

Waglan Series 2019-20, Race 8 & 9

After a break for Chinese New Year, the Aberdeen Boat Club's Waglan Series 2019-20, comprising 12 races, resumed on Sunday, the 16th of February 2020 with Races 8 & 9.

There was a blustery northerly under grey skies but amazing visibility when the race officer, Barry Truhol, and his team set up for the first of two windward / leewards. The committee boat dropped anchor to the southeast of Lamma Island and a black windward mark for IRC was dropped at 1.2 nautical miles, and a yellow mark for HKPN was at 1.0nm. The IRC leeward mark was positioned 100 metres from the committee boat and the HKPN, 180m.

With the wind blowing from 340 degrees, 11 of the 20 registered boats gathered for the 1055 warning signal. Surprisingly, an unregistered sportsboat from the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club appeared with a crew of junior Sharks sailors. They requested – and were granted – permission to join the race.

First off on the gun at 1100, on three laps of the course, were the six IRC boats with *Blackjack* and the J-111 *Juggerknot* contesting IRC 1 and *Legende*, *Crystal*, *Wicked* and *Red Kite II* competing in IRC 2.

The HKPN boats, which included *Generations* and *JeNa PaBe* and the Sharks in Division A, and *Five O One*, *Boss* and *Shun Shui* in Division B, followed five minutes later on the shorter course.

The first incident of the day occurred during the HKPN start. Aberdeen Boat Club regular, *Five O One*, came within inches of T-boning the committee boat. To yells from the race management team and gasps from the wide-eyed crew in the Oceanis 43's cockpit, they were, thank goodness, able to bail out just in time.

The restricted course meant that, in those winds of 15 knots, the IRC 1 boats were around the top mark, within eight minutes indicating it might all be over in 45 minutes. A suggestion to lengthen the course was deferred until the second race.

Approaching the finish line, *Boss* on port was obliged to furl its jib and take evasive action with a full turn, to avoid *Juggerknot* approaching at full speed under its green kite.

It was all over for both classes in 53 minutes with the J-105, *Legende*, bringing up the rear. Line and handicap honours went to *Blackjack* in IRC 1, *Red Kite II* in IRC 2 and *Generations* in HKPN Div A. Despite their scary start, particularly for those on the committee boat, *Five O One* took line honours in HKPN Div B but was beaten on handicap by four seconds by the Bavaria 34 cruiser, *Shun Shui*.

Having stretched the windward mark to 1.4nm for IRC and 1.2nm for HKPN it was straight into a second three-lap race after the noon warning signal.

The sun had briefly broken through whilst the breeze had continued to strengthen to 18-19 knots with gusts of up to 27 knots. There were numerous broaches involving almost everyone including *Blackjack*, *Juggerknot* and *Crystal* and even more difficulties retrieving kites! On the downwind leg of

the second lap, *Blackjack* had problems during a gybe and tore its headsail. Skipper Glenn Smith chose to continue the last lap bare-headed, giving *Juggerknot* the IRC 1 victory.

Red Kite II at one stage was late in dropping its kite at the leeward mark and sailed well beyond the turn but still made it two wins in a row. *Wicked*, which crossed 2nd, was relegated to 3rd on handicap with *Legende* claiming 2nd on corrected and *Crystal* 4th in both races.

Generations likewise, made it two bullets in a row ahead of *JeNa PaBe* and the Sharks in HKPN Div A.

Despite reefing their main and without a kite, opting instead to sail goose-winged downwind, *Five O One* took line and handicap honours in HKPN Div B with *Boss* 2nd, 10 seconds ahead of *Shun Shui*, which brought up the rear in 3rd.

There was no provision in the Sailing Instructions for more races and, apart from the victorious *Red Kite II* team, there would have been few takers for more.

Consequently, the fleet returned to shore where the prize-giving was held on the ABC's sun-deck. There the crews regaled each other with their trials and tribulations in the testing conditions, with much appreciation for the services of the race officer, Barry Truhol from the RHKYC.

The Race 10 in the Waglan Series 2019-20 is scheduled for the 1st of March 2020.