



Not much wind, but a great atmosphere

More than 200 young people on board 25 Sail Training vessels gathered in Cowes Yacht Haven for the start of the Small Ships Race. It is thanks to the generous support of Isle of Wight based charities and clubs that ASTO have been able to organise this event since 2004. The 2013 race was therefore the 10th time the Cowes Small Ships Race has been staged, with a total of 74 different vessels taking more than 3000 young people to sea.

Race day started with a parade of vessels past the Royal Yacht Squadron platform, in which the young crews waved, cheered and showed off their boats. The VIPs and sponsors on the platform were treated to a close up view of what is probably the most diverse race fleet in the country, from 100 year old gaffers to modern ocean racing yachts.

The race itself was tricky, with a combination of strong tides and very little wind. The tide was in favour initially, allowing the fleet to set off toward Ryde Middle at a couple of knots. After about an hour and a half, the tide turned westward, thus removing the advantage the fleet had had. At the same time, the wind dropped, resulting in many of the vessels sailing at less than 2 knots.

Jolie Brise crossed the finish line at 1338, after a race lasting 3 hours and 38 minutes. Unfortunately all other vessels were by now seriously struggling to make any headway, with some stationary and some even drifting backwards in the tide. Morale was high, however, with many crews singing and some waterfights breaking out.



The ASTO Small Ships Race is supported by these organisations:



Shortly afterwards, with little prospect of any other vessels finishing before sundown, the race committee decided to shorten the time limit to 1430. Each vessel reported their position at that time and race results were worked out from that.

Despite the lack of wind, the young crews seemed to have had a fantastic time as the atmosphere at the prize giving showed.

More information about Sail Training, the Small Ships Race, and a full list of results is available on the ASTO website www.uksailtraining.org

Sail Training in the UK

ASTO is the Association of Sail Training Organisations, and has more than 30 members operating more than 50 boats all around the coast of the UK. The common aim of all these organisations is that they use the experience of being at sea as a means to help young people learn about themselves, discover hidden strengths and talents, and understand the



value of working as a team. Member organisations include the Ocean Youth Trust, Tall Ships Youth Trust and Rona Sailing Project, amongst many others. The annual Small Ships Race is just one of the many ways in which ASTO aims to promote and support Sail Training in the UK. The young people taking part

will take away lasting memories and a sense of achievement and self-confidence that will stand them in good stead in their future lives. (picture on right tallshipstock.com) All other photographs courtesy of Andy Wales.



The crew of Jolie Brise receiving the Aurora Trophy for winning overall on corrected time.



Prizes

The race results are worked out using the Rule of Rating developed by Sail Training International for the Tall Ships Races. Prizes in the ASTO Small Ships Races are not just awarded for Group and overall winners. There are also prizes for the youngest crew, the best dressed crew, and the crew that best represent the spirit of the race, as voted for by all competitors.



Major General Martin White presenting Anthony Churchill, the outgoing chairman of the Cowes Committee, with a small thank you from ASTO



The crew of TS City Liveryman receiving the Richard Langhorn Trophy for the best Spirit of the Race.



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