

As with the previous last two weekends the wind was from the north on Sunday, blowing down the West Baldwin valley, the difference being, nature turned up the volume.

For this round of the Watling Streetworks Winter Series there were enough competitors shoreside to have fleets of equal numbers from the two previous weeks. A few particularly strong gusts made their way down the reservoir which promptly reduced the count to nine making it onto the water.

I could have named those who 'Chickened Out' but that would be unfair because sometimes being 'Older and Wiser' is the way to go. Things escalated, the wind continued to be on the rather strong side and borderline but we gave it a go.

Just before the start sequence Tullie Hyett in her Tera Pro experienced a mast breakage (many of us have been there and it's a bit of a 'right of passage') holding the start whilst she was safely escorted to the slip. During this drama George Pearce in his Tera Sport quite correctly decided to call it a day and had a few issues on his way back to the slipway. This delayed the start a little further until the patrol boat became available (well done to Ralph Kee and crew).

In the meantime some veterans were enjoying themselves a little too much, reaching up and down at high speed, experiencing an issue or two, so this meant Andrew Dean and Bob Love were off the roster.

We were then down to five, there were some thoughts of cancelling, but for the most part it wasn't too bad, the gusts were the issue but everyone out there was capable so off we went.

Junior Thomas Watterson in his RS Aero 5 blistered round the course despite a couple of dips to take the win with the evergreen David Batchelor (ILCA 6) second and junior Will Osborn (RS Aero 5) placed third, on the water and after correction.

With gusts increasing up to 24kts, though this was measured in the relative shelter of the bank, it was definitely more in the middle of the lake, Race 2 was cancelled.

Special mention to Lettie Hyett who completed the course despite the most capsizes I've seen by a competitor without giving up (not necessarily recommended by the way). Conclusion of this series next week and with discards kicking in it could be interesting.

Many thanks to Doug at Watling Streetworks for supporting the winter series, Race Officer Keith Poole and patrol boat, Ralph Kee and crew. Check out FB for more pictures of the carnage!

Don't forget that we return home to Ramsey Bay after the final raecs next weekend with the first regatta on the sea being the IOM Copiers Easter Regatta on Saturday 19th, three Races, no discards, job done, see you there.