



A GOODER DAY: START TO FINISH

Race Day One By Richard Blair

Sailors at the Royal Langkawi International Regatta were met by a bracing 15 knot breeze on rallying four miles south of the yacht club just beyond the southern islands for the second series of races in the event. With the wind out of the northeast, the course for Racing Class boats was set straight up and down to windward of the start boat. Fireflies and Sports boats completed a triangular course with beat, run and reach legs and the Cruisers and Rovers followed a coastal triangle with a loop in the centre.

Most races involved a spinnaker run to the finish—always a crowd pleaser—and the second series courses followed suit (after shifting somewhat to accommodate a wind change) giving media at the finish some spectacular shots of kites in full bloom. By the time the Racing Class got off at 0935 the wind had fallen off to about 10 knots but the lively Fireflies leaped ahead to catch up and the Sports Boats heeled way over on a starboard tack. All went well until **Gapurna Mas Ayu II** went OCS and ended up trailing the other two IRC-1 boats across.

The Fireflies — the first to arrive for their U-turn around the leeward mark – came down to a crunch at the mark with **Mamba** leading **Twin Sharks** and **Moto Inzi** around and **Jelik** in close pursuit.



Racers start off Day Two Race One

At about this point the committee heard reports of a protest against **Nom de Plume** rounding a mark wrongly and **Eveline** called in late for the first series. As the Sports Boats rounded the near mark the Singapore team got in so much trouble with their spinnaker that they nearly capsized and, although they finally got it down and around, their excessive off-wind attempt to pick up speed had the gunwales in water washing their lunch bags away...again.

Finishing first, the Fireflies came in: **Moto Inzi**, **Twin Sharks** and **Mamba**, in quick succession, fairly skimming the waves with kites flying. **Jilek** came in alone; **X-Catriot** beat **Running Cloud** and the Sports Boats were led by **Sail in Asia**.

It was so far very good for **Sofa So Good** among the Cruising classes and the **Singapore** Sports Boating team came across with a badly twisted kite and their spinnaker pole flying.

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The Sports Boats performed well in the windy conditions

Straight into the 2nd Series

The committee lost no time in flagging off the Racers on the second go around with **Matahari** shaving peach fuzz off the line but **Yo-2** getting across first. This time the quick little Fireflies were assigned the longer course which seemed just as well for **Mamba** and **Moto Inzi**, but **Twin Sharks** was no where to be seen at the start and **The Frog** seemed stuck in the mud crossing minutes late. As **Sail in Asia** led the Platus across and **La Samudra** the IRC-1s, the wind began to fall off some making the starboard tack a boat stopper. So the Multi-hulls opted for the port tack and finally the Cruisers got off clear with **Nom de Plume** yelling at **Sofa So Good** to fall off and the Committee scrambling for their lunch bags.

As news came in of a possible protest against the race management, the first two Fireflies were bearing down on the leeward turn, but **Moto Inzi** apparently had bigger teeth as it virtually pushed **Twin Sharks** to fall off and allow her around first. **Sail in Asia** dominated the Sports Boat race throughout and **Jelik** slipped across the finish leagues ahead of everyone.

The hottest contest of the day occurred as **Tropicbird** pipped **Nom de Plume** in a flash bulb finish of the Cruisers race with **Sofa So Good** coming in within seconds of them. But then shortly they all started coming in: **Sail In Asia** winning honours among the Sports Boats, **La Samudra** among the IRC-1s, **Moto Inzi** among the Fireflies and **Running Cloud** among the Multi-hulls.

In fact the race had been so well laid out almost the entire fleet came in within minutes overworking hornsman Brian Ferris but eliciting a comment to the press from PRO Mark Pryke, "This morning's race was good but this afternoon was even gooder."



Tropicbird won line honours in a photo-finish of the Cruisers race



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BEHIND THE BUOYS



Don and Irene McKean, S/Y Freedom

Don McKean is a walking Royal Langkawi International Regatta archive! He is one of the original volunteers and has participated now in all five regattas.

In 2003 a call for committee boat volunteers came from friends that were helping to organise the first regatta. Having been a racer for many years, Don had often thought marker boats were a “bloody nuisance” that just got in the way of racing... and he describes that first year on a Committee boat as steep learning curve!

He recalls the first race, on the first day of the first regatta where all did not go according to the book. A member of the media boat jumped in the water and headed for Don’s marker buoy – having no ‘heads up’ as to who this person was (turned out to be an underwater photographer) and seeing the first boat bearing towards the marker rather excited calls were made to “head quarters” – these paled in comparison to those made when the first boat around the marker buoy collected it on her keel and continued the course with marker buoy & photographer in tow! And, no, there was nothing in the manual about dealing with this sort of incident – Don assures us he looked!

Don’s wife **Irene** is also a regular regatta volunteer; this is her third R.L.I.R . From their involvement with R.L.I.R they were invited to help out at the Kings Cup & Koh Samui Regatta and now consider themselves regular ‘Regatta Rats’.

Don & Irene have spent the last thirteen years cruising on their yacht Freedom. This last year they have been doing some land cruising back in Australia. They are back on the water and delighted to be taking part in the regatta again this year.

Jane Clarke

PRO-FILES:



Matahari crew lined up for action!

A boat such as Matahari and its crew are further proof that sailing in Malaysia has a sunny future. Owner and skipper Vincent Chan Siew Onn, who is also the current Vice Commodore of The Royal Selangor Yacht Club, heads a dynamic eight person crew. Gee Boon Kee and Aziz Kadir describe themselves as the more mature, experienced members but are quick to add they are young at heart.

Both are former Commodores of the R.S.Y.C. The five youth crew including three brothers, all bring with them national sailing experience having come up the ranks from dinghy sailing to keel boats.

The Royal Selangor Yacht Club has a program to assist youth sailors to move on from dinghy to keel boat racing. Members’ boats are regularly entered in regional races with youth crews on board.

This is Matahari’s first time in the Royal Langkawi International Regatta. The first couple of days have seen mixed results for the team and they hope to better their overall placing by week’s end. ”In the future we would like to see shorter courses for the Racing Class so that smaller boats in this class don’t end up in a position where the wind dies on them,” said Vincent.

LANGKAWI GOES HIGH PERFORMANCE WITH NATIONAL SAILING CENTRE

The facilities at the National High Performance Sailing Centre in Langkawi would be the envy of many a yacht club around the world. Having started out as a small Optimist Sailing Club in front of what is now known as the Bella Vista Hotel, the new sailing center now has its own club house and facilities across the bay at Pokok Asam.

Mohd Affendy Abdullah, a retired Malaysian Green Beret Commando, former sailing representative for the Commando Sailing Club Malacca and coach of Royal Selangor Yacht Club Malaysia has been the driving force behind this incredible development.



He relentlessly lobbied the Malaysian Government for five years — and it looks like someone was listening!

Future development is already underway. Even while the club house is waiting for its final stage of completion, along side a new building is emerging from its foundations. When finished the new base will have overnight accommodation for two hundred people, schooling rooms, cafeteria, swimming pool, internet cafe and gym. The present stable of boats includes 52 Optimists, 11 Lasers and two International 420's and is soon to be supplemented with some International 470's and Platu's.

Launching is an easy affair at an all tide slipway in front of the club, there are ample storage facilities to the rear of the buildings. Dredging is planned to allow keel boats into the bay for some very up-close and intense training. Affendy's hope is that from these buildings will emerge some very serious world class sailors.

Since, all fourteen states of Malaysia have applied for similar facilities with five being approved already. Asked why he thought that the Government was backing sailing to such an extent, Affendy explained: "Sailing does not require body size but requires skill, determination and training — and we can do that! This, along with our perfect weather and the ability to



practice throughout the entire year, hopefully gives Malaysia an edge on colder climate countries."

Affendy is still a keen competitor himself. He was the captain of the Sultan of Selangor's 53 ft Benetau in the Raja Muda this year. This is his third year as a jury member for the Royal Langkawi International Regatta.

Confident that one day Malaysia will take the Olympics, he is particularly intent on encouraging more Malaysian entries to the Monsoon Cup. Affendy believes that any sailing in Malaysia is good for the cause, and any in Langkawi even better, especially the RLIR which has the continued support of the government evident, as most of the Grand Prize Presentation Nights have had the Prime Minister or his representative in attendance.

With continued government support, and the passion of individuals like Affendy, the future of Malaysian sailing is indeed looking very bright.





Reports from the **POOP DECK**

Street Whys

Regardless of where the visitors to Langkawi come from, most seem to be somewhat careless around the local drivers. Today, for example, I witnessed a tourist on foot foolish enough to attempt to cross the street when cars were clearly visible less than a block away. Perhaps the silly fool thought the crosswalk would protect him against the vehicular onslaught. He surely didn't realize that the traffic signs and regulations here are purely advisory - like telling somebody to eat three meals a day. And about as effective!

If a street is marked 'one way', there is not necessarily a consensus about which way is the right way. Apparently some people believe the arrow on the sign indicates the direction from which the cars are coming, enabling pedestrians to make good an escape. Others believe it shows the direction in which the cars are sometimes going. Driving here can be exciting.

Some of this inconsistency in driver behavior is probably engendered by the whimsical attitude of the authorities. An example that caught my eye was a very narrow lane clearly marked "One Way" - with an arrow pointing down the lane. At the other end of the lane was an identical sign with the arrow pointing in the opposite direction. In a similar case exhibiting a kind of strange symmetry, there is another short lane a few blocks away with a 'Do Not Enter' sign at both ends.

Having put forth this minor diatribe, I suppose you wonder why I recently bought a bicycle. Dealing with such inexplicable things is a good exercise for mental health. It keeps all my little gray cells active.

The Enemy Of My Friend

Tavita and I were sitting under the coco palms along Cenang beach, enjoying a beer. It was placid afternoon and we were both enjoying the tranquility, and watching the youngsters playing in the water.

Tavita is now the headmaster of a secondary school, but when I first met him many years ago he was the captain of a fishing vessel. He is a most imposing gentleman, standing roughly 6'7" and weighing in around 280 pounds. Not too surprisingly, his student charges are widely held to be models of proper deportment. When needs arise Tavita can be very stern, but to us he is like a gigantic version of Peter Ustinov: hugely expansive, with a magnificent sense of humor and a seemingly limitless ability to mimic personalities of the day.

Tavita remarked, "You know, years ago I used to be a pretty good cook but, these days, about the only time I get in the kitchen is to prepare one of my specialties. I sort of miss it sometimes. I used to make a great sea anemone."

"Oh, come on Tavita," I said. "You can't eat sea anemone. It's poisonous! How many have you killed with that dish?"

"Really... it's delicious! Of course anemone *can* be poisonous but it is quite safe if you get the right kind and prepare it properly. I'll tell you what, why don't you and your friends come over to my house for dinner this coming Sunday? I'll show just how good sea anemone can be!"

We gathered in the main room of his house and were enjoying a few Tiger Beers before the promised meal. Tavita stood and said, "Welcome to my home my friends. Before we get started, I must make an apology. I had promised you that I would prepare the cr me de la cr me of all the world's hors d'ourves: Sea Anemone   la Tavita: a truly unforgettable dish. Sadly, though, my son has had a mishap with our boat and was unable to gather the required key ingredient. I am afraid we will have to do without them this evening. But, never fear, for I know that my dear wife has prepared sufficient food to satisfy the most hungry of sailors." And here he fixed the me with a steady gaze.

"After all, my friends," he continued throwing wide his huge arms and booming out: "*With friends like these who needs anemone.*"

Brass Tact

I recall seeing a brass plaque on a visiting yacht. It read: "The floggings will continue until crew morale improves."

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