

Survive-Oh-Five

The 505 Worlds in San Fran is proving to be pure carnage. It's also one of the best-funded regattas of the year, with a rumored \$160,000 sponsorship deal with 5-oh junkie Hasso Plattner's software company, SAP. The event's got some pretty slick live tracking (when it works), a live Twitter feed, and some good video from our pals at Marine Media Alliance and SAP's team. Here's a report from JFunk after a windy day 1. Reports will generally be delayed a day as the funkmeister is pretty much wrecked when he gets to shore, too wrecked to write! Photos by Pete Lyons.



Day 1 of the SAP 505 Worlds and the weather has made its intentions clear, it's going to make it hurt! Whilst there was some racing going on, for many it was about survival and unfortunately, by the end of the second race of the day, less than half the fleet had survived. Included in the retirees were unbackable pre-race favourites Mike Martin and Jeff Nelson after they broke a mast capsizing in race two.

The best performance of the day went to SA'ers - Mike Holt and Carl Smit. An extremely likeable pair, these two love a breeze. They finished second to Martin and Nelson in the North Americans and sailed consistently on day 1, posting a second and a first. Clearly this is a boat speed regatta and they have the second best speed in the nuking conditions.

The other top performance was Chris Nicholson and Casey Smith. Team mates on the Puma round the World Ocean race entrant, these two have come together for this regatta in a borrowed boat and they look good! There is no doubt Chris belongs in a 5oh, it fits him like a glove and they will be consistent throughout the regatta.

For the rest, it was a day of varied results. Conditions were so tough, that if you made it around without swimming, you would almost guarantee yourself a top 10 result. Some of the spectator boats said they recorded 40kn gusts though I am not sure that is true. There is no doubt it was high 20's with gusts into the 30's. At times you would be sailing upwind with no main and only the back third of the jib working and you would have to dump even that as a gust hit.

Again the courses were long for two race days. Around 1hr25 and 1hr35 and the conditions were cold. I was dressed with everything I wear in Adelaide through the middle of winter, plus another two layers and a beanie and I was having shivering fits on the sail home, an hour of mindless torture! On the water it was carnage. Rounding the top mark, boats were laid down everywhere; it looked like the aftermath of a squall. There were boats drifting under jib, waiting for a tow, there were boats separated from their crew who were desperately trying to swim back to them, there were shredded sails everywhere, there were boats without rudders, there were boats with snapped 3mm dyform side stays, there were so many boats without masts, it was inconceivable.



On the Commonwealth Bank/Funkmobile, we made it around, we didn't make any boat handling mistakes, yet we hit the water three times. Twice when the rudder cavitated under spinnaker! We threw everything off as it let go each time, but it was irrelevant, we went straight in, the third time,

we were hammering downhill, launched over a wave and nosed into the back of the next one. We went end over end, a full blown pitch pole. Never done it before in a 5-oh never would have believed it could happen, even had a bit of mud on the tip as a result. Unbelievably, the mast was fine, so we kept going.

Unfortunately for the organisers, today looks to be windier. It is only a one race day, but it looks painful and everyone is hurting already. I won't be surprised if many of the competitors have packed up by the last few races. Wish us luck.

