

Noble Marine Laser Radial Spring Qualifier at WPNSA, 11–12 March

By Georgina Povall

The second Noble Marine Laser Qualifier of the year was held at Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy, and with 86 Radials entered, the decision was made to race as one fleet. The forecast for Saturday was for 10–12kts decreasing throughout the day. Racing was to take place in Weymouth Bay with a stronger and longer-lasting wind than originally expected. The Standards and 4.7s got underway, but as usual, the large Radial fleet needed a few warm up starts and some black flags were given. Unfortunately, the visibility rapidly started to decrease and, despite a good breeze, we were held under postponement. The cloud that had enveloped the Radial fleet showed no signs of moving so, for safety reasons and the minor issue of being unable to see the pin end, we were sent ashore to await further signals and eventually racing was abandoned for the day.

Day two was more successful with three races completed in a building breeze, starting at about 5kts and reaching up to 10kts by the end of the third race. Race 1 saw those at the starboard end of the line come out on top with the leaders linking up the pressure which seemed to be the key strategy of the day. Ali Young came in from the right to lead around the top mark with Jon Emmett and Georgina Povall following having played the left. Pressure and shift on the left up the second beat gave Povall the lead, but after a solid downwind, Young reclaimed the lead and the win, followed by Povall and Emmett. The flat water and wind strength meant there was little difference in boat speed across the fleet so maintaining a clear lane and being in pressure were the priorities. This made it difficult to catch up with the front group if you were behind so a strong start at the biased end was important.

In Race 2, the leaders came from the left taking advantage of the pin-end bias and increased pressure on that side of the course. Rheanna Pavey led the way around maintaining a good lead on second and third by linking up the pressure and sailing lifted tack. Emmett and Young finished off the top three building up a consistent set of results.

Eager to get racing, the Radial fleet had yet more recalls in Race 3 with seven unfortunate sailors adding black flags to their scoreline. Starting at the pin-end and working the left paid up the first beat with Sally Bell from Ireland taking the lead at the windward mark followed by Povall. In the end, Povall took first, with Young in second and Bell in third.

The racing remained similar throughout the day and those that were able to link up the pressure gained. A clear start at the biased end was needed with the large fleet size and keeping the boat flat and powered up to maximize speed. Overall, despite the lack of racing on day one, we managed to get three good races in on Sunday. Georgina Povall took first overall on countback, tied on points with Ali Young who took second place, and Jon Emmett was third.



Georgina Povall – the overall winner of the Radial fleet at the Qualifier

Results:

- 1 Georgina Povall, 3pts
- 2 Ali Young, 3pts
- 3 Jon Emmett, 5pts

Full results:

<http://www.kbsuk.com/laser/events/showrace.asp?EventID=94&RaceURL=%5Bresults%5D/wpnsa2rad.2017nh.html>