

MYA Scottish District - 2024 season - a weekend of IOM sailing at Greenock Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September 2024

Report by Richard Rowan

Photos by Scott Braid and YT Chow

Greenock MY&PBC hosted two days of IOM sailing at Murdieston Dam on Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September 2024. Saturday was the serious day racing for the MYA Scottish District IOM Travellers 3. Sunday was a more relaxed affair racing for the 2024 Scotts of Greenock Trophy.

Saturday was the more intense day of the two days with a good entry of 14 boats, representing seven Scottish clubs and one English club, starting in a good #2 breeze and building to a mid #3 rig strength. Sunday had a somewhat lower entry of 11 boats and lived up to its billing of being more relaxed by way of the pleasant mid #1 rig wind strength.

Saturday - 2024 MYA SD Travellers 3

With a forecast of 15 knot southerly winds gusting to 25 knots, Race Officer Richard Rowan decided to set a course right up at the southern end of the dam. Courses at this end of the dam are not used very often and so the skippers faced a less familiar set of wind shifts and bends. For safety reasons, skippers were restricted to a control area adjacent to the clubhouse which made for a tricky rounding of the windward and spreader marks due partly to bright sun reflecting off the choppy water and the distance and angle of approach to the mark. The early races were held in a good #2 breeze with strong squalls, which most boats were able to cope with due to the relatively flat water.

As the wind started to move more into the south west, it was decided to move the race area across to the eastern end of the dam which gave the skippers a more familiar race direction of starting at the eastern corner and sailing up to a choice of windward mark about 2/3rds the way up and across the dam. Following this change of course the wind started to rise and, although the IOMs could manage to get to windward ok in the #2 rig, downwind gradually became harder and harder. As the afternoon progressed, the wind strength reached #3 level and just as the end of the day's racing approached, the wind strength built to the point where the IOMs in #3 rig were burying downwind. The period of stronger wind also coincided with a heavy rain which just made the sailing really difficult, never mind keeping upright on the top of the embankment!

Eventually 11 races were held. So, who did well and who did not so well? In the first four races, Tich Summers put together a consistent set of good scores. West coast skippers Robert Rooney and Gordon Allison got some top results as did east coast skippers Bob Wilson, Stuart Teasdale and north east skipper John Owens. However, Greenock was serving up some tricky wind shifts and squalls and of these latter skippers, only Gordon Allison managed several low scores.

When the course was moved to the eastern end of the dam, the skippers still faced regular shifts and the gradually increasing strength of the squalls but now also had a nasty chop to contend with. These conditions definitely tested the boats and a number of skippers required running repairs. Ian Dundas started to put together a set of good results which would eventually give him first place overall. Tich didn't seem to be quite so happy with the conditions and gradually fell behind Ian to finish in 2nd place overall. Gordon Allison slowly got on top of the stronger conditions and finished with a run of good results which gave him 3rd place overall. In the second half of the day's sailing, John Taylor finally got a good set up on his new Gillette design to register an excellent run of low scores which pulled him up to 4th overall.

In conclusion, the racing conditions were challenging for skippers and boats with even the top skippers often seen in the middle or at the back of the fleet.

Final scores top 5 skippers

#	Skipper	Sail #	Club	Score
1	Ian Dundas	38	Aberdeen MYC	23
2	Brian Summers	07	Tayside RYC	29
3	Gordon Allison	62	Ayr Bay RYC	32
4	John Taylor	03	Fleetwood MY&PBC	37
5	Stuart Teasdale	54	Kinghorn RSC	40

Race team Richard Rowan (RO), Bill Terry (ARO), David Smith (Scorer), Stuart Lang, Ian Marshall, YT Chow and Ted Johnston

Sunday - 2024 Scotts of Greenock Trophy

Race Officer Simon Thomson called the smaller fleet of 11 IOM's to the water with a pleasant south west to west 7 to 8 knot breeze in place - which then immediately disappeared leaving drifting conditions behind. However, fortunately the breeze quickly returned and the racing started in a mid #1 rig strength. This starting wind direction and strength remained in place for the rest of the day with Simon only having to change the windward mark once. The boats were getting round the beat course fairly quickly which resulted in 15 races being held.

Over the day, Greenock served up a wind which had frequent shifts and changes in strength, which lead to really good competitive and fun racing. Fifteen 15 races resulted in two 2 scores being discarded.

In contrast with Saturday's sailing, Ian Dundas immediately settled in and created an excellent set of consistently good finishing positions over the day to give him first place overall. The other top skippers just had a few more less good results than they could discard, so ended up gradually falling behind. Tich Summers came second with Robert Rooney close behind in 3rd position. Stuart Teasdale finally came good right at the end of the day by winning the last 2 races to finish in 4th overall only 2 points behind Robert.

Final scores top 5 skippers

#	Skipper	Sail #	Club	Score
1	Ian Dundas	38	Aberdeen MYC	21
2	Brian Summers	07	Tayside RYC	39
3	Robert Rooney	71	Paisley MYC	42
4	Stuart Teasdale	54	Kinghorn RSC	44
5	John Owens	33	Aberdeen MYC	53

Race team Simon Thomson (RO), Bill Terry (ARO), Richard Rowan and David Smith (Scorers), Stuart Lang, and YT Chow