

**Saturday 29th - Monday 31st May - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 29 May 1305 ISC line**

Course: Gurnard(s) Marinetrack.com (p) South Bramble (p) West Ryde Middle (s)

Starting in light breezes and with an excellent turnout of eighteen, both Darius and Doublet got a cracking start while several boats struggled to get around the inner distance mark onto a beat to Gurnard during which positions changed so frequently that I think everyone was in third at some point.

Darius, Dauntless and Doublet rounded Gurnard first, as Decoy played out into the tide a little more and sneaked around the mark while the rest of the traffic began to slow in the increasing tide near the mark. Decanter, having sailed in toward the beach and overstood a bit, surprised a few boats by reaching out to the mark and rounding without any difficulty across the bows of a little cluster of nearly-stopped boats.

On the run, Dauntless set off to the left while most sailed down the middle or to the right of the rhumb line to Marinetrack.com trying to find a decent combination of wind and tide, dropping back to fifth while Decoy climbed into third place behind Darius and Doublet as they reached in to the mark. Beating back up to South Bramble tested tactical skill and memory of where the Bramble Bank is, as a few boats found themselves aground. Generally, the left was better than the right and though Darius continued to lead Doublet, Dauntless made their way back up to third ahead of Decoy and Division Belle.

Rounding West Ryde Middle well was one key to the beat back to the finish. A willingness to sail in shallow water the other. Darius and Doublet rounded the mark neck-and-neck with Decoy and Dauntless close behind. While Doublet sailed a careful inshore course to first place, Dauntless spent a few moments confirming the depth of the Shrape before continuing further inshore to sail past both Darius and Decoy for second place just 13 seconds behind Doublet. Meanwhile Darius stood on for more breeze offshore and lost out to the tide while Decoy took a more inside snatching third place and leaving Darius in fourth.

**Sunday 30 May 1205 ISC line**

Course: Gurnard Ledge (s) Royal Southern (p) Quinnell (p) West Knoll (s) Ocean Safety (p)

Twenty-one Darings started in a slightly unsteady force three from the west south-west on the last of the ebbing tide. Staying right to the end paid well, though Decoy turned a lacklustre start into a strong position with a well-timed tack in to shore at Egypt Point. Dynamite, Devius, and Decanter rounded Gurnard Ledge first and all set off for the mainland side of the run while Dauntless, Defiant and Audax led the way to the island shore trying to get the best of the counter inside at Gurnard while Decoy headed straight to the leeward mark.

Leading the break-away island boats, Dauntless helped the rest by finding a rock off Gurnard, but was soon off and back in contention by gybing to cross the tide first at Grantham Rock followed immediately by Audax as Defiant stayed with the right side a little longer before gybing and reaching up more quickly catching Dauntless and Audax just as the breeze picked up to a rather boisterous wind gusting to force 5.

As the island shore boats neared Royal Southern and began to meet the mainland-shore boats, it looked like neither side had been favoured too much, though Defiant kept their spinnaker up longest and surged (quite literally) into an impressive second place behind Doublet followed by Decoy and Decanter. With the wind fairly howling, gybes and take downs were more interesting than usual, and at least one crew has confided that mutiny was near at hand when instructions like 'hop up on the foredeck and untie the rolling hitch in the spinnaker' were bandied about while the foredeck in question resembled the site of a surfing competition.

The breeze began to abate a little on the beat back to Quinnell as Defiant and Decoy swapped tacks and the lead as Doublet briefly tapped the mainland shore. This seems to have convinced Decanter that stopping for a while was a good idea, so they parked up on the beach for the rest of the race. At the top of the beat, Decoy led over Defiant and Doublet with a close following pack ready to pounce.

Dauntless made the first move on the run by sailing a little higher to the right, dropping down to overtake Doublet as Defiant pulled ahead of Decoy to lead around West Knoll onto the beat to Ocean Safety. With the breeze now more stable and slightly veered, the leaders kept a close cover on each other, but Devius still managed to overtake Doublet to move into close contention for the final rounding.

The run to the finish was hardly a parade as Defiant found themselves inshore needing to gybe out on port as Decoy was reaching inshore on starboard allowing Decoy to take first by 22 seconds as Devius followed in third. Just behind, Dauntless managed a last minute overtaking manoeuvre on Dynamite to take fourth.

### **Monday 31 May 1205 ISC line**

Course: Ocean Safety (s) Royal Thames (p) Raymarine (p) Seascope (s) finish

There may have been a few hangovers from the excellent dinner on Sunday night, but sixteen boats started in a reasonably steady westerly force 3, and there was complete unanimity on the choice of the inner distance mark as the favoured starting point. The port tackers approaching the start produced enough backwind that anyone not in the first row took a little time to get up to speed after the start as Dynamite led in from the left and Audax approached on starboard, causing a minor panic among the second row, before tacking to cross the line second with Defiant just behind. The wind and the tide were largely best on the right and, with few exceptions, those that stayed right longest gained most with Defiant sailing first into the windward mark from the starboard layline, closely followed by Decanter with Audax and Dynamite approaching from the left.

As the kites went up, Defiant dropped back a little on a late hoist, but soon regained a good position on the rhumb line as Diamond and Daring I chose to try the island shore and Decoy and Doublet sailed lower stemming the tide more in the first part of the run. Near the leeward mark, Decoy executed a well-timed little luff on Doublet forcing them to gybe for the mark as Decoy nipped round cleanly, while just behind, Defiant and Decanter rounded a touch ahead of Diamond whose mainland tactic had brought them back into fifth.

The beat to Raymarine was a shifty affair, with parallel boats being headed and lifted randomly, and though the port layline beckoned it was hard to resist the temptation of overstanding, though the left certainly seemed better than the shore. By the top mark, Doublet had taken the lead from Decoy with Defiant, Dynamite and Decanter following closely.

Running to Seascope looked like a rhumb line parade except for Decanter who chose to gybe in close to the mainland and reach back out. The strategy worked, though not enough to gain a place and I can well imagine that they expected to be stuck in fourth given the lop-sided beat to come. I cannot though imagine the confusion that reigned when Doublet, the first of four close boats, rounded the mark the wrong way. It seems to have been the cause of vexation on Decoy though, as they rounded the correct way, then decided to round the wrong way to stay with Doublet. From there I gather that the crew on Decoy had a little meeting and came to the conclusion that just for good measure, they should go back round the right way. Defiant, Dynamite and Decanter managed to avoid the gyrations finishing in that order, as Doublet retired leaving the mayhem behind nonchalantly.

In spite of the spell of unusual confusion, Decoy got the fourth they needed to secure the John Dibben Memorial Trophy by a point from Defiant with Dauntless's sixth place enough to secure third. Congratulations to Richard Ottaway and perhaps especially the crew (whose persuasion saved them from a far worse fate) on Decoy.

Paul Miller with thanks to Milo Carver and Giles Peckham

**Saturday 22nd - Sunday 23rd May - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 22 May 1305 RTYC on the RLYC line**

Course: West Ryde Middle (p), Navigators & General (s), Sunsail (p),  
Marinetrack.com (s), Daks (p), Marsh (s), finish.

With the tide just turning to ebb and a pleasant force 3 breeze, the outer end of the start line was favoured for distance and probably tide, but the wind shifts quickly brought mid-line starter up seemingly without loss as the most windward boats were forced to foot to West Ryde Middle in the left-hand shifts. The oscillating shifts on the beat to Navigators & General favoured first the right then the left, with gains and losses for boats on the extremes great enough to make the difference between first and last as Division Belle, Dreamer, Defiant and Dauntless led.

The reach to Sunsail presented few opportunities for overtaking, but as usual those that stayed up tide of the mark gained in the rounding, and both Ding Dong and Dolphin seemed to find good lines bringing themselves back into contention for the beat to Marinetrack.com. This beat proved one of the most entertaining of the afternoon, as the shifts averaged around 20°, and those that stayed in phase and had leverage climbed up the ladder very quickly indeed. Dauntless and Division Belle, back around fifth or sixth at Sunsail, tacked off left after rounding the mark and found a shift that gave them a healthy lead by the time they reached Marinetrack. Division Belle overtook Dauntless as they rounded the mark while Darling, Dolphin, Audax and Devius all made (and sometimes lost) significant places.

After the reach to Daks, there was almost complete unanimity in the decision to sail up the Island to dodge the tide. All except for Audax, lying in eighth, and Devius in eleventh who both spotted the advantage of a 30° right shift. Audax pulled out a 14 minute lead over Division Belle and Ding Dong in the 2.6 miles to Marsh while Devius, which missed the best of the shift by a minute or two, climbed into 6th. Over on the right, I'm told that holes and frustrating shifts were served in equal measure, and it seems that every decision to go right any further brought only further heading shifts and less wind, turning some promising finish places to fears about time limits.

The run to the finish proved more exciting than it should have done. After Audax followed by Division Belle and Ding Dong had finished Dauntless and Dionysus enjoying a luffing match (which Dionysus won) while the temptation to stay in the strongest tide to the end cost Destroyer dearly when they missed the finish line; a slip up that cost perhaps five minutes and a similar number of places.

Sunday 23 May followed recent Sunday precedent with a mercifully short wait before the Committee abandoned racing.

Paul Miller

**Saturday 15th - Sunday 16th May - Red Funnel Championship**  
Island Sailing Club

Course: Gales HSB, Pimm's, Lunch (twice round)

Due to a complete lack of wind, racing was abandoned on both days.

**Saturday 8th - Sunday 9th May - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 8 May 2004 13:05 RCYC**

Wind: West to Northwest 4/5

Course: Gurnard (a) Air Canada (s) South Ryde Middle (s) Trinity mooring (s) Gurnard (a) South Ryde Middle (s) finish.

Picking up where we left off last Monday, the wind blew and the tide ran with a vigour that promised a wet and exciting race. We were not let down. The Committee chose a course that would keep us fairly near the island with an opportunity to shorten should the conditions warrant. They also flew a 'Y' flag (red and yellow diagonal stripes), which we might remind everyone means that the wearing of personal buoyancy aids is required.

The choice on the line was whether it was better to get the start of the ebb from the outer end and be able to lay the first mark or to sail inshore hoping for more current and a shorter distance. In the end, the key was more to do with arriving at the mark on starboard and not overstanding as demonstrated by Dynamite and Division Belle.

The reach to Air Canada was not quite deep enough to carry a spinnaker though Darius tried. Frankly white sail was exciting enough, providing a little taste of what was to come on the next leg. Dynamite lead at the mark, followed by Division Belle and Dreamer as the hoists began. Defiant tried out a sail configuration that might be called the Code 999 as a clew went up instead of the head, but they quickly rejected that arrangement for the more conventional. If one listened carefully, one could hear an ensemble of breaking kickers as we started the rolling, exhilarating ride to South Ryde Middle. Dauntless sailed a higher course at first, though most sailed as deep as they could to avoid a gybe at all cost; generally at the expense of broach or two. With the tide now turned but still increasing to full ebb, Dynamite, Division Belle and Dreamer received a bit of benefit from rounding first having gybed onto starboard, while those a little further back found it harder to round running deep against the tide.

The beat back to Gurnard was wetter than the first, but the course of choice remained the middle or just to the left. Avoiding some of the worst waves off Castle Point seemed as important as picking up the stronger tide, and playing the shifts off the Shrape without going too far inshore helped to bring Dauntless back into contention with the leaders. Overstanding is never a good idea, and anyone who watched the roundings at Gurnard at the end of the beat could hardly disagree. Again, the boats that laid the mark on starboard and tacked close to gained on the overstanding yachts, though largely the positions remained unchanged.

There was little to recommend anything except the rhumb line for the run back to South Ryde Middle, though by going inshore a little, some yachts found the approach to the mark much easier as the wind backed near the mark leaving those on the left with a choice between gybing and running by the lee in seas that most closely resembled a washing machine. Dauntless continued to gain on the leaders rounding just behind Dynamite and Division Belle for the final beat. Dynamite chose to go right at the start of the beat leaving Division Belle and Dauntless to fight it out on the left where they found enough extra to overtake Dynamite. Dauntless in the meantime was plotting to break with Division Belle by pointing higher in order to convince Division Belle to tack: a strategy that allowed Dauntless to split from Division Belle and take first by just thirteen seconds with Division Belle and Dynamite behind in close order.

**Sunday 9 May 2004 1405 RCYC line**

Wind: West Northwest backing West Southwest Force 2.

Course: Royal Thames (s) CHC (s) finish

The wind died in the morning and refused to fill as the start time approached, so the Committee offered us all a chance for breakfast by flying two APs while waiting for a breeze that was not

really expected to arrive. But the wind did come, though it looked to many like it was limited to the edge of a slow-moving cloud stretching from Cowes toward Fawley, and there was deep scepticism about the likelihood of getting back if indeed we ever got away, but get away we did, on a sensibly short course with a line strongly biased toward the outer end.

Loup Garou VIII, Dashing and Audax started at the outer limit as a few boats including Dolphin and Dauntless chose to start well inshore hoping to pick up the stronger tide off the Squadron while the middle seemed to be largely on the turn. Initially the Green paid as Dolphin, Dauntless and Division Belle started to put distance on the outer group. The choice to tack away from the island cannot have been easy with Division Belle being the first to break away and join the outer group where Loup Garou VIII had established and kept a modest lead over Darling, Dashing and Division Belle as Diamond sailed a little to far right and perhaps a little too far from the cloud that was providing most of the breeze.

As the wind dropped a little and backed, Dolphin, Dauntless and Audax which had by now reached the far left found themselves facing the prospect of being on the layline a mile from the mark in a dying breeze with an increasing tide taking them away from the mark as Loup Garou VIII then Darling, Dashing and Division Belle rounded the mark well ahead of them. As the breeze died further, the beginning of the broad reach back to Cowes proved difficult for the back of the fleet while the lead boats tested their various strategies for crossing the tide. Dauntless tried a very bold and risky (or just possibly desperate) move by reaching under white sail to the island shore, but for once the Dauntless magic failed to materialise.

From my position, Dashing, who sailed as far to the east as the wind would permit made up a lot of ground while Division Belle who sailed faster but further down-tide paid an increasing price as the ebb tide increased and they struggled to run down to the mark. So important was the effect of getting up tide that Dolphin who had been perhaps four minutes behind Division Belle at the windward overtook before the leeward mark by sailing up tide before the end of the leg.

Loup Garou VIII, Darling and Dashing rounded CHC abreast with Loup Garou VIII inside, and the fetch to the line was not long enough to change that by the finish, with all three finishing within just over thirty seconds as Dolphin came in fourth a couple of minutes later.

Paul Miller

**Saturday 1st - Monday 3rd May - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 1 May 2004 14:05 RCYC**

Gales HSB (s) Norris (s) South Bramble (p) Gurnard (p) Trinity mooring (p) twice round

Light and fickle winds delayed the start on Saturday but at least the sun shone, and after an hour postponement, the fleet got off to a fairly clean start with Defiant, Devius, and Destroyer choosing the left side for tide and a hope of clear breeze while Dauntless choose to take an inshore line along the Shraps. Defiant seemed worried that Dauntless was gaining inside and decided to join them, but the lack of breeze between the inside and outside meant that Defiant couldn't quite make up the distance, while Destroyer and Devius continued to keep a decent lead to Norris rounding a little before Dauntless.

By now the tide seemed even across the course, and most chose the rhumb line for the broad reach to South Bramble, though Dauntless and Loup Garou VIII sailed deep for the first half of the leg and save a bit of reaching for later. This proved a winning technique as the breeze dropped near the mark and those with a better reaching angle led at the mark with Dauntless leading Loup Garou VIII by a short margin both slightly further ahead of Darling, Destroyer and Devius.

The leg to Gurnard proved a bit of a parade; broad reaching in a stable breeze as Dauntless, Loup Garou VIII and Darling kept ahead and lengthened their lead slightly on Devius and

Destroyer again by sailing a little deeper on the first part of the leg. From there the main tactical factor was to guess that the committee would shorten the course. A couple of yachts that went out to get the last of the flood tide were frustrated to find that by the time they saw the 'S' flag, they had sailed a quarter of a mile further than required, but overall the positions remained the same with Dauntless winning by a comfortable minute over Loup Garou VIII, while third-place Darling kept a small margin over Devius.

### **Sunday 2 May 2004 13:05 RCYC (Postponed for one hour)**

Norris (p) West Ryde Middle (p) Gurnard (p) Gales HSB (p) Prince Consort (s) Sunsail (s) finish  
Wind WSW 2-3

Dauntless and Audax started well as spinnakers popped open along the line and established a short lead; though that lead was briefly held by every boat in the fleet before the first mark. As a small group headed in close to the Shrape most felt that the breeze was better a little off the Island shore. As the wind died around Castle Point the jockeying for position became impossible to follow as Dauntless, Destroyer and Devius tried both left and right in an attempt to break away from the clumps of stationary yachts.

Of course it seems quite predictable on the re-telling, but the fact that every single Daring plus a handful of Sonars all arrived at Norris at the same instant seemed quite a surprise at the time. I cannot begin to estimate the number of cries of 'starboard', 'room at the mark' and 'coming up' that rose on the still afternoon air, but the number of yachts doing circles after the rounding was at least a partial representation of the mayhem. Singular in their ability to get out of the mess unscathed was Dynamite. Anyone else that says they know the order in which they cleared the mark is either clairvoyant or was on the one lone Sonar seen to be sailing all the way round the pile up.

The number of penalties taken did serve to spread the fleet out a bit and the West Ryde Middle rounding was comparatively uneventful as Dynamite in the lead followed by Defiant and Darling chose the left of the beat to Gurnard while Dauntless, Ding Dong and Audax chose the right. The right paid a little, and combined with a tack timed nicely to avoid a passing container ship, Dauntless moved back into striking range on the leaders as first Dynamite then Defiant, Darling, Division Belle and Dauntless rounded Gurnard for the run to Gales HSB.

Division Belle found a rock near the Grantham which took them to the back of the fleet, while the other leaders sailed a rhumb line back past Cowes following well behind Dynamite. Dauntless seeking an advantage to get back to the front sailed alone close in to the Shrape and found themselves back in second at Gales HSB with Defiant and Darling closer behind for the short beat back to the finish.

### **Monday 3 May 2004 1205 RCYC line**

Gurnard Ledge (s) South Bramble (s) West Ryde Middle (s) Gurnard (p) Gales HSB (s) finish

Lively conditions, a strong tide, continuous rain and no postponement were the notable features of Monday's racing for those that decided not to stay for the third day. Most yachts decided that the middle to inner parts of the line were the best compromise between distance sailed and tide as Darius, Dauntless and Darling all got decent starts in the increasing breeze. I'm sure that most were eying the squall roaring down the centre of the Solent, but few could have predicted the enormous 30° lift it brought leaving a few yachts overstanding Gurnard Ledge from a mile or more.

In the veered wind, the mark rounding was a reach-to-reach affair and a few were swept down tide trying to tack through 180° leaving more than a little confusion about the spinnaker strategy. Initially only Darius decided to run away from the mark toward the Island shore, and they looked

miles behind as the rest sailed more or less on the rhumb line. They did not seem so far behind a few minutes later as we all looked around to see that we had made 100 yards on the mark while Darius had gone inside the ledge and was flying up the shore on a fair eddy. In the mean time, Dauntless experimented with a new spinnaker technique using just one sheet and a halyard (I've since been told it didn't work too well).

Out in the tide, there was little to do except watch, though first Dionysus then Dauntless decided that the shore would pay even after spending minutes in the foul tide. The rest tried various strategies of reaching through the tide, none of any notable success as first Darius then Dauntless and Dionysus sailed all the way to Cowes and back across to South Bramble in the lead by a good margin. There was less dissent on the track to West Ryde Middle as everyone kept nearly on the layline in spite of the slightly backing wind making the latter part a dead run for many, but the leaders were by now spreading out a nearly insurmountable lead for the rest of the race, finishing a couple of minutes apart Darius, Dauntless and Dionysus. Naturally the rain stopped as the last boat finished.

Current standings in the Season's Points Series (before discard): 1st: Dauntless (6), 2nd: Darling (16), 3rd: Dynamite (19)

Paul Miller

**Saturday 24th - Sunday 25th April - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 24 April - Island Sailing Club start line: 1305 (but not really)**

There was no race on Saturday, as any of those that sailed around the course can tell you. A keen group of yachts including Doublet, Audax, Destroyer, and Dynamite set off in spite of a postponement that would lead to the race being abandoned. The jaunt was good practice though since the yachts that started this non-race were able to practice sailing in no wind, anchoring and being towed.

**Sunday 25 April - Island Sailing Club start line: 1205**

Course: Peel Bank (p), Gurnard (s), Trinity mooring (p), Norris (p), finish.  
Winds: light and oscillating East to East Southeast locally.

The Daring fleet can spot the favoured end of a start line though some do have difficulty identifying whether there is any room left before trying to start there, and Sunday was no exception. Starting in a light and fitful breeze that brought back memories of Skandia Cowes Week, the outer end of the ISC line was a very social place with most of the twelve starters vying for the ideal start. The plan that worked seems to have been that executed by Dauntless Dauntless by being slightly away from the crowd, they started with speed and an enviable windward position for the beat to Peel Bank with Dynamite and Loup Garou VIII slightly behind and leeward, while Defiant performed a very efficient 720° as penance for a scrape at the pin.

As the fleet sailed out in to the Solent on starboard tack, a few were convinced that the breeze would be better nearer the island. I can say without fear of contradiction that it was not, and Loup Garou VIII will probably agree. Dauntless felt that the breeze would be better out at the corner and sailed almost to the port layline before tacking back and leading the fleet into the windward mark with a small lead over Dynamite and Defiant.

Getting away from the windward mark tested the short-term memory of several tacticians presenting as it did the choice of sailing in toward the shore or further out in the slight foul tide. The lead group stuck close together which presented the following fleet an enticing prospect as the wind died entirely off Castle Point. Unfortunately, the breeze died everywhere shortly thereafter, and only a handful of boats made any ground. In the front pack Dynamite rolled Dauntless at Peel Bank and stretched her lead, with Defiant in 3rd place. A little further back

Darling and Destroyer made efficient use of the counter-current and improved their positions. As the fitful breeze filled off the Shrape, most of the fleet sailed in through the moorings and followed the counter-current along the Green and to Gurnard. On the beat to Norris, Dauntless ran into a hole but pushed through to the strong breeze beyond, followed by Darling who thereby managed to take 3rd place from Defiant.

I suppose that there only a few sailors familiar with the Solent that do not have a certain strong feeling about Norris. Almost everyone I know has a tale of a huge lead lost or an unexpected coup near that mark. Sunday's race will fuel a few of those stories. At Norris, the wind died and gave Dauntless an opportunity to gybe inside Dynamite to take the lead again, while Defiant regained 3rd place from Darling, these four then holding their positions to the finish line while the rest of the fleet were still struggling back at Norris.

Among the most dramatic position changes of the day, most were in the middle or back of the fleet and in the approach to Norris. Finesse played a wonderful risky move by sailing toward the Island after rounding Trinity mooring and came out ten or twelve boatlengths ahead of Devius Ding Dong and Audax, only to drift maddeningly close to Norris unable to find enough breeze near the mark to round it while Devius shot past in a breeze of its own. Devius rounded the mark with ease, but leaving it to starboard instead of port whiel Ding Dong and Audax took a further eleven minutes to cover the fifteen boatlengths to put the mark behind.

Thanks to Giles Peckham for help with coverage from the front of the fleet.

### **Saturday 24th - Sunday 25th July - Red Funnel Championship**

#### **Saturday 24 July RLYC - Committee boat start**

##### Race 1

In a pleasant force 3 and flat seas, Dauntless lead the first beat with Division Belle and Doublet reaching the windward mark close behind. While Dauntless lead the way to the right on the run, Audax gybed at the mark and gained an inside overlap on Division Belle and Doublet by the leeward mark. Audax managed to fight off well-timed challenges from Division Belle and Doublet on the beat by keeping well left, as Dreamer joined the battle for third at the second windward mark. As Dauntless continued to extend their lead on the final run for a first, Audax did another gybe set and held Division Belle at bay to finish second with Division Belle close behind and gaining fast, taking third.

##### Race 2

As the breeze picked up and the seas mounted into a nasty chop, a chaotic start left Dreamer and Double Knot getting away cleanly with Dauntless uncharacteristically struggling a little. The left side genie was out of the bottle, though boxing the corner lead Defiant and a few other boats to overstand dramatically. Double Knot held the lead at the first top, with Dauntless and Dreamer near behind following. With little opportunity to overtake on the run, the lead remained unchanged though boats sailing down the left (like Defiant) generally gained, though not quite enough to change the finish order: Double Knot first, Dreamer second and Dauntless third.

#### **Sunday 25 July RLYC - Committee boat start**

##### Race 1

With less wind and smaller waves, Sunday was a classic Solent day. The left side of the beats and runs was still favoured but everyone was a bit more cautious about overstanding. Darius lead off the line at the pin, followed by Dauntless with Double Knot and Defiant fighting it out for third

at the top mark. As Dauntless tried to sail a better gybe angle, the boats on the direct line seemed to be favoured leaving the order unchanged at the bottom mark.

Careful to avoid the extreme left, Darius and Dauntless played a conservative covering game out toward the left corner before coming back in to the centre just ahead of Defiant. Defiant sailed a little further left than Double Knot on the run, and in spite of a late gybe managed to gain on Double Knot while at the same time Destroyer ran into a spot of bother during their spinnaker drop, setting their nets for a spot of trawling with the chute filled and perfectly trimmed underneath the boat. Unfortunately, with only two on board the task of landing the catch proved incompatible with racing, and Destroyer retired as the leaders Darius, Dauntless, and Defiant came in to finish.

#### Race 2

As the breeze filled to a solid 4 gusting 5 a small but steep chop set in to match. Dauntless lead a good close start taking an early lead by hitting the line at speed right on the gun. In spite of challenges from Darius on the left, and Defiant on the right, Dauntless showed their customary good form, leading a the top mark and down the run. On the second beat Darius tried again to get an advantage on the left, but Dauntless hit a lift on port coming back to the middle which extended their lead slightly. On the run and final beat, Dauntless covered their opponents well to win with Defiant and Darius taking up second and third.

With only one race left in the July Series, the leaders are: Dauntless (41 points), Dynamite (54), and Destroyer (62) with Audax (63) and Dreamer (65) just behind; while in the Red Funnel series (using high-point scoring) the leaders are: Dauntless (188), Dreamer (128), and Audax (126) with Devius (123) and Destroyer (119) following closely after ten races.

Paul Miller

### **Wednesday 21st - Saturday 24th July - International Team Racing Regatta**

Seven teams contested the inaugural Daring Class Association International Team Racing regatta last week. This was organised by The Royal Yacht Squadron and kindly sponsored by Edmiston & Co. The first day consisted of fleet racing to allow the teams to learn the habits of the Island Sailing Clubs Sonar fleet in which the event was to be sailed.

Real 4 boat team racing began on Thursday controlled by a team of on-the-water umpires headed by Bill Brockbank. Racing was over an M shaped course in light conditions in Osborne Bay. From the first race of the round robin it was clear that the two Bruces, Grant and Huber, in the Royal Yacht Squadron team were a lot sharper on team racing tactics than all the others, but some climbed the learning curve fast, especially the team from Real Yacht Club de Gran Canaria. At the end of the round robin the teams were divided into gold and silver divisions. The top three then raced each other to determine first and second. On the last day the finals were between the RYS and the Canarians. The semi finals were between the Daring Association (helms Jamie Clark and Brian Saffery-Cooper) who had dropped from 2nd to 3rd, and the Yacht Club de Monaco (helms Vincert Lienhart and David Gower) who were winners of the silver fleet.

The weather gradually improved during the event and on the last day we were given a perfect day to advertise the Solent, sunshine and a brisk sea breeze. The RYS triumphed without losing single race in the entire series – not that the racing was not incredibly close with some of their last minute escapes showing serious talent. The RYC de Gran Canaria were 2nd and the Daring Class clung on to 3rd in a very close semi-final that hung on one umpire penalty decision in the last race.

This was a new style of racing for most of the teams. The concept that it was more important to make sure that the other team's boat was forced into last position, than that your boat held first, goes against natural inbuilt racing instincts and came hard to many – but by the end this message was clear. Match racing tricks in the pre-start were also very valuable.

The aggression on the water was matched by the friendly camaraderie that developed between races on the hospitality boat 'Fair Trader' kindly provided by Derek Rosling. This was reinforced in the evenings at the various social events when many new friends were made. This was a great success as an inaugural event and all hope for this to be the start of many such regattas.

1st RYS  
2nd RYC Gran Canaria  
3rd Daring Association

Andrew McIrvine

### **Saturday 17th - Sunday 18th July - Solent Series**

#### **Saturday 17 July RTYC on the RLYC line**

Course: Gurnard Ledge (s), Seascope (s), Sunsail (s), Trinity (s), Gurnard (s), Marinetrack.com (t) finish

Dreamer started well at the inshore end of the line but was soon overtaken by Dauntless and Doublet on the way out into deeper water. As the fleet beat toward Gurnard Ledge favouring the right side for wind and tide, Dauntless extended a small lead while Finesse played the top of the beat to perfection to round in second with Doublet just behind. The rounding was a bit chaotic for everyone in the sizeable pack that came next and one rather overwhelmed Etchells caught in the middle probably wished he hadn't found himself surrounded by Darings intent on going a different direction!

But the favoured direction was down the island, and that's where the leaders headed with Doublet overtaking Finesse on the run while Dauntless continued to extend their now comfortable lead. The only decision to be made on this run was when to leave the island, and as is often the case, the Squadron is often about right. Destroyer strayed out a bit too early and caught the foul tide, while a few sailed too far into Cowes and couldn't reach back across to Seascope quickly enough to catch up.

On the white-sail close reach to Sunsail, Doublet and Dynamite gained slightly on Dauntless by sailing a bit lower early, though near the buoy the tide slacked slightly extracting a small penalty from boats that had to broad reach the last few yards before the beat back to Gurnard. As Dauntless kept a loose cover on Doublet and Finesse the rest of the fleet searched for the small shifts and streaks of stronger wind that might improve their position. Doublet found such a good combination of wind and tide that they couldn't bring themselves to leave it long enough to leave Trinity Mooring to starboard. The guest helm on Finesse was good enough to mention this fact at the next opportunity sending Doublet in to the moorings retired.

A fierce battle ensued for the newly vacated third place between Division Belle, Dynamite and Audax and the outcome was tight at the windward mark. A handful of boats decided that the island shore would provide an advantage on the run to Marinetrack.com, but the better wind offshore and the Bramble proved better, and while the leaders remained unchanged, the battle for fourth took on a new dimension as Destroyer entered the fray at the mark replacing Audax whose spinnaker takedown extended too far into the next beat.

Beating back to Cowes, the same lane of stronger wind and tide off the island worked again as Dauntless carried on unchallenged for first with Finesse following in second. As they closed on the line, Destroyer nearly managed to get round Division Belle but the starboard advantage brought Division Belle safely home in third.

#### **Sunday 18 July RTYC on the RLYC line**

Course: North Ryde Middle (p), Gurnard Ledge (p), Sunsail (p)

With a fairly aggressive pre-start, it's no surprise that most boats started on starboard sailing toward the Shrape. Of course the presence of a three-masted schooner on the outer distance mark may have put some off too. Dynamite, Audax and Damsel decided that the left was worth the wait and sailed out on port preferring the sterns of the fleet to going inshore. Darius and Dashing saw the advantage of being a bit offshore early enough to get the best of both, leading into the leeward mark. As Darius and Dashing continued to lead up the beat to Gurnard Ledge, Doublet, Dynamite and Audax kept up a close battle for third. Doublet sailed the top of the beat well and rounded third ahead of Dynamite and Audax for the run back to Sunsail.

While early in the run the island was clearly favoured, as discovered by Audax who lost at least five places by being too far out at Gurnard Sailing Club, the section past the Squadron through Cowes proved costly for boats tempted to sail in over the Shrape. The tide advantage did not seem to outweigh the lighter winds, and for those that carried on to Castle Point, the wind went completely as it is wont to do in the vicinity of Norris. This proved decisive for Darius and Dashing who were unable to get out to the stringer breeze before being overtaken by several boats.

As the new leaders Doublet, Dynamite, Finesse and Derring Do rounded the last mark, Audax made a challenge on Derring Do's windward quarter, but failed to overtake and tacked off toward the island as Doublet and Dynamite sailed the shifts up the stronger wind streak. With the help of a fortuitous shift slightly nearer the island shore, Audax overtook Finesse and Derring Do in a series of crossing tacks in the middle of the beat. While Doublet and Dynamite sailed on to take first and second, Audax was determined not to be taken at the finish by a starboard boat deciding to get the right layline before Derring Do. Having misjudged the tide, Audax became first of many to be menaced by the gigantic bowsprit that projected 40 feet out from the schooner moored to the finish mark. Audax had to call for room from Derring Do which by now was a few feet to leeward, which Derring Do obliging gave. As Audax bore off heavily to pass the bowsprit by about a yard, Derring Do closed the gap and produced a better tack after clearing the obstruction to take third from Audax by two seconds on the line.

Paul Miller with thanks to Brian Hardy, Giles Peckham and Robin Richardson

## **Saturday 10th - Sunday 11th July - Stug Perry Trophy**

### **Saturday 10 July**

Windward/Leeward course

Racing for the "Stug" Perry Challenge Cup, very well organised for us by the RCYC, with Ian Lallow as CRO. What a contrast to last year when there were less than 20 participants, the winds were light and only three races were sailed. This year the wind was in the region of 20+ knots on Saturday and light and shifty on Sunday and it was cold with rain never far away. 25 Darings raced over the weekend with 24 setting out to find Ian Lallow on Zenovia to the east of Seascope. Doublet actually arrived with race favourite Dauntless already sailing for home having broken her boom.

The first race started at the first attempt in a strong westerly over an east going tide from a slightly pin end biased line. Most of the fleet then tended to the right side to minimise the tidal affect. It was fast and furious and very wet, with main sheet travellers well down the track and maximum backstay. Decoy arrived at the weather mark in the lead with Loup Garou and Double Knot not too far back. Then the fun began - did you hoist the big one, the reacher, or did you white sail run, all with white knuckles. Loup Garou put up the big one. Destroyer, in fourth place, hoisted her reacher. What Decoy or Double Knot did was not discernable to this scribe. Destroyer promptly decided her crew were not really trying, so stuck her bow deep into the first available wave which really woke up the crew as the floor boards promptly floated up and it was hands to the pump and bucket. At the leeward mark the order of the first four was unchanged and they were followed by

Doublet and Dreamer. On the second windward leg Destroyer beat through Double Knot establishing herself firmly in third place. Decoy, in the lead, steadily went away, as did Loup Garou, very bravely persisting with her big spinnaker.

This scribe in Destroyer can say little about the second race other than that conditions were again fairly extreme. Decoy won with a good lead, followed by Double Knot, Defiant, Devius and Audax.

Brian Hardy

### Race 3

In a marked contrast to the previous day, light NW winds greeted the fleet for the first race. As the fleet beat off the start-line on starboard, the breeze seemed to be a bit stronger in the right. Doublet and Dauntless tacked away for it and reached the windward mark first and second, with Loup Garou in third place. Most of the fleet sailed too far to the right on the run, trying to keep wind in their spinnakers. Dashing and Dionysus both gained by gybing early and cutting the corner, bringing them up to 3rd and fourth places respectively. The second beat was classically frustrating for some and exciting for others as the wind died in patches and shifted around a bit. Dionysus, Decanter and Dashing tacked onto starboard early and held more breeze to fill the slots behind Doublet at the windward mark. On the last run, the wind backed considerably, to the extent that those who sailed deep on starboard or gybed onto port found themselves unable to hold their spinnakers. Audax tried in vain to lower their spinnaker as it wedged itself firmly in the jumper wires. Spinnakers weren't designed to fill the slot between the job and the mainsail but Audax spent the next few minutes testing this theory as they fought their way around the mark, being passed by all the rest of the fleet. A short reach back to the finish line left the finishing order unchanged as Doublet, Dashing, Dionysus. One boat shouted a protest to the race committee, claiming that Doublet and Dauntless had not sailed through the start line between laps; the CRO politely suggested they read their sailing instructions!

### Race 4

The wind returned for the last race and remained in the SW. A pin-end bias favoured those who started at that end but tacked early to avoid the adverse tide. Dionysus judged it well and took the lead. Some who didn't judge it quite so well bravely tried to shoot the mark against the tide with predictable consequences. The wind then veered from the right hand side of the course and left those on the right overstanding the windward mark. Dionysus again judged it well and was off with a good lead at the mark. Gybing immediately helped Loup Garou and Dauntless to move up to 2nd and 3rd places on the run. On the second beat, Decoy overtook Dauntless and closed on Loup Garou, overtaking her to windward on the second run. On the short beat to the finish line, Loup Garou was close-covering Dauntless but ended up in Decoy's dirty wind and dropped back to 4th place, leaving the top three places as Dionysus, Decoy and Dauntless.

Giles Peckam

After two convincing wins on Saturday, Decoy was in control of the series going into the second day and in spite of an eighth in the third race, Decoy was a clear winner with 4 points after a discard. The competition for second place was a bit more fierce and after three races, Loup Garou needed a win over Doublet in the last race to break the score tie in their favour. Loup Garou succeeded, beating Doublet by a point to take second with 10 points with Doublet in third on 11 points.

### **Saturday 3rd - Sunday 4th July - Solent Series**

On Saturday, as 25 knot winds threatened to rip the "AP" flag from the flagpole, the RCYC race committee was eventually forced to replace it with code flag "N". Prayers were offered to the wind gods that conditions would calm down in time for Sunday's race but with limited prayer-management, the sea at dawn on Sunday was as flat as a pancake.

Fortunately, the wind built during the day and was up to force 1-2 SSW in time for the start.

#### **Sunday 4 July Royal Corinthian YC Line 1205**

Course: West Ryde Middle (p), Seascope (p), Trinity Mooring (s), Air Canada (s), finish

To make the most of the last of the flood tide, the race committee sent the fleet eastwards on a broad reach to West Ryde Middle. However, we Daring sailors are creatures of habit and many had assumed that we would be sent westwards, into the wind. Consequently, with only 5 minutes notice of the course and a tidal sheer across the start line, most Darings found themselves inshore off the RYS, fighting the first of the ebb with little wind. Three boats managed to avoid the trap and were hovering at the heavily favoured outer end of the line at the start. Doublet led, with Dionysus in her bad air and Dauntless just to windward. Dauntless rolled them both and took the lead by the first mark. Dionysus rounded inside Doublet as they gybed for Seascope. Doublet then climbed high and rolled Dionysus to regain second place. By this time the rest of the fleet was very strung out, much in the same order that they had held on the start line with Dreamer holding fourth place. Sorry, but the author couldn't tell what was going on behind Dreamer!

On the beat back to Trinity, the wind backed and the ebb increased, favouring the left hand side, much to Dionysus' dismay as she tacked off to the right. Doublet closed on Dauntless and when Dauntless chose a gybe-set for the run to Air Canada, Doublet caught a puff of wind and edged ahead. However, the dice were fair and the next puff took Dauntless back into the lead where she remained for the rest of the run and the following beat back to the finish line. Doublet followed in second place and Dionysus in third.

Liquid prizes were presented at the RCYC after racing (if you didn't know about it, check the fixture list in the handbook!) and both the drizzle and the start-line blues were quickly forgotten.

Giles Peckham

#### **Saturday 26th - Sunday 27th June - Solent Series**

There was no racing on Saturday 26 June, the day of the Island Sailing Club's Round the Island Race.

#### **Sunday 27 June Royal Corinthian YC Line 1205**

Course: Ocean Safety (s), Spanker (s), Fastnet Insurance (s), Trinity Mooring (s), Air Canada (s), West Ryde Middle (s), finish

Twelve boats came to the Royal Corinthian line in a fresh southwesterly and a new flood tide. Choosing a course out from the shore, Decanter sailed well after a good start and aside from a brief discussion of the niceties of rule 19.1(b) with Devius led the first beat followed by Dynamite, Defiant, Devius and Destroyer.

Running down tide, Devius benefited from a little 'shallow water' warning from the experts on the subject aboard Destroyer as the two sailed full speed toward the breaking waves over the Brambles Bank both looking in vain for a quiet place to gybe. Devius decided to drop and re-hoist on the new gybe taking the opportunity to change down to a reacher, though even with the smaller sail they still managed to test the water-holding capacity of a Daring as they submarined on the back of a succession of waves. Meanwhile ahead, Dynamite overtook Decanter in spite of a little luff by Decanter which helped to keep Defiant and Devius close behind at the mark.

Devius tacked early on the beat to Trinity Mooring and gained an advantage on Dynamite and Decanter being leeward ahead and in less tide while Defiant found too much tide further to the left and fell back a little. On the long tack up toward the Brambles post, Decanter lost her clew

outhaul and had to retire from a strong position leaving Devius and Dynamite to choose their layline across the tide. Devius hit it about right and led Dynamite back to Cowes with Defiant coming in down tide still in third.

Rounding Trinity Mooring in an increasing tide, Devius led the way on the fast spinnaker reach out to Air Canada holding her lead on Dynamite and Defiant all the way through the gybe at the mark and the white-sail reach to West Ryde Middle. In spite of the attraction of Norris and Castle Point, the leaders opted for the port tack more directly back to Cowes while a few boats further back tried to get into the counter-current looking for a late advantage. Devius's lead proved to be so great though, that they even had time to heave-to briefly to chat with the crew on Orange II (apparently caused by a floating life-ring jamming the tiller) just a hundred yards from the finish and still cross first ahead of Dynamite in second and Defiant in third.

After a late surge by both Devius and Destroyer, the June Decanters series ended with Dauntless in first with an enviable 12 points, Destroyer second with 24 points and Audax in third with 38 points. Close behind and closing fast was Devius in fourth with 43 points.

Paul Miller

### **Saturday 19th - Sunday 20th June - Red Funnel Championship Saturday 19 June, CCYC Committee Boat**

#### Race 1 1310

It is a brave committee that sets a course in a northwest breeze in the Solent, and the bravery of the committee was tried and proven many times over the weekend. The first race on Saturday began in a gentle and seemingly stable force 3 from about 350° with eighteen starters. Off the line Darius tacked to the right while the rest of the fleet stayed on starboard for a little longer tacking back toward the centre led by Dauntless and Destroyer. As the breeze began to falter, Darius's previously unenviable position began to look increasingly good as they were able to keep the last of the dying breeze all the way to the layline leading around the mark followed by Destroyer, Double Knot and Decanter.

Having rounded, most of the fleet had an early chance for lunch as the wind died completely. Only Finesse, having suffered a late start and difficult beat to bring up the back managed to keep moving the whole time as the wind filled from the west and they sailed round half the fleet. As the new breeze trickled through, turning the run into a beam reach, the committee scrambled to change the course by ninety degrees, but to no avail. As the beat had now been turned into a beam reach, the few boats that reflexively came away from the leeward (or windward as it was becoming) mark hard on the wind, watched in horror as following boats took up the right course and overtook. In the end, Darius kept their lead followed by Destroyer and Decanter at the shortened course finish.

#### Race 2 1415

With the course changed for the new southwesterly breeze, the left looked good for the ebb tide. Darius go off to a lovely start right at the pin and moving nicely with Dauntless just behind and windward. Darius tacked a little before the left corner while Dauntless and Devius carried on to get the most out of the tide. At the windward mark, Darius crossed just ahead of Dauntless to round first, with Devius in third. Close behind, Destroyer suddenly found themselves facing Daring I directly ahead on port tack. With nowhere to go, Destroyer took the course of greatest resistance, namely through the midships of Daring I. The resulting entanglement, which included the mysterious attachment of Destroyer's spinnaker pole to Daring I's shrouds, took some time to sort out, with both boats retiring and Destroyer earning its name on its own jib.

Back on the run, Dauntless gybed just after the mark to take the left of the course, while Darius and most of the rest sailed more down the rhumb line. Dauntless used their better reaching angles to good advantage overtaking Darius and Devius before the leeward mark. Throughout the second round, Dauntless fought to stay ahead of Darius with Devius never far behind. Finally, on the last beat Darius managed to overtake Dauntless leaving the finish order Darius, Dauntless, Devius.

### **Sunday 20 June CCYC Committee Boat**

#### **Race 1 1210**

A reasonably impressive squall passed through the start area just in time for the start as the 20 boats fought for a place on the line. A lively beat followed with most of the fleet choosing the left of the course while Decoy and a handful of others went right to avoid the last of the flood tide. As the squall passed through, the left kept the breeze longer cancelling any right-hand advantage there may have been putting Destroyer barely ahead at the windward mark with Dauntless and Decanter following closely. Destroyer performed what we what might be called an unhurried hoist allowing first Dauntless, then Decanter to slip past as they gybed near the mark while Destroyer ran straight down.

Destroyer regained their momentum on the next beat, overtaking Decanter, though Dauntless remained firmly in front as they rounded the windward mark for the run. Destroyer had another measured hoist which gave Decanter just enough to get round on the run and from there the leaders remained unchanged through the leeward rounding and the short beat to the finish: Dauntless, Decanter and Destroyer.

#### **Race 2 1330**

The wind continued to increase as race two started in the throes of another squall. Most everyone liked the left side of the course in the new ebb, but Dauntless and Destroyer made the most of it, sailing to the left layline from the start. As Dauntless rounded the first mark for the 100 yard leg to the spreader, the wind died in a spectacular fashion. Decoy was seen to take two tacks in this miniature leg, while most of the boats drifted in to the leading pack. Destroyer managed to get moving before Dauntless to round the spreader onto the run, with a dozen more boats vying with Decoy for third.

Dauntless sailed out to the left of the course and overtook Destroyer reaching back in to the leeward mark while Decoy overtook Decanter both sailing down the middle. As Dauntless and Destroyer covered each other up the left of middle, Decoy broke for the right only to overstand the mark in the increasing ebb tide reducing a hard-earned lead over Decanter. As first Dauntless then Destroyer, Decoy and Decanter set off on the run the wind had picked up to a fresh force 5 gusting to perhaps 25 knots.

Watching Dauntless execute a near perfect complete leeward broach while gybing (most impressive was watching the boat come back up with the chute set and drawing) may have set up some dissent amongst the normally disciplined crew of the Daring fleet. Certainly those that arrived at the windward mark late enough to watch several boats broach even under white sail decided not to hoist a chute at all. On Destroyer our class captain, not normally faint of heart, politely declined the opportunity to perform a spinnaker gybe opting instead to drop the kite first as Decoy and Decanter, who had struck their spinnakers earlier managed to sail past. Dauntless held their lead around the last leeward mark followed by Decoy, Decanter and Destroyer. With the now full ebb, and the veering breeze, the positions remained unchanged on the fetch to the finish line.

Paul Miller with many thanks to Charles Matthews

**Saturday 12th - Sunday 13th June - Solent Series**  
**Saturday 12 June, Royal London Yacht Club 1305**

Course: Royal Thames (s), Norris (p), Air Canada (s), West Ryde Middle (p), East Knoll (s), Sunsail (s), finish

Challenged with a northwest force 3 to 4, the committee managed to pick out a very nice course for Saturday's race, and with 16 boats on the line, the favoured pin end was a little crowded with Dauntless and Streak over early while Audax, Decanter and Destroyer led off the line. Audax tacked first to cross the weak tide and was soon followed by the rest of the fleet trying to play the fitful shifts nearer the mainland shore. Decanter and Destroyer picked the shifts on the right at the top of the beat to perfection rounding Royal Thames first followed by Audax, Darling and Dolphin. The breeze eased slightly before the next boats reached the mark allowing the front pack to open a little lead on the run with Audax reaching to the left while Darling and Dolphin overtook Decanter and Destroyer on the rhumb line.

At Norris, Audax managed to reach in to the mark just ahead of Darling with Dolphin close behind. Audax chose to follow a small lift to the left, while Darling and Dolphin boxed the right corner, the three boats meeting again near the top mark with the order unchanged. Audax unwisely let Darling take a final tack to the right which brought Darling ahead at the mark while Dolphin rounded third. The run back to West Ryde Middle was a shorter replay of the first run with Audax reaching left, gybing and reaching back in ahead of Darling while Dolphin followed in third.

There was less separation on the long beat to East Knoll, with Audax tacking initially then taking up a position to windward of Darling and Dolphin heading for the right corner. Again, though Audax was able to cross ahead near the top, Darling sailed to the right hand layline and crossed ahead of Audax and Dolphin at the mark to lead for the final run. Darling covered Audax and Dolphin more tightly on this run, preventing Audax from separating, though Audax closed the gap down to less than a boat length, with Dolphin behind by about three lengths for the reach to the finish. A vain attempt by Audax to pass to leeward of Darling was thwarted by the same charter boat that foiled Dolphin's attempt to pass to windward of Audax leaving the finish order Darling, Audax and Dolphin.

**Sunday 13 June Royal London Yacht Club 1305**

Course: West Bay (s), South Bramble (s), Gurnard (p), Gales HSB (s), finish

After waiting for the breeze to fill in the weekly high pressure weather, the committee again contrived to set a very good course based on their well-founded faith in the development of a southwest sea breeze. With the shore end of the line favoured for distance, Dauntless and Audax took a gate start with the Red Jet IV as rabbit while Decanter, already upwind from the ferry, was nearly stopped to avoid being OCS. Audax and Dauntless got moving first and sailed in close to the Squadron shore before tacking out to the tide and the breeze with Decanter close behind.

At the top of the leg Audax, having failed to learn from Saturday's routine, let Darling and Dauntless take the right hand layline and dropped gratefully behind Darling on what could have been a very sticky port-starboard at the mark. Dauntless rounded third and immediately gybed to take the island shore with Decanter following. Audax gybed in to stay with Dauntless while Darling and Dynamite sailed more directly to South Bramble dropping back slightly as Dauntless, Audax and Decanter approached the mark broad reaching. Dauntless effectively covered Audax up the beat while Darling and Decanter made gains late in the beat by tacking to the right. This time Audax covered Darling and though losing a little distance on Dauntless at least managed to round ahead of Darling at a windward mark for the first time in the weekend.

The run to Gales HSB allowed Decanter to just overtake Darling before the mark, while Dynamite and Destroyer closed the distance late in the leg. The beat back to the finish would have been a

fine sight in the warm sunshine as the 15 boats tacked up the Shrape. Dauntless sailed on with a fair lead, while Audax did their best to cover the fractious boats near behind, places changing at each tack. Dynamite and Destroyer excelled particularly with well-chosen tacks that brought them past Darling and Decanter. Dauntless sailed on to finish with a comfortable lead while Audax managed to stay in second with Dynamite coming up fast to take third just ahead of Destroyer and Darling.

Paul Miller

### **Saturday 5th - Sunday 6th June - Red Funnel Championship**

Saturday 5 June, all racing abandoned.

### **Sunday 6 June, RYS committee boat start between Hill Head and Seascope**

Race 1 1220

After many incredulous searches of the Squadron flagstaff for the now traditional answering pennant, 15 boats set off for the starting area. But our scepticism was ill-founded, as the committee had indeed found a nice little south west breeze of just about force 3, and the first start was delayed by only a few minutes. Whether the right or left was favoured seemed to be a matter of whether you started on time, with most of the early starters going left initially while at the opposite end of the starting sequence, Dauntless chose to go right being about a minute late.

While Dauntless stayed right, Destroyer, Devius and Darling tended toward the left while Audax indecisively tried a bit of each, managing to pick up a place or two on small shifts. At the top of the beat, Destroyer and Audax led ahead of Devius and Darling. On the run, Dauntless decided that if the right didn't work upwind, it was bound to work downwind, while Destroyer and Devius sailed down the middle. Meanwhile Darling chose the left and Audax gybed down the middle setting for a starboard approach to the leeward mark. As the wind backed slightly, Audax's strategy came good and they took the lead at the leeward mark with Destroyer and Devius behind, Dauntless taking up fourth place.

On the next beat, nearly every boat chose the right, with Audax still in the lead and Dauntless overtaking Destroyer near the windward mark. After rounding in the lead, Audax tried a few strange and varied spinnaker hoist techniques, none of which worked too well allowing Dauntless to take the lead and leaving Audax and Destroyer virtually even into the leeward mark. While Dauntless sailed on to win, Destroyer made a better leeward rounding and covered Audax very effectively to take second place with Audax in third.

Race 2 1350

A nice sea breeze settled in for the start of the second race, and helmsmen had clearly started to remember what starts are like on a committee boat line, as a few shouts of 'up up up' resonated through the air. Dauntless, Defiant and Darling all took to the left, as Loup Garou VIII and Dreamer played more up the centre. At the top of the leg, though Dauntless led, the distance back to the following boats was small enough to keep the boats more closely together, with Loup Garou VIII, Defiant and Darling going right and Dreamer taking a more rhumb-line track.

Dauntless and Loup Garou VIII lead at the leeward mark and sailed straight to the right followed by Dreamer, while just behind, Audax took a tack on a left shift before falling back on port tack inside and windward of Dreamer. At the top, the small shift had made enough ground for Audax as they tacked just in front of Dreamer at the mark to take up third behind Dauntless and Loup Garou VIII both extending their lead slightly.

By the leeward mark, Dauntless, Loup Garou VIII and Audax had established what seemed to be comfortable or at least defensible leads over the following boats, so they didn't pay a lot of attention when Diamond, laying in eighth, tacked off to the left. I for one, never even looked for them until we had tacked near the starboard layline to the finish by which time it was far too late for anything except admiration; Diamond had sailed (with the help of the favourable current on the left) into second place behind Dauntless, comfortably overtaking nearly half the fleet. Loup Garou VIII, whose second place had seemed quite certain a few minutes before, took third.

Paul Miller with thanks to Giles Peckham and Edward Fryer.

[There are no more reports after this date]