

Waglan Series 2019-20, Race 11

Having dropped anchor between Ocean Park and Round Island, the committee boat was on station at 1030 for the ninth day of racing in the Aberdeen Boat Club's popular Waglan Series. Now well into its 16th year, the series typically spans six months and fills a necessary space in the local keelboat racing calendar, providing a 'winter balance' for the Typhoon Series held in Port Shelter during the summer.

The islands race (Race 11) on Sunday, the 15th of March 2020, also formed part of the IRC National Championships* (consisting of five events shared by RHKYC, HHYC and ABC).

The forecast was for a brisk Force 4 but, in hazy conditions and barely 4 knots of breeze, race officer Alex Johnston faced a shifting breeze and difficult course considerations as the scheduled start approached. Finally he settled on Course 19A for the two IRC fleets, and Course 20B for the HKPN boats. At 1050, the breeze swung to 110 degrees and he was forced to reset the ODM. The windward mark then became unnecessary and was removed.

At 1100, seven IRC 1 and nine IRC 2 boats got away cleanly with *Ambush* tacking quickly and establishing an early lead. Disappointingly, and although entered and enjoying a competitive campaign, *Red Kite II* never made the start. Ah well, the final in the series (29.Mar.20) has yet to come.

The IRC fleets headed for Chesterman Buoy, Castle Rock and, sailing further south, left Po Toi to port, sailed inside Sung Kong, then went around the bottom of Waglan Island to then make their way north to TCS2 and Fury Rocks. After that, it was back to Beaufort Island, Castle Rock, a port rounding of Chesterman Buoy and a run to the finish off the Cheshire Home at Chung Hom Kok. Total distance – 23.6 nautical miles.

For the HKPN A and B boats, the course chosen by the RO was nine nautical miles shorter and allowed winner, *Generations*, to storm into the finish and claim overall line honours at 13:56:53. The wind by this time was reaching 20 knots as the first boat in IRC, *Ambush*, closed the committee boat with Drew Taylor at the helm.

The stretch from Chesterman Buoy was giving crews a thrilling ride, allowing them to end the day on a high. There were no slow coaches; conditions were too good! Last boat home was *Crystal* at 14:55:48.

On corrected time, *Blackjack* won IRC 1 ahead of *Ambush* and *Quest*, while *Whiskey Jack* scored a deserved bullet in IRC 2 ahead of *Calamansi* and a jubilant crew on *Rampage*. *Generations* won HKPN A and *Boss* sealed its position at the top of HKPN B.

A combined* prize-giving will be held at the Aberdeen Boat Club on Friday, the 20th of March 2020.