

Director of Sailing report – WYA AGM, 29 January 2008

Introduction:

The Chairman has produced a most comprehensive report; however, I will provide some further details from a staff perspective.

Performance:

I will start with this as I was in the post of Welsh High Performance Manager / Welsh National Racing Coach until November 2007 when Iwan Basten filled the position.

Below are the highlights from the 2007 Season:

By no means does this cover all our results from the season, so I apologise for missing anyone out. This is just a summary of a few of our highlights.

| Class | Sailors / Club | Performance |
|----------|--|--|
| Optimist | David Pain / Cardiff Bay YC | 2 nd – Optimist Junior Nationals |
| Topper | Stevie Beckett / Solva Rowing and Watersports Club | 2 nd – Topper Nationals |
| 29er | Bleddyn Mon and Tom Humphreys / Red Wharf Bay Sailing and Watersports Club | 1 st – 29er Nationals 4 th – 29er World Championships (U 19 Silver medal) |
| 470 | Hannah Mills and Katrina Hughes | Junior European Champions |

We are well above are targets of 5% of the British Squads which is a result of all our work with the Welsh National Squads over the past few years. Below are the details of the Welsh sailors in RYA Olympic, Youth and Junior Squads:

| Class | Sailor | Squad |
|-------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Finn | Ed Wright | Olympic Podium (A) |
| RS:X (windsurfer) | Lucy Horwood | Olympic Podium (C) |
| Sonar | Steve Thomas | Olympic Podium (A) |
| Laser Radial | Sarah Williams | Olympic Transitional (DT) |
| Laser Standard | Dominic Breen-Turner | Olympic Transitional (DT) |
| Laser Standard | Sean Evans | Olympic Transitional (DT) |
| Laser Standard | Dyfrig Mon | Olympic Transitional (DT) |
| Laser Standard | Eifion Mon | Olympic Transitional (DT) |
| 49er helm | David Evans | Olympic Development (D) |
| 470 helm | Hannah Mills | Olympic Development (D) |
| 470 helm | Thomas Mallindine | Olympic Development (D) |
| 470 crew | Chris Grube | Olympic Development (D+) |

RYA GBR Junior and Youth Squads:

| Class | Sailor | Squad |
|----------------|--|--|
| Optimist | David Pain Tomas Pain Matthew Whitfield Eleni Morus Nia Jones | RYA GBR Optimist National Squad |
| Optimist | Toby Morsley Molly Frost | RYA GBR Optimist Intermediate Squad |
| Topper | Micky Beckett Doug Lloyd-Haynes Tom Piggott Hannah Tilley Ross Moreton | RYA GBR Topper National Squad |
| Topper | David King | RYA GBR Topper Intermediate Squad |
| Laser Radial | Andy Joseph Gareth Henshall | RYA GBR Laser Radial Squad |
| Laser Radial | Stevie Beckett | RYA GBR Laser Radial Transitional Training Group |
| Laser Standard | Eifion Mon | RYA GBR Laser Standard Squad |
| 29er | Bleddyn Mon and Tom Humphreys | RYA GBR 29er Squad |

I now leave the performance squads in the capable hands of our new High Performance Manager, Iwan Basten. He has already given some valuable input into the finishing touches of our High Performance Plan and I am sure he will continue to work with our team of coaches to maintain and improve our performance results.

I would also like to thank the Chairman for his congratulations on my sailing and coaching successes during 2007. It was certainly a highlight of my sailing career and a result of good preparation and hard work that Mike Hart and I won the Flying 15 World Championships in Mallorca. I would also like to thank the Chairman for his nomination as Welsh Coach of the Year, which I did not know anything about. It was a true shock to actually win the award at the impressive ceremony in Cardiff last November.

Development:

The RDO team continue to work with clubs to increase the capacity and standards within Welsh Sailing Clubs.

The Coaching Plan continues to evolve and there is support here for clubs who work with us to gain training for members to gain qualifications and work with the RDOs for the underlying purpose of the plan, which is:

More and Better Coaching (and Coaches)

We welcome Ben Smith as our new RDO for South Wales, who starts in January 2008 and brings experience from the successful Onboard project in Cardiff.

Our RDO team will be working closely with the RYA to continue to develop links and programmes including Onboard.

RYA:

Links with the RYA have strengthened further during 2007. The new position of Director of Sailing is part funded by the RYA and Rod Carr made two visits to Wales during the year. All staff will be involved with an RYA Outworkers meeting in February 2008 to continue to build working practices. The role of High Performance Manager has been well integrated into the RYA of the past few years and now is the time for the RDOs to integrate further with the RYA's Sport Development and Training Departments. Mal Jones has continued to ensure inspections have been carried out to RYA standards across Wales and will be working with the Welsh RDO team to continue this process.

Office Management:

2007 has seen the role of our Office Manager; Ceri Yeomans become a full time position. We are all appreciative of the work Ceri does to ensure the smooth operation of the office. Ceri's position becoming full time reflects our increase in staffing and our expanded activity as a small business.

Board and Committees of WYA:

My thanks go to the Board and Committees for their continuing, tireless support for the activities of the Association. As we grow in numbers of staff, the duties of our volunteer flag holders adapts and changes, but without these keen and dedicated people the association would lack truly experienced leadership. Both Chris Basten and Bob Lowe have been extremely supportive of me whilst making the transfer to my new position and we also indebted to Dave Shepherd as Treasurer and the services of Dave Vickery for help with our financial management systems. Bill Jackson completes the membership of the Board and brings business management skills with a sailing perspective which we appreciate.

The Regional and Strategy Committees are now in place to guide our work on a local and national level and our staff will continue to work with these committees.

Sports Council for Wales:

We have had excellent support from Steven Morgan our Sports Council officer. He is always on hand to offer advice and support. We have had an especially challenging year with the transfer of our plan into a new format, but Steven has always been there to help with the process.

Plas Menai:

We continue to work closely with the National Watersports centre where our head office is based. All WYA staff appreciates the support that Alan Williams and his team of staff at the centre give in support of our activities.

Website:

At last I can report that we have a long term solution for the WYA website. This is now hosted by the RYA and our "channel monitor" is Christine Stanley. Christine has spent some time loading information to the site and it has recently gone live. It is now down to the staff to provide updates and information to enable the site to be a key resource in our work.

Media coverage:

Following the work of Robert Dangerfield as RYA appointed Regional Communicator, we have been lucky to have the services of Hamish Stuart during 2007. He has made a massive impact on the number of items we have gained in the media. This includes Regional and National newspapers, BBC website, radio and television as well as ITV. His contacts and hard work in following stories have ensured we are working well to put of sport in the media spotlight. We look forward to continuing this into 2008 and beyond.

Summary:

It just leaves me to say that I am delighted to be given the opportunity to lead the Welsh Yachting Association as Director of Sailing. I will be working hard with our dedicated staff team and numerous volunteers to ensure the future is bright for Welsh Sailing.

Tim Hall
Director of Sailing
January 2008