

Strange times, a strong easterly wind blowing across the Island. Despite this, within the shelter of the West Baldwin Valley the last races of the Watling Streetworks Winter Series took place on Sunday morning.

Although much moderated, the wind gave the usual mix of gusts, shifts and deadly calms, just from a slightly different direction.

For Race one, Race Officer, Brian Quayle set an 'around the lake' course. Leading the fleet of nine into the first mark was the Laser of Ralph Kee, who finding a calm spot was quickly overtaken by the Aero 7 of Dave Batchelor and worse, the Aero 5 of junior Peter Cope. By the end of the first lap Batch had pulled ahead of the following pair, who in turn had put significant room between them on the following fleet.

After three laps Batch was a full two minutes ahead on the water from next finisher Peter, enough to give him first place, even after correction. First Dave, second Peter and third Ralph.

The following pack, some five minutes on the water and more than likely hit by a vicious calm was led home by Andrew Dean in fourth place.

Race two, just to liven things up the race officer set a course, much the same, but with zig zags down wind up the lake. Again quick off the start line was Ralph keeping the lead for the first lap before being overtaken by Dave Batch. This race however, he wasn't able to pull clear and an incident, probably a calm at the last mark allowed Ralph to catch up, leading to a futile 'tacking duel' just to keep line honours by three seconds.

Winner of the final race was Ralph by nearly a minute from Dave Batch, only five seconds ahead of junior, Peter in third place after correction. Even though it has been a fairly windy month all four Sundays have been raced allowing competitors to drop their worst pair of results.

Overall winner, dropping a third and second was Peter Cope, Dave Batchelor dropping a sixth place finished in second one point ahead of Ralph who dropped a fourth.

Many thanks from Manx Sailing & Cruising Club our sponsor Doug Watling, Race Officer Brian Quayle and patrol boat crew Helen Kee and Tim Cope and all other volunteers who've helped out throughout the winter.

These are indeed strange times and as such all MS&CC racing, training and socials have been cancelled for the foreseeable future, stay safe cheers Ralph.