



RYA Press Release

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Reigning champion defends RYA National Match Racing crown

Nick Cherry defended his RYA National Match Racing title this weekend as the Southampton based skipper claimed the coveted trophy for the fourth time at Queen Mary Sailing Club (18-20 November).

The event was overshadowed by frustrating sailing conditions across the course of the three day regatta only allowing for a number of round robin races to take place. With an array of match racing talent in attendance at Queen Mary Sailing Club (Staines), the first day of the grand final welcomed a promising 10-12 knots allowing for nine flights to take place before poor light meant racing was abandoned mid-afternoon.

Day two of the Championships was another slow start for the 11 teams who had qualified for the event over the course of the year. With light, intermittent winds flicking left to right, the race committee managed to make it through to flight 15 by the close of play on day two (Saturday 19th November).

With no racing on the Sunday due to heavy fog, Nick Cherry was awarded the prestigious title on his percentage of wins in the round robin stages. Across the two days of racing, Cherry and his crew won six out of the seven races while Mark Campbell-James won seven but lost two therefore finishing in second place with a lower percentage of wins to that of Cherry. Skandia Team GBR's Lucy Macgregor finished the weekend in third after winning three out of her four races.

On winning the trophy for a second consecutive year and for a staggering fourth time (2011, 2010, 2007, 2006), matching that of fellow match racer Mark Campbell-James who finished runner-up for a second consecutive year, Cherry commented: "We are delighted to win! Looking at the trophy Mark CJ is the only skipper with his name on it as many times and one was a first equal - So I'm claiming the most outright wins of this trophy!"

Cherry skippered his crew of Matty Adams, Connor Myant, Sam Richmond to a total of six out of seven race wins giving them an 85.7% win percentage clinching them the 2011 RYA National Match Racing title.

"One of the main things that went well was our draw in the pairing list! We ended up racing most of the lower ranked teams and none of the top seeds so have to acknowledge that was a factor. Our closest race was against BUSA ladies, skippered by my girlfriend Charlotte Lawrence which after several lead changes came down to inches at the finish. That was certainly a battle I was glad to win," said Cherry.

"Although I haven't done a lot of match racing this year due to my focus on the Figaro with the Artemis Offshore Academy, we have sailed as a team for a long time and were always confident we could put up a good fight. Going into the event I would have certainly put Skandia Team GBR's Lucy Macgregor and her crew as favourites, having trained with them earlier in the year it's obvious that their hard work and new coaching setup has made them a strong unit. I was also looking forward to a good race with Team Wight Match, having crewed for Sam in Bermuda last month it could have been a bit of a grudge match if there had been wind on Sunday!"

Cherry added: "We had some good close races this year, however I think the key to our success was always sailing in a low risk style by just doing enough to get the points on the board. Out

teamwork is also a crucial factor in our success as well as our experience and of course this weekend the weather was also a big factor.”

With racing binned on the Sunday due to extremely poor visibility, heavy fog and inconsistent wind, it was crucial that the skippers were ready from the off.

“Looking at the forecast and the schedule we always knew there was a chance that the result might be decided by the round robin, but in any event we always try to win every match we race. It always helps to treat every race like it's a final decider,” explained the 2011 RYA National Match Racing champion.

Cherry concluded: “Overall it's a great achievement to win the trophy for a second consecutive year and a for a fourth time. Hopefully I will be able to say I beat the women's Olympic Match Race champions the last time we raced come August next year!”

The event this year has been a huge success and an enormous thank you on behalf of everyone must go to the Royal Thames Yacht Club for all their help and support in running yet another successful RYA National Match Racing Championship.

For further information on the RYA National Match Racing please visit www.rya.org.uk/racing and follow the links to 'Keelboat Match Racing'. The 2012 programme will be announced in December.

2011 RYA National Match Racing Championship Overall Results:

- 1) **Nick Cherry** - Matty Adams, Connor Myant, Sam Richmond.
- 2) **Mark Campbell James** - Dave Mason, Andy Clarke, Luke Cross.
- 3) **Lucy Macgregor** - Annie Lush, Kate Macgregor, Vicky Lenz, Maurice Paardenkooper.
- 4) **Robbie Allam** - Niall Myant, Ben Bainbridge, Jerry Fowke
- 5) **Mark Lees** - Toby Yeabsley, Mark Yeabsley, Toby Mumford
- 6) **Sam Pearson** - Dan Gohl, Tristan Jaques, Tom Dawson
- 7) **Rob Gullan** - Anthony Gullan, Theo Mousson, Lucas Brun
- 8) **Tom Phipps** - Chris Dorey, Kelvin Matthews, Tom Forrester-Coles
- 9) **Charlotte Lawrence** - Anna MacKenzie, Pippa Horne, Hannah Diamond, Andrew Walsh
- 10) **Griogair Whyte** - Will Norman, Daka Fadipe, Alisa Weatherall
- 11) **James French** - Robbie Southwell, Bradley McLaughlin, Andrew Sinclair, Andrew Wishart

-Ends-

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