



# THE MAINSHEET

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## A NOTE FROM THE COMMODORE

Fall is upon us, but we are not done yet...

The weather is getting cold, the leaves are changing and Rod McIver is preparing his stew recipes. That only means one thing... our sailing season is coming to an end. Some of our die-hards refuse to accept this and are determined to get in a few more organized races before the wetsuits need to be turned in for snowsuits. Go for it!

Sometimes this time of year provides the best sailing opportunities but everyone please be wary of the cold and the risks and make the appropriate choices for yourself.

I will leave the great reports from the year to others but I wanted to bring up the impact that our sailing school has had on our club. One week in July has created a great vibe and enthusiasm in our sailing program. I have never seen so

many keen youngsters excited about getting out on the water and sailing. These people are our future and we need to provide every opportunity for them to sail and grow in our midst.

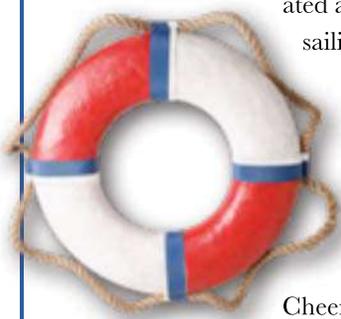
We are a different club than we were a couple of years ago. We are growing, we have a different sailing centric vibe which emanates from everything we do, and there are more women and kids out on the water than ever before. I thank all those that have supported this transition and have made our club a great place to be.

Cheers everyone!



*Commodore Mark Taylor, and crew/brother Paul on their way to successfully defending their title at the Wayfarer Nationals, North Bay Ontario.*

*June 2008.*



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## Sailing School Report

*Norm Rippon*

The children of Corsair School were interested in taking sailing lessons at Mississauga Sailing Club wrote letters to the principal outlining why they should be offered the MSC Sailing Scholarship.

Two grade five students, Brandon and Rania were chosen based upon their submissions, general character, and ability to benefit from the programme. Here are their letters:

Brandon:

Sailing lessons. Why I want sailing..

I want to go sailing because during the summer I want to learn something new, get outdoors, and do something on the lake rather than sitting down playing X-box and eating potato chips.

Another important reason is that learning how to sail will be part of my job because I'm going to join the Navy or the Marines. So when I join that job, the other marines who don't know how to sail, I could teach, and pass my knowledge on to them about sailing. So please PLEASE PLEASE choose me to go sailing with Mr. Rippon!

Thank you.

Rania:

Rania's submission was more esoteric and less goal oriented, but striking in that she added a poem and illustrated it.

Rania:

Sailing Scholarship

I've always wanted to go sailing. To feel the wind in my hair and the sun in my

face. I have absolutely nothing to do in the summer. Going on this trip will fill my time.

And here is a poem!

*Sailin' sailing, Oh how I love to sail!  
Feeling the wind in my hair and the sun  
in my face.*

*I would love to go sailing.*

*It is special. It is cool. It is like something new.*

*So give me the scholarship and you  
won't be sorry*

*Cuz I love to SAIL.*

## Day 1:

(The View from the Shore)

Our first day of Children's sailing School was exciting for the children and possibly traumatizing for me. Alex(andra) and Sam(antha), the OSA instructors met the 16 children enrolled in the programme. There were some rather nervous faces on each of the children, but after a few moments of "get to know you" games, everybody began to relax. Alex and Sam wasted no time getting the children on the water. Within an hour, five of our boats lurched away from the docks and headed out to open water. The coach boat followed, trying to keep everyone pointing roughly south. It was like herding cats.

Several boats touched noses with the rocks, but were quickly towed out of danger. The aluminum Petrel seemed to be magnetized attracted to every rock from MSC to PCYC. The children had a very successful morning, and somehow each boat managed to dock in time for lunch. Motivation must have played a factor.

Lunch was a quiet affair, the only sounds being chewing and the jostling to

### MSC Executive Members

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Mark Taylor

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Rob Wierdsma

#### *Secretary*

Darren Brash

#### *Treasurer*

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#### *Facilities*

Norm Rippon

#### *Social*

Cheryl Hughes

#### *Newsletter*

Bjug Borgundvaag

#### *Club House*

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get the best soda pop from the fridge. (Note to Jerry Piekarsky- buy more soda pop.) After lunch, the children played a racing game, received a short chart paper tutorial, and then practised "tiller exchange" on an over turned picnic bench.

Then- back out on the water. The fleet sailed out beautifully, four children to a boat. (The Petrel was temporarily banned.) Things turned exciting when the marks were moved to allow the children to practise upwind sailing. The wind picked up and so did the speed of the boats. One boat full of shouting

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sailors T-boned our crash boat, but simply bounced off the rubberized sides of the Zodiac.

Storm clouds were moving in and Alex and Sam gave the signal to head in. At that point, matters took an interesting turn. One of the children's boats rammed the Buccaneer, skippered by Emily, causing it to capsize. While Sam and Alex began to tow or sail in the rest of the boats, we fished out Brandon and De-Shawn, crew members, and helped Emily right the Buccaneer, which had its mast stuck in the lake bed.

Emily was "cool as a cucumber," handling herself extremely well. We finally managed to right the Buccaneer by tugging at the forestay and "walking" it, hand over hand, to slowly lift the mast. The only damage was to the wind-vane at the top of the mast.

After towing all four boats back to the dock, the children went inside for a de-briefing. They discussed the lessons learned during the day and determined that more practise was need with up wind sailing. Alex and Sam explained that capsizing was a part of sailing, and that all of the children had acquitted themselves well.

For my part, tonight I'm wondering how many children will show up for tomorrow's classes. Pass the Paxil, please!

Lessons learned today:

a) Children are only quiet when eating.

## Day 2:

Bill Taylor, John Hemingway, Angie Haskell and I got to the site early in order to get the kid's boats into the water, thereby beating all of the recreational boaters to the ramp. It was anticlimatic. It would appear that Canada



Day boaters are a sleepy lot and don't put their boats into the water until later in the morning.

The young sailing school students began to arrive. One—two —three—sixteen! Every child returned! They spent an hour learning sailing theory in the club room and then rigged their boats by themselves. This was a slow process. At about 11:00 a.m. they headed out the narrows into the Lake. After an hour and a half, all of the boats "self docked" for lunch. The instructors remarked that the winds were picking

up and that the power boats were so loud the children could not hear their instructions.

We served the students a barbecue lunch (chicken breasts, Angus burgers, beef dogs, and veggie burgers.) Sam and Alex dyed the children's hair with red Kool-Aid and applied Canada Day tattoos.

After lunch Robin felt sick and then got sick. But she is a game sailor and decided to go back out on the water anyway. Eventually, she had to return to land and sit out the afternoon in the shade keeping company with the oldsters waiting on land..

Sam and Alex set up a little course in our lagoon and soon, all of our boats were parading in a neat line around the marks. It was impressive to see the children's progress. Recreational boating traffic was becoming quite heavy and Seadoos were buzzing around like "lake lice."

The students returned to land about 3:00 p.m. This time they were asked to help us remove the boats from the water and prepare their boats for the night. This made things easier for us and taught ownership of the boat to the children.

Following a short debriefing, the tired youngsters headed for home. Alex and Sam then took me aside and ever so gently suggested that we adults reduce our level of support and leave the worrying to the experts. Some of the kids were becoming too dependent on us

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and the comfort of our Zodiac safety boat. (Those of you who have had the kindergarten teacher firmly close the door behind you after receiving your child will be able to relate to this.)

Lessons learned for us:

- a) Canada Day is not a good day on which to teach new sailors due to recreational boating competition.
- b) Children rarely finish a full can of pop

## Day 3:

The day was marked by high winds and strong gusts (up to 44 km/hr.) After a great deal of agonizing, the instructors decided to have the students spend the day on land. The fare would be hard core sailing theory, game oriented theory, and just plain games.

Rania, Christina, and Kenene took their “capsize test” using Roy Greenwood’s Petrel. None of us watched this dramatic moment as we were practising our own assignment. (Stop worrying. Let the instructors worry.) Some of us cheated, darting between cars to peek at the activity. But not me. Well, I took a short look.

Kenene was so excited that she phoned home and told her Mom, Donna, that she had “sunk” her boat. After returning to her feet and dusting herself off, Donna was able to elicit that her daughter had participated in the capsizing test.

I failed my “do not worry assignment” when I was told that Roy Greenwood’s rudder came loose and was resting peacefully on the lake bed. (Fortunately, Roy is in China for a few weeks, giving us time to retrieve the item.) I hope it’s shiny enough to see when the water clears.

While the bulk of the class was engaged in an activity, one of the instructors took the students learning levels 2 and 3 aside, teaching them separately. The children spent the rest of the day learning theory, visiting the splash pad, and staring down the PCYC sailing students who were engaged in the same type of activities.

The day ended with us whacking the daylights out of Bjug’s Buccaneer as we tried to trailer it in the high winds. Arghhhh!

Lessons learned today:

- a) Letting the instructors do the worrying is a good idea. You’re better not to watch. The instructors REALLY will ask you for help when they REALLY need it.
- b) China is a good place for Roy to be right now. His being there is good for me, too. Yes, at the moment I really like China.

## Day 4:

Our rather bleary eyed land-crew lined up all of the boats into a neat row ready for launching. The rain had finally stopped and the sky was beginning to clear. Just as I was readying the first boat for its re-introduction to the carnage of children’s sailing school, Bill Taylor pointed to a green Jeep parked neatly in a corner of the parking lot. All I could say was “Oh. Oh.”

Apparently Roy Greenwood was NOT in China! There he was, in the flesh, standing by his car. Bill went up to explain our little mishap with the rudder while I prepared myself for a major grovelling session.

Roy took the bad news well, for a guy on the wrong continent. Apparently a funeral had delayed his depar

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ture. He pitched in and helped launch the boats and then stayed to watch the fleet depart. He even promised to help again next day! I wondered whether he'd appear in SCUBA gear.

The children practiced some manoeuvre with the marks that was too complex for me to understand and then practised docking. After watching Rod Anderson's boat bisect the dock at a 90 degree angle and hearing an angry "BOING!" sound, I fled for the safety of the Clubhouse. What I could not see, could not hurt me. Better still, what I could not hear might not have happened.

Eric Cartledge, programme director for the sailing programme, arrived to view the progress of the programme and take a few photographs. He was also delivering a new van for Alex and Sam.

After further testing the resilience of our docks, the students returned to sailing around marks. All boats were under perfect control and competently skippered. Eric told me that there is a tipping point (no pun intended) where the students suddenly catch on and begin "sailing" rather than crazily careering around the lake. Our students had passed that point and were now sailors. He opined that the actual sailing techniques are easy to teach. It was instilling the confidence to use them that is difficult.

After a leisurely lunch, the students practised jibing, with marked success.

This was a group in control of their boats. At about 3:15 Alex blew her whistle and pounded her head with two hands, the signal to dock. I beat a hasty retreat to the safety of the Clubhouse again, but the other adults grouped to watch the docking. (I am not one who is fascinated by train wrecks.) Apparently,

tomorrow, they will complete the cold, and by some, dreaded, capsizing test. Unfortunately, Robin felt sick again and decided that perhaps soccer, rather than sailing would be her sport of choice. If she doesn't return, we will miss her sparkling personality and ear to ear grin.

Lessons learned:

- a) There is a mysterious point at which the group "Gets it" and actually sails.
- b) Don't just assume a person is in China. They might NOT be! A careful check of flight manifests should precede sailing school.
- c) Even if you don't see or hear a boat being scrunched, it will still be scrunched. Greenwood is preparing a fire-plan for the building. The plan will eventually be placed in a special box, allowing easy access by fire-fighters.

## Day 5:

It's all over. This was an emotional day for many of

the students, the instructors and shore support workers. Three of the students overcame major humps or barriers that were threatening to prevent them from earning their certificates, or perhaps from even wanting to ever sail again on their own. But with a little cajoling, some negotiating, and a bit of tough love from the instructors each of them overcame their personal fears; some in a small way and some in a much bigger manner.



it was letter perfect! Each boat gently nudged the dock, in its prescribed order.

These children have come a long way in four days. (As well, new friendships are forming. Kenene decided to stay for race night and crew on the coveted Buccaneer with new friends Emily, and Christine. All of the youngsters in the school love the Buccaneer, seeing it as a sort of shark amongst a school of tuna. Incidentally, the girls beat Gary McIlroy in the race.)

The students debriefed and prepared for their final day of sailing school. To-

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Capsizing or crashing were the biggest fears of several children and this anxiety manifested itself in many different forms and behaviours.

The weather co-operated with light breezes and calm water. Alex and Sam decided that the students would dump the boats in which they were sailing. The fleet slowly made its way out into the deeper water of the lake. One student elected to remain behind at the docks, but later changed his mind. After promising him, if the instructors agreed, that his boat would capsize first (minimizing agonizing waiting time) and assuring him that he would be first to return to shore, we ferried him out to his boat.

A course around marks was set. The students were to leave the course, capsize the boats, bail them out, and return to sailing the course.

Capsizing the boats proved more difficult than anticipated. The CL16's and Wayfarers were difficult for the children to tip. But with a little help from Alex, tip they did. (In one case, when the instructor gave the order to capsize the boat, several children simply

started to jump overboard! Alex prevented them from doing so with a firm bellow- "THE IDEA IS TO TIP OVER! NOT JUMP OUT!") "Abandon ship" was not the idea.

The reluctant capsizer we had delivered to his boat performed well and bravely. I almost broke out into tears with happiness for him. Alex and Sam, diligent and tough instructors, wouldn't give us the signal to retrieve him from his boat until he had helped fully bail the boat and it was back in position on the course around the marks. Good for them! When we finally plucked him from his boat he was a very proud boy.

I can assure the Gallants, the Gallegos', and the Andersons, that their boats float and return well from a capsize.

The Buccaneer capsize was a little more dramatic. As the boat went over two children jumped onto the sail and sat in it, forcing the mast down into the water. It began to turn turtle but its mast hit bottom. Skipper Emily managed to right it quickly and soon returned her sopping crew to the course.

The wet, cold and very happy children returned to the Club and warmed up while eating lunch. The afternoon

was devoted to sailing games on the water. After an early return to land, Alex and Sam took each child aside separately, debriefed them about their performance in the programme and presented them with a certificate of achievement. This was a private affair, between the children, the instructors, and their parents.

I do know, because I was told by the students or parents, that several of them surpassed White Sail One standards and received a White Sail Two award. Nicolas G., Christine B., and Leisel M. were recognized as stellar sailors. Emily B, who skippered every day and was a de-facto assistant to the instructors sailed away with a White Sail Three award.

One very young child, who was traumatized by his capsize on Day One, faced down his own fear and ended his last afternoon— by sailing. He had refused to get back into a sailboat for three days and rode daily with the instructors in their coach boat. We are very proud of him. So is his grandfather who feared he was paying fifty dollars a day for day care on the water.

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It dawned to us on shore, the observers of the programme and of the children's reactions to the lessons, that time plays a huge factor in the success of the children. It was with deep regret that we ended the programme, because after being freed of their fears, another week of instruction would have consolidated the gains and led to real sailing growth.

With regards to Roy Greenwood, who was not in China, we were able to present him with his rudder, tied in a yellow bow at the end of the day. (He had returned to help us retrieve the children's boats from the docks.)

Did you know that a rudder sails through the water? Early in the day, noticing the water had cleared, we managed to hook the errant rudder with a grappling hook. John Hemingway, ever game and persistent, managed to hook and bring it up, almost, to the surface of the water. Then it slipped loose and sailed several meters into shallower water. It looked like a large gleaming fish gliding towards us. It was still very deep, maybe 18 feet.

Alex, the instructor, then conquered her own personal fear. Seeing the gleaming treasure lying off the dock, she dove in, (not without some deep reservations), rocketed to the bottom and returned with the prize. To me, her

performance was almost a metaphor for the programme.

After all of the children's boats were out of the water, two Club members who had been monitoring the programme and had picked up on our children's achievements, approached me and offered to fully sponsor children for



next year as part of our community outreach. Once again, these individuals wish to remain anonymous. It was a GOOD day!

## The Day After:

Judging by the children's responses and that of their parents, the programme was very successful. We were able to track, to a limited degree, the thoughts of the children by the messages and the graffiti they left on the Club's white board. I don't know

whether Alex and Sam encouraged this or the children simply did it on their own.

Some messages over the week, were poignant, such as "I'm STILL afraid of capsizing." Some were laudatory, "BOOM is awesome." Some were simply contradictory such as the message "Sailing is silly" bordered by an elaborately drawn heart. By the end of the course, the board sported messages such as "I DID it!", "I PASSED!", and "I got White Sail Two!"

For me, the biggest indicator of success was the number of children that returned to Club today to sail either on their own, or with the parents. The place was swarming with members' children, sailing with their own peer groups. And everybody knew everybody else. That's a measure of success in itself.

If we do this again next year, I would recommend:  
a) We book early enough to partake in a BOOM course

that uses their own boats. It's only a thousand dollars extra. The boats used are nearly indestructible and we, as Stewards of the Club, don't have to worry about boat damage. The down-side of this recommendation is that children don't learn to sail and care for their parents' boats.

b) We should seriously take a look at whether we want a two week course. After having braved the capsize test, the children were ready to use and refine the skills they had been taught.

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## *The Wayfarer North American Championships, MSC Sept 2008*

c) It seemed wrong to stop the instruction after so many kids crashed through barriers to instruction

d) We, as a Club, need to continue to promote children's sailing. John Hemingway suggested an "inter-generational" regatta, where the children of parents in the Club sail against the adults in the Club. In other words, we should not quit while we are ahead.

e) The Executive might want to meet and debrief about both sailing schools and decide early whether to continue with the programme. Several participants in both the adult and junior sailing schools have suggested meeting as a group of stake-holders with the Executive.

(Note: On July 8, the Executive met and unanimously decided to offer the programme next year, using BOOM boats, and looking at a two week programme if feasible.)

The Club members who provided land support found the Children's Sailing School to be a moving and rather inspirational group effort. We would like to thank, deeply, those members who lent us their boats for both the Adult

and the Children's Sailing School. Donna and Greg Gallant, the easy going Aiden McGahon, Juan and Suzy Gallagos, and the quietly supportive Rod Anderson come to mind. For use of their Petrels, we thank Roy Greenwood and Lochlan Magee.

Roy Greenwood's stoic acceptance of the possible loss of his rudder and his willingness to help us out in any way possible will always be remembered and has become part of the lore of the Club. Bjug Borgundvaag's absolute dedication to the programme, despite trials and tribulation, and a terrible beating to his boat, mark him as special. If I've forgotten anybody, please forgive me. Send me an aggrieved e-mail and I'll see that you're recognized in the next Mainsheet!

Finally, all Club members owe a deep debt of gratitude to Bill Taylor, John Hemingway, and Angie Haskell for looking after things on land and faithfully braving sun stroke, goose pooh poisoning, and sheer physical exhaustion whilst hauling boats in and out of the water at a frantic pace. Their dedication to the school was, in the kid's words, "AWESOME".

I address the last words to the children in the sailing school—YOU ROCK!

## Facilities Report

*Norm Rippon*

Next time you enter the compound, please take the time to admire the fine external display cabinet Aiden McGahon created for us! We have been without a display case for several years and are deeply grateful that we have a member with the skills and willingness to use them on the Club's behalf.

You'll also notice that Ron Divall has painted new numbers on each of the slips. Ron designed and created stencils, and then painstakingly and single handedly painted all of the numbers. This was a BIG job!!! He also designed a frame that will allow us to paint new lines in a quick and efficient way. After a great deal of discussion, we decided to paint the lines by hand rather than by spraying, in order to reduce drifting spray and keep the shuffling of boats in and out of spaces to a minimum.

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By the time you read this, our weather station should be operational. The monitor will hang in the entry way and will receive a feed from PCYC.

Thanks to Brad Nordien for his technical work and for purchasing the equipment, and to Fred Sonnenberg, who drilled the holes for us!

In the hallway also hangs a white board. This will convey important messages and notices. Please also use this board to sign-out when you are on the water. A complete sign-out gives the date, the time out, the sail number, and in some cases, the number of people on board. Please remember to remove your data from the board after finishing your sail!

After consulting with experts, we purchased an industrial strength canopy to augment the rather flimsy and cheap

canopies purchased earlier in the year. Easy to erect, and very strong, the new canopy will last for years, given care and good storage.

A special thank-you to Glen Story who has been “Johnny-on-the spot”, repairing many of the stair treads leading to the upper deck. I say “Johnny-on-the spot” as he has responded almost instantly to our requests for emergency repairs, keeping all areas of the Club safely accessible. We are also grateful to Lochlan Magee, who gave the stairs an emergency coat of stain when the summer rains threatened to rot even more of the stairway!

The “lost and found” (the blue bin in the internal garage) is nearly full. Please check it and retrieve any of your items. We will dispose of remaining items at the end of the season. So if

you see me wearing your XXL wetsuit after October 31, its finder’s keepers! Finally, as this report suggests, many, many people work very hard to keep our Club “ship shape Bristol fashion.” What makes them even more special is their willingness to drop everything and pitch-in when work needs to be done immediately to ensure a safe environment. The members of the Facility committee are truly exceptional!

## We need your help!

We all derive a lot of pleasure from sailing and our membership at MSC. Why not share your experiences by writing something up for the next edition of the Mainsheet.