

Mudhook Yacht Club 2019 Regatta 8-9th June

Report after first three races.

Despite a false start in the final race of the day, Kevin and Debbie Aitken's First 36.7 Animal was lying first in the super-tight RC35 fleet after three races at the Mudhook Regatta.

After an hour long postponement in the morning waiting for wind to fill in and settle, the racing on the Clyde's East Patch off Helensburgh began in light westerly airs of around four knots, setting a challenge for the 26 assembled yachts.

The event is the third round of the highly competitive RC35 championship series and also includes the Sonata Scottish Championship.

On the water, the six-strong, closely-matched RC35 fleet showed why this narrow-band handicap class has really taken off – in all three races the competition was extremely tight, with four minutes separating first to sixth in the first and just two and a half minutes in both races two and three.

In the morning's light airs, the Animal crew certainly played the tricky conditions well and did stretch a convincing one minute lead over John Stanley-Whyte's Blue Jay, a J109, across the water, both yachts perhaps gaining with some local knowledge on their home patch.

In races two and three, however, John Stamp's Corby 33 Jacob VII dominated both across the water and on corrected time to take two firsts for the Port Edgar yacht – with a sixth in the first race of the day, though, team Jacob will have to work hard on day two to topple Animal's consistency of one first and two seconds, which has seen them to the top of the overnight table on five points.



Although the regatta also doubled as the Scottish Sonata Championship, there was a turnout of just three boats.

While this was no doubt disappointing for both the class and the organisers, the racing, was, nonetheless, competitive, and proved particularly fruitful for the Macnish/Galbraith/Chassels owned Old School, which took three bullets to convincingly head the leaderboard going into day two.

Elsewhere, the five Etchells also enjoyed some close competition, with fleet tussles aplenty – including two being forced out on the startline of the third race, while Dominic and Michael Todd's Hammer of Ashton lost position after having wrongly rounding the inner leeward mark in race one.

This fleet remains wide open, with three different yachts having taken a first and only two points separating the leader and third place – Andy Holmes and Peter Judd's Lock'n Load just inching it on seven points with a first and two thirds ahead of Rod Stuart's Ataraxia on eight after two seconds and a fourth.

The oldest competitors of the day, the 95-year-old Gareloch One-Design class, perhaps caused the most controversy on the day, with the two front runner yachts – Barrie Choules in Dione and Charles Darley's Catriona following the wrong course in the final race, forcing them to retire; the first two races of the day were windward leeward courses, while the triangle race in the third is what caught out this pair. Despite the retiral, however, Dione, with two firsts in races one and two had actually done enough to secure the overall win on seven points ahead of Carol Rowe in Hermes on eight.

The regatta concludes on Sunday with two further races

Results after three races Mudhook Regatta, Helensburgh, Clyde: RC35 – 1 Animal (K&D Aitken, Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club/Mudhook Yacht Club) 5 points, 2 Jacob VII (J Stamp, Port Edgar YC) 8, 3 Blue Jay (J Stanley-Whyte, RNCYC/Helensburgh Sailing Club) 11; Etchells – 1 Lock'n Load (Holmes/Judd, Royal Gourock YC) 7, 2 Ataraxia (R Stuart, RGYC) 8, 3 Hero (G Howison, RGYC) 9; Sonata Scottish Championship – 1 Old School (Macnish/Galbraith/Chassels, RGYC) 3, 2 Jazz (N Rosie, HSC) 7, 3 Fiddlesticks (T Flatman, HSC) 8; Sonar – 1 Siglette (C MacDonald, RNCYC) 4, 2 Charlotte (A Yendell, RNCYC) 6, 3 Arrow (S Gibb, RNCYC) 8; Sigma 33 – 1 Sigmatic (D McLaren, HSC/MYC) 3, 2 Rajah (R Summers, RNCYC) 6; Gareloch – 1 Dione (B Choules, RNCYC) 7, 2 Hermes (C Rowe, RNCYC) 8, 3 Catriona (C Darley, RNCYC) 9; Combined CYCA fleet – 1 Sigmatic 6, 2 Mad Dog (D Challis, Royal Western YC) 8, 3 Siglette 10.