

Report by Richard Ennos

Castle Semple was the venue for a very hard fought Scottish District IOM Championships contested by fourteen skippers from six clubs within the Scottish District. The event was blessed with fine weather and a favourable wind which filled in from the south, veered gradually to the southwest, and varied in strength from top of number one suit to a fitful calm punctuated by squalls towards the end of the day.

After a slight delay to allow the local press to photograph the competitors, the event began with a fleet only too anxious to get started, resulting in a spate of general recalls in the early races. When the fleet did get away, it was Ian Dundas who immediately jumped into the lead recording two very convincing wins in the first two races. However it soon became clear that Ian would not continue to enjoy this level of domination, with Patrick Johnson sailing a newly acquired Britpop taking race three and Brian Summers with his own design Buzz II winning race four. Also showing impressive speed at these early stages was Gordon Allison's V9, while Steve Taylor with a new Britpop was consistently putting in low scores.

Sailing conditions on the long course were suitably challenging, and visibility of boats at the windward mark was hampered at times by the glare from the sun to which the skippers did not seem accustomed. However this could not excuse some poor behaviour by skippers at all levels within the fleet approaching the windward mark on port tack and failing to yield to yachts holding right of way. As the day proceeded the frequency of these incidents thankfully declined and fair and competitive racing broke out.

Through the course of the championships fortunes fluctuated within the fleet. John Owens had a purple patch shortly after lunch with multiple wins that pulled him up the leader board. Steve Taylor was making real progress until he broke a forestay, and had to take two races out for repairs. Undiagnosed forestay problems were also suffered by Richard Rowan who was only competitive once these were sorted out. This meant that the championship became a contest between Ian Dundas, who was struggling to find consistency in the early afternoon, and Patrick Johnson, in his trademark black puffer jacket, who showed great form throughout the last six races. In the end it was not quite enough to overhaul Ian Dundas who became Scottish District IOM Champion for 2016. The top five placings were:

1 st	Ian Dundas	Aberdeen	Britpop	38pts
2 nd	Patrick Johnson	Ayr Bay	Britpop	44pts
3 rd	Steve Taylor	Aberdeen	Britpop	52pts
4 th	John Owens	Aberdeen	Britpop	54pts
5 th	Brian Summers	Tayside	Buzz II	56pts

Race team: David Smith (Paisley), Nick Cowern (Levenhall), John Handley (Levenhall), Tony Mitchell (Levenhall), Richard Ennos (Levenhall)