

GUIDANCE FOR RUNNING SCOTTISH DISTRICT TRAVELLERS EVENTS

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The Scottish District IOM Travellers Series comprises of three events every year. The aim of these events is to provide an opportunity for skippers to sail at venues other than their home waters and experience a level of competition that will be more demanding than they might normally experience at their home clubs. The events also allow skippers to meet fellow enthusiasts from throughout the Scottish District and therefore serve a social as well as a competitive function. The aim of the events is that all skippers leave an event with a feeling that they have experienced a challenging but fair test of their sailing skills while in the company of a friendly, supportive but competitive fleet.

Travellers events must be set up to satisfy the needs of four categories of skippers:

1. Those at the top of the Scottish District rankings who wish to compete with the best of the skippers from other clubs in the Scottish District for the Travellers trophy.
2. Established middle ranking skippers eager to test their skills and improve in the company of the top skippers.
3. Newcomers to the sport who are stepping up a level for the first time.
4. All skippers are encouraged to join race teams and develop their competencies in the different roles involved in organising and running an event.

It is only possible to satisfy all of these categories if there is both careful planning and execution of the event. The following guidelines for running events are therefore provided with the desire that the objectives of achieving a successful event are fulfilled.

1. Race Officer

The host club should appoint a competent Race Officer with sufficient radio sailing experience to command the respect of the top skippers and possess local knowledge of the sailing venue and facilities. Ideally, they will have acted as part of a race team in the past and be aware of the problems likely to arise during the event. Taking on the Race Officer role should be seen by all experienced skippers as a duty that they are bound to undertake when events are held at their clubs in order to contribute to the general good of the sport.

2. Race Team

The host club should arrange a race team for a Travellers event of at least 5 people with members being assigned to designated duties with which they are familiar. These duties would include scorer, boatman, starting line judge, fleet assembler/finishing line judge, observer marshal. It is always good practice to use the organisation of an event as an opportunity to provide race team experience to new club members.

3. Fleet Size

Dependant on the venue the fleet size should be restricted to ensure that the step up from club sailing is not so great as to lead to a loss of quality in the racing experience enjoyed by competitors. Sailing in large fleets, as seen in national ranking races, requires a high level of skill and experience. This will not be possessed by many of the competitors who are new to the Scottish District Travellers IOM series. Conditions should be provided in which these skills can be learned and this can only happen if the step up in numbers from club to Travellers fleets is not too great.

Fleet size is at the discretion of the Race Officer and dependent on the venue, wind conditions, etc. It is recommendation that wherever the total number of boats entered

for an event exceeds 12 for a smaller boating pond and 18 for more open waters, HMS should be considered by the Race Officer. The MYA Heat Management System (HMS) provides the means to control fleet numbers. If in doubt, discussion and agreement at the event with the MYA Racing Secretary or other senior skippers is recommended.

4. Course Setting

It is notoriously difficult to be prescriptive about course setting due to the vagaries of the wind and the particular attributes of the sailing water. However, a few general guidelines are:

- a) In keeping with the policy for national events, windward-leeward courses that include a gate at the leeward end should be set.
- b) Windward mark:
 - i. Should be set so that it is both easily visible and in a situation where it is not in wind shadow. This is to ensure that fair strategies of mark rounding can be effectively planned and rewarded when well executed.
 - ii. Wherever possible, Port rounding courses should be used if and Starboard rounding courses avoided. This is particularly important for rounding of the first windward mark at which the majority of problems arise.
 - iii. The course should be set so that the distance from the start line to the windward mark is maximised. This is to ensure that the fleet has spread out before reaching the first windward mark.

5. Observers

For each heat, two observers should be appointed. The role of observers is to call contacts, record incidents and acknowledge resolution of incidents through penalty turns taken on the water. At the end of each heat, observers should report any unresolved incidents to the Race Officer. Observers are best drawn from the race team, but where more than one fleet is being used, may also be recruited from skippers who are not participating in the heat being sailed.