

# Falmouth Finn Festival begins with UK Championship

## Day -1 Major Championships 2012

The long wait is almost over. Three years of planning for one of the most important Finn sailing events ever held in the UK is about to become reality in Falmouth, UK. The JP Morgan Asset Management Finn Festival combines the Open UK National Championships from 5-7 May and the Finn Gold Cup, the class world championship, from 13-18 May.

The UK Nationals has a pre-entry of around 90 boats, while the Gold Cup has, so far, 95 registered entries. There will be more details on the Gold Cup next week, but this weekend the event focusses on the UK Nationals with a very deep and very large fleet in attendance. While some of the international sailors are skipping the nationals, it has attracted 50 boats from the domestic fleet, a sign of the good health of the class in the UK.

Falmouth is about as far west as you can go in the UK but one of the reasons it was selected as the venue for these regattas is because of its similarity to conditions at the Olympic venue in Weymouth. Many sailors are already based in Weymouth in the run up to the Games in August, and many are using this regatta as crucial training before June's Skandia Sail for Gold regatta in Weymouth, and to get as much time as possible getting used to the conditions.

The UK Finn National Championship dates back to 1956 when Vernon Stratton persuaded the Sunday Times to donate an old pigeon-racing cup to the class. The Sunday Times Gold Cup has been a central focus of the British Finn class ever since. The two favourites for the title are sailing against each other in a UK Nationals for the first time ever. Ben Ainslie won back in 2002, while Giles Scott, won in 2007 and 2008.

Last year's open winner Rob McMillan (AUS) and national champion Allen Burrell are also back, but will have a hard time retaining their titles against the Skandia GBR Finn squad, and the very strong international contingent that has entered. Mark Andrews is another former champion who will be competing in Falmouth this weekend.



Other favourites for the open title include 2004 Olympic silver medalist Rafa Trujillo (ESP), double world champion Jonas Hogh-Christensen (DEN), double European Champion Ivan Kjakovic Gaspic (CRO), the runner up at the 2011 Olympic test event Jonathan Lobert (FRA) and winner of last week's Hyeres regatta, Brendan Casey (AUS).

Many of the competitors are using the Nationals as a training regatta to select equipment to use at the following week's Finn Gold Cup, as well as to get used to the conditions in Falmouth's waters. The UK has borne the brunt of a long run of bad weather recently, with strong winds, heavy rain and low temperatures, and this has been forecast to continue through May. Sailors that turned up early to train have been treated to torrential rain and winds touching 50 knots - a stark reminder of what the great British weather can do.

However, the forecast for the weekend ahead looks a little more pleasant with moderate winds, sunshine and showers. It could still be a tough regatta weather wise, but the Finn sailors love to stretch their muscles a little bit, so the racing is going to be both competitive and a bit of fun before the main event the following week.

Roger Thompson, Head of UK, J.P. Morgan Asset Management, commented, "*J.P. Morgan Asset Management is proud to be title sponsor of the Falmouth Finn Festival. We're looking forward to watching the very best Finn sailors battle it out to be crowned World Champion. To add to the excitement this is one of the last opportunities to see potential Olympic champions in action with a number of sailors competing to qualify for London 2012. We're passionate about sailing as it allows us to support values that are important to our business. To be successful at sailing you need excellent teamwork, innovative thinking, leadership and passion, just some of our key values. Huge amounts of work go on behind the scenes and the event simply wouldn't have happened without the professionalism of the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club. A huge thank you to everyone involved. On behalf of us all at J.P. Morgan Asset Management, we wish all the sailors the very best of luck and hope you enjoy the Festival.*"

Racing gets under way on Saturday 5 May, with two races scheduled. Three more races are scheduled for Sunday with the final two on Monday. Then there are five days of measurement and registration before the Finn Gold Cup races start on Sunday 13 May.

Daily reports and photo galleries will be released but you can also keep up to date with the results and news at [www.falmouthfinnfestival.com](http://www.falmouthfinnfestival.com).

## Falmouth Finn Festival officially opened

### Day 0 [News](#)

The JP Morgan Asset Management Finn Festival was officially opened tonight, Friday 4 May, at the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club in Falmouth Harbour.

Event Director Robin Taylor opened proceedings and then introduced the club Commodore Peter Collett.

He said, “This event is very important to the club. It’s very special for us and we have been preparing for it for four years. The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club is one of the oldest clubs in the world and is very good at putting on events like this. We’d like to thank our long list of sponsors headed up of course by JP Morgan Asset Management, and the volunteers. There are 160 people involved in organising these events.”

I am really chuffed about this event having been in it right from the start. I am very excited and I will be out there on the water watching you. so I wish you all the very, very best.”

The microphone was then passed to Andy Denison, Chairman of the British Finn Association. He replied, “What a fantastic welcome we have had so far with lots of help with the trailers and in the dinghy park. Well done to everyone.”

“I also want to thank all the sailors that have come to this event. This is the UK Nationals and thank you all for coming from great distances to support us. I am pleased to say that this is the largest attendance of the UK National ever since it was first sailed for in 1956. We have well over 90 entries so far. Thank you also to the sponsors as without them this event would be nothing.”

"So have a good time, keep it clean, and if you see me on the start line please let me through. Thank you.”



Left to right: Andy Denison, Robin Taylor, Peter Collett



The first race in the JP Morgan Asset Management Open UK Finn National Championship is scheduled to start at 13.00 on Saturday. Two races are planned for Saturday, three on Sunday and the final two on Monday. Forecasts are, as ever, conflicting, but most suggest a 12-14 knot breeze on Saturday with the occasional shower.

# Scott off to good start at UK Finn Nationals

## Day 1 Major Championships 2012

After the first two races at the JP Morgan Asset Management Open UK Finn Nationals, the warm up regatta to next week's Finn Gold Cup, current world champion Giles Scott has got off to a good start with a small margin over main rival Ben Ainslie, each winning one race each. Ivan Klakovic Gaspic (CRO) sits in third on equal points with Ainslie.



The day demanded concentration, good fortune and thermals. It was a cold day on Falmouth Bay on the opening day of the Falmouth Finn Festival and the tricky waves and even trickier winds. But at least it didn't rain. It started with a solid easterly breeze and sizeable waves, but the forecast was for it to drop and it started to do that as soon as the sailors reached the course area and completed the job by the end of the second race.



By the time of the start of race one at 13.00 the wind was down to 10-12 knots with a large sea running. Oscar was flying and this stayed up for the first downwind but then was removed and stayed down for the rest of the day. Eduard Skorniyakov (RUS) made the best of the first upwind to lead round the top mark. But close behind him was Giles Scott (GBR) and it wasn't long before Scott was in the lead to take the first race of the championship. Rafael Trujillo (ESP) crossed in second with Andrew Mills (GBR) in third.



After some delay, race two was started a a very sloppy and patchy 4-6 knots. Again the leaders emerged from the left side with Jonathan Lobert (FRA) leading Pieter-Jan Postma (NED) and Ben Ainslie (GBR) around the top mark. The wind started to go really light on the downwind, and on the second upwind after half the fleet had rounded the gate the wind all but disappeared for 20 minutes with bands and patches appearing randomly over the course. Ainslie hung onto his lead to cross ahead of Scott and Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic (CRO). Meanwhile the second half of the fleet had some major place changes as the decision to go left or right was not easy. Defending Champion Allen Burrell (GBR) opted for the right, and gained around 30 places to cross in 25<sup>th</sup>.

Three races are scheduled for Sunday, with an earlier start time of 11.00 and a kinder forecast of 8-9 knots and slightly warmer.

**Results after 2 races**

1 GBR 41 Giles Scott 3

2 GBR 3 Ben Ainslie 8

3 CRO 524 Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic 8

4 NZL 1 Dan Slater 18

5 NED 842 Pieter-Jan Postma 18

6 CZE 1 Michael Maier 21

7 UKR 1 Oleksiy Borysov 23

8 AUS 261 Oliver Tweddell 25

9 CRO 11 Josio Olujic 26

10 FRA 112 Jonathan Lobert 27

Full results will be on the event website in due course.

Photos by Lee Whitehead

## [Postma wins the day but Scott still leads at Falmouth Finn Nationals](#)

### [Day 2 Major Championships 2012](#)

Despite race wins for Pieter-Jan Postma (NED) and Jonathan Lobert (FRA) on day two of the JP Morgan Asset Management Open UK Finn Nationals, Giles Scott (GBR) still leads the fleet into the final day by four points from Postma. Ben Ainslie (GBR) sits in third place, on equal points with Postma.

What a difference a day makes. Today the 92 strong UK Finn National fleet was treated to three fantastic races in 12-14 knots, with nice waves and even some sunshine. You could almost call it a champagne sailing day, apart from the fact that the cold water and wind-chill made it more like an ice-cold shower day.

Jonas Høgh-Christensen (DEN) led round the top mark in the first race but it was the man of the day Pieter-Jan Postma (NED) who led across the finish line in the great conditions. Giles Scott (GBR) rounded the top mark deep in the fleet, but had a great first downwind to catch up, and nearly caught Postma in a very close finish. Rafael Trujillo (ESP) crossed in third.

After moving course area to take local shipping into account, the next race started in similar conditions, though a change in tide added a bit of interest. This time Postma led at the top mark, but couldn't hold onto the lead. Jonathan Lobert (FRA) eventually took the gun followed by Ben Ainslie (GBR). Scott got his revenge on Postma, just pipping him for third on the line.

With a number of boats calling it a day, numbers were down for the final race. Postma again led at the top mark and this time he held on for his second race win of the day from Scott and Ainslie.

The fleet returned to shore cold, tired and in need of sustenance, which was adequately



supplied at the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club's pasta evening.

Scott said of the championship so far, “Falmouth is such a great place to have this event. It's been really good. The sailing is quite a long way out but it was worth it today for sure. The wind was a bit kinder but it's been a very cold so far, though the hospitality has been great – the Cornish folk are very nice.”

Scott is now in a great position to take his third UK National title. With a four point gap and a discard of a third, he needs just one good race to wrap it up. However Ainslie is renowned for last day comebacks, so he could very easily take his second UK title. It's certainly going to be an exciting final day in Falmouth.

The championship concludes Monday with two more races scheduled, though the forecast is for a low pressure system to move over the area bringing strong winds. The situation will be assessed in the morning with the possibility of moving the course further inshore.

#### **Results after five races (1 drop)**

1 GBR 41 Giles Scott 7

2 NED 842 Pieter-Jan Postma 11

3 GBR 3 Ben Ainslie 11

4 FRA 112 Jonathan Lobert 18

5 CRO 524 Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic 18

6 DEN 2 Jonas Høgh-Christensen 28

7 ESP 100 Rafael Trujillo 29

8 UKR 1 Oleksiy Borysov 39

9 CZE 1 Michael Maier 42

10 BRA 109 Jorge Zarif 51

Full results at: <http://www.falmouthfinnfestival.com/nationals-results/C2>

More photos at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Finn-Class/110408332633>

All photos by Lee Whitehead, [www.photolounge.co.uk](http://www.photolounge.co.uk)



## Giles Scott wins JP Morgan Asset Management UK Finn Nationals

### Day 3 Major Championships 2012

He only needed one race and that was all it took. Giles Scott (GBR) won the opening race of the day at the JP Morgan Asset Management Open UK Finn Nationals to seal his third UK title with a race to spare Ben Ainslie (GBR) finished second while Jonathan Lobert (FRA) placed third.

The overnight storms had cleared leaving blue skies in the morning, but the wind built during the day for a challenging, physical day on the water for the last day of the regatta. The first race took over 45 minutes to get away following a series of general recalls and black flags. When it did Eduard Skorniyakov (RUS) led round the top mark with Giles Scott (GBR) close behind. Scott soon took the lead and rounded the gate just ahead of Andrew Mills (GBR) and Jonas Høgh-Christensen (DEN) to sail away to win the race and the championship.

With the wind reaching 20 knots the final race was a hard test, with many deciding to call it a day. Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic (CRO) battled against Jonathan Lobert (FRA) for the lead, but eventually the Croatian extended for a comfortable win.

Scott said of the first race, “It was an exciting race with lots of recalls and the tide pushing us over the line. There was more and more tide as you went out to sea and left was really good but there were a few shifts to play with as well.”

“I didn't get the best of starts so I took a hitch up and came back on good numbers and then caught up the guys who had hit the left harder. I managed to round second and then had the lead by the bottom and then slowly extended up the second beat which was nice.”

On his third UK title, “It's nice to win here, especially as it's the first time I have raced Ben in a Finn nationals.”



Scott will not be defending his title next week but when asked for comments he said, "Isn't it normal that it's going to be completely different to the week before, so that means it's not going to be 15 knots. So I predict a light wind worlds. Just on the law of sod. But seriously I reckon it will be a very different week as a lot of guys aren't here yet."

Second overall, Ben Ainslie (GBR) commented, "It's been great racing and it's been a fantastic event I think. We've had great conditions and a variety of conditions. For me it's been great to be sailing back in Cornwall where I grew up. I've never really raced here so I am learning a lot. I didn't sail particularly well to be honest so it's good to learn about the conditions."

"I will certainly have to try and sail better next week. The competition will ramp up that little bit with the extra boats. And, with it, of course, the intensity of a world championship. It will be tougher and I'll have to raise my game a little bit."

And will there be less pressure with Scott not sailing? "No I don't think so. Giles is obviously sailing really well at the moment and sailed fantastically this weekend, but there are loads of good guys in the fleet. But of course it will be easier without Giles there though it's still incredibly tough out there to win these races."

Today's second race winner Kljakovic Gaspic said, "It was a great event. We had really good conditions and a good quality fleet so it's good experience of the race areas and to get in touch with the local knowledge. Getting ready for the gold cup I feel really good. I seem to have more speed especially in stronger winds which was a problem for me for a couple of years. So I am now quite competitive and I can't wait for the gold cup to begin."

"Falmouth is a great venue. I really like it. The conditions are very similar to Weymouth so it's a great training place. The venue is really nice and well organised, and the hospitality is great so I can't say anything bad about our hosts. Everything is the best."

The prizegiving was held in the Falmouth Watersports Centre, where the championship has been based. Giles Scott was presented with the Sunday Times Gold Cup for the third time.

Andy Denison, Chairman of the British Finn Association said, "What a great championship we have had here this weekend. The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club has been the perfect host and, of course, special thanks to our major sponsor JP Morgan Asset Management and also to Harken for supplying a range of wonderful prizes and goodies. These events are made far better by support such as this."

The sailors now have five days off before the JP Morgan Asset Management Finn Gold Cup starts on Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Final results** (7 races, 1 drop)

1 GBR 41 Giles Scott 11

2 GBR 3 Ben Ainsie 18

3 FRA 112 Jonathan Lobert 26

4 CRO 524 Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic 28

5 DEN 2 Jonas Høgh-Christensen 33

6 ESP 100 Rafael Trujillo 45

7 UKR 1 Oleksiy Borysov 58

8 CZE 1 Michael Maier 66

9 BRA 109 Jorge Zarif 71

10 RUS 9 Eduard Skornyakov 72

Full results at: <http://www.falmouthfinnfestival.com/nationals-results/C2>

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