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Tacktick Weston Grand Slam – Asymetric Report

Snakes and Ladders were the nature of the game.

Over the Bank holiday 42 asymetrics, including 11 RS 400s, 7 RS 800s, 5 B14s and 5 Cherubs turned up to test the conditions. They were not to be disappointed. The Race Officers were, at times pushed to get the races in, but the sun did prevail and most enjoyed themselves. Courses were to be upwind/downwind.

Friday's racing was conducted in NE offshore force 2. Leaders off the start were RS800 985 (David Sayce/Fiona Sayce), International Canoes 276 (Tony Robersshaw) and 288 (M Rowe). During the race B14 768 Readycrest (Mark Barnes/Pete Nicholson) and ISO 1037 (Andrew Gould/Vicky Gould) pulled through the fleet. However, as the race unfolded the fleet that had rolled the dice were the RS 400s. At the Finish, it was RS 800 985 just beating Readycrest after a 10 tack duel to the finish but RS400 735 (Rob Jones/Liz Jones) was the winners with ISO 1037 2nd and RS400 944 (Winston Lord/Emma Pethybridge) 3rd.

Race 2 and more of the same. RS 800 985 and Readycrest re-engaged in their duel to lead the fleet round the course. Leading the following pack were B14s 758 (Tim Harrison/Jonny Radcliffe) and 654 (Dan Cowin/Rachel Bennet) and ISO 1037 followed by the irrepressible RS400s. At the finish RS800 985 beat Readycrest but RS400 735 was to win again followed by Readycrest and B14 758. So overnight RS400 735 had a commanding lead.

Saturday and more of the same but a little hotter. Race 3 and at the start it was the RS 400s who showed the way as the faster boats had to duck the pack when tacking from inshore. However, 49ers 314 (Ron Price/Chris Eaton) and 739 (F Lloyd/J McInnes) led from the usual suspects as they pulled through to engage in battle with ISO 1037 punching above its weight. At the finish, at last the RS400s had been beaten on Handicap with Readycrest winning from 49er 314 followed by RS400 735.

Race 4 and 2 B14s did battle with the RS400s at the shore end of the line. This resulted in leaving this group in the lighter winds at the start. RS 800 985 and B14 758 led the fleet for the first lap, but the breeze was to fade at times followed by a resounding force 3 - 4 and then nothing. At the finish this resulted in a big park up off the club gate for the slower boats, so finishing a lap down. B14 758 sailed through to win by 20 seconds from Readycrest followed by RS700 820 (Phil Dickinson).

The fleet retired to the shore for the anticipated evening's Hog Roast that was not to disappoint.

Sunday and another day of heat and light winds. Off the start, RS 200 734 (Hamish Walker/Clare Stubbs) port ended the fleet from the shallows to hold the lead till passed by Readycrest and progressively faster boats. Readycrest hit an outfall pipe, knocking the usual race plan to tatters. However, though the plate had realigned itself, the hull seemed intact and therefore they carried on rounding the first mark first. On the downwind leg the leaders became stranded in the middle as the fleet split left and right with RS800s heading for the shore and taking the lead. This they were to hold till the finish but with the building breeze, now force 2 – 3, Cherub 2688 (William Lee/Lucy Lee) and their "T" foil came to the fore to rip them up the fleet to gain their first win from RS200 734 and ISO 1037.

Race 6 and in a steady breeze. Readycrest had returned with repairs carried out. Off the start several boats were over including Cherub 2688, who had to return and so one would think game over but this was not to be the case. The B14s, RS800s and ISO led the fleet with some of the closest racing of the weekend. RS800 985 led for much of the race with a pack of 5 boats biting at their heels, but on the last lap they were passed by RS800 1011 (James Ross/Heather Back) who had gone offshore and led to the finish followed by RS800 985 and Readycrest passing and fending off B14 772 Ince & Co (Mark Watts/Kathy Sherratt) at the finish. However, Cherub 2688 and that "T" foil were to again take a good win relegating the B14s to second and third.

With the day's racing over and a night off for the club's work force, the fleet dispersed to barbecues and parties.

Monday and yet more heat and no wind. Now the fleet were getting serious tans! With little wind the Race Officer sounded the 15 minute warning on time. This resulted in a rush to change and for those that ventured out a Le Mons style rush to make the favoured end of the line. For the passers by this must have offered a strange view. With little wind the fleet slowly worked their way to the first mark taking about 30 minutes or more to cover the 800 m. beat. On the leg back the breeze filled in to force 2 and turned into a beat. With the race shortened to one lap it was to be a race of the slower boats. RS200 734 won from the irrepressible Cherub 2688 and RS400 846 (Chris Aston/Claire Aston).

With one race to go, Readycrest had 13 points followed by RS400 735 14 points, RS200 15.6 points followed by Cherub 2688 and RS400 846 on 21 points. The breeze was up to force 2 – 3. Off the line with a fetch to the first mark 100 m. away, Readycrest led chased by IC276. Through the race Readycrest was to progressively pull out a lead but was this to be enough. The breeze increased slightly as the race ran and the RS400s and Cherub were looking really good. At the finish, Readycrest after racing for approximately 49 minutes beat Cherub 2688 by 5 minutes and first RS400 by 6 minutes 15 seconds. Was this enough. Cherub 2688 won the race followed by Readycrest just holding off ISO 1037 and IC276 followed by the RS400s.

Readycrest had won from RS400 735 and Cherub 2688.