

Week 13 (Sunday 13th July)

The 6th and 7th races in the third 2008 GBSA course racing series were held at Ladies Bay on the morning of Sunday 13th July. After a fortnight in which one morning of course racing and two evenings of pursuit racing had been cancelled, due either to no wind or too much wind, we were grateful to see even the patchy force 2 which greeted us on arrival. In the event this filled in during the morning, and managed to creep up to a force three from the north-west by the end of the second race.

A one lap course was set, starting from a buoy near the mast at the end of the Ammareurs reef, with a beat up to a buoy near the approaches to Tiger Bay. Bob Perkins and Graham Le Page acted as “rabbits” for the two starts, a disadvantage on this occasion since the port tack entered a bit of a wind hole covering the wind surfing channel, and necessitated an extra tack to clear the Chouet reef.

In the first race the leaders mistook the course instructions, and from the windward mark headed on a close reach across the bay in the direction of the Martello tower at Rousse (the wrong tower!). Consequently they were unable to find the proper gybe mark. Before hitting the shoreline they managed to find a buoy for the gybe, and in the event the rest of the fleet followed the same course. This then necessitated a quite long near run back to the finish line at the windsurfing channel.

Seb Lovell sailed well to take his first first place in a course race. Former windsurfer sailor Nigel Gale is also rapidly getting the measure of the IMCO, and took second. Robert Read, on only his second racing outing of the season, took third.

In the second race, competitors who ventured too far across the bay on starboard found themselves in a bit of adverse tide starting to flow up into Sandy Hook, and lost ground. Those who tacked sooner did better, despite some wind shifts and tidal currents that made the approach to the windward buoy on starboard somewhat problematic.

This time, competitors found the correct broad reach down to the gybe buoy in the approach to Ammareurs, followed by a closer reach back to the finish. This proved to be a faster course than that sailed in the first race, and with the slightly increased wind, it could with hindsight have been sailed as a two lap race. Even so the fleet was well strung out by the finish.

Nigel Gale took first place. Simon Gregory, who had missed the first race, took second, with Seb Lovell in third.