

Another Sunday morning in the Baldwin Valley that missed the winter gales that the rest of the Island were experiencing. I'd like to say the sun was shining too for the first of the February Watling Streetworks Series of dinghy racing but it did at least stop raining for a great fleet of 15 boats.

The wind blowing mostly up the valley allowed the Race Officer to set a square course, windward/leeward and two reaching legs at each end of the lake. In the relative shelter of the valley there is no substitute for a large sail. Jerry Colman (Olympic Finn) followed by Andrew Dean (Grey D-Zero) comfortably lead the fleet, at times by quite some margin.

However, the penultimate leg a chasing group containing Radial ICLA 6 Simon Pressly and Dave Batchelor and Junior, Thomas Watterson (Aero 5) made good use of a good downwind gust.

Jerry and Andrew finished three seconds apart but the chasing group were close enough to leap frog them after handicaps came into play. So taking the win was Simon Pressly, second Thomas, Dave third and Jerry fourth.

Your correspondent, after making a characteristic poor start found himself at the first mark with the three Teras but managed to improve and take fifth place.

Race two was over the same course and maybe the wind had built slightly, certainly fewer deadly lulls giving crews a little more confidence in hiking out.

Again it was Jerry and Andrew in front followed by James Walker (Streaker) with Ralph Kee a little further back. In the clear air at the front of the fleet, this group pulled ahead of the following group of Radial's and Aero 5's giving each other dirty air and squabbling over tight mark roundings.

Your correspondent is not too sure of the events from the second to last mark but managed to finish second on the water behind Jerry. After correction Ralph was first by one second (a win is a win!) from James Walker and Simon Pressly third.

Manx Sailing & Cruising Club would like to thank Doug Watling for his continued support, Keith Poole for Race Officer and May Shiu Chan and Ed Pearce for patrol boat. Full results can be found on the club website.