



# 2016 – Sailing Captains Report

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## Club Racing

The 2016 season started slightly later than usual with the first Saturday on 7<sup>th</sup> May with the May Series. This event was strongly supported with up to 17 boats taking part and just one weekend with poor weather. Indeed 2016 proved to be much calmer than the previous years with very few days cancelled due to poor weather.

| 2016           | Midweek | Saturday |
|----------------|---------|----------|
| Rivers         | 5.1     | 2.3      |
| Glens          | 5.3     | 3.1      |
| Sport Boats    | 3.2     | 1.1      |
| Sonatas        | 5.1     | 0.3      |
| Cruisers       | 4.1     | 0.7      |
| Flying Fifteen | 1.5     | 0.3      |
| Dinghies       | 0       | 0.0      |

Overall both Rivers and Glens saw turnout drop by an average of one boat for both Wednesdays and Saturdays. Sonatas similarly dropped by 1 however Sports & Cruisers saw an increase of one and the Flying Fifteens also saw an increase with additional boats being added to all these fleets.

Tuesday night dinghy racing is proving very popular and a great pathway for Sunday sailors to improve their racing skills. It is dependent on parents providing the safety cover and it is important that a sound rota/volunteering structure is put in place to ensure continuity for the future.

## Sunday Sailing

Sunday sailing has been growing exponentially with 2016 no exception. Over 80 individual junior sailors took part at least twice in the Sunday sailing programme with some days attracting up to 50 participants. This requires significant resourcing and is something that a club development person will be able to assist with. On the back of this there was a good increase in membership numbers in this age category. Susan McKnight once again has done a tremendous job in coordinating all this and I wish to thank her particularly for her efforts in arranging all the instructors and safety boat cover which makes this possible. Efforts will also be made at the start of the 2017 to refresh safety boat skills for all those taking part in this activity.

## Events

In July the club were delighted to host the RS Elite National Championships and welcomed visitors from both England and Ireland. 27 boats competed in good weather over four days and everyone had a great time with compliments being paid from all visitors to the welcome they received at the club along with the fantastic sailing waters. Many thanks to all the helpers and volunteers who made it such a great experience. The club's crane also earned its spurs – saving on craning fees and thereby increasing the profitability of the event to the club.

The club also successfully hosted the RYA NI's youth championships in September which had 160 entries from all over Ireland. A fantastic effort from a great many people allowed us to cope with

such a large event and the inclement weather – one of the few poor weekends of weather all season. Once again thanks to the huge number of volunteers that made the event possible.

The **Frostie Series** matched the 2015 number of entries at 35 boats with increasing numbers of travelling visitors. Once again Race Officer, PJ Gualt, and his team on the battery did a great job to get in nine races for what was a very enjoyable series. Matt McGovern (Olympic 49er Class) delivered a well-received talk at the Frostie dinner which was, once again, a very enjoyable night.

## Rock Markers

Last year I undertook a review of the rock markers after a large number were lost over the course of the 2015 season. In 2016 we lost another one off Braddock Pladdy. Working with John Hagan the club invested in 10 permanent rock markers which were put in situ at the beginning of 2016. The design was experimental however they have proven to be very robust and have all stayed exactly in position. We are likely to move the one situated just off Downey rock, where a pole already exists, to either Gull Rock Pladdy or Half Tide. The Downey Pladdy markers are likely to get a height extension to make them more visible at Spring HW although at this stage of the tide there would be over 3m clearance on the pladdy.

## Racing Marks

It has become clear that the pipe racing marks are reaching the end of their working life despite extensive efforts at the start of the season to reseal the bases. This year we lost a record of 5 racing marks over the course of the season and emergency ones had to be manufactured to replace them. I will be looking into some alternatives going forward and we may look to test some out in the 2017 season with the aim of making them as visible as possible when racing in all conditions.

Brian Corry

Sailing Captain

1<sup>st</sup> November 2016