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The Early flyer clinic, TBSC

Report :

17 sailors participated in the Early flyer Open Topper clinic organised by tcsailingcoach.com with the participation of the Tralee Bay Sailing School. Tralee Bay sailing school kindly made available some of the school toppers and their facilities for showers and briefings. Thomas Chaix was the lead coach and was assisted by Alan Ruigrok. The main theme of the 4 days was boat prep, techniques and boat handling. The medium air and the superb weather helped to make it a success and it was amazing to see our youngest sailor Daire Cournane (10) sailing alongside our 4 lady masters. with over 10 hours afloat and video debriefs back ashore, loads were learned and the group felt very happy going home with new skills and the firm motivation to enter the worlds this summer.

Each day, a few races were sailed to constitute the Early flyer challenge. After 9 races (2 discards), Patrick Daly impressively took the trophy home. The ever improving Erica Ruigrok was a distant second but a comfortable top lady. Fergahl Fitzgibbon narrowly took the best improver of the clinic honours ahead of Liz Lynch.

Results :

<i>rk</i>	<i>sailor</i>	<i>club</i>	<i>pts</i>	<i>r1</i>	<i>r2</i>	<i>r3</i>	<i>r4</i>	<i>r5</i>	<i>r6</i>	<i>r7</i>	<i>r8</i>	<i>r9</i>
1	Patrick Daly	TBSC	7	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
2	Erica Ruigrok	HYC/RSC	19	2	5	3	1	2	3	7	3	6
3	Fergahl Fitzgibbon	TBSC	28	7	2	4	7	7	5	2	5	3
4	Michael Magowan	TBSC	29	4	3	2	3	dnc	dnc	3	6	8
5	Daire Cournane	KYC	32	3	4	5	6	3	2	12	11	9
6	Aisling Carney	TBSC	57	5	6	6	11	5	6	dnc	dnc	dnc
7	Jacqui Browne	TBSC	58	dnc	dnc	dnc	4	8	4	5	2	dnf
8	Michele Moore	TBSC	61	dnc	dnc	dnc	5	4	10	11	9	4
9	Cian Dowling	TBSC	64	11	dnf	7	8	11	7	9	15	11
10	Jennifer Stimpfy	TBSC	66	6	dnf	8	10	9	8	15	13	14
11	Donal Fitzgibbon	TBSC	69	9	dnf	10	9	dnf	9	14	8	12
12	Liz Lynch	TBSC	70	8	dnf	9	12	10	11	10	14	10
13	Mark Taylor	TBSC	82	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	4	4	2
14	Jonathan Connor	KYC	82	10	dnf	11	13	12	12	16	12	13
15	Kate Magowan	TBSC	90	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	6	7	5
16	Bridget Lange	TBSC	94	dnc	dnc	dnc	14	6	13	8	dnf	dnc
17	Claire Gibson	TBSC	102	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	dnc	13	10	7

Key learning (transcript of SAILOR'S feedback at debrief sessions):

Thursday Morning. RIGGING

- Pulling the downhaul will flatten the sail
- Adjust kicker to allow a maximum angle of 90-100 degrees between boom and mast (the downwind setting). Secure with a knot.
- Allow the controls to run smoothly through the blocks/cleats.
- Make sure the sail is as high as possible on the mast
- Don't forget the knot on the main sheet. Adjust depending on wind strength!

Thursday Afternoon. INTRO TECHNIQUES. 10-14 kts (F3-4)

- Seat forward in the boat
- Upwind, pull the main sail in block into block when possible
- After the tack, get onto hiking position quickly.
- Pinch when required (helps to keep the boat flat)
- Keep the tiller extension on your knees and keep it at deck level when tacking or jibing.
- DO NOT KNEEL IN THE BOAT. Stay on your feet!
- More downhaul to depower
- No need to move the tiller too much on flat water
- Swap hands after you tack or jibe
- Use the middle toes strap to hike out
- Keep the legs together for better hiking efficiency.

Friday Morning. TACKING & JIBING. 6-8 kts

- Don't bend your back when hiking
- Pull the main sail in before jibing
- Don't use too much rudder when jibing from run to run

Friday Afternoon. TACKING & JIBING. 6-8 kts

- Minimise rudder use in the tack. Use the body weight more and the heel of the boat (Video Patrick)
- Use the telltales (need to fly parallel to the boom upwind and on a reach)
- More kicker will flatten the sail and allow better air flow in light air flat water
- Your tack needs to be "gradual". Cheat the wind if you can!
- Rolling a tack will help to keep your momentum (even acceleration)
- Go to the right mark (oops). Make sure you know the course.
- Windward boat keeps clear

Saturday morning. SPEED. 8kts

- spotting shifts and gust. Keep it simple, always stay on the tack that gets you nearer the target (mark, finish line...)

Saturday Afternoon. 2 LONG RACES

- dealing with tight space (start line) => PRACTICE
- Where to start=> HAVING A PLAN
- Dealing with faster boats=> KEEP AWAY

Sunday. 12-14kts

- Don't over think about it, get on with it