

## **Spring Points**

*Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012*

### Race 1

Slow handicap 7 boats

Fast handicap 12 boats

A bright sunny day, with a light, variable wind, made course setting difficult. It was a challenge to make against the tide when sailing out of the creek. Dave Islin turned his Fireball over at the first mark in an attempt to take advantage of other members of the fleet. Fortunately he did not get wet. This can not be said of Laura who managed to assist in getting the show on the road again. There was much position changing as both fast and slow handicap fleets moved towards Steeple buoy.

At this point, due to light winds and very slow progress, the course was shortened: Doctor and Coopers removed and the fleet returned from Steeple to Jetty buoy and finish. As the fleet rounded the mark the wind then perked up making for a good sail back to the club for lunch.

### Race 2 – Handicap Series 1

The second race was sailed from a single start and, because of the fast flowing tide and light winds, consisted of a course from the club to No 4 and then back to Bay. This was followed by a second lap to finish the race. At the start the wind increased to F3 which gave much more opportunity for a close start. So close in fact that, after a collision and a large number of boats being over the line, a general recall was called. After a short debate between members of the fleet as to exactly what this meant, the race was restarted.

The second start was impressive, with most of the fleet crossing the line closely and none being over. The breeze was steady and increased slightly allowing for some good spinnaker legs and trapeze practice for the crews.

The race was concluded fairly quickly: just as well because the tide was ebbing equally quickly.

See the results page on the website for positions.

## **Easter egg Trophy**

*Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2012*

With a much more promising wind the course was set with a dan buoy for a windward start.

A clean start with only two boats over the line meant a general recall was unnecessary. As many of the fleet arrived at the windward mark together, skill and good behaviour ensured that this rounding passed without incident. The long reach and run out to Mundon gave opportunities for spinnakers, luffing and some jockeying for position. Mike and Keith showed particularly good skill in taking and retaking the lead on a number of occasions. This leg also proved advantageous for Ron and Laura in the Merlin as they moved almost to the front of the fleet. The slower handicap boats also remained in touch with the lead boats.

As the boats rounded Mundon for the next leg to Doctor, the fleet divided into three groups, still not much distance between them. Visibility became difficult at Doctor with drizzle and rain making it a little uncomfortable. Some of the lead boats needed to put in an extra tack at the end of the leg to Coopers, possibly due to the very strong tide or a wind shift.

Ron in the Merlin disappeared toward Northey Island. He alleged later that his mainsheet had become detached. Laurence (Finn) was able to take advantage of this situation and make significant progress towards the front of the fleet. The fact that the slowest (lowest handicap) boats were only 16 minutes behind the first boat at the end of the race is a credit to the sailors and a well set course.

## Spring Points

*Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2012*

Crews arrived to another grey, wet day but with significantly increased winds. Inshore forecast for the afternoon was SW 5-7 gusting gale 8. Fortunately it was less than that in the creek with a steady F5 with gusts F6.

10 brave souls started the race, with one Fireball and one Kestrel in the fast handicap sailing out to number 6 and back into the creek (2 laps). The slow handicap, made up of 6 Lasers, sailed out to Lawling and then back into the creek, again two laps. The fresh, gusting winds made challenging conditions, with the fast handicap boats flying spinnakers and two of the slow handicap boats practising capsizing drill (8 times in all). Very impressed with the expertise in righting the boats and then continuing with the race!

See the results page on the website for positions.

The second race (Handicap Series 1) had a reduced entry, with 4 Lasers starting. Mark Batt changed to a Laser but managed to slip off it twice early in the race. Another Laser sailor also managed to slip off his deck in sympathy. After rounding Spit buoy, there was a fast reach and run to No 4, followed by another very fast reach to No 3. After practising capsizes in race 1, Victoria made a very good start and rounded the first two marks. Unfortunately she was attacked by a mooring buoy which managed to wrap her mainsheet twice around itself, the stop knot at the end of the sheet being caught in its chain. It would be fair to say she stood no chance of staying upright! She attempted to right the boat with little success. She later told me that she was unaware of the extent of her mooring. After being detached from the buoy and righted she discovered that her tiller was broken and so reluctantly sailed back to the club and retired. After a fast couple of laps the shortened course allowed the two remaining boats to complete the race.

The very mixed conditions for the weekend provided good opportunities for all to show skill and enterprise and, in spite of the rain showers, everyone appeared to have a very enjoyable weekend.

Martin and Trish