

Catapults at Yorkshire Dales

Gareth Ede showed his form with five wins out of five races in very different conditions at the Catapults' first event of the season held over the weekend of 12-13 April.

The shifty, up and down breezes on Day 1 posed a bit of a headache for Race Officer Richard Clayton, but he managed to set some great courses for the Catapults including an enjoyable slalom of reaches across the reservoir.



Gareth Ede powers to victory in the strong winds [Copyright: Paul Hargreaves Photography]

Race 1

John Terry was first to the windward mark, but Gareth Ede overtook him on the next reach, with George Evans and Stuart Ede 50m behind. John was hot on Gareth's heels for much of the race, until Gareth eased ahead on the last lap to take the gun by 30 seconds. Meanwhile George and Stuart changed places several times in the fight for third place. George was a few boat lengths ahead at the last leeward mark but sailed into a lull as he headed for the committee boat. Spotting George's difficulty, Stuart tacked for the pin end of the line to snatch third.

Race 2

Gareth led around the windward mark and stretched out his lead on the downwind legs. On Lap 2 he managed to round the windward mark ahead of the fleets of RS400s and 200s with whom the event was shared. However, John, George, and Stuart became thoroughly entangled with the asymmetrics allowing Gareth to sail away into an unassailable lead of three and a half minutes at the finish. George and John vied with one another over the next lap until George gained an advantage on the beat, which he held onto to take second. Meanwhile Stuart had been closing on John, and at the last leeward mark he was just a few boat lengths behind. Stuart gambled on a quick tack for the pin end of the line. However John, who tacked later but was closer to the committee boat end and so had less far to travel, took third by ten seconds.

Race 3

Gareth was again first to the windward mark, but George, Stuart and John, in that order, were hard on his heels. On the last beat Stuart went well right up the beat to avoid a looming traffic

jam of asymmetrics at the windward mark. That tactic enabled him to get past John and catch up with George, whom he overtook on the next reach. Stuart managed to hang on narrowly to second place, while John just eased ahead of George to grab third by a couple of boat lengths.

Race 4

Day 2 dawned with a very different set of conditions: Force 5 with frequent gusts well into Force 6. Only three Catapults out of the six attending ventured out, as a couple of the other helms were below par healthwise.

Gareth showed a clean pair of heels to George and Stuart as he powered away upwind trapezing confidently. With his lighter weight he was less confident when gybing in the strong gusts and opted to wear round on a few occasions to avoid pitchpoling, but he had such a large lead that he could afford to do so. At the end of the first lap George missed the last gybe mark and tried to unravel himself. Bemused by George's antics Stuart managed to miss out the leeward mark, which he didn't realise until the next lap by which time it was too late to do anything about it, so he retired. That left Gareth the winner by a huge margin over George.

Race 5

George and Stuart were more disciplined in their mark rounding this time, not that it did them much good, as again Gareth built up a massive lead with a four and a half minute margin over George. Stuart trailed in behind, regretful of his choice of small rig, as the wind had by now eased a bit.



Spray everywhere as George Evans hurtles downwind.
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Jon Montgomery TT Series results

So Gareth got his season off to a cracking start by winning the event with a perfect scoreline, which earns him the Blue Pennant plus the Yellow Pennant as Travellers Trophy Series leader.

Rank	Helm	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total	Nett
1	Gareth Ede	(1)	1	1	1	1	5	4
2	George Evans	(4)	2	4	2	2	14	10
3	Stuart Ede	3	4	2	(7)	3	19	12
4	John Terry	2	3	3	(7)	7	22	15
5	Damien Cooney	5	5	(7)	7	7	31	24
6	Syd Gage	(7)	7	7	7	7	35	28

Alastair Forrest Personal Handicap Series results

The Catapult Class Association runs a Personal Handicap Series in parallel with the TT Series. George emerged as winner on handicap, which earns him the Lilac Pennant plus the Magenta Pennant as leader of the series.

Rank	Helm	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	Total	Nett
1	George Evans	(2)	1	2	2	1	8	6
2	Stuart Ede	1	3	1	(7)	3	19	8
3	Gareth Ede	(4)	2	3	1	2	12	8
4	John Terry	3	4	4	(7)	7	18	11
5	Damien Cooney	5	5	(7)	7	7	31	24
6	Syd Gage	(7)	7	7	7	7	35	28