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British Universities' Sailing
Association



US Inter-Collegiate
Sailing Association

Press Release
October 2015

BUSA USA Tour 2015

British student team victorious in USA



With the trophies at US Naval Academy:

Back Row: Ben Gratton, Connor Miller, Charlie Makepeace, Cam Douglas

Bottom Row: Tim Gratton, Arthur Henderson, Emily Nagel, Michael Matthews

The bi-annual transatlantic Tour, alternating between the USA and the UK, in which the US Intercollegiate Sailing Association (ICSA) and the British Universities' Sailing Association (BUSA) compete across the sailing disciplines, took place in the USA this year. The British team, nine of the top British University sailors, was carefully selected through a rigorous process and by an independent panel in March. The team comprised: Emily Nagel (Southampton), Connor Miller (Loughborough), Cam Douglas (Bristol), Ben Gratton (Oxford), Tim Gratton (Cambridge), Arthur Henderson (Cambridge), Charlie Makepeace (Bristol), Mike Matthews (Loughborough) and Sophie Shepherd (Nottingham).

Emily Nagel takes up the story:

Week 1

Upon arriving at JFK on Monday the 7th of September, we drove to Easton, CT where we met our hosts for the week, the Dellenbaughs. We had been given Tuesday off to allow us to recover from our jet lag and have a chance to explore NYC. On Wednesday the sailing kicked off at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy where we spent the day making the most of the incredible facilities training in their fleet of J70's. This training was in preparation for the 2K Team Racing that was scheduled for the following day. Unfortunately, however, on Thursday the match was postponed due to a storm passing over the New York area.

Harry Anderson Trophy

On Friday we travelled further up the coast to New Haven, CT where we spent the afternoon training with Yale and CGA for the Harry Anderson Trophy. This was our first opportunity to train in the Flying Juniors (FJs) and Z420s and the first time to line up against the US college sailors. Adapting to these new boats took a lot of time, while similar in design to the Firefly there were a number of techniques that we were unaware of. The fleet racing regatta began Saturday morning, and we sent out our four lightest sailors to make the most of the predicted light winds. The wind however decided to throw a curveball with breeze around 15 knots which our team made the most of. The results attained were fairly mixed, with scores improving throughout the weekend as we got to grips with the unfamiliar boat.

To begin with we were very much out of our depth as university sailing in the UK consists mainly in team racing with only one fleet racing regatta, while in the US they spend their first semester only doing fleet racing. The change in Rule 42 was another huge change for our sailors as the rule is simplified for US College racing, allowing sailors to 'Ooch' and to come out of tacks faster than one enters (allowing for huge roll tacks that in the UK one would be penalized for). Overall the weekend was a huge learning curve, but allowed our team to grow and improve, ready for the competitions to follow!



At Tufts © Ken Legler

Week 2

Following on from our time at Yale the team split, with Charlie, Cam and Ben travelling south to Georgetown for the Laser 3v3 Team Racing match and the remainder of the team travelling to Boston to train with the local teams.

The Laser match was hosted by Georgetown University in Washington D.C. and saw some competitive light wind racing between their top three team racers and our team. With Cam being the only Laser sailor in the team, it was always going to be a challenging match, but the boys performed exceptionally well. Our team outperformed the Americans when the wind was up, and they were able to team race, while the Yanks excelled in the lighter, flukier wind, where their boat handling was better. The match began with the boys winning the first 2 matches, but then, with the decreasing breeze, the Yanks caught up making the score 2 all. After some competitive races, they took the win with a final score of 4-3.



Nevins Trophy C Division (Laser): Ben Gratton © ICSA

Meanwhile in Boston the remaining six spent the week training with all the colleges in the Boston area. This began with an afternoon of training with Tufts at their incredible sailing pavilion just outside Boston.



At Tufts © Ken Legler

We were hosted by previous Tour Coach Ken Legler who ran the training session in the college turbo Larks and shared with us a slideshow of the ICSA tour to Britain in the 80's. The next day we headed into the city where we were hosted by Boston University at their riverside sailing centre. This session consisted of team racing training in the FJs with BU, MIT, Harvard and Tufts. Next, on the Wednesday, we moved further up river to MIT where we had the chance to train with the same colleges, but this time in the MIT Fireflies. These were an interesting experience as the hulls were the same Rondar hulls that we were used to, but with a custom rig. This consisted of a gnav instead of the usual kicker (much more room for the crew!), a larger main and jib, and 49er style rudders. The highlight of this session though had to be laughing at each other in the mandatory helmets that all sailors must wear when sailing at MIT.



Boston Harbour in Sonars © Ken Legler

On Thursday the team was reunited with the Laser boys having completed the 8-hour drive from Georgetown to Boston. This was necessary as it was the day of the second tour match, the postponed 2K Team Racing match. The match was organised by Tufts Coach, Ken Legler, and hosted by Piers Park on Boston Harbour in Sonars. In Boat 1 we had Connor (Helm), Mike (Main), Emily (Jib/Bow) and in Boat 2, Ben (Helm), Tim (Main), and Arthur (Jib/Bow). Again the wind was incredibly shifty, and, due to boat prep, there was no time for training in the boats prior to the match. The team sailed well against the New England Inter-Collegiate Association (NEISA) All-Stars - comprised of sailors from Tufts and Harvard - and won the second match of the Tour with a final score of 3-2.



At Tufts © Ken Legler



At the Nevins Trophy © ICSA

Nevins Trophy

The second weekend was spent competing in the Nevins Trophy, hosted by the United States Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point, NY. This fleet racing regatta comprised of three leagues with A and B competing in FJs and Z420s and League C using Lasers. We used this weekend to prepare our team for the team racing match which we knew would be sailed the following week in Z420s. This meant that we tried to rotate our team through the boats as much as possible to ensure maximum time on the water with the correct helm/crew pairings.

Significant improvements were made in comparison to the previous weekend, with the team finishing in 13th (out of 20) and with a number of top 5 finishes in all the leagues. Special thanks must go to Ken Legler for being our adopted coach for the weekend and giving us some helpful tips on how to sail the boats and some local knowledge.



Nevins Trophy A Division: Tim Gratton and Emily Nagel © ICSA



At Tufts © Ken Legler

Week 3

Our final week began with us travelling down to Annapolis, where we stayed with some of the staff members at the US Naval Academy. On Tuesday we were invited down to the campus where we were treated to lunch at the Academy mess hall and then given a tour around the entire site. After the tour we went down to the onsite Sailing Academy. The Naval Academy's sailing club consists of 18 Navy 44s, 8 Colgate 26s, 18 FJs, 18 Z420s and 18 Lasers, all kept at the Academy's own marina. The Academy is also home of the ICSA Hall of Fame, home to the BUSA-ICSA Tour trophies, which we were allowed to take out and take photos of. We took team photos with the trophies that we had already won, but we were careful not to take any with those we had not yet competed for, being slightly superstitious!



At Tufts © Ken Legler

The Lord John King Match Racing Trophy Match took place that afternoon in Navy 44s against the MEISA All-Stars, consisting of sailors from Georgetown, Navy, St. Mary's, and Washington College. The Navy

44's were a massive step up for the team, with none of us having much experience match racing in such a massive boat and with no training time. Luckily the American team were in the same position, and so the racing was fairly matched. With all 8 of us being onboard they were very busy boats, and we had to be organised and systematic to ensure we did not drop any of the races as it was to be a best-of-three match. The breeze was on, a first for one of our trophy matches, and this kept morale high, and the team flew to victory. We won the third match of the tour with a score of 2-0 and thus won the Tour with the team racing match still to go.

In preparation for the final match the team then travelled down to Washington D.C where we stayed with the Georgetown Hoya's once again. We celebrated our win of the Tour by visiting the National's Park and watching our first game of baseball! Thursday was spent training in the Georgetown Z420s where we worked on our boat handling, in particular roll tacking and gybing the boats.



St Mary's Inter Collegiate Regatta and the Final Match

Friday through Sunday were spent at St Mary's College of Maryland, two hours south of D.C. On Friday we had the opportunity to join in with the Seahawks' team racing training session before being treated to a BBQ at the clubhouse. On Saturday the fleet racing regatta began and the team were determined to make the most of the time on the water prior to the final match, scheduled to take place after racing on the Saturday afternoon. This meant we spent the day trying to figure out the shifts and conditions, while still improving our general boat handling.

The final match involved the entire time, with the six chosen helms rotating every two races. The ICSA All Star team comprised of 8 All-American Honors sailors from the Maryland region (St Marys, Georgetown, ODU, Washington College, and Navy). The racing began in 15-16 knots and saw our team take the first two races before a helm change (helms can only do a maximum of two races in a row). We took one more win before the breeze began to build, setting the score at 3-0. With the increasing wind we had a few mishaps and dropped the next two races, with the 5th race being lost only 100m from the finish. Then, with the score at 3-2, the pressure really was on and the racing became increasingly competitive. There were some absolutely incredible moves from the Yanks on the bottom reach, which put us in a 1,3,6 around mark 4, winning but only just. On the final beat we played the shifts and took the race, winning the final tour match with a score of 4-2.

On Monday 28th of September the team landed at Heathrow Airport victorious.

We would like to thank our sponsor **QuoVadis Global** for their support as well as the British University Sailing Association and their Alumni. Additional thanks must go to **David Dellenbaugh** and his family for hosting us and helping us with all the organisation when we first arrived. **Ken Legler** from Tufts also provided invaluable help, reorganising the 2K match and taking us under his wing at the Nevin's Trophy.



**Back row: Michael Matthews, Emily Nagel, Arthur Henderson, Sophie Shepherd,
Bottom row: Tim Gratton, Connor Miller, Cam Douglas and Charlie Makepeace**

BUSA Captains, Connor Miller and Emily Nagel summed things up: "BUSA Tour 2015 was outstanding. We would like to warmly thank all the coaches involved who made it possible. Our American counterparts were extremely helpful and went out of their way to make it all happen. We would like to thank and congratulate our team who were exceptional. Being on the road, living out of each other's pockets for four weeks is not an easy task! For what we have achieved together, a clean sweep of all the trophy matches, although 'eventful', made us proud. Our extremely diverse skill-set in all sailing disciplines made our team unique and admirable. So, to Sophie, Arthur, Ben, Mike, Tim, Cam and Charlie - congratulations and thank you".