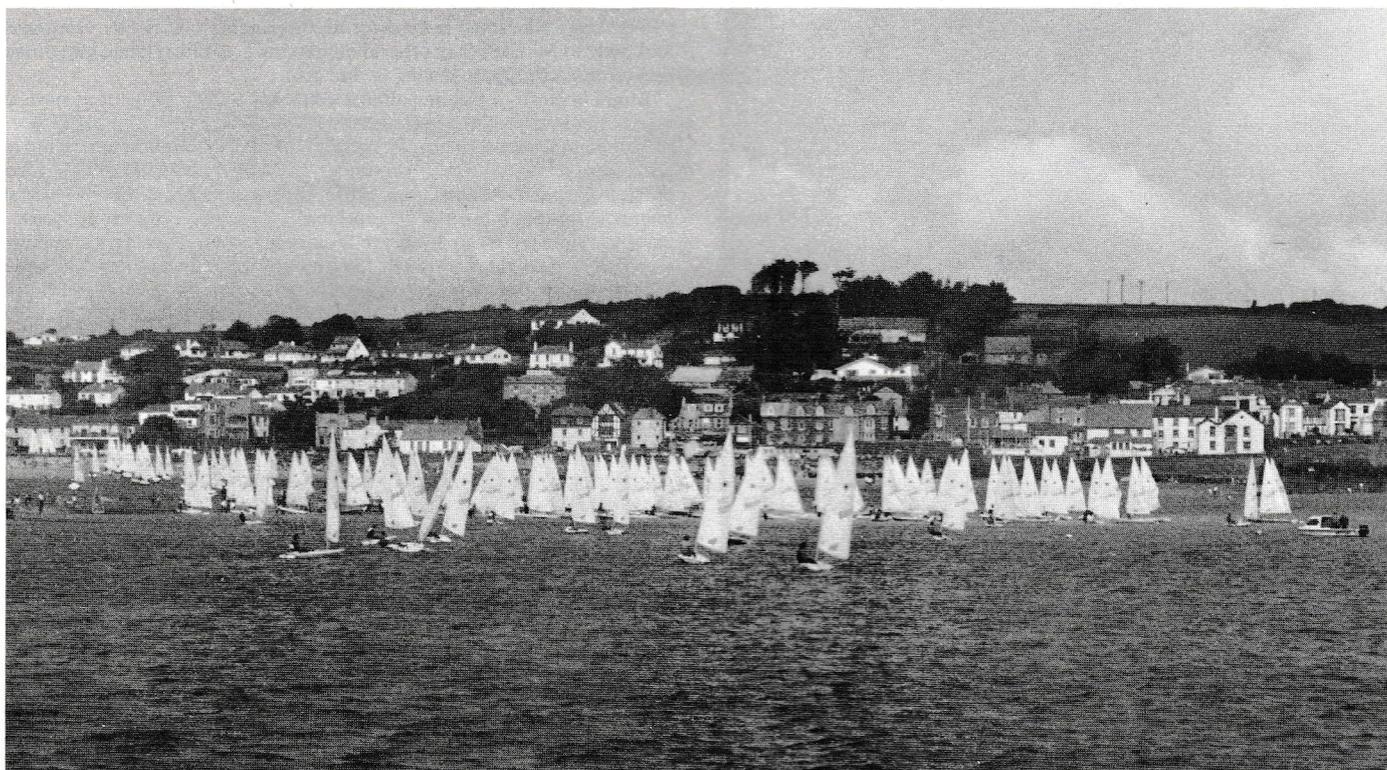


1988 BRITISH OPEN AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP



A WHOWUNNIT BY ANUTTER CHRUNCHIE

The little town's clock struck noon, and the local inhabitants went about their normal routine, unaware that not many yards away, beside the gently lapping waves on the beach, the tension was high and still rising. Would the decisive races take place, or had the final chapter already been written? Who would step forward to shake hands with the Lady St. Levan fresh from her castle on the Mount? Who would receive the acclaim of the massed throng? The story had unfolded during the long, tiring week, and the outcome was still not certain, as the computer operator was still feverishly trying to get it absolutely up to date....

The week had started calmly enough, with a mere 180 people afloat for the Practice Race. Mounts Bay S.C. members had worked hard and long preparing a memorable week for the Lasers, and everything was going to plan. Mild mannered Terry Scutcher, had returned to shore to greet his wife and new baby as the victor. Miss Marble stopped knitting momentarily, during the race, the wind had swung 60 degrees, the course had been adjusted but boats on their way to the finish had mingled with those running down the second reach, was this a sign for the forthcoming week? More entrants were arriving all day, weary after the long journey from Belgium where the European Championships had finished on the previous Friday.

Monday dawned fair, and the competitors were chased away from the beach at 9 a.m. in order to sail the four miles to the race course. This time 210 Lasers were racing, and after one general recall a line start was achieved, and for over an hour the race was on. Unbeknownst to all, the wind was preparing a nasty shock — it vanished, leaving three quarters of the fleet stranded near the windward mark, while the leaders sailing in the new wind from the north threatened to lap them. The race was abandoned, to be started again at ten to five, when the only gate start of the week was used to tame an undisciplined mob who were ignoring the starting line. The sailors reached shore at after seven, after ten hours afloat. Glenn Bourke, an Australian who was fairly new to these isles, won the race, with Ulrich Hemink second. Could they keep up this performance all week?

Tuesday morning was sunny, and M. Pirouette's little grey cells told him something was wrong with the lack of urgency about getting to the start. About two thirds of the fleet failed to reach the start line on time, and had to join in as soon as they could. Again, the shifting wind's influence was felt and the race had to be abandoned. It was only started again when the wind had settled and the fleet breathed again. 212 boats had a good race in an ever freshening breeze. Andrew Brown of Stokes Bay won the race, with Graham Tinsley of Delph second, stout British Yeomen both, with a huge lead over the rest of the fleet once again it set minds working — could they be potential Champions?

After two days racing, the Competitors were given time off for good behaviour, and they all went afloat for the race starting at just before three. 215 competitors had another good race as the sea breeze from the north coast of Cornwall reached Mount's Bay. The front end of the fleet were constantly changing position in their struggle to succeed, but it was Andy Brown who managed to make up three places in the very long final beat to once again win, with Scott Ellis, another Australian visitor, second.

Thursday was cool and cloudy, causing Miss Marble to wonder, as the drama unfolded, why the usual top guys had gone to the left just before the wind shifted 30 degrees leaving the right hand side strongly favoured. The course was duly adjusted, and the wind continued oscillating throughout the race. Young Tim Powell of Bewl Valley was eventually awarded first place after the leader on the water was disqualified for illegal propulsion, with Hector Cisneros of Reading second. Thank heavens, thought Miss Marble, they had amassed enough races to be allowed a discard!

Friday was hot and sunny, and everyone sat around, listlessly watching the postponement flag, hanging limply. When a breeze did arrive, it was a light land affair, shortlived. Racing was rescheduled to have two races on the last day. But even this was not to be. Saturday was warmer, sunnier, and more windless. At 2 p.m. the Race Officer produced the solution, standing merrily in his portable bar, he cancelled the final two races of the 1988 Laser National Championships.

So whowunnit? Can't work it out? Alright then, this is the final chapter:-

1st	Andrew Brown	Stokes Bay	11.5 pts
2nd	Scott Ellis	Australia	13 pts
3rd	Glenn Bourke	Australia	18.75 pts
4th	Peter Fox	New Zealand	21 pts
5th	Chris Gowers	Chew Valley	22 pts
6th	Colin Smith	Budworth	24 pts
7th	Hector Cisneros	Reading	25 pts
8th	Mike Budd	Leigh & Lowton	25 pts

Lady—Concorde

Trophy:

Youth—C.U. Trophy:

Apprentice Master:

Master:

Grand Master:

Christine Brookes

Tim Powell

Jeff Loosemore

Roger Tordjman

Barrie Cox

Maldon

Bewl Valley

Australia

Israel

Restronguet