

Barshaw Model Yacht Pond Centenary Regatta (DF95's), Paisley, 5th October 2024

Report by David Smith Photos copyright David Smith

Sixteen DF95 Skippers (and a dog) representing five MYA Scottish District Clubs came together at Barshaw Park, Paisley, on Saturday 5th October 2024 to compete for the William Bow Trophy in a regatta organised by Paisley MYC to celebrate the centenary of the opening of the Model Yacht Pond, their much-appreciated home water. Half of the cost of constructing the Pond was provided by the Government as unemployment relief with the balance contributed by Paisley shipbuilder and public benefactor, William Bow, who had the honour of opening the Pond on Saturday 4th October 1924.

The forecast for the day was dry with early cloud expected to break up and wind of around 10 mph and generally southerly in direction. Race Officer Robert Rooney set a course with a triangle comprising a beat the length of the pond, a reach and a run, followed by a second beat the length of the pond to the finish.

Racing in two heats commenced promptly at 11.00 a.m. Brendan Bocker won the first heat with a yacht borrowed from Robert Rooney for the day, closely followed by David Bell and Chris Nichols. John Taylor won the second heat, closely followed by Gordon Allison and Bob Collins. Immediately all five clubs present had representation at the top of the leader board. (John Taylor usually identifies with Greenock in Scottish District events.)

Ian Davidson was promoted to A Heat in the second race and finished second to Bob Collins. Ian was followed by Brendan Bocker. John Taylor had been first across the line but retired after an unresolved port/starboard incident on the water was brought to his attention and was demoted to B Heat. John Taylor immediately returned to A Heat in the third race which he won with Bob Collins second and Chris Nichols third.

A half-hour lunch break was taken around 12.30 after the B Heat of race four. All present were well refreshed; the treats included filled rolls brought by June McLaren, one of Paisley's two female skippers, who was sailing in the event, and swiss roll brought by Cameron Darroch, another skipper in the event. A birthday cake bearing 100 in candles was cut and shared. All was washed down by tea or coffee.

On resuming, race four was won by Chris Nichols followed by Bob Collins and Ian Davidson. Jim Boyle, one of our 2024 intake of new members was delighted to be promoted to the A Heat of race five (although he returned to B Heat for race six). Ian Davidson, David Bell, Arthur Black, Gerry McCulloch and Campbell Logan bobbed up and down between the heats and, on average, sailed in twelve of the sixteen heats completed in the day. Chris Nichols won race five from Brendan Bocker and John Taylor. Race six went to John Taylor followed by Chris Nichols and Gordon Allison.

In race seven David Bell sailed really well to take second place behind John Taylor with Chris Nichols third. There was just time to get race eight started before 14.30 to ensure that everyone could claim two discards. David Aitken was delighted to escape from the B Heat to sail in his first A Heat where he came in ahead of Brendan Bocker and Campbell Logan, his two colleagues from Largs MBC. The winners of race eight however came from 'the usual suspects' with Chris Nichols first, John Taylor second and Bob Collins taking third in a strong finish to the day.

When the scores were tallied up John Taylor came first overall and won the William Bow Trophy with Chris Nichols second, only two points behind. Bob Collins finished in a clear third, while Brendan Bocker was fourth, two points ahead of Gordon Allison. Thus, each of the five clubs represented had a member in the first five places in the results.

Jim Boyle led June McLaren and Cameron Darroch, two other new members of Paisley in 2024, by a comfortable margin to take the award for 'Best Improver.'

John Taylor thanked the Race Team of Robert Rooney, David Smith and Bill Lees for the smooth and efficient running of the event which had contributed to everyone's enjoyment of the day.