

Shearwater Comet Open 9th April 2016

Nine visitors joined two home boats for the Shearwater Open. As the current Commodore I welcomed the guests and confidently said the westerly wind we were experiencing was a good wind direction for Shearwater but the lake was always a challenging one. What I didn't expect was that four seasons would visit us during the day.

Nic Cross the Race Officer set a course with five marks enabling all points of sailing to be experienced.

Race one a fluctuating breeze with the odd shower saw Henry Jaggers C800 off to a good start with Chris Hatton C48 chasing him who eventually overtook him on the second lap, and was to hold this position to the finish. Henry held off the challenge of Eddie Pope C804 who in turn kept in front of Chris Robertson C867. John Sturgeon sailing C400X came in fifth.

Race two saw Eddie get off to a good start in a dying breeze. As the race progressed the wind died almost completely. Being in the right place at the right time saw little zephyrs' give some boats an advantage while others languished. Chris Hatton chased Eddie all the way to the line. Both sailors were excellent light wind sailors. John Coppenhall C532 made up four places on the last lap and came in third ahead of Henry Jaggers and Chris Robertson. With only three laps sailed it was in doubt whether a third race should be started but it was agreed to try.

Race three started again in a variable wind. The reason for the extreme lull in the wind in race two became apparent as squall after squall hit the race. Torrential rain; sleet and hail greeted the helms and a lively 40 minutes has had by all. Chris Hatton went into the lead followed by Henry and Ben Palmer C597. As the weather churned the lake up so the positions changed. The heavy weather specialists Ben Palmer and Chris Robertson came to the fore. Ben taking first place being chased by Chris Robertson and then Chris Hatton came in third with Eddie coming in fourth.

An excellent tea was followed by the prize giving. My thanks go to the Race Committee and the Safety crew, and to the galley for all their excellent work.

Clive Chapman

Commodore Shearwater SC