Rotary “Have a Go” days May 2021

Sponsored by **Rotary Club of St Johns**

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**and Orakei Marina**

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Monday 10.5.2021

Saint Patricks School

Weather no wind in the morning session and the rain came in around 11.30.

After lunch rain cleared around one and a very light nor-westerly clocked to the west,

23 sailors, a teacher and 3 support boats on the water.

Quick introduction of the instructors and Gary said a few words about the pleasure that Rotary gets from supporting such programs.

We started the day with a great rigging session where all the sailors got to rig their own boats. This took about half an hour and all the sailors made a good job of this. We had a quick morning tea and got everyone into spray jackets and buoyancy aids, launched all the boats and as there was no wind towed them around for a bit so they could get the hang of steering. Still no wind so we got all the sailors to pair up in numbers. A few more games ball tag and a paddle ashore for lunch.

After lunch it was raining quite hard, but everyone got on the water and had a wee sail in a very light breeze 2-3 knts. Time flew and it was ashore to pack up and get ready for the bus.

All had a good day despite the lack of wind and rain.

One of the sailors spoke on behalf of room 8, to Rotary and the instructors, thanking them for a chance to experience sailing.

Tuesday 11.5.2021

Glen Taylor School

Weather forecast was for increasing nor-westerlies. Very little breeze when we arrive but it started to build.

23 sailors plus teacher on the water.

A quick introduction of the instructors and Gary said a few words about the involvement of Rotary, the teacher got all the sailors to show their appreciation of the opportunities that Rotary had given them.

I thought the wind was going to increase so we reefed the optis and took off the sprits and sent only 6 boats on the water to make management easier. I small front passed over, prior to launching and the breeze dropped so we put all the sprits back on and got everyone sailing. We thought we would make the most of the weather before it was about to increase. We got all the sailors in jackets and buoyancy aid, had a quick morning tea and on the water.

We had a good session with a bit of rain near the end. In for lunch and all the sailors started getting their jackets on telling us they wanted to back on the water. This session we used 9 boats and swapped the sailors around. Be the end quite a few were sailing around confidently.

Great sailors, a great teacher and a great day on the water for all and potentially some future sailors.

Wednesday 12.5.2021

Glen Taylor School

Weather forecast 8-12 knts South Westerly

24 sailors on the water

There was little wind in the morning, so we got all the sailors to rig their boats first up. We have an example boat and don’t tell them much, so it is up to them to work out how to do this. We give them a little help with the trick bits, but they all achieve rigging their own boats. Still no wind so we get them into sailing gear, a spray jacket and a buoyancy aid. This seems to take an age getting all the sizes right. A quick morning tea and on to the water.

A quick brief, most had sailed with the Rotary sponsored program before, so remembered a lot. Still no wind so towed them all out, a chance to work out the steering. A light breeze came up and we got all the boats sailing in one direction by playing follow the leader and other games.

A couple of the sailor’s parents were there so we took them out on the water so show them what we were doing, the parents were great and helped getting all the boats in after the morning session.

Lunch and then back on the water for the next session. This is the time when they can have some fun, jumping off the boats, capsizing, getting their boats up right and getting back on board. The water is staring to get a bit cold, so this only lasted an hour and a half. Everyone ashore and packed up.

Another great day on the water, it will be an experience that they will remember for a long time.

Thursday 13.5.2021

Saint Pius X Catholic School

Weather light South-easterlies moving to North Easterlies in the afternoon.

35 sailors ,2parents and 1 teacher on the water

We got a little bit of a shock when 35 sailors turned up and quickly had to make a new plan. We divided the group by taking out the 18 x year 5s first and the 17 x year 6s in the second session. The sailors were all extremely excited so we got them to rig the boats hoping that this may settle them down.

They did not settle down until we got them on the water. Great bunch with a perfect breeze, so we got them all sailing well. We had them back on shore just before midday and then took out the year 6s after a quick jacket and buoyancy aid change.

The year 6s went very well and we even managed to get them to have a little race around the marks. Then they did some swimming and capsize practise. By the end of the session the sailors were becoming competent at being able to get the boat where they wanted to go.

The teacher also took out a boat and sailed around well.

Once again, a great day on the water that the St Johns Rotary made happen to give these kids an experience that they may never get again.

Friday 14.5.2021

Churchill Park School

Weather, light southeasterlies clocking to the north.

21 sailors ,2 parents and one teacher

The day started with no wind, so we got the sailors to rig the optis. They all did this well and then we dressed them all into wetsuits and spray jackets as the southerly breeze was quite chilly. We had a morning tea break and launched them straight off the ramp and out to the instructors. Before they leave the ramp, I check to see if they understand how to steer and how to use the mainsheet. This group from a decile 10 school went very well with all sailors sailing in the direction we wanted them to. We played follow the leader and ball tag, before sending them in for lunch.

We felt this group needed more structure to the afternoon session, so we ran a few little races, and they got the hang of this. After the racing it was time for some fun, we let them capsize if they wanted to, have a go at sailing by themselves and the inevitable falling in the water.

Ashore and pack up before the bus arrives. This was great group and there are some potential sailors that I am sure we will see at yacht clubs in the future.

Monday 17.5.2021

Churchill Park School

Weather North West building in the afternoon to strong westerlies

24 sailors, 1 non-participant and teacher

Started with a rigging session, all were quick to rig their boats. We got all the sailors in wetsuits and spray jackets as we thought they would chill off quickly in the freshening westerly breeze. The mornings briefing was longer than usual as I picked up that the sailors had a very real interest in how the boat works. This was confirmed when the teacher said they had spent the term working through the Yachting New Zealand Kokokaha program.

We had a great morning session with all the sailors coping well with the 8- 10 knts with the occasional squall of 14knts. After over 1.5 hours on the water, back to shore for lunch.

During lunch, the breeze increased to 15-18knts and a few squirts of 20 knts+. We had to come up with a new plan, so we just put 2 boats on the water at a time and let those sailors who were keen to try sailing in the heavier winds have a go. Most managed very well.

The day finished earlier than planned but everyone learnt heaps and had a good time.

Tuesday 18.5.2021

Churchill Park School

Weather not suitable for learn to sail 20+ knots, frequent showers

Wednesday 19.5.2021

Churchill Park School

Weather; Fresh westerlies with the odd rain squall

26 sailors, 1 teacher and one parent on the water.

Once again, a rigging session which gives us time to assess the sailors and the weather conditions. All did a great job with the rigging. We got all the sailors into wetsuits, spray jackets and buoyancy aids, then a quick morning tea to give the sailors a chance to warm up before going on the water.

It was still windy, so we only put 4 boats on the water with two instructors and one instructor launching and running the turnovers. All sailors had a go and were quite proficient by the end of the session. Ashore for lunch just before 12.00. The principal Elizabeth Gunn popped in to see how it was all going. She seemed incredibly pleased with the program.

We all thought the weather would ease in the afternoon (it did for a little while) but it picked up. We had everyone on the water in 7 boats and the rest in the 3 RIBs. Most coped very well in the conditions and we had a few deliberate capsizes which was managed well.

All were starting to get cold, so ashore just before 2pm, to pack up and catch the bus.

All had another good day on the water.

Thursday 20.5.2021

Churchill Park School

Weather; Light south westerlies

25 sailors, 1 teacher and 3 parents on the water.

Perfect conditions made this an easy day on the water for the instructors and sailors.

We started with rigging which all the sailors achieved this in quick time, then we got all the sailors dressed in sailing gear, a quick morning tea and on the water before they get too hot. There was only 5knts of breeze, so the sailors made theiag way out to the middle of the bay for a game of ball tag. The game kept them occupied for around 20mins, it is a good exercise as they learn to manoeuvre their boats in the direction they want to go. After tag we played follow the leader which makes them try harder at being the fastest and it also allows us to manoeuvre then closer to the ramp to get them back for lunch

After lunch, back on the water for the fun part of the day where they can try hiking, walking around the front of the mast and then the inevitable capsizes. They can choose to do this if they want, but in the end, most want to give it a go. A couple of sailors realised they can get in the air pocket under the boat when it is upside down and breath in there. (This is a great confidence builder for the sailors). Those that capsize must right their boats, get back in, help their crew to get in and bail out the water.

Back to shore, retrieve the boats, get the sailors changed, a quick debrief and suggestions of clubs if they want to go further with their sailing. Happy sailors, happy teacher, happy instructors, what more could you ask for.

Friday 21.5.21

Point England School

Weather light variable south westerlies

23 Sailors and I teacher aid on the water

No wind in the morning so we stretched our rigging session and our on the water briefing, hoping that the wind would come in. No wind so we decided we would do a harbour cruise through the boats in Hobson bay. All the sailors enjoyed this, and we ended up near Orakei wharf and had a game of ball tag. Still little wind so we said if you want lunch you have to make your way ashore.

The sailors were innovative paddling, sculling, using the centreboard as a paddle and using the bailers as a paddle.

All ashore for lunch, not a lot of sun so sailors were a bit cold, but we got over half on them back on the water for a short session of having fun and getting wet.

Despite little wind the sailors had a go on the water in a small sailboat. They all gained confidence on the water and had a great time. Sandy the teacher was fantastic support, and the teacher aid Levi was also a great asset. Fun day for all.

Monday 24.5.2021

Ruapotaka School

Weather strong cold southerlies.

Unfortunately, we had to cancel this day due the unfavourable weather. We must be careful at this time of year as the temperatures start to drop. The smaller sailors are very susceptible to hypothermia when they get wet.

Tuesday 25.5.2021

Panmure District School

22 Sailors on the water

Weather gusty cool south easterlies

Weather was probably at the upper limit for the sailors at this time of year. We did the usual start of getting the sailors to rig their boats. These guys were fast and keen to get on the water. We managed to get all the sailors into wet suits, spray jackets and buoyancy aids. A quick morning tea and into the water. With the big tides and exceptionally low water we were concerned about the slippery ramp and the oyster shells. We put the sailors in the boats and wheeled them down the ramp into the water to avoid any injuries on the ramp.

Most of the sailors coped well in the conditions but we decided to limit the number of boats on the water to 8 and the rest of the sailors we put in the Safety boats and swapped them around on the water.

In for a quick lunch, we anchored the optis out on the water and ferried the sailors in and out to avoid ramp injuries. The wind picked up in the afternoon session, but all were keen to get back on the water.

Ashore after a short session as the bus had to leave at 2pm. All the sailors had a great time and a few asked where they could go to do more sailing.

Wednesday 26.5.2021

Churchill Park School resail of cancelled day on the 18.5.2021.

24 sailors and one teacher on the water

Weather Cool southeasterlies

It was a cold morning, but the sailors were keen. We got them to rig the boats and got them all into sailing gear before morning tea. During morning tea, it is a time for the sailors to warm up out of the wind and in the sun. After a briefing it was time to launch, with the extremely low tides the ramp was exposed, very slippery and lots of oysters. Those with wet shoes could launch and the others with bare feet we put them in the boats and wheeled them to the water.

The breeze was still a bit gusty, and the cold rattled a few of the sailors so we put them on the RiBs and towed their boats in. They all sailed well in the tricky conditions. Ashore for lunch,

18 sailors were keen to do the afternoon session and this lot went very well, we ran three races for them which they all enjoyed. Some were keen to capsize despite the cool winds, most ended up in the water. They cooled off very quickly, so we had to cut the session short to get them ashore and warm them up.

We had one sailor who was exceptional, never been in a boat before, started last and won two of the racers, wanted to try capsizing. Capsized, got the boat up, got in, bailed it out and despite shivering was determined to sail the boat back to shore.

We were all impressed with Sylvia’s performance, so I introduced her to Alex Maloney and Molly Meech (Our 49er sailors who are shortly off to Japan). Alex and Molly were great with Sylvia and wanted to know her surname so they could keep an eye on her in the future.

Thanks to the Rotary Club of St Johns for giving us as coaches an opportunity to give these (270) kids a go at sailing a small boat. We get pleasure at watching these kids grow in confidence during the day. I am sure that through your support you have given these (hopefully future sailor) an experience that they will remember for a long time.

Thanks Kim, Robbie , Holly and Colin. From Yachting New Zealand

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