

Stars of Antigua Sailing Week

Highlights of day five of Antigua Sailing Week included a great win for Cowes-based *Sojana* in the inaugural Corum Round Redonda Race, while first place in the Antigua Ocean Series was taken by *Lee Overlay Partners*.



Credit: Tim Wright / www.photoaction.com

Adrian Lee's *Lee Overlay Partners*, winner of the first Antigua Ocean Series

On a day of firsts for Antigua Sailing Week, Peter Harrison's Farr 115, *Sojana*, won the inaugural Corum Round Redonda Race, establishing a benchmark elapsed time race record in the process, while Adrian Lee's Cookson 50, *Lee Overlay Partners*, corrected out to first overall in the same contest to win the first ever Antigua Ocean Series.

Sojana's winning elapsed time of seven hours, 55 minutes, 58 seconds in the 65 nautical mile event earned Harrison and his crew the Corum Round Redonda Trophy, just days after setting a new course record, and earning another piece of impressive silverware, the Yachting World Trophy in the Round Antigua Island Race. Virgin Islands legend Peter Holmberg, the Olympic medallist and America's Cup veteran, was a member of *Sojana's* crew for both races.

"We had full sail flying with about 18-24 knots of breeze for most of the day," said *Sojana* skipper Marc Fitzgerald shortly after the victory. "Everything was up, sailing along at 18 knots, just flying along with Peter Holmberg trimming the spinnaker for me. It just doesn't get much better than that as far as I'm concerned. I was I heaven."

"I'd never been around Redonda Island before," said Holmberg. "It was pretty interesting. Sailing a ketch was something new as well. It's actually quite nice. The sail plan is split up and everything is much more manageable for the guys. I think Peter Harrison, Marc and Bruce Farr did a nice job, the cockpit is real smart and the whole boat is really balanced. And to come here and break one record and set a new one was a unique opportunity. It's a credit to the whole crew."

Fitzgerald said that the newly established Antigua Ocean Series, comprised of the Antigua-Guadeloupe Race, the Yachting World Around the Island Race and the Corum Round Redonda Race, was a welcome change for the *Sojana* team. "It's pretty risky to come out and sail against smaller boats on close courses," he said. "So this new format has been fantastic. Hopefully in future years more superyachts will see the attractions and come along and join in the fun."

While *Sojana's* team relished their trophy-winning ways, another Farr design, the 50 foot canting-keel *Lee Overlay Partners* corrected out to first place to become the first winner of the Antigua Ocean Series.

Meanwhile, in the Racing 1 and Racing 4 classes, both of which sailed an abbreviated version of the Round Redonda Race, circling a mark about halfway to the island on a 30 nautical mile course, Charles Dunstone's TP 52, *Rio*, and Dig Van der Slikke's Grand Soleil 43, *Curacao Marine*, both led their respective fleets home to win Day 5's races.

With the Division A fleet standing offshore on the two Redonda courses, the Performance Cruiser divisions again took part in a pair of races, the first a short nine nautical miler off

Falmouth Harbour and the second a 16 nautical mile point-to-point race to Jolly Harbour, the scene of Wednesday night's parties and festivities as part of Jolly Harbour Day, in which they were joined by their fellow Division B compatriots in the Cruiser, Bareboat, and Dragon classes.

In Performance Cruiser 1, Clive Llewellyn and Alec Schwed's Grand Soleil 50, *Mad IV*, continued to dominate the action with yet another set of firsts. *Mad IV* holds a comfortable 10 point advantage over Damon Guizot's Swan 53, *Katrina*, going into the final day of competition. Likewise, in Performance Cruiser 2, Martin Jacobson and Nick Burns's Frers-designed Swan 44, *Crescendo*, remained in complete control of their nine boat fleet with a pair of first place finishes on Day 5 of racing.

However, in Performance Cruiser 3, the ultimate outcome is far from decided. Geoffrey Pidduck's six metre, *Biwi Magic*, and Tony Sayer's Beneteau 42, *Augustine*, both found their way to the winner's circle on Day 5. But by virtue of its two seconds, Richard Burbidge's Swan 43, *Pavlova 2*, maintained a tie with *Biwi Magic*, the boats are deadlocked at 14 points apiece, with *Augustine* just three points off the pace, setting up an all-or-nothing race to come.

In Cruising 1, Dr Ulrich Rohde's Swan 53, *Dragon Fly Plus*, earned its fourth straight first place finish in a row, while in Cruising 2, Hugh Bailey's First 456, *Hugo B*, again outlasted Burt Keenan's Frers 48, *Acadia*, to remain atop the 15 boat fleet.

"It was much nicer sailing today," said Acadia's Antigua Sailing Week veteran, Neil Harvey.

"We saw that Hugh ripped his number one genoa and changed down to a number three, and while that happened, the J/120, *Shamrock*, which is also sailing an excellent series, jumped out to an early lead. But Hugo passed us on the beat and then ground down Shamrock on the run."

The Bareboat winners were the Dufour 455, *KH+P Sea You Later* in Bareboat 1, the Moorings 515, *Nifty*, in Bareboat 2, the Moorings 473, *Crumpet*, in Bareboat 3, and the Dufour 40, *Fantasque*, in Bareboat 4. The Flint 54, *Running Cloud*, won the Cruising Multihull class, while *Compass Point* was again the top Dragon.

The 42nd edition of Antigua Sailing Week is now firmly on the home stretch. On Thursday, 30 April, the majority of the fleet will conclude competition with the Division A racers slated to sail a pair of windward/leeward contests off the island's southern coast, while the Division B fleet is scheduled to return to Falmouth Harbour in the 16 nautical mile Jolly Harbour Race. With that, the final day of racing will be left for the four Bareboat classes, which will close out their week with Friday's Gold Silver Fleet Race to determine 2009's top Bareboat crews and skippers.

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