



Upsets, Photo Finishes & Laurels for St. Valentine

Race Day 2 By Richard Blair

It was a day of upsets as the Malaysian Navy team in **Zuhrah** beat **Ericsson (V060)** in the Racer's second go, close finishes as the young Sports Boats teams rushed to a photo finish and laurels for the Race Committee for a well run, almost flawless, day.

The top divisions including Racers, Premier Cruisers, IRC 1 boats and Sports Boats were set on a simple windward loop course while Multi-hulls, Clubs and Rovers headed down wind on Course 4, a triangle with inner loop all within the Toloi Island Area. The Racers got off together but **Zuhrah** seemed to get knocked after the start, putting it behind the others on the beat up against a 12 knot wind from the northeast.



Premier Cruisers Start Race One

Gapurna Mas Ayu II bolted early at the start of the Premier Cruising division and had to cross again, but the sports boats got off well with **KDPII** tacking early toward the first mark 2 miles to the east.

Ulumulu and **Mahligai** gave **Ericsson** a run for her money and there was competition at the first mark as they rounded together and deployed their spinnakers for the return leg. **Mahligai's** kite was slow to fill though

leaving her back in the pack as the Multi-hulls got off downwind on Course 4 with (you guessed it) **Moto Inzi** in the lead. But it was two Singapore boats (**Sunshine** and **Sofa**) which led the purple flags across the start.

The wind was falling off as the Racers bore down on the leeward mark in a tight pack led by **Ericsson** and the Navy boat seemed doomed as she had trouble stowing her spinnaker. At 1030 hours **La Samudra** led the Premier Cruisers across the finish with **Minx** leading in the IRC division minutes later.

Photo Finish



Sports Boats Charge The Line

The excitement of the day came quickly among the Sports Boats as **KDP II** pipped **KDP I** by only a second with **Motornet** just two seconds behind. A little later the Racers came in flying their finery in tight formation: **Ericsson, Ulumulu, Zuhrah** and **Mahligai**.

Meanwhile the Multis and Rovers were beating north and running southward as winds weakened and talk of shortened courses was rife. However, never daunted by weather, the Race committee reset marks another mile out for the Racers' second run of the day and began the race immediately.

The big boats got off almost simultaneously beating to Tolai Island on the first leg of the lengthened #1 course with **Mahligai** tacking early to get a leg up on **Ericsson**.

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Race Day 2 cont'd

The Premier Cruisers and IRC boats straggled across the start in light winds and the Sports Boats got off on radical tacks after threatening the starter boat with several close encounters.

By this time the Multi-hull division was bearing down on their finish with **Running Cloud** getting a holler rather than a horn (so as not to confuse the sports boats) and **Chameleon** and **Moto Inzi** in tow. With winds now down to 3 knots in places, **My Toy** decided to chuck it in and retire as the Clubs and Rovers drifted toward home plate.

A Refreshing Upset



Zuhrah takes the race!

In a unique spirit of democracy it is otherwise not known for, the Committee called a straw poll from the Racers whether to call off. The decision was to continue a shortened course. But things had changed on the tedious downwind run with the Malaysian Navy finally getting it together aboard **Zuhrah** and rounding the leeward mark ahead of everybody.

Isobar pulled line honours for the Rovers as it crossed the finish at about 12.30 and **La Samudra** eased in 10 seconds ahead of **Beaux Esprits** for the Premier Cruisers just ahead of **Minx** which won line honours for the IRC 1 division.

A new winner among sports boats was **Sail In Asia** which pipped **Motornet**. The Navy's **Zuhrah** received a rousing cheer for beating **Ericsson (V060)** and **Ulumulu** across in the day's most dramatic upset.

BEHIND THE BOUYS



America's Cup Lawyers and Skippers Wives

Bryan Willis, in his own opinion, may be a bit too heavyweight for his job. As Jury Chairman for the 2006 Royal Langkawi International Regatta as well as Chairman of the Jury for the America's Cup he comes with a pedigree a mile long.

Not only has he chaired juries for the Raja Mudah series and served as Chief Umpire for the America's Cup, he was in fact one of the first jurists to set up the entire system for regattas.

He says the system allows for the employment of new jurists in each regatta but "So often it is the old experienced hands who get called, resulting in a distinct thinning of the field as the panel ages."

Educated as an engineer Bryan, who hails from the Isle of Wight, is as personable as your favorite auto mechanic and not the be-wigged ogre that many skippers imagine. "Actually we are here to help the skippers in resolving disputes between boats and redressing mistakes made by race officials. There is a lot of educating done in this function especially in private regattas."

In fact it is a good deal different from the phalanx of high-priced lawyers and technical experts who he must face in his America's Cup job. "The fiercest opponent we have to face on the regatta level is often the skipper's wife. But our advice and investigations are aimed at reducing the suffering of skippers who are there, really, for the fun of sailing."

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SOUTH EAST ASIAN REGATTAS

A Bright Future But A Bumpy Road

by Richard Blair

Mark Pryke, Principle Race Officer for the 4th Royal Langkawi International Regatta, says the future of South-east Asian regattas is good. But the proliferation of events is causing some conflict for suitable dates through the season. One advantage is that regattas can be held in SE Asia all year long but chasing the winds is a challenge that all regattas must overcome.

Pryke who has officiated the last three events in Langkawi said, "The future is good because it's plain that people are enjoying these events...with no exceptions! But as in all regions the fight for slots is real and will eventually result in the strong ones surviving and even growing bigger while there is bound to be a consolidation among those weaker."

At present the top regatta is the clearly the December King's Cup in Phuket which draws upwards of 95 boats, followed most probably by the Top of the Gulf races at Pattaya, a new event which is seeing a great deal of interest. According to Pryke, the Langkawi event runs a close third 'or maybe second'. Then comes the Presidents' Cup in the Philippines and such traditional popular events like the Raja Muda Cup in KL, and Singapore's own regatta not to mention new events such as the recently concluded Phang Nga Bay Regatta held at Chinese New Year.

Not only do closely scheduled regattas tend to conflict but they also feed off each other to a certain degree if not too closely slotted. According to Race Committee Chairman 'Zack' Ahmad Zailani Bashah, three weeks to a month between events is probably best for events in and around Malaysia.

Regattas: What to do?

A solution to the problem of scheduling is not an easy one to find. One suggestion: scheduling some events bi-annually only means that the empty slots in a given year will be filled by new events leaving the calendar as crowded as before. Pryke recommends that some regattas specialize in the different racing classes. "There are so many multi-hulls racing in this area now-a-days that you could have a spectacular event specializing in just this one class."

In fact there is no international or regional body with the job of scheduling the different regattas. The Malaysian Yachting Association has a hand in supporting those in this country but not overseas. And the jockeying for spaces goes on around the rest of the world with only casual and informal agreements between some of the events.

What is called for, according to Pryke, is a federation of participating skippers who would agree on which events they were able to attend each year thereby giving national sailing associations a priority list for scheduling events more appropriately. But this is pretty much wishful thinking as no such federation actually exists. And for now the answer to the problem will of necessity come down to the survival of the fittest. The strongest will survive and the weakest will succumb...or not.

FUN DAY TEAMS WANTED

Teams are needed for events scheduled from 11.00 to 17.00 on Fun Day, Friday February 17.

Three competitive events including Go-Kart Racing, Water Polo and Kayak Racing have been arranged for participants at the Royal Langkawi International Regatta. Winners will be decided on a round robin system with prizes awarded at the Gala Farewell Banquet on Friday evening.

One representative per boat for the Go-Kart Race, three for the Water Polo event and two for the Kayak Race are requested to register as soon as possible at the Regatta office. Fun, Prizes, laughs and refreshments!

See tomorrow's Eagle for more details

Sign up now!

(entry form with Skipper's documents)



PROFILES



Mia Gillow

Twenty year old Mia Gillow has spent most of her life on the sea. When she was only one year old her parents left South Africa on a voyage of discovery that was to last until her teens. As a 16 year old teenager she was competing with the boys and racing regularly with the local Phuket 'Ao Chalong Yacht Club'.

Now truly smitten by the adrenaline rush of racing, you'll find her on every important regatta around the Andaman Sea "Asian Circuit" - not as crew but at the helm of the sprite: SY Minx.

The X342 M/H design Bermuda sloop was launched in 1988 after her resurrection from the shores of Chalong Bay. S/Y Minx had been a virtual wreck lying for several years in the mudflats of Chalong Bay.

With Mia at the helm Minx has won the 2005 and 2006 Phang Nga Bay Regattas, Phuket Race Week 2005; she came first last year at the Royal Langkawi Regatta and second in two recent Kings Cup Regattas in Phuket.

I asked Mia what she would like to achieve this year. "It would be nice if we won the "Prime Minister's Challenge Trophy"





Reports from the **POOP DECK**

Monkey Injured in Conflict over Food.

A local monkey suffered severe injuries yesterday when he mistakenly moved between a regatta volunteer and her lunch. The injured monkey is reportedly in a serious but stable condition at the Langkawi Veterinary Hospital.

The Chief Veterinarian who treated the monkey indicated that the animal was very lucky to be alive. "I have rarely seen such massive injuries. It took over three hours to reattach his right arm, and he may still lose his left. I cannot imagine how he could have sustained that kind of damage. There is no doubt that the violence of the encounter was extreme."

"Monkeys are OK," said Ellen McNeil of the yacht Wind Dancer "I like monkeys. I am not a prejudiced person. But you have to understand that nobody, absolutely nobody, messes with my food."

Circumventilation

Yesterday your reporter was sitting at the Charlie's Place bar talking to a friend who had recently sailed his boat around the world. Apparently someone else had pointed out my friend and mentioned what he had done. A gentleman came over to us and addressed my friend.

"I'm sorry to interrupt but I just had to come over and offer my congratulations. I greatly admire your accomplishments," he said dreamily, "I have always wanted to circumvent the world."

There was a brief moment of silence while my friend took in the compliment. Then he smiled broadly. "Me too," he murmured, "me too."

Poaching

There was an early start for the racing this morning and your reporter got up too late for the Yacht Club breakfast. I was forced to fix something myself, not a pretty prospect at the best of times. I was most of the way through the messy process when a fellow sailor stopped by. He looked at my galley and summarily accused me of poaching. I want everyone to know that I take such accusations very seriously. So let it be known that hereafter I resolve to stick to scrambled and fried.

A Question Of Statistics

Did you know that 87% of people believe that they are more intelligent than average? Did you know that 92% of racing yachtsmen believe that they are better than average sailors. Also, are you aware that 76.3% of statistics are made up on the spur of the moment?

Breaking News

In a late breaking story a local yacht chandler has confessed to a failure to anticipate the demand for essential yacht supplies.

"We just blew it. I don't know what to say. I have checked of our shelves and they are just not there," said proprietor Tim Wight.

At issue is a supply of scruples, which were to be on hand for this week's regatta at the Royal Langkawi Yacht Club. Without scruples, the weeks racing may be difficult to control. Spurious protests, sabotage, and American-style litigation could well result.

In addition to his lack of scruples, yacht chandler Wight has also confessed to a severe shortage of qualms.

The regatta race committee has expressed grave concern over the shortfalls, and is looking into acquisition of the items from New Zealand or Finland. Neither scruples nor qualms are available from American or Australian sources. The American trade representative in Kuala Lumpur did indicate, however, that his country did have an abundant supply of bluster.

Royal Langkawi Yacht Club

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