

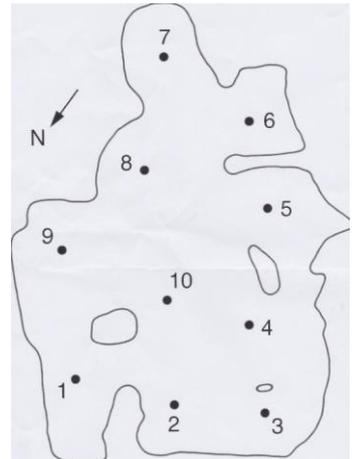
Cotswold Comet Open

14th September 2019

6 home boats were joined by 10 'foreigners' to compete in the Cotswold SC Comet Open. As a day it could not have been better but for one thing – the wind stayed away!

The 10a.m. briefing was short, sweet and to the point – Race 1 postponed until the wind filled in, with 3 races back to back later in the day proposed!! Deep joy!

The time was not wasted as Andy Simmons had brought up the latest incarnation of the White Xtra to demonstrate and garner comments on. The sail has 'Slab' reefing to match in with the Duo etc. Much discussion went on about protecting the zip at the top of the mast and alongside the gooseneck plus where to put the halyard when reefed as the pocket would be within the rolled up section of sail to create the 'reef'.



A very satisfying lunch of Chilli jackets was quickly followed by the call to arms – no time for 'pud' the wind has arrived – just!

The wind was not the only problem as the w*** word (see National's report) was mentioned as we launched into azure blue water! (A blue dye (chemical?) is added to keep the w*** down.)

Race 1 – course – 4, W, 2, 10, SF – W being a black windward mark subtly positioned to accommodate the extremely fluky wind and was placed off the promontory between 5 and 6. SF being the Start / Finish line.

Eddie Pope (C377) and Bob Dodds (C869) pulled away to take first and second, nearer the back Ben Palmer (C599), unusually well back following a bad start, attempted to steal John Sturgeon's (C400) main sheet and the subsequent turns dropped him further back!

The fleet stayed out to get Race 2 started as soon as possible.

Race 2 – course – W, 4, 8, 9, SF – W being moved roughly 1/3 of the way between 2 and 4.

By now the wind had dropped almost to nothing and there were many calls for room as boats drifted across the line. Once more Eddie broke clear but the following pack closed up on each other and then fragmented as some caught a zephyr whilst others didn't. It all nearly came to grief at 8 on lap 1 as virtually the whole fleet attempted to round as one. On the second lap the leg from 4 to 8 saw the fleet spread far and wide with John Coppenhall (C532) chasing Bob hard on the left with Henry Jaggars (C800) way out the right, all looking for anything that would move them forward.

As the last 8 boats approached 9 they were all together but a breeze, yes a real breeze, sprang up allowing Ben to pull clear, unfortunately that breeze soon died away to such an extent that the back markers were nearly two minutes behind!

As we tidied the boats away the breeze filled in and stayed!

The prize presentation saw Eddie awarded 1st prize, Scott Waterland (C412) first youth and Janet Smithson (C539) first lady.

A very welcome tea of sandwiches, cake and the 'pud' from lunch followed the prize giving.

Nigel Fern (C845)