

Top of the Gulf Regatta 2013 - a picture postcard start



'Top of the Gulf Regatta 2013' Guy Nowell ©

Day 1 of the 2013 Top of the Gulf Regatta saw classic Gulf of Thailand sailing conditions with consistent winds of 12-15 knots and a stunning blue sky picture postcard backdrop off Ocean Marina Yacht Club.

A total of 37 boats line up in the keelboat and multihull classes this year, together with 128 youngsters in the Thailand Optimist National Championships presented by Sansiri, over 50 boats in the dinghy and beach catamaran classes, and 30 RS:One windsurfers.

In IRC 1 Racing Class, a six-strong international fleet lined-up for a windward-leeward followed by a longer coastal race, and in the strong winds the Singapore boat Foxy Lady showed their true colours winning two from two. They were pushed hard by perennial competitor Kevin Whitcraft and his crew on Wan Marang, who today had to settle for two seconds.



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Local favourites, Royal Thai Navy 1, skippered by Cpl. Wiwat Poonpat, were quick off the mark scoring a first in race one and beating the highly experienced Australian crew on Ichi Ban, skippered by Matt Allen, by one minute in a close race. Allen got his revenge in Race Two and turned the tables finishing first with Royal Thai Navy 1 second.

The all-Singapore crew from Singapore Management University (SMU), sailing Hi Jinks, made their mark in IRC Racing 3 with two clear wins today. One of four SMU crews taking part in the Regatta this year (three others in the Platu one-design class), Hi Jinks look the one to beat.



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The one-design Platus are racing for the Coronation Cup, and with a record fleet of 15 boats and crews coming from all corners of the world, the competition is tight. Black Betty, skippered by Gary McNally, are being pushed hard by Hong Kong boat Tigrana, skippered by Andrew Moore.

Having made the trip from Phuket, past Phuket King's Cup winner Miss Saigon, skippered by David Liddell, got off to a flying start in the Ocean Multihulls class with two wins, closely followed by Kirati Assakul's Sonic who scored two second places.



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In the dinghy and beach catamaran classes, series standings at the end of Day 1 are as follows:
Formula 18: Pom Green, Michael Scantlebury, Morten Jakobsen.

Open Beach Multihulls: Damrongsak Vongtim, Grahame Southwick, Teerapong Watiboonruang.

Single-handed monohull dinghies: Keerati Bualong, Supakorn Pongwicchan, Natthawut Paenyaem.

Double-handed monohull dinghies: Sittisart Ponpun, Mohd. Faizal Norizan, Noppakao Poonpat.

Competing in the Thailand Optimist National Championships presented by Sansiri are 128 youngsters, and the top three in the standings at the end of Day 1 are Pongsapat Pumyam (10), Suthon Yampinid (12), Mohd Uzair Amin (21).



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Returning for the second time are the RS:One one-design windsurfers from NeilPryde. 29 competitors from India, Myanmar and Thailand took part in the racing organised by the Windsurfing Association of Thailand (WATH). After five races today in tricky conditions, Navin Singart (THA) leads the men's fleet and Siriporn Kaewduangam (THA) the women's fleet.

The Top of the Gulf Regatta continues tomorrow at Ocean Marina Yacht Club.

For more information, visit www.topofthegulfregatta.com



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