

Comet Association Championships

Twenty visitors joined eight local members to sail the Nobel Marine Comet Association Championships at Attenborough SC.

The day was sunny with light winds but with no change forecast. The first race got away with little delay but a wind shift just prior to the start resulted in a mass of boats on starboard at the pin end of the line which saw some boats bailing out at the last minute to avoid collisions. Chris Hatton soon got away from the fleet and stayed there throughout the race. Chris Robinson and Eddie Pope kept 2nd and 3rd place positions from the end of the first beat to the finish.

After lunch, the wind had not improved and was described by someone as “settled to be variable”. The fleet got away to a clean start and by the end of lap one had spread out along the lake. Chris Hatton gained a lead and stayed there. Meanwhile, Eddie Pope was running in second place and Bob Dodds came through the gate in third place. The race was shortened to just 2 laps after almost an hour of sailing. The first three positions at the end of lap one remained unchanged at the finish.

Race three was held back to back which meant quite a long wait for the front runners before the start which again got away cleanly. The wind continued to promise an increase and change direction but then dashed all hopes by fading again. At the end of lap one; we had a new face in the lead - John Coppenhall followed by Eddie Pope and Nigel Austin. By the end of lap two, Eddie Pope found a way through to lead from John Coppenhall whilst Bob Dodds had come through from fifth to third. These positions were maintained to the end of lap 3 as the race ended.

Sunday dawned fine and clear but again the wind was light and variable. The OOD tried to get the fleet away at the allotted time but postponed the start to change the start line and the course. The variable wind still resulted in a biased start when the gun sounded but it was another clean start and there were a lot of tacks put in before the first mark. Eddie Pope came through the gate at the end of lap one in the lead followed by Chris Hatton and Nigel Austin. The light winds resulted in a very drawn out fleet along the length of the lake. The race was finished after just two laps with Eddie Pope and Chris Hatton holding onto their positions. Nigel however dropped a place whilst Bob Dodds managed to gain two places to finish in third.

The fifth and last race of the series got underway with just twenty boats but a gust caught out several sailors who found themselves on the wrong side of the line and had to go around the end of the line to start. The usual faces however featured amongst the lead boats. Chris Hatton got himself to the front and stayed there throughout the three lap race. Chris Robinson came through the first lap in second place but slipped to fifth during lap three whilst Nigel Austin slipped from third to fourth. Eddie Pope fought his way from fourth to third on the last lap whilst Bob Dodds came through from sixth at the end of lap one, fifth at the end of lap two to finish in third position.

Final positions after one discard;

1st Chris Hatton
2nd Eddie Pope
3rd Bob Dodds

First Veteran	Nigel Austin	Cransley SC
First Ancient Mariner	Mike Pritchard	Attenborough SC
First Lady	Trica Peacock	Arden SC
First Junior	Jill Reid	Attenborough SC
Novice (first championship series)	Malcolm Davidson	Attenborough SC
Committee Prize	Iona Reid	Attenborough SC