



## **RYA Press Release**

8 April 2009

### **New breed gear up for 2009 RYA Volvo Youth Nationals glory**

Scotland beckons for the cream of Britain's up-and-coming sailing talent next week as the 2009 RYA Volvo Youth National Championships and Trials take place at Largs Sailing Club.

Around 250 top 19 and under sailors in 200 boats and racing across nine Youth classes have been confirmed for the five days of racing which gets underway on Monday 13 April.

The premier annual racing event for Youth sailors, previous RYA Youth National Champions include three-time Olympic gold medallist Ben Ainslie, Beijing 2008 Yngling gold medal winners Sarah Ayton and Pippa Wilson and Skandia Team GBR's double World champion 470 helm Nic Asher.

Three reigning champions will be bidding to retain their crowns in Largs, James Grant (boys' Radial), Sophie McKeeman (girls' Radial) and Izzy Hamilton (girls' RS:X) all landing their first Youth National titles at Pwllheli last year.

Windsurfer Hamilton and sailor McKeeman are looking forward to trying to repeat their 2008 success.

"The RYA Volvo Youth Nationals are the opportunity for all the young RS:X sailors to compete together and really try to show everyone how much their winter training has paid off," Hamilton said.

McKeeman added: "There were a few big lessons I learned from last year's Championships among the most important being that you don't win or lose in a single day. Consistency is the key to winning any title and you need to stay cool when things are not going well."

The Laser Standard class looks set to be a close contest in Largs with Martin Evans, Phil Reynolds, Rob Holmes and Alex Mills-Barton among the favourites to land the top prize while 2008 silver medallist Bleddyn Mon, now sailing with Nick Redding, and World Under 19 champions Max Richardson and Alex Groves head the pack in the boy's 29er.

Ali Masters will want to go one better than the boys' RS:X silver he claimed last year while 420 duo Phil Sparks and Ben Gratton will hope they can turn 2008 bronze into gold although a number of crews will be doing their utmost to stop them.

In the girls' 420 leading Scots Anna Burnet and Flora Stewart will want to put on a medal-winning show in front of their home crowd with Rebecca Kalderon/Rosie Sibthorp and Jo Freeman/Hannah Mitchell among the other main title contenders.

As well as acting as the Youth National Championships, the event doubles up as a selection event for the Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Championships, which this year take place in Buzios, Brazil in July and where Britain will defend the Volvo Trophy, for the top performing nation, that they won in Denmark last year. The only exception is the Hobie 16 class which will not compete at Largs and whose primary selection event will be Eurocat in Carnac (1-3 May).

Skandia Team GBR star and double World and Olympic Yngling class gold medallist Sarah Ayton will be among the panel of selectors in Largs while the sailors will get to show off their skills in front of a Royal audience on Wednesday 15 April when RYA President, HRH The Princess Royal, visits the Championships.

To keep up-to-date with all the news as it happens in Largs visit [www.ryaracingevents.org.uk](http://www.ryaracingevents.org.uk) and sign up for the new results email alerts to get the latest results straight to your inbox while the popular Youth Nationals blog also returns after its resounding debut success last year.

Meanwhile sailors in contention for Youth Worlds selection are asked to bring their passports to Largs.

## **Ends**

Karenza Morton  
RYA Racing Communications Officer  
T: 023 80 604219  
M: 07769 505203  
E: [karenza.morton@rya.org.uk](mailto:karenza.morton@rya.org.uk)