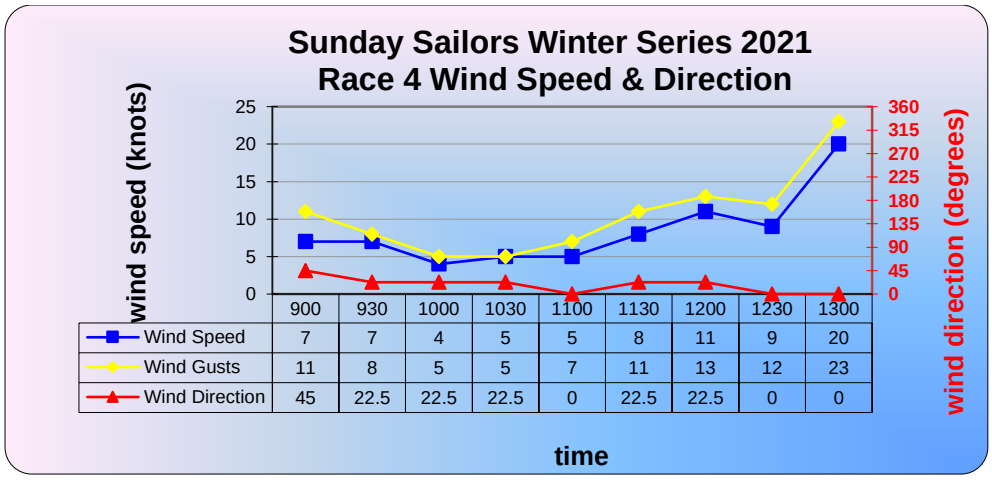
Perseverance Pays Off
Sunday Sailors Winter Series 2021 Race 4

By the time the start of the race arrived, the north easterly breeze had decreased from about 7 to 4 knots. It was barely enough to keep the 19 yacht fleet moving at a snails pace. PANACHE IV (Egils Stokans) had the best of the early breeze but it took her until about 10 past 11 to reach the second mark (SYC 6) of the course. This was about the same time the bulk of the fleet were beginning to round the first mark (SYC 1). An abandoned race seemed inevitable but 18 of the 19 yachts persevered and the breeze did strengthen. It strengthened enough to take all but one of the 19 starters around a course reduced to 4 legs – about 6.2 nautical miles.



	900	930	1000	1030	1100	1130	1200	1230	1300
Wind Speed	7	7	4	5	5	8	11	9	20
Wind Gusts	11	8	5	5	7	11	13	12	23
Wind Direction	45	22.5	22.5	22.5	0	22.5	22.5	0	0

The lack of breeze made starting difficult to judge but ARC DE TRIOMPHE (Murray/Newman/Taylor) won Start of the Day with a time of 8 seconds. PANACHE IV led the fleet from start to finish and won the race with a margin of 18 minutes 15 seconds. She was safely back in the marina by the time the second yacht crossed the line. It was ARC DE TRIOMPHE who was 2nd with BRAVEHEART (Nick Maddison) finishing 3rd. With a time of 1:47:56 it was BRAVEHEART who sailed the course in the fastest elapsed time.

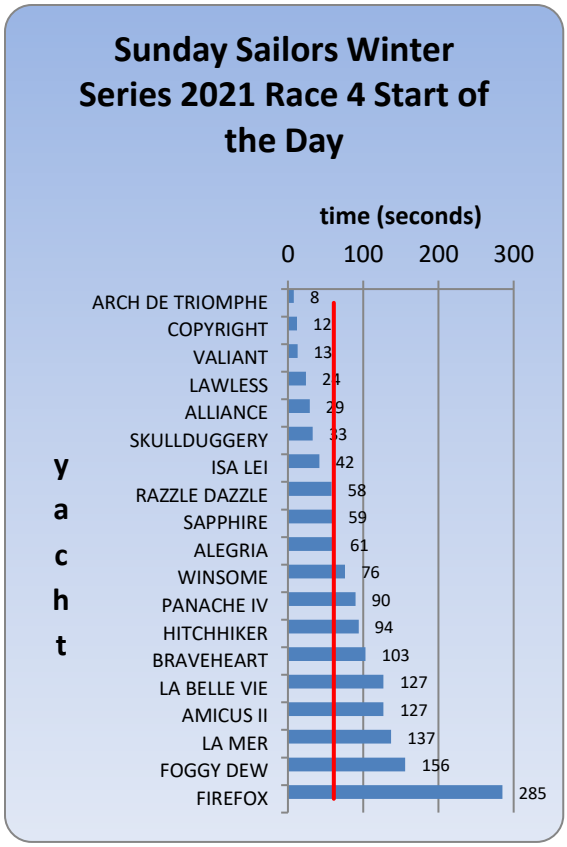
Finishing 2nd in this race was enough to take ARC DE TRIOMPHE to the top of the aggregate with COPYRIGHT (Stuart Morrison Jack) 2nd and FOGGY DEW (Robert D'Arcy) 3rd.

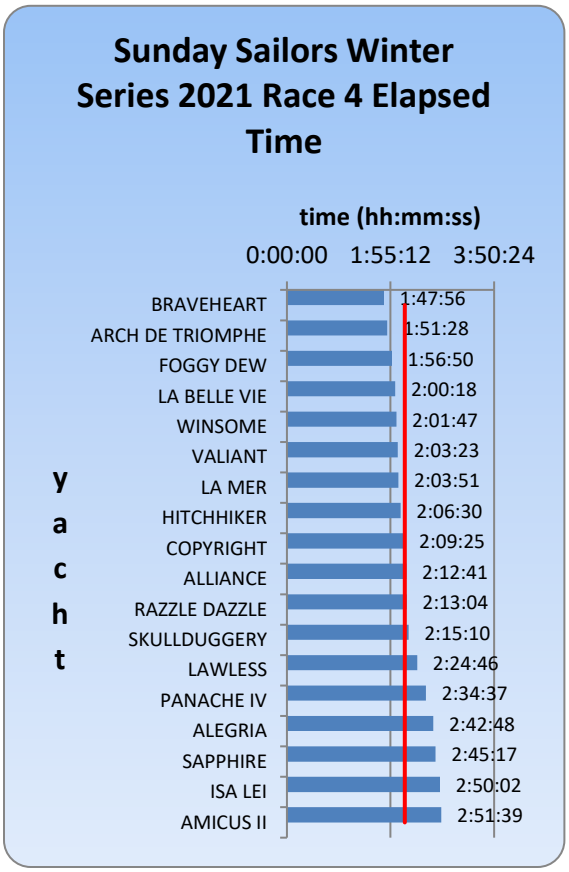
This was the first race of the series for PANACHE. She didn't make the best possible start to the race being 90 seconds late for her handicap. In the end this didn't much matter as she was able to find the breeze and led the fleet from start to finish. PANACHE sailed the course in 2:34:37 and crossed the finish line at 11:44:37 well ahead of the rest of the fleet. PANACHE is 13th in the aggregate.

Soon after crossing the start line ARC DE TRIOMPHE raised her spinnaker, kept to the east of the rhumb line and was the second yacht to round the first mark – a position she held for the rest of the race. ADC sailed a good race; won start of the day; sailed the course in the 2nd fastest elapsed time (1:51:28); and, was 2nd across the finish line at 12:03:28. She started the race from 17th place over a hour behind PANACHE but was able to reduce this gap to 18 minutes 51 seconds at the finish line. Finishing 8th and 2nd in her 2 races ADC leads the aggregate

Although she sailed in race 3 this was the first race as part of the aggregate for BRAVEHEART. She was the last yacht to start the race 103 seconds late for her 49 minute handicap. BRAVEHEART made early use of her spinnaker which gained her significant ground during the first leg of the race. She sailed the shortened course in the fastest elapsed time of 1:47:56 and crossed the finish line in 3rd place at 12:06:56 – 3 minutes 28 seconds behind ADC. BRAVEHEART is currently 6th in the aggregate.

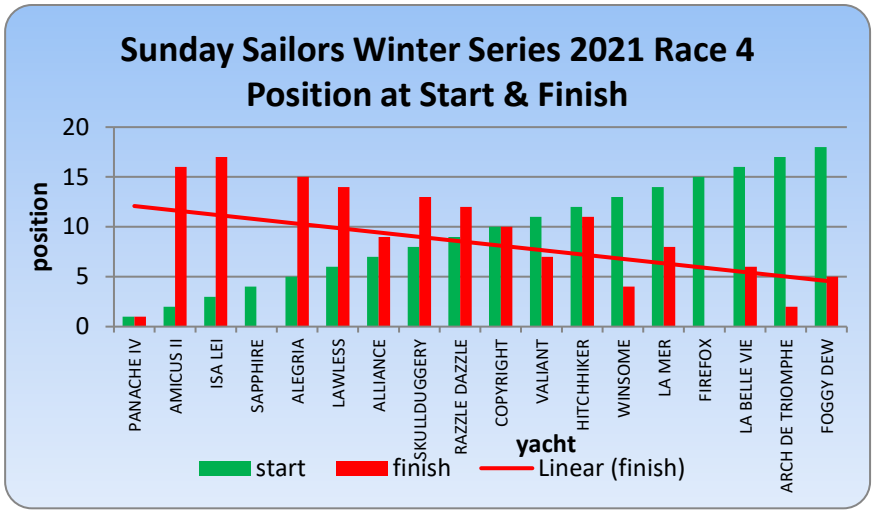
The median start time for the race was 61 seconds. The winning time of 8 seconds recorded by ARC DE TRIOMPHE was the only one in single figures.





This turned out to be a slow race with the fleet recording an average speed of about 2.97 knots. The median elapsed time for the 6.2 nautical mile course was 2:11:03 with BRAVEHEART recorded the fastest time of 1:47:56.

A shortened course usually favours the early starters but it was the late starters who performed better in this race. Of the yachts that finished in the first half of the fleet, 7 were among the last half to start.



(Left) HITCHHIKER completed her first Sunday race

(Below) COPYRIGHT made th 2nd best start of the race

(Left) The sea was flat when AMICUS II started

(Right) FIREFOX started, hoisted the spinnaker but later retired

(Left)
SKULLDUGGERY
slipped from 4th to 8th
in the aggregate

(Right) ISA LEI sailed
the course in 2:50:02

(Left) WINSOME finished 4th - 3 seconds ahead of FOGGY DEW

Neither ALEGRIA (below left)
nor SAPPHIRE (below right)
were able to beat their race 3
result

(Below left) Alliance recorded her best result in 2 races but RAZZLE DAZZLE (below right) slipped from 5th to 9th in the aggregate

LA MER, LA BELLE VIE & VALIANT head for the finish line

Race 5 of the series is scheduled for 25 July 2021

Graham Furness