

Press Release

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Student Yachting World Cup 2014



A start at the BUCS/BUSA Yachting Championships 2014 © Sean Clarkson

Welsh, Scots & English Student Yachtsmen head for Worlds in La Rochelle

The Student Yachting World Cup (SYWoC) is back in La Rochelle for 2014. Three British teams - representing Wales, Scotland and England – are setting out for the 34th edition of SYWoC. The event, organized every year in France by students for students, will be sailed in Grand Surprise boats from the 15th to the 22nd of October. Student teams from Southampton, Strathclyde and Cardiff Universities will compete against teams from around a dozen countries.

For Annabel Vose & Kate Devereux of Southampton and Ali Morrish & Theo Hoole of Strathclyde, in particular, there is a real sense of unfinished business after their strong performances in 2013. Southampton finished just off the podium last year, and Strathclyde was eventually in 6th, although they had been in the top five most of the way.

British teams – one per country – qualified at the annual BUCS/BUSA National Yachting Championships held in April on the Solent.

Team England will be the 2014 British Yachting Champions, the University of Southampton, represented at La Rochelle by Annabel Vose (skipper), Jamie Diamond (Nav), Dan Flanigan (Main), Conrad Manning (Upwind Trim), Kate Devereux (Pit), Jonty Cook (Kite Trim) and George Johnson (Bow). Four are continuing their studies at Southampton this academic year and are joined by 2014 graduates, Dan Flanigan and Jonty Cook.



British Student Yachting Champions 2014, Southampton Red © Tony Mapplebeck

Speaking before the event, Kate expressed her excitement at “meeting new people from lots of different countries and racing against some of the best students in the world”. Dan echoed Kate’s enthusiasm, adding “we came together as a team in a short time period before the Nationals, back in April. We gelled instantly, and I am looking forward to continuing to race with this group in France!



Team England, University of Southampton at SYWoC 2013 © SYWoC

"We have all been away developing our skills since then; Jamie and I have been part of a Ker 40 campaign for some of the summer, while Kate and Jonty were part of a youth Etchells team based in Cowes up until the end of September. I believe we have a really strong team and hope we can do our University proud!" Speaking of what the team hoped to achieve from the event", Jamie commented: "We are hoping to improve on the teams' position from last year (4th) and break into the top 3, bringing home a medal for England. With the wealth of experience on the team, I believe this is achievable."

Team Wales (Cardiff University) are lining up Jack Muldoon (Captain & Bow), Tom Firth (Skipper & Helm), Freddie Purcell (Main), Harry Derbyshire (Trim 1), Helen Armstrong (Trim 2), Matthew Wallis (Tactics), Emily Wiltshire (Pit) and George Jackson (Mast).



Team Wales, Cardiff University on the ferry for France yesterday night © Emily Wiltshire

Cardiff's former Commodore, Emily Wiltshire explains that they "have all been individually training for this event as it was not feasible to get any training together on a yacht due to work/being away at bad times. This has included Etchells, J80's, quarter tonners and the likes, so a huge variety - including dinghies! We had a large turn-out for Cowes Week and have been doing lots of racing in either the Solent or Cardiff Bay, so La Rochelle will be a bit different! We hope to do as well as we can, but most importantly, 'work hard, play hard'!"

The University of Strathclyde's Captain, Peter Cameron, reports that his sailors have been making the best of their summer to train as Team Scotland in preparation for the 34th SYWoC. After their best ever result at BUCS/BUSA Yachting Nationals and having finished 6th at the 33rd SYWoC, they are determined to better this. Since 2012, their team has been getting stronger and more successful. Having won SYWoC twice in the past they have the ambition to repeat this and are determined to make this their long-term aim for the next few years. Being crowned Scottish Student Sailing Match Racing Champions a few weekends ago has given them a great warm up to go forward to the Worlds with confidence to come out with a top result.

Despite being scattered all around the UK over the summer, the majority of the team have managed to compete on the same boat in club races twice a week throughout the summer. This has greatly improved their communication and helped them work on any weaknesses. They have been training on all different sizes of yachts, trying to replicate the Grand Surprise in any way possible. Some team members have managed to train on a Corby 29, which is very similar size and set up to the Grand Surprise.

They have the confidence to do well and are hoping that their training and dedication will pay off. The team have had to make a very late last minute team change due to University reasons. But

with the high level of teamwork that they currently have they don't believe that this should hinder their performance but only give them greater ambition to make Scottish and British sailing proud.



Strathclyde Blue at the British Student Yachting Championships 2014 © Tony Mapplebeck

Peter Cameron concludes by saying: "As Team Captain, I am excited to go and compete among the best. We are a very young and new team, and this will be a huge learning curve and a lot of experience will be gained for following years to come. After our performance at BUCS Yachting, I have full confidence in the everyone to step up their performance and to deliver the same team effort. There have been a few changes made, and, hopefully, it will better the team's overall result."



Strathclyde Blue leading round the mark at the British Student Yachting Championships 2014 © Sean Clarkson

The British Universities Sailing Association (BUSA) has provided financial support to assist the three teams to compete at La Rochelle, but their campaigns are largely self-funded. Daily news flashes will be made on BUSA Sailing Facebook - www.facebook.com/groups/busasailing - during the event, supplementing news from the event organisers [official website: <http://www.sywoc.org>; Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SYWOC>], with a full report on www.busaa.co.uk/.



British Student Yachting Champions 2014, Southampton Red in action on the Solent © Sean Clarkson