

## Race secretary 2023 report

The first races of the season were in the RORC series; the first was the Transatlantic race, 3 MOD70s finished with Maserati coming out on top, in a new course record time of 5days 5hours. This was closely followed by the Carribean 600 with 10 multihull entries and was won by a Gunboat-68 Tosca sailed by Alex Thompson; with a real match race between the MOD 70s Maserati and Zoulou for 2nd and 3rd, with the latter being 11 seconds ahead, but losing out on corrected time.

As usual, the South West racing season really kicked off with 10 boats taking part in the Royal Western YC Plymouth Falmouth Fowey triangle race over the early May bank holiday; there only having been a couple of boats out for the 2 race Saltash Spring Series. Day 1 to Falmouth saw very light conditions, with the start moved out to the Western Breakwater. The smaller lighter boats got away initially but as the wind picked up the bigger boats especially Slinky Malinki and Foxy did well. Andy Fennel in the Shuttleworth 39 tri Morpheus took line honours, but not by enough to make up the time she gave to the fleet. Panoramix took the win with Slinky second and Foxy third, a couple of boats fell into large wind holes and retired or missed the cut-off time. Day 2, to Fowey, saw more consistent breeze along the coast though there was a bit of a shutdown off the entrance to Fowey and the boats that went left into Fowey Bay caught up with those that had gone right and done better initially. Belladonna taking the win, with Slinky 2nd and Easytiger 3rd. The first 4 boats were within one minute on corrected time. The final day back to Plymouth saw an even more consistent breeze for the spinnaker reach back to Plymouth. The longer waterline length boats did well with Slinky Malinky 1st, Hissy Fit 2nd, and jumping into the mix Panoramix in 3rd. The overall win was taken by James Holder in the Dazcat 1295 Slinky Malinky who had been on the podium for every leg, the 2nd placed boat was Andy Sinclair and Brendan Steward's Farrier F82R Panoramix and 3rd was Dominic Gooding's Dazcat10m Belladonna.

The next race in the South West was the RNSA St Peter Port race, which took place over the late May Bank Holiday weekend and had 4 boats competing. A boisterous, fetch in a force 4 saw pretty quick passage times to St Peter Port and the win was taken by Hissy Fit from Trillium, with Easytiger a distant 3rd. Unfortunately, Morpheus broke a daggerboard just short of St Peter Port on the side needed for the final beat up to the finish, forcing them to retire.

Racing Further afield early in the season was Nemo sailed by Matt Theobald and Enora Pichon taking part in the annual ArMen race from La Trinete sur Mer in mid-May, run under the Multi 2000 rating, Nemo was 5th over the 310 mile course and Rock Steady a Dazcat based in France was 3rd. However, the big offshore test was the Azores and Back Race (AZAB) run by the Royal Cornwall YC, which started on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Unfortunately, of the 5 initial multihull entries only two, Bare Necessities sailed by Bruce Sutherland and Alison Bushfield and Suenos sailed by Rupert Kidd and Alan Mitchell made the start-line. The result on the outward leg was very close after 1200 miles of very varied and at times challenging conditions Bare Necessities came out on top by 8 minutes. On the return leg to Falmouth, the split after the start going East or West about the island seemed to be the deciding factor, with the westward route paying handsomely for Bare Necessities, who came in 21 hours ahead on corrected time thus taking the win overall.

The MOCRA Nationals were held between 27th and 29th June; jointly hosted by the Royal Victoria Yacht Club in Wooton Creek and Bembridge Sailing Club, both of which made the fleet extremely welcome and laid on some great social events. There was an excellent turnout of 21 boats, for 3 great days of racing in generally excellent Force 3 to 5 conditions. The first day consisted of a short windward leeward race followed by a triangle-sausage-triangle, and the day was rounded off by what was meant to be a longer around the cans race, but the lead boats made it round in just under an hour. Mark Upton-Brown's F9A Alini was top boat on day one with a 1,2,1, scoreline; closely

followed by Nick Wood's F27 Origami with 2,1,6. The other boats on the podium were Nigel Talbot's F82R Sanity and Luck Jackson's F25A Arlette, resplendent in their Yellow livery, and Nigel Stevens F27 Triassic. The Trimarans being the boats to beat was a pattern that continued throughout the event, with the notable exception of Simon Baker who hustled the biggest boat in the fleet, the Dazcat D1495 Hissy Fit around the tight courses to great effect. Following an excellent hog roast at Royal Victoria on Tuesday evening the racing got underway on Wednesday with a short windward/leeward race and then the longest race of the event the "passage" race to Bembridge, which took a circuitous route round the Nab Tower then back to Bembridge. The Small tri's were again victorious in the short race with a new boat on the podium Chris Dodds F9A Misty coming in behind Origami and Alini. The longer course and more boisterous conditions out by the Nab saw Hissy Fit come into her own and Simon Baker took the win with Origami and Alini completing the podium. Julian Linton's F32 SRC NRB was back on the water for the 2nd days racing having been repairing her daggerboard during the first, but despite her impressive pace around the course, she couldn't make up enough time on her rating to get on the podium. Luca Stonehouse sailing Dazcat D1 was also very quick around the course but suffered a rudder failure during race 6. Impressive repair works got them back on the water for the last race on day 3, but not quite soon enough to start. The final day of racing was planned to be similar to the first with windward/leeward, triangle-sausage-triangle, and round the cans. Unfortunately, the wind didn't hold up for the last race and a couple of boats didn't make the cut-off one hour after NRB's rapid transit. NRB won the first race, Alini the 2nd, and Origami the 3rd. Hissy Fit, Sanity, and Triassic also made it onto the podium on day 3.

After 3 days of close racing, there being only 1 point between 1st and 2nd places and 3 place being decided on countback the MOCRA national champion was:

Nick Wood sailing Origami, a Farrier F27

2nd Was Mark Upton-Brown sailing Alini a Farrier F9A

3rd on countback was Simon Baker sailing Hissy Fit a Dazcat D1495

4th was Nigel Talbot sailing Sanity a Farrier F82R

The Round The Island race took place on the Saturday following the Nationals, 1100 boats entered, 177 retired and 838 finished, in what were challenging conditions; that unfortunately saw two capsize in the multihull fleet; Origami at the Needles and Coco de Mer the Gunboat 66 off Bembridge. Origami was recovered comparatively unscathed apart from the rig, into Ventnor a couple of days later. The multihulls were 2nd start as usual, at a very civilised 08:10. The first leg to the Needles was a one-sided beat in up to around 20Kts of wind, with some much stronger gusts especially around the Needles, followed by a deep reach/run to St Catherines in building wind and seas and a deep reach to Bembridge ledge in moderating conditions with some shelter from the Island and a final beat up the Solent, in for most boats an increasingly adverse tide to the finish off Cowes. The MOCRA winner was Tim Yetman sailing Dragonfly 28, the performance model for the UK agents Multihull Solutions Limited. Alini a farrier F9A sailed by Mark Upton-Brown was 2nd continuing her excellent run of podium results in the RTI and another Dragonfly 28 Performance sailed by Malcolm Jaques was third. Several boats achieved excellent results in the line honours standings, coming in the top 20 were NRB 8th, Raygun 10th, Dragonfly 28 15th, Alini 13th, Hissy Fit 14th, Ice Dragon 15th and Arlette 18th. Raygun the Diam 24 had an excellent race being the smallest Tri taking part and D1 the smallest Catamaran was a very creditable 47th. Richard Woods entered Sagitta in the bridge-deck class in which he was triumphant with a creditable 124th overall.

The biggest race of the RORC season is undoubtedly the Fastnet Race, which, this year was a bit of a destruction derby for the first night, with the fleet assailed by some very strong winds, gusting F9 by all accounts and several boats suffered sail and other damage. Only 8 of 15 MOCRA entries finished, with Morpheus sailed by Andy Fennel being the only multi under 50ft to finish. The winning MOCRA multi-hull in a new course record time was the 80ft Catamaran Allegra skippered

by Paul Larsen. Tosca the 68ft Gunboat was 2nd and Lodigroup an ORC 50 skippered by Loic Escoffier was third. The Ultimes had a better time of it than the smaller boats with a new course record being set by SVR Lazartigue skippered by Francois Gabart.

A few weeks prior to the Fastnet was the Cowes-Dinard-St. Malso race which was the second most popular RORC for multies, with 7 entries. The winner was Lodigroup skippered by Loic Escoffier, with Use It Again a 75ft tri 2nd, and 3rd being taken by D Bouillard in his first season in the newly launched Dazcat 1295 Minor Swing. Most of the other RORC races only had one or two multi-hull entries, such as Jon Mc Coll's Shuttleworth 34 Shockwave which was the sole entrant in the North Sea race, and James Holder's Dazcat 1295, which won the De Guinard Bowl race from Nica a large German catamaran.

The West-country racing resumed after the Nationals with the usual short coastal races to Fowey, Salcombe, and buoys in Whitsands Bay, culminating in the informal Last Hurrah race; this year to Fowey. There were generally 4 or 5 boats in each race apart from the last Hurrah which saw 11 turn out; unfortunately, the wind didn't co-operate and only 3 finished, so it wasn't counted towards the inshore points series this year. There were several different winners from these races, held in a wide variety of conditions, Panoramix sailed by Andy Sinclair and Brendan Seward, and Nemo the Newick 39 sailed by Matt Theobald and Enora Pichon both won a couple of races.

Racing in the Solent run by the Royal Victoria Yacht Club seems to be maintaining its popularity, with a few new boats taking part this year, but some of the more established boats were not out so frequently. The RVYC open series which attracted 6 entries was won by Sanity an F28 sailed by Nigel Talbot from Odra a Woods Wizard sailed by Tim Haslam. The RVYC also held their usual short regatta series; unfortunately, 2 of the 4 races sailed over the bank holidays were not held, 4 boats entered and Strider a Dragonfly 32 sailed by Richard Rae, won from Milly Mo a Dragonfly 920 sailed by Tim Haslam. The Merrydown Regatta sailed on 16th Sept had 6 entries and was won by Sanity with Strider 2nd and Orca third. Strider also prevailed in the RVYC autumn series, which had 3 entries, but unfortunately, 2 of the 4 scheduled races were lost d/t weather.

Racing participation on the East Coast appears to be pretty steady from year to year over the last couple of years and was run by the Royal Burnham YC and this year consisted of the Whitsun Regatta and Burnham Week, both of which attracted 4 entries. Origami an F27 sailed by Nick Wood triumphed from Triassic an F27 sailed by Nigel Stevens in the Whitsun Regatta and Triassic took Burnham week from NRB the F32 SRC sailed by Julian Linton.

The only event of note in Scotland was the Scottish Islands Peaks Race, which combines fell running with sailing; there were two multihull entries this year, Excalibur III an F28R sailed by Brian Young who won class 1 and, Opportune an Outremer 38 sailed by Iain Baird.

At the end of the season, the inshore points trophy was a close run thing with Hissy Fit the Dazcat 1495 sailed by Simon Baker coming out on top just ahead of Sanity the F28 sailed by Nigel Talbot with Trillium another F28 Sailed by Will Rogers in 3rd. Using the inshore points as a metric there was a little more racing activity this year with 50 boats registering points from the events counted compared to 46 last year.

The Race Committee are reviewing the MOCRA rating; the biggest focus is on how headsails are rated, as the rating hasn't kept pace with the development of headsails set flying ( that is those foresails set on furlers ahead of the forestay) that can be used upwind. The rating of both headsails set flying; which currently carry no rating penalty as long as they are smaller than the spinnaker and also jibs/ genoas which can currently go up to 130% of the foretriangle before any additional rating is applied, is being considered. The most likely solution; that is being trialed with experimental

ratings used to re-evaluate some of this seasons results is a sliding scale for headsails set flying depending on their mid-girth ratio. Thus, sails that are nearer to a spinnaker in shape incur a lower rating penalty than those cut more like a genoa that are used more upwind. To keep the playing field as level as possible jibs/genoas are also likely to be rated on the actual area rather than the rating being based on the fore triangle area as it is currently.