

# Mark crowned 'pudding' king

SNOWMEN, fairies and penguins joined Santa Claus on the water as a sailing club held its annual winter regatta.

More than 20 brave sailors donned fancy dress and climbed into their dinghies for Ulley Sailing Club's Plum Pudding Race on Boxing Day.

The event brought to a close a landmark year for the club, which was barred from the water for more than three years while their reservoir home underwent urgent repairs following the 2007 flooding crisis.

The race was launched in the guise of Father Christmas by Orgreave's Dave White, who won a lifetime achievement award at the Rotherham Sports Awards 2010 and went on to win the South Yorkshire Sport Lifetime Achievement award in 2011.

Arriving at the control tower with his young helpers in a festively-decorated Santa Express tractor and trailer, he rang the bell

to start the traditional Plum Pudding Race.

Just a dozen of the 18 craft setting off made it to the finish line, with victory claimed by Mark and Simon Pinder in their Merlin Rocket.

Sailing club member Rosalie Hill said: "The club is now looking forward to a year of celebration in 2012 in which the Olympic Games and Royal Jubilee coincide with the club's own 40th anniversary. We're already planning an open weekend in May, where members of the public can come along and enjoy a free sailing taster session.

"We will also be participating in the RYA Push the Boat Out day in July, which is aiming to get a record number of boats on the water nationally. Although the boat park is now full to overflowing, we continue to welcome new members, thanks to the addition of three new boats purchased through grants from the John Merricks Trust, Mars Refuel, RYA and Sport England."

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Winner of Ulley Sailing Club's Boxing Day Plum Pudding Race, Mark Pinder (right), showing off the hip flask trophy with his sons and Club Commodore, David Holt.