

Noble Marine Laser Standard Autumn Qualifier, Hayling Island Sailing Club, 8–9 October

By Matt Whitfield

The second Noble Marine Laser Autumn Qualifier, and fifth of the year, was held at Hayling Island SC on 8–9 October. As usual at HISC, there was a great turnout for the Standard fleet with 45 boats ready to race.

On Saturday morning, the fleet headed out of the 'channel' into Hayling Bay and were greeted by a solid 10–15knts from the NE. With a small amount of wind against tide, the fleet still managed to get away first time, but multiple horns were heard by many of the fleets and the jury boat cut in front of some leading to part of the fleet to believe a general recall had been called. However, this was not the case, too much of the fleet's disappointment. With big pressure differences up the beat, Lorenzo Chiavarini came off the pin end to work the beat better than anyone to lead all the way to the finish of the race and score his first bullet of the regatta; a sign of how the weekend was to carry on!

For the second race, the wind had dropped to a light 6–7knts and Sam Whaley came off the pin to lead around the top mark and, despite the yellow flag along the reach, he maintained the lead. However, by the finish Whaley had lost the lead to Anthony Parke, who took first, and Harry Blowers, who stormed around the race track to take second.

With the heating of the land making the pressure more unstable and fickle, coupled with a change of tide direction to now go from right to left, the course became skewed with a long tack port. At the start of Race 3, James Grey won the heavily biased pin end and led the fleet to the mark. However, Chiavarini made another hitch to the left off the pin and came into the top mark clear ahead to lead and then extended this around the course to have a sizeable winning margin by the finish.

Sunday arrived and the wind came with it to greet the fleet with 12–15knts of breeze from the NE again. Also, a cold air temperature reminded everyone that winter was coming.

With a 10am start, the tide was behaving differently to the previous day. So more information would have to be collected on how it would affect the racing. The first race got underway in 13–15knts from the NE with an increasing tide going against the wind. Alex Mills Barton, back in a Laser and demonstrating his skills, won the pin end of the line and led until, once again, Chiavarini came in to play and ran away with another race win followed by Mills Barton in second place.

Race 5 started in similar conditions to Race 4 and had a similar result with Chiavarini once again showing the fleet his transom to lead around the course and win by another considerable margin with Mills Barton coming in second across the line.

Race 6 started with a few general recalls and black flags, including to Mickey Beckett, who had been mixing it at the front all weekend, and James Grey, the Podium Potential and Youth Squad coach, who were now both counting a BFD and getting the early shower. Despite Dan Whiteley, in his first Standard event after dominating the Radial fleet this year, coming second, the race panned out very similarly to the earlier races with, once again, Lorenzo winning to be a clear winner of the overall event with five bullets in the end.

Results:

1 Lorenzo Chiavarini, 5pts

2 Jack Wetherell, 19pts

3 Mickey Beckett, 29pts

Full results:

<http://www.kbsuk.com/laser/events/showrace.asp?EventID=88&RaceURL=%5Bresults%5D/haylingstd.2016nh.html>