

Leeds' Halloween Howler 2017



Action in front of West Riding SC at Leeds University's Halloween Howler 2017 © Nigel Vick

CAPSIZES, CONCUSSIONS AND CURRY

Last weekend 20 teams from 9 universities across England and Scotland travelled to Leeds to kick off the USC team racing season at the Leeds Halloween Howler 2017. Attending the top-quality weekend were teams from Birmingham, Sheffield, Sheffield Hallam, Warwick, Reading, York, Lancaster and Edinburgh who made their debut in Leeds team racing and two fresher teams from Leeds testing their new skills.



© Nigel Vick

After the Friday night social at Warehouse, Day 1 racing got off to a good start despite the strong winds. As the event lived up to its name, the capsizing became more frequent and booms more damage inducing (did someone mention a concussion? York?). A decision was then made to postpone the racing until the Sunday after 22 races and one redress when Storm Brian was making his full appearance. Most teams had managed to get out for about half of their races, so the first set of results saw Warwick Red, Warwick Black and Edinburgh Blue leading the scores overnight.



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Not the only 'disaster' at the 2017 Halloween Howler © Nigel Vick

A much-needed nap later, the teams met again in their terrifying Halloween fancy dress outfits in Leeds' finest curry houses for the Saturday Social. After some different kinds of boat races and a boogie in Hifi, everyone woke again bright and early on Sunday morning for the second day of racing and core-strengthening exercise in the still-strong winds.



© Nigel Vick

Continuing the round robin from Saturday, teams managed to get through all the remaining races in their flights. A new schedule was drawn up from the best-performing few teams to attempt to narrow it down to a set of finals, but the gusts once again picked up causing the first 2 boats to head out to capsize within minutes. The races therefore unfortunately had to be called off bringing an end to the weekend with a total of 55 races completed.



© Nigel Vick

Results were calculated from the races that were completed before the storm took over, seeing Edinburgh Blue come in top as the undisputed champions winning every single race. This was

closely followed by Warwick Red in second and Warwick Black in third, who also won all their races in their flights, being separated solely by points.



© Nigel Vick

The success of the weekend was down to an army of helpers from Leeds Sailors and the volunteers of umpires and power boat drivers, ballasts and our photographer all contributing to the smooth running of the event despite the challenging weather conditions. Alex Howe of the University of Birmingham felt 'the event was run excellently', and these opinions couldn't have been achieved without the commitment of Commodore Matt Lloyd who led the organisation of the Howler. A big thanks also to Sheffield, Hallam and Lancaster who all loaned flights of fireflies, without which it would have been a swimming race.



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Event website: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1906958012910220/>.

The Halloween Howler was the first of an inaugural **Northern Team Racing Tour**, encompassing the **Glasgow Grouse** this coming weekend, together with the **Sheffield Shuffle**, **Angel of the North** (Durham & Newcastle), the **Big Lash** (Manchester & Liverpool) and the **Scottish (SSS) Team Racing Championship**. For more details see: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/368412260238692/> and <https://northernteamracing.wixsite.com/northerntour>. See you there!

Phoebe Stocker, PR & Sponsorship Secretary, Leeds University Sailing Club



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