

## World Champions line up at the National Watersports Centre for 'BritChamps'

Written by Administrator

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Four Olympic Champions and over 50 members of the GB Rowing Team, including Nottingham Rowing Club's own Grace Clough and Katie Bartlett, competed alongside more than 800 rowers from 79 UK rowing clubs in the British Rowing Senior Championships over the weekend of 17th & 18th October.

Fresh from last month's World Championships, the GB Rowing Team were out in unfamiliar crew combinations or alongside promising U23 and junior rowers. Grace Clough and Pam Relph, World Champions in the Paralympic mixed LTA coxed four, teamed up with Thames RC colleagues to race GB stars in the coxless fours. Katie Bartlett, a bronze medallist in the eight at U23 level, joined Robyn Armstrong in a double scull.

Conditions on the 2000m Olympic distance were overcast, with a cool following northeast breeze. Morning racing was processional, producing seeded groups of six for the A-I finals in the afternoon. All athletes had an opportunity to test themselves against the best in the country with the Rio Olympics only 300 days away.

In the men's double sculls juniors Josef Stoger and Alex Barlow came 3rd in the I final; Joseph Heade and Sam Panter were 5th in the G final. In the C race Harvey Kay and his Norwich partner came 1st, and James Mawby and his Cambridge 99 partner were 6th. Anthony English and a crewmate from Agecroft RC progressed to 6th place in the B final, making them 12th overall.

In the Women's double sculls juniors Victoria Moreton-Straw and Martha Griffin came 2nd in the I race; Kat Aguilar-Agon and Rosie Taylor were 3rd and Ella Kay and her Nottingham & Union colleague came 5th in the G final. Siena Hayes and Katie Swales claimed 3rd place in the F race, and Katie Bartlett and Robyn Armstrong were 5th in the C final. Highest placed amongst the women's doubles were Kirsty Maxfield and Primrose Wilkins, coached by Dez Atkins, with 5th place in the B final making them 11th overall.

Grace Clough, world paralympic gold medallist 2014 and 2015, gained 3rd place in the B final of Women's coxless fours.

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For Sunday's racing the Nottingham Rowing Club athletes went into quadruple sculling boats. In the Women's quad D final Abi Clark, Bella Barlow, Jenna Draycott and Megan Pepper came 4th. In the B final Lucy Holgate, Rachael Heap, Hannah Stocks and Priya Jenkins were a creditable 5th. All the girls were juniors coached by Declan Gamble and Martin Kay.

In the equivalent open event, in the C final Josh Tolley, Ayrton Carlton, George Hallewell and Jon Stimpson were first and juniors Harvey Kay and James Mawby with their Norwich and Cambridge 99 counterparts were only two seconds behind in 3rd place. Nicola Benavente is coach of these boats.

At the end of the regatta Nottingham Rowing Club were 4th in the Victor Ludorum, despite half the team being juniors. They out performed clubs like Tees who had Olympians in their crews.

Local city clubs Nottingham Rowing Club and Nottingham & Union RC are to stage the Autumn Small Boats Head race from Clifton to Trentside on Sunday 1st of November.