



Arun Yacht Club Easter Cadets 2nd/5th April 2007

The annual Easter Cadet Week, albeit a four day week, kicked off in a lively, sunbathed, and breezy fashion here on Monday 2nd April. The twenty one cadets of various ages were ably supported by the usual team of RYA qualified instructor and safety boat teams that have the energy, passion, and don't mind getting wet for the benefit of upcoming young sailors.

We had a variety of dinghies from the fast very wet Topper Buzz, the exciting RS Feva, two on loan from LDC via Dan Jasper, to the more staid Wayfarer, and the single handed Topper for the young students to practice with. We had four Picos, on loan from Pagham Y C.

This week we ran three sets of training simultaneously: we had eight trainee instructors from within the club and from other local sailing clubs, under the tuition of Keith Hopper. We also had six assistant instructors in training who will eventually move on to RYA instructor level, and the afore mentioned cadets.

The main point of the event is to have FUN. If those participating come off the water with a smile on their faces, then we have done a good job. The groups are divided into a number of groups depending on ability. The more experienced group were in RS dinghies up the river. They had a number of races between the three boats. Hard fought and fun all round.

The other youngsters had a relay race from the club beach. Each time the Topper was successfully helmed round a mark up the river, they returned to collect another person. We eventually had very full small boats sailing up the river, racing each other for fun, learning some sailing skills along the way.

The next few days were designed to get all those involved moving up through the RYA sailing stages. It is a little like learning to drive, and to understand the machine you are driving. The intention is that those involved start to appreciate the skills needed to become star sailors, may be even Olympic level competitors, if Richard Dobson has his way. Like any sport, the pleasure principal must apply, so enjoying what they are doing is key.

There was a regatta on the last day, and a prize giving dinner in the evening. The regatta was run by Richard D in true professional style. The sea was perfect, the wind not too challenging, and most finished the three races without major event. There were a few casualties to the cold North Easterly, but they were swiftly returned to the club. It never ceases to amaze me that the novice sailors, some who have never set foot on a boat before, become competent, motivated, and effective sailors within such a short time. It is all credit to the growing band of RYA instructors at all levels.

We looked forward to the end of the week and had some tired but happy youngsters, who had gained a better understanding of sailing a variety of boats, are motivated to continue the challenge on Thursday evenings throughout the late spring and summer, and with a number of certificates and prizes to collect. We handed out certificates for completed Stages One to Three, Assistant Instructor certificates, and Keith had his group achieve success as well.

We beat the elements and the struggle with safety cover. The cadets and trainees had a successful and enjoyable time. Paul, Emma, John, Martin, Dan, Keith, Arthur and Richard are some of the many needing a mention of thanks. Without them, this show would not have happened.

So, another AYC winning event.

Richard C Renson. Senior Instructor.