

# A day in the life of an Onboard Development Officer



OnBoard is the RYA's programme developed to introduce children to sailing and windsurfing through links between their schools, local sailing clubs and training centres. The aim is to introduce half a million new sailors to the sports over the next 10 years.

Although managed centrally by the RYA, much of the groundwork is carried out by OnBoard Development Officers (ODOs) who are based at training centres and work closely with schools to forge links enabling children to try the sports and, hopefully, stay involved for the long term.

Pip Woods was one of the first ODOs on the team, based at Rockley Watersports in Poole. Here she describes a typical busy day in the life of an ODO.

## Morning assembly at a junior local school

Show the children how much fun sailing can be with our Onboard DVD and explain how they can have a go at sailing through their local club. Chat with the head teacher to explain how sailing can be used within the curriculum. Go over risk assessments, safety and what a centre has to go through to gain RYA recognition.

## Back to the centre

Book in some sessions with another school for a taster session, followed

There are currently 13 ODOs working around the UK with 51 clubs and training centres signed up to the programme. Since April 2005 197 schools, 260 teachers and 70 youth groups have taken part in 24,888 learn to sail sessions. It is estimated that we now have 952 new **regular** sailors



by further sessions to work through the RYA Youth Sailing Scheme.

Write a letter to all local schools inviting PE teachers to the centre for a free teacher evening where they can do some sailing or windsurfing, have a coffee and a chat about OnBoard and sailing for schools.

Call a yacht club who have heard about OnBoard and want to get involved. Discuss the principles behind Onboard, what they need to offer and when they could run sessions etc. Arrange a meeting to talk through how we can encourage and train the existing volunteers in the club. After this we should be able to confirm details with the committee, sign them up and run through their development plans.

Write up the development plans and check the application from another club before sending it to RYA head office for approval.

## Run a training session on the water

I've got 12 students and two teachers from the local school for a taster session – the school are keen to set up a club for after-school sailing. One of the teachers already instructs at his local club.

## Meet with the area Partnership Development Manager

Our PDM has organised a meeting with all the School Sport Coordinators in Poole. He's asked me to discuss Onboard – what it can do for students in Poole and what opportunities exist for kids in the local clubs and centres.

*It is great fun being an ODO – no two days are the same. It may seem like a lot of meetings and admin, and there is certainly a lot of planning and phone calls to be made. However, the job is made easier by being flexible in our approach and working closely with centres and clubs. There have been many challenges along the way, but all seem to be resolved one way or another.*

*Onboard is a great scheme and it has been a pleasure to be involved right from the outset, watching it develop*

## Getting involved with OnBoard

Any recognised dinghy or windsurfing centre can be part of OnBoard.

Your time commitment to the programme can be as big or small as you like – whatever suits your centre or club. What's important is that you are able to offer taster sessions and more regular opportunities for children to get afloat, either during or outside of school hours. You may already run a junior club that could be developed to incorporate OnBoard, or you might offer courses that can be opened up to a wider audience.

Contact our Sport Development team on 023 8060 4198 for details of your local OnBoard Development Officer.



*as time goes on. I have no doubt that we are making a difference and will achieve what we set out to do in the beginning – get more children into sailing and windsurfing and provide them with an opportunity to participate in a fantastic sport on a regular basis.*

## A reminder...

RYA first aid certificates are now valid for three years only, after which time you need to re-take the full one-day course. It is no longer possible to complete a short refresher course after three years in order to extend the certificate's validity.

