



RTYC at the 2018 Baldwin Cup

Now 10 years in the running, the Baldwin cup held at Newport Harbor YC, California, has quickly become one of the premier team racing events in the world, with all the top US teams attending racing just meters off the shore with commentators calling all the action. The boats (Harbor 20s) are a little unusual as one important rule is you have to sit inboard on cushions, which makes for a nice change, they are a fun boat to sail though and make for good team racing. The event uses 4v4 team racing which we aren't very used to in the UK but certainly provides great racing as the races are rarely done and dusted until the last few meters.

This year the RTYC sent a new look team, combining some experienced sailors with a few Baldwins and BA cups under our belts, with a new generation of academy sailors keen to experience a top US event and the delights/challenges of four boat team racing.

12 teams took part, including 10 from the US, ourselves and Costa Smeralda YC from Italy. The format saw all teams race in a round robin, with the teams then split into gold and silver leagues. The first couple of days saw unusually windy conditions which makes for some pretty dicey sailing as the boats have quite small rudders. We had some really close races; including a great win over eventual winners NHYC Thunder and ended the league stage in 8th place overall and so found ourselves in the silver league. All was not lost though as we knew winning the silver league would see us progress to the knock out stages.

We clicked up another couple of gears in the silver league winning all 5 of our races which meant we would play off against the 3rd ranked team from the gold league for a place in the semi-finals. We came up against San Diego YC who were the early pace setters in the competition and definitely one of the toughest teams there. We sailed really well to take what we had thought was a 2-0 win but due to a collision at the finish of the 2nd race we were docked 3/4 of a win and so had to go out and do it all again. We lost the next race which made it effectively one all and then happily bounced back to win the next race to progress through to the semi-finals.

In the semis we faced Larchmont YC, a very experienced team and lost out in two very close races. We came off the water disappointed to not be in the final but feeling pleased with our performance as a new, young team.

It certainly bodes well for the Thames that we now have such a strong pool of sailors able to go out and compete in the top US events. This would also not be possible without the tremendous support the club gives us for which we are very grateful.

Sailing for the Thames

Andy Cornah (capt) & Scott Millar
Arthur Henderson & Tom Heywood
Fiona Hampshire & Tim Gratton
Josh Flack & Guy Brearey

Overall Results;

1st NYHC Thunder
2nd Larchmont YC
3rd NYHC Lightning
4th RTYC
5th San Diego YC
6th New York YC
7th Southern YC
8th St Francis YC
9th Balboa YC
10th Annapolis YC
11th Eastern YC
12th Costa Smeralda YC

Andy Cornah, 17 April 2018