

Axbridge Young Person's Award

2018

Citation

Jamie Harris was introduced to sailing at Cheddar Reservoir by his father. He soon moved on to Royal Yachting Association training programmes in his single handed Optimist dinghy. Early successes included 3rd place in the 2011 SW Zone Championships, 1st place in the same event in 2012, in 2013 he became Junior boy Optimist British National Champion. In 2014 Jamie represented Great Britain at events in Ireland, Italy, Belgium, Holland and France.

In that year Jamie also tried a 2 person dinghy called the Cadet (which has nothing to do with the Sea Cadets). Sailing with his sister Bettine, he went on to considerable success in 2015. This included 1st under 15 at the Belgian Nationals, 1st at the Cadet British Inlands and 1st at the Cadet British National Championships. During that summer he and his sister were part of the British Sailing Team at the Cadet World Championships in Garda, Italy. Jamie and Bettine were leading the event outright by a huge margin when they fell foul of an obscure rule and picked up a significant penalty, dropping them from an almost certain win to a very creditable 7th place. They did have the consolation of becoming the Under 15 World Champions. They also won a very significant 18th place in the prestigious Endeavour Trophy, a champion of champions event where national champions of all ages from many dinghy classes are invited to compete against each other.

Following the disappointment of the 2015 Worlds, Jamie and his new crew campaigned their Cadet in 2016, taking a clean sweep of the British Inland and National Championships, winning the Belgian Nationals and winning 7th place in the Endeavour Trophy. Over Christmas that year, they and the British Team went to Argentina for the Worlds. When held in Argentina, a notoriously difficult venue, this event had only ever been won by Argentinians, but this year was different. Jamie and Antonia were crowned World Champions on 4th January 2017.

Jamie has also been instrumental in supporting his sister Bettine, and we were all absolutely delighted when she won the 2017 Cadet British National Championships in her own right as helm with her own crew.

Since then Jamie has moved in to the 2 man 420 dinghy, a feeder class for Olympic sailors. He continues to perform at the highest level and travels extensively around Europe in his continuing stellar sailing career.