

Write-up by Keith Poole

There were a good number of sailors in attendance ready for races Five and Six of the January Series for the 'Shipyard Trophy', part of the Watling Streetworks Dinghy series on West Baldwin reservoir.

Enthusiasm was initially high but soon the dark patches on the water showing where the gusts were grew more frequent, more varied in direction and noticeably heavier in strength, this was enough for half the fleet to be put back to bed so only seven ventured out to the start.

With the wind rolling down the valley from the North a non-standard starboard course was set, a short beat into the wind to the first mark, a quick reach to the next, a tricky run downwind before the long haul back into the wind. Peter Cope (Aero 7) pulled off a brave port start and was able to cross the fleet and put his stamp on this race from the outset. He was able to hold and extend his lead to the end despite at least one capsize. Normally when you take a dip it enables the rest to catch up but everyone else took to the water at some stage so he went unchallenged.

Simon Pressly secured second in his Laser Radial with Ralph Kee (Laser Standard) third. David Batchelor must have wondered about the merits of using the large '9' rig on his Aero, it should be considerably faster, but only the right way up!

For the second race the wind increased, it was by now gusting 20 plus knots, conditions in which racing would not normally take place. However, the sailors were already wet and no-one headed for the boat park.

This time Peter Cope had a terrible start but somehow clawed his way back to the front before the end of lap one, but was then overtaken briefly by Ralph losing it all and more when his rudder lost its grip in a vicious gust. Peter got away and stayed there although it wasn't quite far enough to beat Simon Pressly on handicap, Ralph Kee once again placed third.

The overall leader board was shaken up by this week's racing, Teddy Dunn's 5th in race 1 and retirement from race 2 results in him dropping from 1st to 3rd in the standings, with Peter Cope now 1st and Simon Pressly 2nd. However, next week discards come into effect and Teddy will be able to dismiss this week's results which will put him back into contention, it's going to be close.

Many thanks to Watling Streetworks for sponsoring the series, Keith Poole for race officer and this write-up and also Helen Kee and Graham Wilson for patrol boat duties, for full results go to the MS&CC website.