



Top Wembley Sailor takes the Venetian Trophy in GP14

60th Commemorative Year

The Welsh Harp, within sight and sound of Wembley Stadium, was full of colour last Saturday as over 30 GP14 dinghies took part in the annual Venetian Trophy competition.

Originally developed 60 years ago, the GP14 remains one of the UK's most popular two-person sailing dinghies for close, competitive tactical fleet racing. As it is the 60-year anniversary of the class, this year's Venetian Trophy had a particular significance.

In bright sunny weather, with an easterly force 2 / 3 wind, Ian Campbell, the Officer of the Day, set a series of three courses to test the ability of the competitors.

The Venetian Trophy is first event in the Southern Travellers Series of races. So competitors came from Papercourt and Tollesbury, as well as from the local clubs of Seahorse and BTYC.

The first race before lunch was won by Richard Lord and Hannah Rose of Seahorse followed by Frank Pearce and Richard Wang of BTYC, with Brian Jeffries and Richard Malden, also of BTYC, in third place.

After lunch, the wind began to pick up slightly, and there were some strong gusts to test the competitors. The GP14 has three sails; The mainsail and genoa are

supplemented by the colourful symmetric spinnaker when sailing downwind. Given the prevailing easterly wind, many boats were flying the spinnakers down much of the two kilometre length of the lake. Although the other sails are typically white, spinnakers can be red, blue, yellow, pink, according to taste. There was even a white skull and crossbones in evidence, flown by Roger Walton.

Jim Faulkner and Steve Cooper won the second race, representing BTYC, with Ben Kaplan and Roberto Serra of Seahorse second, followed by Richard Lord.

The total of thirty-one signed on boats were allocated into "Gold", "Silver" and "Bronze" fleets, and scored according to their ability.

The final race was once again won by Lord/Rose, with Faulkner/Cooper behind them, and Pearce/Wang in third place.

The final scoring was dependent upon which fleet each boat was allocated to, and the best two scores from all three races. Once this had been calculated, the first prize, and Gold fleet award went to Richard Lord and Hannah Rose. Faulker/Cooper and Pearce/Wang took second and third place, respectively.

The Silver award was won by Peter Kay and Chris Lomax of Seahorse. Thanks to their 12th place in the final race, Keith Toovey and Chris Higgs of Seahorse were able to take the Bronze award for Seahorse.

The event was also marked by a number of other awards, including the Novice Helm award to Stephanie Anderson. Like many sailors at the Welsh Harp, Stephanie started learning to sail at the club during the Thursday evening training sessions.

After a year, she was participating in the racing calendar, and borrowed a BTYC club boat to take part in the Venetian. Although she came last in the fleet on Saturday,

she continues to enjoy sailing at the Harp and will no doubt continue to progress during the coming season. Stephanie typifies the ethos of the clubs that are keen to train and encourage people who want to learn to sail.

The Welsh Harp Reservoir is often considered to be one of London's best kept secrets. It comprises a number of clubs, including Seahorse and BTYC, who are always open to visitors wanting to learn to sail or windsurf. During the summer the clubs organise training evenings, where new members are able to learn under the supervision of qualified instructors. Once "checked out", club members can participate in group "plain sailing" sessions, novice racing, and take part in the regular racing calendar.

The Southern Travellers Series of GP 14 races includes Papercourt, Tollesbury, Lee-on-Solent and Poole. No doubt the Welsh Harp will be represented by keen sailors for these events during the year, thus demonstrating that competitive sailing is alive in Brent.

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Further Details

BTYC Sailsports

The Welsh Harp Reservoir is a great water sports centre situated in Brent in North-West London. It is a conservation area and wild life centre, based upon a mile long stretch of water set in pleasant surroundings. The Lake runs alongside the North Circular road, but it is hard to believe that you are less than 5 miles from Marble Arch.

BTYC Sailsports – Sailing and Windsurfing club in North London, host to the Venetian Trophy on 10 April 2010.

<http://www.btycsailsports.org.uk/>

The GP14 Dinghy

Originally designed by Jack Holt in 1949, the GP14 is easily recognised by the distinctive bell on the mainsail. The idea behind the design was to build a general purpose (GP), 14-foot dinghy which could be raced, cruised, rowed or to which you could even attach an outboard motor if you wanted to.

The GP14 is used for all levels of sailing, from training beginners through club racing to competing at regional, national and world events. As a relatively stable boat it is

ideal to learn to sail in and is sailed by people of all ages and abilities. For competitive racing there is a wide tolerance of all-up crew weight.

With recent developments and the continued backing of an active class association, the GP14 remains one of the UK's most popular sailing dinghies for close, competitive tactical fleet racing.

Background to the GP14 from the UK GP14 Class Association:

http://www.gp14.co.uk/page/page.php?editorial_id=3

The RYA

The RYA is the national body for all forms of boating, including dinghy and yacht racing, motor and sail cruising, RIBs and sports boats, powerboat racing, windsurfing, inland cruising and narrowboats, and personal watercraft:

<http://www.rya.org.uk>

Great Britain Olympic Sailing

Great Britain is the world's top Olympic Classes sailing nation with the British Olympic team sailors topping the medal table at the past three Games in 2000, 2004 and 2008.

Skandia Team GBR is the British Sailing Team in the Olympic and Paralympic

Classes:

<http://www.rya.org.uk/programmes/skandiateamgbr/Pages/aboutskandiateamgbr.aspx>

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