

Report by Andrew Dean

14 dinghies contested the final two races of the Bourne Plaice February Series organised by the Manx Sailing and Cruising Club of Ramsey and held at Injebreck reservoir. The all-important wind conditions were very tricky, being a varying south-westerly giving strong gusts and the attendant capsize. It was raining at the start though not at the end, but dinghy racers are not aware of the difference, being distracted by more important matters. (Amazingly it was raining up north which, as we all know, never happens.)

The first course was set by Race Officer Keith Poole to start with a short beat to mark 1 causing much congestion, but it was the usual suspects near the front including Mike (D-Zero), James Walker, Simon Pressly (both Lasers) and your ancient correspondent (Laser Radial). By some sort of magic, or was it the training week in Portugal, Mike stretched out a big lead leaving the rest fighting the usual battles. After several exhausting laps Dean secured 2<sup>nd</sup>, Walker 3<sup>rd</sup> (despite a capsize he was hoping would be unnoticed), Simon Pressly (Laser) 4<sup>th</sup>, Ralph Kee (Laser) 5<sup>th</sup>, Mike Swales (D-Zero) 6<sup>th</sup>, Keith Holden (Finn) 7<sup>th</sup>, Jerry Colman (Rooster 8.1) 8<sup>th</sup> and John Dowling (Gull) 9<sup>th</sup>. Conditions favoured the experienced and our promising youngsters were having a tough day. Matthew Perry (Laser 4.7), who started the day with a reasonable chance of winning the series, suffered a broken boom in the first race; James Arnold (Radial) arrived a little late for the first race but had a great recovery in the second, and Arthur Bankes-Jones in the tender Byte C11 spent time testing the water temperature, but persevering to finish both races.

In the second race, with the same course covering most of the reservoir, the wind had increased and backed towards the south, although the forecast had suggested a veer. Pridham performed his trick again, but Walker was in closer contention to take 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dean was spotted letting go of his tiller on a tack right in front of the race office but managed to avoid capsize and take 3<sup>rd</sup>, Pressly another 4<sup>th</sup> wrestling with his radially-cut new sail, young James Arnold an excellent 5<sup>th</sup>, Kee 6<sup>th</sup>, Swales 7<sup>th</sup> despite his mast displacing itself, Holden doing a great job with the powerful Finn for 8<sup>th</sup> and Dowling another 9<sup>th</sup>.

Even though Kee had a quiet day, he had already done enough to secure the February series when two discard results were taken into account. The top 3 of Kee, Mike P and Andrew were separated by only 4 points to end an exciting, full 8-race series. The final March series starts on 28<sup>th</sup> February, of course and Easter weekend makes way for the MS&CC Regatta in Ramsey Bay.

Full results and photos can be found on the MS&CC Facebook page. Thanks to our sponsor Rob Cowell, Keith Poole for the officer of the day duties and the safety boat was manned by Dr Graham Wilson and Mrs Helen Kee, to whom enormous thanks are due.