

The Association Secretaries Report on the 60th South Coast Championship Regatta (and the 11th South Coast Junior Regatta), hosted by the Coast Amateur Rowing Association at Herne Bay, Kent, on Saturday, 3rd September, 2016.

It was the Coast ARA's turn to host the Championship Regatta with Herne Bay the chosen location – for the first time since 1985 – but over a different but very fair course. Information and communications prior to the event, sent primarily by E Mail, were sent out on a regular basis and were comprehensive giving confidence for a well organised and efficiently run Regatta which, apart from a view minor issues – notably the PA system – proved to be the case.

The Official reception and Championship draw, on the Friday before the Regatta, were the only part of the proceedings that were based on the Herne Bay Rowing Club Clubhouse a free bar until the draw an ample buffet made for an enjoyable event the only disappointment being the restriction on the number (50 per association) which forced the H&D Executive Officers to make a difficult decision on allocations – with many of the Championship crews missing out on the opportunity to witness the draw as a result. In an effort to keep them and others informed the draws were posted on the H&D Website – and its Facebook page and Twitter feed within an hour.

The most disappointing aspect of the Regatta had nothing to do with CARA or the Hearne Bay Club – and that was the entry from both the WEARA Clubs and – surprisingly from our own Association. The very poor entry from the WEARA Clubs – with just two Clubs entering – both based on the Torridge at Bideford – was I am sad to say not a surprise as it is what we have come to expect – especially when it is a CARA contested event. They had just five representative crews, just one in the open and none in the Junior event – which is usually their strongest area of representation. This must be particularly annoying for CARA who have gone out of their way to accommodate WEARA by agreeing to host the 2018 Championships Regatta to allow WEARA to host in 2019 – the 150th anniversary of Dartmouth Rowing Club who will host on their behalf. While I have sympathy for Bob Board, the WEARA Association Secretary and their SCC delegates – who are committed to the event – WEARA really do need to be taken to task over this issue which is clearly the biggest threat to the sixty year old regatta.

The Hants & Dorset ARA can usually be relied on to provide a significant proportion of the entry – usually over 50% of the open events – and as far as I am aware have never failed to provide a full quota of Championship crews – although we went pretty close on this occasion – and I have to question the commitment and attitude of some of the H&D Club regarding Association representation which should be seen as an honour. It was surprising and very disappointing that three of the Hants & Dorset ARA Clubs that had competed during the season – Lymington, Newport and Westover – did not enter the Regatta – and that two more – Christchurch and Poole only entered their Championship crews. It was also of great concern that we very nearly failed to have our full quota of representative crews in the Men's Coastal Fours Championship Fours event where both Poole and Westover – who were the joint runners-up for the Association Championship behind Christchurch did not enter and that others appeared reluctant to lose the opportunity for a possible open win by stepping up to the Championship. Ryde – a crew only promoted from Novice in mid-season - are to be thanked and congratulated for responding to a last minute appeal to ensure the Associations had full representation – and showing the correct attitude to this Regatta which should be all about the Championship events and representing your Association.

The total entry for the Regatta was 115 crews which I suspect is the lowest for many years. Thirty-free of these were in the Championships were WEARA's failure to provide a full quota allowed both CARA and the H&D to enter additional crews – the Hants & Dorset had 3rd crews in the Men's Senior Fours, the Men's Master Fours and the Ladies Junior Fours – although it was sad to see a Ladies Senior Championship race with just four crews competing – with no Senior Fours in either the Men's

or Ladies event from WEARA. There were 67 entries in the open events – less those transferred to Championship races – 41 from CARA Clubs, 25 from the H&D and just 1 – Bideford Reds in the Men's Coastal Junior Fours - for WEARA and there were just 15 crews across the four Junior (by age) events – 9 from CARA Clubs and six from the H&D. The two J14 Quad events only had two crews in each event. Hants & Dorset ARA Club Crews represented 40% of the total entry.

And so to the racing – and as usual, with my thanks to John Bailey – I quote his Press report on the regatta to describe the how the Championship events went –

“Another successful Championship Regatta for the Hants and Dorset Crews but once again it was the Coast ARA who retained the Bideford Bowl with a comfortable win for home club Herne Bay. BTC on the outside of the course made a short lived charge from the start but as the crews settled it was Herne Bay, with ex GB Squad members R Hoskins and D Ritchie adding to the power of T Walton and W Cambell coxed by N Ingram, who were seen to be forging ahead of Bowl holders Bexhill and past winners Itchen Imperial. With the race half done Herne Bay had a clear lead and looked to be moving directly ahead of Itchen Imperial as Bexhill fell away into third place. With 250 metres remaining Herne Bay held a two lengths lead with Itchen Imperial, still looking strong, making their final charge, but it was Herne Bay who crossed the finishing line to win the Bideford Bowl for the eighth time in the events 60 years.

In the first of the Championship events Itchen Imperial, with S Taylor, R Benham, L Ratment, I Barnaby (Stk) O Barnaby (Cox) proved to be worthy Champions in the Veteran +40 Fours having crossed the line a length and a half clear of BTC and Folkestone and in the Mens Junior Fours Christchurch lived up to expectations with K Mersey, M Lewis, I Gaston, J Gaston (Stk) S Erwin (Cox) dominating from the start.

In the Ladies Senior Championship race Itchen Imperial's P Lewis, R Daniels, K Taylor, J Bull (Stk) L Gooch (Cox) had to match Shoreham all the way with never more than a length between them. With 100 metres to go Itchen looked to have their bow in front and a final push gained them the verdict with just 1/2 length separating the two crews.

In the Ladies Junior Fours Championship, Hants and Dorset Champions Poole and runners up Southampton did the Association proud both rowing at their very best. Drawn next to each other on the start line they both got away cleanly, matching each other stroke for stroke with little to choose between them, but it was the better steering by W Hartland the Southampton cox who kept her crew to their task as they gradually pulled away, despite repeated determined efforts from the Poole Ladies, that made the difference with L Sadler, L Barker, L Florence, K Wood (Stk) putting in their best performance of the season they pulled clear to win by three lengths with Ryde in third place giving the Hants and Dorset a clean sweep.

It was disappointment though for the Hants and Dorset in the final Championship event of the day, the Men's Junior/Senior Championship, with an enforced change to hot favourites Christchurch necessitating Marcus Lewis, who had previously won in the Junior Fours Championship event, to fill in for J Glass-Hooper. Christchurch built a comfortable lead off the start but gradually Deal got back on terms and with 200 metres remaining with a final charge that Christchurch could not match Deal pushed ahead with several lengths to spare.

Maybe next season, when the Championships will be held over the Olympic course at Dorney Lake, the Bideford Bowl will come back to the Hants and Dorset ARA!”

Although missing out on the “Bowel” once again the results of the H&D ARA representative crews in the six Championship events – four wins, four seconds and three thirds were enough to ensure that our Association were the winners of the Eileen and Eric Crowe Memorial Challenge Cup for the

Association gaining the most point in the Championship races once again – with Itchen making the biggest contribution.

Hants & Dorset ARA Clubs also did well in the supporting open events – unless CARA try to claim credit for dual affiliated Southsea – who won both the Coastal Junior Fours events. Further wins for H&D Clubs came for Shanklin in the Men's Junior Seniors and the Ladies Masters Fours for BTC with a BTC/Ryde composite taking the Men's 40 masters. There were 2nd places for BTC in the Men's Junior Senior Fours, for Southsea in the Men's Junior and the Men's and Ladies Novice Fours and for Southampton in the Ladies Master Fours and Ryde in the Ladies Junior Fours – with a 3rd place for BTC in the Men's Coastal Junior Fours. They may well have been another win – in the Ladies Senior Fours but for the unfortunate disqualification of Itchen for a second false start. The best results in for H&D Clubs in the Junior Fours events came for Shanklin in the Boys in J16 Coxed Quad were they finished 2nd and for Itchen who were second in both the Girls J16 Coxed Quad event and the Boys J14 Coxed Quad.

Southsea's two wins and three seconds gave them the Port of Dartmouth Royal Regatta Sesquicentennial Trophy for the most successful Club in the open and invitation events – which they would not have won had one of their two Junior Men's crews accepted the invitation to represent the Association. Deal won the Pat Sherwin Memorial Trophy for the most successful club in the Junior Regatta.

It often appeared that Ryan Epps was the sole organiser – as all communication came through him – but I am sure he had a strong committee behind him who are to be congratulated on a successful Regatta – let's hope it's not another 31 years before we return to this venue.

For the record – and for the first time in four years – WEARA actually provided a boat Inspector – who alongside Phil McCorry representing CARA and myself for the H&D ARA inspected around fifty Coastal Fours – including the late arrivals – and found four faults – all heel restraints – and all fixed on the day, re-inspected and allowed to go afloat.

It is not clear to me why the entries were lower than usual – I can't believe the earlier date had any particular impact – although it may have put off some WEARA crews – but their poor response was not unusual – they don't even support WEARA hosted events very well - and this remains the single biggest threat to continuation of the Championships.

So for the 61st Championships we – the Hants & Dorset ARA - host - back at Dorney - and we can only hope that we have an improved response from our own Clubs and that the opportunity to race the Junior events in river boat inspires an improved response from the WEARA Clubs – encourage them to provide crews for the Championships and open events as well - but I am not holding my breath.

Steve Bull.
Association Secretary.
Hants & Dorset ARA.
September, 2016.

Entries Table.

South Coast Rowing Championships.

2016

ENTRIES TABLE. *Southsea regarded as H&D/Worthing as CARA.*

Sat.3/9/16.	H&DARA	CARA	WEARA	Totals	% H&D.
Championship	15	13	5	33	45%
Open	25	41	1	67	37%
J14/J16	6	9	0	15	40%
Totals	<hr/> 46	<hr/> 63	<hr/> 6	<hr/> 115	<hr/> 40%

Results

Championship Events

Men's Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. HERNE NAY.

2nd. ITCHEN.

3rd. Deal.

Ladies Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. ITCHEN.

2nd. Shoreham.

3rd. BTC.

Men's Masters Coxed Fours.

1st. ITCHEN

2nd. BTC

3rd. COALPORTERS.

Men's Junior / Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. Deal

2nd. CHRISTCHURCH

3rd. Deal.

Men's Junior Coxed Fours.

1st. CHRISTCHURH.

2nd. Deal.

3rd. Bideford Blues.

Ladies Junior Coxed Fours.

1st. SOUTHAMPTON.

2nd. POOLE.

3rd. RYDE

Open Events.

Men's Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. Bexhill.

2nd. Shoreham.

3rd. Deal.

Men's Junior-Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. SHANKLIN.

2nd. BTC.

3rd. Herne Bay.

Men's Junior Coxed Fours.

1st. SOUTHSEA.

2nd. SOUTHSEA.

3rd. BTC.

Men's Novice Coxed Fours.

1st. Bexhill

2nd. SOUTHSEA.

3rd. Eastbourne.

Ladies Senior Coxed Fours.

1st. Worthing.

2nd. Folkstone.

Only 2 crews finished.

Ladies Junior Coxed Fours.

1st. SOUTHSEA.

2nd. RYDE.

3rd. Folkestone.

Ladies Novice Coxed Fours.

1st Herne Bay.

2nd. SOUTHSEA.

3rd. Deal.

Masters 40 Coxed Fours.

1st BTC/RYDE Composite.

2nd. Herne Bay.

3rd. Eastbourne.

Ladies Masters 40 Coxed Fours.

1st. BTC.

2nd. SOUTHAMPTON.

Only 2 crews entered.

Masters 50 Coxed Fours.

1st. Bexhill.

2nd. Herne Bay.

3rd. Herne Bay.

Junior Events.

Boy's J16 Coxed Quad.

1st. Deal.

2nd. SHANKLIN.

3rd. Worthing.

Girls J16 Coxed Quad.

1st. Shoreham.

2nd. Itchen.

3rd. Herne Bay.

Boy's J14 Coxed Quad.

1st Deal.

2nd. Itchen

Only 2 entries.

Girls J14 Coxed Quad.

1st. Herne Bay

2nd. Deal.

Only 2 entries.