

## **Laser Welsh Championships. New Quay Yacht Club May 21st - 22nd 2011.**

New Quay Yacht Club hosted the Welsh Laser Championships for the second year running. Last year the event was blighted by a complete absence of wind, which saw the competitors spending the weekend on the beach sunbathing. This year the wind gods turned up in force to give breeze gusting up to 36 knots both days. Perhaps mindful of the strong wind forecast, entries were down on those projected.

Saturday the fleet launched in a strong offshore breeze watched by a pod of dolphins swimming around off the end of the pier. Several competitors thought better of the demanding conditions and returned to the beach. Those that remained battled round in rising winds. Dom Breen-Turner, adopting the novel tactic of staying upright as much as possible, won the race, only capsizing once. Jonathan Morris was second with local sailor Douglas Lloyd-Haines 3rd. The racing was abandoned with wind gusting force 8 and the Committee boat unable to stay on station without running its engine continuously.

Sunday dawned with bright sunshine but still strong breeze but from the west giving better shelter in the bay. Race officer Steve Berry opted to run the racing closer into the beach giving more shifty conditions but slightly more manageable breeze and flatter water. Again the winds stayed strong but a total of 4 races were completed with an impressive display of high winds sailing by both the young guns in the full rigs and the former Laser European Champion Keith Wilkins sailing a radial rig. With only 8 competitors braving the conditions, which again saw gusts of up to 36 knots, the fleet was started together. Race 2 was won by Sean Evans with Breen-Turner 2nd and Lloyd-Haines 3rd. Race 3 saw Lloyd-Haines winning from Craig Williamson and Keith Wilkins with Breen-Turner returning to shore to get a new bottom section having spectacularly snapped his mast downwind. Race 4 was again won by Evans with Lloyd-Haines 2nd and Wilkins 3rd. The final race thus began with the result wide open. Breen-Turner won the race from Lloyd-Haines leaving them level on points with Breen-Turner winning overall on the last race result.

Final results: Full Rig; 1. Dom Breen-Turner, 2. Douglas Lloyd-Haines, 3. Sean Evans, 4. Jonathan Morris, 5. Cameron Smith, 6. Nick James. Radial: 1. Keith Wilkins (and 3rd overall), 2. Craig Williamson (and 4th overall)