

The Glasgow Grouse 2017



***Strathclyde Green* takes the Grouse from *Edinburgh Import*, on a tie-break**



RNCYC racing Edinburgh Import in the semi-finals, with Bardowie Castle in the background
© Patrick Condy

From ‘nae wind’ to 30kn gusts to ‘nae wind’, but the Glasgow Grouse delivered, on and off the water

This year, with a shiny new flight of boats, and 30 teams attempting to secure a space at the event, the members of Glasgow University Sailing Club could barely contain their excitement for the 5th year of the Glasgow Grouse from 28 - 29 October, 2017.

The week preceding the event had seen towing, boat repairs and anticipation reach unprecedented heights. The changeable wind forecasts predicted 15 knot winds with gusts reaching 33 knots on Saturday, and 5 knots gusting around 15 on the Sunday. The Grouse team prepared reefing lines, and after discovering that one of our new sails lacked any reefing holes, Aberdeen agreed to bring six of their sails to the event.

Competitors and helpers arrived on the Friday night, donned their tartan, sporrans and dancing shoes, and made their way to the Grouse ceilidh for an evening of energetic dancing and less injuries than usual. The three Newcastle teams who came up for the event appear to be getting the hang of the ‘Gay Gordon’ and ‘Stripping the Willow’, and along with the team from Nottingham they excitedly settled into the Scottish atmosphere for the weekend.



Some of the less rowdy ceilidh dancing ©Lindsay McCosh

Saturday morning dawned grey and cold. The race management team had 24 boats rigged and rearing to go for the 9:57 am start, but the Loch remained surprisingly windless. By about 10:30 am, a westerly wind had come up and the racing began, with early wins from Newcastle Blue, Strathclyde Pink and Glasgow Yellow. The forecast wind began to build gradually, and by 1 pm, with gusts of about 27 knots coming down the Loch, the race committee called boats ashore to reef. After about 40 minutes, boats took to the water again to test the conditions in newly reefed sails. A further half hour of intense sailing and gusts reaching about 30 knots followed, as well as some spectacular planing and capsizes. At 3 pm, after completing race 36, the race committee canned racing for the rest of the afternoon. Competitors leapt into their buses with relief, and headed back into Glasgow for a night of festivities.



Strathclyde enjoying the waves before a race! © Patrick Condy



Glasgow Purple looking determined upwind



Newcastle recover from a capsize



Fun being had on the water despite the wind!

© Patrick Condy



By 9 am on Sunday, 8 teams were changed and ready to launch for race 37 in the crisp, clear Scottish morning. However, the Loch resembled a mirror, and the wind forecast was far from promising. At 9:30, the race committee postponed the first start to 10:27, and headed upstairs to contemplate getting a result out of a 36 race Grouse.



Umpire dog boosting morale on the Sunday © Patrick Condy

Luckily, just after 10 am, patches of wind had started to materialise, which, despite being shifty, were enough to instil a wee bit of hope in the organisers' hearts. Competitors were on standby after 10:30 for an imminent start, if the conditions allowed it.



Joy levels are high on day 2 of the Grouse! ©Patrick Condy

The course management team had an uphill battle with shifty winds, but it gradually settled into the forecast northerly direction, and race 37 started soon after half past 11. The 60-race round robin was completed, and the race committee announced two possible formats for the afternoon depending on whether the wind held, which would either allow us to complete the quarter, semis and finals for the gold fleet alone, or give more people a chance to sail by holding quarters, semis and finals for gold, silver and bronze groups.



RNCYC gybing gracefully in the Scottish sunshine ©Patrick Condy

It soon became evident that the wind was dying fast, and the 'Nae Wind' plan was speedily put into effect, taking us straight into quarter finals for the gold fleet. The top eight teams from the group stage: RNCYC, Edinburgh Escorts, Edinburgh Green, Strathclyde Green, the Means of Propulsion, Newcastle Red, Edinburgh Blue and Edinburgh Import raced each other in high stakes, sudden death quarter finals.

RNCYC, Strathclyde Green, the aptly named Means of Propulsion, and Edinburgh Import made it through to the semi-finals. At this stage, Edinburgh Import and RNCYC, and the Means of Propulsion and Strathclyde Green were set to battle it out in best of three semis, before progressing to finals. However, the wind had other ideas, and after Edinburgh Import beat RNCYC in a closely contested race involving an epic smack down from RNCYC, and Strathclyde Green upheld their consistent record and defeated the Means of Propulsion in a 2-3-4, the wind died completely.

This left the Grouse results team with some complex calculations and deliberations. After spending some time pouring over Appendix D in the Racing Rules of Sailing, and successfully breaking the tie between Strathclyde Green and Edinburgh Import, the final results were as follows:

- 1st: Strathclyde Green
- 2nd: Edinburgh Import
- 3rd: Means of Propulsion
- 4th: RNCYC



Strathclyde Green win the Grouse trophy after an intense event ©Patrick Condy

We would like to thank everyone who made the event possible. Firstly, thanks go to our PRO, Craig Evans, who ran the racing very successfully. Secondly, thanks to our ARO, Robyn Fitzgerald, who provided humour and experience onshore, Izzy Burroughs for competently completing the results, with help from Niall McLeod and Peter Collings in the more difficult exercise of tie-breaking, and our Chief Umpire Niall McLeod for making calls and overseeing the umpire team of Charles Darley, Martin Nichol, and Gilmour Manuel. Shout out to Emily Robertson for her mysterious flight sheet magic, Ciaran McMonagle for patrolling the beach, and to all the helpers and volunteers who kept us well fed, laid the course, manned the start and finish boats and ferried competitors to the pontoon and back.

A further thank you to the Clyde Cruising Club Dinghy Section for their support and the use of Bardowie Loch, as well as our sponsors, Summer Sail Week, Viper, the Lansdowne, and Glasgow University Sports Association, whose support is vital to getting us on the water.

Hope to see everyone back again next year!

Lindsay McCosh

The sailing photographs are available at <http://bit.ly/2zeiyGh> and the ceilidh photographs are at <http://bit.ly/2zxtyPU>.

The **Grouse video** is also up! - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fG5GUo13osw&feature=youtu.be>

FINAL RESULTS:

1st: Strathclyde Green 2nd: Edinburgh Import 3rd: Means of Propulsion 4th: RNCYC

GROUP STAGE RESULTS:

Fleet	Place	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Gold	1	Edinburgh Escort	Edinburgh Green	The Means of Propulsion	Edinburgh Blue
	2	Edinburgh Import	Newcastle Red	Strathclyde Green	RNCYC
Silver	3	St Andrews Pink	Strathclyde Pink	Andy's Bitches	Glasgow Purple
	4	Newcastle Blue	Can for the Buoys	Big Booty Bitches	Aberdeen Blue
Bronze	5	Strathclyde Yellow	Glasgow Yellow	5 Sailors Minus Joe	Newcastle Brown
	6	Glasgow Beige	Aberdeen Skyte	Glasgow Blue	UHI Purple



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