

TSC Midnight Race - 2010

Sixteen boats, including a welcome visitor from Conwy, *Maybe*, came to the start line for the 89th running of the Tranmere Sailing Club annual Midnight race to Douglas on the 18th June 2010.

Following a short postponement to allow *Ulula* to make the start after an unfortunate grounding inside the marina on the approach to the lock, the fleet set off at in a light airs drift at 1645hrs.

The light and flukey wind saw the fleet make slow progress downstream and the tidal effect saw boats change position frequently until reaching Brazil buoy where a steadier north westerly breeze began to fill in. This gave all boats enough wind to give a good passage down the Crsoby and Queen's channels with *Skukusa* and *Musketeer* enjoying a close tacking duel all the way out to Q2, *Magic Moments* making up ground and the quicker class one boats *Mighty Max II*, *Ulula*, *Sleeper* and *Pandanova II* making a steady getaway.

On clearing the main channel at Q2, tactical decisions mostly fell into the range of just trying to keep the boats going in whatever wind was available as it again became light and variable, dropping to zero at times and spreading out the fleet in the deepening dusk.

Shortly before midnight, a slight but noticeable breeze from the south east began to pick up and very quickly built to F5 and gradually backing north east. As reflected in the final results, boats seemingly well positioned to take advantage of the breeze and making good use of spinnakers were *Skukusa* and *Tango* each getting consistently high speeds until the wind backed further into the north giving a fast white sail reach into Douglas by which time, some boats were seeing gusts of over 30 knots.

Unfortunately, the heavier wind saw *April* having to retire due to a crew injury (although all was well on being checked out in Douglas) but it did give the whole fleet a brisk (and wet) ride into Douglas with the last boat in arriving by 11000hrs Saturday morning, this being *Chrissie*, commendably sailed singlehanded by Chris Bailey due to late crew drop outs.

Line Honours went to *Ulula* some four minutes ahead of *Mighty Max II* at a little over 13 hours from the start with *Pandanova II* coming in third over the line.

Overall positions on corrected times saw *Tango's* Richard Baldwin and crew sailing a superb race to take the win by 86 seconds from second placed *Skukusa* with *Musketeer* taking third place.

Final Placings:

Overall :

1. Tango – Super Seal (Richard Baldwin)
2. Skukusa – Impala (Stuart Lofthouse)
3. Musketeer – Sigma 33 (Michael Inman)

Class 1 :

1. Pandanova II – Sigma 38 (Derek Matthews)
2. Ulula – Corby 36 (Nick Ogden)
3. Mighty Max II – Prima 38 (Neil Thomas)

Class 2 :

1. Skukusa – Impala (Stuart Lofthouse)
2. Musketeer – Sigma 33 (Michael Inman)
3. Black Magic – Impala (Jeanette and Dave Hardy)

Class 3

1. Tango – Super Seal (Richard Baldwin)
2. Catch 32 – Sadler 32 (John Myerscough)
3. Nightflyer – Super Seal (Mike Doran, Tudor Goodman & Andy Kendrick)