**Icebreaker Race Report – 4th November 2018**

Sunday was another stunning day for race 5 in the Danske Bank Icebreaker Series at Ballyholme Yacht Club. This week a number of new faces were tempted to give the racing a go, including some of those who had been doing the adult improver training. Claire Ritchie joined the laser radial fleet and Jenny Mullan and Sarah McVeigh joined the 2-hander fleet in their Topaz.

The laser fleet saw a number of “old faces” returning to compete in the series. Great to see Bill O’Hara pull himself away from the TV this week and join the action. To be fair he has been away most weeks as he continues to participate in the professional sailing circuit in exotic locations. There were also a few notable absentees this week who gained another DNC to their scorecard.

The lasers got off first time with no one recorded as OCS. It was a gentle and shifty breeze but good enough to have great racing. The first beat saw a small number of sailors gain a substantial lead over the rest and they were able to capitalise on this throughout the remainder of the race. Conor Simms, Chris Boyd, Shan Doran (not black flagged this week!) and Adam Fermor were all scrapping for the lead as the race developed. There was a gap opening up with Charlie Taylor, Cavan Fyans and Richard Ramsey trying hard to stay with the leading group. Richard had an amazing lap where he split tacked away from this group and caught up with the leading group. A fantastic turn of speed in difficult conditions to make much ground.

Further back in the fleet there were lots of battles going on as people battled to gain valuable points. Paddy Brow showed he had lost none of his talent and worked his way through the fleet well to finish in 12th and Mark Mackey had a better day in the office with a 13th placing.

Alex, Brian Lennox and Ed Winton were also having a good battle for positions along with Neil Cameron. It is reported that Neil had to contend with a multihull losing control and capsizing on top of him. Not a pleasant experience for anyone but especially when you are trying to beat Alex, Brian, Ed and Chris Mackey. It transpired the capsizing catamaran was BYC Commodore Pete McDowell. This was his first race of this series and clearly the lofty position of power has taken its toll!

Back at the business end of the fleet, Conor Simms was having to work his socks off to keep Chris Boyd behind him, especially on the reaches where Chris demonstrated great technique to generate speed. Conor earned a well-deserved first place with Chris 2nd. Richard Ramsay worked some form of magic and propelled himself to 3rd. Shaun Doran was delighted to see some points on his series with a very strong 4th place and Adam Fermor came 5th.

After 5 races, the leader board is taking on a familiar look with Chris Boyd leading the series by a considerable margin. Adam Fermor holds onto 2nd place one point ahead of Charlie Taylor (6th today), Cavan Fyans is on equal points with Charlie and 2 ahead from John Simms. The fleets will be announced either this week or next after the judging panel have had a chance to review the score.

The laser radial fleet grew in size this week with the welcome return of Joni Rock, a familiar sailor from the Summer Series, and the addition of two new sailors, Tommy Wilson and Claire Ritchie. Joni took the fleet by storm and landed a 1st, closely followed by Emma Greer, who is currently the overall champion of the radial icebreaker. Jess Winton and Colm McLarnon spent most of the race neck and neck, until Colm nailed the final leg and was able to grab 5th place (albeit by the skin of his teeth!). Jacques Picton came 4th, leaving him and Emma Greer matched on points - all to play for next Sunday!

The 4.7 fleet only had 2 on the water with Lucas beating Ollie. Pity none of the others made a show for what was a great day of sailing. Ollie still holds onto the lead with Lucas in 2nd overall.

The large dingy fleet had 6 boats on the water. The Robinson family took to the water with Colin and his son having a great day and honing their silky skills as the laps continued. Rob Milligan had another solid day with his 3rd first place of the year which projected him to 1st overall, 3 points ahead of Brian Bibby who was being given a lesson in his Aero by Sandra Halliwell and Christina Cunningham. Ian and Ruth Moore were 4th this week with the Robinsons in 5th.

The Multihull fleet had 4 boats start the race with Pete having an early bath. Matt McMurtrie had a great race to push Adrian Allen into 2nd place with Swannie in 3rd.

Sarah McVeigh and Jenny Mullan had their first race in the small dingy fleet and had a very successful debut in the Icebreaker.

There were a few contenders for the coveted Mug of the Day. David Wilson had a coming together with a topper, Adam got acquainted with the green mark but no one came close to Commodore Pete who was this week’s outright winner.