

Write-up by Jerry Colman

Sunday morning's races were started in a cold, grey and gusty Nor'Easterly. A fine fleet of 16 boats shepherded by Peter Hoosen-Owen and Kat Osbourn in our patrol boat 'Hilary' braved the conditions and if they worked hard enough were suitably rewarded. Anyone who completed the course deserves props for guts and skills and for some for repeated recoveries from multiple capsizes of all modes.

When your correspondent left Ramsey at around 0830 to prepare for the race the surf was roaring in Ramsey Bay so any dinghy sailing seemed a remote prospect. However, it's never what you expect at Injebreck so on arrival at the dinghy park at around 0900 it looked manageable, if cold although with some quite strong gusts. Hoisting the sails resulted in some increasingly loud sail flapping in the gusts and for some of us a concern that it could be a bit much. But once the sails are up you gotta go and so it was.

Your correspondent's single-handed Finn dinghy has a rather large sail area as does the two-handed Enterprise sailed by the Whitelegg brothers Joe and Eric. Both of us took a surprise gust and some heavy water before the start of the first race but the Enterprise was capsized and swamped and had to retire. Whereas the Finn was lucky to recover just in time and could then dispose of the flooding with the self-bailers which were helped by another gust this time handled rather better with the Finn planing away like a speedboat.

This time should have been spent assessing which end of the start line was favoured. Most started from the slightly upwind port end but your correspondent got a good view of the fleet passing across the bow from the starboard end and it was an impressive sight watching them playing the gusts and shifts up the first beat. First round looked like Dave Batchelor in the Laser Radial, closely followed by Ralph Kee in the full rig Laser which was to finish the race in the lead but not quite far enough in front to beat Batch who came in first on handicap with Kee second and Will Osbourn in the RS Aero 5 in a well won 3rd place completing the podium. The lightweight Aeros took some serious controlling upwind and down and tend to float away rather fast if you get spat out. In the Finn it was more a question of having the strength to pull in the mainsheet while hanging out far enough to hold the huge rig upright which was not effectively achieved and won't be until I get back onto the circuit training.

The second race took place in broadly similar conditions with the exception of the late appearance of the sun which was sadly unable to warm us up much but was nice to see anyway. This time James Walker in the Streaker showed us all how to tack on the shifts and hunt the gusts going downwind (there were flat spots with almost no wind where your correspondent could often be found). Tom Watterson (Aero 5) and Batch completed the podium to hoist themselves up the overall series ranking while correspondent slipped back a bit but still holds a top 10 position (well, sounds good).

The younger sailors (Tullie Hyett, George Pearce and Jake Walker) in their Tera's showed great skill and determination, completing both races, pushing as hard as they could and recovering from upsets under the watchful eyes of the patrol boat crew.

Many thanks to the patrol boat crew and to Keith Poole and of course to our sponsor Doug Watling of Watling Streetworks. See y'all next week for possibly similar weather.

Full results on the club website and some pictures on the Facebook page.

Jerry Colman