

2026 MYA Scottish District DF95 Championship, 21 March 2026, hosted by Ayr Bay RYC
Report by Nick Slane. Photographs copyright Nick Slane

Ayr Bay Radio Yacht Club hosted the first major event of the 2026 MYA Scottish District Racing Calendar at Irvine Beach Park Boating Pond on Saturday 21st March. The Race Team of David Belding, Bill Fitzpatrick, Charles Abbot and Nick Slane had been busy on the Friday laying marks based on a forecast of a gentle breeze from the west with maybe a touch of south in it. That should result in a windward leeward course the full width of the pond with a start line in the middle.

We were not disappointed and Saturday morning saw 17 skippers attend the event on what started out with a breeze building to a fairly steady 5 to 7 mph. The race team had opted for two heats with fleet sizes around 10 boats. On a sunny day with everyone on A rigs it made a splendid sight for visitors to the pond with lots of questions for the race team about what was going on – great advertising for our sport!

Early form favoured Paisley Model Yacht Club with Ted Johnston and Robert Rooney scoring early wins. There were also good performances from Cameron Darroch, Arthur Black, Bob Collins and Ian Davidson putting them in the running and a slightly slow but steady start by John Taylor of Fleetwood MYC had him right in contention. Malcolm Downie from the Ayr Bay club had made a strong start but a failed rudder servo put him after Race 3.

Slight wind shifts required some changes to the windward and leeward marks but did not delay racing. The Scottish District DF95 fleet is growing in strength and depth and several competitors (Campbell Logan notably) were finding themselves for the first time in that fun place of the promotion/demotion zone where you find yourself in nearly every race without a break. Five races were completed by the lunchtime with John Taylor, Robert Rooney and Ted Johnston all fighting for first place and with Bob Collins Arthur Black, Ian Davidson and Cameron Darroch fighting it out in the next group.

Lunch was a bit of a mixed blessing. Along with the break came a distinct change in the weather with a cold mist coming in off the Clyde hiding the sun and dropping the temperature to about 5degC. Visibility also dropped and at times it was difficult to see the windward mark from the start line prompting some to worry if we might have to cancel any further races. Fortunately, the fog did not kill the breeze and we were able to continue. However, with the wind shifting further south it required a change to the course alignment.

The change in the weather also flagged a significant change in fortunes for a number of key players – the classic “game of two halves”. John Taylor benefited the most with a string of excellent starts and first place finishes in the last five races. Gordon Allison claimed a number of second places and David Bell put himself firmly in the A fleet with second and third place finishes. At the other end of the see-saw Robert Rooney and Ted Johnston both found themselves visitors to the B fleet after mid race tangles.

By just after 4pm, ten races had been completed and any further races would run into the event time limit so it was decided to stop.

When the arithmetic was done (2 discards) the results were:

1 st John Taylor (Fleetwood MYC)	11 Points
2 nd Robert Rooney (Paisley MYC)	19 Points
3 rd Ted Johnston (Paisley MYC)	24 Points

Overall feedback from competitors was really positive despite the vey cold weather in the afternoon and all declared that they had a good days racing. David Smith (MYA SD Secretary) thanked the Ayr Bay Club and the Race Team for running the event and the RO thanked the competitors for racing in a spirit fully aligned to the RYA Racing Charter.