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ISORA race from Wicklow to Pwllheli - May 2004

by Guy Rose on 19 May 2004

Despite an unpromising weather forecast six yachts braved biting northerly winds to take part in the first ISORA race of the season from Wicklow to Pwllheli.

The competitors demonstrated the entire spectrum of offshore racing. At one end the shiny and new Ker 32 'Voodoo Chile' owned by Alan Crosby and crewed by a crack team of twenty-somethings with plenty of dinghy and round the cans honours to their names. At the other, 'Gums n' Roses' a Swan 38 celebrating her 30th birthday in the company of her comparably long in the tooth crew. The former contemplating the need for a specialist tactician to keep them going. The latter, wondering about employing a pharmacist for the same reason.

The race began just after 8.00 am with some of the boats in a state of mild disarray that was attributed to them taking full advantage of the famous Wicklow Sailing Club's hospitality the previous night. 'Voodoo Chile', whose crew had obeyed orders to stick to soft drinks, took full advantage and an early lead.

The wind was a stiff Northerly blowing at 25 knots with a lumpy sea that made finding the buoy for the start line difficult did not moderate until the yachts had left the Arklow and Codling sandbanks astern. 'Voodoo Chile' and last year's ISORA championship runner-up, the Sigma 400 'Trinculo', began to stretch away from the pack.

As the wind gradually moderated the remaining four yachts, Dermot Cronin's White Rooster, 'El Nino' a Grand Soleil, and the 2 Swans Albireo, and Gums n Roses, began a close quarters battle that would last for the next eight hours. Positions were swapped with regularity and so close was the racing that at one stage boats were calling for water at the mark. The mark in question being Bardsey Island.

As evening approached the wind went light leaving hidden pockets of calm air that trapped the unwary for minutes at a time. The specialists aboard

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Mini Calendar



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Voodoo Chile ended up performing five headsail changes in what seemed like as many minutes in order to maintain their progress.

In the end it served them well as they were able to pip a hard charging Trinculo to the line by just 9 minutes. The battling pack arrived an hour later with Gums N Roses and El Nino only 11 seconds apart.

On corrected time Voodoo Chile maintained her first place, Gums n Roses was a close second, with White Rooster taking third spot. There were barely 15 minutes separating the whole fleet. All bodes well for an exciting and close fought series this year. Further entries are welcome for the next race being from Holyhead to Dun Laoghaire on 24th May 2004.

This was the first ISORA race to incorporate the CORA Corinthian class and the 2 boats entered were neck and neck with 'Gums'n Roses' 1st separated by only 20 yards from 'El Nino' in second place after 10 hours of ding-dong racing. Both boats went on to record a finish in the overall race.

2000 to 2009

We are in the process of cataloguing old archived documents including Year Books, Race Week Programmes, Results and Photographs.

We will publish these on the ISORA web site as soon as they are ready.

If you have old copies or photographs which you think should be featured please provide us with a copy – or if you prefer we can prepare the scan and return the originals.

Nothing published yet - please come back soon.

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