



British Universities' Sailing Association

Press Release

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RYA & BUSA Ladies' Team Racing Nationals 2014



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British women celebrate great team racing and a fun weekend Birmingham scoops both RYA and BUSA honours

On the weekend of 22nd and 23rd February, the RYA & BUSA Ladies' Team Racing Nationals 2014 took place at West Kirby SC, a place synonymous with Team Racing. Until this year Spinnaker Sailing Club has been the regular host to this event. With an increased entry of 16 teams, there was a noticeably greater geographical spread this year, including teams from Glasgow, Plymouth and Swansea, as well as two non-University teams, the experienced Rutland Raiders and the youthful locals, West Kirby.

The event was won by the **University of Birmingham**, which was declared both **RYA and BUSA Champions**. This followed an 80% round robin and a tie-breaker with the Bristol 1. They were followed by Cambridge Blue in 3rd and BUSA Ladies 4th. The young, non-university team from West Kirby did their Club's reputation proud to be 5th. The importance of the event and the appreciation of the sailors is evident from their reports, stories and comments.

Teams turned up in dribs and drabs on the Friday night, with one Bristol team taking slightly longer than expected as they took a short detour via North Wales. Teams were kindly hosted in members' homes, with a few teams staying in the scout hut, which was a great success once they worked out the heating

system. We were greeted on Saturday morning with sunshine, a good breeze and the smell of sausage batches for breakfast. There was a good turnout of 16 teams from around the country.

Everyone was aware of the forecast, that it was due to get windier as the day went on and that Sunday was not looking good; therefore, everyone was keen to get as many races in as possible. Racing started at 10 am prompt, using cut-downs straight away. There was an excellent standard of racing amongst the teams, aided by a strong team of umpires and an excellent course laid by **Richard Connah**. As the morning went on the wind picked up, and, at times, there were several boats swimming. The conditions were a race officer's nightmare, but it seemed that the gusts came through in short bursts, and, overall, the conditions were very sailable and made for an excellent day's racing.

Adam Whittle pushed on to the bitter end, determined to get in as many races as possible. As 5 o'clock neared, it became clear that there was a cut off point for everyone to have sailed 12 races. However, there were two teams tied at the top. Bristol and Birmingham, halfway through showering, had to quickly get dressed again and race to break the tie - Birmingham were victorious.



© Philip Shepherd

.....Oh and there was a great moment in the Oxford - Cambridge race when an Oxford and a Cambridge boat capsized on top of each other at mark 3. I think Oxford won, but don't quote me.....!

At the end of a long day, we had an excellent meal put on at the Club, cooked by the galley girls (and two honorary galley guys, also former commodores) and served by the sea cadets, which was a lovely touch. Dinner was followed by karaoke, and it turns out Manchester have a serious talent on their team who entertained us for a lot of the night [Mabel Lim reports that "the gorgeous girl with the amazing voice would be **Harriet Griffiths**" - singer/songwriter/sailor and doyenne of the clubs in the North West (follow her on Facebook: *Harriet Griffiths music-y stuff*)].

Unfortunately, Sunday morning greeted us with what we had expected, lots of wind! However I think most teams were pretty knackered after a long, hard day's racing on Saturday; it's not many events you do 12 races each in a weekend, let alone a day. The decision was made early to end the event and have the prize giving to allow the teams to go home. It was lovely to have so many teams, mainly university, but also the oldest team, Rutland Raiders, and the youngest, the West Kirby juniors, who gave us all a run for our money.

Abi Griffiths of Birmingham said: “it was a very well run event. The racing was of a good standard and the course was lovely and long. The weekend had a great atmosphere and the guys at Kirby couldn't have done anything better (except maybe control the wind..)”.



The RYA and BUSA Team Racing Champions 2014 – University of Birmingham © Philip Shepherd

Mary Fenton-Jones of Bristol University said: “As ever, West Kirby put on a fantastic event - from the efficiency of getting the races in to the Championship Dinner on the Saturday evening. It was great to have the opportunity to sail against other Ladies' Teams, and the conditions made for some exciting racing - the two Bristol Ladies' Teams definitely enjoyed themselves!



Bristol 1, who took 2nd from the tie-break, or , maybe, they were just slower back from the showers?
© Philip Shepherd

“One of our cars arrived late on Friday night after a diversion through Wales and ended up driving into a graveyard, thinking it was the way to the guide hut... and some of our two teams managed to get locked out of the guide hut, 30 minutes before the dinner, with the only other key being with a Glasgow sailor who was unfortunately at the hospital”.

Emma Watson, Glasgow's Commodore told us why the GUSC Girls loved the Ladies' Champs:

- everything ran on time
- boats worked and were easy to find
- we were astonished to find boats had 2 sets of sails in matching colours
- food was great
- THERE WAS WIND
- we actually team raced
- people were admiring our fashion sense
- the ferry boat had WiFi to check the rugby score
- we were paid in shots to run the social
- it was cheaper to buy 2 jagarbombs
- we even were appreciated in our hungover state as the 'Scottish Champions'
- the official people loved our banter and singing
- oh and also, we could actually wear our matching sunglasses without looking silly, as there was lots of sunshine! Hope this is usable information”.



We are assured that the shades were needed for the sun, but they kinda give away their Glasgow origins! © Philip Shepherd

Mabel Lim of Manchester said: “I had an awesome weekend at the Ladies’, and I'm sure everyone did as well!! It was a tip top organised weekend, making full use of the one day racing, amazing social (karaoke), everyone loved it:”).



Mabel Lim & Iona Deacon of Manchester hike when the wind blows on West Kirby's marine lake © Philip Shepherd

Emily Smoothroller Robertson, Captain of the 'Glasgow Girls' (the ones in pink!) wrote: "We had a fantastic time and would like to thank the Race Committee for doing such a fantastic job of running 96 races in the one day we could sail! It was the best event I've been to in all my (two) years at uni in terms of both the racing and the running of the event.



© Philip Shepherd

"Everyone was really friendly, and all of the teams were fun to race and nice to chat to, not like at some events where people can take winning or losing a little too personally.



We are reliably informed that these are the best of Glasgow! © Philip Shepherd

"It was a really good opportunity for girls in the teams to have a chance to helm if they had been crewing all year, or even just to race for some of our non-team committee members. This is important as a lot of

team racing is heavily dominated by males. In our circumstances, it was great experience and really boosted the confidence of a helm or two who never felt comfortable, or good enough, to really helm an event.

“In terms of the social Glasgow LOVED the karaoke! Would happily come back next year purely for that. We are very glad you liked our Tshirts; they took a lot of care and attention, as did the matching glasses”.



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Abigail Griffiths-Torrance, Birmingham's Commodore, followed up her initial comments with a considered report on their weekend: “Amy Yeoman, Issy Scruby, Siobhan Orr, Abi Griffiths, Toni Duffy and Lizzie Hubbard started bright and early on Saturday morning heading up to West Kirby for the BUSA/RYA Ladies' Nationals. After a breakfast made for athletes of delicious sausage sandwiches, they headed out onto the lake to take on the Women!

“The girls had a tough first race against Oxford, which they fought ‘till the final beat but, unfortunately, lost. However, with first race nerves over, the girls quickly settled into their usual rhythm and upped the focus to go on to win the following 2 races before facing the West Kirby Sailing Team. It was a close race, but WK nabbed the win on the line. The day was incredibly efficient, with enthusiastic drivers on the changeover boats and a brilliant course; the Race Officials managed to plough through 96 races in fear of the looming Sunday gales.

“Birmingham went on to win all their remaining races giving a total of 10 wins out of their 12 races with some perfect starts, boat handling (not including Siobhan and Abi's capsized...), excellent covering, communication and gapping within the team! The girls headed in to get changed, shocked by their own performance, only to be called out of the showers for a tie breaker race with Bristol 1 in preparation for no racing on Sunday. All three Birmingham boats aced the start, and, by mark 1, Amy and Issy had first place with Siobhan and Abi close behind in second, Toni and Lizzie protected the points with some awesome gapping, even throwing in a cheeky spin after a controversial mark rounding. The girls' pace shone through up the final beat, and they finished their final race in 1, 2, 3!

“West Kirby laid on a delicious Champions' Dinner, with all of the ladies providing entertainment via karaoke... Up bright and early on Sunday and down to the club feeling fresh as daisies; the day's racing was, as expected, cancelled due to blow out wind conditions, leaving Birmingham - BUSA/RYA Ladies' Team Racing National Champions 2014!!

“A huge thank you to West Kirby and all of their helpers for a fabulous weekend!”

Sarah Moulder, BUSA Ladies' Captain

We are grateful for the use of photographs taken by West Kirby SCs **Philip Shepherd**

See Results and Emily Robertson's report in verse below



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Results:

Team	Races Sailed	Race Wins	Total Points	% Wins
Birmingham	13	11	106	84.60%
Bristol 1	13	10	115	76.50%
Cambridge Blue	12	9	102	75.00%
BUSA Ladies'	12	9	107	75.00%
West Kirby SC	12	8	106	66.70%
Southampton	12	8	110	66.70%
Oxford	12	8	121	66.70%
Rutland Raiders	12	6	114	50.00%
Plymouth 2	12	6	118	50.00%
Manchester	12	6	136	50.00%
Cardiff	12	5	135	41.70%
Plymouth 1	12	5	141	41.70%
Glasgow	12	3	145	25.00%
Swansea	12	2	161	16.79%
Bristol 2	12	1	160	8.30%
Cambridge Pink	12	0	170	0.00%

Emily Robertson of Glasgow Girls reports in verse:

Once upon a time, in a land not so far,
 Some ladies embarked on an adventure, by car.
 Through the wind and the rain, we sped down the road,
 But alas, they did not tell us the dress code!
 'No hats!' they exclaimed as we walked through the door,
 And that's when we saw what we didn't before...
 We were in England now, full of the English you see,
 They don't like hats, they like crumpets and tea!

But there was an upside to getting out of the car,
We talked tactics with tick tocks and boats from the bar.
The tick tocks and games took us into the night,
And then around about two we saw the daylight!
Damn Bristol! They almost had us, they did,
Almost got up, went sailing, God forbid.
But the English won't get us, 'Not this time!' we said,
And then with a blink we went straight back to bed.

When we woke, we worked like an oiled machine,
Never has Glasgow ever seemed quite so keen!
We had tea in our mouths, on our pillows as well,
And then down we went, but.... 'What the hell?!'
'There's no water!' Said Emma 'let's go back to bed'
It's a good thing my team's not so easily led.
So out sailing we went, in time for gun one,
We couldn't let England have all the fun.

In race one and race two we were over the line,
Race three and race four we didn't win, but that's fine!
By now we had not a bailer in sight,
The wind getting stronger, we put up a fight
Race five was a race, a good one as well,
But race six brought disaster, anyone will tell.
Through a crash and a spin, RobWat first to capsize,
The boom came down hard, and I heard Emma's cries.

Her hand was not broken, you'll be glad to hear,
But Harold came in, reserve stepped into gear!
A spare crew with a spare tshirt, luck was on our side,
Our rugby success only heightened our pride,
We sang through the start, the middle and the end,
The LADs in the boat were our new bestest friends!
So race seven was a close one, but not the best we could be,
And then, for race 8, we bagged our first 123!

After that we paid back Bristol and made them capsize,
Then Cambridge were slow, not eating enough pies!
So that's three in the bag, and one race to go,
But with no bailers, Rob used the only technique she did know,
At 40 seconds to go, out the back I fell,
Some bad words were said that I can't even spell,
But back in the boat and into the race,
We still got the one, you should have seen Harold's face!

But we didn't win that one, and then we went in,
And, after a share of a shower, we started 'prinkin',
That night was the dinner, the dress casual smeert,
The dinner delicious, Lindsay loved the desert!
We led the karaoke, got paid for it too,
And shot after shot, the English joined our crew.
YOLoSquad won and brought home some gifts,
Black sambuca of death caused some memory shifts...

We were definitely at Spoons, with the police no less,
But to be honest we as well have played chess.

We escaped from the place, there was nothing to see,
Made our way home, but took the drinks, they were free!
When we got home, only one option was this,
Chocolate crispies they wanted?
No? Sh*t. By now we were all wide... Wide awake,
Turns out so much pro plus can give you the shakes.

We cleaned up the glass, that inevitably broke,
Got told of by Bristol, haha! What a joke.
We spooned and we slept and woke once again,
But we knew we weren't sailing, almost at the end!
The prize giving was brief, Birmingham won,
Though everyone knows, we had more fun.
We sat in McDonald's, unwilling to live,
But eventually one more push we did give.

We had a great weekend, we didn't come last,
But my, oh my, we were pretty god damn fast!
We loved all the socials, on shore and off,
And even coming home, we didn't get lost.
We made up some songs, I can't remember them all,
But sing them really loud and we'll answer your call.
Thank you for reading, you made it quite far!
I'll stop writing now, see you at the bar.



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