

U20 Alexa Wins Asian Yachting Grand Prix's Commodore's Cup

8th Commodore's Cup 2015

2014/15 Asian Yachting Grand Prix Event
Subic Bay, Philippines

And the show must go on...



April 7, 2015: In the wake of Super Typhoon Maysak, a reduced fleet are contesting the Cup this year, but local sailors have rallied together to keep the event alive, with three keelboat classes and three dinghy classes. This is also the 10th regatta on the Asian Yachting Grand Prix (AYGP) and a chance for Philippine and Hong Kong skippers to improve their standing in the 2014-15 AYGP Skipper and Yacht of the Year.

Being ringed by hilly terrain, Subic Bay is large enough to develop its own microclimate that cycles between local land and sea breezes. This can be very tricky and sometimes has a bearing on the overall outcome. Today there was a gusty 15 to 20 knots blowing in from the North East during the practice race.



In the Performance Cruising Class, the local boats like beating up on each other for bragging rights each year. Harry Taylor's S&S 36 *Irresistible* has won here before, but his biggest threat comes from the smaller boats, Eric Jurado's U20 *Alexa*, and, for the first time, the Philippine Navy's J24 *Louie II*, if they can perform up to their allocated handicaps.

Up, up, and away they go...

April 8, 2015: A gusty 15 to 20 knot Easterly greeted the sailors on the opening round today, which made them buckle down and make crucial sail selection decisions to suit the conditions.



The Performance Cruising Class approached the start line with caution and proceeded around the course in varying degrees of trepidation. Eric Jurado's U20 *Alexa* made quick work of the long reaching leg to the entrance to the bay and although Harry Taylor's S&S 36 *Irresistible* clawed their way back on the close hauled legs, they couldn't make up the deficit and settled on second place behind *Alexa*. Ome Carbonell's Bugo - Bugo did the best of the rest to slot into third place.

A game of snakes and ladders...

April 9, 2015: With the wind direction shifting between 50 and 110 degrees and speed varying between 5 and 20 knots, it produced big gains and losses around the course.



Crossing the start line on time and flying on the downwind legs, once again earned Eric Jurado's U20 *Alexa* the daily double in the Performance Cruising Class. Although Harry Taylor's bigger S&S 36 *Irresistible* did manage to take the lead at one stage, being a displacement boat hindered them on the downwind legs and had to settle on second place again. As the gap expanded and contracted, Ome Carbonell's Bugo - Bugo did the best of the rest to slot into third place.

Keep on, keeping on...

April 10, 2015: Day 3 and one passage race for all classes, made it imperative that the leading contenders keep the pressure on, if they expect to finish on top of the podium. Watching the spirited pre-starts and covering tactics between the dueling class leaders, has become the highlight of the day on the start boat. Defying all weather forecasts, the gusty Easterly has consistently built up each morning and lasted throughout the day, enabling the race committee to complete the races early and have crews back onshore by 15:00, to enjoy the Philippine hospitality they are famous for.



Eric Jurado's U20 *Alexa* continued on their winning ways with another bullet in the Performance Cruising Class. By the finish line, Harry Taylor's bigger S&S 36

Irresistible had closed within a little over two minutes of *Alexa* but, close behind, Ome Carbonell's Bugo - Bugo went one better to claim second place and relegate *Irresistible* down to third place on this occasion.

Victory for U20 Alexa

April 11, 2015: The gusty Easterly has been blowing all week and although a little lighter today, it did not disappoint and successfully rounded off the regatta. Two windward/leeward races for the IRC classes and another passage race for the Performance Cruising Class, was their last chance to improve their standings and decide which step on the podium to stand on. Once again the spirited pre-start maneuvering provided the entertainment on the start boat and ultimately the race result and overall placings.



Several lead changes between Harry Taylor's S & S 36 *Irresistible* and Eric Jurado's U20 *Alexa* during the race, made for an exciting finish. On the final lead in the Marina finish line, some dramatic wind shifts and a departing container ship complicated things, which allowed Jurado's *Alexa* to capitalize and secure their fourth win in a row and the Cruising Class title for the first time. By taking second place, Taylor's *Irresistible* missed the chance of winning the title for the third time. Ome

Carbonell's Bugo - Bugo was a late entry and finishing in third place is a great result and very character building for the crew.



Summary

Unfortunately, Super Typhoon Maysak played a big part in depriving several Hong Kong yachts from competing and severely compromised the regatta. But as they say in the classics, "The show must go on." The local boats came to the rescue and had a wonderful outing. Strong wind, clear sky, and flat water makes for great sailing at any regatta. The organizing committee must be commended for persisting in light of the circumstances and running an exceptional show both on and off the water to their usual high standards.

