

The season started with a rush. First the Triple Crown and then the Hobie Tiger Extreme series in Langebaan followed by the very next weekend round #1 of the Grand Slam series at Fishhoek. With a strong north-westerly wind blowing on Friday and much rain the prospects did not look good for Saturday. However the weather forecasters assured us that they would be a strong South Easter on Saturday moderating for Sunday ! The reason to hold the Fishhoek round of the grand Slam series earlier this year had been to try to dodge the gale force South Easter's that sometimes blow this regatta out. When we arrived on Saturday morning we thought that this change of date had not worked as the South Easter was blowing strongly and increased in strength during the day. It is not often that Shaun Ferry decides that it is too strong to sail but he and Klaas de Rooy decided that discretion was the better part of valour and packed their sails away but left the masts up to return to sail on Sunday. Race officer Belinda Hayward was determined that we were going to sail and using the club's small rubber duck laid an accurate windward / leeward course within Fishhoek Bay. Belinda ran the races from the rubber duck with help from Lance who very kindly gave up his Saturday to sit out the in the cold strong south-easterly wind. With the wind gusting up to 27 knots before the start getting out through the surf was difficult. Matthew and Nick Breedt got rolled in the surf but managed to return to shore with the minimum of damage. There was a debate on the beach whether it was better to go out left towards Kalk Bay or right towards Fishhoek. The right-hand side looked easier but one seem to end up having to tack over onto starboard in the end. The swell was running between 4 and 5 m which made for exciting surfing downwind. We took the middle road and put in a reef and pulled the trapeze hooks right up which made the boat much easier to handle. In fact we found that it went to windward faster than the fully rigged 16s and pointed higher as well.

Belinda gave us three windward leeward races of three rounds each. The intention had originally mean to have four races on Saturday but by the time we got to the end of race three it was really blowing and everybody was frozen. Everybody capsized at least once with Josh and Erhardt doing a spectacular backwards capsize downwind - never seen that before. Paul and Tyrone showed us the way around but even they capsized in the third race preventing them from having a clean sweep.

The wind on Sunday was 6 to 8 knots SE in complete contrast to Saturday. Shaun and Klaas came out to play and Shaun and Janine showed us the way around although the racing was very close with Rob Selig looking for a win in race five but being squeezed out by Shaun and Paul right on the line. Food was available for breakfast lunch and after the racing from the kiosk on wheels which was appreciated. There were some very generous prizes for the top three with Belinda once again running this as well.

A big thank you to Belinda for giving up her boat to run the regatta for the rest of us - much appreciated and very slick with the minimum of resources. It just shows what can be done.

<i>Skipper & Crew</i>	<i>Sail no.</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Disc</i>	<i>Net</i>	<i>Pos</i>
Paul & Tyrone	25	1	1	2	3	2	3	12	3	9	1
Rob & Suzanne	03	2	4	4	2	3	6	21	6	15	2
Josh & Erhardt	89	3	2	3	7	6	2	23	7	16	3
John & Caro	40	4	3	1	4	5	5	22	5	17	4
Shaun & Janine	89	10	10	10	1	1	1	33	10	23	5
Klaas & Suzanne	07	10	10	10	5	4	4	43	10	33	6
Brent & Chloe	24	10	10	10	6	10	7	53	10	43	7
Murray & William	20	10	10	10	8	7	8	53	10	43	8
Mathew & Nicholas		10	10	10	10	10	10	60	10	50	9

John Ryall for WCHCA
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