

Minima Regatta 2022



A good hiking breeze for the single handers at Minima Regatta 2022 © Rehanna Neky

Blow the wind Southerly, and plenty of it, the song should have gone. Minima's 2022 regatta, sponsored by TWM Solicitors for the 15th consecutive year, celebrated a cracking weekend of sailing with the absolute perfect wind. On the north south reach we often have to deal with from the prevailing south westerly looping over tall trees and generating swirling and tricky conditions, which river sailors are supposed to love. Of course we don't have much choice.

But at the 2022 Regatta weekend we had two glorious days of a pretty solid southerly, mostly around force 3, which made for fantastic racing. With our usual packed weekend with five races, and with a good hiking breeze by the end we all felt the benefit in our abdominal muscles.



The first Ents and Merlins start at Minima Regatta 2022 © Allan Blair

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There were 24 boats, in line with recent years, with welcome visitors from the neighbours up and down river, Tamesis, Thames and Twickenham.

Enterprises and Lasers are now the dominant classes, with seven boats in each. The Merlins were sadly down to two, and there were four Solos. To even up the numbers on a start line that provided plenty of excitement the double handers were sent off 10 minutes before the single-handers.



Solo class winner Nick Titley (Twickenham) shaves a mooring buoy in the pre start at Minima Regatta. He's about three metres out heading straight for the bank, hence the expression of concentration © Rehanna Neky

It's a fairly narrow river at the Minima start line, and there were some good moments, best of all in the second race on Saturday when a hapless party out on a picnic in a hire boat were faced with the fleet of Ents and Merlins lined up hull to hull going at pretty well full chat right after their start. Mayhem ensued when the hire boat went full astern, presenting a moving obstruction for the pumped up competitors. I'm not really sure where you find that in the racing rules, but there was no damage, and the incident slightly favoured those late off the line who had time to steer round the resulting schemozzle.

Commodore Robin Broomfield, and his crew Rear Commodore Paul Bloomfield pulled rank on the Ents with four straight wins, however young guns Ed Mayley and James Budden gave them a run for

their money and the results disguise some really close racing, and it was the same story down the fleet: in fact a very few minutes separated first from last finisher.

In the Lasers the Minima's own Jan Cihak took three firsts, losing one race to Tammy veteran James Hamilton, who brought his boat under both the Kingston bridges to join the fun, a feat in itself. Minima's Ed Cubitt took four second places, clearly a force to be reckoned with, as he was only able to get back on the water a couple of weeks ago.

It was the sort of weekend when you would do all five races even if you didn't have to, and Twickenham's Nick Titley did just that, winning all five to regain the Solo trophy he won in 2019 and 2020.

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Rob Brignell (Twickenham) got his Ent back up in the final race at Minima Regatta, but sadly had to retire. Merlin 1288 is class winner Nick Armfield's, Enterprise 22655 is Richard Shillito of Minima. © Rehanna Neky

Nick Armfield lost the first Merlin race on Saturday to clubmate Denis Lockwood, but then won the rest to take the trophy. His boat took a serious dent from a collision with an Enterprise in the second race on Sunday, but still won the last race in style, smothered in black tape.

The Handicap fleet of four was won by Chris Martin of Thames SC in his one-off Keith Callaghan-designed Heatwave, which added a touch of sophistication to proceedings, being entirely unique.

And Laser novice Paul Southall took the new sailors race, an excellent Minima innovation, from his wife Frances in a Topper and Jon Fray's Solo. Paul, nothing if not versatile, also won the men's kayak sprint, while Erica Bishop took the women's prize.



Kingston Mayor, Councillor Yogan Yoganathan, and TWM's Eileen Barry presented the prizes. Councillor Yoganathan paid tribute to the volunteer spirit which kept organisations like Minima going, while Eileen paid tribute and presented bottles of bubbly to longstanding Minima stalwarts Denise Norman and Alan Jales, who retired this summer from his role as Honorary Bar Steward.

(Left) Commodore Robin Broomfield, and Rear Commodore Paul Bloomfield receive their prize from (L to R) Mrs Yoganathan, the Mayor and Eileen Barry, of TWM and Minima. © Rob Brooks

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Overall Results: (Minima unless stated)

Enterprise

- 1 Robin Broomfield and Paul Bloomfield
- 2 Ed Mayley and James Budden

Handicap

- 1 Heatwave, Chris Martin (Thames SC)
- 2 Nick John (National 12)

Laser

- 1 Jan Cihak
- 2 James Hamilton (Tamesis)

Merlin Rocket

- 1 Nick Armfield and Jacqui Fry

Solo

- 1 Nick Titley (Twickenham)
- 2 Andy Banks

New Sailors

- 1 Paul Southall

Kayak sprint

Women: Erica Bishop

Men: Paul Southall