

2019 BSI AGM Chairman's Report

To BSI members and supporters:

The previous twelve months saw the conclusion of the extremely successful 2018 Blind Match Racing World Championships in Scotland, hosted by the Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club. Five teams and four countries battling it out on the water in Sonars.

BSI is grateful to RNCYC for all their hard work making the event such a success, not least their and Liz Baylis's patience keeping the Acoustic buoys functioning through each day's sailing.

During the event, we were all proud to demonstrate the sport and share our passion with Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, who came out onto the water to watch the racing, then back on shore to meet the sailors, the race management team and volunteers. Concluding with myself on BSI's behalf, presenting Her Royal Highness with the BSI "Sailing out of sight" Burgee.

With BSI endorsement, World Sailing approved Canada for the 2019 Fleet Racing Blind World Sailing Championships, with Kingston Yacht Club as the preferred host, and the event sailed in the Sharks. An event on track to bring together fourteen teams from six countries. The event has been possible through the hard work and commitment of both Kingston Yacht Club and Canada Blind Sailing.

I would also wish to acknowledge the work of BJ Blahnik moving forward the Technology and Safety working group. I also need to thank Walt Raineri, who has given his time and expertise to research and draw up a proposal to bring the BSI Constitution up-to date and more democratic.

During the year I have worked hard to secure hosts for the next three years, both Match racing and Fleet racing, and has drawn wide interest from both USA and Europe.

During the last twelve months, on BSI's behalf, I have worked with enthusiastic visually impaired sailors and programme organisers from twelve countries, across four continents. Some well-established, while others are emerging. BSI has a strong network with countries keen to support others growth.

I personally have had the honour of being at the helm of BSI since 2012, valuing the support and friendship of Ryck Lent BSI treasurer and David Brown BSI secretary. A role which has enabled me to build friendships and be inspired by sailors from around the world. The new Constitution will bring a new and enthusiastic BSI committee. I know I can confidently hand the helm over to this new committee, who with the support of all of you together, will guide the future of Blind Sailing, building opportunities for blind sailors, growing and expanding the sport we love, to even more sailors in more countries.

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