



**British Universities and
Colleges Sport**

**National Fleet
Championships 2012**



Press Release

7 November, 2012

Plymouth University triumphs on home waters



The Fireflies are away at the UK Student Fleet Championships © James Forbes

195 sailors, in 105 boats and four fleets, competed last weekend in Plymouth Sound for the British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) Fleet Racing Championships 2012, in conjunction with British Universities Sailing Association (BUSA). The event was hosted by Mount Batten Sailing Centre, in conjunction with a partnership of Plymouth University and its Sports Union, Plymouth Youth Sailing, Plymouth Marine Institute and the University's Sailing Club, drawing in many volunteers.

Saturday dawned bright and chilly with the sailors keen to take on the challenging winds forecast. As soon as they had made their way to their start lines, the day's racing got underway. The Slow and Fast Handicap Fleets on the Blue Course raced on the western side of the Sound, with the course laid towards Cawsand Bay with PRO, John Burgoine. The Firefly and Laser Fleets were with RO Mike Johnson on the Red Course on the eastern side of the Sound, towards Jennycliff Bay.



Laser and Firefly Fleets in light winds on Sunday © James Forbes

Soon after all fleets had completed their first races, a few large shipping movements interrupted the racing and gave the sailors a brief break. Once the ships had moved through, racing restarted for the Firefly and Laser fleets, completing a second race. But the Fast and Slow Handicap fleets had to abandon, after the course was moved to accommodate a large vessel and then the wind picked up to 40 knots!! The Safety Fleet, were kept busy assisting capsized sailors and recovering boats. The fleets swiftly headed for Mount Batten, some evidently enjoying the blast, to de-rig and grab a hot pasty.



Oscar Daws & Arisudan Sheth of Brunel University
© Lloyd Russell, University Photographer, Plymouth

This was followed by the presentation of the 'Marine Institute 150 years with Plymouth University Trophy' by Paul Wright, Associate Director of the Plymouth Marine Institute. The trophy is awarded to the winners of the second Firefly race on the first day. This year the trophy went to Plymouth sailors Craig Dibb and Ali Masters, who had scored bullets in both races.



**Paul Wright awards Craig Dobb & Ali Masters
the 'Marine Institute 150 years with Plymouth University Trophy'**
© Lloyd Russell, Chief Photographer, University of Plymouth

The overnight leaders were Craig Dobb and Ali Masters of Plymouth University in the Fireflies, Lorenzo Chiavarini of Plymouth in the Lasers, Sarah Alton and Harry Derbyshire (in a 420) from Cardiff University in the Slow Handicap, and 29er sailors, Michael Matthews and Iain Millar of Loughborough University were leading the Fast Handicap Fleet.

The Students' Union hosted the Saturday night social, with the sailors dressing up in assigned colours from a Rubik cube, with the aim of swapping clothes with sailors from other Universities.



**Plymouth Radial sailors, Charlotte Greenhalgh and Sophie McKeenam
seek clear wind ahead of the all these Fireflies**
© James Forbes

As the sailors arrived on Sunday morning, it looked as though there would be perfect conditions. Following a very short briefing, crews headed out for the final day's racing. The first race of the day started in light conditions with many boats being carried by the tide during the race, and the race for the Firefly and Laser Fleets in Jennycliff Bay had to be abandoned. Between races the Race Committee and sailors had to contend with a 180 degree wind shift.

But the wind having picked up and the courses re-set, was perfect for the second and final race of the day.

Sam Brearey of the University of East London, sailing a Streaker, was 5th in the Slow Handicap. He came off the water exclaiming, “fantastic weekend, good race management and organisation on and off the water. Just a pity that the weather did not allow more races! There were a good variety of boats and skills and experience; it was particularly good to see the Finn guy”. Another single-hander, also from a university not (yet!) with a developed sailing club, was Kahla Delahay of the University of Wales, Newport (where she is a sabbatical officer). She sailed her Europe to 6th place, enjoying the sea state and wind conditions of the first day, commented on Sunday morning: “windy! gusty, challenging day. This is my first BUCS/BUSA event and, probably, Newport’s! It would be nice to have even more in the handicap fleets”.



Fast Handicap head up in light winds on Sunday © Dr Andrew Eccleston
– videoed from *Take the Helm* on loan to the PRO from Plymouth University’s Marine Science & Engineering

Another sailor who was the sole representative of his university at the event was Andy Brown, 3rd in the Laser fleet. But, for the second year running, he takes all-important BUCS points home to Newcastle University. He commented: “it was a good weekend in Plymouth. It’s always nice to have wind to sail in after travelling so far for the Newcastle team. It’s always a hard event in the Laser with many of the top guys at uni now. Would have been good to get the full series in as it was so tight, but that’s how it goes. And the social is always good on the Saturday”.



Fireflys head off © James Forbes

Skandia Team GBR and Scottish Laser sailor, Lorenzo Chiavarini of Plymouth, “really enjoyed the weekend’s racing. I thought the conditions were perfect, and it was a shame that we did not complete the series despite the Race Committee’s best efforts. I enjoyed sailing along side my training partners and felt that I learnt a lot from them. I was very proud of the Plymouth Uni team as all the participants took a professional attitude to the event. It was a nice end to the season, and it has highlighted some areas of improvement over winter”. Lorenzo went on to mention that “it has been difficult to balance the Uni demands with Skandia Team GBR commitments, but I am settling down nicely in Plymouth with a lot of help from my team-mates and lecturers”.

Pete McCoy gave a Finn sailor's perspective on the weekend's racing: "The BUCS fleet nationals went well for me on the weekend. I felt I sailed to the best of my ability in the Finn. We only managed 3 of 6 races due to having too much wind on Saturday and only completing one race. However on Sunday the race committee did an extremely good job of getting two good races in despite the wind swinging a whole 180 degrees. However, as all handicap racing goes certain boats will have the advantage in the given conditions on the day. 2 of the 3 races were sailed in 20+ knots and the three 420's proved to be the boats to beat in the slow handicap fleet in the windier races. They were able to plane upwind, something extremely difficult to compete with in a single handed heavyweight hiking dinghy. However, in the lighter race I achieved a good lead by sailing the shifts and tide to my advantage and beat the next boat by 2 and a half minutes on the water in a 39 minute race. This result helped secure 2nd overall and the silver medal".



Pete McCoy (University of Plymouth) in his Finn © Lloyd Russell

Speaking the day after the Championships, Pete gave further insight into the pressures on performance sailors combining their sailing with their academic work, "I am now in Weymouth training all this week as I have a Skandia Team GBR Olympic Development Squad camp next weekend (Friday-Sunday). I normally travel from Plymouth to train at WPNSA every Tuesday as we have no lectures on Tuesdays and then most weekends over the autumn....I do find it a challenge to juggle time between my sailing and University commitments; however, I am very lucky to have solid support from Team GBR specialists, and also Plymouth University gives me the flexibility to study when I'm not sailing".



Sarah Alton & Harry Derbyshire (Cardiff Uni) (420) and Sam Brearey (Uni East London) (Streaker)
© Lloyd Russell, University Photographer, University of Plymouth

Once all sailors were ashore and changed, the prize giving got underway, with BUCS Medals and trophies being presented by PRO John Burgoine and BUSA Chairman, Ed Morris, with Event Director, Jess Beecher:

Fast Handicap: 1st Michael Matthews and Iain Millar (29er) Loughborough University
2nd Jack Holden and Carla Sheldon (RS200) Southampton Solent

	3 rd Tim Norris & Finn Taylor (RS400)	University of Plymouth
Slow Handicap:	1 st Sarah Alton & Harry Derbyshire (420)	Cardiff University
	2 nd Pete McCoy (Finn)	University of Plymouth
	3 rd Nia Jones & Freya Adams (420)	University of Exeter
Laser:	1 st Lorenzo Chiavarini	University of Plymouth
	2 nd Filip Kobielski	Aston University
	3 rd Andrew Brown	Newcastle University
Firefly:	1 st Craig Dibb & Ali Masters	University of Plymouth
	2 nd Jason Saints & Lucy Goff	University of Exeter
	3 rd Phil Sparks & Poppy Maxwell	University of Bristol

Impressively, the University of Plymouth medalled in every fleet, and were crowned BUCS Fleet Racing Champions 2012. The team competition placed the University of Exeter 2nd, Southampton Solent University 3rd, Bristol University 4th and Loughborough University 5th.



Commodore Neil Marshall with Ali Masters & Craig Dibb and the Plymouth University team
© Tony Mapplebeck

Jack Smith, Plymouth's Fleet Captain, was clearly delighted to be receiving the Team Trophy, the award of which drew a massive roar from an audience which had been generous with their support throughout the proceedings. He explained that "we set out to choose the biggest team ever and entered our best sailors, including many of whom are competing well at European and World levels. The weather over the weekend was certainly interesting, and this provided some equally interesting sailing. I am very proud of the team's efforts and success, and I hope that we have provided an enjoyable weekend for all competitors".

Phil Timing, Watersports Coordinator & Development Officer at the University of Plymouth Students' Union, brought another BUCS Fleet Racing Championships to a conclusion by thanking competitors and organisers for making this another successful and memorable one. He paid tribute to the Event Director, Jess Beecher and her team, to the Race Committee and to the Jury, to Adrian Peach of Plymouth Youth Sailing and all his Safety team, to the Marine Institute for its continuing support, and, especially, to all the many volunteers who had helped on and off the water, managed the beach, organised the socials, taken photographs and contributed to the success of the event once again. He thanked all the staff of the Mount Batten Centre for doing a fantastic job hosting the event. He paid particular tribute to the sailors of the University of Plymouth for bringing home the Team Trophy this year.



Phil Sparks & Poppy Maxwell of Bristol University © James Forbes

The University of Plymouth Sailing Club's Commodore, Neil Marshall, representing the host club and involved in much of the organisation, had been constantly ensuring that everything was working smoothly over the weekend, as well as variously sailing a Laser II and, after damage on Saturday, a Laser 5000. "It was a fantastic event to organise and a lot of fun to get volunteers together to work both on and off the water. The socials seemed to be successful [some mention here of purple tights, which may be best explained by reference to the many Facebook blogs after the event]. It was an honour to host the Championship, and icing on the cake that Plymouth won it this time. We hope to see BUCS and BUSA back soon!"

BUCS Points earned by boat:

Fast Handicap:

- 1st Michael Matthews & Iain Millar (29er) Loughborough University (12 BUCS points)
- 2nd Jack Holden & Carla Sheldon (RS200) Southampton Solent (8 BUCS points)
- 3rd Tim Norris & (RS400) University of Plymouth (6 BUCS points)
- 4th James Penty & Sam Jacklin (RS200) University of Plymouth (4 BUCS points)

Slow Handicap:

- 1st Sarah Alton & Harry Derbyshire (420) Cardiff University (12 BUCS points)
- 2nd Pete McCoy (Finn) University of Plymouth (8 BUCS points)
- 3rd Nia Jones & Freya Adams (420) University of Exeter (6 BUCS points)
- 4th Meia Harnett & Ed Riley (420) University of Exeter (4 BUCS points)

Laser:

- 1st Lorenzo Chiavarini, University of Plymouth (12 BUCS points)
- 2nd Filip Kobielski, Aston University (8 BUCS points)
- 3rd Andrew Brown, Newcastle University (6 BUCS points)
- 4th Cameron Douglas, University of Bristol (4 BUCS points)

Firefly:

- 1st Craig Dibb & Ali Masters, University of Plymouth (12 BUCS points)
- 2nd Jason Saints & Lucy Goff, University of Exeter (8 BUCS points)
- 3rd Phil Sparks & Poppy Maxwell, University of Bristol (6 BUCS points)
- 4th Chris Rust & James Vineer, University of Portsmouth (4 BUCS points)

Team Trophy and team BUCS points:

- 1st Plymouth University 20 BUCS points
- 2nd Exeter University 14 BUCS points
- 3rd Southampton Solent University 10 BUCS points
- 4th Bristol University 7 BUCS points
- 5th Loughborough University 5 BUCS points
- 6th Portsmouth University 3 BUCS points
- 7th Surrey University 2 BUCS points
- 8th Birmingham University 1 BUCS point

The **full results**, together with all other information, are available on the BUSA website at www.busa.co.uk.

~ Ends ~

With thanks to Dr Andrew Eccleston of Plymouth University's Department of Marine Science & Engineering, James Forbes, Plymouth University Sailing Club's official photographer, Alex King of Mount Batten Watersports & Activities Centre and Elliott Russell, University Photographer, Plymouth for their photographs

PHOTOGRAPHY
WITH
PLYMOUTH
UNIVERSITY

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James Rosser & Philippa Mitchell (Birmingham) and Liam Arrowsmith & Richard Long (Plymouth),
with Filip Kobielski (Aston) in the Laser © Alex King, Mount Batten Centre



PRO John Burgoine wonders whether he is aboard Titanic rather than the Race Committee's craft
© Alex King, Mount Batten Centre



Mount Batten Watersports & Activities Centre © Lloyd Russell