

16th Western Circuit ends in bigger puffs and game-changing races



'SB20 Battle! - 16th SMU-RM Western Circuit Sailing Regatta' Nat Tan

The 16th SMU-RM Western Circuit Sailing Regatta came to an end on Saturday, 24th August 2013. The event, which hosted the biggest fleet of SB20s Singapore has yet seen, came to a close after two weekends of some of the most exciting keelboat racing the small island has to offer—hosting 79 entries over nine different classes.

Winds were light on the first two days, forcing crews onto leeward and making maintaining boat speed through tacks and other manoeuvres the key priority. The last day of racing, however, brought stronger puffs (11-knot maximums, up from the previous week's eight) like the participants hoped, and gave everyone a chance to get in more action packed sailing!

The battle for the IRC A title started off with lots of close racing and, on Saturday, continued as Windsikher's crew tried to close Foxy Lady VI's two point lead. However, they didn't manage to squeeze in a single bullet, and even finished behind ReKering Dream in the day's second race after stalling on the start line with a limp jib. This means that Bill Bremner's Foxy Lady VI finished today with a score of 1-1-1, securing him the overall top spot in the IRC A class on top of the SMU President's Cup which they bagged on day two after winning the long distance passage race. Nevertheless, Sarab Singh's Windsikher fought hard and went home with an honourable second place, with Simon Piff's ReKering Dream taking overall third.

The IRC B ranks were reshuffled in the new conditions that sailors saw on day three, and in the stronger breeze, Kurt Metzger's Waka Tere faired far better than she previously had. She earned herself wins in the first two races and finished a close second on in the third. Previous days' leader, Collin Lim's SMUMad, finished immediately behind her twice, before taking third place in the last race when Gordon Maxted's Shoon Fung Too came from behind to finish ahead of the fleet. The single day's strong performance bumped Waka Tere into overall first place, leaving skipper Collin Lim with a sour second on countback, while Shoon Fung Too likewise overtook the smaller boat, Alexi Lim's SMUve, to take the last spot on the podium.

The fray in the SB20 fleet saw Singapore's Anthony Kiong execute a perfect last day with three bullets, while Glasgow Kiss, winner of the SMU SB20 International Cup the week before, which had previously scored no lower than a second, forfeited their first race by DNF before finding her form to end the regatta with two more second place finishes. Pocapena, which consistently finished ahead of half the fleet, grabbed overall third for her efforts, and although Glasgow Kiss' first race looked to be costly, it was not enough to deny her overall first place, leaving Anthony Kiong to settle for second in the completed series.



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Day three brought an end to Calvin Lim's total domination of the J24 fleet when he finished fourth in the second race and second in the last one. Still, all established positioning from the previous week ensured no scramble on the podium which left Shengli class champion, with Daniella Ng's RSYC Dua as first runner-up, followed closely by Winfrid Wong's SMU-alumni-crewed Jagan Main Main.

Jeremy Perrier secured his first position with two wins to add to his belt, and Red Rocket



Publication: Sail World

Date: 27 August 2013

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finished behind him both times to improve her own series' score. However, Molly's Inheritance had too much of a lead over her and, in the end, Andras Torok took third place behind Molly Inheritance's John Simpson.

In the Trimaran class, David Stanton skippered his M23 to end his good series with three first place finishes, securing an overall win, while the Dash and Dash Boot held the second and third positions throughout the rest of the regatta to end up in the same spots overall.

The Moths, too, seemed to fly in formation, holding their race and overall regatta positions with Muc Dhoo, Slingshot and Bladerider ending the whole event in the first, second and third positions respectively.

Racing aside, the regatta ended with a bang at the closing gala dinner which featured a number of performances from small local bands to SMU-affiliated arts groups like Samba Masala, and included the all-important charity auction which saw designer watches, paintings and brand new household appliances go at very generous amounts, all in the name of giving back! With the inclusion of lump sum donations from Changi Sailing Club, HVS Engineering and a private donor, the amount raised totals some S\$37,863—much needed funds that will be used in support of Sailability Singapore's programme for disabled sailors. At dinner, the memorandum of understanding between the Singapore Management University and Raffles Marina was also renewed, assuring us of more action-packed regattas in the years to come!

by Bryan Reginald Chan