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Conde de Barcelona (August 21-25)

The first race on Thursday saw seven boats gather for the transitional long races of the Conde de Barcelona, sailed at Puerto Alcudia for the second year. Elsewhere you'll find the report on the big boat sailing, so we'll stay with the Flying Fifteens.

The line being set for the classics, it was more than long enough for us, but that didn't stop some overenthusiastic barging at the committee boat. The course had been set with a buoy before the first racing mark, to keep the fleet on the "proper" side of the course. For this race, it was to be left to port, with a view to keeping the fleet away from the island. *ffiel good* arrived first, assumed this was the first mark, and hooked around it to port, before heading across the bay. They had gone quite a distance before they realised it was the "safety" mark, and came back to unwind themselves. The rest of the fleet saw this, and passed to port before continuing the long beat to the windward mark, where *Stormtrooper* led. The next mark was on the opposite side of the bay, and the fleet all bore away to hear for where it was believed to be. As we approached the far side, it became apparent that it wasn't where we thought, with some boats heading down to look for it. Finally *Emeraude* – the leading classic, appeared and we all followed her course to find the buoy closer to the eastern side of the bay than expected. For several boats, this then turned into a second beat, which closed the fleet up dramatically. First round was *Stormtrooper*, then *Dragonfly*, followed by *Fuego Fatuo* and *Tro* close behind. *Fuego Fatuo* was able to use her lighter crew weight to advantage, and after a close battle passed *Dragonfly* for second place. After rounding the final mark, positions were unchanged, with *Stormtrooper* first, *Fuego Fatuo* second, then *Dragonfly*.

Day two saw winds a little lighter, although a longer course was set. This time, the first true mark was on the far side of the bay, so the "red buoy" was to be passed to starboard. A good start saw *Fuego Fatuo* approaching this in first place, but they tacked as *Dragonfly* came in on starboard, rather than ducking behind. This was a mistake, as they then continued to beat for three hundred metres before realising that they should be on the other tack, across the bay. This cost dearly, and they lost several places. Having started after us, the classics were slowly catching, with *Emeraude* again the leader. She soon started to overhaul the Flying Fifteens, giving many boats a free ride on her wake. *Stormtrooper* took most advantage of this, staying on the surf for almost five minutes, but not catching leader *ffiel good*. Rounding the mark saw a beam reach along the southern side of the bay, but no place changes. *ffiel good* took first, *Stormtrooper* second with *Dragonfly* completing the top three.

A surprise for the fleet was that this was actually counted as two races, one for the first three legs, and another for the complete course - effectively doubling the scores.

Saturday saw winds as before and the long, long (12 miles?) beat across the bay. The fleet was well matched and most were at the mark within the same minute! Planing to the finish were *Fuego Fatuo*, Scott & Andrew and Emiliano (*Tro*) in that order. Racing was truly wonderful.

Overall results:

- 1 3763 *ffiel good* (Scott Walker & Andrew Harvey)
- 2 3577 *Fuego Fatuo* (Stephen Babbage/John Walker & Francisco Gadala-Maria)
- 3 3610 *Stormtrooper* (David Miles)

All in all, a great experience for everyone, and a tremendous thrill to see some of the huge classics sailing alongside our own fleet. Thank you Alcudia!

Trofeo Australia (September 14-15)

Three races were sailed on the Saturday, all sailed close inshore around a short course using 3 buoys, giving options of windward-leeward or Olympic races. Race one was a windward-leeward race, started in a lightish north easterly. The right hand side of the course was favoured, and saw half of the fleet arrive close together. The first lap was completed quickly, and few places changed up the second beat. Results at the end of the run to the finish were first *Koonjog* (Ken Dumpleton) then *ffiel good* (Scott & Andrew) with *Stromtrooper* (David Miles having handed over the helm for this regatta to Olympic sailor Viviana Giuliano) third.

The first race having finished quickly, the committee set a longer, Olympic “sausage-triangle-sausage” course for race 2, again with a downwind finish. The windward mark was moved further out, to accommodate the wind, which had started to shift. Pin end of the line was favoured and most boats started there. After the first sausage, the wind started to back, and boats closer to the windward mark lost the breeze and the fleet closed up. First boats around tried their spinnaker, but what would normally have been a broad reach had turned into a fetch. As boats approached the gybe mark, the wind continued to head, and ended up close hauled. Once round the mark, bearing away rather than gybing, spinnakers were possible, and the race restarted. The wind stabilised, and the last two legs saw a number of close tussles and place changes. Winners were the Harris brothers, in *Flying High*, then *Stormtrooper* and *ffiel good*.

The final race of the day was to be another windward-leeward, this time with a finish to windward, closer to the club. The wind shifted dramatically during the start sequence, and it almost looked as if it would be possible to lay the windward mark on port, starting from the pin end. Nevertheless, it was necessary to tack, although the run had now become a reach. Having rounded the top mark in fifth place, *Fuego Fatuo* took a more windward course, and soon came alongside the leaders, this was shortlived, as the wind continued to surprise, both in direction and force. At one point, the entire fleet was line abreast on the way to the leeward mark. Seven boats arrived at the same time, amid much vocal review of rights to mark room. In the light of the changing winds, the committee determined to finish the race at the end of the next – windward – leg. The wind was not done with us, and shifted wildly all up the final beat, with many place changes. The outcome was a win for Michael Clough and Francois Morin in *Speedy Gonzalez*, followed by John Leaf in *Spanish Fly*, and *Koonjog* third.

The Sunday race was combined with the cruiser fleet, and counted double points. Course was starboard around, with a start near to the club, up towards the lighthouse, then across to Bon Aire, before heading west towards the beach and then back to the finish. The start was

confused, with cruisers and Flying Fifteens sharing the same line and gun. Leading boat around the first mark were Ken and Alan, followed by the Harris brothers and *Stormtrooper*.

After a close reach across the bay, when a few boats tried their spinnakers, positions at the front were unchanged. *Flying High* had experimented with their Code 0, before retiring later. The next leg allowed the fifteens to get their spinnakers going in earnest, and a battle for third ensued between Viviana in *Stormtrooper*, *ffiel good* and *Fuego Fatuo*, although positions at the end of the leg were unchanged in that order. Almost as soon as the leaders rounded the mark for the final beat, the wind started to change, without settling down in any one direction – or even strength. At one point, there were boats 50 metres apart, beating in the same direction on opposite tacks, at another an 80 degree shift would hit, tacking the boat with no human intervention – but much surprise! The five leaders all had periods when they were the only boat moving in a strong breeze, then just as suddenly dumped into a hole in the wind and stopped. All the time, the boats behind were watching, and taking a different course close up the beach, where the wind was stronger and less variable. At the finish, *Koonjog* snatched the win, with *Stormtrooper* second and *Spanish Fly* completing the top three.

Series results:

- 1 3753 *Koonjog* (Ken Dumpleton & Alan Green)
- 2 3610 *Stormtrooper* (David Miles)
- 3 3763 *ffiel good* (Scott Walker & Andrew Harvey)

Upcoming regattas:

October 4-6	Campeonato de Baleares (Pollensa)
October 19-20	IX Trofeo Club de Mar Vela Ligera (Palma)
October 20	Serie Otoño 2013 RCNPP (Pollensa)
October 26-27	Cala Gamba (Palma)