



2021 Hansa TT hosted by New Forest Sailability at Spinnaker Sailing Club

by Malcolm Bentley 8 May 06:43 BST 5 May 2021



2021 New Forest Hansa TT - 303 fleet and 2.3 in the distance © Chris Wales



2021 New Forest Hansa TT - Dave Durston ready to go © Chris Wales

Following quite closely on the heels of the Whitefriars TT on 24th April, the New Forest TT on 5th May was the second to be run under the continuing Covid restrictions.

This required more than usual liaison between New Forest Sailability, Spinnaker Sailing Club, Hansa Class UK and Whitefriars to ensure that the optimum level of entries and competition could be promoted within the social distancing and other limitations on two person sailing, the boat

handling of unloading, launching and rigging, safety boat manning, race management, briefings, hospitality and prize-giving.

Particular consequences of this were restricting visiting boats to only the Liberty and 2.3 classes, with all 303 competitors using New Forest boats, and restricting two-person 303s to members of the same household. This resulted in only one entry by the Hillmans as at Whitefriars. Also all entries had to be made in advance and nearly all briefing of volunteers and competitors was done with written briefing notes and Zoom meetings. In many ways this made for smoother running on the day as most things were worked through, documented and communicated beforehand.

Despite the limitations, the day very much had the feel of a normal regatta and competitors and volunteers alike were delighted to see a return to such a degree of normality and be able to see many people that they had missed, possibly for two years.

In the event there were 18 boats competing and excellent racing was enjoyed. The weather was (comparatively) kind, bearing in mind that two days before had been gales and torrential rain, and it did not rain until the competitors had at least come ashore, even if some packing away of boats had to continue. The wind was largely westerly and thus coming off the lake shore over the Race hut. This makes for a reaching start (at least on starboard) and tricky wind shadow close to the shore. As usual with the Blashford Lake conditions, surrounded as it is with quite a lot of trees, the wind swirls and varies hugely with frequent small, strong squalls. Generally the wind was quite strong but within safe limits and no boats chose to reef, wisely or not for some.



2021 New Forest Hansa TT - Manoeuvring before the start - photo © Chris Wales

The podium sailors from the Whitefriars TT in the 303 and Liberty classes all attended meaning that the series competition could be pursued with eagerness. Three races were run back-to-back allowing for one discard.

The 303 one person was the largest class with 10 entries and Natalia and Alan Hillman started with them. The top 5 boats, including the Hillmans, shared the top 5 positions in every race except for

one, when Steve Kitson achieved a 5th (4th one person), so there was strong consistency between these racers and in fact this consistency largely spread down through the fleet.

The surprise, for the regular Hansa TT sailors, was the presence of New Forest's secret weapon Richard Bickford. He achieved an impressive 1st, 1st and 3rd to give perfect final points of 2 and overall 1st position. He is also a Spinnaker Sailing Club member of long standing and there is the possibility that local knowledge played a part together with fine sailing.

Rory Mckinna and Mike Everitt were 2nd and 3rd respectively, reversing their 2nd and 1st comparative positions from Whitefriars and will thus be evenly placed in the TT series. James Woosnam maintained his position immediately behind these two and Steve Kitson was only one point behind James, having had to retire during the second race at Whitefriars due to boat problems.

Natalia and Alan Hillman were the sole entry in the two person class and thus readily won first place. Nevertheless, they competed very well with the one person boats and so enjoyed close racing and achieved two 3rd places and a 2nd in the combined fleets.



2021 New Forest Hansa TT - the five fastest 303s in close competition - photo © Chris Wales

The Libertys had three entries and the class was closely contested as usual with all three gaining a 1st position. Ultimately Dave Durston and Paul Phillips were tied on three points after discards and Dave earned 1st place having won the last race. Tessa Watkiss was third. These positions followed the same pattern as Whitefriars and will represent the series to date.

This was the 2.3s first TT outing this season and it was good to see four boats in the fleet. The two visiting boats were Lindsay Burns and Lara Sturgis from Frensham, who were 1st and 2nd respectively in the 2019 National series, although that year only Lindsay entered sufficient events to avoid having any DNC counting.

In the event Lindsay sustained her dominance, winning both the first two races and being able to retire from the third race and save her energy. Rowena Marsh won the third race and had been

immediately behind Lindsay in the earlier races so was a clear 2nd overall followed by Andy Holmes and Lara, who tied on 6 points, but Andy gained the 3rd position having beaten Lara in the final race.

Overall Results:

303 one person class

- 1 Richard Bickford (New Forest)
- 2 Rory Mckinna (Clyde Cruising)
- 3 Mike Everitt (Frensham)
- 4 James Woosnam (Frensham)
- 5 Steve Kitson (New Forest)
- 6 Jane Knight (New Forest)
- 7 Philip Hall (Chesil)
- 8 Stefan Hart (New Forest)
- 9 Dave Jolliffe (New Forest)
- 10 Brent Coleman (New Forest)

303 two person class

- 1 Natalia & Alan Hillman (Weston)

Liberty class

- 1 David Durston (Whitefriars)
- 2 Paul Phillips (Frensham)
- 3 Tessa Watkiss (Frensham)

2.3 class

- 1 Lindsay Burns (Frensham)
- 2 Rowena Marsh (New Forest)
- 3 Andy Holmes (New Forest)
- 4 Lara Sturgis (Frensham)