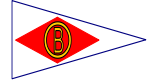




AFSS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

WEEK #5 – 7/27/25-8/1/25

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



A big week for OBYC and Abbot Fletcher Sailing School. We hosted a MIRC (Maine Inter-club Racing Circuit) on Wednesday. We had eleven visiting sailors from two different clubs compete with seven of our sailors. We had all five of our 420's on the water racing. One of them had just recently been donated and was ready to race after a visiting club, Sail Maine, brought an extra boom vang that was needed. The head coach from UNH Community Sailing set the course and ran the starting line. A true partnership between clubs.

Our three OPTI sailors had a challenge competing with more experienced racers from Sail Maine, but they all fared well in the low wind and high current conditions. They were all newbies to racing but totally enjoyed themselves and learned a great deal. Our two 420 crews tied the UNH team over the six races. AFSS had one boat that earned a first, three second places and a third. Our second boat improved greatly through the races. The teamwork and support from the AFSS and OBYC community was excellent and heartwarming. We Competed, had Fun and did it Safely with Honor. The UNH coach gave a great introductory speech talking about honor.

We ran both our Beginner and Intermediate classes while putting on the race. No easy task considering that we had all of our sail boats (18) in the water with three coach boats and a handful of OBYC members offering rides to parents and coaches.



The Beginner morning class had a great week, where we were on the water every day. We had some nice winds in a few mornings when a cold front brought some NW winds. Our coaches had some OPTI crew double up in the boats to add weight and make it easier to balance and tack. We used the Rhodes 19 keelboat, which can hold six sailors and a coach, many days. Many students really like steering and running the sheets (lines that control sail trim) in the Rhodes. We had some older Beginners this session that made a diverse group that really came together.

The Intermediate class had a mix of second and third week younger Beginners and some older sailors who were honing their skills on the 420's.

A few days we had a mix of OPTI's and 420's sailing out to Stover's Point and working on tacking (turning into the wind) and jibing (turning away from the wind). Understanding wind direction and current are paramount in becoming skilled sailors. The progress and fun that each sailor had was noticeable. Only a few of the sailors asked, "What time is it"? The response from our coaches is consistently, "It's sailing time!"

Our four Racers had their last week at AFSS. Practicing on set courses and starting lines really helped prepare the crews for our race midweek. The two crews, one boy and one girl crew, had such fun on the water while repetitively practicing starting lines and roll tacks. Roll tacks intentionally exaggerate the boat's

movement side-to-side which adds forward motion to the boat due to the foils (both the centerboard and the rudder blades). It's a skill born of timing and finesse. Our racers should be very proud of their accomplishments this summer. They also attended two races at other MIRC participating clubs.

