Focus on Scotland

What’s happening North of the Border

Within the UK, the Scottish District is by far the smallest in terms of clubs and membership but is the biggest in terms of square miles and travel distances to events. It does however have the benefit of some excellent sailing waters and some interesting activities.

So who are we and what do we do?

Model Yachts have been sailed in Scotland since the middle of last century. The Scottish District first affiliated to the MYA back in May 1994 and was inaugurated with 3 member clubs - Buchanness, Edinburgh (now Levenhall), and Drumpellier. Since then Paisley, Greenock, Brechin Castle and Aberdeen have in turn affiliated to the MYA with Ayr Bay taking up membership in 2010. In the 1990’s the Marblehead and R6M classes were popular and the IOM was emerging. In this period Scottish District skippers finished at the front of the fleet at several major R6M and IOM championships in particular Richard Rowan, Alistair Law and Gordon Price.

The IOM is still predominant

The most predominant class in Scotland today is the IOM but there has always been a strong support of the R6M at Paisley who host a Scottish Championship every year. There is currently a resurgence of the RA class through the efforts of Hughie Shields from Greenock with 5 boats expected to take part this year in a relaunched Scottish Championship.

There are pockets of Laser, Micro Magic and Footy activity around the country but this has never flourished with the exception of a group of big boat sailors who sailed Lasers over the winter months and have now created Ayr Bay Club where they sail refurbished Marbleheads of 1990’s designs that they have been able to pick up for only a few hundred pounds.

Wooden boats are Characteristic of the Scottish District

A characteristic of the Scottish District is the number of wooden boats that are built and raced. This started with the A and 6M boats and of course the Fifies, but has carried over into the IOM class. A big drive for this came from the Brechin Castle Club where ex full size sailors saw in their move to Model Yacht Racing an attraction to build their own yachts. John Milne is on his 13th wooden boat and Hughie Shields has lost count. Some skippers also design their own boats and these have performed very well at Club and District events.

The wooden boats have proven to be a great help in getting potential members to try R/C borrowing wooden boats from various skippers.

Fine examples at the Scottish IOM Wooden Hull Championships. The standard of build just seems to go up each year and some of the boats are very good examples of traditional craftsmanship. Pictures Ian Dundas
Combined sailing produces reasonable fleets

Because clubs in the district are small there is a lot of combined club sailing to get reasonable size fleets. An example is the North East Clubs Winter Series where from October to March Aberdeen, Buchanness and Brechin Castle join up for a series of monthly races. Of course severe weather can impact the programme but what is strange is that the most northerly venue at Peterhead never seems to ice up. Paisley and Greenock also run joint events throughout the year.

Using Starting Advantages

Most clubs are using Starting Advantages at their club races. A detail of the Scottish district experience of Starting Advantages is given elsewhere in this edition of Acquaint. (See page 13 Ed.)

National events are run in Scotland

Although the district is small it punches well above its weight when it comes to running National Championships and Ranking Races, using the Castle Semple Watersports Centre at Lochwinnoch. This excellent piece of water has the added attraction of being only 15mins from Glasgow Airport, is very accessible by road, has parking alongside the launch area and good on site catering facilities. There is also a good selection of accommodation all around. What many visitors don’t realise is that the race team will have travelled just as far as they have since there is no club at Castle Semple and race equipment has been brought in from far and wide.

Two special events

The large number of wooden hulled boats led to the creation of a Scottish IOM Wooden Hull Championship in 2005 and this has been held every year since. The standard of build just seems to go up each year and some of the boats are very good examples of traditional craftsmanship.

For many years Richard Rowan has maintained an excellent district website where all activities and results are posted. If you want to know more about us then give it a look http://www.myauk.org.uk/Scotland/home.htm

More importantly why not come and see us and take part in one of our events - you will be made very welcome - make contact through the MYA Club Contact given in the Members Area.