

RYA EAST NEWS

Easter 2009

KEEPING EASTERN REGION SAILORS INFORMED

RYA East is on a roll, with two highly successful conferences only a week apart under its belt; the RYA Eastern Region Instructors Conference held at Bradwell on March 15 attracted 100 instructors from all over the region. The Regional Forum a week later saw nearly 70 people gather at Levington. See pages 2 and 5 for full reports and pictures.

WHAT'S THE RYA EVER DONE FOR ME? HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL FORUM PROVIDES SOME OF THE ANSWERS

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Minutes of the Eastern
Regional Committee meeting of
March 14, 2009 can be down-
loaded from the regional web-
site at
[http://www.ryaeast.org/new_si
te/minutes.shtml](http://www.ryaeast.org/new_site/minutes.shtml)



The audience at the Regional Forum learnt a lot and laughed a lot

RYA East's Regional Forum 2009, entitled 'Boating into the Future' was generally voted the best conference in years by the nearly 70 sailors who attended at Haven Ports Yacht Club, Levington, Suffolk, last Saturday.

Typical of comments made afterwards came from past regional chairman John Ramuz: "The Committee produced an excellent

conference, quite the best that the Eastern Region has ever done! I was delighted it was so well supported by RYA Hamble. Informative, friendly, and well organised. Well done all."



Full report page 2

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ROD CARR ANSWERS 'WHAT DOES RYA DO FOR ME' QUESTION

The RYA top brass were out in force; Richard Langford Chairman of RYA Council, Rod Carr RYA Chief Executive, Gus Lewis Legal and Government Affairs Manager, and Helen Waterhouse Development Officer Green Blue, had the audience hanging on their every word.

Giving the keynote opening speech, Rod Carr told the audience: "We welcome you asking the tricky questions. It's extremely difficult to get over to people the width of what we actually do. Members and sailors have the right to ask 'What does the RYA do for me?'.

"Take our legal department for example, it's staffed with three professionals and two helpers. We'll give you general advice but we won't act as your paid legal adviser, we'll only get involved if there is a clear principle in law to be established to the benefit of us all.

"In round terms the Marine Bill is a good thing, it's bringing together several pieces of clashing legislation. There are 350 pages to the Bill and the legal department has read every word on them. The devil is in the detail and we are making sure that your reasonable rights are secure. We're not flat earthists, we're making sure there's a balance between what we want as sailors and what legislators think we should have," he added.

"People who think we at the RYA should be more radical and chain themselves to the railings round Parliament or at the end of Downing Street will find their interests are not best served by doing so. We want to be the legislator's best expert friend – we know more about leisure boating than the legislators. They know it and they listen."

There was no way to stop the development of wind farms. "Our issue is that we don't want them parked on top of our cruising routes. We need to ensure that routes through the wind farms are safe, well marked and viable; Fisherman's Gat is one such we're lobbying on."



Three wise men; L to R: Gus Lewis, Rod Carr, Richard Langford contemplating some searching questions

On E-Borders he said the RYA did not do immigration policy. "We don't agree with their suggestions for 2014 (when rules governing sailors come into effect). There will be a policy, typically a sledgehammer to crack a nut, affecting recreational boating and our job is to make sure it's workable and proportional. We have some experience of this as up to 15 years ago we had to make Customs declarations on leaving and entering; we say at worst it shouldn't be any more onerous."



Rod Carr OBE, in full flow

The amount of formal racing had fallen over the past 20 years. "It was quite usual then for 100 boats to be out on Sunday morning racing, now we might get 20 or maybe less. People take their recreation in a different way. Gone is the day when for a £1,000 we get the plywood kit and build a boat to race. The growth of multi-functional one-designs has put paid to that. People don't want the baggage, they want it simple, functional and fun, off the shelf."

He stressed that a key element of sailing was fun; race organisers and planners had to meet the expectations of competitors in that respect. He saw the introduction of the RYA Club Charter and a reduction in protests as a major step forward in improving the fun element.

The future, he said, centred on young people, and getting them into sailing while still at school. "The French do it better than we do. It's part of their curriculum, and almost all youngsters are given the chance to try sailing. Where they fall down is retaining them in the sport, they don't have a club structure to help them progress. There are as many

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MAJOR BATTLE FIGHTING YET MORE GOVERNMENT INTERFERENCE

RYA Legal and Government Affairs Manager Gus Lewis, in a lively and often humorous presentation demystified the plethora of regulation governing our sport. Everybody, he said, had a duty of care. The definition used to be narrowly defined, now, thanks to a pointless case in Scotland, the whole ethos had changed to a broader 'what's reasonable' approach.

"Everywhere we go today we're cajoled to do a risk assessment. For most cases it's enough to show that you have thought about the risk. Again when exhorted to reduce risk, show you've thought about it. You can't escape risk but you are expected to foresee it," he said.

"We're in a blame-claim culture, fundamentally brought about by the removal of legal aid. Insurers are terrified of losing a claim, however spurious, if it goes to court, so they'll pay up. It means that however slim your case it's always worth having a go!," he added.

He said that health and safety were being too often used to simply stop an activity. Some areas of club activity give rise to greater exposure of risk; such as training, house management, safety boats, moorings and even race management, but they were all insurable, so just think it through before banning an activity.

The Soham Murders had resulted in the usual knee-jerk reaction from legislators. The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 set up the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA), which is a Non-Departmental Public Body (or as he preferred to call it, a quango) sponsored by the Home Office. Its simple remit was to ask 'can you work with children' or 'can you not work with children'.

People working with children will have to register (even if they already have CRB clearance). "Instructors will be in the scheme, but safety boat drivers – we don't know. We're working flat out on untangling this piece of legislation and will issue guidance hopefully by October," he said.

Another worrying piece of pro-



Gus Lewis, getting the message home with humour

posed legislation was drink-sailing. "It doesn't matter what we say or do, it will come in as it was in labour's manifesto. Section 80 hasn't been enacted yet and while we don't condone drinking alcohol and sailing or handling a power boat, the proposal is to say the least draconian, not well thought out and probably unenforceable.

"At the moment it applies to vessels of more than seven metres in length and capable of more than seven knots, and that the offence occurs when the boat is moving. The limit is the same as for cars, but it doesn't say who on the boat is affected, just the skipper, or the chap on the helm at the time, or anyone in the crew.

"It envisages that enforcement is by Harbour Masters; that is HMs who are DoT qualified harbour masters. They can only detain the ship not the individual until such time as the police come and breathalyse them. It's a sledge hammer to crack a nut and not enforceable at sea. Where it has most impact is on inland waterways," he warned.

The law on carrying knives impacted on sailors. Advice is to carry a knife for use in emergencies on board. "Walking about on the pontoons or in the boatyard you'll probably be alright, but don't take a knife in the pub or wear it when shopping in the supermarket. It covers the 'tool' knives, sailing knives, continued on page 4

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sailing clubs in the UK as there are in the whole of North Western Europe combined."

OnBoard was the RYA's answer to this problem of capturing them young. It was up to clubs to ensure they retained them in the sport. "The key is to make it fun. We want to get them to take it up full time because it's fun and they can compete at a variety of levels to suit themselves. They build up friendships and compete against their mates. The clubs are vital in this process. If you are a club without an active youth section you're in trouble, the youngsters are the future of a club's existence."

Now was the time to get involved, the prospect of the 2012 Olympics in the UK had turned the spotlight on sport. One aim was to ensure that boating formed part of the currently five hours a week for sport being offered in schools. Already 170,000 youngsters had gone through the OnBoard scheme. The aim was to retain 10 per cent in the sport.

VOLUNTEERS

Without volunteers the sport of boating would die, was the bald message from RYA Chairman of Council, Richard Langford. There are a total of 22 Million volunteers throughout the UK, and every pound they saved by not employing staff generated a payback £14.

"Volunteers put in thousands of hours of work. We have a culture of voluntary work in this country, we enjoy being involved, part of the team, and we enjoy our sport," he said.

Sport England was funding £600,000 for voluntary training in England, and it enabled RYA to offer free CRB checks to clubs, among a growing number of schemes aimed at helping them, including the Volvo Champion Club scheme, volunteer awards such as the Community Awards, RYA Club of the Year Award (he regretted that Eastern Region clubs had not entered).



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DON'T TAKE YOUR BOAT KNIFE TO THE PUB

diving knives, and a boat is not considered by the legislators as a private place, nor is your car. In simple terms take care not to flash it about," he advised.

The Marine Bill is a huge piece of legislation, which is going to affect us all, he said. "We think it's not a bad idea, and we should be proud that we are the only country to have an all encompassing piece of legislation that brings together a whole raft of law concerning the sea and its use. It'll only work though if it meets all our aspirations.

"It will make legal processes easier and cheaper and gives us only one body to go to, but we want to ensure that we have the right to challenge the decisions of its governing body the MMO."

Gus told the conference that he and his colleagues were working hard to get clarification on how the proposed E-Borders legislation would affect boating. "We don't know yet how it will affect us. The writer's of this Bill aim to catch 95 per cent of travellers going via airports, ferries and the Chunnel, but they've given no more thought to how it will impinge on us.

"We disagree with the fundamental premise behind this legislation. We believe such control should be intelligence lead and aimed at the bad guys, not the largely law abiding recreational boater.

"It's a disproportionate response to an immigration problem," he added.

TECHNICAL TALKS POPULAR

The afternoon was divided into three strands, Racing, Club Development and Cruising, at which the technical aspects of boating were discussed. It proved highly popular with delegates, who commented that it gave them the chance to get themselves updated on their specific subject, without having to deal with areas of no interest.

Chairman of the conference sub-committee, Regional vice-Chairman Fiona Wylie, said: "We are delighted that the formula worked so well. What we didn't want, were people with specific interests being bored by having to listen to general non-specific subjects.

"We managed to attract some top people in their various disciplines to take part and the feedback was positive. Our thanks to them and to Haven Ports YC and Suffolk Yacht Harbour for helping to stage the event."

RAINWAT IS LATEST ACRONYM

Close on the heels of warnings that UK yachts visiting EU inland waterways should have waste holding tanks, comes further legislation requiring yachts going inland to have an Automatic Transmitter Identification System (ATIS) capable VHF sets aboard.

Speaking to the cruising practical session at the Regional Forum, Pin Mill sailing instructor and author of the popular VHF/DSC handbook, Sara Hopkinson said: "Now we've another acronym to cope with RAINWAT. Yachtsmen on this coast will be most affected, as they are more likely to go into the Dutch waterways.

"Originally agreed at Basle in 2000, it has nothing to do with DSC, it applies only to inland waterways and should not be used offshore. Ofcom launched it here in the UK on January 1, this year, for inland waterways, but forgot to tell us!" she declared.

The aim of the scheme, which is monitored from a centre in Brussels, is to track interference and illegal use of VHF. ATIS requires a separately registered 10-digit identification number, it also requires entry of similar data to DSC, boat name, type, call sign which it blurts out in a fraction of a second at the end of each broadcast.



CLUBS CAN SAVE BY RECYCLING

Helen Waterhouse, Green Blue Development Officer told the conference that both the RYA and BMF strongly supported the campaign as self-regulation was preferable to legislation. The advice from Green Blue was scientifically sound and clubs could cut their outgoings by as much as 20 per cent by following some simple rules and recycling.

"We have developed a marine toolkit for clubs, which will help you comply with environmental legislation, save money through better use of energy, water and materials, help you reduce waste, measure your performance and identify low- or no-cost options.

"You can access it on-line, it's free and confidential, just answer the questions and stay on the right side of the law. We're shortly taking on a person who will be pushing the toolkit to all clubs and marinas," said Helen.

"There's a wealth of information including a range of 'How to guides'. The Volvo Eco-Challenge is making £20,000 available to get youngsters involved and offer grants for environmental improvements," she added.

As well as registering you will also need to obtain a copy of the 'Basle arrangement' which must be carried on the boat at all times.

"As if that wasn't complicated enough, you'll need to be aware of channel changes. Different areas in RAINWAT will use different channels. If any one wants more detail go either on the RYA website or contact me," she said. Sara's e-Mail is sara.pinmill@rya-online.net .

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BEST YET INSTRUCTORS CONFERENCE

A series of concurrently running workshops and demonstrations kept the 100 instructors from all over East Anglia busy at this year's Regional Instructors Conference held at Bradwell Outdoor Centre in March. RYA insurers Heath Lambert heavily sponsored the event.

Following an open address by RYA Training Manager James Stevens, groups of instructors delved into a wide range of practical subjects ranging from rig tuning, plastic welding repairs, windsurfing, basic outboard maintenance, top techniques and Sailability awareness.

Other subjects covered in the classroom included volunteer and club development, and the OnBoard scheme. In the afternoon most took to the water for updating sessions including catamaran techniques, double-handers, single handers, how to set up and play games and three powerboat sessions covering close quarter handling, MoB recovery and dealing with entrapment from a RIB.

Luckily it was a warm, sunny spring day; unfortunately there wasn't a great deal of wind.

James Stevens told the conference that while the government professed to be keen on outdoor sports, it was going the wrong way about achieving its aim of a fitter, slimmer nation. There was too much regulation and too many sports centres were being closed for shortage of funding and through over-regulation. Sport was undoubtedly the answer to obesity.

Boating was lucky; RYA centre certification cost three times less than in most other sports. So far 130 OnBoard centres had been set up across the UK and 170,000 youngsters had been introduced to the sport through the scheme. With the 2012 Olympics in London looming there never was a better time to grasp at funding opportunities in sport.

Child protection continued to raise concerns. "We're not at risk really, in fact on the water we're very good. The latest move by government is to make all sports instructors in the country go through a three-hour child protection course every three years and be licensed.



An expectant audience



The weather could not have been better. Bradwell Creek



What do you call a group of instructors in RIBs?

"We think we can incorporate it into instructor and coaches courses. It'll be a major result if we can. We have tutors who will deliver the three-hour SportsCoach UK awareness course to clubs, through OnBoard, Team 15 and

Volvo Champion Club programmes. Clubs and centres can also get involved," he said.

Commenting on the current discussion on lifejackets James said the

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PRACTICAL DEMONSTRATIONS AND HANDS-ON TRIALS PROVE POPULAR

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RYA policy was “wear one unless it’s safe to take it off”. He warned instructors to set an example, if they had crutch straps use them and don’t let students see them dangling.

“Remember, don’t go for the one size fits all when buying lifejackets or flotation vests for your classes,” he cautioned.

There were more powerboat courses; windsurfing was holding steady, and adult dinghy courses, which two years ago were falling, were starting to climb back up again. A new ‘better sailing’ certificate between L2 and intermediate level is being introduced shortly.

“We carried out a website survey into entrapment, the incidents, causes and outcomes. We found there were a lot of near misses. We found that on the Laser Vago and the Laser 4000 the trapeze hook could easily get caught on the lower shrouds, thus tethering the crew if the boat went over. The hook is being redesigned as a result and a new technical standard for a quick release catch will be available from RYA Technical department shortly.

“We see the real answer lying in masthead buoyancy – it solves the problem straight off, as the boat cannot invert,” he added.



RYA Training Manager James Stevens



RYA East Chairman Chris Edwards



L to R: Paul Wren Regional HPM and Robbie Bell Regional Development Officer and organiser of the conference, listen as Bradwell Outdoors Manager Jim Ormerod briefs delegates on the afternoon activities afloat. Below: Paul Wren on rigging asymmetrical spinnakers



**James Stevens (R) takes a group of instructors through close quarter RIB work
Below: wise heads at work**



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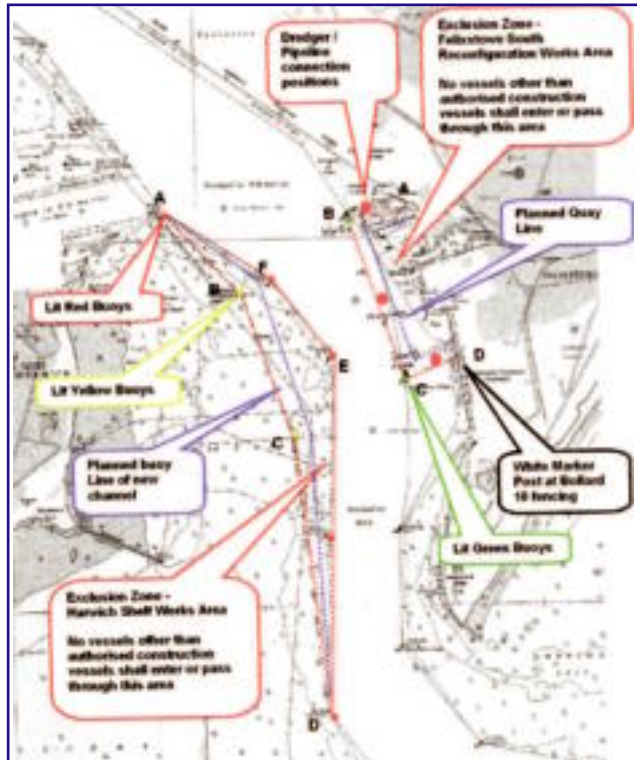
YACHT RESTRICTIONS IN HARWICH HARBOUR

Yachtsmen planning to pass through Harwich Harbour could face serious disruption this season. From April 1 contractors will be dredging out the harbour bottom for the extension to the Felixstowe South quay on the East side of the estuary.

The position of the recommended yacht track reduces the width at the narrowest point between the Grisle and Harwich Shelf buoys to around 200 metres. The boundary between the new yacht channel and the exclusion zone around the working area is marked on the E side by lit yellow buoys.

RYA East advice is that yachts going north in this area should keep as close to the line of yellow buoys as possible, leaving them to starboard, while those going south should keep as far to the west - over towards the Harwich Town side - as they can without running out of water. Yachts should therefore pass port to port.

Event organisers are advised to



Plan of the proposed works which will constrict yacht movement all summer. A download is available on the regional website at www.ryaeast.org

check with Harwich VTS to see if any dredging coincides with the event. You are urged not to go east of the exclusion zone or within the main shipping channel. In addition you are advised to monitor Channel 71 (Harwich VTS) as normal.



The East Coast's top brewer, Adnams of Southwold has bought three iconic yachtsmen's watering holes, the world-famous Butt and Oyster at Pin Mill, The Ship at Levington (both on the banks of the River Orwell) and at Waldringfield on the River Deben, the Maybush. Punch Taverns sold them for £2.7M to reduce debts.

The Broads Authority Bill is now expected on the Statute Book in the spring, following a number of late objections that resulted in a long delay. The Bill gives the Broads Authority (BA) increased powers, including full implementation of the boat safety scheme, licensing of hire boats and making third party insurance for all boats compulsory.

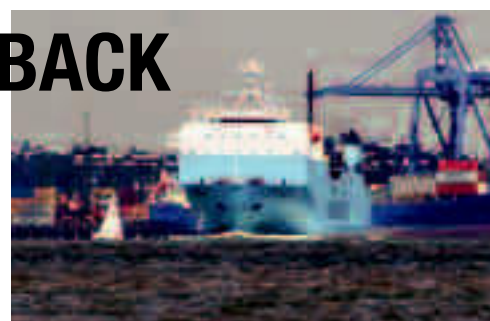
In a brief statement Norfolk and Suffolk Boating Association (NSBA) chairman Mark Weller said: "There is considerable relief that this long drawn out process is now almost at an end. Now it's time to move on. We have many points of difference with the Broads Authority (BA) and, while observing closely how they choose to apply the new legislation, we want to get back to concentrating on sorting out these substantive issues with them."

Disabled sailing charity The Woolverstone Project is celebrating its 15th year with the arrival of a new Access 3.03 two-man training dinghy purchased by Ipswich Rotarians and a new Challenger trimaran donated by the Golden Bottle Trust. The additions bring the fleet up to 20 boats operated between the Project's two centres on the reservoir at Alton Water and the tidal Orwell at Woolverstone. The Project is extending the hours and days it's open for sailing to meet the increasing demand for its services.

GO ROUND THE BACK

Yachtsmen manoeuvring within the confines of Harwich Harbour, or crossing the main shipping lanes approaching the harbour, are being advised to stand off and let commercial vessels through first and not to try crossing ahead.

RYA Cruising Manager Stuart Carruthers, in a message to East Coast yachtsmen said that in the crowded waters of the Thames Estuary the old adage "steam gives way to sail" no longer applies. Big ships, especially container ships cannot always see ahead of themselves for up to three ship's length. In the case of the real monsters that's a



quarter of a mile or more.

"If you cannot see the bridge they can't see you," commented Harwich RNLi Sea Safety Officer Terry Corner. "Once you go out of sight they don't know whether you are standing on and will get clear, or are moving too slowly and have tacked clear or worse still tacked into irons under the bow."

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SIGN UP FOR THE THRILL OF A LIFETIME

Are you between the ages of 8 and 12 or 13 and 16, if so then why not have fun and win your club a 5.8 metre RIB from Ribcraft with a 50hp Honda outboard on the back, and an Icom VHF set in the console, all mounted on a top of-the-range Indespension road trailer. Plus a whole range of prizes for yourself.

Three area heats will give more youngsters than ever the chance to compete in this fun challenge culminating in the Regional Final at **Alton Water Sports Centre on Saturday July 4, 2009**. The two regional class winners will go on to represent this region at the **National Final at PSP Southampton Boat Show on September 13, 2009**.

The heats are at **Island YC, Canvey Island on May 26 (briefing 1130)**; **Paxton Lakes, Cambs, on May 30 (briefing 0845)** and at **Alton Water, Ipswich, on June 27 (briefing 1100)**. The first three places in both classes will go on to the regional final. Sign up at whichever is nearest to you. If you can't make a date at one and don't mind travelling, we'll slot you in to another.

Top six from each heat are invited by the team at Alton Water SC to training and practice sessions on Sunday June 28.

This is a fun competition, offering splash and dash coupled with balance and boat handling skills. Come along and have a go! Top instructors will be on hand to help.

Details on the RYAEast website, www.ryaeast.org

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WHO'S WHO AT RYA EAST

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