

21st Broadland Youth Regatta at Norfolk Punt Club, 30 August 2014

82 youth and junior sailors in 67 boats from seven Broadland Clubs took part in the 21st Broadland Youth Regatta on Barton Broad, hosted on behalf of the Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association by the Norfolk Punt Club. All four races were sailed in a moderate to brisk westerly breeze. Top honours in the fleet racing went to Hugh Braidwood in the fast handicap start, sailing a Laser for BASC, Charlie Folkard in the slow handicap start sailing his laser radial for BASC, Joseph Drake in the Topper Class sailing for WOBYC and William Pank in the Optimist Class sailing for Norfolk Broads Yacht Club.

Close racing and keen competition in all four Classes – Angus Richardson (WOBYC) tied on points in the fast handicap, the tie broken in Hugh Braidwood's favour on countback, similarly Joshua Means (HSC) tied with William Pank in the Optimists. The RYA Judge, Trevor Lewis, may have regretted urging competitors to protest at the briefing as in all there were seven hearings, however NPC's expert event management delivered a totally successful, albeit long, one day regatta for the large turnout of keen youth sailors, parents and club coaches.

The interclub competition for the Centenary Salver was contested by six clubs, and by the narrowest of margins Beccles Amateur Sailing Club, who have never won it before in spite of rallying large teams, were triumphant, with WOBYC and NBYC in second and third places.

Size isn't everything: interestingly teams of eight boats (BASC and WOBYC) excelled, the largest NBYC numbered 15 boats, HSC fielded 14 boats, HBSC 13, NPC 8 and NSSA a single RS500. NSBA event organisers were pleased to note an increase in the number of two handed dinghies - 15, and that the two Norfolk Punts, helmed by Freddie Scott and Jack Drew-Leventon provided greatest spectator value, with dramatic fallings in and capsizes whilst racing close to the appreciative crowd on the pontoons.

The Whelpton Cup for the most successful double-handed boat was awarded to Billy Johnson crewed by Katie Davies in their Feva XL.

The Lady Mayhew Trophy for endeavour, applying the greatest effort in a spirit of sport determination and fun without necessarily achieving a winning position was awarded to Elske Wilton from the host Club, NPC in her Topper "Oink".

NPC gave a big "thank you" to Harken and Clamcleat for sponsoring the event and filling the "goody bags" that all competitors received.

Bryony Bennett-Lloyd, International 420 Ladies World Champion 2013, awarded prizewinners their trophies and glassware mementos. Bryony addressed the award ceremony, saying she was inspired to raise her game in competitive dinghy racing at the 2006 Broadland Youth Regatta. Bryony started in Toppers at HBSC and went on to reach the pinnacle of youth sailing representing Great Britain at the ISAF Youth Worlds and now plans an Olympic campaign in the Women's Skiff, the 49er FX, looking towards the 2020 Tokyo Games. Her remarks were a remarkable inspiration to the young sailors and their support teams. You are advised to follow her progress.

