

## 29er Inlands at Grafham Water – 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> November 2007

With an impressive turnout of 55 boats at Grafham Water for the 29er Inland Championships, close racing was going to be unavoidable. Saturday was a beautiful sunny day and when the competitors arrived a steady 8 knots was blowing.

The fleet launched on time and racing quickly got underway. James Peters and Ed Fitzgerald won the first race with the experienced but new pairing of Phil Walker and John Mather in second.

After a general recall in the second race, the fleet got away at the 2<sup>nd</sup> attempt. However, the race officer had changed the number of laps to be sailed between the recalled, and eventual start from 3 to 2. Many of the competitors failed to notice this change which proved costly to several crews. The leader, and winner of the race, Keith Escritt sailing with daughter Siobhan hedged his bets by crossing the line before sailing back up the beat. However, the second boat, Becky Diamond and Fiona Hampshire, seeing an opportunity to take the lead rounded the leeward mark to sail back up the course, followed by a number of others. Eventually it became clear that the course was 2 laps as more boats crossed the finish, and to their dismay those on the beat had to turn round.

The third race was back to 3 laps, and as the wind dropped away and a big left shift stirred up the fleet, boats were well spread out on the course. James Peters managed to pull out a good distance on the rest of the fleet, followed by Robin Cnudde and Hugo Kerhascoet, one of the 6 strong French team visiting us for the event.

After a relaxed Saturday evening, sailors woke up to another sunny day, but instead of the nice gentle breeze, the lake took on the appearance of a mirror. An indefinite postponement was flown, and eventually the decision was made to abandon racing for the day.

James Peters and Ed Fitzgerald won the event becoming 29er inland Champions with Phil Walker and John Mather runners up. For full results, see <http://www.kbsuk.com/Events/data/29er/data/results/2007inlands29ernh.html>