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Sailing regatta resumes in The Solent

An annual sailing event hosted by technology experts is back on the water following a year missed due to Covid-19. The Moore Barlow Silicon Cup Regatta will take place in September, raising money for charities that help young people and sailing fans.

Sailing enthusiasts and first-timers to the sport will be taking to the water once again for a charity regatta in The Solent, following the cancellation of last year's event due to coronavirus restrictions. The Moore Barlow Silicon Cup Regatta will see up to 30 boats battling it out for two days of races between Port Solent, Hampshire and Cowes on the Isle of Wight.

The event, which is run by tech experts and sees boats entered by teams from international companies such as Dell, Fujitsu, Microsoft and Salesforce, has been held annually since 2000, but had to be cancelled in 2020. Over the past two decades the regatta has raised more than £1m for charity, and although there was no in-person regatta last year, an online auction was held, raising nearly £21,000 for three charitable organisations: Dreams Come True, the Andrew Simpson Foundation, and Grieg City Academy.

Shaun Frohlich, chairman of the Moore Barlow Silicon Cup Regatta, said: "After a year of lockdown restrictions, there are many people who are keen to get back on the water, have some fun and take part in some challenging sailing races. We are pleased that many companies that have taken part before will be competing again in this year's regatta, and it will be great to continue our tradition of raising money for charities that help children and young sailing fans."

This year's regatta will be held on Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 September. Teams will take part in up to six races between Port Solent and Cowes, in 40ft sailing boats. Each boat will have a professional skipper and mate, and eight participants from the sponsoring team. An evening gala dinner with entertainment and an auction will be held on the Tuesday at the Royal Ocean Racing Club in Cowes, and a prize-giving closing ceremony will be held on the Wednesday in Port Solent.

The proceeds of sponsoring a boat via yacht charter company, Sunsail, along with money raised from the auction, will be donated to charity. This year's recipients will again be Dreams Come True (a charity that aims to fulfil the dreams of children and young people with life-limiting conditions), the Andrew Simpson Foundation (an organisation named in honour of Olympic Gold and Silver medal sailor, Andrew Simpson, which aims to transform lives through sailing), Grieg City Academy (a north London secondary school that runs a sailing programme), and a fourth charity as nominated by the winning regatta team (which records the fastest overall times across the two-day event).

The event name was chosen by its founders who were in the technology industry, in reference to silicon being used in computer chips.

Jessica Edwards, head of events and challenges, Dreams Come True, said: "We are grateful to once again be selected as one of the charities that the Moore Barlow Silicon Cup Regatta will raise money for. A donation from last year's online auction was used to help

young people achieve their dreams, including eight-year-old Harrison Sherwood who has Phelan-McDermid Syndrome – a rare genetic condition which has left him blind in one eye, partially sighted in the other, not able to speak and limited in his movements. It was Harrison’s dream to have a tricycle made, and thanks to a donation from the Silicon Cup Regatta, this will shortly be achieved. With his new trike, Harrison will be able to spend more time outdoors with this family, have fun and gain a sense of independence.

“The past year has been a difficult time for many charities, as a lot of fundraising activities were severely limited. We hope all those who take part in this year’s regatta will have an enjoyable time, and we would like to thank the event committee for choosing Dreams Come True as a recipient of money this year. It will mean more children and young people will be able to enjoy some great life-changing experiences.”

Iain Percy, multi-Olympic Gold medallist and founding Trustee of the Andrew Simpson Foundation, said: “Many sailing enthusiasts have not been able to have lessons or take part in events over the past year because of Covid restrictions, so we know how keen people are to get going again. As one of the long-time beneficiaries of the Silicon Cup Regatta, the money that is donated to us from the committee will help us to keep running sessions that encourage hundreds of young people across the UK to learn new skills and gain confidence both on and off the water.”

Jon Holt, head of sixth form and leader of the Sailing Club at Greig City Academy, said: “As a school in north London, many of our pupils would not normally have access to watersports, but the ones who get involved with our sailing club really love it. They enjoy the physical side of sailing and develop capabilities that help them in their academic schoolwork and everyday life.

“The money we received from the Silicon Cup last year was a great help in supporting three of our students compete in the Royal Yachting Association’s Youth National Championships, and we are thankful to be chosen again as one of the groups to receive money from this year’s regatta.”

To enquire about entering the Moore Barlow Silicon Cup Regatta and sponsoring a boat, go to: <https://thesiliconcup.com/enter/>