



British Universities and
Colleges Sport



Match Racing Championships
2014

Press Release

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Southampton Solent University retain BUCS Match Racing Championship Bendon, van Dyke and Tiernan's prowess is convincing

The annual round of British student sailing championships – team, match and yacht racing – started last weekend with the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Match Racing Championships 2014, organised by British Universities' Sailing Association (BUSA), in conjunction with the Royal Yachting Association (RYA).

Fourteen teams, representing Bristol, Dundee, Durham, Exeter, Loughborough, Newcastle, Portsmouth, Solent (2), Southampton (3), Surrey and York, raced over three days on Portland Harbour at Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy in the RYAs fleet of Elliott 6m yachts.



© Nigel King

Last year's winners, Philip Bendon, Bruno Van Dyke and Chris Tiernan were back to defend their title. Sadly no team from Plymouth this year, but Tim Carter & Fergus Barnham were back for Portsmouth, Nick Wilkinson for Bristol, Jason Saints for Exeter and Tom Harrison for Southampton, along with Harry Frith in the Newcastle team.

Jack Fenwick reported in detail on the racing (from the vantage of his umpire's RIB) and filled us in at the end of the Championship.

Day one got off to a flying start. The cold wind and rain couldn't dampen the spirits of the 14 teams assembled in Portland Harbour, and 12 flights were completed by the end of the day. Competitors were split into two groups of seven:

Group A		
Philip Bendon	Solent	47
Tom Harrison	Southampton 1	332
Andrew Wishart	Surrey	419
Conor Simms	Dundee	909
James Cunnison	Durham	1076
Rory Mackenzie	Newcastle	0
Tom Lovesey	Solent	0

Group B		
Nick Wilkinson	Bristol	132
Jason Saints	Exeter	220
Tim Carter	Portsmouth	471
Annabel Vose	Southampton 3	477
Connor Miller	Loughborough	0
Matt Goacher	York	0
William Goldsmith	Southampton 2	0

Group A managed to complete their round robin with last year's champion, Phil Bendon from Southampton Solent, qualifying direct through to the quarter finals, with six wins from six races. The next two quarter final places went to Tom Harrison (Southampton) and Andrew Wishart (Surrey) taking the other two places in the quarter finals. It nearly didn't go all Bendon's way though; in the last race of the day a great charge from Harrison allowed him to overtake just before the finish line, only to be penalised for pumping, to give the win back to Solent. James Cunnison (Durham) was unable to put any points on the board, meaning he finished 7th in the group and was now knocked out of the competition.

Reports from the umpires were that most of the matches have been really tight and many of the results could have gone either way. The remaining three teams would now have to fight it out with teams from the other group for the remaining two quarter final places in Saturday's repechage, so all, for them, was still to play for.



© Nigel King

In Group B, races were very tight with no one team showing dominance over the others. With teams having done either three or four races overnight, each team was carrying at least one loss, so the pressure would be on these teams for their final group matches when racing resumed on Saturday.

Once ashore, the teams were treated to a hearty supper at the RYA's Portland House before the Umpires led a competitor debrief, helping to give the competitors an insight to the intricacies of Match Racing. BUSA President and chief umpire for this event, Peter Johnson, opened the briefing by saying "the standard of Match Racing at this year's event feels higher across the board than at previous editions, so all teams should be congratulating themselves".



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Day two brought similar conditions to the first day of strong winds, but, this time, without the rain. With Group B still to finish their round robin all was still to play for, and the final three flights were hard fought. By the end of the round robin the results were tight, with two teams, Exeter and Loughborough, tied with 5 wins each – Exeter topping the group having beaten Loughborough. At the other end of the Table, Southampton's Annabel Vose was tied with York's Matt Goacher, with the tie going York's way. Vose was understandably disappointed to be knocked out at this stage having shown remarkable flair during the prestart; indeed, in the race she won, her victory was the result of three penalties inflicted against her opponent before the start. It was an uncharacteristic lack of boat speed that was to prove her Achilles heel. Portsmouth's Tim Carter had shown impressive speed through the group stage and progressed direct to the quarters in third place. This left Bristol's Nick Wilkinson and Southampton's William Goldsmith to join York's Matt Goacher in the repechage for the last two quarter final spots.

Bristol's Nick Wilkinson was the dominant force in the repechage, winning all of his matches, with fellow Group B competitor William Goldsmith taking the other quarter final spot.

With the breeze holding strong and the sun occasionally making an appearance, PRO Richard Kingsnorth pressed on with the quarter finals. In the first group, Solent's Phil Bendon beat Southampton's Will Goldsmith 2-0, while Portsmouth's Tim Carter despatched Southampton's remaining team skippered by Tom Harrison similarly, 2-0. The second round of quarters also went 2-0 with Exeter's Jason Saints knocking out Bristol's Nick Wilkinson, and Loughborough's Connor Miller getting the better of Surrey's Andrew Wishart.

At the end of a long day a team of weary sailors and race officials headed back to Portland House for some well deserved dinner and debrief before an early night, in anticipation of the clocks changing.



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As the final day dawned, it was obvious that we were in for a completely different day's racing. As teams rigged the boats on the docks, there was very little wind in Portland Harbour. With just enough wind to get racing underway just after 9.00 all four semi-finalists found themselves parked up together at the windward mark, so the sensible decision to abandon was made. With the course re-laid, it was time to go again; this time all three matches got away and first blood went to Solent's Bendon in SF1 and Exeter's Saints in SF2. In the play-offs, Nick Wilkinson beat Will Goldsmith to secure his place in the 5/6th play-off. Semi-final 1 continued going Bendon's way with a 3-0 win over Carter. In Semi-final 2, however, it took all five races to decide who would be facing Bendon in the final with Exeter's Saints taking the win in the last race of what had been a hard fought series against Loughborough's Miller. In the play-offs Tom Harrison had defeated Andrew Wishart to put him in the 5/6th play-off and Goldsmith taking the win over Wishart to finish 7th overall.

In the finals, Bendon once again showed his dominance, winning 3-0 over Exeter's Saints. In the peti-final Miller clawed back from a defeat in the first race to tie at 1-1 meaning a winner takes all final match. In a very close match, Miller managed to overtake at the final windward mark and hold on to take the win, and 3rd place, by about a boat length.



Southampton Solent: Bruno Van Dyke, Philip Bendon, Chris Tiernan
Exeter: Jason Saints, Jordan Saints, Tarra Gill-Taylor
Loughborough: Connor Miller, Michael Matthews, Tom Neilson

Once ashore the teams made quick work of getting the boats lifted out and back to their shore berths at WPNSA, before a quick prize giving on the pier. BUSA president, Peter Johnson, presented the medals to the victorious sailors and, with that, we all went home.



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The BUSA Match Racing Champions 2014 are, therefore, Southampton Solent University (Philip Bendon helming, with Bruno Van Dyke & Chris Tiernan) for a second year.

Phil Bendon told us: "The guys did a great job over the weekend against some great teams. We were pretty pleased with how we sailed during the regatta. It is early in our match racing season so we were just trying to get back into getting our communication and boat handling to where it should be. We have the ISAF Youth Match Racing World Championships for Team Ireland this year and, so far, eight confirmed grade 2's and, hopefully, some world tour events, as well as plenty of grade 3's, so we should be pretty busy!

"The racing was good this weekend; it was good to get some heavy wind training and, then, for the final day, to have lighter conditions. It was nice to get some variation so we could try out some different tactics and handling techniques".

Connor Miller of Loughborough said: "Overall pleased with the result, Our goal was 3rd and we achieved that. At the time we were hoping to get into the Finals to race Phil, but the Saints sailed well and deserved to make it through.

"Racing was tough, and we were placed in the "round robin of death" where several quality teams fell victim to the curse and ended up in the repechage with a lot of sailing to make it through or get knocked out early. The Race Committee did well and kept on ploughing through the races completing all the quarter finals on the second day.

"The de-briefs after dinner were long and eventful, with everyone craving the pub; however, the umpires put on a good show and everyone learned a lot!

"Some more training weekends for the GBR teams before the FISU worlds are planned. However, plenty more sailing left with the Team Race Finals fast approaching, and Yachting soon after!"

Jason Saints generously responded saying, "Yes, Connor and his team were a big surprise and sailed very well. We didn't even know of him before this event, but he gave us some of our closest races, and we sailed all the way to race 5 in the semi finals. So he really did well and deserved his 3rd place. Definitely he has huge potential going forward!

BUSA committee member and umpire, Alan Baser, said after the event "we have had three days of great racing in some pretty varied conditions. I have been really impressed by the standard of sailing at this year's competition, and I'm really looking forward to seeing many of the sailors back next year for what I am sure will be an even tighter event."

Results:

1 **Solent 1:** Philip Bendon, Bruno van Dyke, Chris Tiernan

- 2 **Exeter 1:** Jason Saints, Jordan Saints, Tarra Gill-Taylor
- 3 **Loughborough :** Connor Miller, Michael Matthews, Tom Neilson
- 4 **Portsmouth:** Tim Carter, Harry Houlding, Fergus Barnham
- 5 **Southampton 1:** Tom Harrison, Jamie Diamond, Jonty Cook
- 6 **Bristol:** Nick Wilkinson, Robert Hooper, Fred Brown
- 7 **Southampton 2:** William Goldsmith Oisin McClelland Kate Devereux
- 8 **Surrey:** Andrew Wishart, Joe Stansfield, Joe Simmons
- 9 **York:** Matt Goacher, Sam Edom, Katie Dewing
- 10 **Dundee:** Conor Simms, Max Wyatt, Francis Munnoch
- 11 **Solent 2:** Tom Lovesey, Alexis Ackers, Dillon Hayes-Plantinga
- 12 **Newcastle:** Rory Mackenzie, James Morson, Harry Frith
- 13 **Southampton 3:** Annabel Vose, Emily Nagel, Alex Locke
- 14 **Durham 1:** James Cunnison, Matt Goodbourn, Guy Dixon

For full results visit: http://www.busa.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2014/04/14BUSA-BUCS_MRchamps_Results.pdf

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