

The first round of the February dinghy racing for the Watling Streetworks series nearly got off to a very slow start this Sunday morning on West Baldwin reservoir. With the wind in a westerly direction the Baldwin valley was completely sheltered, not a breath rippled the water and it was just above freezing. Having lost the last two weeks of the January series to either too much or no wind it didn't look promising.

It took the efforts of the youngest competitor, Peter Cope, winner of last month's series to persuade all the other adult competitors that what they needed was more racing where juniors win! As it was the fleet of eight crews took to the water after a slight delay allowing the win to 'fill in', blowing up the valley.

For Race one the Race Officer set a course avoiding the windless area behind the dam wall and by the first mark Mike Pridham (Radial) had pulled out a slight lead which increased hugely by the second mark. At the third mark he came to a standstill and was gathered up by the rest of the fleet including junior, Peter Cope and the ever youthful Jim Whitelegg. By the finish at the end of lap two Keith Holden (Olympic Finn) had pulled ahead of Prid to finish first on the water. After correction Prid was first with Peter only eight seconds back, Jim in third and Keith joint fourth with Andrew Dean (D-Zero).

The wind piped up a bit for Race two which allowed for some proper 'sitting out' and this time Keith Holden, with the bit between his teeth, lead from start to finish over the three laps of the same course. Although after correction and despite being one and a half minutes ahead of Pridham on the water he dropped to third behind Mike with, guess who, Peter Cope in first place by more than a minute.

Manx Sailing & Cruising Club would like to thank our sponsor Doug Watling, Race Office Keith Poole and patrol boat crew of Helen & Ralph Kee.