

The Tactick & LDC Weston Grand Slam 2006

The annual four-day event was held over the Easter weekend and sported Weston's newly renovated clubhouse. With 127 boats, Tactick and LDC prizes and a forecast for medium breeze all weekend it was lining up to be a cracking weekend. The competitors were split into 4 fleets making for some very exciting racing. Cat fleet (21 entries), Asymmetric fleet (49 entries), Fast fleet (25 entries) & Slow fleet (21 entries).

Friday

A sunny and warm morning greeted our visitors with a light and unstable NE breeze that set the trend for the day. Away first was the cat fleet which was dominated by the close racing of Adam Piggott / Drew Taylor and Grant Piggott / Ben Hinks both in their Tornados. Grant took line honours however the race was won by the F18 of Gummer / Forshaw on handicap.

The asymmetric fleet the largest by half was away cleanly with Ron Price / Chris Eaton's 49er rounding the top mark first. Matt Humphrey in his Rs700 made a costly capsize but the first downwind leg which left Ron and Chris to an easy win. Rob & Liz Jones came second in their RS400 on handicap followed by Kevin George / Aaron Cole's International 14' to complete the Weston member podium line-up.

The fast fleet this year consisted of only single-handed sailors but this by no means reflected the diversity of class's enter. Foiling moths (PY 840) were lining up against Blazes (PY 1047), with a very strong mid range composing of 12 Contenders and 5 Rs600s. The first race was away cleanly with Sam Pascoe finding just enough wind to get his foiling moth up and running to go through to win, followed by Mike Lyons in his Blasé who sailed a very consistent race. Mike Murley's contender came in third.

The slow fleet this year was dominated by the Lasers with 14 boats and 5 Europe's to boot. Jon Emmett radial led from the start most of the way up the first beat till Ian Morgan took him nearing the top mark. Emmett chased Morgan hard through the race just securing a win on handicap. Weston's Steven Lee who never really got a look in gained a third.

The tornados were once again battling it out at the front in race 2 this time between Adam Piggott / Drew Taylor and Dave Pitman / Dan Pitman. Adam gained a bullet, but Stuart Gummer / Ellen Forshaw in their F18 took Dave on Handicap.

The start of the asymmetric fleet saw many boats OCS of which only a few went back. Matt Humphrey's Rs700 chose the right side of the beat and managed to pip all including Ron Price / Chris Eaton's 49er at to the top mark. Matt went on

to win with Kevin George / Aaron Cole's International 14' gaining a second followed by Ron.

The light breeze died towards to end allowing the faster Rs600s of Olly Straker and Fred Lord to finish first and second, whilst the slower boats struggled to finish. Mike Lyons Blaze seemed to go well in the light airs and carried him through to third on handicap.

The slow fleet was battled out at the front between Ian Morgan and Steven Lee. Ian managed to finish before the wind died, which left Steven and Jon Emmett to count the seconds till the Europe behind closed in. Ian Stow and James Eynon managed to gain a second and third in that order.

Saturday

The start of race 3 was postponed for a short while the wind filled in initially from the SW 5-10 knots. Coming over the land the inshore air was to say the least shifty and inconsistent. The race officer set an offshore downwind start to sail the fleets straight into clear breeze. Most boats got away well including Jason Smith / Stuart Offers tornado who rounded first hotly pursued by both Piggott's. The day belonged to the F18s as Stuart Gummer / Ellen Forshaw and James & Gillian Power took the top results in that order.

There was some upset on the busy asymmetric start line with Matt Humphrey's capsizing avoiding a collision. Through the confusion Kevin George / Aaron Cole's International 14' went on take a first just ahead of Alan & Jane Olives Rs800. Sam Hoyland / David Bate in their Rs400 came in third.

Andy Hewitt in his Rs600 read the downwind start in the shifty airs perfectly and was a 100m clear just after the start. An unfortunate capsize in the gusty building breeze nearly cost him the lead as Rs600 Olly Straker caught up and shortly overtook on the next very fast fetch. An unfortunate change in wind direction quashed any chance of a true upwind leg. This shifty conditions however suited the Blaze with Mike Lyons and Paul Taylor coming in top with Sam Pascoe's foiling Moth third.

Weston's local sail maker Ian Moran was absent busy repairing the previous days competitors sail damage. This however turned out to be costly as Jon Emmett gain another first. Ian Stow and Kerry Tucker followed.

The wind had swung for race 4 and the SW breeze came up Southampton Water and made the start and eastern shore side sailing very tricky. The Cats fully powered up for this race saw some damage, but the F18s and Adam Piggott Weston's Youth hopeful 'sponsored by Tactick' split them to complete the top group.

An Rs400 1, 2, 3, with Sam Hoyland / David Bate choosing the right side of each beat to coming in first after holding off Rob & Liz Jones, and Howard Fabrother / Louise Hosken third.

The fast group struggled to the top mark in the shifty conditions inshore due to consisting of mainly single-handed trapeze dinghies. Once round the foiling moths and Rs600s were gone. Sam Pascoe took advantage of the foiling conditions to come in first, followed by Kieth Paul and Olly Straker.

Morgan returned for this race beating Steven Lee, but was piped for first by Jon Emmett on handicap.

Saturday Night

Weston's famous Hog Roast was Saturday night's entertainment, in the new clubhouse and bar. The food was once again excellent and a good time had by all. The local field was a

And again this year the Grandslam Visitors were impressed by the Westron hospitality hiring the

Sunday

Race 5 started well and once again the home Tornado fleet went to the front of the fleet with the F18s of Power / Power and Gummer / Forshaw close enough behind to win on handicap in that order. Gummer / Forshaw again gained a rare 2nd in the next race behind Alex Ferr / Marcelle Newbold's Spitfire keeping Weston's head held high amongst the tough visiting competition.

The asymmetric fleet the Rs800s of Alan & Jane Olive and Andrew Cornah / Arwin Murrey gained the top spots, just piped by the Int 14' of Kevin George / Aaron Cole's.

In the slow it was Jon Emmett who got clear this time, initially leading until the fleet well and truly caught up in the other fleets. Ian Morgan had good pace downwind and managed to stay out of trouble. Again it was a Laser 1, 2, 3 with the Europe's catching the breeze that freshed towards the end. Unfortunately for James Eynon he was called OCS at the start. A bullet in this race pretty much gave Jon Emmett the overall win, but the fight for 2nd & 3rd and 4th & 5th was really hotting up. Following the laser 1, 2, 3, the Europe's of James Eynon came 4th and Ian Stow 5th.

Monday

The Cat fleet was showing signs of fatigue coming into the final day but this by no means had any effect on Stuart Gummer / Ellen Forshaw in their F18 who

sealed a win overall with 2 bullets, totalling 7 points from 8 races, not bad going! Second place went to James & Gillian Power on 16 points. In third place came Weston's very own youth hopeful Adam Piggott with Drew Taylor as crew, Well done boys!

Jon Emmett despite winning the previous day stayed to race the next and help Steven Lee gain a points advantage coming only 1 point of Ian Morgan overall in second. James Eynon and Ian Stow's tussle was settled decisively win James's win in the final race.

The Weston Grandslam

This year was in short another cracking Weston event which could never have happened with out the dedicated voluntary support of its members. With special thanks to this years generous sponsors Tactick Compass's & LDC Racing Sailboats.