the first time since Weymouth 2000.

Having had the opportunity to go through the plans with the organisers of the Festival, the Nationals and the Gold Cup this year will be offering some of the finest Finn sailing for all levels of sailors. It is encouraging to hear that 14 year-old Jack Arnell from Christchurch will be taking part. The organisers of the festival have promised a climax of all climaxes – something that Falmouth will remember upon for many years.

Just after Falmouth we head up to North Wales where Pwllheli Sailing Club is hosting the Finn World Masters Championship. Last year in Italy the Championship had entry of nearly 300 boats and if we see this entry level in Wales it is fair to say that the small town of Pwllheli will see an economic boom.

Congratulations must go to Ben Ainslie for successfully qualifying to represent the UK at the London 2012 Olympic Games. As current Olympic Champion, Ben automatically gains qualification for the Gold Cup at Falmouth where he has said he will be looking to stamp his mark on home waters. The Olympic Games sailing competition at Weymouth & Portland will

be the highlight of the year – although arguably a less competitive fleet than at the Gold Cup, the pressure and expectation upon all the top sailors will be huge and we all wish Ben the best in his quest for a fourth Olympic gold medal and a place in sailing history.

The UK squad having just returned from the southern hemisphere and will be taking some well-earned rest before the start of this 2012 season. Congratulations go to Giles Scott on winning the Gold Cup and the Europeans earlier in the year.

Looking back at 2011 we enjoyed an accommodating Inlands Championship at Roadford Lakes and a record attendance at a sparkling Nationals in Christchurch. Throughout the 2011 season there has been an encouraging turnout to the JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifications series with a number of the guys battling it for the 12 places available to the British Finn Association.

We are once again deeply grateful to our main sponsor, JM Finn & Co of London, for supporting us in these tough times. I can only hope it is rewarding for them too.

The part-timers and Masters of our association are all dusting down our bikes and picking the dirt off our running shoes in desperation to try and patch together some form of fitness to get us through this demanding Finn year. I look forward to seeing you all on the water.

Good sailing!

**Andy Denison GBR-20**  
Chairman, British Finn Association

*Pump* is the official publication of the British Finn Association – [www.finnuk.org.uk](http://www.finnuk.org.uk)



Covershot: GBR-41  
Giles Scott on his way  
to victory at the Gold  
Cup, by Robert Deaves

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# Secretary's Report

PHOTO: ROBERT DEAVES



Ben Ainslie and Hogn Christensen do battle in Perth

## Here's to 2012

**W**hat a year we have ahead of us! The Finn Festival in May, followed by the World Masters in Pwllheli at the end of May and the Olympic Games in August.

I cannot believe that after many years of planning we are only a few months away from the Finn Festival incorporating the UK Nationals and Finn Gold Cup in Falmouth, the JM Finn Travellers / FGC Qualifiers Series is nearly at an end, with only one event in March at Weymouth still to go. Whilst the scoring for the Travellers trophy will continue, it is already evident which sailors will definitely qualify outright for the places in the FGC.

As it is vitally important to the UK Finn Class that we maximise and use all the places that are available for British sailors to compete in this

prestigious event. We also recognise the importance of giving everyone the maximum notice and time to prepare for the event. Consequently, at a recent committee meeting it was unanimously decided that we should confirm the qualification of the top 13 sailors and obtain a firm commitment from those sailors that they will sail in the FGC in May 2012. Any places declined by these sailors, in the outright qualifying positions, will be offered to sailors lower down in the qualification series.

As one or two of the leaders cannot sail the event, the decision to offer the places is working out well and the team is almost confirmed. Something to remind all sailors attending the FGC – all the boats will be fully measured so please double-check your certificates and that everything is in order.

The Notice of Race for the UK Nationals is available on the Finn Festival website and this promises to be an amazing event – could we get 100+ Finns on the start-line in Falmouth? No reason why not, so book early, the party starts May 4th with the opening ceremony and the first race Saturday 5th May. The club will be providing social activities and I am led to believe there is going to be a special 'Finn Beer' brewed for the occasion. As this event could easily see 100+ boats, Royal Cornwall YC have requested that entries are submitted online **before** 4th April 2012. All entries after this date and up to 28th April will be subject to a late entry fee – so no excuses, enter as soon as possible. It will be great fun: how often do you get to sail against Ben, Giles, Ed and the other top sailors from around the world?



Once you've recovered from Falmouth the Finn World Masters in Pwllheli takes centre stage. The Notice of Race and entry list are up and running on the event site and all the arrangements are coming together – another event for all Masters to attend. The entries are starting to come in, and I am told that the Olympic Torch Relay is visiting us during the Championship.

The 2012 sailing programme is almost finalised for this year, but as this issue goes to print in time for the Dinghy Show please watch the forum for updates as I am still awaiting confirmation of a few events. The only change for this year (due to all the 2012 events) is that the UK Masters will be sailed within the two-day event at Menegham Rhythe on 29-30 September, and not a three-day event as usual.

With travel costs increasing, ideas for venues will always be appreciated together

with constructive ideas for events. I am finding that if we can use Finn fleet clubs then the costs to run and to enter are reduced for all.

Again, thanks must go to JM Finn & Co for all their continued support of our class.

See you in Falmouth and Pwllheli – two events not to be missed!

Good sailing in 2012.

**Rory Barnes GBR-24**  
*BFA Secretary*



# 2012 Finn programme

## February

- 3-6 Squad Training Camp, WPNSA – GBR
- 14-17 Cannes – FRA
- 22-26 Squad Training Camp, Palma – ESP

## March

- 1-4 Squad Training Camp, WPNSA – GBR
- 3-4 Dinghy Show, Alexandra Palace
- 10-11 Spring Series, WPNSA – GBR
- 16-24 Finn Europeans, Scarlino – ITA

## April

- 1-6 ISAF Princess Sofia, Palma – ESP
- 10-17 UK Trials, WPNSA – GBR
- 14-15 Spring Series, WPNSA – GBR
- 14-15 Finn Inlands, Roadford – GBR \*
- 20-27 Semaine Olympique, Hyeres – FRA

## May

- 4-8 UK Nationals, Falmouth – GBR \*
- 11-18 Finn Gold Cup, Falmouth – GBR
- 23-27 ISAF Delta Lloyd, Medemblik – NED
- 24-30 World Masters, Pwllheli – GBR

## June

- 1-8 ISAF Sail for Gold, WPNSA – GBR
- 9-10 Warsash Open – GBR
- 16-17 Roadford Classic Event – GBR
- 16-22 ISAF Kiel Week – GER
- 23-24 Scottish Nationals, Largo Bay – GBR

## July

- 7-8 Southern Champs, Christchurch – GBR \*
- 7-8 Lord Birkett-Northerns, Ullswater – GBR
- 20-27 French Nationals, Quiberon – FRA
- 27-12 Olympic Games, WPNSA – GBR

## August

- 11 Starcross Open Meeting – GBR
- 20-24 Fed Week, Chichester – GBR
- 25-26 Scottish Inlands, Loch Venacher – GBR

## September

- 16 Bosham Open – GBR
- 22-23 National Ranker, WPNSA – GBR
- 29-30 UK Masters, Menegham – GBR

## October

- 13-14 National Ranker, WPNSA – GBR
- 27-28 Warsash Year End Open – GBR \*

## December

- 17-21 Christmas Race, Palamos – ESP

\* 2012 Traveller Series

**Keep up to date with 2012 events  
at [www.finnuk.org.uk](http://www.finnuk.org.uk)**

# ***Ben Ainslie – exclusive!***

PHOTO: RICK TOWLINSON



Ben Ainslee in training at Weymouth

# Pump talks to one of the very first members of Team GB to be selected for the London 2012 Olympic Games. Here are **Ben Ainslie's** thoughts on racing in Weymouth, the Falmouth Finn Gold Cup and Jess Ennis...



## **PUMP: Having won the Test Event, will you prepare any differently for the London 2012 Olympic regatta?**

**Ben Ainslie:** I think so. We are always working on developments, and we learnt a few things this year which we will change to improve the situation for next year. For sure I was happy with the outcome at the Test Event, but you can never rest – it's all about improving every part of your campaign.

## **Given your experience at the Test Event, in what ways do you think the Olympic regatta could be improved?**

I think it's a great venue. It's challenging both physically and tactically. The medal race course works in the south-westerly breeze, but the race officials will need to make some sensible decisions if we have any breeze out of north-west to north-east. We're keen to make the racing entertaining but it can't get in the way or affect the standard of the racing.

## **What would be your tips for sailors wanting to come down to see the racing – where should they watch from?**

I think it depends greatly on the course area you want to view. Osmington Heights can be good for the bay area. Portland Heights is obviously good for the harbour course. The Nothe Fort is ideal for the medal race course, but it will be restricted to ticket holders. Anyone who wants a day out should come down to Weymouth as there are so many places you can watch the racing from and there should be a fantastic atmosphere in the area.

## **You beefed up a lot for the Test Event – how hard was that to do ... and do you have any tips for us amateurs?**

The weight you sail at is pretty critical for your rig setup, etc. It is hard work to put on weight effectively and you need to do it with muscle, not lard. For sailors who aren't racing full-time I would suggest getting a rig which suits your natural weight and enjoy life! Putting on the weight sounds fun, but believe me it's hard work and very frustrating. I find the muscle weight hard to put on yet very easy to lose.

## **To what extent would you say your wins at Sail for Gold and the Test Event were down to your mental toughness and experience rather than being the fastest in all conditions?**

Both events were pretty brutal – certainly some of the toughest conditions I've ever raced in, and against some of the toughest competition too. It's fair to say I had to push myself to the limit, but sometimes that's what you have to do. I had pretty good speed and was able to match the bigger guys most of the time.

## **Do you think racing in the JP Morgan Asset Management Falmouth Finn Gold Cup in May**

## **will be an even tougher competition than the Olympic regatta?**

It will be great to be competing in Falmouth at the Gold Cup. It's the area where I started sailing and I have fond memories and lots of friends and family in the area. The competition at the J P Morgan Asset Management Falmouth Finn Gold Cup may well have a stronger fleet of sailors compared to the Olympics, as nations will have more than one sailor competing compared to the Games where it's strictly one sailor per nation. However, it's important to enter every competition with the same mindset: to do your best and hopefully win. The pressure comes from within – if there isn't pressure at an event you should be asking yourself why!

## **As far as you can tell us, what areas of equipment development have you been working on for Weymouth in 2012?**

Well it's hard with the Finn as most things have been tried and tested, but we will continue to try and develop in all areas.

## **What other sports are you looking forward to seeing at London 2012?**

Any sport where we're winning I guess. I think if Jess Ennis [heptathlon] can win gold that will be the standout performance from a British perspective.

## **Many of your rivals at the Test Event said you were so much faster than them. How have you been able to make such dramatic advances in boat speed in less than a year from coming back into the class, compared to others who have been sailing full-time for the past three years?**

It's often interesting to hear different perspectives. We worked really hard on trying to improve in all the areas – sometimes gains are easy to find and sometimes you work your arse off and still can't find anything. I try to prepare as well as possible and then just go out and race, I try not to worry about the opposition too much.

## **How do you cope with the huge burden of expectation on your shoulders of not only winning at home, but also winning your fourth gold medal in 2012?**

Well, it's hard to hide from so you just have to take it as reality and work as hard as you can to make it happen.

## **Finally, after you have won gold at London 2012 – as we all hope you will – will you be looking to carry on in the Finn to Rio 2016?**

I'm not sure I can continue in the Finn much longer, it's a great boat but the physical challenge at the top level is bloody hard these days. Who knows, perhaps a Star would be fun if it gets reinstated for 2016? ■

# Finn Gold Cup 2011



Race nine action

**T**he first day of the 2011 Finn Gold Cup delivered more than it promised as the wind exceeded the forecast light airs.

Ben Ainslie (GBR) won both his heats to lead overnight, while solid performances from Rafa Trujillo (ESP) and Zach Railey (US) left them in second and third overall. The regatta was split into equal fleets for the first few days before being seeded into gold and silver fleets for the remainder of the week, with a final medal race for the top 10 from the gold fleet.

The wind dropped half way through the first race with the 'R' flag raised to limit pumping again. Oscar was up again for the start of race two though, as the breeze built to a solid 15 knots, providing for some great sailing

conditions. This time, defending World Champion Ed Wright led round the top mark from Brendan Casey (AUS), Dan Slater (NZL), Railey and Ainslie. Ainslie took the lead on the first downwind to lead round the rest of the course for his second win of the day. Wright held on to second while Casey crossed in third.

In the blue fleet, starting second and sailing the inner trapezoid course, 2004 Olympic Silver medalist Rafa Trujillo (ESP) led all the way to win. He was followed over the finish by returning Olympian Chris Cook (CAN) who had not raced competitively for three years, and European Champion Giles Scott (GBR) in third.

The defending champion Wright said: "I had a slow start, though did better than last year.

But who said Perth was windy? I was surprised by the light weather conditions and I'm hoping for better winds for the rest of the week".

After a day's delay racing recommenced on Wednesday with three heats. The story of the day was the disqualification of a large number of sailors who picked up black flags in the blue fleet at the start of race three. These included several of the regatta favourites including Ed Wright (GBR), Rafa Trujillo (ESP), Zach Railey (USA) and Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic (CRO). ITO, Peter Reggio, explained: "It was a very trying day, but the conditions were fantastic. The left was favoured and this is probably why the guys were so eager to take this side and push the

## Robert Deaves reports from the 2011 Finn Gold Cup in Perth...



start which ended up in several recalls and disqualification. In the first race, four boats were disqualified in the first group and 11 in the second over three attempts to start."

It was always going to be a tough day off Fremantle and as the sea breeze filled in and built during the day. With winds peaking at around 22-23 knots and a substantial sea forming, conditions took their toll on the sailors – after nearly eight hours on the water they returned exhausted, though happy with a great day's sailing. In the yellow group, Giles Scott (GBR) immediately took the advantage of the stronger wind and won races three and four. He led most of race five as well, but got overtaken in the closing stages by Pieter Jan Postma

winning the next two races by significant margins, with Rafa Trujillo (ESP) picking up a second place and Deniss Karpak (EST) continuing his excellent week with a third.

Although Scott had the best day, he came off the water in second overall: "Everything went well today except in the last race when I rounded the wrong mark at the bottom gate and lost a place to second. I had good speed and was able to put some pressure on the early leaders. The first day of racing was frustrating; I had the speed but didn't sail smart. It was good to be fighting it off with PJ."

Postma added: "I had three good races so I am of course really happy, my speed is improving, I got more into the rhythm. I made a mistake on the first race [on Monday] so I have no way out. I have to be careful and watch out. Ben and Giles have no bad races. Tomorrow is the start of the final, but I will do my business as usual, try to take good start, good speed ... I am really looking forward to it!"

Ed Wright explained his race wins: "In the second race I came in from the right in the end. I got a couple of shifts out to the right and everyone was defending the left so I was quite lucky there. Downwind I extended, so I was happy with that, but I was struggling with the reaching, heading for the wrong mark."

On the Thursday Pieter Jan Postma (NED) won the race to extend his lead to two points over Giles Scott (GBR), while Ben Ainslie remained in third, another two points back. The fleet was treated to fantastic conditions once again with sunshine, 14-16 knots of wind and nice waves. Having been split into gold and silver fleets the ➤



And they're off!

# Finn Gold Cup 2011



GBR-41 Giles Scott, GBR-3 Ben Ainslie and GBR-11 Ed Wright lead the fleet

racing suddenly became much tougher. It also shed some light on the country qualification process for London 2012. With 18 places available in Perth, there were 21 nations in the gold fleet, so the race was on to be one of these 18. Three of the 21 will have to try again later this year in Falmouth.

Regatta leader Postma led from start to finish. Ainslie rounded the top mark in second with Scott in third. Scott sailed past Ainslie on the downwind and closed on Postma, but the Dutchman kept his cool and his lead to round the final windward mark with a narrow lead.

Postma and Scott then extended on Ainslie downwind to win by a sizeable margin from the five times champion. Behind them, Ed Wright (GBR) climbed through the fleet to finish fourth after a poor first upwind

Postma said: "It was great to win another race today. With just one race scheduled, I could put all my energy into this race. The British team had a great race, all in the top places. I have a bad race from the first day so am holding my breath. I still attack though and will keep racing this way. At this high level you just can't relax. You have to go for it. At the

same time I have to manage the risks, especially at the start to avoid a disqualification. Tomorrow is no exception, I will keep giving it my all."

After winning both races on the opening day, Ainslie had a string of four third places: "It is a real contest on the water with PJ and Giles. They are both really fast. I am a bit lighter than them so especially upwind they are faster than me. I have to try to hang on close to them and wait for them to make a mistake."

How does the training work between him and the other GBR sailors? "Training with the squad is great. We all realise that training together makes us all better. On the water it is each man for himself. However, this being said I have never had an issue with Giles on the water even when the racing is tight, which is surprising as we are often on the same bit of water."

Among the familiar faces in Perth was three times Olympian Anthony Nossiter (AUS) who just couldn't miss the opportunity to sail a Finn Gold Cup in his home country. Down in 26th place he was having a tough time, but enjoying every moment: "It's good to be back, but it's tough being a tourist. It's such hard work. I rounded the top mark about 10th today but ended up about 20th as the race went on. But it's good to keep your Olympic class skills. And it's good fun. There's no sailing better than



Jonas Høgh Christensen



sailing a Finn. I'll be a Master in two years so I am looking forward to that and going up against the Big Czech [Mike Maier]."

Skandia Team GBR coach Matt Howard commented: "We had five in the top seven today and so far so good. It reflects the long amount of time spent here training with the squad. The only one who didn't train this long is Ed, but he is the World Champion from a windy venue so he is expected to do well too. We all worked hard and so far it is paying off. Fingers crossed for the rest of the week. It is surely very satisfying for a coach but these results are even more satisfying when you are a sailor. For a coach though, it is hard to have a fully good day because in a big team there is always one of the guys who didn't perform so well. Today is one of those very rare days when everything works well."

On the Friday Ben Ainslie climbed back on top after another incredible display of consistency and skill. The five time Finn world champion built a two point lead from Giles Scott while overnight leader Pieter Jan Postma slipped to third another five points back. The wind gradually built during the day with 10-12 knots at the start of race seven, building to 15-16 knots by the end of race eight.

The early leader in race seven was Tapio



Pieter Jan Postma and Ben Ainslie

Nirkko (FIN), leading round the top mark from Jonas Hoegh Christensen (DEN) and Ainslie. Ainslie slipped past both of them on the first reach to lead down the run and was never headed, extending on each and every leg to win by a 30 second margin. Behind him Nirkko held on to second for a long time, but the defending world champion, put the throttle down on the final downwind to move up to second. Nirkko crossed in third.

Ainslie's main rivals finished deeper than they would have wanted. Postma recovered to fifth while Scott recovered to 10th. Ainslie's previous comments about keeping close and waiting for others to make a mistake happened sooner than any of them expected.

In race eight Scott made amends by leading all the way round for his third win of the week. He rounded the top mark ahead of Wright, Rafa Trujillo (ESP), and Ainslie. With the wind increasing it turned into a tough slog with the

British sailors gradually working their way to the front. Scott led Ainslie and Wright in from the left on the second beat and with Andrew Mills (GBR) also passing Trujillo, it was a British top four at the finish. Ainslie actually closed up on Scott on the final downwind for a very close finish.

Ainslie said: "It was a tough day out there, but I managed two good races. I was more consistent than PJ and Giles. PJ did struggle a bit in the second race and Giles placed 10th in the first. That's good for me because I needed another really good day.

"When you are a good sailor, people expect you to be winning all the time and it puts a lot of pressure on you. Some of the sailors out there are really hard to beat, the quality of the fleet is high and winning is never easy. With the free pumping, sailing downwind is often brutal. Sometimes I can imagine what it might be to be a rower. When you are racing, it is just amazing that you can keep pushing yourself so hard." ➤

# Finn Gold Cup 2011

Looking ahead to Saturday, he said: "Sailing tomorrow on centre course will be interesting. I need another good race before going into the medal race." Ainslie was later to rue these words...

Saturday was a day of stadium racing for the rock stars of the Finn class in Fremantle, with two gold fleet races sailed just off a grandstand which was almost filled to capacity with action hungry spectators. They got far more action than they expected. The shock news was that regatta leader Ben Ainslie was disqualified from both races under a Rule 69 hearing, while Giles Scott took a two point lead from Pieter Jan Postma and a nine point lead from Ed Wright into Sunday's deciding medal race.

As well as being a controversial day, it was also scorching hot with a solid sea breeze building around midday to reach 16-18 knots by the time the Finns started. It was ideal conditions for some full-on Finn racing, right in front of a willing audience.

For the first time the Finns were racing on the centre course, with the grandstand viewing platform next to the massive 'PERTH' sign. A confined leeward gate gave the spectators there, and on the beach in Bathers Bay, the best view of the racing. There was also a new course configuration, with three windward-leeward loops and a final dog-leg to the finish.

After losing the overall lead on Friday, Pieter Jan Postma needed to do something special to close the gap on the leaders. Race nine start after a general recall with a lot of river sailing tactics called into play as the fleet played the left side of the course, tacking – and calling for water to tack – near the sea wall. Postma emerged to round the top mark just ahead of regatta leader Ben Ainslie (GBR) and Jonas

Hoegh Christensen (DEN) close behind.

Postma and Ainslie battled tooth and nail throughout with Ainslie closing up on the third beat. However, Postma proved faster downwind and won his fourth race of the week, while Giles Scott (GBR) moved through the fleet from around eighth at the top mark to third at the finish.

After crossing the finish line, Ainslie boarded a camera boat after almost being swamped by its wake during the final leg and had an animated discussion with some of the crew before diving out to rejoin his Finn. Ainslie said: "On the final downwind leg of the race, I was hindered by a media boat, the actions of which I felt were seriously impeding my progress in the race." Though apologies were later offered from both sides, a Rule 69 protest hearing was held and Ainslie was disqualified from both the day's races. This then dropped him out of the medal race.

After another general recall, race ten started under a black flag. Unbeknown to Ainslie, he was its only victim, but carried on sailing unaware of the penalty. His plan seemed clear before the start and he sat on Postma throughout the race to push him as deep as possible. Tapio Nirkko (FIN) emerged as the early leader in the race but dropped back after the first lap. Eventually Rafa Trujillo (ESP) broke through to the front and held on for his second win of the regatta. Hoegh Christensen was having another great race but lost second place to Zach Railey (USA) on the final downwind.

Trujillo said: "In the first race I went swimming at the bottom mark. I slipped in the boat when I was about sixth. But I am really happy after a difficult day as in the second race I had a good motivation to do a good race to finish the championship. It was one to one downwind, borderline capsizing but I am happy that I won. It was nice out there. I think it was a good show for everyone."

The new overall leader Scott had another up and down day: "I rounded deep in the first race, about 15th, and had a good first downwind. I worked my way through and found myself in third, which was good, and then the second one was not good. I got caught in the 20 boats fight along the sea wall and didn't come out of that very well. People were calling for water and you'd tack back again and it got a bit tricky. It was a bit like river racing. For the medal race I think its OK but for 40 boats trying to race in such a small tight area, it was a bit marginal at times. And then there was the helicopter. It came a bit close and I saw all the water flying up in the air and PJ was sailing straight towards it. I really thought he was

Was the media too close to the racing?



going to capsize. It was way to low and directly over where you were going."

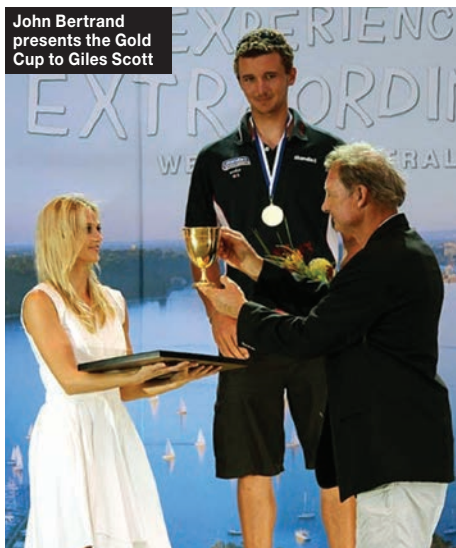
The end of the gold fleet marked the end of the first stage of qualification for countries for the Olympic Games, with Australia, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Ukraine and the USA filling the first 18 slots.

Jorge Zarif (BRA) said: "At the end of the race I heard people shouting from the grandstand but I didn't realise it was for me. Then I came closer and saw all the Brazilian team cheering up for me. Now I understand why ... I had just selected Brazil for the Olympics in the Finn. This is good. Now I have to win the trials. I win one point here for qualifying the country, I need to win the trials in Buzios in January. If I don't then it will be the first Brazilian in Palma."

The medal race was a fantastic finale and it didn't disappoint. With three sailors capable of winning the coveted title and three more capable of snatching bronze, it was an enthralling and exciting contest with a thrilling ending.

Sailed in a fitful sea breeze, Oscar flag was only raised at the second windward mark as the breeze topped 10 knots. Postma dominated the race from the start, winning the pin end and protecting the left side to round the top mark ahead of Jonas Hoegh Christensen (DEN) and Scott. Hoegh Christensen briefly took the lead in more pressure close to the sea wall on the first downwind, but Postma just broke the overlap at the leeward gate and from there on extended to lead throughout. Scott was close on the Dane's heels throughout and at the final top mark had closed the gap enough to be confident in his downwind speed to the finish. Scott went wider, surfed through to the lead as the fleet passed in front of the cheering grandstand, and was

John Bertrand presents the Gold Cup to Giles Scott





Race ten

closing on Postma towards the finish. But second place in the race was enough to take the Finn Gold Cup for the first time.

Both sailors held their heads in their hands after the finish and were clearly emotional. Postma had picked up another silver and for Scott, the realisation that even as European and World Champion, he would still not be going to the Olympics. For him it remains a hard pill to swallow.

Meanwhile, defending champion Ed Wright didn't have such a good day. At one point he was in last place but climbed to fifth by the finish to take the bronze.

After winning the Europeans in Helsinki this summer, Scott had said he had felt "total relief". Asked the same question again, he said: "The same, but more so. I don't really know why. Probably because it's the Worlds. But when I crossed the line I was a bit of mess to be honest. And it was a really weird feeling. There's five years to go to the next Olympics for me, though I am not really sure I have thought about it too much." On today's race he said: "I made things difficult for myself today. PJ did a brilliant job, as he has done all week, of getting off the pin end of the start line and getting the first shift right and he has almost led every race to the top mark. So as soon as I saw him do that I knew I had a bit on. I was just

thankful that I rounded so well."

Asked to describe the event in three words, the only word Scott could come up with was: "Emotional, really emotional. Rafa came over to me earlier and gave me a hug and said welcome to the Finn Gold Cup Club It's quite funny but it's great to be a part of that."

Wright commented on the race: "Today was harder, lighter and more shifty. I made some mistakes. I probably was a bit too much confident. At the start I was too eager, so I made a show for the public," he joked. "I crossed the line, was clearly over and came back. I thought my first beat was good and that I had gained some places, but the racing was so tight that I was last at the top mark. It was good racing, very close and tricky, it took me the full three laps to catch up."

You have to feel for Postma. After picking up a silver in 2007, many thought he was a real threat this year. He lost again by the smallest of margins, after dominating the medal race, his fifth race win of the week: "I missed the title by a point and it is hard, but I gave it all and more importantly I have greatly enjoyed the process. The racing was fantastic and fun, and that's the most important part. Giles had a better preparation than me, and is benefiting from a good programme. Working with the British Finn squad is a real advantage as he is always

training with the top four guys in the world. They push each other constantly. The British are a step ahead."

So there is a new name on one of the most hard to win trophies in the sport of sailing. At the medal ceremony at the World's Village, the Finn Gold Cup was presented to Giles Scott by Finn class legend John Bertrand.

The fleet reconvenes in just five months' time for the next Finn Gold Cup at Falmouth, the home waters of Ben Ainslie. So that is going to be really interesting, with some unfinished business for Mr Ainslie... ■

## Final results

(Medal race results in brackets):

- 1 GBR-41 **Giles Scott** 30 (2)
- 2 NED-842 **Pieter Jan Postma** 31 (1)
- 3 GBR-11 **Ed Wright** 45 (5)
- 4 DEN-2 **Jonas Hogh Christensen** 54 (3)
- 5 ESP-100 **Rafa Trujillo** 65 (8)
- 6 FRA-112 **Jonathan Lobert** 70 (9)
- 7 GBR-85 **Andrew Mills** 81 (7)
- 8 EST-2 **Deniss Karpak** 84 (4)
- 9 USA-4 **Zach Railey** 88 (10)
- 10 CRO-524 **Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic** 93 (6)
- 11 GBR-3 **Ben Ainslie** 88
- 18 GBR-9 **Mark Andrews** 113

# Classic Finns 2011

The Classic Finn fleet has grown this year, from a small nucleus of enthusiasts at Roadford Sailing Club led by Graham Brookes and Alan Williams to a competitive fleet with its own National Championship. We now have very cheap glassfibre Finns from the '60s and '70s enjoying racing alongside newer Vanguards and wooden Finns. We race at Classic and Vintage Dinghy Racing (CVRDA) events and as a fleet within the fleet at Finn events.

The year for classic Finns started off well with a new website – [www.classicfinn.org.uk](http://www.classicfinn.org.uk) – launched, devoted to classics. This site now hosts a lot of useful information on owning and sailing a classic Finn, together with a forum where advice can be found or sought on boat history, rigging, maintenance and renovation. A definition of a classic Finn has been settled on: “any boat built before 1985 and using a terylene (Dacron) sail with an alloy mast.” This prevents a confusing arms race with carbon topped or full carbon masts and keeps the fleet's speed more even.

## 2011 events

The Finn fleet at Roadford ran the Finn Inland Championship in April, and six classics joined in the fun. John Barnes in his Vanguard was the first classic, followed by Mark Belshaw in his wooden Taylor, with most of the classics managing to get in among the newer boats at some stage.


Then in June a fleet of eight classics converged on Mylor for the first Classic Finn National Championships, hosted by the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club. The forecast for Sunday was for gales and heavy rain, so before setting off on the Saturday morning a decision was made to sail five races and then wrap up. The races were held in the entrance to Carrick Roads, off St Mawes Castle in a shifty breeze. The racing was very enjoyable, with good close racing across the whole fleet. Two boats bought on eBay – Andi Wyer's Pearson and

Mike Bridgewater's newly restored 1963 Elvstrom – were enjoying the racing, whilst Mark Belshaw in his 1973 wooden Taylor was having a battle with Steve Robinson in his 1983 Vanguard for the front places. At the end of the day Mark had just done enough to win from Steve, with Peter Vinton in third place in his 1964 wooden Fairey.

## Get involved in 2012!

For 2012 the classic Finns will be joining their younger friends at the Finn Festival in Falmouth, sailing alongside the newer boats in the British Finn Nationals. It promises to be a great event and well worth dragging an old Finn out of hibernation for!

If you want to join in the fun this year, what should you be looking for? An old glassfibre Finn from the '60s or '70s can be bought very cheaply (from about £300). Most were soundly built and will just need the hull stiffeners and mast step checking and repaired if necessary. Later '70s and '80s glassfibre boats built by Vanguard will cost more (from about £1000) but will almost all be sound and competitive. Wooden Finns will need more care in buying, repair and maintenance – but wooden boats have the potential to be stiffer and lighter than older glassfibre boats, so as well as looking great they can be quite competitive too. The control systems will probably need sorting out on all older boats but the layout is pretty standard and information on efficient controls is all on the classic Finn website – [www.classicfinn.org.uk](http://www.classicfinn.org.uk). Most older Finns will come with a Needlespar alloy mast, but a Vanguard may have been upgraded with a carbon mast in which case a Needlespar may need a little searching for. A Dacron sail to match the Needlespar mast is also necessary, but fortunately these are easily obtainable.

Come and join the fun in 2012, at both the Falmouth Finn Festival and World Masters in Pwllheli! 



The Finn classics fleet



Peter Vinton in his 1964 wooden Fairey

**Peter Vinton** reports on the Classic Finn fleet's year...



# JM Finn UK Nationals

PHOTO: MIKE RICE



Allen Burrell

**A**fter winning the final two races of the JM Finn-sponsored Finn UK National Championships to take the overall win and the open title, an emotional Rob McMillan said: "It means an awful lot to me to win the British Open as an Australian. To come back here to race against people that you know and like in a great environment, it's actually quite emotional." McMillan was a three-times winner of the British Finn Nationals back in the early 1990s before moving to Australia.

Second overall was Laurent Hay of France, on equal points with McMillan but losing out on the overall win after a tiebreak – McMillan had won two races to Hay's one. Probably the fastest over the water in the lighter winds, Hay struggled in the stronger winds on the final day to lose the overall lead for the first time.

Allen Burrell was the very popular winner of the JM Finn British National Championships, after finishing in third place overall. This title is something Burrell has had his eye on for a very long time. Burrell first started in Finns in 1997 having been a very competitive sailor in other classes, but really struggled to make the grade in the Finn. However, his determination and persistence over the past decade has finally been rewarded with the highest domestic prize in the class – the Sunday Times Gold Cup.

## The event

The JM Finn, Finn UK National Championships at Christchurch Sailing Club was sailed over the long weekend of 6-8 May. Thirty-two Finns made the journey south to join the ten-strong local fleet for seven races in a wide range of conditions on Christchurch Bay. As it turned out, the Championships turned into a three horse race between McMillan, Hay and Burrell, though many others also put in a strong showing over the course of the weekend.

The British Finn Nationals is now in its 55th year, having been started back in 1956 after Vernon Stratton persuaded the Sunday Times to donate an unused pigeon-racing trophy to the Finn class for its National Championship. The Sunday Times Gold Cup, as well as the numerous other trophies on offer at the Championships, bears the names of many sailing heroes down the generations. This year there was added incentive to do well, as it was the second event in the JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifier Series to select the British team for the 2012 Finn Gold Cup, due to be held in Falmouth in May 2012.

The class is fortunate in having a great sponsor in JM Finn & Co. Could there be a more apt sponsor for the Finn class? JM Finn & Co is one of the UK's leading privately owned investment managers. Andy Denison, Chairman

of the British Finn Association said, "JM Finn & Co has been a great supporter of the British Finn Association since 2007, as the title sponsor of the British Open Championships, and we are very pleased that it has been extended through 2011."

"In 2012 there is the Olympics in Weymouth and in May the UK is also hosting the Finn World Masters in Pwllheli, which attracts upwards of 250 boats each year. All-in-all, the next two years will be the best Finn sailing the UK has experienced for a long time."

## Day one

Despite forecast threats of the great British weather making an appearance, the first day started with blue skies, high temperatures and a light patchy wind. In race one local sailor Rory Barnes got it right and rounded the first mark just ahead of Martin Hughes, David Potter, Simon Pettit, and Laurent Hay. Hughes took the lead on the downwind, but on the second beat Potter made his move and led down to the finish in the gradually dying wind.

A wait ensued for race two to start when a stronger wind eventually filled in. The wind clocked left throughout the whole race, so those who favoured that side made huge gains. First to the left was the 73 year-old Masters World Champion Legend Richard Hart, who

# Rob McMillan returns home to win the UK Nationals, but under the Aussie flag! **Robert Deaves** reports...

made such a gain that he led all the way round the course. He was followed round the top mark by Merrick Gill and McMillan. Pascal Tetard moved up to second on the downwind leg and was still in second at the second top mark, but rolled the boat into the bay on the final downwind as the wind started to increase. This allowed McMillan into second, while Hay also gained and crossed in third.

After the first two races Hay led from McMillan and Potter. Burrell was down in sixth after an indifferent first day, but all of that was about to change.

## Day two

With promises of stronger wind the fleet gathered at the club more in trepidation than anticipation as 35-knot squalls had swept through the harbour early in the morning. However, by launch time the wind was down to a manageable 12-13 knots and never really increased above 16 knots all day.

In race three, Burrell rounded the first mark ahead of Marc Alain des Beauvais and McMillan, and maintained his lead throughout the whole race after some great free pumping planing reaches as the wind peaked for the day at about 15-16 knots. McMillan worked his way through to second, while junior James Hadden sailed a great race to move up to fourth at the finish.

In race four most of the favourites went left, but the wind died and left them wallowing while the right came in with pressure on a nice shift. Graeme McDonald led round the top mark from Hay, Burrell and Hadden. The wind had almost gone at this point and the free pumping was removed at the wing mark, only for it to increase again. Hay led at the wing mark, but Burrell picked him off up the next beat to take a second race win of the day on the shortened final lap, while Hay placed second and Hadden picked up another third.

Hay found the front for the final race of the day and never let it go, despite the first reach being a fetch with a misplaced wing mark. The wind increased a bit for the final beat with Neil Robinson sailing a great last leg to move up to second, from junior Harry Briddon who placed third. Burrell maintained his challenge for the championship with another solid fourth place to move within one point of Hay with two races remaining on Sunday. However, McMillan was not far behind in third place.

## Day three

The Championships ended in fine style with two fantastic races in near-perfect conditions. The wind had strengthened and shifted to a

more southerly direction, making it more stable over the course area. With a solid 14-16 knots most of the day, and brilliant sunshine, it was a fantastic way to end a great Championships. After tricky winds the previous days, the sailors enjoyed stretching out and revelled in the challenging and exciting conditions.

Race six was led from start to finish by McMillan, with Allain des Beauvais and Burrell close behind. A third for Burrell was enough to take the overall lead, if ever-so-briefly. The wind died slightly for the start of the deciding race seven, posing the tricky decision of whether to stay inshore or go offshore.

Burrell opted inshore while McMillan went offshore, but it was Neil Robinson who rounded first with McMillan in close pursuit. Burrell rounded about 10th and the chase was on.

While McMillan moved into first, Burrell could only climb to sixth, just two points short of taking the open as well the national title. Robinson finished second while Allain des Beauvais crossed in third. A fifth for early regatta leader Hay was enough to tie on points for first overall with McMillan, but lose out on the tiebreak as McMillan had won more races.

## In conclusion...

Rob McMillan had previously won the British Finn National Championship in 1989, 1990 and 1992 before moving to Australia. So to come back and take the open title as an Australian was an emotional moment. He said: "It means an awful lot to me to win the British Open as an Australian. To come back here to race against people that you know and like in a great



Andy Denison



Start of race seven

PHOTO: MIKE RICE

PHOTO: CLAIRE ADB

# JM Finn UK Nationals

PHOTO: MIKE RICE



Rory Barnes

“It means an awful lot to me to win the British Open as an Australian...”

environment, it's actually quite emotional, and I am really pleased for Allen. I have known him since 1991 when we sailed Solos and to see him become National Champion is just fantastic.”

The new JM Finn, UK National Champion Burrell said: “It feels great to have finally won the British Finn Championship. It's taken long enough, but it's fantastic. Today I was very nervous before the start and that was probably my downfall. I was sailing a bit conservatively, especially downwind. But I am very happy with the final result. I was really impressed with the competition here this weekend. It's a very strong fleet, especially with a number of overseas sailors joining us. I think the standard was really high and it's certainly been very competitive.”

Hay, second overall, said: “It was a very good championships, the club and the people racing are great and it was a very interesting regatta. The English boys are very strong and very fast, so for me this was very good training. I am very happy to have come here. I did not win it this year but maybe I'll come back next year.”

Though Skandia Team GBR sailors did not race in the regatta, preferring to focus on their preparation for the Skandia Sail for Gold In

Weymouth, Giles Scott coached a very successful training day on the Thursday before the Championships and Ben Ainslie attended the Finn class dinner on Saturday evening, after spending time with some of the young sailors within the club.

The JM Finn, Finn UK National Championships was the second event in the JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifier Series – David Higham of JM Finn, who finished 39th in the Championships, said that it was a natural and obvious fit for the company to sponsor the Finn class: “JM Finn are really enjoying their association with the Finn class. I am thoroughly enjoying coming along to events and am grateful for everyone who is making boats available for me to use – and also trusting their boats in my hands, especially after my efforts last year. The event this year has been really great fun and thanks to Christchurch Sailing Club for hosting it so well – it's a fantastic spot. JM Finn looks forward to being associated with the Finn class for many years to come. With the Olympic Games coming up next year we are looking forward to supporting the class however we can going forward.”



On Saturday evening a prize draw was held for a brand new North Sails Finn sail, sponsored by JM Finn & Co. It was won by a surprised Allen Burrell. Left to Right, Andy Denison, Ben Ainslie, Allen Burrell



Left to right: British Finn Association Chairman Andy Denison, National Champion Allen Burrell, Open Champion Rob McMillan, second overall Laurent Hay, and David Higham of JM Finn

## Final results

- 1 AUS-2 Rob McMillan 18
- 2 FRA-75 Laurent Hay 18
- 3 GBR-2 Allen Burrell 19
- 4 FRA-99 Marc Allain des Beauvais 35
- 5 GBR-65 David Potter 42
- 6 GBR-679 Neil Robinson 43
- 7 GBR-635 Simon Percival 52
- 8 GBR-567 Martin Hughes 56
- 9 GBR-7 George Cooper 57
- 10 GBR-631 Richard Hart 67

# Vernon Stratton

**Richard Hart,**  
Chairman of the  
Technical  
Committee,  
remembers an  
influential man...

**W**hen I started Finn sailing in 1962, I only knew of Vernon as an important figure in the IFA and the BFA, and as our most recent Olympic representative in the Finn. I worked at sea in those days, so I didn't have a clear idea of who did what – but looking back, I think he provided a lot of support to a group who took Ricard Sarby's design, and set the technical framework for the success of the boat in the future. They included Martin Beale, who did so much for sailing in Chichester Harbour, Charles Currey, who did much work on lofting the lines to a greater detail than the first drawings, and Richard Creagh-Osborne, who developed the class rules to a standard almost unequalled at that time.

Somewhere along the line, Vernon recognised the brilliance of Gilbert Lamboley, so that in the 1970s they showed the world how to control the weight distribution in a dinghy class – with the swing test by famously carrying Vernon's 'Micky Finn' into the IYRU Conference at the Royal Thames to prove the effectiveness of the Lamboley swing test we still use today. I've been driving the paperwork for a while now, but the technical work was done then!

I think that Vernon should also be credited with playing a leading part in developing the class organisation from a comparatively modest Scandinavian background into a robust and truly international group; in 1956 he persuaded Tiny Mitchell of the Royal Burnham Yacht Club to present the Finn Gold Cup, and by the time I started sailing the Finn there was a Norwegian President, a magazine with a US Editor, a volunteer Class Secretary from Switzerland,



The Illusion fleet has organised a memorial regatta in Bembridge for Vernon on 10th March with over 45 boats already entered

and a working set-up for national associations all over the World. Vernon was IFA Secretary from 1961-64, and President from 1964-71.

Vernon was a first class Olympic sailor, as the sport emerged into the modern era of dedication demonstrated by Paul Elvstrom and others – **more** hours in the boat, **more** fitness, **more** preparation. Over the next few years Stratton trained hard and was unlucky in the 1956 trials for the Melbourne Olympic Games, narrowly beaten by Richard Creagh-Osborne.

Vernon finally won selection for Rome 1960. The sailing was held in the Bay of Naples, well known for its fickle light airs. Stratton always preferred heavy winds, and though he started well, with an eighth and a fourth place, the breeze dropped off throughout the week and he ended up 12th. He reckoned he would have had a much better chance in the strong conditions off Melbourne four years earlier.

For the 1968 Mexico City Games, Stratton was appointed sailing team manager, with wife Pepe, his assistant, the 'team nanny'. They made an approachable and formidable partnership. With his enthusiasm and energy he transformed the team's approach, bringing in training schedules and advising on race tactics. He also borrowed David Houghton from the Meteorological Office and sent him out to Acapulco Bay in advance to plot daily tides and winds and introduced tune-up boats for the first time to help the selected sailors get up to speed.

Diets were strictly maintained by the team doctor and the atmosphere of the camp was determined by Stratton's inspiration and dedication to victory.

All this coordinated effort led to gold in the Flying Dutchman for Rodney Pattisson and Iain MacDonald-Smith and bronze in the 5.5 metres for Robin Aisher and his crew.

Iain spoke at the memorial service for Vernon at Bembridge in October and told the story of how he and Rodney won their gold medals, of the huge impact Vernon's methods had, and how he laid the platform for what is now the RYA's hugely successful and professional British Sailing team.

Vernon actively sought out and encouraged sailors with the potential to reach the top, and extended the principles for a successful campaign to team level. He also lent Mike McIntyre and Bryn Vaile his Star that led to their winning gold in Seoul 1988. Sponsorship was still a new idea, and Vernon's advertising background helped British Olympic Yachting make the transition from amateur sailing to the modern era of sponsored regattas and professional sailors.

Vernon and Pepe's later years were spent around their beloved Bembridge Harbour, where Vernon fostered the growth of the Illusion fleet, attracting many top names to come and race in his winter series.

Thanks Vernon. ■

PHOTO: JESSICA DOBBS

# Reports...

## Finn Scottish Nationals



West Kirby's John Greenwood trying his luck north of the border

Scottish Area representative **Russ Ward** reports from the Finn Scottish National Championships, 20-21st August 2011...

**T**he 2011 Finn Scottish National Championships was once again held at the stunning location of Loch Venachar Sailing Club. With Scottish, English, Danish and South African nationalities competing, it could have been billed as a truly international event – which added to a great weekend both on and off the water.

The 12 to 15 knots of wind and sunny skies made for excellent conditions. As the first race got underway on Saturday with the Oscar flag flying, the leading competitors entertained the spectators with some pumping and rocking right on the edge. Race 1 had four different leaders as the wind swung through 30° which made it challenging with John Deleeuw of the home club taking the gun, followed by Finn newcomer Dave Love in second.

Races 2 and 3 were started with no Oscar flag flying as the wind had dropped to around 10 knots. Russ Ward worked out a lead of about a minute in both races to take the gun with Greg Shaw second and John Deleeuw third in both races.

With conditions remaining excellent for sailing, the race officer decided to put a fourth race in on the Saturday which was won in fine style by Kevan Gibb of Largo Bay. A newcomer to the fleet from the Solo class, and one who benefitted from his lighter weight as the wind



ing Photography

Russ Ward, John Deleeuw and Greg Shaw collect the spoils

PHOTO: IAN YOUNG

dropped, Kevan managed to stay ahead of Russ Ward in second and John Deleeuw third.

The now traditional Finn dinner at the Lade Inn was an excellent and very entertaining event with the international humour flowing along with the real ales that the Inn is famous for.

Sunday dawned with the Loch looking like a mirror, but the race officer delayed the start of race 5 until 11.30 by which time a steady 8-10 knots had blown in. This breeze held for the rest of the event.

Race 5 was won by John Deleeuw with Greg Shaw second and Russ Ward third. This set up a great final race as Russ needed to ensure he finished in the top two with John not winning in order to maintain his lead and take the event overall.

Race 6 got underway with Russ sitting to John's windward side on the start which ensured John could not make the pin end and had to gybe away at the gun.

The early race leader was Kevan who held on to his lead as Russ covered Greg up the beats from his position in 2nd. John caught Greg at the second windward mark but a collision between the two as they fought for water at the mark resulting in John's tiller breaking with his subsequent retirement left Greg to chase Russ downwind with the breeze filling in from behind. Russ and Greg then matched race each other on the final two laps leaving Kevan to sail off to win the final race, with Russ holding on to 2nd with Greg 3rd.

Overall results left Russ Ward crowned Scottish National Champion with 6 points followed by John Deleeuw in 2nd on 8 points closely followed by Greg Shaw in 3rd on 9 points leaving a clean sweep for the three Finn sailors from the home club.

## Results

- 1 **Russ Ward** Loch Venachar SC
- 2 **John Deleeuw** Loch Venachar SC
- 3 **Greg Shaw** Loch Venachar SC
- 4 **Kevan Gibb** Largo Bay SC
- 5 **David Love** Strathclyde Loch SC
- 6 **Bjorn Hanghoj** Strathclyde Loch SC

## Scottish Finn News

The good news from Scotland is that there are three new Finns now at Largo Bay SC and a further three new boats now at Strathclyde Loch Sailing club with another possibly joining the fleet this Christmas.

This together with three of us at Loch Venachar SC and the odd ones dotted around Scotland now shows a healthy growth north of the border. Next year we hope we can get a few more boats together at two main events that we will be planning for 2012.

- 1 The 2012 Scottish National Champs will be held at Largo Bay SC on 23/24 June
- 2 The Scottish Inlands will be held at Loch Venachar SC some time in August – dates to be confirmed.

It would be great to attract some of the northern guys to these two events – and I for one will be doing the Nationals, the World Masters, and what other events are possible.

New guys we are pleased to welcome to the Scottish Finn fleet this year are: Peter Malcolm, Johnny Paterson and Kevan Gibb from Largo Bay SC, as well as Dave Love, Bjorn Hanjoi plus one other from Strathclyde Loch SC.

We would love to welcome other Finn sailors from the north of England or even the south coast to our events set in a wonderful landscape and with great local hospitality – come and join the fun! ■

# Warsash Finn Open

## Martin Hughes reports from Warsash SC, October 29-30 2011

A cloudy, mild, autumnal weekend with winds between 12 and 17 knots saw 27 Finns arrive at Warsash SC for the final event of 2011. With some sailors travelling over 600 miles to attend the event, all boded well for an exciting weekend of highly competitive sailing in the perfect Finn conditions of the omnipresent Solent chop. The consistent south-westerly breeze ensured some thigh-busting upwind and roller-coaster off-wind sailing.

With so many enthusiastic Finn sailors attending, Principal Race Officer Jon Spencer had to keep his eyes well and truly peeled at the start of the first race. The line set with pin end bias, I flag flying, and a knot of tide pushing the sailors over the line meant most of the fleet sailed an agonising two-lap triangle sausage before they realised they were on the course side of the line at the start. Eventual race winner, Thorpe Bay SC sailor Alan Burrell sat chuckling to himself at the committee boat end of the line as he heard most of the fleets sail numbers called out by the PRO.

Two more races on Saturday were dominated by John Greenwood using his newly created North sail. Very close racing between the three Warsash sailors Nick Daniels, Paul Blowers and Martin Hughes as they vied for top five positions was only interrupted by occasional forays into the top of the fleet by Julian Smith, Alan Burrell and the three young Olympic squad aspirants, James Hadden, George Cooper and Harry Bridden.

Sunday dawned with some stiff bodies

and sore heads following the annual end of year supper. The slight moderation in wind strength was not readily felt as sailors were quickly covered in spray on the fast reach to the start area in a reasonably steady 14 knots of wind.

Three great races, with a variety of courses including upwind and downwind and a full two-lap triangle sausage, were all started to great effect by the PRO. All the sailors were more weary of the I flag and the outcome from the previous day, consequently everyone behaved themselves with three first time clean starts.

John Greenwood's consistency gave him first place overall, followed untypically by Alan Burrell with only two race wins. A couple of mistakes on the last leg of the course – including having to do turns for not giving a boat in another fleet room to round the last mark – consigned Martin Hughes to fifth overall, preceded by George Cooper and Harry Bridden.

## Final results

- 1 GBR-5 **John Greenwood** West Kirby SC
- 2 GBR-2 **Allen Burrell** Thorpe Bay SC
- 3 GBR-23 **Harry Bridden** Ogston SC
- 4 GBR-7 **George Cooper** Royal Corinthian YC
- 5 GBR-567 **Martin Hughes** Warsash SC
- 6 GBR-40 **Nick Daniels** Warsash SC
- 7 GBR-635 **Simon Percival** Christchurch SC
- 8 GBR-665 **Julian Smith** Mengeham Rythe SC
- 9 GBR-18 **James Hadden** Mountbatten SC
- 10 GBR-68 **John Mackie** Portdinorwic SC

# Allen Burrell – uncovered



Allen charging upwind at the 2010 Split World Masters



Allen at the 2009 Worlds

**PUMP:** You have been remarkably consistent in the Masters World Championships, with a 2, 6, 7, 7, 3, 11, 3 record over the last seven years. What do you put that down to?

**Allen Burrell:** I'm not sure really, I always try and stay out of trouble and not to push it too hard at the starts and so have been lucky enough not to have any really bad results that can ruin a series. If you look at Andre Budzien, he's been in the top two for several years but even he suffered a black flag and a DSQ this year from trying too hard to win the start.

It all went my way this year – we were expecting light conditions, I hadn't lost weight specially but the wind was perfect for me, with free pumping allowed in every race.

The other factor is all the encouragement I received from all the other Brits at the Masters.

When people keep telling you that you are going to do well, you tend to believe them...

**So how did it feel to win the silver this year – your best result ever?**

It was exciting, as there were three of us on equal points and it was only when I came ashore and worked out the count-backs that I realised that yes, I had made second overall. It is emotional and I am proud to have achieved my best result and improved on my personal best.

**Your results often seem to peak at the Masters – is that the focus of your sailing year?**

It's the highlight of the Masters racing season – the highlight of our year. The last few years we have been doing some early season training with coaching from Matt Howard at Warsash,

PUMP caught up with 2011 World Master runner-up **Allen Burrell** for breakfast at Thorpe Bay YC. Over the bacon and eggs we uncovered what makes the UK's most successful Master tick...



**“I just look upwind and decide what I want to do, and that's what I do!”**

and the keener sailors that go to that tend to push each other on.

**So with the Masters in the UK this year, will this be your year – and can you beat Michael Maier?**

Obviously I would like it to be my year and will be trying as hard as I can. I don't think Michael Maier will be my only problem by far. There rumours of people like Laurence Crispin coming back into the class, and lots of Brits who are going really well; John Greenwood, Martin Hughes and Nick Daniels. Also, you never know what the weather's going to do... it might be light!

**On the race course you seem to be a 'seat of the pants' sailor, with a canny intuition to always go the right way and**

**start in your own place. Is this true or do you just have us all fooled?**

It's all natural... As a child I was lucky enough to spend a lot of time on the water as my parents had a boatyard near Burnham-on-Crouch. I just look upwind and decide what I want to do, and that's what I do! Having been sailing a long time I tend to know what is going to work. If we're racing in separate fleets you can see what the boats starting before are doing and how they get on off the start – that can give you a good feel for what the conditions are doing.

If it's hiking conditions I do feel very confident in my speed to get off the line in the Masters fleet. I don't like to start right at the pin end, but prefer to start a bit shy of the pin with clear air so I can tack off if I want to go to the right. I also try not to start next to anyone I know can point high,

because my natural style is to sail fast and low.

**What's the secret to boatspeed in your favourite windy and choppy conditions?**

I guess we do sail in choppy conditions at Thorpe Bay, so I am used to that. Plus being heavy and going to the gym helps. I enjoy hiking hard and set my rig up for maximum power in those conditions. The obvious tip is to drive the boat through the chop and use body movements to help steer over and around the waves. Stick your shoulders back as you head up the face of a big wave and then bend forward as you bear off down the back of it.

**So what sort of fitness levels are we talking about? What do the rest of us need to do to go the same speed as Al Burrell? ➤**

# Allen Burrell – uncovered



Allen crosses ahead of rival Laurent Hay during a bruising encounter on the way to the silver medal at the 2011 Masters World in Punta Ala, Italy

I do quite a bit on the rower: I recently completed 10,000m in just less than 40 minutes. I do a lot of leg work – on the leg raise machine and squats – to help with the hiking, plus bicep curls to aid pumping downwind.

**You rarely seem to have an incident on the race course or suffer from other boats getting in your way. Your brain seems to have a great traffic management system – what do you put that down to?**

I try to avoid any trouble on the water. I'm trying to look ahead all the time and work out where I and other boats are going to be – it's a bit slow if you start having to do 720s! Just being aware of boats around you is important, I guess it's about having a good spatial awareness. Sometimes I would rather slow down if there's a pile of boats in front at a mark and let them sort themselves out and then find a gap or go wide and around to keep the momentum going in light airs,

instead of the 'crash-and-burn' approach – you can gain a lot that way.

**If you could change one thing about Finn racing, with the boat or the race formats, what would it be and why?**

Just sail upwind! I have always preferred the traditional big, long triangle / sausage courses, with more time to recover if you have a bad start. I don't like the short, 45 minute races where it's all down to your start. I like the courses that finish on an upwind leg, so that the smaller sailors like you can't get past me downwind!

**How do you think the UK Finn class could attract more junior sailors?**

I reckon the main problem is the price of the boats. It's good that they hold their value so well but it makes it hard for youngsters. You can't get a higher profile role model than Ben Ainslie to attract young sailors to the class; we just need to find them boats somehow.

**Despite your dominance on the water, you are infamous for switching boats, masts and sails – always looking for an extra edge. Why?**

I am always looking to go quicker – if you don't try new things you get stale and aren't going to go any faster. If you keep trying

Allen and Pump editor John Heyes in the pits at the 2011 Punta Ala Worlds in Italy





Allen leads the fleet at the 2011 Punta Ala Worlds in Italy

new things, one day you might find something that's much quicker. When you see other people going fast with new gear, like Adrian did last year with his WB sail, then you try it – and it worked for me at the Masters in Italy.

**We hear you're a big fan of Strictly... Who would be your chosen dance partner, and which celebrity dancer do you think your performance would be closest too?**

Aliona or Ola... I am not actually fussy really, they are all pretty fit, especially the one in the catsuit! In terms of who would I be closest to, I look a bit like Russell Grant – I'm a similar build and weight, but I have two left feet.

**We know you are a big fan of Marmite – just how important is it in your pre-race build-up and what would you not ever but Marmite on?**

It's very important! I had to have it flown in to the Masters Worlds in Hungary so that I could have some for breakfast every day. The annoying thing is when we go to an event sharing the accommodation, and other sailors go and eat it all! It's lovely with peanut butter and on scrambled eggs – it goes with everything really. The only thing I wouldn't put it on really would be a roast dinner... Liz would kill me! ■

**“ I look a bit like Russell Grant – I'm a similar build and weight, but I have two left feet ”**

Allen on the podium, alongside Michael Maier at the 2011 Punta Ala Worlds in Italy



# Juniors – Jack Arnell



The latest recruit to the Finn fleet looks to be the ideal build and height. At just 14 years of age he's already 6'2" and has all the makings of a great Finn sailor...

## Jack Arnell

**Born:** 05/07/1997

**Age:** 14

**Height:** 6'2"

**Club:** Christchurch SC

Sailing is in Jack's blood. From almost the day he was born, Jack was sailing with Granddad on his cruiser. At the age of 4 ½ his dinghy racing career began, crewing for Uncle Chris in the Mirror dinghy. His dad says Chris did all the hard work while Jack munched on his sandwiches, but in truth he was already handling the jib and spinnaker and learning fast! By the end of his first summer season he had enjoyed his first solo sail – and also his first capsized – in his very own Topper.

In 2005, aged 7, Jack crewed for his dad in the Mirror Nationals at Poole. The following season he entered the Topper Nationals at WPNSA, with his best race result a 42nd out of 136 competitors.

Jack outgrew the Topper at 10 and went into a Laser Radial – but, even then, his dream boat

was the Finn. By the time he was 12 years old Jack was borrowing his uncle's OK. Enjoying the challenge of the OK he took part in a couple of open meetings and managed a few races in borrowed boats at the 2010 Nationals.

In May 2011 Christchurch hosted the Finn Nationals. Jack was part of the safety crew. He sailed Andy Denison's Finn back to the sailing club after a race and fell in love with it. Three months later he was sailing his own Finn, taking part in his first Finn open meeting aged just 13.

At Christchurch Sailing Club there are 10 Finns and a competitive fleet which is helping Jack to progress quickly. Four of the members have qualified for the Gold Cup in Falmouth in 2012 and Jack is now working with a coach and training hard to compete as a junior. He is very much looking forward to the experience of sailing against the world's best at the JP Morgan Asset Management Finn Gold Cup.

When asked about the Finn, Jack replied "Even though it's a powerful boat, she's great fun to sail and I would love to compete against more juniors."

Jack has found the Finn to be much bigger

and more powerful than the Laser, and has found roll tacking a much heavier boat hard work. Jack reckons the Finn is a challenging beast to sail as you have so many controls and mast settings to adjust to get the best out of the boat, but finds it a great challenge.

To buy the boat Jack had to sell his Laser, and his dad sold his as well to help fund a 2000 Devotti with a Needlespar rig. Jack is now working towards a carbon rig for next year. He fell in love with the Finn after watching the sailing at Beijing 2008 with his dad. Watching Ben Ainslie claim his third gold medal inspired him to get his own Finn.

We asked Jack what he considers the best part of sailing the Finn, and he replied that he loves sailing upwind in a breeze as the boat just rides the waves and powers on. However, he adds: "I haven't really mastered the downwind sailing yet as the power of the boat is quite frightening at times, but great fun. I need more time sailing on the sea to master the waves better, and have realised how fit you have to be to sail the boat to its best."

Jack's best race to date was sailing at

# Junior 2011 Campaign



Weymouth in October at the JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifying Series. Racing against Giles Scott, World Champion Ed Wright, Andy Mills and Mark Andrews made one of his dreams come true – to actually race against the elite of the class. Even though he finished last overall, Jack realised just how much work is needed to compete at the very top. Two weeks later he raced at the end of season JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifier at Warsash which included the UK's best club sailors and found the racing hard work as it was a brisk wind all weekend. But Jack loved it and learned so much from the experience and from the fact that Finn class members are always on hand to help and provide advice.

When asked what would attract more youth sailors to the class, Jack said it would be great if there was an under-18 section, which he thinks would bring younger kids in. Jack's dad is coaching him but has realised the boat is hard to crack, so the father and son team has enlisted a little help from a great friend Andrew Rushworth and a former Olympic coach, which has been a great help. The team has now got Jack on a fitness training schedule as he hopes to be competing at the Falmouth Finn Festival in 2012 as a junior entry. Jack is currently lying 23rd in the JM Finn Gold Cup Qualifiers which is a great achievement for anyone who has been sailing the boat for only three months, let alone a 14 year-old lad. Go Jack go!

## James Hadden reports on his international season...

**T**his year I competed in five international events, three ISAF World Cup events, the Finn Europeans and the Nordic Open Championships.

The first big event of the summer for me was the Delta Lloyd Regatta in Medemblik, a venue which many of the Masters are familiar with. Having never sailed in Medemblik before I was looking forward to a new challenge, and as the forecast promised 30 knot winds it was sure to be exciting. We only managed 6 races of 11, with high winds causing two days on shore – this is the risk when travelling long distances around Europe, but I feel that the lessons that I learnt made the event worthwhile.

Having done both Sail for Gold and the Junior Worlds I was starting to be recognised and becoming known within the fleet, which when travelling alone is a massive morale boost and it's great to be able to talk to different people around the fleet. Although for many of the Masters camping is feared and to be avoided, it does mean a huge amount of money is saved at the event. It is not the best preparation but with this year being more about experience rather than results it is something that can be learnt from.

Sail for Gold was the next event and this time being a 'home event' I felt much more relaxed going into the racing. Once again the forecast was a typical Weymouth howler for the start of the week, with the possibility of lighter winds towards the end. With the exception of the lengthy sail out, the event was good and I had a couple of good races. Harry Briddon also completed at Sail for Gold but found the conditions understandably tough considering the short time he has been in the boat. With this event being a lead up for the test event, the competition was tough but again I felt that I learnt a huge amount.

After Sail for Gold I travelled out to Kiel, Germany, for Kiel Week. George Cooper also came out to this event and we both had a good week. The conditions were tough with the course being close into the shore and the endless German rain making upwind 'fun', to say the least. This event saw more juniors than the other two events, and it was a good experience to race with competitors of the same level. We both camped for this event

which although cold and wet again saved us money, easing the strain on the budget. Due to travelling costs I decided to go straight from Kiel to Travemünde to get the ferry to Helsinki. This meant I would be in Helsinki for three weeks, but the cost of driving back to the UK then back to Travemünde was more than the extra accommodation.

I stayed in an apartment in Helsinki which worked out cheaper than a hotel, and as a tip for anyone going to Helsinki – take your bike! The cost to park in the city is ridiculous, so leaving my car at the sailing centre saved me lots of Euros. Whilst out in Helsinki I competed in the Nordic Open Championships against a number of the top Swedish and Finnish sailors, which allowed me to get some training done with these guys. I also sampled some culture by eating with the Swedes on the last day of this event, the food took some mind power to eat but tasted surprisingly good!

The Finn Europeans as my last event on the calendar was my main focus for the summer, and without doubt was the most enjoyable. Whilst training before the event I had a chance to sail with a number of the top guys and it was great to learn from them. After a treacherous sail through numerous unmarked channels to the race area the racing was intense, I had a couple of good races again, and can learn from the mistakes I made. It was good to get to know the fleet better and the experience gained from this was valuable.

I managed all of these events on a tight budget, and some of the lessons I learnt will be useful in the future. One problem with travelling around Europe alone is that costs cannot be shared. Ferries – especially long ferries to Helsinki – are very expensive, and accommodation likewise costs large amounts of money. These costs cannot be avoided, so trying to make savings where possible – for example at events that are not as important – helps to ease the strain slightly. Finally, planning well in advance can help to find the best deals, and travelling at weird times of the day will save you money too! ■



# Sail development

PHOTO: ROBERT DEAVES



'Super-athletes' - Jonas Høgh Christensen on the new North GP design sail chases Ben Ainslee

It's worth sharing, that after making the crazy decision to do the Europeans rather than the Masters in 1999, I got the shocking reminder – or should I say my body got reminded – that Finn racing at the top level really is a fit man's sport. I also remember, about 18 months after that, talking to some of the coaches that were in Sydney, that the Finn results pretty much followed exactly the strength and fitness levels of the guys in the top 10: the fittest guy won and the 10th fittest guy came 10th – it was as simple as that.

But hey! That was a decade ago and things have moved on ... or have they?

I truly believe that they have ... and massively! I'd say it was pretty much indisputable that the guys racing Finns at the top level today are fitter, stronger, more accurate with their steering and more consistent than they were even 18 months ago – and by a factor that's probably far greater than we could guess at. They are now 'super-athletes'. Yet still, when we old fellas specify our equipment, we look for the same equipment used by those younger, stronger, more accurate, more consistent... Quite understandably, just as I have done in the past, there is comfort in the knowledge that our sail designs and mast numbers are either exactly the same or within millimetres of those far better equipped than us. All in the vain hope that we can replicate their performance, and if not their performance, at least their 'speed'.

Yet I'm certain now that just copying what

the 'super-athletes' are using is not fast for us older guys. I know the truth is hard to accept ... but it only takes a sideways glance in the mirror to realise that we are not as tall, not as powerful nor as fit as those guys. "Ah," I hear you say, "But that's only going to make a difference when they start hiking!" Well, to a certain extent you might be right – but the reality is, having raced close to the boys at Weymouth back in October, that even when it's not full hiking conditions, their work-rate in the boat in maintaining accuracy and consistency in steering and sail trim was uplifting to watch. That whole weekend at Weymouth was a fantastic experience and made me much more aware of how high the bar really is now in terms of absolute performance.

I think it's important to understand how high the bar is now, to fully comprehend the need for specialist equipment to help the performance of those less able than the 'super-athletes'. Just take a trip to your local golf shop to see what I mean. Golf is also a sport where the top guys have become stronger, fitter, more accurate and more consistent. Whilst the golf shops my well advocate the brand chosen by Rory McElroy, they are more likely to offer a more senior or less fit looking customer a quick glance at the rescue clubs or the softer shafted drivers that whip a bit more to improve head speed through the ball. Tennis follows the same pattern too – fitter athletes using stiffer, more powerful equipment.

Finn sailors the world over have always understood that a softer mast suits the lighter sailor, yet I'm not sure that many of us understand to what degree the softer mast suits us as we become less powerful. By sheer coincidence, the mast I got when I bought Jim Hunt's old boat from Ray New was more or less exactly the same as my old Latini from 2000/02. Whilst the fore and aft numbers are standard, the sideways measurements are certainly a lot softer than those of the 'super-athletes' – and more than likely softer than a lot of other masts out there. However, the reality is that not many of you are going to rush out and change to a softer mast just because of a few observations and different ideas. Hence it's my view that it's both necessary and desirable to develop a sail that's much easier for us older, less powerful guys to sail with.

## Developing a new Finn sail

When Dave Potter and I started on this project in September 2010, there were four objectives:

1. To produce one sail for all conditions, that was easier to use, less sensitive to trim and reduced our need for accuracy and consistency.
2. To produce a flying shape that was less powerful as wind-speed increased and less liable to over-trimming as it decreased.
3. To make the sail in a cloth that lasted longer than the current cloth to increase the workable life of the sail and therefore improve value.
4. To work with a brand that could offer international distribution and a high level of process management to ensure quality of production.

The early work with Ullman quickly produced a result – winning the Inlands in March with a flat sail, set up with the mast well aft that performed really well in the light winds and flat water. We then worked on making the sail easier to use on the sea, and confidence was gained with a few race wins at qualifiers and the Masters later in the year. The sail we produced really performed well, as we saw at Weymouth in October. In spite of those achievements and Ullman's 12 months of commitment to the project, I had some reservations on timings which led to me moving the project over to North Sails. The decision was driven mostly by time and ultimately by my goal of having a finished product by the end of 2011 so I could move out of the development phase and work within the 100 or so hours I could fit in during 2012 leading up to the Masters in Pwllheli.

I started working with North at the beginning

# John Greenwood (GBR-5) shares his experience of developing a sail for the non 'super-athlete'...

of October 2011. Paul Hobson understood completely the situation North were in, that whilst they maintained a dominant position at the front of the 'super-athlete' fleet, WB Sails were making good progress with a different product approach: a cross-cut sail made of different cloth that provided a bit more feel than the ranges they were currently producing. A similar story was true in the Masters. Michael Maier was doing a great job with Doyle and the WB was becoming a popular choice. Timing, leading up to 2012, and my passion for the project led North to offering their full support to the project's objectives.

After learning about the range, I began to understand that during the programme for Beijing 2008 that led to the M1 and M05 sails, there was a development that put more shape into the front of the sail producing a more powerful sail. Our starting point was to use the original M1 mould that would immediately produce a less powerful shape. Our next task was to make the sail easier to trim, less critical to rake settings – and in the lighter stuff, less sensitive to mainsheet tension. We did that by building more twist into the sail at the very top. To prevent that extra twist compromising the pointing ability, an extra seem was put in at the top of the sail to help keep the twist to the top section of the leech and help support the leech from the third battens downwards.

Charlie dropped off my first sail just before the Warsash Q, so the first time I properly sheeted the sail to the deck was on the way to the first start. As my mast is very much the same as my old Latini, I'd set the sail up just I had done back in 2000 and 2002 – and right

from the go I was better than 'on the pace'.

Feedback from Warsash was very positive. I felt that the sail was easy to control and as the wind increased from say 12 to 15+ knots, I did not get that sudden increase in helm and could keep the boat in balance very easily without cunning controls and aggressive use of the outhaul. I found that even at lower wind-speeds I was using more Cunningham to keep the draft forward and that the extra twist coming out of the top of the sail sucked out some more shape, making the power easier to control. My conclusion off wind, was that whilst my speed on the reaches was great, I was not using enough vang on the runs, with the sail twisting more than I was used to, and opening up quicker on the pumps. So I just need to get used to that and readjust my marks.

Following Warsash, I had two objectives. Firstly to finalise the sail shape. I wanted to make sure the sail had enough in the front third to cope with the chop and bad sea conditions we are likely to get at Pwllheli. Testing was carried out on the Dee Estuary at West Kirby, with severe chop in the shallower areas on a changing tide. There were no problems. Tack full forward, Cunningham hard on, less leech tension, outhaul slightly eased when I needed more power. Conclusion – sail shape fine. No further alterations required. That's been backed up by testing in Australia. Jonas Høgh Christensen took the sail down to Perth for the Gold Cup and gave a lot of positive feedback after training and measured in the GP1.1 (as the new sail is now termed) and an M1H for the regatta.

My second objective was to test different cloths, to increase long-term stability and reduce

shrinkage. The standard Technora cloth has a lot of positive properties that make it absolutely appropriate for the Grand Prix sails that the full-time guys use. We also recognise that the Masters' needs are different. We are less powerful, less accurate and less consistent than the pros – which we've recognised in our sail development. Yet at the same time we want long term stability in the sail, and if possible less shrinkage.

The sail I used at Warsash was made from 0.75 and 1mm Technora (a Japanese branded version of a Kevlar product with a black died polyester overlay) which is exactly the same as the standard M1

A pure Kevlar sail should offer greater stability, but the challenge was getting the cloth weight right. A 0.5mm Kevlar has been used successfully to extend the wind range of the M0.5 from 8 knots, in its polyester configuration, to 12 knots. Less successful have been trials using a 2mm Kevlar – the standard cloth now in most performance classes North support, but only on stayed masts where there is greater rig control. The issue was that the cloth was just too stiff and did not 'work' in the same way we expect our Finn rigs to work. Even Charlie's extensive testing in the Solo Class concluded that the cloth did not respond as required and was simply too stiff. Given that the Solo Class has overcome the stability / value challenge by moving to a 3DL, the best option open to us was to have a Kevlar cloth made specifically for the Finn in a 1.5mm configuration.

First view of the Kevlar sail looks good and as I sign off here, we are progressing testing to see how the Kevlar sail performs across the wind range. Let's see how she performs. ■



# Finn World Masters



**A**midst a truly idyllic pinewood forest where the Tuscan hills meet the shores of the Mediterranean, the 2011 Finn World Master

Championship opened following an impressive flag bearing ceremony at the Punt Ala Camping Resort, the host and major sponsor of the regatta.

284 Finns from 28 countries were finally registered, making this the largest Finn event of all time. The first day's racing got off to the perfect start with eight heats in absolutely fabulous sailing conditions. With so many boats, the sailors were split into four coloured fleets with their own starts, on one of two racecourses.

On course 1, Yellow fleet was the first to start. Most of the fleet favoured the left hand side, though the wind was pretty stable across

the course area. Geza Husar (HUN) took the first race from Martin Hughes (GBR) and Jan Willem Kok (NED), after Kok sailed a wrong course to the finish and lost places. Hughes claimed he was lucky, as the first four boats headed for the wrong mark, but he couldn't repeat his form in the second race due to a slipped halyard, so the win went to Kok followed by Christian Kühlwein (GER) and David Potter (GBR).

In the Blue fleet, Allen Burrell (GBR) largely had it all his own way leading round both races and winning the second race by an impressive margin. Despite a 10 degree pin end bias in race one, Burrell started at the committee boat end and went hard right for the expected right-hand shift as the day went on. In a 15-knot

north-westerly breeze that later dropped to 10-12 knots, the long, deep waves made upwind sailing challenging and downwind sailing exhilarating with long, fast surfs all-round. In the first race Burrell was followed by Arwin Karssemeijer (NED) and Luuk Kuuper (NED), while in the second race it was Andreas Bollogino (GER) and Johnny Aagesen (DEN).

Over on course 2, a sequence of general recalls and black flags delayed the racing with a number of boats pulled out. The Green fleet was dominated by the defending champion Michael Maier (CZE), leading both races from start to finish. In the first race he finished ahead of Kenneth Boggild (DEN) and Marc Allain de Beauvais (FRA), who were both later scored OCS, so Laurent Hay (FRA) moved up to

# Robert Deaves and John Heyes report from the 2011 World Finn Masters in Punta Ala, Italy



second and then picked up another second place in the next race with Allain des Beauvais in third again.

In the Red fleet, Uli Breuer (GER) won the first race from Thomas Moerup-Petersen (DEN) and Bas de Waal (NED). Three times champion Andre Budzien (GER) rounded the first mark deep and climbed to fourth offwind by the finish – he then went on win the second race, overtaking early race leader Breuer offwind.

With two wins apiece, Allen Burrell and defending champion Michael Maier headed up the fleet overnight, while in third overall was Uli Breuer (GER) – an ex Star sailor and new to the Finn fleet, he picked up a first and a second. With four fleets racing at any one time and the scores effectively multiplied by four each race,

it was soon realised that every point was valuable – every boat lost or gained is the equivalent to losing or gaining four points, so naturally the competition was intense. Nick Daniels (GBR) had a good day with a 4th and 5th in his first Masters event and in Burrell's much cherished old boat.

While course 1 had Oscar flag raised for free pumping throughout, on course 2 Oscar stayed in the race officer's pocket all day, leading to some yellow flags for over enthusiastic sailors. Maier commented: "Today was good, great reaches and nice upwind sailing. We had very nice conditions for surfing but I didn't understand why we didn't have free pumping because it was perfect conditions for this. I actually capsized on the last downwind, but got it up very quickly and only lost 100 metres, but still managed to win the race."

## Day 2

The day started almost windless with brilliant, burning hot sunshine but it was soon obvious a sea breeze was building and by the time the fleets reached the race areas, there was a solid 12 knots in place. Oscar flag was flying on all the downwind legs, with the wind building to around 15-16 knots before easing off for the finish of the final race as an inland thunderstorm rolled past.

On course 1 in the Yellow fleet, Allen Burrell really enjoyed the excellent conditions, stamping his authority on the fleet with two great wins after repeating his right hand track upwind from the previous day. Enrico Passoni (ITA), an old Finn Olympic campaigner from the '80s, chased Burrell who held a good lead to finish second in race one, while Marc Allain des Beauvais (FRA) followed in third place. In the second heat of the day Adrian Brunton (GBR) started at the pin and went left initially before crossing to the right and in so doing picked up second place behind Burrell, to go with a fourth

*finnsailing [ finn~sæ-ling] obsession.  
The fine art of getting really wet,  
really cold, going nowhere really  
fast, while spending really large  
amounts of money.*

from the earlier heat. The light weight sailors found the going hard in the testing breeze and stiff chop, making it hard to power through the waves without the necessary momentum and a powerful rig. However, Richard Hart (GBR) made light of his Legend category by scoring an impressive 18th in the Yellow fleet, ahead of many of the more youthful masters, only to be matched by the young pretender to his Legend throne – Howard Sellars (GBR) with two 18s on the other race course.

There was drama in the Blue fleet as Andre Budzien – one of the pre-event favourites and a two time Masters champion – led from start to finish in the first race after starting at the pin and crossing the fleet, and then tried the same in the second race only to get there too early and be scored BFD. In the second race, Uli Breuer led at the first mark but Budzien passed him offwind. Breuer held on for second, which was later converted to a first, to add to his second in the first race of the day. Mihail Kopanov (BUL) finished second in the second race while strong third place finishes went to Nick Daniels (GBR) and Oleg Khudianov (RUS).

On course 2, Red fleet was dominated by Thomas Moerup Petersen (DEN) with two race wins to lift him to fourth overall. Kenneth Boggild (DEN) and Arwin Karssemeijer (NED) picked up second places while Thomas Gautschi (SUI) and Bas de Waal (NED) picked up thirds. Michael Maier dominated Green fleet again with two ➤



# Finn World Masters



Michael Maier

more impressive race wins. Peter Kurz (SUI) and Jan Willem Kok (NED) finished second while Laurent Hay (FRA) finished third in both races.

## Day 3

On day three, for the first time the top two boats got to race each other head-to-head in an individual heat, with Burrell going against Maier for the first time.

On course 1, in the Yellow fleet, Uli Breuer took an early lead from Jurgen Eiermann (GER) – though by the finish it was Marc Allain des Beauvais in second with Mihail Kopanov (BUL) continuing his good week with a third. In the Blue fleet, Thomas Moerup Petersen won his third race of the series to stay in contention at the top. Paul Blowers (GBR) sailed well into second, while Jan Willen Kok (NED) crossed in third.

However, most of the leading sailors were on course 2. In Red fleet, Lars Hall (DEN) led all the way to the final downwind mark, when Andre Budzien (GER) – who had rounded the top mark very deep after an awful start but made gains on every leg – came past. Kenneth Boggild (DEN) also made gains on the final downwind in the fantastic surfing conditions to cross in third, while Adrian Brunton (GBR) who spent most of the race in second ended up fourth and Nick Daniels again well up in 5th. But Budzien had to retire after the finish following an infringement at the start, when the Jury determined he didn't do his penalty turns correctly, and the top three moved up one. With a black flag disqualification already from Tuesday, his hopes of a fourth title were now gone.

Over in Green fleet, Michael Maier led at

every mark as usual and built a massive margin offwind to take his fifth race win in a row. Allen Burrell rounded in second and was then overtaken by Laurent Hay but Burrell, old 'mates' with Hay, clawed back on the second beat much to his satisfaction and led the Frenchman into the finish. Howard Sellars kept his claim on the Legends trophy alive with a steady 19th.

## Day 4

Day four started with a postponement ashore as the sea breeze failed to materialise by 12.00. The fleets were sent out an hour late in sweltering temperatures and a further postponement afloat meant that the first heats didn't get away until nearly 14.00 – and even then only in 4-6 knots of unstable breeze with many pressure bands and holes.

On course 1, in Yellow fleet, light airs expert Laurent Hay (FRA) started at the pin and immediately tacked across the whole fleet, but a few more boats went further to the left and found more pressure and rounded ahead. Francesco Faggiani (ITA) already had a good lead at the top mark, which Hay, who rounded in sixth, gradually reduced to move up to second, but he could not catch the light weight Italian. Christian Kühlwein (GER) crossed in third.

In the Blue fleet, Uli Breuer found more pressure on the left on the first upwind and then more on the right on the second upwind to lead throughout. Andre Budzien (GER) spent the race trying to catch him up but didn't quite make it. The old fox Howard Sellars (GBR) was

also up the front and rounded the gate in second, before finally finishing fourth behind Budzien and Davourlis Panagiotis (GRE) who climbed through the fleet on each leg. After his fourth place finish, Howard Sellars became the favourite to take the coveted Legend trophy, with a useful 34 point gaps on previous winner Richard Hart. He said of his race: "I started four boats up from the pin, just over the top of Andre Budzien. I think we were all a bit shy of the line because it was a black flag. He tacked over early and I couldn't because of a boat on my hip. When he finally tacked it left me as most windward boat, and I lifted over the fleet, and rounded the top mark in fourth. I stayed to the left on the run while the others were playing with each other on the right and I rounded the bottom mark second behind Uli Breuer. I didn't get it right up the second beat and was back in sixth at one point, but got a nice lift into the top mark, and from then on it was a procession to the shortened finish." What would winning the Legend prize mean to him? "I could be quite emotional about the whole thing, but it would be absolutely wonderful to win it. I've done a lot of sailing but it would be right up there among all the things I have done."

Over on course 2, Marco Buglielli dominated Red fleet from start to finish, winning with a margin of around 200 metres. Florian Demetz (ITA) placed second with Jonny Peach (GER) in third. Lots of boats were pulled out with black flag disqualifications after several restarts.

For the regatta leaders the real interest was in Green fleet where three out of the top four

were up against each other. Initially Thomas Moerup Petersen (DEN) had the advantage, but Michael Maier caught him on the second upwind, coming in with more breeze from the wide left to claim his sixth heat win of the regatta. Meanwhile Enrico Passoni (ITA) slipped into second place, yet Allen Burrell (GBR) could only manage a sixth after an impressive recovery from a hopeless position on the far right of the trying course, to drop him to third overall. As the wind was still only about four knots the race officer then decided to call it a day and sent the fleet home – which, typically, meant that the breeze almost immediately filled in and stayed in at 8 to 10 knots.

Marco Buglielli would have liked another race in the lighter condition, but he commented on his big win: "I started mid-line during a shift to the left and immediately tacked and played the shifts. I was very fast and that was it. I was first at the top mark with Jonny Peach just behind me and then I really extended downwind and had about a 200 metre lead. It was really very easy then to win the race. For me it was nice to have a light day after the windy days. These were my conditions, I like them and I am fast in them.

Italians are more used to these conditions and you can see a lot of them at the top today. I am only 85kg so I really struggle in wind and I am a bit slower than the big guys when it is windy, so I am forced to do tactical mistakes because I cannot go the way I want."

After his second place Laurent Hay said: "It was a very difficult race because the wind was very light and it was my first time this week on course 1. On the first leg one of the Italians went to the left corner and rounded the top mark with a 100 metre lead. I was sixth round, but moved into second on the downwind, but not close enough to get past

him. It was a good day for me, but not enough to move up the results as each point is very important in this type of regatta."

## Day 5

A new wind direction from the south introduced new elements into the racing for the final day. With moderate wind strengths of up to 16-17 knots and much more shifty conditions than previously encountered during the week. Both courses were set up and down the beach rather than perpendicular to it, with course 2 being much more shifty due to its proximity to the Punta Ala headland.

Virtually all of the championship contenders were on course 1, where in spite of the alleged random fleet assignment, six out of the top ten ended up in one heat. In the Yellow fleet Enrico Passoni (ITA), took his first race win of the week, from Adrian Brunton with his best result of the week and Jurgen Eiermann (GER). In the second race fellow Italian Marco Buglielli won his second race of the week from Michael Staal (DEN) and Brunton in a great third. These two top-three results from Adrian Brunton lifted him into the top 10 overall for the first time this week, despite an error the previous day that had cost him a good position.

Marco Buglielli said of his race win: "I was sailing lower than all the guys who are bigger than me. I was third at the top mark behind two big guys but got past them downwind. Then one got past me again upwind and I passed him on the next downwind, and then on the last upwind to the finish, which was much longer than usual, he gained again and I won by a couple of boatlengths. It was really tough."

In Blue fleet, where all the regatta leaders were, Michael Maier notched up two more race wins to make it a clean sweep of eight wins out of eight races. In the first race, Thomas Moerup Petersen (DEN) crossed in



# Howard Sellars

Pump caught up with the new Finn Legend World Master, Howard Sellars, on his return from the Championships...

## Pump: Did you go to Italy thinking you could win the Legends title?

**Howard Sellars:** I went thinking I could – that it was possible, rather than probable. I didn't really know who would be there but I intended to have a real crack at it. I wouldn't have been disappointed if I had not won... well, maybe!

## At what stage in the regatta did you think you had it in the bag?

I didn't know, even until after the final race, I couldn't believe it until the last minute when the results came out. All week I kept waiting for some new Legend to come out of the woodwork – Michael Maier's dad maybe!

## How did you feel after that great 4th place in the light air race?

It was down to my light polyester M-05 sail – every time I put it up it goes well. I started at the favoured port end and was the first boat to tack, together with Uli Breuer. We crossed the whole fleet and just kept getting lifted. We got to the windward mark with one of the Italians and our little group was 50 yards ahead of the rest of the fleet. From there I just defended my position and tried to keep clear of the German and Italian.

## Are you ready to defend your title in Pwllheli – what are your training plans?

I aim to go up a few weekends before for a bit of sailing – and I'll also be taking the fishing gear! I will talk to some of the local sailors and sail a few days to get used to the conditions. It would be great to get Matt Howard up there to give us all some training and advice on the water.

I hope to defend it but you never know who might turn up. Fredrick Muller is a Legend this year and he is going, so we will have to wait and see...



# Finn World Masters

second with Marc Allain des Beauvais in third while in the second race Allen Burrell placed second, happier in the breezier conditions with Allain des Beauvais again in third.

Over on course two, held under the headland of Punta Ala, the winds were much more gusty and provided for some interesting racing. In Red fleet Lars Hall (DEN) won the first race from Kenneth Boggild (DEN) and Alexander Kasatov (RUS), while in the second race Hall finished second to Mihail Kopanov (BUL) with Bernd Moser (AUT) in third. Hall's great performance also lifted him into the top 10 overall.

In Green fleet, Jan Willem Kok (NED) was the only top ten contender – he won the first race before finishing third in the second. Svend Vogt Andersen (DEN) placed second in the first race from Cees Scheurwater (NED), while in the second race, Paul Blowers (GBR) – at his first ever Masters Worlds – won from Francesco Faggiani (ITA) and Kok. Blowers, new to the Finn after a dinghy, match racing and keelboat career, was made up with his win that backed up a consistent scoreline to take him to 25th overall – a frustrating single point behind housemate and Grand Master Martin Hughes who also had a strong and consistent week to finish 24th. International Finn class scribe Robert Deaves (GBR) had his best result of the week in an elderly borrowed Vanguard boat, scoring an impressive 8th in the final race after having to dash back to the beach for a replacement tiller after it broke as he was tussling with the leaders in the earlier race.

Laurent Hay didn't have quite the day he hoped for and dropped to sixth overall: "In the first race I was good but I made a mistake on the second upwind leg. I went 30 metres too far on the left when I was second and five boats passed

me. In the second race, I broke something in my boat on the second leg upwind so had to fix that, then I capsized on the downwind leg and lost four boats and finished seventh."

In winning, Michael Maier claimed his third World Masters title: "Today was good. Although it looked like it could be a little bit tricky, finally the wind was good and I think that's the most wind we had all week. I am sailing this week for fun, if I win I win, but if I don't then it's OK. I am very happy with the result, but I have had a few lucky races this week, especially yesterday in the light winds – you never know what will happen. But today everyone at the top was in Blue fleet and it's supposed to be random, so maybe there was something wrong with the computer!"

The drama was high on coming ashore, with Burrell, Breuer and Moerup Petersen all tied on 13 points, but when the maths was done Burrell clinched the second spot on a close countback, after both he and Breuer tied again with four wins apiece. It was Uli Breuer's OCS in the first race of the final day that lost him the silver medal, whilst Burrell held his nerve to score a five and two. After clinching the silver medal, an elated Allen Burrell said: "It's been a fantastic week, the sailing has been run really well and I am over the moon about getting silver as I thought I would be third or fourth after today. I thought I had blown it when I finished fifth in the first race, but the breeze filled in a bit more and I got a second in the next race, which made all the difference. But the conditions this week have been fantastic – almost perfection."

An emotional Howard Sellars, winner of the Legend category said: "It's very, very difficult to say how I feel about this. It's very emotional and I battled not to have a tear in my eye. Some of these guys are the elder statesmen of

the greatest class in the world, and to be up there on stage with those guys is wonderful. I couldn't believe I had won it until he actually read my name out – I couldn't believe that it was going to happen, and I still can't really."

David Potter in 17th overall, Nick Daniels in 20th and Ray New making the Great Grand Masters podium rounded up a great performance for the GB team, all of whom are looking forward to 'home advantage' at the Masters World Championship's this year in Pwllheli. ■



## Final results

### Top 10

(from 283) overall

- 1 CZE-1 **Michael Maier** 7
- 2 GBR-2 **Allen Burrell** 13
- 3 GER-707 **Uli Breuer** 13
- 4 DEN-9 **Thomas Moerup Petersen** 13
- 5 NED-780 **Jan Willem Kok** 17
- 6 FRA-75 **Laurent Hay** 21
- 7 BUL-24 **Mihail Kopanov** 25
- 8 FRA-99 **Marc Allain des Beauvais** 26
- 9 DEN-6 **Lars Hall** 29
- 10 GBR-707 **Adrian Brunton** 32

### Ladies

- 1 GER-706 **Bine Breuer** 196
- 2 CZE-4 **Bozena Smidova** 401

### Masters

- 1 CZE-1 **Michael Maier** 7
- 2 GBR-2 **Allen Burrell** 13
- 3 GER-707 **Uli Breuer** 13

### Grand Masters

- 1 FRA-99 **Marc Allain des Beauvais** 26
- 2 DEN-6 **Lars Hall** 29
- 3 ITA 6-**Enrico Passoni** 41

### Grand Grand Masters

- 1 SWE-721 **Mikael Brandt** 93
- 2 NED-860 **Louis Kruijer** 98
- 3 GBR-80 **Ray New** 106

### Legends

- 1 GBR-77 **Howard Sellars** 103
- 2 GBR-631 **Richard Hart** 160
- 3 GER-3 **Walter Mai** 175



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