

IOM Copiers Round the Island Race 2019

Jerry Colman won the Coronation Cup in emphatic fashion in his boat Sea-Pie in the Round the Island Yacht Race on Sunday.

In difficult conditions, with competitors having to beat into a strong south westerly all the way down the west coast, only one other boat completed the Manx Sailing and Cruising Club-organised race – Freya, skippered by André Midwood.

Sea-Pie - a Sigma 33 boat - got off to a near-perfect start in blustery conditions at 9am and went straight into a lead it never forsook for the rest of the day.

It made it down to the Point of Ayre in less than an hour, putting in a reef after the Point as it prepared to face the onslaught from the south west.

Speaking after the event, Colman commented: 'The boat handled it superbly – so did the crew. It was force seven in gusts, a bit less in the lulls, but overall I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was a brilliant performance by the crew - it was a bit tough round the west coast but we kept going.'

Those sentiments were echoed by one of his crew, Bob Love, who said: 'It was hard, at times a bit tedious - the boat was heeling about 30 degrees.

'We were beating from about 10am till five – seven hours of beating down the west coast! But we knew once we got round Chicken Rock it would be a sleigh ride back.'

Sea-Pie put in a gibe after Langness, the wind then shifted and filled in, and the boat had a nice reach on port tack back up the east coast to Ramsey.

Sea-Pie, which finished at 8.35pm on Sunday, also won the Bancroft Trophy, the Golden Jubilee Trophy and the Ramsey Courier Cup (for the fastest lap).

Freya, which finished at 4.36am on Monday, won the Sheila Williams Trophy, the Maddrell Trophy and the Copland Trophy for endeavour.

Only four starters began the race this time, which was a week earlier than the Tynwald Day date it has occupied for the last couple of years.

Aside from Sea-Pie and Freya, the ketch Black Swan made it as far as Jurby while the 22-foot Jemima, skippered by Laurence Clark, turned back just before the Point of Ayre. Black Swan, bought by owner Paul Redford in October, had only been out on it four times previously and was skippered by 19-year-old Timmy Chan.

'We'd never sailed together as a team, so we got it alright considering,' said Redford, who was highly complementary of Chan's handling of the boat. 'Once we got round the Point it got a bit rough. The strength was in the team's decision to call it off. We'd worked out we weren't going to get to the Calf for the tide.

'We were wet and cold and were close to sea sickness - it was too much for us. I think we did really well to get where we did. 'The objective was to have fun, stay safe, and get back. If you sail you always have a problem thrown at you,' said Sue Pennant, who was crewing on her brother's boat.

Thanks go to the MS&CC for hosting the race and also to race officials commodore Keith Poole, Andrew Dean and Ed Pearce for starting the race. Also to Neil Boyes for running the scoring and Niamh Poole for preparing both a post and pre-race dinner.

JAMES PENN