**Enterprise Training at Club Level – Some suggestions**

**But First: Health and Safety/Liability Disclaimer etc etc**

Just because it’s in this paper doesn’t mean it’s OK/safe to do it!

You need to do your own risk assessments before trying anything.

Your own skills, the standard of the group, the number in the group, the safety cover, the exercise itself, the water you are using, other water users, the weather conditions, the forecast and other factors will all play a part in you deciding whether to go ahead, or not, or choose something more appropriate.

Please don’t complain to me, or anyone at the Enterprise Association, that your attempt to run a rudderless session with 10 boats simultaneously in a F6 in the mouth of the Lymington River when the IOW ferry was due, ended badly.

**Teaching Skills**

Keep sessions focussed and timed to be within the capacity of your group, cold, tired and frustrated sailors make very poor learners!

Everyone should know what they are supposed to be doing before they head out onto the water

You should have agreed signals for the group, or a boat, to heave to, come to you on the water or head ashore,

The experience should be fun and positive

**Training Suggestions**

This paper is not from an expert. It is merely a starter, which needs refining and to which you can and should, add.

The assumption is that the sailors you are dealing with have achieved RYA level 2 or equivalent.

I am also assuming that you are a competent Enterprise sailor and/or RYA DI, otherwise a number of the exercises won’t make sense

I have set out below some of the skills that need to be developed in order to become an effective Enterprise sailor. Those skills can only be refined and developed through practice.

*The beginner is able to undertake a simple tack that takes the boat through the wind onto a new heading.*

*While for the expert, the tack is an automatic process involving helm and crew making best use of balance, trim, sails and foils to achieve a smooth turn through the wind onto the new heading at the best speed possible in the prevailing wind and water conditions.* (or something like that!)

In other words tacking practice is just as important for beginners as it is for experienced sailors – we all want to remove that question mark shape from our wake.

Also, just because you can complete an effective tack or gybe in a F2 or F3 doesn’t mean you can do it in a F6. Practice in all wind conditions (subject to the H&S paragraphs at the start!) is the answer.

**Basic skills:**

**Heave to** – teach them this early, it enables them to have a rest on the water as necessary and means you can get up close to give instructions without going ashore

**RYA five essentials and the Enterprise**

* Balance
* Trim
* Centreboard
* Sail setting
* Course-made-good

You will find yourself talking about these without even thinking about it as you explain how to get the boat to ‘go fast’

**Tacking** (in varying weather conditions) so that it becomes automatic – beware oversteering. Roll tacking,

**Gybing** – as for tacking

Exercises:

1. Tacking/gybing on the whistle - but don’t forget to check it’s safe for all of them before you blow.

You will have told them to keep a good lookout, but:

“I heard the whistle so I thought it was OK” will be the excuse as you pick boat bits and bodies out of the water.

360s can be added for variety, but there are a number of clear instructions that need to be fully understood by all before you try that one!

2. Follow my leader (rescue boat) this will help develop: **Slowing down, Stopping** (under control)**, Accelerating** as well as **Tacking** and **Gybing**

* Each boat should aim to be no more than half a boat length behind the one in front
* After a time tell the front boat to peel off and sail to the back; to give each boat a chance following the leader
* For variation call last boat to the front, you set a slow pace to allow this. Last boat has to sail fast/shortest route to get to the front as quickly as possible

1. Practice starts with very short courses

* Short countdown 60 secs say
* Short distance to windward mark (100m at most) and return, or a small triangle
* Repeat again and again

Develop by adding the following:

* Boats to be within 3 boat lengths of start line for 30 seconds before start
* Vary the line bias and/or length
* Set boats off in pairs as match races

**Improving Skills**

**Beating**

**Downwind technique**

**Reaching**

**Light airs sailing**

**Sailing in a heavy breeze (don’t forget the H&S aspects)** - if it’s blowing F6 just set a course and go sailing, they’ll learn quickly enough, or you’ll be practicing your rescuing!

The full application of the famous five essentials, as appropriate to the Ent, given to your sailors through your own expertise is what is required for these skills to improve – oh and practice!

Exercises which will help these skills:

1. Windward/leeward courses for beating & downwind sailing

* Also enables improvement of mark rounding.
* Probably best combined with starts – competition usually aids improvement!

1. Crosswind courses for reaching and mark rounding

* More fun in planing conditions.
* Alternatively set a course to go upwind followed by several marks wide set to provide a downwind slalom with gybes between the reaches

1. Sailing in a circle round the rescue boat to improve close quarters boat handling skills

* Sail round the boat using sail setting, centre board, balance and trim appropriately
* Start with a reasonable radius based on your knowledge of the skill of your sailors (you don’t want any broken boats!)
* As the exercise progresses encourage them to tighten the circle
* Send them round in the other direction
* don’t overdo it, this is a very tiring exercise!

4. Rudderless sailing, really helps with balance, trim, sail set, helm/crew co-ordination and hence boat speed

* Fair bit of theory required before you try this one
* Choose a day with a steady F2/3 to start with
* You can tie the rudder straight, personally I prefer to take it off completely (but keep it in the boat!)
* C/board at least half up in an Ent or you’ll just be spinning in circles
* Put an experienced sailor in with your student to start with!
* With a little practice it should be perfectly possible to sail a triangular course round a set of buoys

5. Piggy in the middle.

* Three boats on a short square/rectangular course
* Start sailing continuously round the course, one behind the other
* The aim is for the first boat to sail the last boat to the front (within the rules of sailing!)
* This is done by the first boat using various techniques (within the rules) to slow up the second boat. Port/starboard, w/w boat, taking her wind, getting to the three boat lengths, slowing up there to force the second boat to take the longer route round and so on
* Once the last boat is at the front the game continues with a new 1,2,3
* Repeat so everyone has a shot in each position at least twice – or as many times as you like!

This exercise will develop all skills as well as improve the knowledge and application of RRS

**Theory sessions for when you can’t sail**

If there’s no wind at all (more than that and an Ent will sail – unlike many other classes), or if it’s too strong to be safe then you’re stuck onshore.

All the skills set out above need explanation/discussion ashore and you can even teach/practice transits for start lines on shore in the boat park!

Sessions on rules with various scenarios are obviously useful for when you can’t go on the water

Exercise (inside if the clubhouse and doors are big enough)

1. Sail controls.

Rig a boat, put it on its side, support the top of the mast and the end of the boom so the sail is horizontal. Put a cupful of water (not the cup, just the water) on the sail and then see how it behaves as you adjust the kicker, outhaul and cunningham.