

ESRF UK REPRESENTATIVE REPORT 2012

The UKSRL has made a substantial effort in 2012 to expand surfrowing in the UK and engage a larger number of rowers. The Summer Series has seen a change of three venues to some that might result in an increased entry. Relative newcomers Newport Boat Club were chosen to host the first round and this led to the entry of two other local Celtic Longboat crews. At Portreath the host club embraced the opportunity to compete again after a three year absence and St Agnes SLSC enjoyed a rare run out. Hopefully the remaining rounds at Westward Ho and Bournemouth will see more guest crews from still-water and coastal rowing backgrounds having a crack in the big stuff.

A switch to an attendance-based point system has forced the regular clubs to be involved in enticing as many crews and rowers possible. Several regular clubs are bringing on second crews and additional rowers in their squads.

UKSRL also held a Taster Day in May that was well attended by novices and experienced rowers from the local pilot-gig clubs. A second taster day was initiated in early August by Newport Boat Club to cater for interested rowers from the Celtic Longboat fraternity.

Following the resurgence in sport interest created by the Olympic Games it is important for UK surfrowing to capitalise on the soaring participation in all sport. This can only be done with the continued hard work of all clubs, crews and rowers involved.

Overall the 2012 season will have seen a large number of crew entries, including guest appearances from the Amsterdam Mongrols and Tom-of-Finland Biarritz, but it is the work to build on this in the off-season with additional Taster Days and Sweep Training that will encourage some of this year's 'guests' to return next year.

Participation in this year's ESRF Championships is down slightly on recent years and this is a trend that needs to be addressed in order that healthy high-level international competition be maintained in Europe and that combined development of the sport continue throughout the continent.

The Gallipoli 100 event in 2015 might finally solve the problem of a shortage of surfboats in this part of the world if all 50 boats are shipped and spread throughout Turkey and Europe. This continent has a wealth of quality rowers in a wide range of disciplines and a great interest in rowing sports as a whole. ESRF and the national surfrowing bodies must work hard to bring the two together.

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