

The fourth week of the long board racing season continued the rather disappointing light wind conditions, but still attracted six and eight competitors respectively for the two events.

Pursuit races 5 and 6 were held in a force 2 to 3 easterly on the Tuesday evening, with the tide rising towards the top of a high 9.6 metre spring.

The starting handicaps were rather distorted, since Tim Laine and Simon Gregory had each lost 2 minutes the previous week in winds that proved too light for their formula boards. This week, both on their IMCO's, their lower handicaps made them untouchable.

A two lap course was set from the beach with two broad reaches, out to the centre of the bay and then down to a buoy west of the "Christmas pudding" buoy near the entrance to Ammareurs. There followed a fairly long beat back to the end of channel buoy.

On the high tide, the wind shadow from the bank up to the common gave some difficulty, especially in race 6. Some competitors lost ground just getting clear of the beach, and in the light winds it was difficult for later starters to make up ground over lower handicapped competitors.

With the conditions and handicaps as they were, the races therefore tended towards a bit of a procession, with consequent lack of interest. Competitors soon found though, that it paid to keep out in the bay for the beat in order to make the most of the rising tide.

Light weight Laine (handicap 5 then 6) did make up ground over heavyweight Gregory (4 then 5) to take two first places, with Gregory taking two seconds. Dennis White (6) took third place in the first race, with Graham Le Page (6) taking third place in the second.

The two final races for series 1 of the course racing were held on the Sunday morning in quite similar conditions; a force 2 to 3 north easterly, and again on a rising tide.

A two lap course was set, starting from the "Christmas pudding" buoy, with a beat up to a windward buoy in the centre of the bay, followed by two broad reaches, to the end of Channel buoy, and then back to the start.

Competitors arrived at the start buoy only to find it sitting in an unexpected wind hole, and with a local wind in this part of the bay tending to the variable. This made the short beating leg quite tricky. Competitors who ventured too far on starboard tack found themselves in a strong tide flowing up into Sandy Hook, and in the light wind lost a lot of ground.

Once away from this part of the bay, the wind was more consistent. Even so, those competitors who got into favourable tides and wind gusts gained some ground.

Tim Laine and Simon Gregory, with their big sails, took first and second place respectively in both races. In the first race Bob Perkins acted as "rabbit" for the start;

setting off on port tack, while the rest of the fleet crossed behind on starboard. In the event this proved an advantage, as the port tack took him out of the tide and into the wind, giving him a comfortable third place. Simon Lovell was fourth, and so acted as "rabbit" for the second race.

In the second race, most competitors tacked onto port soon after starting. At the gybe mark on the second lap, Perkins and Jo Robinson were both in contention for third place. Robinson's gybe almost took her into the upwind position, but Perkins just managed to stay ahead on the final reaching leg to take third, with Robinson a close fourth.

The overall results for the first course racing series (8 races with two discards and six to count) were: First - Tim Laine. Second – Bob Perkins. Third – Graham Le Page.