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SMALL SHIPS AND TALL SHIPS ROUND-UP

Another victory for Jolie Brise

ASTO (the Association of Sail Training Organisations) arranges its Small Ships Races for the smaller vessels in the UK sail-training fleet, rather than the big square-riggers seen at the Tall Ships races (see below), writes Max Mudie. The race on 22 August off Dartmouth had a ten-minute gate start and a half-mile line to cross for each of the three classes. In theory this gave the six gaff-rigged vessels in Class B plenty of space and time to start. Brixham trawler *Provident* was first across the line, bound for Gosport, followed by the ketch-rigged trawler *Leader* and the pilot cutter *Pegasus*.

But they reckoned without the racing spirit of Dauntsey School's classic pilot cutter, *Jolie Brise*, which powered through the gap between the two, overtaking both as she crossed the line, eventually taking first in class and the Aurora Trophy as overall winner on corrected time. Such is the beauty of this race (and a complicated and secret Time Correction Factor calculation) that a classic 1913 wooden pilot cutter can not only beat wooden ketch-rigged trawlers but also GRP bermudan sloops, steel ketches and ex-Challenge and Clipper round- the-world racers.

Tall ships at 60

It seemed like most of the population of the north east – certainly hundreds of thousands – crammed into Blyth from 26-29 August to see the gathering of Tall Ships assembled in the deep-water port, reports Clare McComb. They were mustering for their race to Gothenburg, Sweden. Sunday's traditional bank holiday deluge and a flooded car park did nothing to dampen the excited Northumberland welcome from a region whose heritage was built on seafaring and shipbuilding.

This year marks the diamond anniversary of the inaugural Tall Ships Race in 1956. Among trainees from 26 different nationalities on the 17 competing ships, members of the Ferguson family, whose firm sponsored the Blyth event, joined as crew on *Swan*, the 1900 Scottish ex-herring fisher (Fifie) from the Shetlands, and 1929 gaffer *Maybe*, as they set off from Blyth to Gothenburg under clear skies, with a steady

following breeze and calm seas. The 116-year-old *Swan*, oldest ship in the race, eventually retired so she could use her engines to be sure of arriving by the deadline at noon, 3 September. *Maybe*, a veteran of the very first Tall Ship contest in 1956, had better luck, coming second in class B. Overall winner was the 1909-built, 100ft (30.5m) wooden schooner *Vega Gameleby*. The Tall Ships will return to the northeast in 2018 when Sunderland will be host port. Pictured below is the 90ft (27.4m) replica frigate *Shtandart*.



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