

Parkstone Cadet Open 7th September 2013 - Another cracking day in the Top Triangle.

Barely a week since the Nationals concluded in Abersoch, a very healthy fleet of 28 Cadets competed in Parkstone's Autumn Open Meeting, part of the Southern Travellers Circuit. The event was the first for a number of new partnerships with some sailors getting their first taste of salt water.

Under the expert Management of PRO Paul Freeman and his slick band of helpers (mostly current and past Cadet parents) the fleet was treated to 3 back-to-back races (triangle, sausage, sausage) in sparkling conditions in the infamous Top Triangle.

The forecast (the one I read anyway) was for a building breeze swinging from SW to S, and that is exactly what we got. The wind died totally for the competitors briefing but had returned sufficiently for the first race to get away roughly on time.

Race 1 began in a patchy 5 knots, puffing under the clouds, with it paying to go left up the first beat. At the windward mark Jack and Laura Hardie from Frensham in Di Maggio (8513) arrived first ahead of Sophie Goodrich and Lewis Lane from South Cerney in Aslan (8291) and Jamie Tointon and Hamish Taylor from Parkstone in Ice Blue (9295). As the wind dropped the beat was shortened and Ben Shorrocks and Ellie Watling from Frensham in It Takes Two (8441) showed excellent boat speed to pop out in front at the 2nd windward. Up the 3rd beat, Jack and Laura made best use of the shifts to re-take the lead and the bullet ahead of Sophie and Lewis and the fast improving Kirsten Glen and Lily Tointon from the home club in Y-Knot (9370)

Another clear start for race 2 and again left was favoured up the first beat. Ben and Ellie arrived first ahead of Jack and Laura and Tom Collyer and Francis Butterworth from Fishers Green in Leviathan (7658). Up the second beat Jack and Laura again used the shifts well to establish a good lead. But by the top of the third beat things were extremely close with Ben and Ellie pushing Jack and Laura hard. Team Di Maggio held on to the finish ahead of Ben and Ellie and Kirsten and Lily making their now familiar late charge. With two firsts, Jack and Laura had overall victory in the bag but the minor places were up for grabs.

The start of Race 3 saw the only individual recall of the day with Ceire Fowley and Maddy Harvey from Parkstone pushing things a little too hard – hard luck girls. By now, the wind had swung to the south and built to a force 3-4. Jack and Laura made it to the first mark in the lead and maintained a healthy gap for the rest of the race to make it an impressive clean sweep. Jamie and Hamish had another blistering first beat to round second but then struggled a bit in the breeze. Up the next beat Sophie and Lewis were in second, covering Kirsten and Lily's every move in their efforts to secure the overall runners-up spot. As the wind built further, a number of the less experienced crews took to the water for some swimming practice and the more seasoned campaigners began to stretch their legs and smile. Kirsten and Lily finally managed to break cover halfway up the final beat and extended away for a well deserved second place in the race and overall. Sophie and Lewis held on to third ahead of Ben and Ellie to fill the third spot on the podium.

Another excellent day at Parkstone – good luck to all of those looking for selection to the various class winter training squads.