

Danske Bank Icebreaker Series – Race Report 3rd March 2019 – by Garth Maxwell

It was another lovely day for racing although it was more like an “icebreaker” as the temperature had plummeted. However, there was good breeze to keep us working hard enough to generate heat. The wind continued to blow from the south this week, although the forecast was for it to change direction by 180 degrees during the afternoon. The debate was which way was it going to go (east or west).

Strangely we started from the North West mark rather than the North East mark on our windward start. This meant that a lot of congestion occurred at the first turning mark and all fleets experienced some degrees of near misses with the laser fleet very noisy at it closed in on the first mark. Some contenders for ‘Mug of the Day’ happened at the first mark.

Another strange event was the appearance of some multihulls on the start line. Great to see Matt McMurtry with Andrew out along with Adrian and Barry. The multihulls make the bay a much more exciting place to sail when they are on the water. They also give Robin Gray another excuse to shout at other boats during the starting process.

This week Matt and Andrew sailed an excellent race and held off the challenge from Adrian and Barry. Swanny was seen sailing in a mirror dinghy this week. Just not quite the same!! Matt leads the series overall from Adrian.

The large Dinghy fleet were next away. I believe there was also controversy in this fleet and there is a protest pending I understand. Not sure what Brain was up to this week..... maybe we will hear more about that from Alex next week!

Robin Flannigan and Diane reversed their fortunes from last week and while they crossed the line first again this week, they had pulled far enough ahead to claim first place on corrected time. Well done guys. Ian & Ruth Moore had a solid second place with David Fletcher and Ryan being pushed back into 3rd this week. Not an Aero in sight of the top 3!!!..... Sandra was 4th with Brian Bibby in 5th. So overall Ian and Ruth have now moved into 1st place in the series pushing Brian into second and David Fletcher into 3rd. Sandra is 4th with Rob in 5th place. Amazingly there are only 2 points between 1st and 5th so this is as tight a fleet as we have seen for a while. Pressure is building!

I thought we were going to have a large number of Toppers on the water for Dan and Izzy to compete against, but alas they headed out to do their squad trying and didn't race. In fact, Izzy didn't make it this week either so poor Dan was on his own....

In the Laser 4.7s Ollie Haig finally got the better of Lucas and took 1st place. Well done Ollie. The overall result could still go with way here!!

In the Radials there were 7 boats on the water which led to good close racing. It was great to see Colleen Connolly back out on the water making the long trip from Armagh to race with us. Joni Rock had another successful day in the office and took first place with Jacques in 2nd and Emma in 3rd place. Jess Winton was 4th with Russel Finlay back in 5th place. Russel is finding the competition just as hard as Colm found it!!!!

The Standard fleet had 24 boats on the water this week. Some regulars still missing so it will be good to see Richard Ramsey and Cavan Fynes making a return SOON..... one of the missing flock did make a welcome return to racing. Shaun Doran made his first outing of the year and made an immediate impact slotting into the front of the fleet easily. Both he and Rusty shot away from the start line putting clear water between themselves and the rest of the fleet. Shaun actually sailed so well from

the start that he forced Colin L to tack off - not many can claim that. As I said earlier the first windward mark was interesting as boats all closed in on different tacks. There was a kind left hand shift that help the leaders gain some distance. Rusty and Shaun were flying ahead leaving the rest to try and catch up. Colin was scrapping away to get back at them. James Moore and Paddy Brow were having a fantastic race and were just behind the leaders. I think we may have put James in the wrong fleet. We had 3 good beats and then the course changed to No. 10 which resulted in a fetch back to the finish line. However, for those who tacked early suffered as the wind died on the right-hand side of the course. This saw poor Shaun drop from 2nd to 7th in on leg. Very unfortunate, however some people's misfortune was an opportunity for others. It allowed myself, Chris Boyd and James and Paddy to sneak in front of Shaun.

In the Silver Fleet, Charlie Westhurst and Micky continue to fight it out with Charlie getting 11th, one place in front of Micky. Brian McConville was 2nd in the bronze fleet with Chris Mackey just behind him. Alex and Ed continue to fight it out further back.

So Colin still leads by 4 points from Chris Boyd with John Simms in 3rd place even though he missed last Sunday as he was competing in Portugal in the Dragons. Micky leads the silver fleet by 3 points from Charlie and Robert in 3rd. James Moore leads the bronze fleet with John Pierce in 2nd and Ed in 3rd.

Early start this week as the rugby is on afterwards. So another Carlsberg Sunday on the cards.

G. Maxwell
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