

# James Bulson Windsurfing Report 2016

## European Championships, Sopot, Poland

For the first four days there was Team GB training which I found very useful as the conditions on the Baltic Sea were different to what I was used to. On Sunday we had a rest day. In the evening there was the opening ceremony and I got to hold the flag for Great Britain. The qualifiers for the gold fleet started on Monday and finished on Wednesday night. There were six races in the qualifiers (two per day). I came around 30 out of 83 competitors which I was happy with and it also meant that I got into the gold fleet (the top half of the competitors). The races in the gold fleet started on Thursday morning and finished on Saturday and were much harder than the races before. I finished 36th overall which I was happy about as it was my first regatta in the gold fleet. On Friday there was a massive thunder storm so the races had to be abandoned and lots of people had to be rescued as the wind picked up to over forty knots (46 mph) but my race finished before it came so I got in okay. Overall I really enjoyed the regatta and learned lots, I'm looking forward to training and racing in the UK over the summer holidays for the next big regatta which is the world championships in October.



*James Bulson (GBR9926) competing on the Baltic Sea in Sopot, Poland July 2016*



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## National Windsurfing Championships

On the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of September I competed at the National Windsurfing Championships at Rutland Water. I competed in the under 15 category using a 6.8m<sup>2</sup> sail. The first day was light winds and raining and the second day was sunny with a reasonable breeze picking up towards the end of the day. Overall we did 6 races around a course. The key to a good race is to get a good start and I managed to achieve this. It helps to get away quickly so that you are in clean wind and this makes decision-making easier. Windsurfing is a very tactical sport and decision-making in races can make a huge difference to the outcome of the race. I had a very successful weekend and I finished second overall. The prizes were presented by Bryony Shaw, who represented Great Britain in windsurfing at Rio this year. It was great to meet her and ask her lots of questions about what it was like to go to Rio.



*James Bulson winning 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 6.8 m under 15s at the National Windsurfing Championships, Rutland September 2016 with Bryony Shaw, GB Olympic windsurfer.*

## What's next?

The next challenge is the World Championships, in Lake Garda, Italy October 2016. I am busy training and keeping fit ready for the World Championships. Due to the high mountains all around, the conditions will be very different in Lake Garda to those I'm used to sailing in around the British coast. I have heard that the wind comes in very early in the morning so there may be some ridiculously early morning starts. I'm really looking forward to meeting all the windsurfers from around the world again and hope to improve on my performance at the Europeans in July.

After the world championships, I will be moving up to a bigger sail size (7.8 m<sup>2</sup>). I have recently been told that I have retained my place in the National Junior Squad for 2016/17 and I will start the winter training in November.



*James Bulson (GBR 9926) winter training at Weymouth National Sailing Academy*