

Irish E Boat National Championships 2008.

The 2008 **Irish E Boat National Championships** were held in CY&BC between 4th – 6th July. 16 boats from Clontarf and Skerries took part in the 3 day, 6 race event. The race format was explained by **NRO Ian Sargent** at a short briefing at 9.30, then the boats made their way out to the racing grounds in Dublin Bay.

The first race was an Olympic course and the 16 boats got a clean start and at the weather mark, **OctopussE** put her stamp on the race and with a quick hoist opened a gap on the following group. Racing was tight and boats had to constantly defend their positions. Errors were punished and places lost were not easily recovered. **OctopussE** led at the finish ahead of **Escapade**, **E-ejit**, **Aoife** and **Easy Go**.

The second race starting sequence began soon after the last boat had cleared the line and again **OctopussE** got a good start and was first into the weather mark, closely followed by **Escapade** and **E-ejit**. The result of the second race was **OctopussE**, **E-ejit**, **Escapade**, **Eagle Eye** and **Aoife**. Racing finished for the day and boats headed for home and a few well deserved drinks.

Saturday morning began with force 7 gales. The NRO decided to hold racing inside the harbour walls because of the outside sea conditions. As the crews assembled on the slip, "**Easy Go**" was discovered on the rocks, badly damaged after breaking her mooring. Paul Hick and crew left to arrange recovery of the boat and gear. A crane was quickly brought into service and the boat recovered before further damage could be caused.

The remaining fleet began race 3, an Offset windward/leeward course. **OctopussE** again showed her mettle and won ahead of **Eagle Eye**, **Smile E too**, **E-ejit** and **Aoife**. Skerries boat "**L'E-jit**" retired with rudder problems.

Race 4 was again an Offset windward/leeward course and surprise, surprise was won by **OctopussE**! **E-ejit** had a battle royal with **Escapade** but held her off to finish second, **Escapade** third followed by **Eagle Eye** and **Heatwave**. End of second day and we returned to the club to survey the damage of the recovered "**Easy Go**". Sad to see.

Race 5 was started in glorious sunshine out in the bay. It was back to an Olympic course and last year's winner "**Eagle Eye**" found her form and took the lead at the weather mark followed closely by **OctopussE**. They held their positions to the finish followed by **E-ejit**, **Escapade**, **heatwave** and **L'E-jit**, back after her repairs.

Race 6 was an Offset windward/leeward course and positions could not have been closer with 3 boats vying for the second and third positions. Again **Eagle Eye** got a good start and sailed a flawless race to finish ahead of **E-ejit**, **OctopussE**, **Escapade** and **L'E-jit**.

The overall winner of the event was **OctopussE** with 4 wins from 6 races. Second was **Eagle Eye**, third boat was **E-ejit** from Skerries and fourth was **Escapade**.

Prize-giving was held in Clontarf and the event was declared a great success by all. Great praise was heaped on **Ian Sargent** and his race committee for the excellent courses in some trying conditions.