

YACHTS  
& YACHTING  
Awards  
2018

# WINNERS REVEALED

The votes have been counted and the winners selected in our hotly anticipated Y&Y Awards

Every year the Yachts & Yachting Awards brings together the finest achievements, innovations and performances to create a definitive list of the very best the racing world has to offer. This year has seen a whole host of impressive deeds with records falling left and right, new products that have impressed, and individual and team performances that set new standards.

It is always a huge challenge to draw up our shortlist of nominees across the 12 categories that make up the Awards and this year our editorial panel thought long and hard to bring you our list of the very best – and clearly so did you, our voting public, given how close many of the categories were. This reflects on the strength of the sport and also its increasing diversity.

Foiling and foil technology continue to take hold at the technological leading edge of sailing, with foiling sailors, boats and teams represented across the board. Paul Goodison, Peter Burling and Alex Thomson all received sailor of the year nominations for their exploits in variously foiling craft. We saw Goodison's back-to-back Moth Worlds win, Burling steering the Kiwi AC50 to victory in the America's Cup and Alex Thomson's impressive second position in the Vendée Globe, despite early damage to his semi-foiling Hugo Boss Imoca 60. All show the impact of foiling in our sport.

These sailors at the very top of their game are worthy of nomination, but it is the youth and amateur sailors who form the backbone of our sport. As ever there have been impressive racing performances aplenty but it has also been pleasing to see so many mixing their racing with the sense of adventure that is also a key element of the sport of sailing.



PETER NEWTON

## EVENT OF THE YEAR



### OPTIMIST 70TH NATIONALS

This was a very close run category between two events in particular. Interestingly the one that eventually won out was celebrating 70 years of success, beating an event which was newly formed for 2017.

July 2017 saw the Optimists celebrate their 70th birthday with the National Championship attracting hundreds of youngsters to compete. They can now add Y&Y Event of the Year award to the list of honours.

A particularly special highlight was the spectacle of the champion of

champions race, which saw national championship winners from as far back as the 1960s squeezing themselves back into an Optimist for a fun race (though racers being racers, there were times it seemed no one had told the sailors it was not supposed to be too serious).

Running the Oppie event close was the Sevenstar Triple Crown Trophy at Lendy Cowes week, which saw some super high performance (and huge) boats invited to compete across three events within Lendy Cowes Week – a great initiative we hope to see again.



## PHOTO OF THE YEAR

### WINNER: RICARDO PINTO

There were just a handful of votes between the winner and runner up in the photo of the year category.

Of the six stunning images representing all aspects of sailing, from offshore racing to classic Cowes Week action, it was this image of a 49er launching off a wave at the World Championships in Porto, which was most popular with the voting public, and it is easy to see why. For all that foiling has got us used to seeing images of airborne boats, there is still little that beats the thrill of seeing an archimedean boat burst off the back of a wave.

### RUNNER UP: ALEX IRWIN

This rainbow which broke out over Portland Harbour during Bart's Bash is perfectly captured. Iain Percy and two youths are (fittingly) sailing the Star, which carried Percy and his crew the late, great Andrew 'Bart' Simpson to Olympic silver in 2012. →



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## PRO SAILOR OF THE YEAR

### ALEX THOMSON

If anyone is going to be the first non-French sailor to win the Vendée Globe, it is hard to look beyond the affable British sailor, Alex Thomson. Thomson along with his team at Alex Thomson Racing and long term sponsor, Hugo Boss, committed to an extreme design for last year's Vendée Globe, building much more aggressively to the new semi-foiling rules than anyone else. And the boat was quick in the Brit's hands.

In the early stages of the race all the talk was of a potential Vendée win. However, a way ahead of his Cape Horn rounding, still in the relatively early stages of the race, Thomson hit an unidentified object underwater, broke a foil and effectively had to complete the majority of the race with a crippled boat. That he still finished second is testament to both the skill of Thomson and the opportunity missed.

But it should also be noted that the Brit went to great lengths to keep his fan base engaged in the race, posting huge numbers of video throughout and remaining remarkably open about many of the problems he faced as he battled his way around the globe.

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## AMATEUR SAILOR OF THE YEAR

### FIONA HAMPSHIRE

Fiona Hampshire was helming the Royal Thames YC Academy Team at the J/70 Europeans. The team had an excellent week and a particularly tight battle with Jack Davies' Team Yeti in the Corinthian class. In the end it was 26-year-old

Hampshire and her crew who took a well deserved win, sealing their place at the top of the podium – and ultimately the top spot in our Award. Fiona's achievements captured the public's imagination as she was a clear winner in a tight field.

CHRISTOPHE JUNEY

**PANTAENIUS**  
Sail & Motor Yacht Insurance



## DINGHY OF THE YEAR

**kingfisher**  
YACHT ROPES

### SUPERFOILER

Our winner in this category, the SuperFoiler is an ambitious and highly exciting project from Australian company, Grand Prix Sailing Pty Ltd. The new three-trapeze full foiling design, we admit, looked all but unassailable to us initially, but since then we have been proved wrong. It really does fly! Already, top international sailors are signing up for a new grand prix circuit. Not only that, the plan is to televise racing from Australia in 2018, following in the footsteps of its 18ft Skiff series predecessor.

In a nod to diversity, the SuperFoiler was closely fought for the top spot by the RS Neo from RS Sailing, which builds on the success of the RS Aero by creating a similar boat with smaller rig for youth sailing.

## YACHT OF THE YEAR

**ANDARK**  
DIVING & WATERSPORTS



### FIGARO BENETEAU 3

The Figaro Beneteau 3 was a clear winner in this category, heralding a new era in one design production yachts. Sporting semi-lifting foils which negate the need for water ballast, with high performance rig and asymmetric spinnaker (see full review on page 68), the boat was designed to bring the old Figaro 2 bang up to date. It also bridges the gap into premier offshore events, as the Imoca class embraces foiling. The new boats will debut in the Solitaire du Figaro next summer. Clearly this all-out design to hit a very specific and forward-thinking brief chimed with the public. One design fleets of Figaro 3s could feasibly be raced by amateur sailors as well as the pro solo sailors; this public vote win certainly seems to add credence to that potential. →

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## ACHIEVEMENT OF THE YEAR

### CONRAD COLMAN

The Vendée Globe is a unique race in the sport of sailing. Certainly in the modern era, there are very few races that have quite so many non-finishers and, though this has improved in recent years, it still represents a spirit of adventure that can be hard to find elsewhere.

Conrad Colman was the definition of this adventuring spirit in this latest edition of the race. The New Zealand-born racer was desperately light on funds, entering the race and effectively risking everything to make it to the startline. His boat was converted to run exclusively on natural energy, and his images, video and writing throughout engaged with the public. By the time he lost his mast some 700 miles from the finish the Kiwi had built a sizeable following and limped across the finish to a well-deserved hero's welcome.

## GEAR OF THE YEAR



### HARKEN V BLOCK

The name Harken has long been a mark of quality, evidently a factor that appealed to our voters as this latest product took the top spot. The V Block is aimed at grand prix racers and uses a number of technological advances and top end materials like titanium in the cheeks and rollers, and carbon fibre to reduce weight. The result is a strong, lightweight block that offers unmatched efficiency at high loads, while spinning freely at low loads for smooth easing in light air.



**WINNER**  
Outstanding  
Achievement  
**Y&Y**  
**AWARDS**



### TONY LAWSON, TEAM CONCISE

Tony Lawson has been a highly influential backer of British offshore sailing. The self-made man has himself been sailing since he crossed the Atlantic as a youngster and has been passionately involved with the sport on many levels since then. The Concise sailing programme, which has trained and invested in dozens of young British sailors on board its MOD70 and Class 40 yachts, has been running for a decade. 2017 saw several major wins and records broken by the team.

To read more about Tony's involvement with British sailing, see last month's Yachts & Yachting.

**WILDWIND**



## RACING PERFORMANCE



### EMIRATES TEAM NEW ZEALAND

It was difficult to look at the build up to the America's Cup and think anything other than the deck was stacked against Emirates Team New Zealand. Of course, to a degree, that has long been the challenge of the America's Cup, for those who are challenging. But the winter before the event was due to take place, the Kiwis were still training in isolation in their home country while every other team was out on the water where the Cup competition would take place, in effect working as a group to improve performance. It seemed unlikely that the New Zealanders, operating in a bubble, who started the cycle with very limited funds, would be a realistic threat come June 2017.

Of course Team New Zealand have been at this game for many years and have learned a great deal along the way - and were also not afraid of trying something new! They took a very different design approach to all the other teams and crucially (a big lesson learned from the 2013 edition) kept their biggest and best ideas under wraps until as late as possible. This time around the Kiwis looked almost unbeatable from the moment they turned up in Bermuda, and, as their developments continued, they only got faster from there. By the time they made it through to the first race of the America's Cup itself, no one thought there would be any result other than a well-deserved Kiwi victory!



## YOUTH SAILOR OF THE YEAR

### BEN HUTTON-PENMAN AND LUCY HEWITSON

The young sailor of the year category is often a close run thing and this year was no different, with all the nominees finishing within a handful of points of each other. Ultimately it was the impressive performance of Ben Hutton-Penman and his crew Lucy Hewitson - the latter recovering from a ground-breaking operation to beat scoliosis - at the RS Feva Eurocup and Nationals, that saw them pick up the biggest number of votes.

Special mention should also go to the Grieg City Academy sailors who were just edged into second place in the public vote by Ben and Lucy. The inner London state school's position as the only school to enter the Fastnet Race this year clearly impressed the voting public.

## KIT OF THE YEAR



### MUSTO FOILING RANGE

Voters were clearly impressed by this new dinghy range from Musto, featuring steamers, long johns, thermo tops and rashguards. In particular the trusted clothing marque has focussed on the needs of high performance racers. The approach to this is two-fold: innovative eco-friendly, limestone based neoprene ensures ease of movement offering high levels of flexibility; meanwhile, garments are able to protect from big impacts - an increasing problem as the performance of boats gets ever higher. But, aware that not all sailors need impact protection at all times, flexibility has been key, and pads can be inserted or removed as required. It's a range that tick a lot of boxes and from their position out in front of the public vote, it seems to be delivering just that.

## BRITISH MARINE AWARD



### ELLEN MACARTHUR CANCER TRUST

The Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust has been doing great things to help young people who have had to deal with cancer, to get back onto their feet. This year, hundreds of young people who have all sailed with the Trust, in recovery from cancer, took part in an extraordinary 2,400 mile sailing relay Round Britain challenge. From May to September, the Trust's 44ft voyage yacht, Moonspray, visited over 60 coastal towns and cities with five different young people joining the crew for each leg.

This inspiring adventure was, by a significant margin, the top of the voting public and editorial panel's selection for this special Award. Presented annually, this award recognises those who go above and beyond to promote the sport of sailing.

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**2018**

The Yachts & Yachting 2018 Awards will be presented at the London Boat Show in the Legends Theatre on 11 January.

Come along and show your support for this year's winners!

Show tickets are available at [londonboatshow.com](http://londonboatshow.com)

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