

UKLA Laser 4.7 racing events

There are several racing events for the UKLA Laser 4.7 fleet. The local Laser 4.7 events are the Grand Prix series. Nationally we have the Gul Laser 4.7 Ladder events. Our highlight each year in the summer, is the UKLA British and Open Laser Nationals.

Grand Prix series

There is a very busy diary of local racing in your area. The Grand Prix Series are listed on our event calendar and marked in orange.

Races are part of a series and will be held at various sailing clubs in your region. All rigs often start at the same time. The Grand Prix series are run by our area reps. You will need to have a Class legal boat and be a UKLA member. Often there are separate Youth prizes to be won.

Gul Laser 4.7 ladder Events

The Laser 4.7 have a series of 10 events held each year from August/September until June the following year. It offers UKLA Laser 4.7 sailors some excellent racing against other mainly Junior or Youth sailors at various venues. Our Ladder series are sponsored by Gul who provide us with some generous event prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 1st Lady and a Merit prize. Some of the Ladders are used by the RYA as indicators for their National Junior Squad; some are used by the UKLA as Qualifiers for the European and World Youth Championships. There are several Ladder events that are just used for racing, without being a Qualifier or indicator so you can practice your racing skills without too much pressure. Traditionally we use the last Ladder in June as a coached event in preparation for the major summer events like the Nationals, Europeans and World Championships. It will still run as a normal Ladder but there will be a briefing and debrief as if you are competing at a major event with coach support.

You can join the UKLA Ladder events as soon as you have UKLA membership which can be obtained through our website. Temporary membership is also available for those just wishing to sail just a one off event. Most sailors join the Laser 4.7 fleet in the summer but you can join at any time in the year.

The Ladder events have the same format, see our Notice of Race. We do insist your laser is Class Legal i.e. no replica sails, spars and foils are allowed. Please contact me if you are not sure. As you can see from our Notice of Race we have left some Ladders purely as ladders so you can train before your next Qualifier or indicator without any pressure. We have sailors at various ages, weight and experience and we aim to plan our Ladder events around the RYA Squad diary so the National Junior Squad can sail the Ladder events too.

We aim to have a couple of our Ladder events together with the Radial and Standard Rig to allow you to meet the Radial fleet that you hopefully will move into one day. We have an Overall Ladder prize giving, at the Inlands which is our second event with all rigs together. It is always a great honour to see our

consistent top laser 4.7 sailors winning some fantastic prizes sponsored by Laser Performance. In previous years prizes included a brand new Laser sail, Laser Performance top and bottom covers, Harken blocks and Laser Performance spar bags. The Ladder events are organised by your Laser 4.7 rep.

UKLA British and Open Laser Nationals

Our Nationals is an open event and it is a great week of racing. The 4.7 fleet will have their own start and depending on numbers their own race area. It is a great opportunity to meet the whole fleet and see the other Laser rigs racing. This event is organised by Ken Falcon and Dot Beadsworth

UKLA Laser 4.7 Open training

The UKLA found there was a great need to provide high quality coaching at RYA Squad level for all UKLA Laser 4.7 sailors. Not all sailors will be chosen for the RYA Squads and in the past the sailors who missed out found it hard to get selected for future squads or progress their racing. There is a great need for sailors to progress their sailing but often their Club coaching can't provide this level of coaching.

We are very fortunate to have two excellent coaches who provide us with high quality open training for UKLA members. Our Coaches Marcus Lynch and Tim Hulse know the Laser 4.7 inside out. Marcus was for many years our RYA Laser 4.7 National Junior Squad Head Coach but is now very successfully coaching our GBR Paralympic Team, Tim Hulse was up until last year, our Transitional Youth Squad Coach and is now Head of PE at a large school in the South of England. The goals for each coaching session are advertised on the UKLA website under the Event Calendar. Training is marked in yellow. Marcus and Tim often invite other top coaches and sailors from the Podium Potential Squad as additional coaches. The ratio's between sailors and coaches are high and there is always a very thorough briefing and debrief using the latest audio visual facilities to show you how to sail your Laser 4.7 fast. Some venues have the option to charter a Laser.

Your boat has to be Class legal and you have to be a UKLA member to be able to join the Open Training.

Open training is suitable for sailors new and transitioning into the Class and existing sailors with various levels of experience. If you are not sure please contact Marcus and Tim to discuss your experience (marcusvlynch@mac.com). The training days are full on (9:00- 4:30 or 5:30) and the training courses are generally over subscribed. Numbers are restricted so book please book early via the UKLA website-calendar. Your UKLA Laser 4.7 Rep coordinates the Laser 4.7 training and training is provided by Sail Race Marine (sailracemarine@hotmail.co.uk)

Other training:

Some sailing Clubs with larger Laser Fleets organise their members only Laser training like the Royal Lymington Yacht Club, Queen Mary SC , Datchet SC, Grafham Water SC and Weir Wood SC.

Some Cubs organise Winter training that you can join if you take out their often reduced Winter Membership like Hayling Island SC and Grafham Water SC.

RYA

The RYA has a National Junior Squad for the Laser 4.7.

There are two points of entry for this Junior Squad :

1) Winter Squad

The Winter NJS is the main entry point for sailors who are generally around the age of 12-14 years of age, sometimes going up to age 15/16 depending on the RYA Selection Policy. Please read the selection policy as this can change each year!

www.rya.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Racing/youthjunior/Web%20Documents/Policies/Laser%204%207%20NJS%20Winter%20Phase%202014%2015%20Notice%20of%20Selection%20-%202001.10.14.pdf

Your sailing age, is the age you will be on the 31st of December of that year, this is also called your ISAF age. The two indicator events for the Winter Squad are generally Ladder 1 and 2.

2) Summer Squad:

The Summer Squad is selected in April and May each year often using Ladder 8 and 9 as their indicator events. The Summer Squad is sometimes supported by the RYA for events abroad like the Laser 4.7 Youth Europeans and Worlds Championships.

The RYA have a strict selection procedure and a list of criteria that is published each year on their website. You will need to enter for a squad application on the RYA website as well as entering and sailing the indicator events

<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youthjunior/squads/junior/Pages/default.aspx>

The RYA uses some of our Ladder events as Indicators to select their squad and often attend and observe the sailors whilst racing. We also use two of the RYA events as our Ladder events. The RYA has a single handed Pathway manager: Tim Hall who can advise you regarding the RYA Squads and the best pathway for you. Please do not hesitate to speak to Tim if you have any questions (tim.hall@rya.org.uk).

The Winter Championship

The Winter Championship is a yearly event in January currently only for the 4.7 fleet. Normally it is the first Qualifier for our Laser Youth Europeans and World Championship and therefore we can have 40 to 50 sailors competing in sometimes some very cold and windy conditions. Next year we are looking into extending the Winter Championship to the Radial and Standard rig. We have a prize that is donated by Esso for the overall Laser 4.7 winner of this Championship.

The UKLA Laser Inland Championship

This is a yearly event where we race together with the Radial and Standard rig. We often share our race area with the Standard rig. It is always a large event and also the overall prize giving of the 10 Ladder events sponsored by Laser Performance.

International events

There are several international events for the Laser 4.7 fleets. If you are thinking of following the RYA pathway it is very important you build up your international experience. Good international events to consider are:

Open entry events:

United 4 in The Netherlands <https://www.united4sailing.org>

Dutch Youth Regatta in The Netherlands <http://www.dutchyouthregatta.org>

Nieuwpoort Week in Belgium <http://www.nieuwpoortweek.be>

Europa Cup- various events all over Europe <http://eurilca.org>

Restricted Entry events:

Youth European Championship- Organised by EurIlca <http://eurilca.org>

Youth World Championship- organised by Ilca www.laserinternational.org

Please be aware you will need to sail the Qualifiers for these events and comply with the relevant qualifier documents listed on the UKLA website

Transitioning into the Radial

It is always a difficult decision to leave your friends and move hopefully into the Radial rig but as soon as you have done so you wonder why you waited so long! It is important to think ahead: if you would like to sail an international event in the Summer or move into a Radial Squad you will need to sail the qualifiers months in advance!

The RYA will be able to advise you the best time to transfer. Most Radial sailors have a bodyweight of 60+ kg. Sailors often buy the Radial bottom section and sail and train/compete in both rigs for a while until they are ready to leave the 4.7 fleet.

A good event to aim for in the Radial rig is the Youth Nationals organised by the RYA (http://events.sailracer.org/eventsites/default_sy.asp?eventid=197370) for the Radial and Standard rig. There is no Laser 4.7 fleet at the Youth Nationals. The other time sailors transfer into the Radial rig is after the Summer Holidays. Girls stay in the Radial rig but boys can progress into the Standard rig if they grow big enough.