

The final round of the Watling Streetworks 2018/2019 Winter Dinghy Series took place on Sunday morning at West Baldwin Reservoir. A good forecast of bright sun and spring-like temperatures brought out a good fleet of 12 crews. The wind, however, was from the East and with the Baldwin valley running north/south was just a bit confused, down the valley at the top, up the valley in the bottom, round in circles in between and don't forget those vicious calms too!

The Race Officer, because of the wind direction set a course that ran up the lake, start mark to starboard, other marks the more usual port. This caused a bit of a pile up at the first mark when some of the front runners, more used to following (no names) had trouble, firstly in identifying which mark and secondly on which side to pass it!

With excellent eyesight (and he drew the map) Ralph Kee (Laser) was first out of the mess followed by Dave Batchelor (Aero 7). The pair pulled out a good lead over the rest of the fleet, frequently changing places until a decisive gust (maybe too strong a word for it) pushed Kee ahead by a good margin to finish far enough in front to win after correction.

As ever it's wise never to forget the juniors, although finishing a lap sooner, using 'average lap timing' and correction they are, like Peter Cope and Nicholas Ellis, never far off the pace, second and third in fact.

Going into the final race the series was between Ralph and junior Peter, over the same course and with everyone knowing the way, just about every competitor had a go at the lead on the water. In the end it was Simon Pressly (Radial) who caught the 'lucky gust' to finish first on the water assisted by Kee and Batch being caught in an 'unlucky calm' near the finish line!

After correction, Simon in first with juniors, Peter and Nicholas (Tera Pro) second and third with Kee hanging on for fourth. The March Series was won by junior Peter Cope by one point from Ralph in second and Simon third, for full results and photos go to the Manx Sailing & Cruising Club website or Facebook page.

MS&CC would like to thank Doug Watling of Watling Streetworks for sponsoring the 2018/2019 Winter Dinghy Series, Race Officer Keith Poole for officiating and James Bishop and Tim Cope for the patrol boat.

Sailing now moves to Ramsey Bay on Sunday 14 April for a 'shakedown' starting at 10.30am ahead of the IOM Copiers Easter Regatta on Saturday 20 April which has a start time of 11am. The prize-giving for the Winter Series will be held at the MS&CC Clubhouse after the Easter Regatta.