



Foiling Easter Regatta, Garda.

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On the Garda circuit now, and with 21 entries, this event can only get more popular. Emmanuel Dodé reports on his personal experiences.

I arrived at Garda the weekend before and it was sunny and 18-20 deg for the whole period. However, the wind was a light southerly, and 6-10 kts with occasional 12kt gusts. The upside was that this made the water almost flat.

I am now sailing an Exploder AD3, having changed from the DNA F1x after the Worlds, and I was very focused on my technique and on my new boat. I am still discovering the new feeling of what Exploder is capable of, and I am very happy with my first sailing efforts I achieved in Garda Now, realising that upwind foiling is my next step, as well as smoother foiling downwind, but I did manage to beat Mischa in 2 of the 9 races also!

On a lake such as Garda, sometimes, you will find the pressure before the other sailors and with a good foiling technique, differences multiply. Garda is a special place, and you have to catch the good wagon to stay alive in race. Also I didn't foil upwind during the actual races (only, so far, in training), but some guys did foil upwind. Sometimes sailors will foil upwind when they are over their lay-line, so that is really usual in Garda! And then they will try to save their race and foil upwind, but is not usually a good bet, if you don't master the upwind leg properly. On my part I prefer to stay straight on lay line during this regatta.

For me now, the mastery of upwind foiling is my next key to achieve a big difference and because a lot of the top sailors can now foil early in the downwind legs. I realise I must train more before I can achieve that in a race, and then use this weapon at the right moment, when I become a master of it. But this time due to the light winds, foiling upwind during races quite was rare.

With the light winds, I try to stay focus on the first feelings I have with my new boat and to remain simple in tactics and, for example, keep in the field, and be straight on my lay-lines. For sure if there is a little more wind I want to try to foil upwind and feel what this boat is capable off. In this way, I stayed focused in the first races and on downwind foiling as I discover the boat, and secure race places.

At the end of the regatta, I was putting more focus on other points and especially on my starts. I am also trying to get a better rhythm on my new boat, as other sailors have. My main aim was to be able, at the end, to be very consistent on my race points card. I am sure that if there was a little more wind (but not too much!) the differential would have been bigger with the sailors who manage well both their upwind and downwind foiling.

I was being chased by Jacek, who is a top sailor of 'A' Class since many years experience and has a great experience of regattas and foiling, so it's a pleasure to compete with him and it helps me to improve my level to sail with top sailors.

This time, the race committee, were controlling the Moth/Waszp fleets also, but did a loop on left for us and one on right for Moths, and they managed different start for each fleet, so we race together but rarely crossed with them. I see often Waszps on water but not had much chance to compare speeds. On the last day I was foiling with 8-10kts of wind downwind near a Waszp, also on downwind leg, and I feel we go little deeper and little faster than him...

I don't feel anything new has arrived compared with the last Worlds in AUS yet. 'A' Cat people are now very focused on upwind foiling, which was a bit of a secret, until now!

Emmanuel Dodé

Full results here <http://foilingeaster.com/results/> (<http://foilingeaster.com/results/>)

Photos Ollie Hartas.



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