

## **N e w s   R e l e a s e**

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### **GOSPORT CHARITY PURSUIT 2018 raises £8,500 for charities, including £2,000 for Gosport Marine Futures.**

On 16 June 2018, seventeen yachts competed in the Gosport Charity Pursuit 2018 on the Solent. Organised by Gosport Marine Scene, this is the second year that the competition has taken place to raise funds for a variety of charities including Gosport Marine Futures.

Gosport Marine Scene was set up in 2013 with the aim of raising the profile of Gosport as the biggest centre of yachting services on the south coast. Included in its work is raising money for, and running, Gosport Marine Futures which introduces young people to marine life including residential trips onboard a yacht, maintenance projects and sailing qualifications.

The overall winner of this year's charity pursuit, with the highest accumulated points, and retaining the Gosport Challenge Cup for the second year, was JUKE BOX, skippered by Chris Copeland. In addition to coming 3rd on the water, JUKE BOX's team raised over £1,300 for the Sherborne branch of the RNLI. Caroline Dineage, MP for Gosport, presented the cup together with an additional prize of a lift out, scrub-off and re-launch at Endeavour Quay, sponsored by Premier Marinas and presented by Tim Newell.

The sailing was both challenging and exhilarating for many of the yachts' crews who were not necessarily seasoned sailors. The staggered start times over the start line off GAFIRS had the smallest yachts starting at 10 o'clock and the fastest an hour and a half later. The system proved extremely successful as RABBIT, an Evolution 22, skippered by Ben Archer, was first to cross the finish line just 14 seconds ahead of ASSASSIN, a Prima 38, skippered by Jon Wetton and Mark Brown and the second highest rated yacht on handicap. With one or two exceptions, the whole fleet had crossed the finish line within 20 minutes of each other.

The fleet was shadowed out to Nab Tower and back for the most part by the historic high speed launch HSL 102 from Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust.

The prize giving and after-Pursuit party, generously hosted by Hornet Services Sailing Club, was preceded by the famous 'Fizz at Five' laid on by the main sponsor of the event Boatshed.com.

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There were lots of other categories for prizes and trophies. First on the water was ASSASSIN, who received their trophy, which was sponsored by Resolute Property, from Caroline Dineage; CHUSANNA, skippered by Andrew Tomkins, raised the highest total of over £2,500 for The Greyhound Trust and received their trophy from Abby Thomson who, as part of Sisters Inn Arms, sponsored the 'Highest Fundraiser' category. Other sponsors were YouBoat, RS Divers, ASTO and Steve Jupp.

Pursuit Director Peter Newell says: "Gosport Marine Scene is delighted that competitors were able to raise so much money for their chosen charities, and that our charity 'Gosport Marine Futures' will be able to provide opportunities for more youngsters from the Gosport area to get involved in sailing and the maritime sector. A great day, enjoyed by everyone, and we're already looking forward to next year."

Skippers and crews are already eager to sign up for next year's Gosport Charity Pursuit, and more entrants are welcome. Contact [peter.newell47@btinternet.com](mailto:peter.newell47@btinternet.com) for further information.

**ENDS**

### Notes to editors

- Gosport Marine Scene is a non-profit organisation that organises the bi-annual Gosport Marine Festival.
- The annual Gosport Marine Futures is a six-month programme culminating in the Small Ships Race in August, through which up to ten young people from Gosport will be able to experience sailing and employment in the marine sector.
- Gosport is home to the biggest concentration of yachts and services on the south coast. In 2013 the network – Gosport Marine Scene – was set up to give a voice to the 160+ marine businesses.
- Gosport Marine Scene works with other organisations with mutual goals such as Gosport Borough Council and the Coastal Community Team as well as schools and colleges in Gosport, the UKSA, and of course with the sailing clubs.
- It raises the profile of Gosport as the yachting centre has everything: riggers, slipways, shipwrights, sailmakers, boatlifts, drydocks, and chandlers – already in place.

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