

## Howth Sailors at the IODAI Optimist Training Camp Schull

A large number of intrepid optimist sailors and very patient parents headed to Schull in West Cork for the mid-term break.

Over 150 boats attended the event which made it the biggest Schull training camp to date. The Sailors were divided into groups according to experience and ability. These groups were colour coded and most clubs had representatives in all of the groups. The sailors were coached by a dedicated team of coaches led by David Harte of Schull Sailing School.

Having had such terrible weather since Christmas the sailors and parents were relieved when the forecast looked promising.

Day 1: Brought light wind and some sunshine. The sailors couldn't believe their luck although the more experienced sailors hoped for more wind in days to come. After finishing sailing and de-rigging was finished the sailors had a game of tug of war. This ended when the rope broke!



*Tug of war girls vs boys*

Day 2: Again brought light winds, slight drizzle and some sunshine. This again favored the younger lighter sailors in the Regatta and Pre-Regatta Fleets and the main fleet sailors once again crossed their fingers and hoped for the wind to pick up. The après-sailing activities consisted of Jousting and Sumo wrestling.



*Sumo wrestler fun*

Day 3: Really Light Winds & sunshine with jackets being abandoned during slip duty. The fleet managed to get some coaching and racing in despite the very light conditions. Race results weren't posted as this was a training event.



*Sailing in light airs*



*Lunchtime !*



*The sailors paddling home.*

Day 4: Schull harbor looked like a picture postcard with the water like a mill pond. It was decided to delay the fleet launch until 1:30pm. The sailors had lunch first and then took to the water but the day ended with the Oppy's either paddling home or being towed. That evening a talk about the progress of Green Dragon in the Volvo Ocean race took place in the sailing school. The room was full to capacity as the audience was connected via live video link to the crew on

board Green Dragon. The sailors were given the opportunity to ask questions. Erica Ruigrok gave them some tactical advice as she was leading the fleet in the online Ocean Race.



Instructors hard at work



Floating home

Day 5 No wind launch was delayed until 11am and as the mist rolled in up the harbor the decision was taken to cancel racing and the prize giving was scheduled for 1pm. Prizes were given for most improved sailor in all groups and extra fun prizes were also awarded.



Sailing my boat



Taking life easy in West Cork.

On behalf of all the Sailors and parents we would like to thank David Harte and his team for hosting the event and Conor Phelan from IODAI for organizing what turned out to be a fantastic fun filled event.

*By Niamh Hopkins*