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## PRESS RELEASE

28 June 2011

### WAKEFIELD SCHOOLS ONBOARD SAILING FESTIVAL



Forty youngsters from the Wakefield area came together last week to do battle at the Wakefield Schools OnBoard Sailing Festival.

The young sailors, all aged between 11 to 15 years, from Airedale Academy, Crofton High School, Queen Elizabeth Grammar School and Outwood Grange Academy, collected at Pugneys Country Park for an afternoon of fun and competition to decide which school should represent Wakefield at the RYA Yorkshire OnBoard Festival next month.

“We had a great afternoon,” said Liz Wrigglesworth, RYA Yorkshire OnBoard Development Officer. “We had relay races and individual races for both windsurfers and Topper sailors.

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Points from each race went towards the school's score."

"The results were really close, David Cadman from Queen Elizabeth Grammar School won the sailing and Matthew English from Outwood Grange Academy won the windsurfing, but the winning school overall was Airedale Academy. Particularly impressive as all of their competitors were new to sailing and windsurfing this year."

"We never dreamt we would win," said Elizabeth Harrap, Year Manager at Airedale Academy. "Our victory was due to fantastic teamwork, with each individual doing their part and supporting each other in every event. I am really proud of our young people".

The RYA OnBoard programme opens up the sport of sailing to young people between the ages of 8 to 18 through youth groups, schools and clubs, as Elizabeth Harrap explains:

"Taking part in the RYA OnBoard scheme gave Airedale Academy youngsters up to six sailing sessions at a greatly reduced cost. I would like to thank Pugneys Country Park and the RYA OnBoard programme for offering our students the chance to take part in watersports that they would otherwise have been unlikely to experience."

The young sailors from Airedale were thrilled to have won and they are looking forward to taking on the other schools in Yorkshire in July.

"It was great to learn something new and have fun at the same time!", said James Klumb. "I really want my family to take me sailing more often."

Aaron Parsons, "The instructors were great and made the sessions fun, it was a fantastic experience. The opposition was

tough but we came out on top.”

James Mylonas: “I had a great time and it wasn't too expensive. I wouldn't normally have the opportunity to do anything like this.”

Travis Reid: “It was a real thrill to win.”

“A lot of parents came along to watch their children in action,” said Liz Wrigglesworth at Pugneys Country Park. “I think they were impressed with the skills the youngsters had learnt over the six weeks.”

The next Regatta will be between the schools of Leeds on 29 June, leading up to the RYA Yorkshire OnBoard Regatta in early July.

Run by the RYA, OnBoard is a grass roots programme which introduces sailing and windsurfing to young people aged 8 to 18, through schools, youth groups and training centres.

Over a ten year period OnBoard aims to introduce a minimum of 500,000 children to sailing and windsurfing in the UK, converting over 10% of them into regular participants. So far it's nicely on track.

For more information about how to get involved in sailing visit the RYA's website [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk) or the OnBoard website [www.ruob.co.uk](http://www.ruob.co.uk)

**-ends-**

**Pictures attached:**

Wakefield 1, 4 & 5 – The teams in action at the regatta

Wakefield 2 – The winning Airedale team from Back left, Travis Reid, Chris Brown, Kieron Middleton, Aaron Parsons; Middle left, Megan Bourne, Stephanie Lumb, James Klumb; Front left, James Mylonas, James Ingham and Nathan Pease.

Wakefield 3 – All the teams: Airedale pink, Queen Elizabeth Grammar blue, Crofton High purple and Outwood Grange green

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**Notes to Editors:**

**About OnBoard**

- Started in 2004, the OnBoard programme is giving over half a million young people in Britain the opportunity to try sailing and windsurfing over ten years.
- To date over 280,000 OnBoard beginner sessions have been run across the country, with over 14,000 young people taking up sailing or windsurfing on a regular basis. There are over 210 OnBoard Clubs and Centres, with several more due to join the programme during 2011. Together the partnership will increase interest and involvement in sailing and get young people out on the water whilst retaining upwards of 10% to become long term participants of the sport.
- Special thanks go to all the OnBoard supporters and suppliers: Sport England, Henri-Lloyd, LaserPerformance, Harken, RS Sailing, Topper and Bic Sport. Your support is greatly appreciated.

**About the RYA**

- The RYA is the national body for all forms of recreational, competitive and professional boating. It represents dinghy and yacht racing, motor and sail cruising, RIBs and sports boats, powerboat racing, windsurfing, inland cruising and personal watercraft.
- The RYA is recognised by all government offices as being the negotiating body for the activities it represents. It continually fights for the rights and freedoms of its 100,000 personal members, the majority of whom choose to go afloat for purely recreational non-competitive pleasure on coastal and inland waters. There are an estimated further 500,000 boat owners nationally who are members of RYA affiliated clubs and class associations.
- The RYA also sets and maintains a recognised standard for recreational boat training through a network of 2,340 RYA Recognised Training Centres in over 43 countries. On average 155,000 people per year complete RYA training courses.

- The RYA is committed to promoting all forms of boating and making them accessible to everyone. For more information please refer to our web site [www.rya.org.uk](http://www.rya.org.uk)