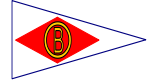




AFSS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

WEEK #3 – 7/14/25-7/18/25

AFSS is a program of the Orr's-Bailey Yacht Club



During our third week at Abbot Fletcher Sailing School, we got on the water the first three days. Thursday brought in pea soup fog all day and Friday the Northwest winds were 18 mph with 25 mph gusts in the morning. On these land-based days we worked on extensive knot-tying covering the square, figure eight, bowline and sheep's bend. We also worked on compass theory and practice on the lawn, laying out courses and following a four-legged course. We used charts on the back porch of the yacht club and set compasses on the compass rose for chart orientation. We familiarized the students with most aspects of nautical charts. This experience directly relates to GPS usage but offers a practical view and a time-honored approach towards seamanship. It's also good to have a backup if all other technology fails.



The Beginners section in the morning had a great start with sailing the OPTI 8-foot dinghies and getting opportunities on the Rhodes 19 keel boat. They handled the tiller as captain and as crew controlling both the main sheet and the jib sheets. Sheets are lines that are used to control the trim of the sails. The word "sheet" derives from a similar old Norse word that describes the lower part of a sail. On Wednesday, the Beginners got a full morning of sailing out to Stover's Point across the Sound. We tacked and jibed back and forth for almost two hours. When asked, "What time is it?" by multiple students, the instructors' answers were consistently, "It's sailing time!". The dozen in this morning group, ages 8-15, formed a cohesive bunch that learned a lot and had an equal amount of fun while doing it.

Our Intermediates sailed a mix of OPTI's and 420's which are two-person boats designed for fast sailing and racing. Many also had a trip out in the Rhodes 19. Our focus with this group was making our turns, tacking (into wind) and jibing (away from wind) more efficiently and under control. We also focused on our points-of-sail and practiced trimming the main and jib to each point of sail. The mix of sailor capability in this Intermediate group was large, but we teamed them appropriately and they all improved greatly. One of the best awards to give is "Most Improved". It was well earned this week in the Intermediate group.



The Racers had a challenging three days in the water practicing hundreds of tacks and jibes and practicing starting line tactics. They also are progressing well with “roll tacks”. They are tacks, or turning that rolls the boat sideways in an aggressive fashion that gives the boat more forward momentum. This tactic can especially help in lighter air. During our two down days the Racers mixed in well with the Intermediates. On Friday we attempted to sail with the racing group but found that the winds were just too much. All in all, it was a great week!



