

RYA Press Release

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Shaw regains GBR's World University Match Racing crown



Ed FitzGerald, George Yeoman, Andy Shaw, Rachel Williamson, Ben Ainsworth

Double British Universities Match Racing Champion, Andy Shaw and his crew, are celebrating today after being crowned World Universities Match Racing champions following an emphatic win at the fifth FISU World Match Racing Championships held in Gazi, Crete last week (5-12th July).

After Mark Campbell-James won the first ever event for GBR back in 2000, no British crew has been able to regain the crown since however 20-year-old Southampton University Ship Science student Shaw, made no mistake in reclaiming the title this year winning 17 of his 19 races.

Competing at what is seen as the pinnacle event of student match racing for the first time ever, the Itchenor Sailing Club member wasn't sure what to expect. Being crowned world champions however surpassed the teams goal of "a medal" at the event.

Shaw comments : "We didn't know we were number one ranked before we raced so we weren't going in there expecting to win - we knew what our abilities were however and we trained quite hard for it so we knew we could do it.

We came here knowing the competition would be tough, knowing other really good match racers have been here and not won, so to have won it's just brilliant and it feels amazing. All our boat handling was really smooth and all the crew did their jobs perfectly - to have won practically undefeated and bring the crown home to the UK after ten years just makes it even better!"

Shaw dominated the event right from the start winning 10 of his round robin races, going into the second round of racing in first place. He then beat Frederic Denis (FRA) in the second stage 2-1 followed by Marte O'Leary (IRL) 2-0 in the semi final securing his place in Sunday's grand final. In straight wins Shaw

emphatically blew second ranked Jay Griffin (AUS) right out of the water rounding off an exceptional performance for the team at the event and claiming the coveted title in fine form.



Andy (& Co) celebrating on the podium

The bi-annual event, sailed on J24s, is open to two teams of four or five student sailors from each country. Applications for the British team were made in February with the RYA and BUSA (British Universities Sailing Association) selecting two teams for the event awarding each of them a grant to cover the cost of the competition.

Thirteen separate teams from nine different countries entered the fifth instalment of the event this year with a second British team headed up by Bristol University Research Engineer James Goss, joining Shaw in GBR's event line-up.

Along with his crew, the 22-year-old, who is a member of Burghfield Sailing Club, made a cracking start to proceedings in the round robin stages qualify for the next round in second place behind Shaw. After an extremely close battle in their second round test Australia's Jay Griffin, the eventual second place finisher, scooped the win 3-2 leaving Goss to fight it out in the bottom four semi final race-off. Beating Frenchman Frederic Denis but losing out to Lin Christopher of Singapore Goss ended the event in a very credible sixth place.

Goss commented: "We are very pleased with how we did during the round robin and i think we surprised ourselves finishing second in that stage. I guess that raised our expectations so we were slightly disappointed going out in the second stages but we've had a really fun week and learnt a lot. We're definitely going to be doing some more match racing in the future."

"I'm doing a doctorate so I've still got another three years of university sailing left. Hopefully i can do this event next time and use my experience to defend the crown!" he concluded.

For more information about the FISU World Match Racing Championships click [here](#) and for more information on University Match Racing click [here](#).

2010 FISU World Match Racing Championships GBR Teams

GBR 1:

Andy Shaw, 20, Southampton University – Helm
Rachel Williamson, 21, Portsmouth University
George Yeoman, 20, Newcastle University

Ben Ainsworth, 23, Southampton University
Ed FitzGerald, 21, Newcastle University

GBR 2:

James Goss, 22, Bristol University
Chris Carden, 22, Bristol University
Elliott Parsons, 22, Exeter University
Harriet Marsden, 21, Bristol University
Pete Johnson, 23, Plymouth University

Ends

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