

Like many sporting events Island-wide storms Ciara and Dennis caused the cancellation of half of the February Watling Streetworks Dinghy Series. True, sailing requires wind but not that much and on the upside the continuous rain doesn't seem to have made the pitch any wetter!

Going into the final two races of the February series the first and second place sailors were only separated by one point.

With the wind blowing from the north west over the mountain and across the Baldwin valley led to some interesting gusts, changes in direction and not forgetting Injebreck's famous 'holes'.

Given the conditions the Race Officer (Keith Poole) set a course up and down the lake, knowing that there would probably, in each leg be a reach across the wind, a run with the wind and a beat into the wind.

In Race one it was Ralph Kee (Laser) who, by starting by the bank nipped round the first mark in the lead only to be overtaken by the faster Finn of Jerry Colman and Aero of Dave Batchelor. It was Jerry who pulled well ahead of the fleet who were snapping at the heels of Batch and Ralph. At the final mark, with Jerry completely becalmed, the rest of the fleet caught up, jockeying for positions - so to speak - in no wind! Then a sudden and quick strong gust hit the fleet from the opposite direction causing chaos. This time it was Ralph who found himself initially in the wrong place, but at the right time to take advantage of the gust and clear the fleet to finish first on the water, closely followed by junior, Peter Cope. After correction the win went to Peter with fellow junior Teddy Dunn in second and Ralph, first adult, in third.

In the interval between the races the breeze increased slightly and in his own 'private' gust Dave Batch was seen to attempt a forward roll in his Aero, not bad, losing marks of course for a messy landing!

To avoid some of the worst Injebreck holes the Race Officer set a shorter course, this time though, it was Dave Batch who made the most of the running, chased by Ralph, the pair built up a considerable lead in what was at times fantastic planing conditions. Batch was first over the line with Ralph in second by only twenty seconds, the win on correction went to Ralph. Batch slipping to third behind junior Peter Cope.

This result left Peter and Ralph on the same points and same number of wins in the February series, the count back went to second places, leaving Peter the winner of the Shipyard Trophy.

MS&CC would like to thank Doug Watling of Watling Streetworks for his continued sponsorship, Race Officer Keith Poole and patrol boat crew of Peter Hoosen-Owen and Andy Dunn.