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Director of Sailing report

WYA Strategy Committee, Tuesday 13 May 2008

Introduction:

I am pleased to write my first full report to the Strategy Committee in the post of Director of Sailing since taking the position on 1st October 2007.

Staffing:

Following my appointment, the Welsh High Performance Manager position was advertised. We had considerable interest and interviewed 3 very strong candidates. Iwan Basten was offered the job following his work as South Wales Regional Development Officer and started in November 2007. Iwan is now based at the head office in North Wales. This left a vacancy for the South Wales RDO which was also advertised and we recruited Ben Smith who started at the end of January 2008.

Richard Twining has been off sick since early December 2007, but we hope he will be returning to work in the very near future.

Onboard:

Following discussion with the RYA, we will be launching the Onboard programme in Wales very soon. Partnerships have been established with two key centres, Plas Menai in North Wales and Cardiff Harbour Authority in South Wales. The RYA is providing funding to support an Onboard Development Officer (ODO) at both centres who will be partly managed by the relevant WYA Development Officer. The role of the ODO is to link with Schools to introduce children to sailing through the centre and more importantly then guide these children once they have reasonable sailing ability to their local sailing clubs. ODO positions will be advertised by the centres once final contract details have been agreed.

Website:

A new WYA website has recently been launched which is now hosted by the RYA. This is a great asset to the Association and Christine Stanley has been thanked for her work in setting this up as our Channel Monitor. Any comments on the site are welcome as we continue to develop it.

Media:

The profile of Welsh Sailing has been raised by a considerable number of items in recent media. Welsh performance results have featured in local and regional press as well as a considerable article in Yachts and Yachting magazine. There have also been items on the television: BBC Sport, S4C News and BBC news. The UK Youths at Pwllheli with a visit by HRH Princess Anne helped raise awareness for the BBC news with considerable coverage which promoted both WYA and Pwllheli SC.

Coaching Plan:

The attached 1 page summary with this report outlines the plan for this year which we hope will make an impact in clubs in Wales this season through community coach work managed by the Welsh RDOs. Instructor conferences and Sailsmart sessions have already been run this year funded through the plan.

CHI (Climbing Higher Investment) Plan:

This was submitted in February and I thank the staff and Board members for considerable help in completing this. We used a new format this year which is still being developed, but should be easier in years to come.

RYA:

We continue to strengthen links with our parent (GBR) organisation. Staff attended an outworkers meeting in February for all related staff working outside the main Hamble office. This was a good opportunity to build relationships and learn from other areas. The Welsh RDO team have now integrated with their English counterparts and meet with both Sports Development and Training departments to keep up to date. The Welsh High Performance Manager role is already well integrated with the RYA Racing Department, but will continue to take advantage of RYA support. In particular, the National and Regional Performance Squads will be taking advantage of a full online application process to squads and events.

Welsh National Coach:

Following discussions with the RYA, the Welsh RDOs have now taken over responsibility for ensuring all RYA Training Centre inspections are carried out within Wales. Previously, Mal Jones as Welsh National Coach had fulfilled this remit but it was considered that now is the time for this role to be taken over by the full time staff. Mal has done an excellent job during his 22 years as Welsh National Coach and we extend our thanks to him for this. Mal will still be heavily involved in delivering the actual inspections and also in an advisory role for the RDOs.

SCW:

The support we receive from SCW and in particular Steven Morgan is excellent. This is a great help at many levels and although the information now demanded from SCW is detailed, there is always support and guidance available. We are also pleased to have secured further funding to support some of our talented sailors identified through our High Performance Plan.

Pwllheli Sailing Academy:

WYA has been involved in the proposed development of the facilities at Pwllheli which are still in the process of being discussed and finalised.

Zone Championships:

WYA has always run the Welsh Youth and Schools Championships as well as the Acorn (formerly PGL) Junior Regatta at Llangorse. For 2008 we will be adding an additional Championship to be run over the weekend of 27/28 September 2008 at Pwllheli. The Zone Championships will be run at the same time as the English RYA Zones as well as Scottish and North Irish Championships. This is part of the linked up work we have been doing with the RYA and will enable all junior sailors across the UK to compete in their respective Zone / Home Country at the same time. In Wales, this event will form an important part of the selection series for the National and Regional Squads. It is important to note that this event is for Junior sailors only (under 16). The recognised classes are: Optimist, Topper, Mirror, Cadet and Feva.

Club Audits:

The RDO team are starting to work with clubs this season to gain up to date information for the 2008 audit. As we refine the detail we need for this document we hope the information will help provide accurate statistics for the SCW as well as the clubs to help with their ongoing development.

Board Committee:

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to all members of the Board for their help and guidance during the first months in my new position. I hope to continue this close work in developing and managing the association.

Tim Hall

12 May 2008