

Merthyr Tydfil Sailing Club

We broke the trend! In recent years, we've been plagued by light and fluky winds for this event but this year we were thankful that winds were not too strong following recent storms. Today we had a northerly wind coming down the centre of the reservoir with just a little east in it to add some spice. This allowed the first race to have a beat of over 1 km, taking the Comet fleet to places on this large water they hadn't been for years.



Race 1

The relatively straight and steady wind allowed everyone to make a well-timed start for the first race. But, Paul Hinde (844, Severn SC) got away first after hovering at the outer mark with everyone else within a couple of boat lengths. However, he didn't carry enough speed over the line so was wind-shadowed by half the fleet within a hundred metres. For the first lap-and-a-half Chris Robinson (867, Burghfield SC) led the fleet with the places close behind being exchanged between Peter Mountford (864, Staunton Harold), Chris Hatton (48, Severn SC) and Ben Palmer (597, Baltic Wharf SC). As the race progressed, Chris Hatton gradually crept past the others and led over the line at the finish after 2½ long laps. Chris Robinson held on to second place and Ben Palmer was third over the line. It was a little windier than some had expected so a couple of sailors retired from this race and chose to sail the remainder of the event with the shorter Xtra rig.

We then returned to shore for a lunch break.

Race 2

During lunch, the wind had dropped slightly so there was less likelihood of planning conditions. This first manifested itself in a slightly more strung out start, but this time Kahla Delahay (165, Merthyr Tydfil SC) got away first. However, Chris Hatton was quickly upwind of her and taking the lead up the slightly shortened beat and across the reach. Chris Robinson was close behind with third, fourth and fifth places being exchanged between Dave Harris (841, Severn SC), John Coppenhall (532, Hunts SC) and Ben Palmer. The wind was dropping and becoming patchy towards the end of the race but Chris Hatton managed to finish about a minute ahead of Chris Robinson and Ben Palmer around thirty seconds later. Some of the fleet, myself included took as much as five further minutes to cross the line.

Race 3

In the third race, the fleet was less straggly but Ben Palmer got away promptly at the outer mark, yet no one was more than a couple of boat lengths back. However, Dave Harris managed to get clear ahead of the fleet having started towards the back but with good momentum; a lesson there. As the wind was now light we only managed a lap-and-a-half of the course with Dave Harris managing to stay ahead all the way round once he'd got in front. Second place was taken by Chris Hatton with Ben Palmer managing to hold on to third place.

Thanks go out to the organisers, caterers and safety boat crew and all who helped on the day, even trolley dollies are appreciated on a congested slipway.