

W&M Sailing Club completes move to Kingsmill in time for home regatta

William and Mary Sailing will host the Colony Cup Saturday and Sunday out of the Kingsmill Resort marina. (William and Mary Sailing / Virginia Gazette)

By **Kellen Holtzman**

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Members of the William and Mary Sailing Club have added reason to be excited about hosting the upcoming Colony Cup, the Tribe's lone home regatta of the fall season on Saturday and Sunday. William and Mary hosted the same event out of the Kingsmill Resort marina last season, but this season, it is truly a home regatta for the Tribe.

William and Mary Sailing moved its floating docks and fleet permanently into the James River waters by Kingsmill only about two weeks ago, though planning preceded the official move for more than a year.

"Obviously there's a lot of gravitas associated with the place," said Tom Griffiths, the club's commodore and a senior from New Hampshire. "It was one of those moments last year when the teams came out and were like, 'Wow, this is quite a spectacle.' You have a great view from the bluff down to the regatta. It's a great

viewing area. But I think we're very fortunate to move there. The Kingsmill Yacht Club members have been extremely helpful and welcoming throughout the process."

William and Mary will welcome [Virginia Tech](#), Maryland, Virginia, Salisbury University, Christopher Newport University, St. John's, American University, [Penn State](#), [Rutgers](#) and [Washington College](#) for the Colony Cup.

The Tribe competes in the Mid-Atlantic Intercollegiate Sailing Association with multiple varsity teams like Georgetown, which Griffiths said boasts a powerful program.

Unlike its varsity counterparts and even some of its club counterparts at home, William and Mary is student-led, despite being one of the largest clubs on campus with more than 60 members.

About half of them are women, including Audrey Fulk, a junior from Fishersville who serves as the club's sailing operations chair. Managing the team's daily practices are included in her responsibilities.

"We really do impressively for not having a coach," Fulk said. "We're one of the best student-run teams that I've known. It's just been really cool because when we do go to these regattas, we get to meet all these coaches with different levels of experience."

Fulk has been sailing since she was about 10 and Griffiths had little competitive sailing experience prior to joining the club.

The range in ability of the sailors is part of what makes the club, which was established in 2003, special to its commodore.

"A third of the people have never sailed," Griffiths said. "A third have been in the boat at some point and then a third have raced competitively. We kind of have a broad spectrum of experience, which is cool to see."

So are the sails being beaten by the wind, even on training days.

"It's beautiful," said Kingsmill Director of Sports Kevin Dry. "If you're sitting there at the James Landing Grille – Even when you come out to practice, they'll have six or eight boats out there. It's special to watch."

"They're right here in our backyard," Dry added. "We want to support the community and it just works out great for both parties."

The weekend action will start at 10 a.m. and run until 3 or 4 p.m., depending on the wind.

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