

As seems to be the norm this winter blustery conditions again prevailed for the latest round of the Watling Streetworks dinghy series. As usual in the relative shelter of the Baldwin Valley the conditions were gusty, shifty including a few calms just to make it interesting.

A good fleet of thirteen launched with twelve making it to the start. It seems that gentleman Jim Whitelegg in the 'mighty' Gull was finding it a little too frantic and he returned to the bank to enjoy his pipe.

The wind and gusts were mostly up the valley so the Race Officer was able to set a course using the whole length of lake that, unusually, had a windward leg, a reach and a downwind leg.

First off the start was Jerry Colman (Finn) who was closely followed by Ralph Kee (Laser) around the first mark, who managed to overtake on the downwind leg in the faster planing Laser. This lead was only temporary, being overtaken eventually by an ever faster planing Aero of Simon Pressly. At the finish Simon led Ralph over the line by 10 seconds, however, it was third on the water, junior, Peter Cope who took the win on correction after a messy start that wasn't his fault! Second was Ralph and third for Simon, his best place in his new Aero.

Race two, over the same course was led on the water, almost from the first mark by Dave Batchelor proving that his poor finish in Race one was weed on his centreboard and not just a rubbish start!

In the slightly spicier conditions the Aero's of Peter and Simon kept ahead of the Laser of Ralph until the final leg when Ralph was able to reverse his position with Simon to finish ahead on the water.

Although first on the water Batch dropped to second on correction behind Peter in first with Ralph third.

Other juniors doing well were Teddy Dunn, fourth in Race one and Roo Hyett, in her tiny Tera, competing on Injebreck for her first winter, ninth in Race one.

Finally, this will read much like an obituary, one of our 'gentleman sailors', Keith Holden (Finn) got his feet wet, something not witnessed for some 20 years on Baldwin reservoir. Not if but when!

Manx Sailing & Cruising Club would once again like to thank our sponsor Doug Watling of Watling Streetworks, Race Officer Keith Poole and patrol boat crew of Dr May Shiu Chan and Andy Dunn. Pictures and full results on Facebook.