

Trophee des Isles: Guernsey's young sailors gain valuable experience

Sailing success in St Malo

SAILING

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NINE Guernsey Optimist sailors attended the Trophee des Isles, an annual sailing competition between junior Optimist, Laser and Topper sailors from Jersey, St Malo and Guernsey.

This year hosted by the Societe Nautique de la Baie de Saint-Malo, the Optimist sailors were split into two fleets depending on their ages.

On the first day, with fog all around, the wind speed hovered around the six knot mark and on occasions died completely, but over the afternoon they managed to get a few good light-wind races in.

Thankfully, the fog lifted and the wind picked up on the second day to about 13 knots which enabled some good racing against the French and Jersey competition.

However later in the afternoon, the wind vanished and so the final race was abandoned.

The younger fleet was made up of nine sailors, with the four Guernsey competitors – Peter Birch, Arthur Collette, Edmond Hartley and Xavier Ellis – finishing third, fifth, sixth and ninth respectively.

Birch's best individual race result was a second-place, while Collette and Hartley both recorded a fourth-place finish at some point during the event.

In the fleet of older sailors there were 11 competitors, five of them from Guernsey.

Joe Walters finished fifth, Zach Ellis seventh, Jacob Brady eighth, Joe Coutanche ninth and Catherine Lees was 11th.

In his first race, Walters managed to earn a third place finish, even beating the French sailor



The Guernsey sailors gather for a group picture in St Malo, where they faced tough competition from French and Jersey sailors as well as encountering tricky weather conditions.

who would go on to win the competition.

The rest of the Guernsey competitors in the older fleet managed to gain a consistent set of results which reflected their fi-

nal overall placings.

Four Guernsey sailors participated in the 28-strong Laser/Topper fleet, with the top-placed Guernsey sailor being Phoebe Lewis in fourth.

Across all classes, the French teams came first, Guernsey second and Jersey third.

The Guernsey team immediately celebrated the event by holding an impromptu diving

competition in the beach bathing pool in front of the SNBSM clubhouse.

Next year's event will be hosted in Guernsey on 27 and 28 August.