

## Carsington Capers—a personal view

The Carsington Comet Open was too close to home to miss and it enabled me to catch up with Comet colleagues from around the country. The Open was being shared with the Supernovas, who numbered roughly twice as many as the Comets. Having commented on my preference for the wide open space of SHSC in comparison to the Avon at Severn; Carsington makes SHSC look small. Hopefully this will become a regular on our circuit.

It was, for me, clearly an Xtra day (black that is), with strong and blustery winds creating sizeable waves and heavy rain squalls.

Once on the water I followed Chris Robinson (sailing the only Standard rig) down to the start area which was almost a run. I was more than a little concerned as to my safety in the shifty and gusty breeze, which was not helped when Chris wore around to get to the start rather than gybing. If Chris is not gybing what chance do I stand! I followed suit by wearing round! Very probably and with hindsight he was playing it safe. To cut a nervous story short I survived to the start - just!

As is usual practice at double fleet Opens the faster fleet i.e. the Supernovas went off first.

The RO had stated that each course would be an Olympic course - i.e. a Triangle / Sausage course. He also stated that there would be an offset mark to separate the 'triangulars' from the 'sausagers' at the windward mark, if the need arose, but I forgot when this mark should be used, so used it every time! Read the SIs carefully in future!

The racing now is a blur but everything went off very well with few incidents if any, helped in no little way by the wind easing a little. In fact it was a 'blast' and just for that afternoon I felt really in control and thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially on the reach back to the start mark.

During the races I, as nearly always, was near the rear but not on my own. I had the pleasure of the company of Steve Bellamy, Henry Jagers and John Sturgeon at some point in all 3 races but could only manage to keep John behind for any length of time. Sometimes I was able to get by Henry on the beat, but he always managed to get back in front just before we got to the windward mark and then pull away down wind.

A special mention should be made of Jenny Chuen, sailing her first Open in somewhat challenging conditions and finishing every race. Hopefully we will see her at more Opens in the future.

Pity there was not a 'Club' trophy - SHSC would have walked it! Perhaps that's an idea to increase traveller numbers?