

Week 16 (Tuesday 29th July and Sunday 3rd August)

The first race of the 4th GBSA pursuit racing series was held at Ladies Bay and attracted eight competitors.

A south westerly wind which had been blowing quite strongly all day, was moderating as competitors arrived to rig up, and by the start of the race had reduced to force 2 to 3.

Nevertheless a two lap course was set, from the beach beating out to a buoy near the Rousse moorings, with a short reach down to the gybe at the Christmas Pudding buoy, a broad reach to clear the post at the end of the Ammareurs reef, and a run back to the end of windsurfing channel buoy. Unfortunately the wind continued to drop, and by the end of the second lap was veering northwards, turning the final leg, which should have been a run, into a broad reach.

The falling wind resulted in a long race of some 40 to 50 minutes, allowing higher handicapped sailors plenty of time to catch up. Tim Laine, off 8 minutes, took first place by a wide margin. However Seb Lovell (2) managed to hang on and just pipped Simon Gregory (6) by about half a board's length to take second, with Gregory third. Graham Le Page (3) was only a couple of board lengths behind to take fourth.

By the time all sailors had finished the wind had dropped to almost nothing, and the planned second race was cancelled. This series will therefore be run as seven races, with two discards and five to count; unless we have another evening with only 1 race, when we will revert to an eight race series.

In fact this season has seen a reasonable variety of winds so far, and the south westerly that was blowing on the Sunday morning for the second and third races in the 4th course racing series, had a go at providing most of this in a single morning. One minute it had lulled down to little more than a force three, the next it was gusting towards the top of four, maybe five at times. This provided some challenges.

A three lap course was set from a buoy just beyond the windsurfing channel, with a beat out to a windward mark near the end of the Rousse headland, a fast reach back to the Christmas Pudding buoy near Ammareurs, and a challenging run back to the end of windsurfing channel buoy.

Six competitors started the first race, but in the conditions only three managed the full three laps. Tim Laine and Simon Gregory on their formula boards took first and second. Simon Lovell suffered from equipment failure and did not start until competitors had nearly completed their first beat. His perseverance was rewarded with third place, when the other three competitors retired.

The same six starters began the second race, and this time four completed the whole three laps. As had happened in the first race, the finishers were well spaced out, and the first three finished in the same order. Graham Le Page also completed the course to take fourth.