

Catamarans Racing Report from Weston Easter Grand Slam 2007



What a gorgeous sunny weekend to celebrate Easter. Weston were hosting their Annual Weston Grand Slam sponsored by Tactic and the cats & monohulls were out in force with nearly 100 boats racing.

Due to the tides, racing could only start at 1pm every day. We had 4 days, 8 races in sunshine with not much wind. Most mornings were flat calm and by lunchtime there was a light breeze to get the racing started. Occasionally we had some tide flowing faster than the wind issues which made starting interesting, along with having the 2nd, 3rd and 4th starting fleets still getting out onto the water across the startline problems. Race 1 for the cats did not get off to a great start with a general recall which then put us at the back of the starting sequence. We waited our turn and then there was a little confusion as we had to wait for a starting sequence where there were no boats starting so 90% of the cats took off at what was our 3-minute gun. Realising the error, they came back only to be met by a random hoot one minute to our start which had a few people confused and starting. Finally we had our start with some still trying to get back to the startline - chaos.

As the wind was offshore for Friday & Saturday it was very shifty and you couldn't rely on your result until you actually made it through the finish line. One minute you could have a comfortable lead and the next you are fighting your way through from the back. The textbook says to sail towards wind to get speed, well we tried that a few times, only for the wind to disappear before we get there. We'd watch somebody on the same tack as us, only a few boat lengths in front of us get a massive lift for us to only get nothing or sometimes headed.

Thanks to the sunshine everyone stayed in good spirits even though the racing was all over the place. Saturday night was the Hog Roast which was delicious as always. Racing on Sunday started with an upwind downwind as pretty much normal but one leg into the race it turned into a reaching course which was fantastic because finally both the helms and crews got to get out on the wire with the spinnaker up and have a blast down the course on a 3 sail reach - FANTASTIC ! Unfortunately we only got to do one lap like that, although I'm not sure my hands would have lasted too many laps double trapezing with the spinnaker up on a close reach.

Monday's first race was a case of if you could get your boat to move forward in zero knots of wind, you'd win the race. 2nd race of the day was the best wind of the whole event... just enough to get both out on the wire upwind, wind was blowing onshore so it was a lot more consistent and it was a lovely way to end the regatta. I am now 'a happy bunny' as I have a sun-kissed face from all the sunshine, I've had 4 days on the water and to top it all off, Capricorn F18 GBR16 (James & I) won the cat class. I guess yesterday was the day for us to buy a lottery ticket.

1st - James & Gillian Power - Capricorn F18
2nd - Adam Piggott & Ian - Nacra Infusion F18
3rd - Stuart Gummer & Hannah Burke - Capricorn F18

I hope we'll see all the F18s at Minnis Bay on the 21st of this month.

Posted By: Gillian Power