



**British Universities and  
Colleges Sport**  
**Fleet Championships  
2015**



## Press Release

23 March, 2015



Fireflies racing at the 2014 Championship © Sean Clarkson

## Cardiff University to host the BUCS Fleet Racing Championships 2015

British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS), together with British Universities Sailing Association (BUSA), is delighted to announce that the Cardiff University will host the 2015 BUCS Fleet Racing Championships at Cardiff Bay, from their new home, Cardiff Bay Yacht Club, from 6 to 8 November 2014

This is the first national sailing event of the academic year. It draws over 100 competitors from around the U.K., including many new students having their first taste of university sailing at this event. But it also attracts some skilled, high performance sailors, often recently in youth squads and some even starting Olympic campaigns, alongside sailors who sail in a variety of classes and at club level or have developed their sailing through training afforded by university sailing clubs. Usually with four fleets – Laser, Firefly, Slow and Fast Handicap – sailors bring their own boats and fleets of university Fireflies; various opportunities to charter are also provided.



Very close competition in the Laser Fleet at the 2014 Championships © Sean Clarkson



The competition can be fierce, but there is a great spirit and every effort is given to support as wide participation as possible. In addition to individual Fleet titles, there is also great competition for teams in the points-based league table, with an overall University Team title, BUCS Medals and the all-important BUCS (financial) points to carry back in both the women's and men's categories.



**BUCS Fleet Championships 2011 © Kristian Brunt-Seymour**

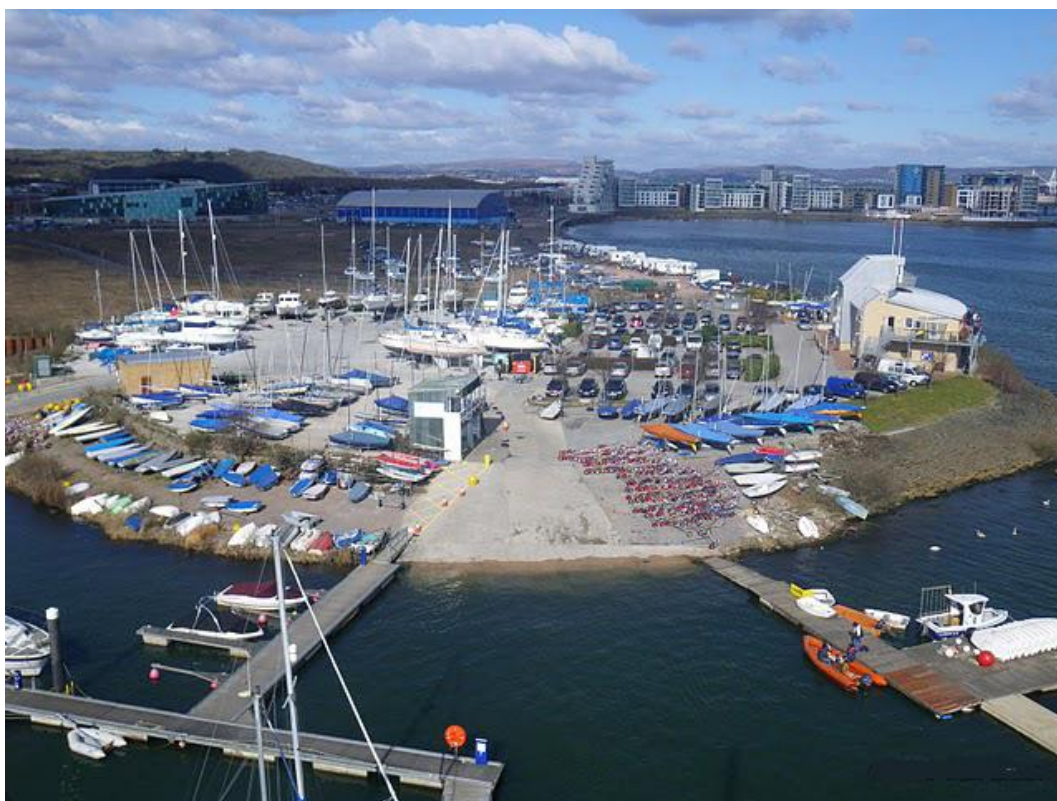
The award of the 2015 Championship to Cardiff follows a competitive process, with bids from three UK universities. Cardiff's proposal was submitted by Cardiff University Sailing Club, Cardiff University Students Union (CUSU) and Athletic Union, in partnership with Cardiff University and Cardiff Bay Yacht Club, supported by RYA Cymru Wales. Also collaborating with the other yacht clubs in Cardiff Bay, Cardiff City Council and other training centres, including Cardiff Bay Water Activity Centre, the University Sailing Club has the support and cooperation of the Cardiff Harbour Authority,



**Some of the 52 Firefly dinghies on the 'run' in the Plymouth Cattewater © Paul Wright**



With prevailing Westerlies, the Bay has exposed and sheltered areas, allowing flexibility for the setting of racecourses. Coordination with the Harbour Master will ensure that racing occurs uninterrupted by other vessels. The whole bay will be available as a racing area, with a Notice to Mariners being issued and any restrictions made where appropriate.



Cardiff Bay Yacht Club © Ollie Green

Cardiff University Sailing Club has a strong record in all aspects of student sailing. The only UK university approved in its own right as an RYA Training Centre, it has great facilities and capacity. Its more experienced sailors, many of them qualified instructors, play a key part in teaching students new to sailing and supporting recreational sailors in developing their skills, all of whom play a full part in the Club, both on and off the water. As well as having several teams competing in the annual BUCS Team Racing Championship, the Cardiff USC runs its own events, including the popular inter-university team racing fixture, the Welsh Dragon. Cardiff also competes in keelboats, regularly racing at the BUCS Yachting Championships on the Solent. In 2014, Cardiff represented Wales in the World Student Yachting Cup in La Rochelle in October 2014.



Close sailing in the Firefly Fleet © Sean Clarkson

In 2012/13, Cardiff University Sailing Club was awarded a development grant to increase university-wide training and participation in sailing, which has underpinned a strengthening of the Club across the whole range of activities from learn-to-sail, community participation and recreational sailing to national and international competitive racing. In 2014, it was nominated as RYA Cymru Wales Participation Club of Year, coming second across the whole Principality. Samantha Healy, South Wales Development Officer from RYA Cymru Wales enthused about the University's Sailing Club: It is a "joy to work with such proactive and dedicated young people who have an extremely competent team of volunteers, delivering RYA training to their own students and helping out with community projects, notably OnBoard, to extend opportunities and participation in water recreation, sport and sailing, I wish them every success in hosting the BUCS Fleet Championships. I shall certainly be there to see them in action!"

Cardiff University hosts the annual Welsh Varsity, between Cardiff and Swansea, attracting 15,000 students to the Welsh Institute of Sport and the Millennium Stadium. This is the largest Varsity Event outside the Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race. And the Students' Union, having recently undergone refurbishment, is now a popular venue hosting big-name gigs and providing excellent social facilities, over and above the great nightlife of the City of Cardiff. Cardiff is a city of entertainment, culture and sport, drawing people in from all over the world all year round. A particular feature of Cardiff as a student sailing venue is the close proximity of the City Centre, University, Students' Union, and budget hotel accommodation to the Bay and land-base for the Championship at the Cardiff Bay Yacht Club.



RS200s – among the popular classes in the Fast Handicap Fleet © Sean Clarkson

Cardiff University Sailing Club and its partners have plenty of experience at hosting events. Every year the USC successfully organises and delivers the Welsh Dragon, one of the leading fixtures in the inter-university team racing series, regularly attracting teams from as far as Edinburgh, Trinity College Dublin and Plymouth; in 2014, there were 126 participants in 21 teams from 14 universities. The popularity of Cardiff amongst university sailing clubs arises not only because of its ideal location (readily accessible by road, train or plane) and the quality of the sailing competition, but also because it is nationally recognised as being great at hosting social events; the Students' Union is rated in the top-ten in the UK. Recently, Cardiff successfully bid for, and delivered, the BUCS Playoffs, as part of the 2015 BUCS Team Racing Championship. Cardiff Bay Yacht Club regularly hosts fleet racing events for Class Associations, including the prestigious UK leg of the Extreme Sailing Series in 2014.



Cardiff USC President, Harry Derbyshire, and Vice-President, Emily Wiltshire, responded to the news that the Fleets would be coming to Cardiff by saying: "We are thrilled that Cardiff has been chosen as the club to host the Fleets this year.. It marks the success of a lot of hard work and development the Club has undertaken over the past few years. It will, hopefully, provide a refreshing new venue, with easy access for most students. We will endeavour to put in our all to make this event run as smoothly as possible, with great sailing and socials. We look forward to seeing you in November!"

Cardiff Bay Yacht Club Commodore, Jane Hall, and Sailing Secretary, David Cairncross, responded: "Cardiff University Sailing Club are to be congratulated on their successful bid to host the BUCS Fleet Racing Championship in Cardiff Bay in November this year. We were very impressed with the professionalism of the CUSC members we met and look forward to working closely with them to ensure that this event is as successful as it can possibly be, especially given the ideal location of Cardiff Bay Yacht Club, combined with the protected expanse of water off our foreshore".

BUCS Head of Sport Programmes, Mark Brian, concluded: "Following a strong bidding process, I am delighted that Cardiff University have been selected to host the Fleet Racing Championships for 2015. I was impressed with the bid and am confident that the Club and University will deliver a professional and enjoyable event. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Plymouth as previous hosts, for supporting this event, and we hope their enthusiasm and dedication to the event will be matched by Cardiff".



Fireflies line up for a start at the 2014 Championship © Tony Mapplebeck



A battle to the line at the top of the Laser Fleet in 2014 © Sean Clarkson