

Insurance Times Event IT Pack 2011

This year's crew: who will sail ahead?

The grand finale of this year's IT Pack took place on the high seas, with our intrepid IT Packers proving their leadership skills and business acumen through a high-adrenaline challenge. They were split into teams on three boats – a metaphor for a joint business – and each team had to work together in highly pressured circumstances to demonstrate their skills.

That wasn't all: the intrepid finalists also faced an intense grilling from the IT Pack judges – *Insurance Times* editor-in-chief Ellen Bennett and Aviva's head of trading Jodi Grattidge, head of broker key partners Clark Ross and regional broking director Jon Neill – about their careers to date, their ambitions for the future and their understanding of and commitment to the industry.

The interviews were designed to find an individual who was committed to their career and the wider industry, and went above and beyond what would usually be

expected at their level. The judges were looking for a broker who could inspire and lead others, and act as an ambassador for the sector, while also succeeding personally.

Bennett said: "The IT Pack is always one of the highlights of the year – and 2011 has been no different. We have met some incredibly talented brokers from all over the country, and it was fantastic to see all our finalists again at the finale."

"I know the judges were bowled over by the quality of the brokers. It was incredibly hard to choose a winner – everyone who made it this far should be proud of themselves. In previous years, IT Pack winners have formed their own communities and stayed in touch with each other and with *Insurance Times* long after the event. I hope that will be the case this year, too, as I'm sure we've met some stars of the future."

The winner of the IT Pack 2011 will be unveiled at the *Insurance Times* Awards on 6 December.



Rachel Wells,
account executive, Higos
"Preparing a three-course dinner for eight people on a boat with two gas rings, a flat battery at 6am and contending with an oncoming Stena Line ferry ... definitely a way to spend the weekend!"



Harry Doyne-Ditmas,
contact manager, JLT
"The competition was fierce, the tasks were challenging, the judges were tough, but it was a fantastic experience to perform and sail in such an arena!"



Nick Ascott,
commercial account executive, Swinton
"Being 6'3" and sleeping on a boat that had a 4ft long, 1ft-wide sofa bed was by far the biggest highlight of the weekend – I really cannot wait to do that again."



Jemma Nicholson,
commercial account executive, Swinton
"The metaphor of using sailing for how we would run a business was truly unique and an excellent way to develop leadership skills."



Sean Doolan,
assistant manager, Autonet
"My local waterway is the Trent and Mersey Canal, so being on the Estuary chased out to sea by the Stena Britannica is an experience I won't be forgetting."



Gwyn Evans,
development executive, Romero
"Cooking a three-course meal for our 'customers' in the smallest kitchen known to man – we were doing a fine job until one of them noticed that our chicken was uncooked! Fail!"



Neil Adebowale,
accounts executive, Independents Insurance Solutions
"Big personalities, big challenges and big blisters from the ropes! Even bigger opportunities."



Corinne Beadsmoore,
project manager placement and development, Oval
"The experience was tougher than I expected: planning, the interview, sleeping on a boat, cooking for seven in a tiny space and rescuing Boris (the dummy). What really added to the enjoyment of it all was the great team involved."



Andrew Roberts,
commercial broker, Hendersons
"Three important lessons I've learnt this weekend: 1) Communication is everything. 2) This includes listening. 3) Tea is an essential part of sailing."



Matt Imber,
broking director, GM Imber & Sons
"I will never forget waking up to that amazing sunrise, followed by a day of challenges and tasks."