



Universal Marina

METRE CLASS UPDATE

Cowes Week got off to a great start for 'Italia', the International 12 Metre built in 1985 as an America's Cup contender, now owned by Richard Rankin and skippered by Jaffa Harrison of The Metre Shed. Day one saw Italia lead from the outset off the Royal Yacht Squadron line heading West, a position she maintained on the long reach against the tide and for the first half of the race. Following gear failure, she worked her way back into the fleet to finish a creditable 5th place in IRC1.

Gear failure was to hamper Italia's progress for the next two days' racing, as the crew tried to fix the starboard primary winch system on Sunday and were forced to retire on the Monday with more winch problems.

With all winch systems up and running for Tuesday's race, the windward leeward course, suited the ex-America's Cup yacht. She sailed to win by a margin of just over three minutes, an amazing result for a 23 year old 12 Metre in such a competitive fleet; morale soared; Italia was back on track.

Thursday provided the crew of Italia with one of the best day's sailing of the week, with a long beat against the tide in a light to moderate breeze cross tacking with her rivals. She finished fourth.

Friday's race with more breeze and a number of reaching legs allowed the crew to sail the boat to its potential, finishing with her second first place of the week, and 9th overall in class.

Following the 12 Metre's success during Cowes Week, The Metre Shed produced another victory at the Royal Solent Yacht Club annual regatta. 'Valhalla' owned by Paul Smith and helmed by his brother Rob won the 6 Metre class overall, posting two firsts and a second. 'New Sweden' recently purchased by Universal Marina Managing Director, Avia Willment and helmed by Jaffa Harrison, finished third overall.

Further events this year for 'The Metre Shed 6 Metres' include the Metrique Winter Series on the French Riviera, which will run over 6 events, starting next month and continuing to March 2009. The events will be raced in Cannes, Monaco and Antibes and will be supported with on the water coaching and video debriefs. This circuit is becoming a 'must' as part of the European training program for the 6 Metre Worlds in Newport, Rhode Island next year.

Further information on the series or for charter of an International 6 Metre for the events can be obtained from Karen on +44 (0)1489 574 272 or by email : karen@thewillmentgroup.com

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6 Metre "New Sweden" racing in Royal Solent Annual Regatta



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