

NSC Comet Open meeting report 10th April 2022

A good turnout of 16 boats took part in the Comet Open held at Nottingham SC on Sunday 10th April. Six of the entries were visitors from as far afield as Bristol, Reading and Cheshire; joined by ten home club entries of which two weren't regular Comet sailors.

On arrival at the club at 9 am there was very little wind, but it was mild and dry, however by the time of the briefing at 10:30 there was a light 4-6 knots wind from the SSW-SW. The river-based venue provided a simple windward leeward 'sausage' ~1.6km length course; and with the wind on the day being mostly SSW-SW resulted in a nearly entirely port beat to the windward mark.

The format was for 3 races of approx. 60 minutes long, with one race scheduled in the morning, and two after lunch.

The first race got underway at 11:10am, with 15 boats taking part. A clean start saw a competitive first beat with 8 boats in close proximity rounding the first mark, led by Chris Robinson (C867). Unfortunately lead NSC Comet sailor Sue Jones (C835) managed to tangle her boat in the riverbank growth on the way to the first mark, dropping her from 6th to last place. By the end of the first lap Ben Palmer (C597) led, followed by Eddie Pope (C377) and Chris Robinson. Over the next couple of laps boats were changing positions throughout the fleet with a group of 3 boats breaking free ahead. As the fleet became spread-out the race officer shortened the race to end on 3 laps. The top 3 after race one were Eddie, Alan Bennett (C126) and Ben. First NSC boat was Tom Fletcher (C397) in 5th.



Everyone then enjoyed a fantastic homemade lunch cooked by Zeny Roberts, wife of Phil Roberts (C784), and homemade carrot cake made by Rose Wilkinson (C804).

Over lunch the wind dropped a bit and swung to SSW more frequently. The second race got underway at 13:25 with 16 boats now taking part. Chris Robinson and Alan Bennett led the way on the first beat. By the end of lap 1 Alan led followed by Chris and Ben Palmer. On lap 2 Eddie moved up to 2nd and Chris dropped back to 5th. Again, the race officer shortened the race to end on 3 laps. Alan took the honours, followed by Eddie and Ben. First NSC boat was Sue Jones in 5th.

After a cream tea break, the race team shortened the course quite a bit moving both the windward and leeward marks. With both Eddie and Alan tied on 3 points; each with a 1st and 2nd place, it was all down to the final race to decide the event winner. The final race got underway at 15:00. Eddie got away well and



Congested start line © Peter Staples

led throughout, with Alan back in the pack and only 6th after lap 1. Sue had a poor start and was last across the line, but then moved through the pack to eventually finish 2nd. Ben was a consistent 3rd again, with Alan finishing 4th.

There followed a prize giving in the Clubhouse with more tea and cakes. The NSC Vice Commodore, Shad Jawad presented prizes to the first 5 overall, and the first junior helm Rose.



Eddie takes the victory spoils © Jim Harms

Competitor Comments

Marie (C83) adds, the reason for my low position in the second race was a shackle failure leading to a collapse in my mainsail! I had to go back to the Club to re-rig and start again but managed to avoid finishing last – just.

Phil (C784) also adds, I was sailing pretty much the first time this season, so just pleased to take part and finish. The first race was unusual for our stretch of river in that thanks to the wind direction, it could be sailed both upstream and downstream without tacking. However, the downstream mark proved tricky to get round with tricky wind, in the first race a loss of momentum as I turned led me to drift around 30m downstream before getting moving again.

Hazel (C685) writes. At our club we have a really friendly Comet fleet. Having missed last year's Comet open, the day was especially exciting. It was great to see so many Comet boats setting off up the river and though I was nearer the back than front, this gave me lots of opportunities to see and learn what other boats were doing in this wind. The food was fabulous and the atmosphere just as good off the water too and a great day had by all.

Phil Sheppard (C784)