

Swallows at Itchenor – 10 July

Pondering The Immutable

What a great day's boating – warm, eventually bright blue skies, a building breeze and a clearly popular one-day trophy format, with all three races to count. PRO Peter Nicholson and his team gave us precisely what the sparkly conditions required and with the added responsibilities of counting all three it supposedly made for more cautious close encounters and better rule observance (but sadly not universally).

The courses for the b2b morning races were both RW but as they were either side of HW they were quite different. In R1 Darter lead the majority of the fleet up the Itchenor side until they got 'confused' in the sea fog and amongst the Bosham boats whilst Migrant and Cockersootie were eking out a 50m lead in less traffic and not too much tide on t'other side. Marengo advanced to 2nd and Boomerang to 3rd with a counter-intuitive 2nd beat on the Itchenor side after most went up the Thorney side.

Serenade waltzed away from the R2 start and was seemingly untouchable but Marengo nevertheless reeled them in by using some classic windward attacking techniques. Migrant's 3rd meant that they were just a point behind the fillies at lunch.

More of a harbour tour for the R3 finale and now with a rampant ebb and fast-emptying harbour. Buccaneer and Spectre (aided and abetted by Mimie) were best away but Marengo was in touch. Spectre was first round Dunes but Marengo's risky route close to Pilsey (considering they had rebuilt their faulty depth sounder over lunch) was rewarded with the lead and they were never subsequently challenged.

Ponder Challenge Cup

1st Marengo (Carolyn, Sue and Christine) 4 points

2nd Migrant (Charles, Richard and Carol, Jim) 8 points

3rd Buccaneer (Mike, Steve and John) 13 points

4th Curlew (Simon, Olly and Chris) 16 points

Brass tacks

- The Marengo girls had (allegedly) spent the previous evening seriously binge-drinking. *So* yesterday, but also curiously effective – if one overlooks the hesitant start in R1 (only 2nd) and the trawled spinnaker at Wear in R2. Should we all consider this preparation technique?
- Mike Bond would welcome appropriate hails from approaching starboard boats as far in advance as possible. It actually gets Steve to *really* hike out over the side to see what all the fuss is about.
- After some necessary modifications following R1 Simon Slater's splendid panama stayed put and definitely added a touch of style.
- You have to laugh: For the first beat of R1 the majority of the fleet went left and two clever boats went right. On the second beat exactly the reverse - but a different pair. Well done Charles and Jeremy respectively (performing strongly after his back op).
- We now know what it is like to sail with and against the ubiquitous Bosham classic dayboat fleet that seemed to be doing much the same course in R1.
- Chris Creak sent his apologies from Rock where together with Annie, and with Beccy doing the nav, the family was winning the Shrimper Championships for the 4th successive time. Bravo Bonney!

- With 18 starters, and 17 for the similar Finella Cup in June, this format is clearly popular (full results on ISC website). More for next year, or does it suck support from other races?