



RYA Press Release

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Young sailors gear up for 2010 RYA Volvo Youth National Championships glory

Weymouth and Portland welcomes the cream of Britain's up-and-coming sailing talent this weekend as the 2010 RYA Volvo Youth National Championships kick off at Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy.

Over 320 top young sailors racing in/on 250 boats/windsurfers across six Youth classes, have been confirmed for the five days of racing which gets underway on Monday 5 April.

As the premier annual racing event for Youth sailors, previous RYA Youth National Champions have included 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.

Four reigning champions will be bidding to retain their crowns during the week, Phil Reynolds (Laser Standard), Hannah Tilley (girls' Radial), George Bowles (mens' RS:X) and Izzy Hamilton (girls' RS:X); the former landing their first Youth National titles at Largs last year and Hamilton going for a hat-trick this year having picked up her first title in 2008 at Pwllheli.

Bowles commented: "The RYA Volvo Youth Nationals are a big deal being one of the most important events in the year for RS:X youth sailors. We've had all winter to prepare for it and it's a chance to see how we all fair against each other. There are a lot of people who are pretty dedicated and have been training hard so they will definitely be on form and be tough to beat."

"Keeping focused and trying not to be too nervous was the key for me last year as that's when you start making mistakes. You've got to concentrate on your own thing and not worry about anyone else too much," he concluded.

The 29er competition looks set to be a close call with last year's boys champions moving on to pastures new, and a new breed of girls and boys RYA Volvo 29er National Youth Squad sailors coming up to the table looking evenly matched over recent regattas.

Laser Standard sailor Martin Evans will be looking to upgrade his bronze medal last year, and Tom Britz, who is debuting in the Radial class at the event, will be taking on stiff competition in his fleet including the 2009 third and fourth place finishers Jack Wetherell and Elliot Hanson.

Amongst the ones to watch in the girls 420 class will be hot new duo Annabel Vose and Joanna Freeman who only moved up from Optimists to the 420 this summer and since then have picked up top results at the major regattas. In the boys class Tim Gratton and Ed Riley

will be setting their sights on gold after finishing fifth last year with a number of other hot prospects including Mike Wood and Hugh Brayshaw on their tails.

Taking on Hamilton and Bowles in the RS:X class will be Skandia Team GBR Transitional Squad sailor Sophie Bailey looking to improve on her silver medal of last year as well as current Bic Techno World Champion Sam Sills stepping up into the RS:X class for the event. And as the catamaran class returns to the Youth Nationals once again, 2008's Hobie 16 sailors Adam Butler and his crew Nikki Boniface, who both represented RYA Volvo Team GBR at the Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Championships last year, will be looking to replicate their success in the newly adopted Spitfire class debuting with 11 boats.

As well as acting as the Youth National Championships, as always the event doubles up as a selection event for the Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Championships, which this year take places in Istanbul, Turkey in July and host of Class World, European and International Championships with tens of thousands of pounds of travel grants up for grabs.

Skandia Team GBR star and double Olympic and World champion, Sarah Webb, will among the panel of Youth Worlds selectors at Weymouth and Portland while the sailors will also have the chance to show off their talents in front of a Royal audience after conformation that HRH The Princess Royal will be attending the Championships on Wednesday April 7.

To keep up-to-date with all the news as it happens in Weymouth and Portland visit www.ryaracingevents.org.uk. You can also follow us on Twitter [www.twitter.com/youthnationals](https://twitter.com/youthnationals) for the first time ever and watch the results unfold across the three race courses as it happens, and the popular Youth Nationals blog will be returning keeping you filled in with all the latest developments shore side.

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