

## The (51<sup>st</sup>) Norman Moore Trophy

### Gwaihir raises the bar

What a weekend of contrasting sailing conditions – well what there was of it anyway. It had all started so well with a great race on Saturday morning in a breeze that gusted to 30 knots and gave one champagne three sail reach that, win or lose, made it for us all. This first race has the reputation of having the tetchiest start of the year but despite the almost routine squeaking from Marengo the fleet were away cleanly. Skua got the pin end bias perfectly with Gwaihir and Serenade close by. They ‘had’ to call for water quite soon – but Bluff ducked them and then went on for another 200 yards! Mike (with Roddy Bridge as guest crew) quickly selected overdrive to lead at Wear with Skua, Bluff and Blue Phantom next up. Bunching on the run caused some place changes but by staying clear (and despite being in the tide) Marengo advanced from 8<sup>th</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> at Dunes. Skua suffered a shroud failure near Ellanore and the mast exited stage right – a great pity. Bluff put their avoirdupois to good effect to take up the running but Gwaihir was cruising to a crushing victory.

An unseasonal and strong NE blowing straight into the Club was a bit intimidating but there was no doubting the wisdom of PRO Tim Hill’s decision not to race that afternoon as the wind continued to strengthen. The overnight forecast and that for Sunday was not encouraging either but hey presto come the morning it ain’t like that at all.

A lightish S wind brought a quite different test but almost incredibly the same two boats rounded Ellanore in front Gwaihir (with guest crew Mark Struckett) Star just ahead of Bluff as the fleet negotiated their way through the XOD start. Gwaihir (and others) grounded momentarily in the Thorney channel on the beat back out and Olly was ahead at the turn. It was great to see two boats built 30 years apart with very different all up crew weights so closely matched on the leg over to SWP. Those who took the East Head and circular route did well, notably Kansu who arrived at SWP with kite already pulling strongly to round 4<sup>th</sup>. The now infrequent visits to Channel are welcome and can be interesting but this time just allowed Gwaihir to stretch their lead. Rounding Freddie Brookes in the very close company of 20 Oppies was added entertainment. At East Head the gap between Bluff and Marengo in 3<sup>rd</sup> was over 3 minutes – and how Bluff wished that the race had finished there. The wind died on the run to Park and then it became an almost total lottery within sight of the finish – Kansu might not agree as they made the most of it to finish 2<sup>nd</sup>.

There was no evidence of a sea breeze at lunchtime – or any breeze, but Peter Nicholson persevered and had us out there on time in hopeful anticipation – and we were duly rewarded after a postponement and relocated start. Goosander (which lost 55kgs on it’s winter diet and is now fully tweaked as well) looked good from near the pin but a resurgent Migrant was first into the slacker tide near Pilsey and just shot away to Dunes with almost exponential gains from a shifting wind and the leebow. The beats became rather one-sided after that southerly shift and the location of the RS 200 Open fleet denied the RO his desired course change. Most of the excitement came from the hooking turn around Thorney and rounding Park with the X’s. After recovering from a mediocre start the best of the rest turned out to be Gwaihir but even they elected not to match Migrant’s bravado performance in holding their kite “comfortably” to the finish.

It was truly horrid on Monday morning – an inch of rain overnight, still pouring and with a cold and strong NE with gusts of 30 knots to complete a very unattractive picture. This was to be the day of the two back to back races to make up for Saturday afternoon. The consensus was not to risk a

demolition derby. Later, of course, it was pleasant and the wind had dropped, but no complaints. It was a pity however that the weekend petered out in this way and that the hugely impressive performance of Mike and his team in Gwaihir did not receive the recognition properly due to them. Still the champagne can be properly chilled for a presentation in due course.

A special thanks to all those involved in the planning of this event and for a fine dinner on Saturday complete with amusing anecdotes of Swallow sailing over the years from various Class luminaries (including John Prunty who sailed this weekend with Jeremy Buckwell – his 57<sup>th</sup> year of Swallow sailing!). Enthusiastic reeling and disco dancing courtesy of Richard Grant and Charles and Mareika Fisher (thanks for the reels crib sheet!) rounded off an excellent 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

1<sup>st</sup> Gwaihir Mike Wigmore, Mark Struckett, Roddy Bridge, Andy Pinkham, William Kalderon  
2<sup>nd</sup> Migrant Charles Fisher, Richard Thompson, Hugo Fisher, Simon Brimacombe, Jim Jerwood  
3<sup>rd</sup> Marengo Carolyn Brigg, Sue Glover, Christine Graves  
4<sup>th</sup> Bluff Oliver Gilchrist, Nick Warner, Ian Denton,  
Mid Fleet Prize Spredaeagle Richard Grant, Tom Troubridge

### Short tacks

- 23 boats was a great turnout given the miserable forecast and a great sight for other to behold as we sailed around a mostly empty harbour
- The award for the strongest grip in the fleet must surely go to Simon Brimacombe –, holding on to the transom of Migrant whilst planing is no mean feat (having gone swimming sorting out the spi sheet)
- Rusty? Chris Body took Echo to a 3<sup>rd</sup> in the only race he sailed – good to see him back in a Swallow
- Marengo temporarily missed out Park on Sunday morning – it was supposedly ‘her’ fault – but which her?! It cost them two valuable places.
- Gwaihir has Hyde sails (and Merlin too). The 08 vintage Batt sails (Serenade and Skua amongst them) look great. Marengo mostly sticks to her ever-faithful Mountifield main, now some years old. Meridian has some (sadly seldom seen) fancy Australian-made North sails. It really isn’t a one horse race – and Hyde are about to make it even more interesting .....