



British Universities and
Colleges Sport

Yachting Championships
2013



Press Release

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Southampton see off Cambridge and Portsmouth at British Universities' Yachting Championships 2013



BUCS Medallists: 2nd Cambridge Blue, Champions Southampton Red, 3rd Portsmouth Black © Tony Mapplebeck

British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS), in conjunction with the British Universities Sailing Associations' (BUSA), held the University Yachting Championships 2013 at Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth last week.

Over 200 student sailors, in 26 teams, from 17 British Universities - Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Exeter, Glasgow, Loughborough, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oxford, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Southampton, Southampton Solent, Strathclyde, Warwick and the University of the West of England – boarded Sunbeam F40s at Port Solent on Sunday evening. For most of them, these became their homes for the week.

Racing started with a Practice Race on Monday, but moved then directly into the competition. For some teams this will have been one of the first times they had sailed together, while others had been training

through the winter, though experience in the F40s was variable. All teams required at least two crew members with keelboat experience; while some teams had very experienced keelboat and dinghy sailors, each year podium places are taken by helms and crews who had no keelboat experience before coming to university. BUSA provides senior coaches on the water throughout the racing, who provide detailed feedback and an evening video debrief.

The 2013 Championships saw a range of conditions, wind and visibility over the course of the week, providing a good test of skill, with only the very last race having to be foregone when the wind dropped away.



© Sean Clarkson

An innovation this year was the provision of an F40, crewed by two student yachtsmen, as a VIP boat. On most days this was a popular opportunity for visitors to watch the racing, but the event had a special visit on Tuesday from senior representatives of BUCS and the RYA, watching all three races. BUSA Secretary, Jessica Beecher and BUCS Sport Coordinator, Francesca Stirling hosted the VIPs. By all accounts, experienced helm, Sarah Treseder, RYA Chief Executive, took charge during the inshore coastal race, ordered the raising of sails and had Mark Brian, BUCS Head of Sports Programmes and John Derbyshire, RYA Performance Director, working hard (Mark can now claim to be an accomplished grinder!) so that, albeit without spinnaker and with a reef, the VIP boat seemed to make excellent speed ahead of the racing fleet.



The VIPs having a blast

© Paul Edward Renshaw

After returning to shore at the end of the day, Sarah Treseder said, "the organisation was great, and I was extremely impressed by the enthusiasm, boat handling skills and tenacity of the crews. When I was at university this kind of event didn't exist, and I envy the students of today who have the opportunity to

challenge themselves in this way – its effect can only be positive for both them and the future of the sport”.

BUCS Head of Sports Programmes, Mark Brian, visiting a university sailing competition for the first time, commented, “the BUCS Yachting Championship is not only striking due to the nature and size of the boats, but for the quality of sailing. To be out on the open water and to watch at first hand the skill needed to manoeuvre the SunSail boats around tight courses in choppy conditions was very impressive. The races were all extremely close and required some quick thinking and precision handling; tactics were clearly the order of the day. The support that the RYA provide for student sailors clearly enables them to attend university, to study and yet still to continue to sail at the highest level, along with providing an extensive programme covering Fleet Racing, Match Racing, Team Racing and Yachting”.



© Tony Mapplebeck

John Derbyshire added, “fantastic to see the quality of the fleet yesterday with some challenging conditions enabling those more skilled in big boat racing to work their way to the front. The crew lists show a combination of current British keelboat sailors, ex Youth squad sailors and a significant number of sailors new to this side of the sport; the rate of learning was clear to see, even during the day. A big thanks to SunSail for making their boats available, and it must be unique to any University sport where the competitors live in their arena, in a city centre area, close to a shopping mall and night clubs! A great experience all round. A credit to the British University Sailing Association for organising it and to the BUSA coordinator, Jess Beecher, in particular”.



**Southampton Blue take the Jim Saltonstall Teapot for winning the long inshore race
Nick Robson, Will Goldsmith, George Finch, Chris Lawson-Johns,
James Hayward (helm), Kat and Matt Burleigh & Becky Thomas**

Two inshore coastal races took place during the week, the longer one taking some five hours on Wednesday. The winner of this long inshore race was Southampton Blue, helmed by James Hayward. The team won the Jim Saltonstall Teapot Trophy. Jim was, for many years, President of BUSA.



© Tony Mapplebeck

Ed Gibbons of Portsmouth Black, speaking half way through the event, explained that “we didn’t have a plan; we came open-minded. After the first day, in the Practice Race, we found that we were relatively quick, and we had a couple of consistent scores in the first two races. With a 6, 1, 5 in the races today, I was particularly happy to have won a race!” Portsmouth Black’s consistency led them to an overall third place in the Championship. When asked about their training, Ed explained that they had started weekly training in February this year, but there was a big overlap with their sailors’ commitment to Team Racing.



Portsmouth Black go racing

© Paul Edward Renshaw

Alice Courage, the winner of the Ladies’ Helm prize, with Southampton Solent Red in 12th overall, had evidently enjoyed the racing. “It has been good fun. Tough conditions. Our team were pretty ‘last minute’, so this was our first event together, with no training. We gelled and went.” It was very encouraging to see five lady helms at this Championship; it is hoped that this will be a developing trend.



Southampton Solent Red in action, with Alice Courage at the helm © Sean Clarkson

The victors in the Championship were Southampton Red, whose helm, Bleddyn Mon, told us that his multi-talented team “came with high expectations. As individuals we have a lot of experience in both keelboat and dinghy racing, though maybe lacking in time on the water together, especially in these boats; we had just half a day’s training in the F40 before this week. We were confident that we could put the boat in the right place on the race course and pull off most boat handling manoeuvres, but were unsure of boat specific set up. Luckily we had Pat Jolly, who has a lot of experience in these boats, coaching us on the first two days.



2013 Yachting Champions, Southampton Red © Paul Edward Renshaw

“We had a good start to the week with a 6th and a 1st on day one. This put us second overall just behind our team mates Southampton White, though we still had room for improvement. Day two was a long day with two windward leewards, followed by a round the cans coastal. The strong winds meant kites were not allowed for the first two races, which lead to some tight racing and even tighter finishing. We kept our cool and scored a 2nd and 3rd, followed by 1st in the coastal - a non-discardable race!



2013 Yachting Champions, Southampton Red, swopping here their red livery for Champions' jackets

“The next day was the long distance race which couldn't have started much worse – we got pinned out at the Committee boat end, then, re-approaching, we infringed another boat and did our spins. All quite exciting bearing in mind there was only 3knots of breeze! It was all on from here. By mark one, we were up to the tail end of the fleet. Then it was a long run/reach down to Cowes with the tide behind, which made gaining places difficult. Fortunately we had caught up to the back of the main pack by the time we reached Gurnard, and, with the tide firing boats wide, we squeezed inside. Now we were making progress, and after the tight kite reach across the channel we were up to 12th. Unfortunately, a slight misjudgment of the tide at the next mark meant we kissed it with the back corner. So, after another spin, we were off playing catch up again. On the long beat from Southampton Water to Stokes Bay, which involved quite a few tacks up the beach, we clawed back some places to finish in 12th. This put us a few points clear of our main rivals, Cambridge, going into today.

“The first of two scheduled races today started in arguably no wind. We aimed to track Cambridge if we could, but the light wind meant we had to sail our own race. We worked the left hand side of the beat, in the hope that the breeze that we could see up wind would come in that side first - it didn't! Fortunately at the windward mark Cambridge were only four or five boats ahead, and Portsmouth, who were 3rd overall, were behind us. On the run, the slight breeze that did come in was dissipating, so the Race Committee shortened the race to one lap. This led to a slow drift to the finish with Cambridge just in front, though we knew we would both be discarding this race and, therefore, we would remain in front. After an hour or so of postponement and one attempt at starting, the Race Committee decided to call it a day.”



Cambridge Blue (4002) in the fray on Day 1

© Sean Clarkson

Matthew Deacon-Smith of Cambridge Blue to second place overall and was clearly pleased with his team's performance when all were back at Port Solent YC for the Prize Giving. He explained that "we came with the expectation of achieving a top 10 place, but are delighted how it played out. The event has been really well organised, including the course laying. Some teams complained about the use of the black flag, but it seemed to us appropriate in the conditions. We had trained on the F40s in some eight sessions over the preceding academic terms, and it was great to pull through to the front, having won the Varsity match at the weekend". Tactician, Jack Davies added that "there were really good competitive crews to race against. We are very pleased to finish in the first group against well-drilled south coast teams".



Nearest the shore, Ed Harrison, competing in his seventeenth and last BUSA event and helming Durham Blue to fourth overall, with Southampton Solent Black (Jack Holden) in the foreground © Sean Clarkson

The Yachting Championships brings to a conclusion the four national events – in Fleet, Match, Team and Yacht Racing - in the BUCS/BUSA sailing calendar for another academic year. BUSA looks forward to hosting the bi-annual UK/USA Tour in Match and Team Racing this summer and to several FISU and other international events at which BUSA will be represented. Many of our sailors are already competing in the season of ISAF Olympic Class and major yachting events, and most student sailors will have a busy summer's competition schedule ahead of them. Meanwhile, the BUSA Calendar for 2013 – 14 is filling up. The 2014 Yachting Championships will be held from 13 – 17 April, 2014.

Top dozen teams:

1. Southampton Red (Bleddyn Mon, Annabel Vose, Max Richardson, Toby Mumford, James O Mahony, Amy Prime, George Johnson, George Thompson) 25 points
2. Cambridge Blue (Matt Deacon-Smith, Jack Davies, Eddie Romano, Tim Worrall, Imogen Whittam, Barbara Muehlemann, Dan Murray, Piran Tedbury) 29 pts
3. Portsmouth Black (Ed Gibbons, Harriet Poulter, Tim Carter, Harry Houlding, Fergus Barnham, Harriet Morris, James Vineer, Euan Welsh) 34 pts
4. Durham Blue (Ed Harrison, Konrad Weaver, Robbie Urwin, David Burn, James Buckley, Bella Roberts, Catherine Taroni, James Cunnison) 39 pts
5. Portsmouth Purple (George Hand, Lucy Evans, Liam Gardner, Oliver Clark, Chris Rust, Amy Clay, Thomas Foster, Henry Archer) 40 pts
6. Plymouth Black (Daniel Wray, Andrew Sinclair, Jack Kilburn Capt, Matt Haslam, Natalie Gill, Haley Bouma, Sandy Macpherson, Dom Silman) 43 pts
7. Exeter Blue (James Anderson, Martin Evans, Tom Brophy, Alice Butler, Nia Jones, Sarah Douglas, Steve Gibson, Harry Aitchison) 45 pts
8. Southampton White (James Wilkie, Matt Foskett, Richard Burrows, Conrad Manning, Erica Leung, Lillie Cable, Jonty Cook, Dan Saltmarsh) 53 pts
9. Plymouth Pink (Craig Dibbs, Chris Taylor, Will Broughton, Alex Alcock, Emily Mulligan, Anna Masters, Ali Masters, Edward Roberts) 53 pts
10. Oxford Blue (Henry Course, Robert Fink, Eric Topham, Ed Gryspeerdt, Vanessa Johnen, Alex Bajjon, Antoine Robin, Julia Toynton) 58 pts
11. Plymouth White (Chris Matthews, Pete McCoy, Marcel Herrera, Tim Norris, Eleni Morus, Suzanna Stoke, Leopold Scholefield & Alex Burgis) 62 pts
12. Solent Red (Alice Courage, Philip Bendon, Alex Gardener, Andy Liss, Rob Henderson, Carla Sheldon, Jack Cunningham & Bruno Van Dyke) 63 pts