

## **The development of junior sections within sailing clubs.**

Outlined below are the findings from some groups that attended the RYA club conference who considered how important junior sections, and representations, are within our sailing clubs. Clearly, if we can have strong sail racing for junior sailors that is good, but making the club vibrant is key to the long-term development of future sailors.

### **1. Does developing a junior section add value to a sailing club, and is it necessary?**

- Junior sailing is the future of clubs and sport therefore we need to nurture the junior sailors and develop our junior sections
- The juniors can bring in new ideas to the whole club, see things from a completely different perspective, and challenge some of the established ideas.
- They may provide continuity of club officers and help succession planning. For example, the provision of coaches training other juniors.
- The more juniors in a club, the more active the adult of pool volunteers in the form of parents.
- Junior Sections can reduce the barriers between the ages.
- Generally it was thought that it is good to have a Junior Class to focus sailors towards a specific class with clear steps towards the next step. For example Laser4.7/Radial a double hander.
- Juniors will reduce the average age of the club and enables the club to develop and grow membership.

### **2. Good practice adopted by some clubs.**

- A number of clubs have elected committees of junior members (15/16 years of age), with defined tasks. (Emsworth slipper sailing club, Bosham sailing club). This helps to establish the junior's identity and gives them ownership within the club. One person from the Junior Committee would then sit on the club's main committee.
- Junior events run by juniors for junior members. At Gurnard SC the juniors raised money for their own training and traveling to events.
- Social events for the juniors or combined with adults was considered important.
- Sailing Stars brought into coach beginners training and other activities outside of sailing, is a good way of stimulating the juniors. (VCC can sometimes get Olympic sailors in for Junior Club prize giving's).
- Juniors as group from a club of traveling to other events outside of the club. This was seen as a good way the sailors having fun and introducing the fun of going to events further afield.
- A junior committee feeding through one person to the main committee. Often the juniors may see ideas that older members may not consider.
- Identifying a particular time and day for juniors.

- Encourages a family friendly club.
- Feedback sessions from the juniors can be good ways of helping the club develop.
- Team sweatshirts/T-shirts is a great way for the junior sailors to have “Identity” whilst wearing a “Cool” shirt. We know that in squads the sailors aspire to either Squad Jackets or Sweat Shirts.
- Junior Fun Weeks or weekend. Day trips with camping.

### **3. Barriers to develop and junior sections.**

- The club's attitude to juniors.
- A greater duty of care on the club
- Members do not like the nuisance or the noise of juniors.
- The juniors may require more resources and therefore more funding to help develop