



Press Release

14 January 2010

British Keelboat Academy announces inaugural squad and plans for 2010

Following the launch of the RYA and UKSA's new British Keelboat Academy (BKA) at the end of last year, the Academy's managers joined a selection of newly signed up sailors at the Tullett Prebon London Boat Show today (Thursday, 14 January) to announce their plans for 2010 and reveal the inaugural squad.

Comprised of two levels, National and Development, the 40-strong BKA squad boasts some of the most promising new keelboat talent in the country, with sailors making the grade after a gruelling selection weekend in December.

Selected sailors encompassed the best all round mix of skills, required to take their keelboat sailing forward and perform on the international stage. Team work, performing under pressure, campaign management and sailing technique form the Academy's main sailing focuses whilst the BKA also works on the personal development of each sailor, providing them with life skills which will enhance their futures, both in sailing and in all of their undertakings.

With sailors split between the two tiers, the National squad will focus on bigger boat racing making use of John Merricks II, kindly loaned by the John Merricks Sailing Trust. The Development Squad will place their efforts on smaller boat racing, using UKSA's fleet of J80s.

BKA Head Coach and UKSA Racing Manager Luke McCarthy comments; "We were very impressed with the standard and quantity of applications received for the squad. Having already run our first training weekend it is evident that all our sailors are absolutely full of potential. We can't wait to get stuck into 2010's schedule of activities."

The first event for the newly-formed squad will be the RORC Easter Challenge in April, with both the Development and National squads competing in their respective boats. All the sailors are now training hard and working to ensure the boats are ready for the season ahead.

Following the Easter regatta, the Development Squad will be taking the J80s to compete in local regattas, followed by the Nationals and, funding permitting, the Europeans in Garda in June.

Meanwhile, the National squad have their sights set on the Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race (23-30 August), which would provide a great challenge to the crew.

McCarthy adds: "The Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race is an ideal opportunity for the National squad to put their skills to the test and get a taste of competing at International level. It will be a massive test of both their sailing and also, more importantly, their ability to put together a campaign at this level,"

"We are already working on putting together a campaign for the event with our fantastic group of very generous financial and in-kind supporters. However, further funding is required and we are actively looking for additional funding to help us be successful." he concluded.

The BKA's partners include B&G, Grapefruit Graphics, Hamble Yacht Services Harken, Henri Lloyd, North Sails, Ocean Safety, Performance Rigging, Premium Liferrafts and RORC. Full details of squad sailors are now on the BKA website at www.britishkeelboatacademy.org along with more information about the Academy and how you can help with fundraising.

BKA Squad Members

National

Jonathan Coad	Sally Olsen
Aaron Cooper	Tom Smedley
Becky Scott	Phil Miller
Callum Calder	Antonia Bull
Chris Noble	Guy Fillmore
Christopher Dorey	Peter Knight
Hamish MacDonald	James Brown
Peter Cowell	Linford Rees
Rachel Scarfe	
Richard Clay	

Development

Marina Brassington	Lizzie Shawcroft
Michaela Boughton	Henry Smith
Lizzy Foreman	Katherine Whitley
Matthew Hallam	Toby Yeabsley
Catherine Jordan	Kirsty Matthews
Mark Lees	Tom Forrester-Coles
Sam Matson	Stephen Aiken
Kelvin Matthews	Nicola Curwen
Tom Phipps	Oli Egan
Matt Reid	Adam Lees

-ENDS-

For more information contact:

Ellie Williamson

RYA Racing Communications Officer
T: 023 8060 4219
M: 07769 505203
E: ellie.williamson@rya.org.uk

Nicola Holder

UKSA PR
T: 01425 472330
E: nicola@mckennatownsendspr.com