

While Storm Bella raged across the British Isles dinghy racing took place in the relative calm of the West Baldwin valley on Sunday morning. This is the final racing of the 2020 season though the Watling Streetworks Winter Series of which this is part, will continue on to March 2021.

Conditions were similar to the Frostbite Regatta on Boxing Day, a bit gusty up the lake with the usual random calms but with a bit of added rain and hail just to top the year off.

A course was set diagonally along the lake to give the best approximation of a windward/leeward course requiring short tacks across and long ones down the lake, all options worked, but not every time, classic Injebreck.

A very competitive fleet of 10 started, Peter Cope (Aero 7) was, after the short leg to the first mark, already in the lead and using the clear air, left the rest of the fleet struggling in each others 'dirty air'. Peter increased his lead over fellow junior Teddy Dunn (Aero 5), although finishing one and a half minutes ahead of Teddy the result was much closer after correction - only seven seconds. Jerry Colman (Finn) was the next finisher but dropped to seventh on correction.

A little further back in the fleet the two Lasers of James Allinson and Ralph Kee, even after the latter had 'tested the water' were on for a very close finish until Ralph hiking hard in a gust, that just stopped about two boat lengths from the line had to jump out to avoid a capsize (the water is still cold). This allowed both James and Andrew Dean through, for his efforts third place to James on correction.

Race 2, over the same course was again completely dominated by juniors. Peter in this race pulling two minutes ahead of Teddy who was himself more than thirty seconds ahead of Jerry Colman. After correction Peter was first by thirty seconds ahead of Teddy, Jerry dropping to eighth. As in the first race a Laser scrap was being fought, a three way one this time without any mishaps, on the last full windward leg, the length of the lake Ralph rounded the mark first. On the downwind leg the smaller radial rig of Simon Pressly got 'left behind'. By the last mark James had about a boat length lead when Dave Batchelor squeezed him wide at the mark allowing Ralph to finish five seconds ahead. However, it was Simon in the radial Laser who took third after correction with Ralph sixth and James seventh. Junior Nikolas Ellis had a good race to finish ten seconds ahead of Ralph in fifth.

Many thanks to our sponsor Doug Watling, race officer Keith Poole and patrol boat crew of James Nicholls, Helen Kee and Andy Dunn. For full results and pictures please visit our website and Facebook page.

Happy New Year from all at Manx Sailing & Cruising Club