

# race by race

**Bob Fisher reports on the individual matches.**

**Round One.** 22-24 knot wind, no spinnakers allowed

**Crebbin v Smith.** Two Endeavour Trophy winners meeting with Smith not as experienced in the type of boat as Crebbin. It showed at the start, which was taken by Crebbin. Crebbin had an easy lead at the weather mark and set his genoa as a spinnaker whereas Smith goosewinged his. The lead Crebbin had established was more than adequate for the run. He beat back from the lee mark to the finish, an easy winner.

**Knights v Aisher.** An aggressive pre-start with Knights on Aisher's tail. They both hardened up on the gun at the pin end with Knights to windward. There was little in it for the first beat and run with Knights always holding a slight advantage. It went his way when Aisher had trouble dropping his spinnaker at the leeward mark.

**Cudmore v Petterson.** Cudmore started to leeward of Petterson and soon forced him to tack away to clear his wind and then came the covering tack. Cudmore was well ahead by the windmark mark and the race was never in doubt after that.

**Oakeley v Rogers.** Oakeley took the weather berth at the start and led at the first mark. He set his genoa goosewinged and flew a protest flag against all those that set their genoas flying. It did hold up the racing for a while but

made no difference to this race, Oakeley improved on his early lead throughout the race.

**Law v Bruce.** Law was ahead at the start and Bruce tacked quickly on to port, but was covered. Bruce attacked on the run to weather of Law, but Law did get on the inside for the lee mark and went on to cover all the way to the finish to win by a couple of lengths.

**Round two.** A new signal was hoisted allowing spinnakers and reefed genoas and an optional reef in the main. The wind had moderated to 14-18 knots.

**Aisher v Smith.** Aisher won the start, to windward of Smith who then hit the pin-end mark and had to re-round. Aisher was 35 seconds up at the weather mark but Smith had reduced this by half, two-thirds of the way down the run. At the lee mark 10 seconds separated them and on the beat home Smith edged ahead to win by one second.

**Petterson v Crebbin.** Petterson was on Crebbin's tail from the five-minute gun. Petterson hit back when Crebbin broke off by gybing and placed himself in a safe leeward, pulled out in front and was to windward when the starting gun went. What promised to be an exciting race was all over at the leeward mark when Crebbin's crew were unable to lower their spinnaker. Petterson romped home 6½ minutes ahead.

**Cudmore v Knights.** Cudmore started to weather of Knights and kept him behind despite a short tacking duel instigated by Knights. At the weather mark, Knights hit the buoy and had to re-round which put the Irishman well clear and untroubled.

**Oakeley v Bruce.** Bruce started ahead and to leeward of Oakeley, but that was a short-lived advantage. They split gybes on the run but nothing that Bruce could do reduced Oakeley's lead.

**Law v Rogers.** Law was two lengths up at the start and went on to win comfortably.

**Round three.** There was a delay while a new spinnaker was issued to Crebbin and a new genoa to replace Oakeley's torn one. Wind 18 knots dropping to 12.

**Petterson v Aisher.** A port-tack start with the boats level and Petterson to windward. The Swede drew away relentlessly with better boat handling to win comfortably.

**Knights v Smith.** Knights started ahead and to windward of Smith and led at the weather mark. Some poor spinnaker handling by the leader let Smith through to claim the inside overlap at the lee mark and win by half a minute.

**Crebbin v Bruce.** Crebbin started to weather and three lengths up on Bruce, and from that there is little chance of recovery. Crebbin finished a minute ahead.

**Oakeley v Law.** Oakeley was a length clear of Law at the start, right on his rival's bow. Every move Law made was covered and every attack he made on the run, countered. Oakeley was 30 seconds ahead at the finish.

**Rogers v Cudmore.** Rogers was a fraction ahead and to leeward of Cudmore at the start but hit the pin-end buoy. He took a long time to sort out his problems, by which time Cudmore was well on his way to the weather mark. Rogers retired leaving Cudmore to sail round for his third victory.

**Round four.** Wind variable in strength 14-25 knots, gusty.

**Petterson v Knights.** Close pre-start manoeuvres with Petterson just winning the advantage. Petterson came away from the weather mark a minute up, and held this lead for the rest of the race.

**Bruce v Aisher.** Both came to the line on port with Bruce half-a-length to weather. Then he tacked too soon and let Aisher in at the starboard end of the line when he should have shut him out. On the beat however Bruce moved ahead and stayed there.

**Smith v Law.** Both started on starboard after some moderate pre-start manoeuvres. Smith was four lengths to weather and consolidated this for the rest of the race.

**Oakeley v Cudmore.** A very close start although neither had shown much interest in the other before a minute to go. Cudmore was 11 seconds up at the windward mark but had his work cut out to hold it on the run. Oakeley came at him time and time again. At the leeward mark Oakeley moved to dive inside Cudmore, who had taken the buoy a bit close on his approach. The pulpit of Oakeley's boat just nudged the pushpit of Cudmore's and in the subsequent protest Oakeley was disqualified. On the final beat Oakeley scraped past Cudmore to cross the line first, but to no avail.

**Round five.** Day two, 15-20 knots NE.

**Bruce v Knights.** Bruce won the start by being to windward. Knights had trouble hoisting his spinnaker and Bruce went on to an easy win.

**Petterson v Law.** Very close circles before the start with Petterson showing slightly greater initiative until the last minute when Law went for the line to leeward and soon after was able to make Petterson tack. Law



(above) Your reporter Jack Knights managed 4 wins. (below) Chris Law, 3 victories.



(above) The Contessa 32's builder, Jeremy Rogers, one win and (below) Robin Aisher, no victories.



# Game, Set and Match

continued

was 15 seconds up at the weather mark but on the run Petterson overtook only to lose the lead again. On the final beat Petterson regained the lead to win by a length.

**Smith v Cudmore.** Both were over before the start with Cudmore in control. He was back and restarted before Smith and stayed ahead to the finish after a fine close-tacking duel to the line.

**Aisher v Rogers.** Aisher just ahead at the start after some close circling. He held the lead to the leeward mark, only to lose it to Rogers on the final beat.

**Oakeley v Crebbin.** A tame start with Crebbin over the line to leeward. He took a long time to get back and was never in the hunt again.

## Round six. 13-18 knots

**Bruce v Rogers.** Just before the start both boats were reaching down the line and Bruce got the advantage by hardening up first and being to windward. He led by 7 seconds at the weather mark and went further ahead to win.

**Law v Cudmore.** Cudmore won the start and was 5 seconds clear at the windward mark. Law drew level on the run, but Cudmore luffed at just the right moment. Law failed to respond and sails touched. Cudmore crossed the line first and Law was disqualified.

**Crebbin v Knights.** Both were head to wind with a minute to go. Knights forced both over and came back in time for the gun to be 2 lengths up at the start. They arrived at the weather mark simultaneously but Knights hit the buoy and his re-rounding lost him the race.

**Petterson v Smith.** Petterson was on Smith's stern coming to the start. He broke clear and led at the weather end of the line and increased the lead up the beat to go 52 seconds clear and was not troubled again.

**Oakeley v Aisher.** Oakeley, to leeward of the pair, forced both over and was back first, to lead away. 1 minute plus up at the weather mark, Oakeley was an easy winner.

**Round seven. Full sail allowed for the first time as wind was down to 8-10 knots.**

**Crebbin v Cudmore.** Crebbin started to leeward of Cudmore and was able to force him to tack away. He was 17 seconds up at the weather mark but lost some of this as Cudmore attacked hard on the run. The two were very close at the leeward mark where Crebbin still held the advantage. As he gybed the main boom knocked a crewman unconscious. The time lost was too much to regain and Cudmore was well in front.

**Knights v Rogers.** Knights won the start and was not in any danger for the rest of the race.

**Law v Aisher.** The start was close but Law went ahead on the first beat and won.

**Bruce v Smith.** Bruce took the start comfortably and led by 12 seconds at the weather mark. He maintained this lead for the rest of the race.

**Petterson v Oakeley.** The Swede was two lengths up at the start and stayed in front on the beat. Downwind Oakeley came back at him to gain an overlap at the last mark, slipped through and stayed ahead to the finish.

## Round eight 4-8 knots shifty

**Cudmore v Aisher.** Cudmore was 2 lengths up at the start and Aisher almost hit the limit mark after he tacked to clear his wind. Aisher led down the run but two good quick gybes put Cudmore ahead by the leeward mark. He went on to win.

**Smith v Rogers.** Smith got the weather berth and increased his lead all the way round.

**Crebbin v Law.** Crebbin took a safe leeward at the pin-end and sailed away from his opponent for an easy win.

**Knights v Oakeley.** Oakeley was just to weather of Knights but tacked away almost immediately. Knights led by 45 seconds at the weather mark but Oakeley cut this back to 5 seconds by the end of the run. Knights held off Oakeley's challenge on the final beat.

**Bruce v Petterson.** Bruce started well ahead of Petterson who did not gather way very fast after a tack just prior to the gun. Petterson narrowly led at the weather mark and increased his lead on the run to win.

**Round nine. The wind had dropped to 3-4 knots and was dying. This was the race in which the Committee shortened the course for two of the pairs and were protested.**

**Aisher v Crebbin.** Aisher started well to windward of Crebbin but the wind had begun to back and the advantage went to Crebbin who went on to win.

**Law v Knights.** Law who was to windward at the start lost out on the windward leg and Knights rounded first and went on to win.

**Bruce v Cudmore.** Bruce had way on at the start and went straight through Cudmore's weather into the lead. Cudmore was in front by the weather mark and held the lead for the rest of the race, covering Bruce tightly to the finish.

**Smith v Oakeley.** Smith, seeing the wind-shift, went for the pin-end of the line and took the advantage, by 5 lengths. But on the beat Oakeley went to the front and stayed there through the shortened course. This was one of the races that was protested and Oakeley forfeited his win.

**Petterson v Rogers.** In very light winds, Petterson started well ahead of Rogers and left him for dead. Petterson went on to win by over 9 minutes.

**Final score: Cudmore 8 wins, Oakeley 6, Crebbin 6, Petterson 6, Bruce 6 (including the Cudmore forfeit), Smith 5 (including the Oakeley forfeit), Knights 4, Law 3, Rogers 1, Aisher 0.**



(above) Feverish activity as Crebbin (boat A) and Cudmore scramble round the mark with spinnakers half-down and genoas half-up. (below) Pelle Petterson, complete with America's Cup garb, concentrates downwind.

