

WETAS AT ROCK – 1st to 3rd May 2021

It seemed a bleak prospect when we started planning a sailing weekend in the midst of a covid epidemic having already cancelled it last year, but despite the social distancing, rule of 6, eating and socialising outside, we were rewarded with bright sunshine from dawn to dusk and though the wind was always a little late in arriving for the morning tides, we manage to fit in 2 races on both the first and second days. The third day was always planned to be a day for free sailing and exploring the area or a spare day in case we were not able to race on one of the previous days.

Despite the obvious uncertainties such as would the event would go ahead? Would there be accommodation? Where could we eat? What would the weather be like in spring? 8 boats turned up from across the country at Rock Sailing and Waterski Club on the Camel estuary, North Cornwall. The organisation and friendliness from the club was just superb with a fish and chip super on Friday night served in the dinghy park to bacon butties and coffee in the mornings whilst waiting for the wind. There was lunch if we wanted it when we got back from sailing all washed down with a pint or two of Doom Bar or Atlantic from the local brewery. All this was ordered and served to us at the tables set up in the dinghy park in front of the club by a joyful staff who seemed just as happy to see us as we were to be there.

Most competitors had arrived on or by the Friday and the early birds were able to get a practice sail on the ebb of the morning spring tide which was wonderful after months of lock down if a little challenging in the 5 knot current with very little wind. Saturday morning dawned with bright sunshine but the wind gods were conspicuous with their absence. After an hour's delay a NW breeze started to come in and Race Officer Martin was able to set a course in the channel off Padstow. The first race was a case of getting used to the conditions and for some getting out in their new boats for the first time. The wind remained light and variable for both races but there was some close racing throughout the fleet. Because the start had been delayed due to lack of wind the water was running away and I think most people touched the bottom at some stage or another. Back for lunch and a pint in the glorious sunshine and an afternoon for beach walks but you had to wrap up as the wind though light, was chilly. Because of the social distancing rules we could not meet indoors at all and only in groups no greater than 6 outdoors so we all had to do our own thing which was not ideal but at least we were not in full lockdown.

On Sunday morning the estuary looked beautiful with bright blue sky but mirror like water which was not great for sailing. By about 11 o'clock a zephyr of a breeze had set in and Martin set the course off Daymer Bay near the mouth of the estuary where we would have more water. The first race started in about 4-6 mph of wind on a simple windward / leeward course but the conditions were anything but simple with speed boat wash shaking the wind out of our sails and trying to get the right angles down to the leeward mark against an ebb tide proved tricky. Once again there was close racing throughout the fleet with literally a photo finish between Steve Tonge and John Watts. For the second race the wind was a little steadier at 6-8 mph with the odd gust up to 10-12 mph. The added breeze was welcome as the current was getting stronger and we were actually plaining on the downwind legs. We just had enough water to get to the sailing club after the race for a welcome drink, quick change and prize giving.

This event was originally supposed to have happened last year but due to Covid was postponed. Paul White, one of our Weta sailing friends from Australia was due to have come over for last year's planned event and would have come to this year's event but was prevented because of the restrictions. He was a great help in the social media side of putting this event together but we were lucky enough to have his sister Erica in Rock and she very kindly presented the prizes.

RESULTS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Single Handed</u>	<u>Double Handed</u>	<u>Overall</u>
Patrick Lyon	1		1
Tim Jeremy	2		2
Lynne & Stuart Swan		1	3
John Watts	3		4
Stephen & Guy Hall		2	5
Steve Tonge & Andy Greenaway		3	6
Charles Ferguson		4	7
Pete Cailes	4		8

A special thank you to Richard Smith and his team at the sailing club for looking after us so well and making everyone feel so welcome. Also to Martin and his wife Lynne in the committee boat with Peter Pollard who did the photography for the weekend.

Feedback

.... Please pass on our thanks to the club and make a point to thank the manager and staff who were outstanding.....

Lynne and Stuart Swan

..... such an enjoyable Weta event - good company, lovely area and a most helpful sailing club. I look forward to another event in Rock. All the best, John.

John Watts

..... I totally agree with all of the above. Thanks.

Andy Greenaway

..... Highly enjoyable to meet everyone and to sail in such good company looking forward to next year already.

Stephen and Guy Hall

... Very enjoyable. Look forward to the next event.

Tim Jeremy

Links

Weta Marine NZL – www.wetamarine.com

Weta UK - www.wetauk.co.uk

UK Weta Assoc. - www.wetaclassuk.co.uk

Rock SC www.rswsc.co.uk