

Catapult TT at Bassenthwaite

After a challenging first event at Carsington Gareth Ede got back into his stride at Bassenthwaite with four wins out of six.

At the kind invitation of Bassenthwaite Sailing Club the Catapult fleet of seven boats returned for another May Day bank holiday weekend TT event sailing alongside the Club's home fleets. It has become a popular mainstay of the Class Association's calendar.

Race 1

The Race Officer set a round-the-cans course incorporating two beats in a shifty and patchy Force 2 breeze.

Gareth Ede led off the start with John Terry on his heels, while Stuart Ede, Chris Phillips and George Evans were close behind. Gareth and John had just rounded the windward mark when a shift and lull caused Chris and Stuart to struggle. George gave the mark a wide berth, and was able to sail over Chris and Stuart into third place. As the fleet stretched out over the next two laps both Chris and Damien lost their way and had to retire leaving Stuart to take fourth place. At the front Gareth increased his lead to finish three minutes ahead of John who in turn was nearly two minutes ahead of George.

Race 2

The order at the first windward mark was Gareth, John, Chris, George, Stuart and Damien Cooney. Downwind George caught Chris, but on the second and final lap Chris took the best line to round the windward mark and regain third place as George struggled to round in the shifty and patchy conditions.

On the run John caught Gareth, and, as they approached the finish line the wind died and shifted, making it difficult to cross the line. In the confusion John managed to pip Gareth to the line by a few boat lengths.

Behind them Chris and George also struggled to make the finish allowing Stuart to catch up. Chris just managed to creep over the line to take third, but George was left wallowing in a windless hole just yards from the committee boat allowing Stuart and Damien to snatch fourth and fifth places, respectively.

Race 3

On Day 2, when Chris Upton joined the fray, the wind was still very shifty. John was first to windward mark with Gareth close behind and George in third place.

In the very shifty conditions around the second windward mark Gareth got past John. Thereafter he extended his lead to finish a full five minutes ahead. The same mark proved problematic for Chris P and George allowing Stuart to overtake Chris and close the gap on George. In a tight race for the line Stuart pipped George by 20 seconds to take third place. Chris U took fifth place after Chris P had to retire having got lost.

Race 4

Chris P shut John out at the start of Race 4 which was sailed over a triangular course in a freshening breeze. Chris held onto second place at the windward market behind Gareth. John, who was third to round, overtook Chris on the next run, and on the following lap George got past as well.



Gareth collects his trophy as TT event winner
© Margaret Evans



John shows off the Lilac Pennant for his win on handicap and his glass trophy for coming second in the TT.
© Margaret Evans

At the back of the fleet Stuart and Chris U kept exchanging places until Stuart overtook Chris on the reach and set off in pursuit of Chris P.

Meanwhile Gareth had got so far ahead that he lapped Chris U. John and George finished at roughly two minute intervals thereafter to take second and third places.

Race 5

Gareth was again first to the windward mark of this triangular course closely followed by John, and these two managed to pull away from the pursuing pack, not to be caught. Stuart, George and Chris P were in close company as they started the second lap. George pulled away upwind, and Stuart tacked off on a shift, but that proved to be a mistake, because it allowed both George and Chris P to open up a fairly comfortable lead. On the third lap George very nearly caught John on the run only for John to pull away again. On a hull flying reach Chris U capsized – subsequently to retire - and Stuart caught up with Chris P and George. A tactical error by George on the next beat allowed first Chris P and then Stuart to get past. In a close fought battle for the line Stuart just pipped Chris by 15 seconds to take third place.

Race 6

Day 3 dawned with light airs. A trapezoid course was set. Stuart spotted a late wind shift that favoured a port tack start, which soon gave him a 100m lead up the first beat. Then it was a case of deciding which shifts would be longer lasting and tacking on them. Starboard tack starters John and Gareth fought a close quarters battle up the beat and on the downwind legs, which slowed them and enabled Stuart to increase his lead.

On the second beat John tacked right as they neared the windward mark, while Gareth continued up the middle. John rounded with a lead of several boat lengths over Gareth. However, Gareth attacked on the downwind legs and their close quarters battle continued, which was great news for Stuart who finished with a lead of two and a half minutes. John managed to cling on to second place by 20 seconds over Gareth.

Level rating results - John Montgomery TT Series

Pos	Helm	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Pts
1	Gareth Ede	1	2	1	1	1	3	6
2	John Terry	(2)	1	2	2	2	2	9
3	Stuart Ede	4	4	3	(5)	3	1	15
4	George Evans	3	(6)	4	3	5	4	19
5	Chris Phillips	(8)	3	8	4	4	8	27
6	Chris Upton	(8)	8	5	6	8	8	35
7	Damien Cooney	(8)	5	8	8	8	8	37

As event winner Gareth Ede received the Blue Pennant. He also retains the Yellow Pennant as overall leader in the Jon Montgomery Travellers Trophy Series.



Everyone's a winner, babe: (l to r) Stuart, Gareth, George and John display their trophies
© Margaret Evans

Handicap results – Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap Series

The Catapult Class Association runs a personal handicap series in parallel with the level rating TT series. Honours were widely distributed across the fleet with George recording two race wins, and John, Chris P, Chris U and Stuart one each. However consistency won out, and John Terry took the Lilac Pennant as event winner.

George's second place lifted him onto equal points with Stuart on the handicap series leader board so far, but Stuart retained the Magenta Pennant on tie-break.

Pos	Helm	Rating	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	Pts
1	John Terry	818	2	1	(5)	2	3	2	10
2	George Evans	870	1	(6)	3	1	5	4	14
3	Stuart Ede	902	4	(5)	2	5	2	1	14
4	Gareth Ede	765	3	(4)	4	4	4	3	19
5	Chris Phillips	920	(8)	3	8	3	1	8	23
6	Chris Upton	1010	(8)	8	1	6	8	8	31
7	Damien Cooney	1110	(8)	2	8	8	8	8	34