

## Crawley Mariners Comet Open September 2022

Crawley Mariners held their annual Comet Open meeting on 17th September on a beautiful sunny day, with a light and shifty breeze. Seven boats participated.

### Race 1.

This started with Bob Dodds getting an early lead with Izac Dodds chasing. Mike Thompson got past Izac but not for long. In fact, a late charge by Izac resulted in getting past Bob at the last leeward mark, however Bob was not to be beaten! Further down the fleet, Alan Todd pipped Jeff Smith on the line despite being behind for the rest of the race, proving the adage never give up!



Race 2. The wind went haywire for a few minutes before the start but fortunately settled back to the forecast direction just before the start. Everyone was tight to the line but Bob was a good boat length over and had to return. This left Izac to get a good lead, however the fleet compressed with Bob pulling through to second downwind. A hard-fought beat on lap two then resulted in Bob getting through to first and back to third two tacks later with visitor Nigel Austin up to second. In the middle of the fleet the tricky North Westerly over the trees caused a few problems and capsizes with the sudden gusts and shifts. It looked like Izac has got away but again the fleet compressed into the last leeward mark. Nail biting last beat resulted in just 20 seconds between first and fifth, but again Bob sneaked through making it two from two at lunchtime.



Race 3. After lunch with the wind shifting more to the North, the race started from the Committee boat instead of the Maid of Kent. Mike got a flyer with a healthy lead around the first mark. This continued throughout the first lap with Jeff and Nigel following, with Bob and Izac having ground to make up. Mike fell into a hole down the next run with boats unfortunately overtaking on both sides. Bob sneaked through to leeward of everyone but hit the mark and had to take a penalty. Bob however battled back and eventually pulled out a decent lead to take the third race and the event.



With Bob sitting out the final race we had an extremely competitive last race. Four boats converging on the first windward mark, two had to take a penalty. Izac was one of them, but he still pulled through into first down the run.

Izac sailed off into the distance to take a commanding win from Nigel and Jeff despite a final twist when a squall came through resulting in a couple of broaches, death rolls and a capsize.

It was a thoroughly fascinating day for the race committee watching some very close and tactical racing, with the odd bit of luck thrown in. At the end of the day Bob's consistency shone though, with his first CMYC Comet Open win for a few years. Well done to Bob.

Geoff Larkin