

Lancing Laser II Open Meeting

'Lancing plays hardball'

Just 3 boats made it to the start line last Sunday: the home fleet halved by crew holidays and family illness, and only one visitor (thanks Robert & James, from Bough Beech), possibly due to the weather forecast for Sunday. Whatever, it meant that the Laser IIs were in with the Fast Fleet.

Fresh(?) from their strong wind practice at the Worlds, the Croker's led the Laser IIs, but could not outrun the local Contenders and a sole RS700 in race 1's lumpy waves. The wind picked up to a solid F5 for the afternoon races. Team Foster elected not to play (buy the lad a decent wetsuit, Chris!) and Robert & James' efforts ended near the windward mark with a dis-masting following a couple of capsizes; Lancing showing its mean side. The Crokers kept up the Contender chase, and managed to stay right side up, although sailing more and more conservatively (now where did we put the spinnaker...).

Monday morning looked more promising for Race 4, but the wind kept backing and dropped to a F1-2. Team Foster won the start and disappeared impressively into the distance. The Crokers pulled back a bit on the runs, but a mobile roadblock, on the form of a local Laser 4000, ensured Team Foster remained untroubled. After lunch the sun came out and the wind increased to all of F2: all this on a Bank Holiday Monday! With a bit more pressure, the Crokers were able to fight back in the final 2 races, despite getting involved in a last race start line Contender 'love-in'.

All-in-all, a bit of an anticlimax after 24 years of Laser II racing at Lancing. No doubt club racing in Laser IIs will continue: it is a tough boat well suited to launching off a beach, but probably no more open meetings.

Sigh!