



## Weather window looking favourable for the 17th Tiger Trophy

6-7 February 2010

By Dick Sanders 29 Jan 2010 07:10

Cold and bright with good breezes and definitely no snow is the 10 day projection for the Rutland Challenge for the John Merricks Tiger Trophy to be held at Rutland Water on February 6th and 7th. The weekend raises funds for the John Merricks Sailing Trust.

Following directly from the Steve Nicholson Memorial Trophy at Northampton this weekend, the Tiger is now the third event in the new SailJuice Global Warm-Up series for seriously hardy dinghy sailors. The final event is the Hoo Freezer on the 28th February with prize giving at the RYA Dinghy Show the following weekend.

Current leaders are 505 sailors Andy Smith and Tim Needham who have been warming themselves in the south of France following their victory at the Bloody Mary in extreme conditions.

Compared with Queen Mary, next weekend will be a "walk in the park" but with the added pressure of all classes racing directly against each other on an average lap basis followed by a non discard able pursuit race on the Sunday. There is still an outstanding bounty of £1000 for the sailors who win all four races.

In addition there is the Tiger Dinner, again sponsored by Everards, the independent Leicester brewery and held at Rutland Sailing Club. Ian Walker, Volvo and America's Cup Captain will be flying in from Oman to say a few words about John, his old sailing partner.

An on-line entry system from Sailracer has been used for the first time this year, following its successful adoption by the RYA at the Sail for Gold Regatta. Sailors are being encouraged to enter in advance to reduce the pressure on administration on the day.

Numbers are encouraging with the Laser 4000s, Phantoms, 420s, RS400s RS200s Fireballs, Moths and Lasers among others, building by the day. Rutland's central location has attracted a lot of entries from the north of England and Scotland in past years and this practice looks like repeating this year.

The English winter regattas allow all dinghy sailors to participate together, prior to the conflicting pressures of summer timetables. The Tiger also continues to raise more than half the total weekend proceeds for the John Merricks Sailing Trust to help it in its support for the early careers of young sailors.

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