



Galway City Sailing Club

COMMODORE REPORT

January 29, 2020, Harbour Hotel, Galway.

Annual General Meeting 2020



A Big Thank You To Past And Present Members And Friends

The past season, 2019, was a period in which we harvested the fruits of long held visions and the lessons learned along the way. From our humble beginnings in 2011, when we started with borrowed boats, 2019 was the year when a lot of hard work paid off. We now have modern equipment fit for purpose. These achievements are a credit to our committee, members, past members and the friends of Galway City Sailing Club who have helped and supported us along the way.

It has also been a year when our junior section has really blossomed, I would like to congratulate our junior members on their achievements, to thank their parents for their support and to thank our junior committee for all their hard work.

2019 Season Highlights

Junior Coaching

The year opened with our Junior Coaching Programme on Sunday Mornings, one of many initiatives run by our junior committee over the year.

Arrival Of New Rib

February saw the arrival of our second Atlantic Composites RIB with Johnny Murphy & Paddy McCarthy collecting the RIB and transporting it to Galway from Donegal.

Schools Team Racing Championship

Sunday 3 March brought success for club member Rían de Bairéad, when his school, St Enda's College, won the Connacht Schools Team Racing Championship in Carraroe. He then went forward to the Schools National Team Racing Finals, hosted by Schull Community School Cork, on the weekend of 4-5 May where his team came 6th nationally.

Environment

The first Beach Cleanup of the season was held in March. Further beach cleanups were built into the schedule of our Junior Sailing Courses with the view to developing a culture of beach cleanups within the club.

Sailing Courses, Powerboat Training & In-House Sailing Instructors

We launched our sailing seasons' training schedule in April, commencing with Easter Junior Sailing Courses followed by a Basic Skills IS Certified course for adults.

Rians' successes in sailing continued over Easter when he qualified as a Sailing Instructor encouraged and facilitated by the club. From this initiative we grew our network of Qualified Instructors & Assistant Instructors from around the bay.

Among the other highlights of our training programme was the introduction by Andreas Baumann, of bookable club instructor coaching sessions for adults, which were available over the summer and which employed our new network of Instructors and Assistant Instructors.

Eager Beavers Take To The Water

May brought our first tie-up with Port Of Galway Beaver Scouts (6-9yr olds) and the arrival of forty eager sea beavers, twenty each Tuesday and Wednesday evening, over four weeks of May. The Beaver Scouts were keen to get their Sailing Badges. Our in-house team & instructor network developed a bespoke programme for them which included the use of our Argo Dinghies and by the end of the month, our Optibats, which the beavers could sail by themselves under supervision.

Following the success of this community initiative and encouraged by very positive feedback we rolled out further sessions for Renmore Beaver Scouts, Renmore Cub Scouts & Port Of Galway Cub Scouts in July.

In total this programme encouraged 120 Junior sailors out on the water for evening sailing sessions.

Topper Squad Hit Blessington And Beyond

Our Topper Squad had a fantastic event at Blessington Sailing Club in May. With brilliant conditions, the squad did very well, competing in all 4 races. Our club held its own, with one of our sailors, Béibhinn de Bhaldraithe placing third in the Junior Girls. Galway City Sailing Club were beyond proud of all of it's junior members.

Later in May came another successful weekend for the club, with Alex Roe coming third in the Silver Fleet and 11th overall in the Donaghadee Topper Sprints. Further events followed during the season in Crosshaven and Kinsale where in the under 14 Topper event, Béibhinn de Bhaldraithe came in 3rd again. Closer to home Alex Roe won at GBSC for the second year in a row with Béibhinn coming in at a very respectable 4th.

Pico Fleet Arrival

In early June we replaced our aging Topaz fleet when we took delivery of our Picos. Much fun was had on Saturday June 9th when a volunteer crew assembled and rigged the boats. These boats have done much to improve our situation as a club, not least the elimination of the constant rounds of maintenance required for the Topaz boats.

Annual Cong Galway Sailing Race

Our support for the Cong Galway continued this year with our club participating on and indeed hosting the organising committee at GOSC from early in the year. On the day, Saturday 29 June, we had seven boats in the race out of a total of 19. We also supplied RIB support, helmed by Nigel Collins, and the halfway catering at Kllbeg Pier organised by Martin Roe. Our own Colm Macintyre and Michael O Fatharta were presented with a veterans award for their participation in the race. Two of our participants finished in the top four.

Also in June we changed our evening sailing session to Wednesday from our traditional Thursday.

Sailing Activities 7 Days A Week For July

Between Adult Sailing on Wednesdays and Saturdays, Week Long Junior Courses, Scout Evening Sessions, Powerboat Courses and Adult Coaching, July was busy. We ran sailing sessions or associated activities almost daily, 7 days a week and on most weekday evenings for the entire month.

Frances Thornton Memorial Galway Bay Swim

In addition to our own July activities we also provided two ribs to support the Frances Thornton Memorial Galway Bay Swim. Thank you to Brendan Breen & Colm O Fatharta our helms on the day.

Junior Summer Sailing Courses

We ran another busy schedule of Junior Sailing Courses this summer. Our home grown team of Instructors and Assistant Instructors, our reaching out to new local sailing instructors and participating at national competitions helped build a wonderful team to run the courses. The feedback from participants and parents was excellent with many commenting on the friendly nature of the club. The feedback from Irish Sailing during their audit reinforced this assessment further, with similar comments regarding the spirit at the club, the quality of equipment and beautiful setting in which we sail. Effective use on the online IS assessment and documentation system also made for happy parents who could see the progress their children made.

First Galway City Sailing Club Junior Regatta

August saw an easing of the pace following a hectic few months and our next highlight was our First Junior Regatta and BBQ Lunch held on Saturday, September 7, 2019.

The first inaugural Junior Regatta for Galway City Sailing Club was a fantastic success! We wish to thank all the members, parents and grandparents for helping out and to all the Juniors for being such great sailors, helping each other out and having lots of fun! A Massive thanks to Elaine from OptiqueOpticians in Briarhill for the prizes and to Jamie from BaristaBus ... amazing coffee!!

The Winners in the Main Fleet were:

Alex Roe, 1st place from GCSC, Reuben Florisson, 2nd place from GCSC, Sean Lemonnier, 3rd place from GBSC

The winners in the Regatta Fleet were:

Lorcan & Darragh Small, 1st place GCSC, Tom Healy, 2nd place GCSC, Ava Halpin, 3rd place GCSC

Autumn Racing

As the season eased into autumn we held two race series' during our Saturday sailing sessions. An Autumn Race series which was quickly followed by our Last Hurrah series. With friendly rivalry the races were keenly contested and well supported each week. I'd like to extend my thanks to all the participants, race officers and rib support who helped make the races happen. One of the highlights for me was the race where the wind dropped completely and we crawled into the beach by early evening moonlight.

Season End

For our junior sailors the season concluded with a laying up "pizza lunch" in Milano's and for the club as a whole we held our annual social get-together in the Harbour Hotel on December 14th. Just two days previously we took possession of our latest acquisition, our tractor, which has already proved itself to be a gamechanger for rib launch and retrieval.

Committee

I thank all our committee members for their work at the club this year.

Our prudent approach to club finances has stood us in good stead and for this sage stewardship I thank Nancy Roe our treasurer and club founder. Our recent procurement success has been exceptional. For this I thank Kevin Finn our Club Secretary and Johnny Murphy.

I want to thank Brendan Breen and Paddy McCarthy who took on the maintenance duties, both developing new skills and expanding our knowledge & network of contacts.

Our junior committee has achieved much this year with many of its members also active on the Club Committee. On behalf of the club I thank them, the parents and Martin, Sharon and Paddy for not only their personal commitment to the club but for what they put into coaching, boats and travel to events countrywide.

Special Thanks

For their valued support on behalf of Galway City Sailing Club I thank Galway Ocean Sports Centre, Pierce Purcell, Capt. Brian Sheridan and the Harbour Board.

Conclusion

It has been a great privilege for me to be Commodore of our club and I thank the committee and club members for the honour.

As we move on from season 2019 I wish our incoming committee every success for 2020.

Thank you.

John Hendley

Commodore 2019