

CONSISTENT, CLEAN RACING GIVES BANSHEE OVERALL TOP SPOT AT MUDHOOK REGATTA ON THE CLYDE FOR SECOND YEAR

After five clean races across the weekend, Banshee with Charlie Frize and crew has taken RC35 top spot at Mudhook Regatta on the Clyde.

It is the second year in a row that the Corby 33 has taken the victory at the regatta in this strong class of very tightly-matched yachts.

The weekend's conditions ranged from light to moderate, with Sunday's breeze topping out at 10 knots from the south or south west. For the 31-strong field, short, sharp races were appreciated across the five classes competing at the Mudhook Yacht Club event, supported shoreside by Helensburgh Sailing Club, and held on the Clyde's East Patch.

After Saturday's drama in the RC35 fleet, with the Jeffrey/Scutt owned First 36.7 Carmen II being infringed by Sloop John T, the Thomson brothers' Swan 40, leading to a tangle of rigging, a shredded mainsail for Carmen and the loss of various instruments, both yachts did make it to the startline for day two's competition.

And both sailed clean races, but fellow competitor Wildebeest, Craig Latimer's KER 32CR, meanwhile, sought unavailable room at a busy mark in the final race, disadvantaging a Hunter 707 in the process and had to accept a discretionary penalty.

All these various contretemps left the way open for Banshee and Neill Sandford's MAT 1010 Now or Never 3 to sew up first and second overall respectively.

"We're very happy," said Frize. "We are really enjoying the boat and the RC35 class has produced some great racing. It was quite shifty on Saturday, but we seemed to manage to pick our way through them ok and got some good results.

"Race two on Sunday wasn't so great for us – perhaps we had taken our eye off the ball a bit. As it happened, it didn't matter in the end and overall we kept it clean – didn't get involved in any shenanigans, tried to sail clean, get our nose in front and stay there.

"The core of our crew remains the same from year to year, so we sail well together. We're off to Bangor next for the fourth round of the RC35 series and that will be tough; the J109s [David Kelly's Storm and the Halls' Something Else – both J109s – edged Banshee into third at the recent Scottish Series] rate very well in the class and are hard to beat."

A port bias on the startline led to some very close starts across all fleets, with the 707s particularly keen to gain early advantage, though only one recall was recorded.

Building on an excellent first day's results and doggedly pursuing consistency, Stewart Robertson's Cacciatore ran away with a very convincing first place for the eight-strong 707 gaggle – the crew's five point victory gave them a clear lead

over second-placed Jetstream belonging to Justin Venton and Bill Hamilton which finished on 10 points.

The 707 fleet was also presented with a trophy in recognition of the effort they had made to attend the event – seven of the eight boats are usually based on the Forth, but had been persuaded to make the journey through to compete on the Clyde.

The Sigma 33 line-up may have been small, but it did present some interesting competition, which resulted in an overall win for James Miller and crew on Mayrise, a single point ahead of Scott Chalmers' Encore – Chalmers' first outing in the Sigma 33 field for more than a decade – promising, perhaps, some tight future racing for the pair.

The resurgent tide for the Etchells continues to flood nicely and, amongst the eight starters was yacht Extravaganza which is being used as a training academy vessel for the fleet – helping to nurture the next generation.

But it was the more seasoned campaigners who headed to the top of the scoreboard, with James Cochrane and Duncan Munro's Bullet 7 just managing to eke out the advantage over Steve Cowie's Diablo – with the former finishing a single point clear on eight points after five races and one discard.

The most emphatic line up of results, however, belonged to Griogair Whyte at the helm of Siglette in the Sonar class – five firsts from five starts; what's not to like?

Overall results Mudhook Regatta, Helensburgh, Clyde – one discard applied:
RC35 – 1 Banshee (C Frize – Mudhook YC/Royal Northern and Clyde YC) 6 points, 2 Now or Never 3 (N Sandford – Fairlie YC) 10, 3 Wildebeest (C Latimer – Royal Western YC/CCC) 12; Hunter 707 – 1 Cacciatore (S Robertson – Royal Forth YC) 5, 2 Jetstream (Venton/Hamilton – Port Edgar YC) 10, 3 Seaward (D O'malley – PEYC) 13; Etchells – 1 Bullet 7 (J Cochrane/D Munro – MYC/Royal Gourock YC) 8, 2 Diablo (S Cowie – RGYC/Clyde Cruising Club) 9, 3 Hero (G Howison – RGYC) 10; Sigma 33 – 1 Mayrise (J Miller – Helensburgh SC) 5, 2 Encore (S Chalmers – RNCYC) 6; Sonar – 1 Siglette (Siglette Consortium – RNCYC) 4, 2 Grouse (S&L Pender – RNCYC) 9.