

Week 14 (Tuesday 15th and Sunday 20th July)

The 5th and 6th races in the 3rd GBSA pursuit racing series were held at Ladies Bay on the evening of 14th July.

Competitors arrived to rig up in a brisk westerly breeze at the lower end of force 4. Murphy's Law of Winds states that if competitors had rigged their smaller sails, then the wind would have dropped off during the evening. As it was nearly everybody elected to rig their larger sails, and the wind increased steadily, until by the end of race 2 it was blowing towards the top of 4 and into 5. This proved too much for the majority of sailors with larger rigs.

A three lap course was set, with a beat from the beach out to a windward buoy near the Rousse pier, followed by a fast reach across the bay to a buoy in Tiger Bay, a very close reach to clear the Chouet reef, then a broad reach back to the windsurfing channel buoys.

Ten competitors started race 1, but in the increasing wind only 6 finished the course. Simon Gregory, off 5 minutes, was first with Simon Lovell, also 5, taking second and Tim Laine (9 minutes) third.

Only 6 competitors elected to start the second race, and with the wind still making, only three of these finished. Simon Lovell, now off 6, demonstrated his strength and skill in sailing the IMCO in these conditions with an 8.5 metre rig, by not only completing the course but coming in ahead of the two formula board sailors, who in fairness probably had much more wind than they needed in their even bigger sails.

Simon Gregory, also off 6, was second, and Tim Laine (9) was third.

The 8th and final race of the 3rd course racing series, and the first race of the 4th series were held on the morning of July 20th, in a northerly force 3, just gusting into the bottom of 4 at times.

A 2 ²/₃ lap course was set from the "Christmas Pudding" buoy in the approach to Ammareurs, with a beat across to Tiger Bay, an almost run down to a gybe at the end of channel buoy, and a broad reach back to the start. The race finished in lap three at the end of channel buoy.

This proved a surprisingly challenging course, with quite a few competitors taking one or more tumbles, particularly after rounding the windward mark, when it was necessary to turn beyond the direct run in order to clear the Chouet reef before firming up towards the end of channel buoy. Some sailors elected to gybe immediately after the windward buoy, with or without a second gybe after clearing the reef and a third at the actual gybe buoy. Others managed to stay on the same tack throughout the leg.

Tim Laine dominated both races to take two first places, but all other positions were closely contested. Simon Lovell took 2nd in race 1 and 5th in race 2. Jo Robinson was 4th and 2nd respectively, with Nigel Gale 3rd and 4th. Simon Gregory was 6th and 3rd.

The first three positions for the overall 3rd course racing series (8 races with two discards and 6 to count) were:-

1. Tim Laine (14 points)
2. Jo Robinson (17 points)
3. Simon Lovell (22 points)

Runners up to these were Nigel Gale and Graham Le Page in 4th and 5th places (25 and 26 points) respectively.