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BLACK ISLE SAILOR WINS PRESTIGIOUS SCOTTISH AWARD

Chanonry Sailing Club (Fortrose) sailor Richard Evans has been selected as the Royal Yachting Association Scotland's Coach of the Year. The award was presented to Richard by Stephen Park OBE, RYA's Olympic Manager for Team GB, at the RYA Scotland Annual General Meeting at the Falkirk Wheel last Saturday.

Stephen Park ('Sparky') highlighted Richard's dynamic approach to coaching which has inspired more sailors to enter races and take a critical look at their own sailing. Richard has also assisted the Regional Coach with the North of Scotland Sailing Squad which is a youth group of sailors who aspire to compete at a national or higher level.

Richard is part of a sailing dynasty. His father, Jack Evans MBE, is a previous Commodore of Chanonry Sailing Club and Richard's son Jack (16) has been selected for the Scottish Youth Squad for the second year running. Richard has also served as Commodore and in many other positions within the club. He and his wife, Val, are well known on the Scottish dinghy racing circuit having campaigned their RS 200 dinghy with great success over 11 years.

As the Chanonry Club Race Coach, Richard is of course a volunteer. He is very modest about the time he gives to the sport but virtually every weekend will see him coaching or racing or supporting Jack. Richard in turn has received valuable support towards gaining his qualifications from Coaching Highland and the Ross & Cromarty Sports Council.



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Chanonry's Commodore, Dr Miles Mack said "I'm delighted to see Richard's hard work and dedication acknowledged through this award. Richard has enhanced the reputation of the Club and we are now the location of choice for the North of Scotland Sailing Squad's training weekends." Training Principal, Richard Jenner, added "Chanonry has offered a friendly and low cost route in to the sport of dinghy sailing for many years but in the last 18 months Richard Evans has widened our remit to developing racing skills for sailors of all ages as well."

For Richard Evans, it's the provision of high quality coaching in the Highlands that he is most proud of. As Miles Mack said, "UK competitive sailors often complain that all the best facilities are in the south of England. In the Highlands we think that the Scottish club coaching activity is only in the Central Belt but that is no longer the case. Not only do we have a highly competent coach in Richard Evans, we also have all the equipment to support him at Chanonry Sailing Club. Through Richard, the club now sails all year."

Notes:

Chanonry Sailing Club was founded in 1955 and has a busy annual programme of cruiser and dinghy events and races and is also a training centre where individuals of the ages of 8 upwards can be taught to sail a dinghy by a qualified volunteer instructors. See: <http://www.chanonry.org.uk/>

Information on the North of Scotland Sailing Squad can be found at <http://www.gs-online.org.uk/nosss/nosss-faq.htm>

The Royal Yachting Association is the UK's national organization representing everyone who goes boating for leisure. See: <http://www.rya.org.uk/AboutRYA/>

RYA Scotland is a regional office of the RYA and runs the Scottish Squads. See: <http://www.ryascotland.org.uk/aboutsct/whatis.htm>

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Photographs:

Richard Evans (left) with Stephen Park at the Falkirk Wheel



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