



British Universities and Colleges Sport Yachting Championship 2018



Warwick & Southampton Solent White cut through the waves

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Southampton Solent and Oxford celebrate Championship and Trophy titles

The Yachting Championships of the British Universities & Colleges Sport (BUCS), in conjunction with the British Universities' Sailing Association (BUSA), started in the Solent on Monday 27th March and completed with a Finals Series on Thursday 30 March when the 24 teams competed in Championship and Trophy fleets.



Plymouth Blue motoring in the Championship Fleet © Harry Bowerman Photography

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190 student sailors, in teams of 8, representing universities from St Andrews to Plymouth and Swansea to Surrey had set off from Port Solent in Sunsail Fast 40s first thing on Monday morning and raced in the Solent over four days, berthing at Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth.

The Principal Race Officer, Steve Parry described each day's sailing.

Day 1 Two windward/leewards and the shorter inshore coastal race

On Day 1, "against a background of a very variable forecast, we achieved two windward/leeward races in surprisingly stable conditions. After some practice starts, Race 1 was started with the Uniform flag, requiring a general recall, but with a successful second start. The windward leg was shortened to reach the target time and to allow the second race to proceed only slightly late. The second windward-leeward race again started in less than 7 knots of breeze over a 0.7* course.



London & Imperial © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

"For the third race, the inshore coastal race, the wind swung south and increased nicely to 10 knots as the race began. Unfortunately, it disappeared completely for a brief period before swinging to the South West and coming in at 12 knots. The course was shortened, allowing the fleet to close upon a long beat up the shore to Gilkicker Point. Here there was very close racing, with the whole fleet finishing within 7 minutes after 2 hours racing."



Swansea Green in action and....smiling for the camera © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com/>

Overall after the three races, through which there had been quite a spread of results, Plymouth Blue (James Torr) and Edinburgh Pink (Suzy Peters) led the day on equal points, closely followed by Exeter (Oliver Grogono). It had proved a challenging day for many and the way teams were to progress over the next days was not readily predicted. The Jury had a busy evening in the Protest Room.

Day 2: A windward/leeward and then the long coastal race

“After a slight delay waiting for MV Mont St Michel, we set up a start in Wootton Creek (between Wootton & Fishbourne on the Isle of Wight) with 1.2nm windward/leeward course at 250* (breeze at 12-13kn). There was close racing, with the leeward gate splitting evenly”. The race was won by Strathclyde Blue (Angus Gray-Stephens). She was followed by Exeter, Southampton Solent and Edinburgh Pink, who were to remain the leading pack at the end of the day.



Oxford Blue © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

“For the long coastal race”, continued the Principal Race Officer, “we used the same windward mark for the first leg. Unfortunately, one boat was UFD. A 21 mile tour of the central Solent had a long beat and a long run via Gurnard, to finish at Gleeds after about three hours.....during which we all got very wet!”

Southampton Solent Black (Mathieu Cadei) won the long coastal. Exeter White (Oliver Grogono) and Edinburgh Pink (Suzy Peters) were 2nd and 3rd, with Plymouth Red (Sam Clarke) taking useful points in 4th to build her position in the overall fleet ranking, while St Andrews, in their first Championship, took a 5th, which was to give them a boost to their position overall.



St Andrews © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

Exeter White ended the day in 3rd overall. Annabel Bates said, “we had a pretty good start yesterday (Monday), but were frustrated in the coastal race, arising from the sudden drop in the wind”. So, today was an opportunity and an improvement. Murray Hampshire explained that, “after a couple of bad starts, we had good decision-making and boat speed, which pulled us back through the fleet to good finishes” (second in each race).



Solent Black © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

Southampton Solent Black had had a 7th in the coastal race the previous day to carry forward, but they achieved a 3rd in today's windward leeward and then won the long coastal, leading to an overall second placing tonight, just 0.5 points behind the leaders, Edinburgh Pink. Mathieu Cadei was enjoying the “mono type” (one design) competition in this event. He and Solent Commodore, Nicole Ames, spoke about Solent's preparation for the event and their team building (they had received two SunSail awards for wins in the two most recent SunSail regatta).



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However, Mathieu emphasised that they had not come into the Championship with particular expectations, “just keeping going, anything can happen. We are pretty confident about our boat speed, but the light winds on day 1 were pretty weird. We are enjoying ourselves and will have some fun afterwards”. Nicole was more ebullient: “Over the moon, ecstatic, nearly cried....for the right reasons!”

Sam Clarke, Plymouth Red, spoke of his mistake in the first race, “poor...late for the start...then held back by the tide....‘kick in the nuts!’”. But then the long coastal. “Yesterday in the short coastal, we had been first to the windward mark, but then hit that patch of no wind and dropped right down. So, in today’s long inshore, we showed well, second to the windward mark, remaining consistently in the top four, just missing out on 3rd at the last mark (spinnaker got stuck). So, we were quite pleased with a fourth here.”

New to the Yachting Championships this year, the St Andrews sailors were excited to be coming and looking for the experience, but they came in that evening quite buoyant. Helm, Balazs Gesce, experienced sailor from Hungary’s Balatonfüred, confirmed that this was to have been a steep learning curve. “For us this was a step up from the 707s we sail in Scotland and in a much larger and competitive fleet. All credit to the team in general, which has shown cohesion. I am really pleased to be sailing in this competitive fleet”. Alex Carter, St Andrews’ Yachting Captain confirmed that they had “enjoyed the nice light winds on the first day to get prepared” (though they may have been like several others caught by the total drop in wind during the short coastal). “Today was a step-up, a bit of struggle with manoeuvres in the heavier airs. After a false start in the long inshore race, we had a really fantastic upwind leg and finished the race in 5th!”

Day 3: Three windward/leeward races determine the line-up for the Championship and Trophy series

“On the back of a wet forecast, the fleet set out into Langston Bay and, in a shifty 10 to 12 knot breeze, started their first of three windward/leeward races, eventually, on a black flag due to several over enthusiastic teams pushing the line. The rain came down, and a big left shift from around 335 to 255 degrees in several chunks, caused the course to be reset twice before race 2 was got the under way again with a black flag in a 12 to 18 knot breeze. Fortunately, the rain eased and the wind held steady for the third race to use the same course. The sun even came out!”

At the end of the third day, The top eight universities qualified for the Championship Fleet on the final day. Exeter White (Oliver Grogono; Sunsail 4014), Solent BLACK (Mathieu Cadei; 4004), Edinburgh PINK (Suzy Peters; 4022) Plymouth Blue (James Torr; 4021), St Andrews Blue (Balazs Gesce; 4018), Southampton Blue (Titus Treneman; 4010) , Strathclyde Blue (Angus Gray-Stephens; 4015), Surrey Pink (Joe Simmons; 4013)

Plymouth Red (Samuel Clarke; 4016) in overall 8th on the evening of the 3rd day, went into the final series leading the remaining 16 in the Trophy Fleet.



Strathclyde Blue © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

Final Day: Championship and Trophy Fleets

Upon return of the fleets to Port Solent at the end of the final day, PRO Stephen Steve Parry described the racing. “The course area was towards the Isle of Wight side of the Solent due to the wind coming from 170*. A windward/leeward course of 1.1 nm was set for the Championship Fleet and a ‘round-the-cans’ set for the Trophy Fleet for its first race. With an increasing breeze and lots of very heavy rain, conditions tested both fleets considerably.

“In the second Championship race, when a squall came through, there was one MOB (safely recovered and continued to race). Although a few boats close together, the Trophy fleet, finishing its first race about 0.75 nm away, was very spread out, so there was a pause before its second race - around a different course, finishing at Gleeds, close to Portsmouth Harbour.

“During the second Trophy race, the Championship fleet did a third windward/leeward on a 1 nm course. There were gusts of 28 knots in the rain, but the racing was very close (sadly one boat had been UFD and returned early to Port Solent).

“A tight schedule was completed over the week, in difficult conditions and with limited resources. I am grateful to Dermott O’Malley, the Deputy RO and thank Karen Rawson and John Nabney, Race Officers of Sunsail. I particularly want to pay tribute for the superb job undertaken by the Mark Layers, Martyn Clark and his daughter, Kim Clark of Loughborough University”.



Solent Black © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

As the fleets returned to Port Solent to return their yachts to Sunsail and to gather for the Prize Giving, Will Van Dyke, captain of Solent Black – the two Solent teams were on a well-deserved high! – said they were “really pleased with our up-wind boat speed and well-prepared, with a lot of sailing in the Solent, so tactically quite familiar. But, Edinburgh and Exeter proved to be tough, but very fair opponents. Fantastic competition. Hopefully, we’ll have the same team next year to defend and retain the Trophy!”

Oli Grogono, helm of Exeter White, said that they had “not sailed much together” this year, so it was “really good to finish consistently and to lead into the final day, the Championship series. Great racing, with Solent and Edinburgh, always in the mix”. Although a “shame not to have pulled through, but good to race [well] in a mixture of conditions”.

Suzy Peters, helm of Edinburgh Pink and doyenne of this event and student keelboat racing, said “very glad everyone is alive” [they too had a MOB, just after the finish of the second race, who had been dragged along underwater, only to be recovered and re-clothed for the last race by our photographer and BUSA Keelboat Officer, Harry Bowerman]. A really, really good event, with a fine standard. We didn’t complain!”

Winner of the Trophy Fleet, having worked its way up in the qualifying round, was Oxford. Skipper, Josh Bell, explained that “we had a shocker of a first day, but managed to turn it around, with a set of consistent results, performing particularly well in the big breeze”.

But Oxford’s helm was leading a 50/50 crew, with the most women on board in the fleet overall. Hot on the heels of Oxford’s overall triumph in the RYA/BUSA Women’s Team Racing Nationals 2018, Oxford University Yacht Club is showing the way. Becca Anthony spoke of “the great dynamic among all of us, the team as a whole, although she did mention her “excellent trim”. We have known Sean Lansdall since he led racing at Imperial, always with serious visage, so it was good to hear Becca “shout out for the Captain. He brought me marigolds.....oh, and we didn’t get frostbite”.

The other team to figure in the Prize Giving was Solent White, which took second place in the large Trophy Fleet. Helm Francesco Pignone was sailing his third BUSA Championships and spoke of how the “event has improved. Overall it was fun – we came to have fun and to enjoy the event. We had better crew bonding, and the result for us was better than expected. Really nice. The best of the three years!”

The Race Committee and the enlarged Jury, on the water for the first time this year and effecting decisions during the Final Series were particularly thanked (and applauded) at the Prize Giving. And BUSA much appreciates the leadership and support of Jack Fenwick, Event Director, and his colleague, Gavin Maguire, of the RYA in pulling all the complex arrangements and logistics together and of Stephen Parry for leading the race team, making the event run so smoothly



The Championship Medallists

Results and Trophies

The results of the Championship and Trophy series are appended.

The full results are uploaded on the BUSA website Championship page at:
<http://busa.co.uk/championships/bucs-yachting-championships-2018>

The following trophies and awards were made:

- Sunsail Trophy (Champions) winners – Southampton Solent Black
- BUCS medals awarded to the top three teams from the ‘Championship’ Fleet
- Trophy (Trophy Fleet) winners – Oxford Blue
- BUCS medals awarded to the top 3 teams from the ‘Trophy’ Fleet
- Jim Saltonstall Teapot Trophy for the winner of the Long Inshore Race – Southampton Solent Black

- The Scottish Trophy – Edinburgh Pink
- The Welsh Trophy – Swansea Green
- The Sunsail award for the most improved team – Southampton Solent White
- The top English (Solent Black), Scottish (Edinburgh Pink) and Welsh (Swansea Green) teams may be invited to the Student Yachting Worlds 2018 (providing they are eligible to race, with no crew changes). If the winning team is ineligible to compete then a runner up may be offered an invitation.



The "Trophy" Medallists

The event was followed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/events/2223119657924031> ,and, to follow BUSA through the year, see <https://www.facebook.com/groups/busasailing>.

Special thanks to Karen Rawson of Sunsail for her blogging and photos and to BUSA Keelboat Officer, Harry Bowerman (Harry Bowerman Photography) for his great images – see <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com/gallery/6348532/home>



Edinburgh Pink © Harry Bowerman Photography <https://harrybowerman.shootproof.com>

‘CHAMPIONSHIP’ Fleet 2018

Rank	Sail No	Club	Helm Name	Ranking Points	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total	Nett	BUCS Points
1st	4004	Solent BLACK	Mathieu Cadei	2	3	1	2	8	8	50
2nd	4014	Exeter WHITE	Oliver Grogono	1	7	2	1	11	11	35
3rd	4022	Edinburgh PINK	Suzy Peters	3	1	4	3	11	11	24
4th	4015	Strathclyde BLUE	Angus Gray-Stephens	7	2	3	4	16	16	16
5th	4021	Plymouth BLUE	James Torr	4	6	5	6	21	21	14
6th	4005	St Andrews BLUE	Balazs Gesce	5	5	7	7	24	24	12
7th	4010	Southampton BLUE	Titus Treneman	6	4	6	10.0 UFD	26	26	10
8th	4013	Surrey PINK	Joe Simmons	8	8	10.0 UFD	5	31	31	8

‘TROPHY’ Fleet 2018

Rank	Sail No	Club	HelmName	Ranking Points	Race 1	Race 2	Total	Nett	BUCS Points
1st	4017	Oxford BLUE	Rebecca Anthony	5	3	1	9	9	35
2nd	4006	Solent WHITE	Francesco Pignone	6	2	6	14	14	21
3rd	4019	Southampton GREEN	Oli Aldridge	3	5	8	16	16	14
4th	4024	Swansea GREEN	Robbie Robinson	10	4	4	18	18	12
5th	4003	Bath BLUE	Owen Bowerman	7	6	5	18	18	11
6th	4016	Plymouth RED	Samuel Clarke	1	1	17.0 RET	19	19	9
7th	4029	Southampton RED	Quentin Bes-Green	2	14	3	19	19	7
8th	4027	Strathclyde RED	Oscar Andrews	13	8	2	23	23	5
9th	4020	Durham PURPLE	Thomas Goodbourn	8	7	9	24	24	
10th	4023	Warwick BLACK	Dan Venables	14	10	7	31	31	
11th	4025	Bristol RED	Emily Broad	11	11	10	32	32	
12th	4026	London & Imperial	Campbell Manzoni	9	15	12	36	36	
13th	4030	Loughborough PURPLE	Oliver King	4	17.0 DNS	17.0 DNS	38	38	
14th	4012	Newcastle WHITE	Josh Dawson	12	9	17.0 RET	38	38	
15th	4028	Cambridge BLUE	Igor Yakunin	15	12	11	38	38	
16th	4011	Portsmouth PURPLE	Josh Atherton	16	13	13	42	42	



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