

Catapult TT at Kielder Water

The Catapult fleet held their September TT as part of Kielder Water Sailing Club's thoroughly enjoyable Dinghy Open. Multitasking Commodore, Richard Purdy, was not only an efficient Race Officer, but scorer and Cordon Bleu pizza chef as well!

Race 1

The shifty Force 3 with significant strong gusts and lulls made for challenging conditions, as low clouds bringing persistent light rain and drizzle swept down the lake. Race 1 was run over four laps of a triangular course. Stuart Ede was first across the line but was soon overtaken by Gareth Ede and John Terry, who rounded the windward mark in that order. George Evans was a slow starter, but on the beat to the gate on Lap 2 he powered past both Stuart and John to move into second place. The fleet gradually stretched out over the next two laps with Gareth winning by a minute over George with John another two minutes back.

Race 2

A significant wind shift led to most of the fleet starting on port. However starboard starter John rained on their parade forcing most to duck his stern. The port tack starters persevered up the right of the beat and rounded the windward mark in the order Gareth, George, Stuart. John, who had gone left, trailed in their wake. On the next beat the advantage shifted to the left side benefiting Gareth and George, while Stuart made what proved to be the wrong choice by going right. Stuart's poor choice enabled John to close the gap, so he was right on Stuart's tail as they rounded the bottom mark of Lap 3. He then powered past on the beat. On the last beat John and Stuart closed the gap on George, but George held them off to take second behind Gareth.



Wet, wet, wet: a rain-spattered John (red bowboard) attacks Stuart as they round the bottom mark.

Race 3

A trapezoid course was set for Race 3. The fleet went back to a starboard tack start with the exception of Stuart whose port tack flyer paid off. Stuart tacked soon after the start to consolidate his initial lead and to go up the favoured left side of the beat. Nevertheless Gareth managed to round the windward mark just ahead of Stuart. On the beat of Lap 2 John first overtook Stuart and then caught Gareth at the windward mark as Gareth fell foul of a shift and a lull. Behind them George beat Stuart to the mark to move into third place. Gareth caught up with John on the top reach of Lap 3 and challenged him all the way around the next lap and a half. However, he could not get past, and John held on to win the race.

Race 4

A windward-leeward course was set for this race. Gareth rounded the first windward mark in the lead from George and John. He stretched his lead downwind while John challenged George, rounding the leeward mark a boat length ahead. As the race progressed, the wind gradually died away and became more shifty. George struggled to round the next windward mark on Lap 2 allowing Stuart to overtake and set off in pursuit of John, but in the dying breeze that proved impossible. Meanwhile Gareth had cemented a huge lead, which translated into a massive 10 minute winning margin, as the rest of the fleet trickled along on the lightest of zephyrs in the order John, Stuart then George.

Race 5

Fortunately the wind piped up again as another all enveloping rain cloud came down the lake, and Races 5 and 6 were run over triangular courses. The breeze was still quite shifty, and choosing the best side of the beat was a bit of a lottery with Gareth emerging with a narrow lead after the first lap. Then a major shift meant the windward mark could be laid on a single tack from the bottom mark, so the race became rather processional. However, there was a sting in the tail. On the last beat for the line the wind began to shift back and weaken, and it was no longer quite possible to lay the Committee Boat from the bottom mark, so the fleet had to make a couple of short tacks to cross the line. Gareth slowed dramatically in the lull, as did the chasing boats, and they struggled to tack and make headway. Gareth just managed to creep over to take the win followed by John and George, as Stuart, who had tacked left half way up the beat to avoid the pile up, tried unsuccessfully to pull off a coup.

Race 6

Stuart led the fleet off the line towards the pin end. However, he was soon overtaken by George, and the two of them went left up the beat while John and Gareth tacked off to go more up the middle. George's superior pointing ability allowed him to hold onto the lay line while Stuart slipped away to leeward. George rounded first with John coming in from the right to round ahead of Stuart, leaving Gareth at the back. That didn't last long, as Gareth attacked Stuart on the next reach to round the wing mark in third. George held onto the lead for most of the race, while Gareth overtook John on the downwind leg of Lap 3. George was still ahead on the beat for the line with Gareth and then John not far behind. As they approached the line there was a repeat of the finish of Race 5 as the wind lightened and became shifty. Anticipating this Gareth tacked off left, while George and John held onto the line that should take them closest to the Committee Boat. Unfortunately they became unstuck in the shifty conditions enabling Gareth to snatch first place by 20 seconds. And to George's chagrin John managed to pip him to the line by a few boat lengths.

Jon Montgomery Travellers Trophy results

Gareth's five wins out of six races gave him a comfortable winning margin for the event. Meanwhile John's three seconds on Day 2 enabled him to wrest second place from George who had held that position after Day 1.

In the 2024 TT Series John knocked George off the top slot and will be flying the leader's Yellow Pennant at the class's next event at Grafham Water SC. Meanwhile Gareth moved into third place ahead of his father despite having to count three DNCs in his season's scoreline.



Mugshot: the perpetrators in the line-up are (l to r); John, Gareth and George

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Total	Nett
1	Gareth Ede	1	1	(2)	1	1	1	7	5
2	John Terry	(3)	3	1	2	2	2	13	10
3	George Evans	2	2	3	(4)	3	3	17	13
4	Stuart Ede	(4)	4	4	3	4	4	23	19
5	Chris Upton	5	(DNF)	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	35	29

Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap results

The Catapult Class Association runs a personal handicap series in parallel with the level rating TT Series. George's win on handicap at Kielder consolidates his grip on the Magenta Pennant as leader in the 2024 Series, four points ahead of Stuart, who in turn is 9 points ahead of John in third place.

Place	Helm	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Race 4	Race 5	Race 6	Total	Nett
1	George Evans	1	2	1	(3)	2	1	10	7
2	Stuart Ede	(2)	1	2	2	1	2	10	8
3	John Terry	3	3	3	(4)	3	3	19	15
4	Gareth Ede	(4)	4	4	1	4	4	21	17
5	Chris Upton	5	(DNF)	DNC	DNC	DNC	DNC	35	29