

MYA Scottish District IOM Travellers 3, Forfar Loch, Saturday 15th October 2023

Report and photos by Brian Summers

In summary - as good as it gets! Autumn sunshine and plenty of wind from the WNW blessed the fleet of twelve IOMs from across Scotland gathered at Forfar Loch for the last event in the Scottish District calendar for 2023. Hosted by Tayside RSC, seven clubs were represented with four from the east coast and three from the west coast. The fleet ranged from home designs, built at home with homemade sails to a 3D printed boat and the latest state of the art professionally constructed yachts - all were represented at some stage during the event at the front end of the fleet.

The PRO, Boyd Baird, started proceedings promptly at 09:45 with the skippers briefing followed by the first race at 10.00 with all skippers initially choosing their #1 rigs. However, even before the first race had been completed the breeze was starting to increase as per the forecast and there were numerous requests for a time out to change down. All but one skipper took advantage of the break to set their #2 rig which they stuck with for the rest of the day, although there were times when there was some talk of going to the #3 rig when the gusts came through at the very top end of #2.

Signs were ominous from the first races that Steve Taylor from Aberdeen, sailing his relatively new Venti design, was going extremely quickly and was going to be the boat to beat in the prevailing fresh conditions. Tich Summers from the host club sailing his home designed and built Buzz III, and no doubt with a little local knowledge, was sailing consistently well. Stewart Teasdale from Kinghorn, sailing his BritPop, took a while to settle in the conditions but soon started to record good results.

Further back a midfield tussle emerged between Richard Rowan, Gordan Allison, Ian Dundas and Malcolm Worsley. In the challenging conditions, Colin McGinnis, Simon Thomson and Bob Wilson were also keeping each other honest whereas David Smith regrettably retired after Race 5.

At the end of the event, fifteen races had been sailed. Steve Taylor had sailed exceptionally well starting with four bullets and although he was challenged at times by various skippers no one else had the consistency to make a serious dent in his lead even when he suffered gear failure (broken main sheet) late in the day and had to count the last two races as his discards.

Tich Summers, with ten top 3 positions secured second place overall. Stewart Teasdale with eight top 3 positions, was 3rd overall. Six different designs filled the first six places which along with some of home builds proving that skippers can be competitive without spending big.

A very big thank you must go to Forfar Sailing and Water Sports Club for again opening up their full facilities and providing exceptional catering throughout the day from coffee and bacon rolls on arrival in the early morning to homemade cakes at the prize-giving. Showing their progressive nature FS&WSC now have affiliation agreements with many other water users ranging from a university sailing club, fishing, canoeing, paddle boarding, rowing and of course radio sailing.

Many thanks must go to the race team (Boyd Baird, Ken McIntosh, Keith Furnace, Scott Graham & Ralph Knowles) who provided first class racing and without whom these events which the competitors enjoy so much would not be possible. Along with the usual bottle of wine for the podium places each competitor who was present at the prize-giving got a homemade jar of delicious jam to take home kindly donated by one of the safety boat crew, Keith Furnace.