

## RS400 Southern Championship

### Portchester Sailing Club:

Sunday morning dawned and there was a real sense of excitement as we arrived at Portchester SC. Upon arrival we were greeted with a smile and made to feel genuinely welcome. The weather was outstanding and apart from warm sunshine there was a substantial SSW breeze for once pretty much as predicted by Wind GURU!!

Registration was an efficient relaxing affair with bacon rolls and coffee with friends on the veranda, but all the while it felt a little like the calm before the storm ahead.....

With rigged boats and having been briefed in full about the racing and the numerous underwater hazards awaiting us below the surface, we all took to the water and headed to the race area. We were greeted by wonderful sailing conditions, 20 ish Kts and a choppy sea state.

Race one got underway cleanly partly I am sure thanks to a very generous start line, from here on in the rest of the days racing gets a bit hazy for me, as Jon & I dealt with our own numerous dramas so for full details you will need to refer to the official results to fill in the gaps.

Subsequent races got underway like clockwork. The safety crews had a pretty busy day and were ever present to ensure the safety of all who had mishaps, including the odd Helm who managed to miss their toe straps (sorry Jon!).

There was some great close racing right through the fleet and as the wind built so did the speeds and excitement levels with speeds recorded in excess of 17 kts.

It appeared that the day took its toll on a great many of the fleet with just 16 boats lining up for the final race of the regatta due to a combination of broken boats and I believe the odd damaged sailor. The conditions made it a real challenge for the very best sailors so congratulations to all those that took to the water and in particular the last 16!!!

Eventually after 3 challenging races the fleet returned ashore and enjoyed some more wonderful Portchester hospitality, afternoon tea and the opportunity to re-hydrate with something from behind the bar.

In all it was a tremendous success. 32 boats in very challenging conditions could only have been managed by a well organised race team. Our thanks to the RO and the whole waterside team.

Finally congratulations to our winners Penny & Russ Clark and to all the other prize winners. Also thanks again to Portchester Sailing Club for the wonderful Welcome, great organisation and first class hospitality. I for one cannot wait till next year.

**Andy Powell,**

Rs400 527