

## Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 17 September 2015 09:30

---



Rough weather: no problem 



The Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta almost didn't happen this year; the weather was so rough that organizers almost had to call it off two days before the event was to occur.

In fact, just before the regatta started a 68- metre Cambodian registered container ship called the Sinaran Andaman, en-route from Penang to Myanmar, lost steerage in rough conditions off Cape Promthep and hit Koh Hae (Coral Island). A helicopter from the Thai 3rd naval air command rescued 10 crew (6 Indonesians, 4 Malays) as the ship sank, spilling containers into the sea. At the same time, a barge sank on the way from Phuket to Koh Racha Yai (three of six crew were eventually rescued). The Attaya Namchoke fishing boat also capsized off Koh Racha Noi with its six crewman being rescued by the HTMS Chon Buri.

But 36 hours before the call for the first race to start, the rough weather subsided somewhat and the ninth version of the regatta got under way. Organized by the Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC), this event has turned into one of the largest gathering of multihulls in the region with three days of racing and four nights of partying. At the skippers briefing PRO Simon James noted that if the winds were consistently over 22 knots – there would be no racing, luckily that did not take place. But Simon did remind all participants that "there's no shame in wearing a life jacket", stressing that "safety is at the uttermost importance and all measures will be taken while conducting the racing and expect the skippers to do the same".



What makes this regatta unique is Phuket's changeable July winds, leading to an inconsistency in the race results. Countless memorable moments have been made in previous years where a race has taken place on a windy morning followed by a huge drop in winds throughout the afternoon, resulting in different boats staking their place race by race. This variety in weather

## Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 17 September 2015 09:30

---

conditions makes for an "all to count" or "no mistakes race" and participants can't afford to have a bad day.

With an exciting array of yachts organizers showcased what local boat manufacturers have on offer in Asian waters these days, including the Fireflies designed by Mark Pescott and built by Mark Horwood, Asia Catamarans' Stealths and the Corsairs built in Vietnam.

The Multihull Solutions Regatta is very appealing for so many reasons. Firstly, the waters off Phuket, though rough, are absolutely perfect for this type of racing; secondly, everything is happening from Ao Chalong Yacht Club. The regatta itself is packed full of surprising moments due to the unpredictable July weather making it a pretty open regatta for the taking.

The regatta is always held the weekend before the Cape Panwa Hotel Phuket Raceweek, making both events more attractive for sailors coming from abroad as they can get in seven days of great sailing spread over 10 days. The multihull-only regatta is growing in its reputation for being highly competitive as not much separates contestants on the leader board.

As Captain Marty said, "This regatta is a natural fit for Phuket, as many foreign boat designers and composite experts, have moved to Phuket and neighbouring Southeast Asian countries. As the industry growth has been phenomenal, Multihull Solutions has opened dedicated brokerages in Asia and sold some sleek racing machines, which have raised the profile of the event. Last year, the regatta also experienced strong wind, which caused some mayhem and produced exceptionally close racing, encouraging all class winners to line up again this year."

Andrew de Bruin, Asia general manager of title sponsor, Multihull Solutions summing up the race said "Three days sailing around Chalong Bay in strong breeze, with a bunch of like-minded people, gathering at the yacht club bar afterwards, to regale each other with tall tales of their exploits over a few cold beers – what more could you want?"

### Wrap Up

Despite consistently strong wind gusts and rain periods that reduced the course to within Ao Chalong Bay, the contingent of 16 multihulls rose to the challenge from 10-12 July and produced extremely competitive performances with some overall positions divided by mere seconds.

## Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 17 September 2015 09:30

---

Sixteen boats originally entered the regatta, but intense wind bouts played havoc with the field and forced four to withdraw early in the racing. Alan Carwardine's 11.8m Asia Catamarans Hurricane and Mick Coleman's Java staged a mighty battle in the Racing Multis (OMR) division over the three days with the lead consistently switching until Hurricane finally managed to gain victory in the final day's race. Kirill Stashevskiy's Stealth 13 Gokova Phuket Galeforce, Henry Kaye's Seacart 26 Sweet Chariot, Grenville Fordham's Image Asia Nina and David Liddell's new Stealth 14m WOW provided added excitement further back in the field as they tackled the weather and technical problems to enthusiastically fight for minor placings.

The Easterly breeze moderated to the low teens and everyone that could, ventured out for the final showdown. All eyes were on the battle between Alan Carwardine's Stealth 11.8m Asia Catamarans Hurricane and Mick Coleman's sister ship Java, for the Racing Multi's (OMR) title. With four wins on the board, John Newnham's Twin Sharks skippered by Brent Gribble had all but wrapped up the Firefly 850 Sports title and was eager to get on with the job. A couple Corsair Pulse 600 trimaran's continued with their exhibition event and Tatiana Bogatyzova's Lagoon 380 Star Fruit continued to rotate as the sole entrant in the Open Multihull Class.

*The tropical  
cruising grounds  
in SE Asia have  
long been a  
breeding ground  
for multihull  
sailing to flourish.*

Mick Coleman's Stealth 11 Java led for most of the first race, until Alan Carwardine's sister ship Asia Catamarans Hurricane driving deeper and faster on the downwind legs, snatched the lead and tried to open up the separation needed for a handicap victory. When the calculations were made, Coleman's Java won the race by three seconds from Hurricane. Grenville Fordham's Image Asia Nina climbed up into third place. As five races were completed the drop race was introduced if a sixth race was run. This resulted in Java and Hurricane being tied on points for the lead when Hurricane drops their retirement yesterday and the last race being the decider.

Carwardine's Asia Catamarans Hurricane nailed the start line and was never headed. They extended on every leg, to win the race and the overall title on count back. Mick Coleman's Java never finished worse than second place in six races and although they put up a brave fight, had to settle on second place. Two third places for Grenville Fordham's Image Asia Nina elevated them into third overall and after holding third place for two days, dispatched Henry Kaye's Seacart 26 Sweet Chariot down to fifth overall. As the tie was broken amongst the back markers, Kirill Stashevskiy's Stealth 13 Gokova Phuket Galeforce slotted in fourth overall, after trailing in the mid fleet.

### Capt Marty's Hi-Lites Preview

Many skippers were a bit apprehensive in joining the regatta but thirteen multihulls eventually did split into three classes - Firefly One-Design, Racing Multi's (OMR) and Open Multi's (NHC Handicap). Earlier this year, Multihull Solutions Asia scooped the rest of the world, with the launch of the very first Corsair Pulse 600 trimaran and the two crews lining up here were looking forward to serious fun on- and-off the water. Four Firefly 850 Sports catamarans will race one design and always provide a great spectacle. Last year, Neil Ayre's Advanced Racing Team won the last race and came out on top with the title. Recovering from a pre-regatta capsized, John Newnham's Twin Sharks made a remarkable comeback for second place. Breakages let the former champion Hans Rahmann's Voodoo down to third place, but are more than ever determined to regain their former glory. George Eddings Blue Nose has a year of experience of close quarter racing and expect them to make their presence felt.

The big battle comes in the Racing Multis (OMR) Class. Four of Asia Catamarans super light Stealth catamarans lead the charge. Alan Carwardine's 11.8m Hurricane, Mick Coleman's sister ship Java, Russian Kirill Stashevskiy's Stealth 13 Galeforce while David Liddell is taking the reins on the newest Stealth 14m WOW. Although they might have the legs on the others, they will have to go like a bat out of hell, to claim handicap honours. Modifications to Henry Kaye's Seacart 26 Sweet Chariot were expected to bring more speed and fresh conditions will help Grenville Fordham's heavy displacement Image Asia Nina to get into the mix and amongst the silverware.

#### Day 1

The strong wind warning dropped to a consistent 12-14 knots, with rain storms randomly sweeping across the course and gusts increasing to the high teens. Crews proceeded with caution, reefing the mainsails and as they got used to the conditions, shaking out the reef and powering around the course. Overnight Hans Rahmann's Firefly 850 Voodoo, parted company with the mooring and ended up high and dry, on the other side of Chalong Bay, to become the first casualty of the regatta. Two of the new Corsair Pulse 600 trimarans suffered structural damage, leaving only one to circulate and reducing the fleet to twelve yachts. This did not diminish the serious contenders from pushing the pedal to the metal and extracting the best performance from both the crew and boats.

#### Day 2

Consistent 18 to 20 knot Westerly breeze greeted the sailors on Day 2, causing some equipment failure before the off. Broken halyards on two Firefly cats, steering linkage failure and a snapped dagger board forced two Stealth catamarans to retire from the second race. Despite all this, it was warm and sunny until the inevitable storm passed over during the latter stage of proceedings. It is believed the uncharacteristic breeze is being sucked across the peninsula by Typhoon CHANHOM (FALCON). The resilient crews remained undeterred and instigated

## Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 17 September 2015 09:30

---

running repairs to get them through the day and stay in the running for the title.

### Day 3

The strong wind made racing for crews with iron constitutions. It has restricted the boats to the Ao Chalong Bay, but there was plenty to play with for the brave hearted. It also caused a high rate of attrition but those that came prepared and are used to driving the boat hard, reaped the benefits. It's great to see the revival in Multihull racing in Asia and long may it continue. The Ao Chalong Yacht Club must be commended for holding the event and Multihull Solutions for the generous sponsorship and support. Multihull enthusiasts must make this regatta a "must do" event and enjoy with a bunch of like-minded people and Asian hospitality.



Action was equally intense between three Firefly 850s in the Sports Division with Neil Ayre's Sports Advanced Racing Team taking on John Newnham's Twin Sharks, Hans Rahmann's Firefly 850 Voodoo and George Eddings' Blue Nose for some furious competition that pushed the boats to their limits. The gusts played havoc with the division and the vessels scrambled to overcome rigging issues and produce three days of tight racing, with Twin Sharks ultimately recording five wins in a row to take the title.

The Open Multihull Class was battered on Day One, resulting in the withdrawal of two Corsair Pulse 600 trimarans and a decision was subsequently made to use the regatta as an exhibition event for the Corsair class. Regardless, Bob Garner's Corsair SuDu Red and Russia's Tatiana Bogatyzova's Lagoon 380 Star Fruit didn't let the losses dampen their competitive spirit and waged a spectacular first race. When SuDu Red received an official Racing Multihull (OMR) rating and was bumped up into the Racing class, Bogatyzova's Star Fruit was left to go it alone in high spirits for the remainder of the regatta in the Open Multihull Class.

Over the three nights, the 120 sailors and supporters revived their spirits with amazing social events, including a free beer evening sponsored by Corsair and a sumptuous final night's buffet at the Ao Chalong Yacht Club. Despite being somewhat battered at the finish, the crews were thrilled with the entire event and all swore to return for the 2016 regatta. The crew of Twin Sharks declared "it was the best regatta we've ever sailed," while the Hurricane crew stated "it was the closest racing we've ever had with three races separated by less than five seconds."

## Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta

Written by Administrator

Thursday, 17 September 2015 09:30

---

Multihull Solutions Asia general manager Andrew de Bruin said the company was delighted with the professionalism of the event and the enthusiastic spirit demonstrated by every yacht. "It is great to be a part of the revival in multihull racing in Asia, and we look forward to continuing our sponsorship for an even bigger and better event next year," Andrew said. Plans are already underway for the 2016 Multihull Solutions Phuket Regatta, with organizers considering the addition of a "white sails-only" (non-spinnaker) division.

The regatta continues to be arguably the best value event of its kind in the southern hemisphere, with Early Bird entries costing only 3,500 Baht per boat including skipper or 1,800 Baht per crew member.

*You'll be hard  
pressed to  
find a setting  
as visually  
stunning as  
this in which  
to sail.*

### History of the ACYC

The Ao Chalong Yacht Club (ACYC) began in the early 1990s as the Ao Chalong Cruising Yacht Club (ACCYC). Established by several locals to get people together for cruising purposes, its first "home" was Pan's Lighthouse with Horst Lakits serving as its 1st commodore.

The ACYC formed several years later and offered Sunday races, giving it a more competitive nature. Venues have changed several times over the years with The Lighthouse providing premises including the area beyond the Richmond Group's property development, The Pier, formerly The Fishing Lodge. The club officially moved into new premises in 2009 in the Chalong area off east Chao Fa Road close to Wine Connection and Flints One Bakery.

Several people have served as Commodore, providing the guiding light and steering the passage since the early days from Mark Horwood to Grenville Fordham, Mick Kealy and the current president Scott Duncanson.