

A gale warning was in force for the north Irish Sea and indeed a gust at Ronaldsway of 35 knots was recorded at 11am, well in to gale territory. Clearly the forecast discouraged attendance for this weeks Watling Streetworks Winter Series, with just 6 boats launching, and one of them deciding to beach before the start. That left two D Zeroes, Stu Brew's with the ambitiously large (8.1 sq mtr) grey sail rather than smaller 6.9 blue sail of your correspondent, the two full-rig Lasers of Donald Edward and Ralph Kee and the worryingly competent young Teddy Dunn in his RS Tera Pro. Jerry Colman decided not to launch his Finn (over 10 sq mtr sail), so we missed that exciting spectacle. Southerly winds at Injebreck are attenuated by the uphill valley, but there were many severe gusts to catch even the alert. It is believed that it rained but such was the concentration required that no sailor noticed.

The starts were wary affairs with even 5 boats together feeling intimidated in the conditions. The course was a well-set 2-5-6 but there were beefy gusts at the first mark where Andrew got the capsizing started with three before even rounding the mark. He managed to restrict falling over to just one in the second race but even Donald admitted to three. This did not seem to affect Donald's result since he won the first race by just 19 seconds on corrected time from Teddy in second. Ralph completed the podium followed by Andrew and Stu.

The wind seemed to ease a little for the second race but that didn't prevent Andrew getting pinned beyond mark 5 unable to gybe when he wanted to. He discovered a submerged rock but very little damage done. Teddy had an even better result getting the better of Donald by 35 seconds. The other positions were as the first race.

So with one weekend left Mike Pridham still leads the series from Andrew, Donald, Keith Holden, Ralph and Simon Pressly. Andrew will be on grandpa duties next week so all-change is expected and it's all to sail for.

Manx Sailing & Cruising Club would like to pass on their thanks to Doug Watling, Keith Poole, Commodore, for Race Officer duty, and the patrol boat crew of Dr May Shiu Chan, Andy Dunn and Dr Glenn (you can't have too many doctors in attendance) for their highly appreciated assistance. Full results and photos will be found on MS&CC's Facebook page.