

Vane 36 National Championship 2026
Saturday 2nd of May – Monday 4th of May
Venue Gosport Model Yacht and Boat Club (GMYBC)

The Championship usually takes place over Easter at Gosport, but this year, due to the impending IOM World Championship, it had to be moved. Last year, at Fleetwood, the event was well attended and a request for a third day to accommodate a larger fleet was granted. This was the main factor in lower entry numbers and there were only 14 boats. Although a smaller fleet, the entries included skippers from five different clubs. A complete round, where each skipper races every other competitor was achieved comfortably plus an additional three heats.

Skippers, their mates, family and friends were warmly welcomed by Robert Hobbs, the President of Gosport Model Yacht and Boat Club. The previous week, the weather had been ideal. Dry with wind, although at times, at the top end, and sunny. By Saturday, whilst remaining sunny, the wind was nowhere near the top end. In fact, a 15-minute postponement was called following the briefing. Gradually it filled in sufficiently to allow Robert, using his wealth of past vane racing experience, to start the first couple of pairs.

During the day, neither the wind direction, nor its strength was constant. Then, later in the afternoon it rained heavily.... Peter Fothergill/Paul Edwards racing *HHot*, a Mike Dann designed Diversion 2 showed the way and, bar one run, won every heat! They were closely followed by Lewis Wyeth with mate Shaun Wyeth or one of his two brothers, racing *Sonic*, a Road Runner design by Dave Hollom and on the same points was Mark Dicks, racing a Martin Dovey Dark Matters design, *Rum Runner*. Also racing a Martin Dovey Dark Matters, *Chuffin Pink*, and just behind were Oli Murray/Rob McIntosh.

On Sunday, a little more wind, although with similar, fickle strength and direction, another six heats were completed. The first place remained the same, but Mark Dicks just overtook Lewis Wyeth. Oli Murray/Rob McIntosh remained in fourth place. However, they were being pursued by four other competitors: Chris Harris, racing a Martin Dovey Dark Matters, *Dark Matters*, Max Buttmer, racing a Mike Dann Diversion Mark 2, *Black Pig*, Shaun Wyeth with Mates, Lewis, Russell and Thomas Wyeth racing a Dave Hollom, Roadrunner, *Nessie* and David Lindsay racing a Martin Dovey, Dark Matters, *Pink Star* with Sunday's mate, Nigel Brown, were coming through.

All to play for on Monday, which actually had the worst weather forecast!!!! The wind was still swinging around and the scoring at each end had to change, as the day before, from a downwind to an upwind.

Congratulations go to Peter Fothergill/Paul Edwards who maintained their lead to become the 2026 Vane 36 National Champions. They were, closely followed by Mark Dicks in second place. Lewis Wyeth held third place in spite of a late charge by Chris Harris who overtook Oli Murray/Rob McIntosh and Shaun Wyeth.

Dave/Jeanette Geldard racing a Martin Dovey designed Dark Matters, *Shorty*, won the Veterans trophy.

The windward legs were won jointly by Mark Dicks and by Peter Fothergill/Paul Edwards, ahead of skippers Shaun Wyeth, Lewis Wyeth who were third equal and fifth place equal Susanne Lewis who was racing a Mike Dann designed Diversion 3 *NBC* and Oli Murray. For the downwind legs, Chris Harris was easily the winner, followed by Peter Fothergill/Paul Edwards. In tied third place, were Mark Dicks and Dave/Jeanette Geldard. Lewis Wyeth and David Lindsay were close behind. In what were often challenging conditions, the wind was largely from the South-East, but when it went light it could come from all directions, anywhere on the lake, it is a credit to all the competitors that the level of competition was good, and results were often close.

As an aside, with the light wind at one point, the Air Ambulance landed in the area next to the lake and it was hoped that the down blast from the rotor blades might assist. In the event it was too far away to help!!!!

The Pugwash Trophy was run concurrently with the Championship. The points of the two members of each team were added together at the end of the event. Congratulations to the two winning skippers, Chris Harris and Mark Dicks. In joint second place were the family team of Shaun and Lewis Wyeth and the team of Peter Fothergill/Paul Edwards, and Susanne Lewis. Max Buttimer and Dave/Jeanette Geldard were fourth.

A big thank you to Robert for starting the event. Also, to the race team, Phil Hampson, Rob Andrews, Chris Powles, Chris Judd, Eric Meighen and Ron Rich, who worked effectively, with the schedule of racing to ensure that those who were mating others were able to do so as far as possible, successfully. They did brilliantly. In pre-race correspondence, and at the briefing, skippers were made aware that there were a number of competitors without a mate. In order not to leave it to chance, most skippers in that position, organised another fleet member to assist them on the other bank, which was successful.

An enormous thankyou goes to our scorer, Chris Phillips, for entering the data, dealing with admin, and keeping the refreshments topped up! Also, to Paul Edwards, our Club Measurer who carried out the scrutiny. Thank you to GMYBCs Commodore, Darin Wigg for handing out the prizes. The fleet thanked Jacque Cook, for organising the event, writing this report as part of the post event actions and being Principal Race Officer.

Jacque Cook