

On the 13<sup>th</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> April, Tata Steel SC welcomed the Osprey and the Solos to a joint Open Meeting. The entry was a little down on last year but the stalwarts who came were treated to a weekend of exciting and eventful sailing. Seven Ospreys made the journey to Wales to join five local boats, some coming from as far afield as Sheppey and Yorkshire, while a much depleted local fleet of three Solos were joined by ten visitors, some also travelling significant distances for the event, which was the Western Area Championships.

Race Officer, John Lockett, set challenging course, making full use of the reservoir and the Ospreys revelled in the long three-sail reach along the length of the water, though the blustery conditions meant some paid the price at the gybe at the end of the reach. The rescue boats were kept very busy.

Unluckiest was Andy Barker and Adam Ellory who had made the 250 mile journey from Mounts Bay SC, and had to retire from the first two races, once with a broken rudder, and then with a main halyard failure. They did manage to complete the third race on the Saturday before registering two further retirements on the Sunday, which was slightly better than Nigel Young and Darren Hamilton who also had 4 retirements and a DNC.

The Solos seemed to fare better on the Saturday with only one retirement in the three races. Shane Mac Carthy and Chris Brown were having an epic battle at the front with Shane leading after 3 races with two 1<sup>st</sup>s and a 2<sup>nd</sup> to Chris's 1<sup>st</sup> and two 2<sup>nd</sup>s.

Even gustier winds on Sunday saw depleted fleets coming to the start line for race four, with the Solos down to eight competitors. The Ospreys managed eleven at the start but the conditions were such that only seven finished with the Solos managing five finishers.

And so to the final race, six Solos started and all finished with numerous capsizes in the tricky conditions. Chris Brown demonstrated his skill with two further 1<sup>st</sup>s to take the overall win from Shane. In the Ospreys, local hero D J Edwards and Alister Ransden showed their mastery of the conditions adding another 1<sup>st</sup> place to their three 1<sup>st</sup>s of the Saturday and then electing not to sail the final race, presumably to give someone else a chance.

Only four Ospreys started the final race and one of those by the skin of their teeth. Dan Jackson and Chris Mackay hadn't realised the two races were back to back and had their boat on its trolley when the warning signal went and there was a frantic rush to launch and a fast reach across the reservoir to start seconds before the 4 minute time limit expired. They were the only Osprey to finish that race!

As the event was the Western Area Championship for the Solos, additional prizes were for Veteran (over 50), Grand Master (over 60) and Septimus (over 70). By general agreement the Septimus trophy went to Brian Milford from Towy BC who had entered for the series but had wisely decided, at 82, the conditions were too much and had sat the series out.

At the prize-giving all the competitors were full of praise for Tata Steel SC's professional handling of the event, with testing courses and excellent rescue facilities, plus hot food available, and an entertaining evening meal on the Saturday. Commodore Linda Ingram thanked the competitors for coming to the event despite the forecast and looked forward to welcoming them all again the next year.

## **Results:**

### **Solo Western Area Championship:**

1st, 5834, Chris Brown, RYA, 5pts  
2nd, 5808, Shane Mac Carthy, Greystones SC, 6pts  
3rd, 5782, Nigel Davies, Draycote Water SC, 14pts  
4th, 5745, Andrew Fox, Leigh & Lowton SC, 17pts  
5th, 4927, Tony Thresher, West Oxfordshire, 22pts  
6th, 5038, Jason Taylor, Tata Steel SC, 23pts  
7th, 5130, Mark Lee, Lymington Town SC, 27pts  
8th, 5786, John Steels, Starcross YC, 38pts  
9th, 5104, Bob Taylor, Tata Steel SC, 38pts  
10th, 5851, Roger Guess, Salcombe YC, 41pts  
11th, 5731, Vernon Perkins, South Cerney SC, 46pts  
12th, 5356, Graham Don, Tata Steel SC, 52pts  
13th, 5008, Brian Milford, Towy BC, 56pts

Veteran, Andrew Fox, Leigh & Lowton SC  
Grand Master, 4927, Tony Thresher, West Oxfordshire  
Septimus, 5008, Brian Milford, Towy BC

### **Osprey Open Meeting:**

1st, 1336, D J Edwards and Alister Ramsden, Tata Steel SC, 4pts  
2nd, 1276, Dan Jackson and Chris Mackay, Tenby, 8pts  
3rd, 135, Mark Weston and Simon Hawkes, West Riding, 12pts  
4th, 1348, Oscar Chess and Charlie Charles, Tata Steel SC, 18pts  
5th, 1369, Roger Blake and Jamie Blake, Great Moor SC, 19pts  
6th, 1373, Richard Marshall and Steve Watson, Poole YC, 27pts  
7th, 73, Mike Murray and Pam Murray, Tata Steel SC, 33pts  
8th, 1114, Ros Downs and David Downs, Tata Steel SC, 33pts  
9th, 1225, Carawyn and Paul Bambridge, Tata Steel SC, 38pts  
10th, 1372, Mick Greenwood and Martin Roots, IOSSC, 39pts  
11th, 1299, Andy Barker and Adam Ellory, MBSC, 47pts  
12th, 1316, Nigel Young and Darren Hamilton, BCYC, 52pts