

Etchells 2023 NSW Championship underway from Gosford Sailing Club

The Etchells 2023 NSW Championship commenced today from the Gosford Sailing Club, with 31 boats on the start line, the largest fleet of Etchells to race in Australia post-COVID.

Jeanne-Claude Strong on Flying High AUS1435 currently leads the regatta with her crew following consistent a 9, 4, 2 (15), followed closely by Doug McGain on Ciao AUS1244, 10, 5, 1 (16) and Peter Merrington, First Tracks AUS1485 2, 2, 13 (17).

“Results are tight after the first day” said JC Strong following the first day of racing from the top of the leaderboard. “Sailing in Gosford has been great. The locals are super welcoming and the organisation has been A1”.

“Today was challenging for everyone, with shifty conditions in light breeze and with a short lived period when a lot of teams changed to heavy jibs and runners, but it soon settled down again”, she continued.

“Very tough day, not that windy, but the pressure came through with some rain clouds at times. Very shifty, with flat water keeping everyone quite close on the race track. So typical Gosford” confirmed Douglas McGain, who also managed consistent results despite the challenges.

“While the track was mostly set around 055 degrees, there were plenty of changes of course, ranging from 5 knots to 12 knots” explained McGain. “Every side of the bay had its turn, but it was mostly about trying to join the dots and crossing your fingers and hoping for the best”.

Unsurprisingly, given the localised conditions, there were two winners of races from the Gosford Sailing Club, John Denton on Ivy AUS892 won Race 1, and John McDougall on Pointless AUS910 won Race 2. Pointless are sitting in fifth overall.

“The local boats did a superb job today, congratulations and well done” finished Strong.

“Two locals won a race today, which was awesome to see, showing all these hot shots how to do it. It actually is really good, it proves the regular sailors can have a chance against the best, with the fleet more equalised now” said McGain.

“Nice to see 31 Etchells racing again now with several M11 boats in the regatta, and nice to see the top yachtsmen [and women] racing” Strong said of the large fleet.

“The RC did a great job to get three races in, we only need four [races] for a series, so we will just take it every leg at a time, try to get a good start and sail what is in front of us” finished McGain on the plan for tomorrow. “Tomorrow looks a bit better, still going to be very shifty, but there will be wind, tomorrow should be a more consistent wind, 10-12 knots” concluded McGain.

Event website (will have full results soon): <https://www.revolutionise.com.au/gosfordsc/regatta-gosford/gsc-nsw-etchells-states-2023/>

