

The 2008 long board racing season got off to an interesting start, in two contrasting sets of conditions.

The first two races in the Tuesday evening pursuit racing series took place in a light, but pleasant force 2 to 3 blowing from the north east, and 8 competitors took part. Pursuit races are handicap races, with competitors' starts from the beach being staggered at 1 minute intervals depending on handicap. This makes them particularly suitable for beginners as well as experienced sailors.

A course of two laps was set with 2 reaches, from the beach out to the centre of the bay, and then a buoy off Rouse, followed by a testing beat back to the end of channel buoy.

In the first race Ian Campbell, off four minutes, led from start to finish, with Graham Le Page (5 minutes) and Tim Laine (7) taking second and third respectively.

In conditions which favoured the light weights, Simon Lovell (4) took first place in race two from Bob Perkins (6). Heavy weight Simon Gregory, also off 6, sailed well and should have been a comfortable third, but misjudged the angle of the finishing line. Rod Hutchinson, coming down fast on the opposite tack, crossed the line to place third by a whisker, with Simon taking a fourth place to add his fourth in the first race.

The Sunday morning course racing got off to a more dramatic start in an easterly force four gusting to 5, and six competitors taking to the water. The course was similar to the pursuit course of the previous Tuesday, but started off Rouse to provide a beat for the first leg.

In deference to the veterans taking part in these conditions, the course was kept short; just one lap plus a second beat back to the beach.

Tim Laine, sporting an ambitious 9.8 metre sail in these winds, took two convincing first places on his formula board. The remainder of the fleet, all on Mistral one-design long boards, were left to fight it out for second and third.

In the first race Bob Perkins, using a 6.6 metre sail, still found enough power in the wind to take second place, with Jo Robinson in third. In the second race Jo powered through on her 8.5 metre sail to take second, with Bob in third. Graham Le Page was a close fourth in both races.