

Etchells European Championships 2024
Royal Yacht Squadron
11th - 13th October

17 teams were geared up to take on the season finale of the Etchells European Championships in Cowes, the event was run by the Royal Yacht Squadron of Peter Saxton and his very experienced race committee. The Etchells class also welcomed international teams from New Zealand, the United States of America, and Ireland to round up a good international spread of Etchells competitors to compete for the European title.

Day one of the regatta saw a light breeze forecasted of around 6-10 knots for the day with a tricky East North Easterly direction, with a small delay in the morning before the PRO, Peter Saxton, gave the fleet the green light to head out towards the race course. Race 1 saw a few boats over the line and having to head back straight away, towards the front of the fleet, Rob Goddard's Rocketman sailed a near perfect race to take a comfortable lead and win the opening race of the regatta. Grant Gordon also had a good opener in Louise Racing to take second, and 2023 European champion, Ante Razmilovic, taking the final spot on the podium of the opening race. Race 2 saw a similar track to the first race, with a strong tide taking the fleet over the line, and light shifty conditions coming into play. Kiwi sailor Anatole Masfen took the win in Man's Best Friend, with Shaun Frohlich and David Maclean finishing second and third respectively, already the fleet had seen six different teams on the podium! In the last race of the day, the tide reduced throughout the race, but with different cloud driven weather fronts rolling through the race course, the wind shifts were key to get right in order to stay on top of the fleet. Ante Razmilovic took another solid result with a win in the final race of the day, youth team Mano took second after a strong first day in tricky conditions, Rob Goddard took third to also round up a very good day on the water, and to sit second overall overnight. The fleet then headed to shore for post racing drinks hosted by the Pontoon View.

The evening social was held at the Royal Yacht Squadron in the Pavillion section of the venue. Within the schedule of the evening were two great events taking place. The first was to recognize and appreciate the great work carried out by Jan Ford, who has been the Etchells class secretary for the last 30 years, a few great names and regular faces of the class took the time to recognize Jan's great work through various speeches and stories. From the Etchells class, we thank you Jan for all of the great work you have done for the class. There was also the prize giving for the Champions of Champions series, the series that determined the true overall season winner of the 2024 Etchells series. Team Mano collected the series prize for top overall youth team, Rob Goddard claimed his title as the Corinthian king, and Grant Gordon's Louise Racing claimed overall victory of the 2024 Etchells, only on countback to Shaun Frohlich's Exabyte.

Day 2 of the regatta was scheduled to be a mixed forecast, with all the different models providing different predictions. There was another very short delay whilst the wind settled, but the fleet then soon headed out to the racecourse for the second day of the European Championships. Race 1 of day 2 had a light South South Easterly breeze across the course, with Ante Razmilovic taking another win to his scorecard, and David Maclean adding a second to their already impressive series, Man's Best Friend with Anatole Masfen made up the podium in third for the first race of the day. Race 5 of the series saw a small increase in wind, but again provided some relatively shifty and tricky conditions that the fleet needed to be adaptable for in order to maintain a decent performance, Shaun Frohlich took his first win of the regatta, with David Bromilow in Pulse banking a good second, and showing another good performance from our Youth Academy for 2024, David Maclean remained extremely consistent to grab another podium result. Race 6 of the regatta was shaping to be a big roll of the dice, with a large rain cloud traveling down the Solent from the South West towards the Etchells fleet. This front brought a short rain shower and increased pressure for the fleet to contend with, the wind then reduced once again towards the back of the weather front. Grant Gordon did well to stay in the right areas of the course to take the win, Ante Razmilovic bagged another counter in second, and David Maclean now getting very comfortable with finishing consistently in the top 3. The final race of the day saw a change in conditions with a light to medium breeze throughout the race, with a WA3 course to finish near the Bramble's post. Ante Razmilovic claimed another solid result with the final bullet of the day, Anatole Masfen from the Royal Akarana Yacht Club took second, David Franks on Strait Dealer took his first podium of the event.

Day 3 of the regatta had all of the models and forecasts agreeing with one another, with no wind forecasted all day, and variable direction changes on any fronts that were to come in at all. PRO, Peter Saxton made the correct decision to cancel the day in advance to finish the regatta with 7 races overall. The prize giving was held at the Royal Yacht Squadron in the morning to allow everyone to have back their Sunday afternoon! First youth went to David Bromilow on Pulse, who sailed a regatta with some impressive results to also finish 7th overall. First Corinthian was awarded to Rob Goddard on Rocketman, who started the regatta strong with a race win, and therefore sat 6th overall. 3rd overall was claimed by Anatole Masfen on Man's Best Friend, and 2nd was well earned by Ada, led by David Maclean after a very consistent 5 races in the middle of their series. Winning and successfully defending their Etchells European Championships from 2023 was Ante Razmilovic, Brian Hammersley, and Mark Lees, who claimed the 2024 title!

Results: https://yachtscoring.com/event_results_cumulative.cfm?eID=16935