



OPTIMIST EARLY SUMMER CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Optimist Early Summer Championships were held at Hayling Island Sailing Club over the weekend of 14th and 15th May. With a bumper fleet of 180 sailors attending, including an amazing 80 entrants in our younger and less experienced Regatta Fleet, we had a great attendance, showing the strength and depth in the UK fleet!

Edwards (Parkstone YC) and William Moss (Barnt Green SC) kept their noses clean and laid down a solid first day's results to lead the fleet prior to a discard.



The 70 boat regatta fleet launched off the back beach at HISC into beautiful sunshine & light breeze. The fleet contains a wide range of abilities & experience from those

Saturday provided champagne sailing, with light winds and plenty of sun. Regatta Fleet showed their older friends the way forward, getting three races completed in quick succession, while Main Fleet, a little slower off the blocks getting out to Hayling Bay, did get three races in but certainly tested Race Officer Tim Hancock and his long suffering team with a healthy supply of general recalls. Once Tim started wielding his black flag, the racing got underway in earnest. Quite a few of the top end of the fleet fell foul of the black flag on the start line, and there was a full blackboard at the back of the committee boat, but Lila



doing their first event to those looking to step up into main.



Race Officer Dave Dobrijevic set a square course in the middle of the harbour over Pilsea Bank, providing a slack tide & traffic free race track.

3 fairly busy races were completed, a very eager fleet causing a number of recalls and the unveiling of the U Flag... The 3 races produced 3 different winners, Freddie Pank taking the first race, Edward Taylor the second race & Isabella Deas claiming the third & final win of the day.

Overnight, consistency paid, Edward Taylor (1,2) leading from Freddie Pank (12,3). Only the top six had managed two top ten results, such is the tightness of the regatta fleet racing. Rupert Garlick held third (4,3) followed by Eliza Holley 4th (4,5) , Isabella Deas 5th (1,9) & Lizzie Hudson in 6th (5,6).

The evening saw the HISC house team lay on a lovely BBQ on the sun terrace with the theme being Hawaiian dress. The weather didn't disappoint and it only started to get chilly as the band struck up and we all headed inside. After a few more drinks some of the parents treated the rest of us to their dancing skills. Meanwhile, the kids had decanted to the beach for a mass game of beach cricket followed by swimming. It was great to see the kids having as much fun off of the water as they had had on.



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Regatta Fleet Sunday

Sunday dawned with a slightly less appealing view.... rain!!! but at least we had wind... Once again Dave set a square course on Pilsey & the fleet was raring to launch! Once the safety fleet was ready, the earlier fleet was released, only for a large dark cloud to appear & steal the wind. With Lightning reporting the area, the fleet then returned to the shore - for a quick snack break to wait for the front to pass. The Skies cleared, the wind returned & the fleet headed back out for three rapid fire back to back races. The wind was up to 12-15knots, testing the metal of the young sailors, leading to some hiking, some misadventure & a fair bit of bailing!

Over the three frantic & tight races, Isla Hutchinson had the best day with a 1,2,4. Freddie Pank also claimed a 1,2 & BFD. Ruby Coster cracked the podium with a 3rd in race 5 & then led the last race from gun to gun to take her first regatta fleet race win!! Other consistent performances on Sunday saw: Rafe Bradley with a 4,4. Rex Hay with a 3,7 & Lizzie Hudson with a 5,9.

Once back on the beach, the rain abated and the sun returned, just in time to dry out the fleet & motivate the families for the pack up...

Main Fleet was won by Lila Edwards (Parkstone YC), with William Moss (Barnt Green SC) and Dylan Creighton (Cardiff Bay YC) making up the top three.

Regatta Fleet was won convincingly by Freddie Pank (Castle Cove YC), in his second Regatta Fleet victory of the season, with Lizzie Hudson and Isla Hutchinson (both Royal Lymington YC) coming second and third.

IOCA love to reward good sportsmanship and people who go the extra effort mile. Stand out performances were from local lad Louis Gaunt who toughed it out in the difficult bay conditions but will being toward the back of the fleet still did his turns when he hit a mark. Also 8 year old Robby Mayo from Lymington who stated that he didn't care that his parents didn't want him to go out in the windy conditions and that he was going, which he did.



We would like to thank IOCA UK Sailing Lead, Nick Martin. Our splendid race officer and mark laying teams, led by Tim Hancock (Main Fleet) and David Dobrijevic (Regatta Fleet) did a fantastic job, along with the safety teams (especially on Sunday where the latter certainly got a workout).

Finally, a big thank you to our fabulous class and event sponsors, without which this wouldn't have been possible, Xtremity (who kindly donated ribs for the event), Gill (who gave some lovely prizes), Noble Marine and AR Design Studio – we really appreciate your support!

