

Write-up by Jerry Colman

A fresh Westerly, seasoned with a little cool rain greeted the slightly reduced fleet at Injebreck on Sunday morning for the second of the December Series. Storm Darragh had seen to the previous weekend's proceedings with some outrageous gusts, enough to uproot the patrol boat (Hilary) and dump her upside down at the top of the spillway, as well as sadly damaging some of the dinghies.

Sterling work by Manx Utilities saved some of the dinghies from further damage and helped us recover Hilary with their JCB so many thanks to the team who had plenty on their plates at the time.

Hilary's outboard had ingested a bit of the reservoir so had a clean out of the cylinders back home in Ramsey and an oil change thanks to Ralph Kee. On 'Hilary's return to Injebreck on Sunday morning (with some added character) she started second pull, as ever, so those of us with operational dinghies were able to go sailing.

Your correspondent in the Finn had one of his better starts and led the fleet away on a tight reach down the lake to mark 2 then back up again to 4 and 5 then back to the start line. Three laps holding the lead on the water was tense enough but building enough of a lead to get the handicap time back was too much. After correction Tom Watterson in the RS Aero 5 took the race by 2 seconds from Dave Batchelor and by a further 5 seconds from Lettie Hyett both in Laser Radials (now known as ILCA 6s)

Simon Pressly in his ILCA 6 snuck in 15 seconds ahead for 4th so a mid-fleet finish for the Finn but again with the rest of the fleet just a few more seconds behind on corrected time. Very close racing!

The fleet was a little too keen at the start of the second race with an indeterminate but large number of boats over the line at the gun resulting in a general recall and another go at the start. Seasoned sailors blamed a strong tidal flow across the line – it was a full moon after all.

Tom took the second start at speed and held the lead throughout the 4 laps in slightly stronger, gustier and shiftier breeze - enough to cause a few capsizes but Hilary's services were not required to assist. The wind shifted so as to make the close reach down the lake a bit more of a beat in places making it important to grab those yards to windward when they were made available and not easing sheets and heading down towards the mark too soon.

Lettie, Tullie Hyett and Jake Walker (in the Teras) suffered capsizes which set them back in this race while Jason Hyett stayed upright and nudged the Finn into 5th again by 2 seconds with Watterson Batchelor and Pressly on the podium. Andrew Dean, Devoti D-Zero, was 1 second behind the Finn and Will Osborne (RS Aero 5) another 15 seconds back. Incredibly close racing and a lot of fun so thanks to the sponsors Watling Streetworks, patrol boat crew Ralph Kee and James Walker and Race Officer Keith Poole.

Next race is Sunday 22nd at 1100 hrs and then it's the famous MS&CC Frostbite Regatta on Boxing Day morning starting from at 1100 but finishing for all boats at 1200. Sailors, see you there!