

Report by Jerry Colman

After a couple of missed weekends due to calm conditions on the reservoir the Watling Streetworks December Series at Injebreck finished on Sunday with all completed races to count and with several boats in contention for the series so needing to put in the right results.

13 boats made it to the start line in a light to moderate Westerly (more light than moderate) which at Injebreck translates to Westerly at the boat park, South Westerly at the start and occasionally North Westerly on the other side of the start line with some gaps in between.

The Race Officer set a short course in areas where he could see some breeze and which provided at least a possibility of a beat to windward, using the southern half of the lake. This meant more laps and hence more mark roundings than usual so the quiet of the rather attractive environment up in the hills was occasionally punctured by shouts of 'Starboard!' or 'Water!' as places were traded around the marks. This is where you learn a bit about race craft.

The way to avoid getting tangled up with the bunch at marks is to be at the front and here was to be found pretty much throughout the morning the Laser Standard sailed by Phil Hardisty, recently back from some major repairs (Phil not the boat that is). His skills do not seem to have suffered much during these interludes but rather him than me. He kept the lead on the water pretty much throughout despite some supposedly faster boats on the course. Once you are ahead at Injebreck, it is often possible to draw away as the bunch slow each other down. So two wins to Phil to end the series, but that wasn't enough to make it to the podium as he had not competed in the earlier races.

The battles for the series were being fought further back in the fleet between the Laser Radials of Matt Perry (leading by a clear 7 points before Sunday) and Simon Pressley and Ralph Kee's Laser Standard, equal, with the Tera Pros of Teddy Dunn and Peter Cope, Mike Pridham's Laser Radial, the D Zero of Andrew Dean and Jerry Colman's Finn hoping for half decent results to finish off.

Jim Whitelegg's dangerous Gull was accompanied by Donald Edwards' Laser Standard, Archie Dunn (Tera Sport) and Mike Swales (D Zero) for just these last 2 races (as well as Phil of course) but this bodes well for next month's series, we hope.

The first race started with a bit of a lull that caught some out short of the line including Matt who never managed to get out to the front to defend his position. Phil and Andrew Dean (in the Devoti Zero with blue rinse rig) however scooted off on that little extra that the boats in front are given in light airs and the rest of us could not quite catch up. Phil finished in front of the lot of us including those who had done a lap less. Andrew was second and Simon third but Matt languished back in 11th on handicap which did more than enough damage to his chances for the series, putting Simon in front for the moment. Ralph Kee's 8th, 2 seconds in front of the mighty Finn was not a little unusual for him although I understand his race was interrupted by marker buoys jumping out in front of him requiring 360 degree turns when he hit them. The Karma obtained by doing your turns usually propels you to the front but not this time. Perhaps it was just enough to hold your correspondent off.

The second race saw Simon slip to 4th but Matt and Ralph could only manage 5th and 6th so the series was Simon's. Mike Pridham and Teddy Dunn in the Tera Pro worked the shifts well to take 2nd and 3rd while Peter Cope (Tera Pro) and Donald Edwards (Laser Standard) eased Colman and Dean down the

points slide with Archie Dunn (Tera Sport) Jim Whitelegg (Gull) and Mike Swales (back after a sojourn under doctor's orders) in the other D Zero completing the fleet.

Thanks to the patrol boat crew, Emily Kee and Tim Cope, the RO Keith Poole and all the December competitors. We look forward to a strong fleet starting the January series next weekend. Full results and photos on the MS&CC website and FB.