

## A Year of Youth Sailing at Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club

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CVLSC Youth Co-Ordination and Chew Crew Team



May 2023 saw the start of the longstanding Chew Valley Lake Sailing Club (CVLSC) junior summer sailing programme, after a few ad-hoc Topper training sessions to whet the appetite in March and April 2023. This year the Chew Crew programme was once again over subscribed with 25 young sailors participating on Sunday mornings over the season running from May to end of July.

Alongside Chew Crew, we ran two RYA Level 1 courses for 18 young sailors in total, a RYA Level 2 course for 16 sailors, a RYA Level 3 course for 11 sailors and a RYA Level 4 Course for 5 sailors, with most proving successful in achieving their accreditation and all learning new skills in a



range of Optimats, RS Teras, Toppers and RS Fevas. While sailing skills no doubt improved, perhaps the most fun was had when capsizing, pirating other boats or racing against each other.

Throughout the numerous courses, we were delighted to provide a number of our own CVLSC volunteer Assistant Instructors and to work alongside additional resource from All Aboard. None of it would have happened, though, without the incredible support of a team of parents who helped in so many ways to ensure we could deliver the courses – whether that was providing sailing instruction, bosun skills, rescue cover, our very own Chew Crew OODs and shore support of all kinds. Thank you to all those involved and for creating a great community at the club.



Alongside the RYA Youth Sailing certification programme, we were absolutely delighted to see some of our junior sailors start some performance sailing. Some of our Chew Crew youth sailors travelled across the country to attend a number of RYA and ITCA youth sailing events.



In April 2023, Dylan Pritchett, Toby Colls and Leo Griffiths attended the ITCA SW Training and Traveler event at Paignton Sailing Club and performed really well, clocking up some respectable top 10 places in heavy winds.

In June 2023, Dylan Pritchett together with Toby and James Colls then attended the RYA British Youth Sailing Regional Junior Championships at Royal Torbay Yacht Club, which proved challenging, especially for the bigger boys, trying to keep up with fierce competition in very light winds.



In July 2023 that same team of young people were then joined at the SW ITCA Training and Traveller event at Bristol Corinthian Yacht Club by a record number of additional CVLSC youth sailors – Anna Gribble, Caroline Baxendale, Tessa Hummel and William Batho. It was fantastic to see so many of our Chew Crew sailors compete at this regional racing event and come off the water with huge smiles despite the extremely heavy winds.

It was lovely to see so many Chew Crew with raised confidence, sailing and competing at CVLSC over the Summer holiday period. In other summer holiday youth sailing news:

- Toby and Dylan enjoyed a little 49er sailing at Carrickfergus Sailing Club in Northern Ireland.
- Leo & Ethan Griffiths spent a fantastic week sailing at Exe Sailing Club, Jacob Chesters-Withey in Weymouth and Caroline Baxendale at Salcombe Yacht Club.
- Chloe Gribble and her dad came 4<sup>th</sup> in the Comet Duo Worlds & National Championships at Cransley Sailing Club
- Rowan Peters received a warm welcome from Paul and others at the friendly Loch Broom Sailing Club in Scotland where he raced and came second in a flying fifteen. His first time at sea and he really enjoyed it.
- The Gribble, Kemp and Houghton families adventured in small boats on the East Coast.

In September 2023, Toby, Dylan, James and Leo set off travelling again, this time to race in the SW ITCA Training and Traveller event at Salcombe Yacht Club – a definite crash course in tidal sailing on the beautiful estuary and in very light and shifty winds.



That same team of 4 then travelled the following week to the S, SW and L&SE Super South Championships held in Poole Harbour, where they formed part of the South West ITCA contingent competing amongst c. 80 entrants, in challenging

conditions all weekend – starting with very light and changeable winds on the Saturday and followed by very strong winds, lightning and big waves to contend with on the Sunday.



Back at our home club at CVLSC a large number of our Chew Crew have also progressed to joining club racing events and the CVLSC family regatta. Most recently a very light wind Barts Bash was attended on the lake in September 2023 by Alyssa and Meg Penrice, Anna and Chloe Gribble, Bella Broughton, Will and Robert Batho, Caroline Baxendale and Giovanni Bianchi.



In late September 2023, we received the great news that Toby Colls and Dylan Pritchett have been selected as part of the RYA South West Regional Training Squad after attending various RYA/ ITCA qualification and assessment weekends.

They are delighted to don their British Youth Sailing Team kit and wrap up warm to attend the winter training events ahead. A fantastic achievement – well done boys!



What an exciting youth season it has been! And the fun doesn't end there, we have scheduled a few CVLSC Topper and Feva training events over Autumn 2023 (see CVLSC webcollect for details), various Chew Crew are travelling to ITCA Autumn training and racing weekend, and plans are hopefully in motion to host some great youth sailing open meetings at our club in 2024.

The Youth Committee are also already in discussions about sailing course plans and Chew Crew for Summer 2024. We will provide details of the expressions of interest process in a CVLSC Newsletter in early spring, so watch out for it then.

If there are other CVLSC families who have youth sailors competing in other events, please do let us know so we can give them a shout out in future news updates.

If you have any questions about the youth sailing programme at CVLSC, drop an email to Angus, Ruth and Steph at [chewcrew2023@gmail.com](mailto:chewcrew2023@gmail.com).