



## 2021 IOM Nationals August 28<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>

The 2021 (30<sup>th</sup>) IOM National Championships were hosted by Fleetwood Model Yacht Club over the 3 day August Bank Holiday.

After registering and measuring in all 76 boats, the seeding races commenced at 10am on the Saturday in a light Westerly wind. The winners of the seeding races were, Stephen Taylor (Venti), Chris Harris (Britpop), Brad Gibson (Pop) and Graham Elliott (Britpop).

4 rounds of races were completed on day 1 with Brad Gibson stamping his authority early on with a brace of wins but the chasing pack of Chris Harris and Rob Walsh were not too far behind.

Day 2 saw the wind coming out of the East and building in strength quite nicely throughout the day. Our PRO, Derek Priestley, had his work cut out due to the importance of skippers realising a decent start was paramount in these conditions, this caused many general recalls and even a few black flag situations. The sailing was now some of the best encountered, shifts, gusts, long course and tightly compacted fleet in all heats. It was Brad Gibson once again owning the day with another brace of wins.

After sailing, all skippers, families, friends and volunteers were invited to a social evening at 'The Avenue' in Cleveleys where we were treated to a hot buffet and one of Dereks most difficult quiz's ever encountered, I feel it was the difficulty level of the quiz that sent a small group of skippers in search of a late bar back in Fleetwood to discuss the answers into the early morning.

Day 3, the final day, with another decent Easterly breeze and Gibsons sizeable lead it was going to be a fight for the podium for the chasing group. Coming into the final race of the event it was Chris Harris and Graham Elliott on equal points and a one race shoot out for the runners up position, positions changed throughout the race with Harris getting the upperhand and sailing a great covering race until the last 30m when Elliott made a final roll of the dice and broke the cover and manage to pip him on the finish line.

Of the top 10 designs there were 6 different designs on show, the Venti from Ceccarelli, the K2 from Jelacic, Akziom is a one off design by Graham Bantock, Vanilla is designed and home built by Craig Richards, Britpop is the design by Brad Gibson and the boat sailed by Graham Elliott was first launched in April 2011, bucking the trend to change designs every 2-4 years. Pop is a prototype design from back in 2014 by Brad Gibson, although he no longer owns this boat he did have great success with her back in 2015, winning the Worlds and again in 2016 winning the Europeans with her.

Many thanks must go to Fleetwood Club and the many volunteers that made this event a complete success. For 2022 the Nationals will make a welcome return to Castle Semple in Scotland where the fleet will be guaranteed a fantastic welcome and organised event.

IOM-GBR Management Team - <https://www.iomgbr.co.uk/>