

Press Release
Tuesday 30th August 2022

Sailing Wellness and ISMAUK Join Up to Combat Stress



Sailing Wellness is a new initiative founded by Simon Collyer, an experienced sailor and former member of the Olympic Training Squad. He is also interested in PTSD and other mental health conditions and wanted to use his sailing experience to help sufferers alleviate their symptoms through involvement with sailing. He approached ISMA^{UK}, as the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, to see if they could help by spreading awareness of his project amongst their community and got a very positive response.

Having sailed radio-controlled (RC) boats in South Africa, Simon saw the potential of using RC boats to teach sailing to those with PTSD and other conditions in the UK. He said, “The great benefit of sailing with RC boats is that participants are kept onshore – on the water, it is more likely that PTSD sufferers may experience anxiety attacks due to sudden noise or movements, for example if a helicopter flies over.”

He continued, “Getting people afloat using RC boats requires a lot of concentration by participants, rather than simply being passengers or crew members on a yacht. The Sailing Wellness project aims to break the cycle of rumination in PTSD and other conditions, where people go over and over what went wrong in a continuous loop. It gets participants out of the house, mixing with others, and helps them to feel life has not ended, despite major setbacks.”

Carole Spiers, Chair, ISMA^{UK}, said, “We are pleased to be supporting Simon with the development of his Sailing Wellness initiative. As the leading professional association for both personal and workplace stress management, we have been supporting mental health, wellbeing and performance for over 30 years. ISMA^{UK} is dedicated to promoting knowledge and best practice in stress management, and projects like Sailing Wellness will mean sufferers from mental health and stress-related conditions can take part in therapeutic activities to alleviate and reduce their symptoms. PTSD is a condition that affects a far wider range of people than is sometimes realised, and victims can suffer lasting effects. Getting involved with sailing without actually being on the water is a great idea and I am sure it will advance the healing process for those affected.”



Simon said, "I am delighted to have the support of ISMA^{UK} as their involvement will enable Sailing Wellness to access a wide network of mental health professionals, and wellness counsellors and to connect with those dealing with stress in the workplace. I have every confidence that teaching sailing to those with mental health issues can only be of lasting benefit."

Back-up and management of RC boats requires a lot of know-how, tools, and expertise. Simon is seeking to attract grant-funders or donors, to enable him to purchase a motorhome training base and workshop for Sailing Wellness, and to fund boat transport and accommodation. Please get in touch if you can help.

Notes for Editors

About Simon Collyer

Simon hails from Brightlingsea, Essex, where he was a schoolboy sailing champion. He has taken part in sailing events all over the world from Japan to a pre-Olympics in Los Angeles. He has sailed the Olympic 470 Dinghy and was a member of the Olympic Training Squad, racing in Europe, Japan, Australia and further afield. Simon is racing at Leiden in the Netherlands in the Dutch DF95 Open National Championships on 10th September. He plans to promote Sailing Wellness amongst the wide range of contacts he has built up, from Olympic Gold medalists and top sailors to mental health specialists and consultants. Simon is also the founder of the Association of Pension & Benefits Claimants CIC.

About Radio-controlled Boats

The Sailing Wellness project uses the new DragonFlite 95 Class and the smaller DragonFly 65 radio-controlled boats, designed in the UK and manufactured by Joysway Hobby. The growth of these classes has been explosive worldwide. With one rig and a basic transmitter it is possible to get afloat for as little as around £350. The boats use four rigs and change down in size as the wind increases. A fully tricked-up boat with four rigs and a better-quality transmitter is still under £1,000.

About ISMA^{UK}

ISMA^{UK} is the leading professional body for workplace and personal stress management, wellbeing and performance, promoting sound knowledge and best practice in stress management, resilience, wellbeing and mental health for over 30 years. ISMA^{UK} practitioners and consultants provide stress management services, including flexible training courses and coaching to individuals and businesses in both the private and public sectors, assisting around 40,000 people who need professional help with stress-related issues every year. ISMA^{UK} endorses and uses the HSE guidelines for managing stress in the workplace. To find out more about ISMA^{UK}, visit www.isma.org.uk.



Press Interviews

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