

Scottish Solos at St Mary's Loch
16th May 2015

The 19 sailors that turned out for round three of the SailingFast.co.uk Scottish Solo Circuit were treated to some challenging racing in the blustery winds of St Mary's Loch.

With the wind at around 25 knots and forecast to increase the race committee took the sensible decision to move the race course somewhat to the club end of the loch. As the first sailors headed out it was clear that this was going to be big breeze sailing St Marys Loch style with huge wind shifts and gusts.

Race one got under way, albeit with a slightly reduced fleet as some sailors fell foul to the savage gusts on the way to the start area. In the challenging conditions Andy Tunncliffe led round the windward mark, followed by Andy Hutchison and David Sword. With capsizes a plenty it was hard to keep track of positions but on the last beat Andy Hutchison had to pause to repair a shroud that had come adrift. A capsize by David Sword in one of the fearsome gusts let Hamish Whyte sneak through to take second behind Andy Tunncliffe with Kevan Gibb taking third and fourth place going to Ian Hopwood.

It was a still further reduced fleet that started race two as many of the sailors had abandoned attempts at finishing race one. It was Andy Hutchison who showed dominance, with the wind increasing toward the end of the race. In the end Andy Tunncliffe took second behind Andy Hutchison, followed by Kevan Gibb and Hamish Whyte.

Race three was abandoned, much to the relief of the tired sailors, as the wind increased further.

Praise must be given to the St Mary's Loch team for managing to hold a first class event in such challenging conditions, with particular praise for the rescue cover who were kept somewhat busy!

The next round sees the fleet head to East Lothian Yacht Club at North Berwick for the Scottish Championships on 6/7th June in what will surely be a warmup event for the National Championships to be held there in August.

