

## Prize-giving - 2020/21 season



Dear member,

Welcome to the written prize-giving for the 2020-21 season. Before we review the season, I'd like to say a few words of thanks. Without a significant volunteering effort, the wonderful sailing we experience at Wimbleball wouldn't be possible. Firstly, thanks to all the duty volunteers who operate the safety boats, manage the racing, and oversee the clubhouse, which also included a wider pool of volunteers than before for our Wednesday evening sailing. Thanks also to the members of the Committee who spend their time at the club during the week carrying out maintenance, and also countless unseen hours away from the club looking after all manner of administration including managing the duty roster, keeping the bills paid, processing memberships, taking care of insurance, organising training and a lot more besides. Many thanks to you all.

The season started with some disruption from the last of the lockdowns. It's easy to forget now that as we put the covers back on the boats on Dec 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020, we wouldn't be taking them off again until Easter.

Once free of lockdown we re-jigged the sailing programme and resumed Sunday club racing. Sadly, we were unable to run the Exmoor Beastie or the K1 Open, but we have new events scheduled for next year. We have the privilege of hosting the K1 Inland Championships on March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, and our signature Beastie 3-hr pursuit event will be run on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, the final event of the Sailing South-West series. A volunteering request will be on its way to club members shortly. We'd be very grateful for a strong response to that!

As usual during the year we had a mixture of Portsmouth Yardstick and Personal Handicap events. In 2021-22 there will again be approximately one-third of our racing on personal handicap. The idea of personal handicap racing is to compensate not only for the class of boat but also the skill and experience of the helm. The current handicaps are displayed on the notice board and are re-calculated regularly. Personal handicap events can provide some exciting close finishes, with places separated by only a few seconds.

We had our fair share of variable winds this year – some weeks it was too light and others too strong. I wonder if climate change is to blame, rather than the new Sailing Secretary as Tony likes to suggest?! Our famous Wimbleball wind shifts also came into play regularly. Rather memorably on one Sunday morning in the spring Paul Harwood decided to head into lunch mid-race after some bad luck with the shifts, but then found a lovely gust near the jetty and changed his mind as he found he was suddenly leading a fading pack. You win some, you lose some!

This year we saw some new junior faces in our club racing, and they are a very welcome addition. Well done to Molly Alcroft, Amy & Daniel Savage-Bailey, Toby White, Billy Tompsett, Hazel Phillips, and Will Barnes, among others. Some of them regularly sailed the new Fusion dinghies, one of which was generously funded by the Eric Twiname Trust.

Without doubt the new Fusion boats have been a big success, often the first boats our juniors want to hire. Just recently one of the Fusions was named after a former member, Terry Quinlan, who gave so much time to the club, and who sadly passed away last year.



Before announcing the winners of our club racing, I'd like to congratulate some of our members who sailed in events around the country. Simon Hawkes is now both K1 Inland and K1 National champion, having won the Inlands at Carsington SC, in Derbyshire, and the Nationals at Weymouth. At Carsington Wimbleball members had a clean sweep of virtually all the prize categories, including Paul Birbeck (2<sup>nd</sup>), Ben Hawkes (3<sup>rd</sup>) and Dave Stockton (4<sup>th</sup> overall and a 1<sup>st</sup> in age group award). At the K1 Nationals we shared the water with the resident dolphins at close quarters and enjoyed the facilities used by our 2012 Olympic team, which was a real treat.

To say Simon won the K1 Nationals doesn't really do it justice. He won 7 out of 8 races, only slipping to a lowly 3<sup>rd</sup> in race 7 when it was already won. You won't see Simon on the water at the moment as he recovers from back surgery but he's being generous with his volunteering in the meantime, which we are grateful for.



Chris Dyer won the Blaze Southwest Championships at the Paignton Open for Single Handers (POSH) and was second overall by a single point in the "red fleet" mixed class, out of 40 entries.



Dave Stockton and Sophie competed at the RS400 Nationals Congratulations at South Shields, with some excellent individual race finishes in the top third of the fleet.

"They're tough up north" said Dave, as he enjoyed a warming complimentary choc-ice after coming off the water.

In a busy week Dave doubled up the RS400 Nationals with the K1 Nationals the following weekend.

Nathan and Leo Muggeridge also went on their travels with the RS200. They competed at the open event at the Exe Sailing Club, with some strong performances.

I'm sure I've missed lots of other events, but congratulations to everyone who represented the club across the country.

### **Upton Spur Cruise**

In August we held our annual cruise to the Upton Spur. The forecast was for light winds, and we didn't succeed in getting as far as we'd have liked, but we had a really nice social get together afterwards. The donated cider from Christopher Courage went down extremely well, as did the local sausages & burgers and cream teas. The weather forecast put some people off, but we actually had a dry day. Thank you to all the helpers especially Dave Mather and Kevin Mercer for the BBQ and let's hope we can do it all again in 2022!

## Club Awards

Now onto the club awards. I'm sorry we can't accompany these awards with the applause they deserve but nevertheless congratulations everyone. Thank you to all the members who participated this year in our racing programme. The more people that join in, the better it is.

- 🏆 Winner of the Winter Series, that was curtailed as we went into our New Year lockdown, was Simon Hawkes.
- 🏆 Winner of the Easter Regatta Cup was Paul Birbeck – clearly showing no signs of rustiness after a lengthy lockdown layoff.
- 🏆 Winner of the Keith Turner Trophy which was decided on personal handicap was Paul Harwood. No less than 7 competitors flirted into contention throughout the day, but Paul came out on top.
- 🏆 In an excellent season, which included winning the Blaze Southwest Championship, Chris Dyer also won a very well attended Britnell Bowl in May, the K1 Special and the Spring Series. Do you need a wheelbarrow for all those Chris?
- 🏆 Moving into our summer season, the winner of our Lady Helm Trophy was one of our new junior racers, Molly Alcroft. We hope to see more of Molly in the results next year!
- 🏆 Our next trophy was for a series of 3 pursuit events for the Sheppy Cup. Winning two out of 3 events, our Sheppy Cup champion is Paul Harwood.
- 🏆 Our next award is for the Junior Cup, and goes to one of our more regular juniors, Jacob Chambers in the RS Aero.
- 🏆 Our Double Hander Shield, so often fought over by Tony & Sandy Paine (Tasar) and Pete Smith & Dave Dowling (Fireball), this year goes to Nathan and Leo Muggeridge in their RS200.
- 🏆 The Clatworthy Chilblain Tankard was re-scheduled to summer this year, where the risk was from sunburn and not chilblains. It became a very close personal handicap contest between Jemima Ryles and Kate Jeffreys, both in Laser Radials. In an eventful day of racing, they traded race wins. There was a missed mark at a crucial stage and one of them also lassoed the ODM with their main sheet and started towing it down the course. Fortunately, the FIA didn't have to intervene (topical for F1 fans), and it was Jemima who narrowly won the tankard.
- 🏆 Our Summer Series was decided with margin of just 4 points after 11 events. The winner was Paul Harwood, with Mike Green in close pursuit.
- 🏆 Moving into autumn, the winner of the pursuit single-hander Cup for the second year running was Geoff Curtis in the Mirror. I wonder if a hat-trick will be possible in 2021/22? Geoff also wins our naturalist award (careful with the spelling) for his mission this year to tame & feed a very friendly robin!
- 🏆 Our last single day trophy, the Rookie's Cup, was won by Paul Gaunce in his RS Aero.

Our next awards are for the annual series' trophies.

- 🏆 Winner of the Tasar trophy for most 4<sup>th</sup> places and the K1 Series Cup was Nick Ryles.
- 🏆 The top crew award this year goes to David Dowling in the Fireball. Anyone that hangs off a trapeze in Wimbleball's shifty conditions deserves recognition!

🏆 Once again Colin Allen has kept close watch over the top helm ladder. This year's top helm award came down to a last day decider. Despite two race wins for Chris Dyer on the final day, which closed the gap to just one win, our top helm was Paul Harwood with 11 race wins. Congratulations to Paul for a brilliant season.

🏆 Our last award was for the Victor Ludorum series, our monthly series scored on Portsmouth Yardstick. I think without doubt this was one of the closest finishes in club history. With average points being awarded for duties, which has made the series fairer, the winning margin was 0.4 of a point. It literally came down to the last leg of the last race. Congratulations to Mike Green.

Our next award is for the Junior Endeavour Trophy. Last year this was awarded to Jacob Chambers for his determination to race in all conditions!

🏆 Our Junior Endeavour Award this year goes to Amy Savage-Bailey, in recognition of her willingness to take part regularly in the racing this year. Amy sailed a Fusion and a Laser 4.7 and was second in the Rookie's Cup. Very well-done Amy, keep it up.

The final two awards are really to celebrate the volunteering effort within the club:

🏆 The first award is for the Unsung Hero. As I mentioned earlier, there's so much that gets done to allow our club to function, beyond the obvious things that we see: for example, looking after the finances, publicising our activities, applying for planning permission, making changes to the legal structure of the club this year, and improving the website, among other tasks. This year though the award goes to Mike Green for the unenviable task of keeping our dinghy park in good order. Thanks Mike, for all the effort allocating berths, labelling all the dinghies, and for the difficult task of handling the disposal of abandoned dinghies.

🏆 Our final award is for Clubman of the Year. Not for the first time, we'd like to award this trophy to Colin Allen, our outgoing Commodore. Being at the helm of the club during the Covid pandemic has been such a difficult task and we're very grateful to him for all of his efforts during such a difficult period. Thank you Colin.



Thank you for supporting the club this year and we wish you all a very happy Christmas.

We look forward to seeing you on the water for our last Sunday before Christmas (19 Dec) and in the New Year!