



Junior Sailing "MAKING WAVES" 2016 February: ALMOST LIKE "FROSTBITING"

Almost every year, January and February weather is challenging, especially for the Beginners. But 2016 seems determined to break all the records! Nevertheless, Head Instructor Caitlin Hevey, along with assistants and volunteers, managed to make every Saturday count.

Rigging the boats properly is most important; Beginners are learning from scratch at this time of the year; but even the advanced sailors need a refresher.



Getting out on the water is a little more problematic with strong winds from the wrong direction. Nevertheless the Opti group managed a good day on the water. When the weather did not cooperate, a trip to the Lighthouse and games at the ball field were popular activities.



FEBRUARY 13TH 420 CLASS REPORT

Not to be outdone by the windy conditions, the 420 fleet decided to sail anyway. Here is an entertaining report by Richard Woods, assistant instructor, who bravely offered to skipper one of the boats and shared in the exhilaration - and misery! (Richard changed the Junior Sailors' names to protect the not-so-innocent!)

"Another Saturday, another day of sail training. Maybe it is a sign of the times, but of the twelve I have been teaching eleven have been girls. Maybe it's just that boys have more opportunities for sporting activities.



The weather today was marginal at best. 20 knots and building, although the sun and warm, clear Bahamian water made it deceptively inviting. Even so, cancelling the beginners and intermediates was a no brainer.

So six advanced sailors rigged the three 420's and they sailed away, escorted by four instructors in three safety boats. Hopetown has a very narrow entrance which is, of course, very busy with ferries and cruising boats, never mind fishermen. So it was quite a challenge to sail out, but all managed it safely, despite much laughing and shrieking.



No sooner had they all cleared the entrance when it all started to fall apart - literally. We suddenly realized the shrieking from one boat had taken on a more intense tone, motoring over we found they had lost a shroud, it had failed at the swage - as they always do. Fortunately the girls were quick enough to get the mainsail down before the mast broke. One safety boat towed them to shore.

Minutes later a second boat capsized, right in the harbour entrance. The boat stayed on its side a long time because David didn't want to fall into the water and get wet. And it is impossible to right a boat when someone is hanging on the high side.

Worse, it is also very easy to then turtle the boat. And a turtled boat is very much harder to right than one on its side. Eventually, after some "insistent instruction" from us he fell in and of course Jane was then able to right it very quickly, David being "scooped in" as it came upright.

But by now the boat was too close to the shore for safety so we pulled them away.

We got the two remaining boats to sail a mile up to windward and we all landed on the beach and took stock. Debbie had cut her hand and decided not to sail any more. So we had 5 in two boats. We put three girls in one while David, being the smallest and least experienced, Susan and I went in the other. The wind had increased still further, so we decided to sail straight home downwind.

We set off on a fast plane with me explaining to Susan how to steer "downhill" in waves and how to stop the boat rolling. But ultimately to no avail, I think we both realised simultaneously we were about to capsize (David was oblivious) and sure enough we rolled in. I didn't think there was anything Susan could have done differently, it was just one of those things - like skidding a car on an icy road.

Annoyingly David once again tried to stay dry and hung onto the upper gunwale. Susan had been thrown out at the stern which left me to try to right the boat. She forced David into the water while I swam the boat head to wind and then, as before, it was easy to right it and in doing so both Susan and David were scooped in.

Of course it would have been easier if Susan had gone to the bow to get it head to wind. Even easier if there had been righting lines under the gunwales that I could have pulled on to "walk up" the boat. They are what I always fit on my own boats and I suggest you do the same.

I thought it strange we had no safety boat near us, looking round we saw the other boat was still sailing, but it seemed low in the water and the safety boats were standing by. Later I learnt the girls had flooded their boat but had not capsized. We all got home safely, everyone soaking wet - even the other instructors were more than "damp".

Sailing "Big Boats" to Man-O-War - Saturday Feb. 20th was a special event day for Junior Sailing. Dan and Sharon Forman's Bristol 35.5 "Barquita", Greer and Aaron's J-24 "Lone Peak", and Jan and David Guthrie's Alberg 22 "Little Swan", hosted 18 Junior Sailors on a sailing/learning trip to Man-O-War. Paul Gooding sent in this report:

There was a meeting in the Club gazebo first, run by Nakia Wilhoyte, who split the Junior Sailors into three groups for the three boats, before going over to the Harbour's Edge, where the three boats were tied up.



The two smaller boats took the more experienced kids, and on both these boats, the Juniors did everything, - rigged the boats, hoisted the sails, helmed, trimmed the mainsail and tacked the jib, etc. - rotating so that they all were involved in all aspects.



On "Barquita" there were the youngest kids, some of whom had never been on a sailboat. For this group, it was more of a sailing experience, and they were not quite so involved in the actual sailing, but nevertheless had a wonderful time.



Support boats: Otis Wilhoyte & Frank Knowles, Logan & Caroline Rowell, and Ann & Paul in "Panda."

The 3 keel boats sailed to Man-O-War and anchored off, outside the harbor, and the 3 support boats then ferried each group of kids into Man-O-War, where they ran off to enjoy the flea market, get some food (and ice cream) and met back at the docks an hour or so later, to be ferried out to the keel boats, for a sail back to Hope Town. A very successful day!

Club Dinghy Races - Feb. 21 - Three Opti sailors joined the Dinghy races for the first time this year. (Look for the 420's senior/junior fleet in the next dinghy race series!)

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