

## **Sailing Program**

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### Summary

The 2006 sailing program was successful due to the thorough advanced planning coordinated by James Nicol and his committee of members dedicated to making improvements. Among the changes were opening the program to non-members, extending the course length by adding refresher sessions and ensuring instructor certifications. We also survived an anticipated budget loss with an eventual surplus thanks in large to a concerted effort to revise our club insurance and the overwhelming participation. And finally, we had the good fortune of having veteran instructors and excellent weather.

### Attendance

This year's strong program attendance was due to opening it to the public. Early in the year we were prepared to execute plans to get the word out through flyers and advertisements, but as the enrollment started growing we realized it wouldn't be necessary. It seems simple word of mouth by existing members was enough. A total of 24 of 39 participants were non-members comprising of 5 of 14 beginners, 4 of 7 experienced and 15 of 18 adults. Compared to the previous year with member only participation the Beginner and Experienced groups had equivalent member numbers but adult group had the unusual inverse with almost the same total as the previous year but only 3 members. In retrospect we didn't rally the membership because we couldn't; the program was already over the limit of the program faculty and available boats.

### Budget

The budget for the year was anticipating a loss considering the unknown costs of insurance, boat expenses and advertising. As it turned out the insurance costs were covered within the general club policy, boat expenses and the need for advertising never materialized, and gains were made with the non-member higher rates. With these we were able to absorb instructor certification expenses and give them pay raises, and still come out over \$1600 ahead. A copy of the budget has been forwarded to our financial officer.

### Instructors

Our instructors did a terrific job once again organizing and coordinating activities. Their backgrounds as teachers (and perpetual student), experienced sailors and their recent US Sailing certification I believe were the perfect qualifications for this program.

## Boats

This year we were able to use just two classes of boats for the program and their versatility seemed to fit our goals. Flying Scots are a stable and simple boat making it ideal for group instruction while the Laser gave the opportunity for single-handed confidence building. In years past Sunfish were used but the condition of the available hulls and lack of rigging and hardware made them not worth the effort.

## Future Considerations

More thought needs to be put into the schedule. The additional refresher days seemed awkward for parents trying to coordinate summer activities. We could probably justify 2 weeks for beginners and 2 weeks for experienced, and maybe break out the adult into beginner and advanced weeks. Is there opportunity for an adult racing clinic week?

I would expect even more adults next year as word of mouth advertising grows. And if we want to push our membership it will get bigger still.

We're vulnerable to losing instructors and we should prepare a replacement strategy.

Money did not seem to be an issue affecting enrollment, non-members wanted the opportunity. If it's deemed necessary to raise rates to cover expenses or build for the future it should be considered.

Using member boats is risky and imposing, but requiring participants to provide their own would sharply reduce enrollment. A major step (and commitment) would be a strategy to have club owned boats.