

## **Flying Fifteen Day at the Saltspring Sailing Club 4 May 2024**

*The Flying Fifteen group at the Sailing Club is gaining momentum and new energy during the spring of 2024. Much of this renewed growth is due to the enthusiasm and input of Club member Jill Oakes, owner of Flying Fifteen Robyn Hood, who is connecting with a wide swath of both Sailing Club and community members to increase local awareness and interest in these fun-to-sail dinghies.*

On May 4th, the group welcomed and sponsored **Jenny Price**, an F15 sailor who placed on the podium in the recent 2024 New Zealand Nationals and who sails internationally with an all-woman crew and inspires initiatives to encourage women in sailing. She jumped at the opportunity to come here and work with local Salt Spring female sailors. She arrived on Saturday morning, fresh off the floatplane, with Simon Wheeler handing her a hot cup of Saltspring coffee and Jan Macpherson organizing her gear. They walked the 1000 feet to Centennial Dock and then sailed Jill Oakes' F15 *Robyn Hood* over to the Sailing Club docks. Martin Herbert rowed out to greet Jenny on the water in his beautifully handcrafted 1800's design *Duck Boat*...a fitting and spontaneous beginning to a most special day.



Laura, Jan, Kristi, Kelly-Ann, Barb, Jane, Gail, and Simon met Jenny at the SISC dock. The SISC Dinghy Program generously provided a coach boat, with Fleet Capt. Dinghy Douglas kindly volunteering to drive. Simon (*Bluebird*), Martin (*Kay D*) and Jill (*Robyn Hood*) provided the F15s used throughout the day, often with three people to a boat in rotating positions.



Jenny moved from the coach boat to *Bluebird* and *Robyn Hood*, coaching one-on-one, pausing only to savour Rosemary's homemade cookies and sandwiches during the lunch break. Martin's offer to sail *Kay D*'s spinnaker brought the day over the top on the "fun scale"!



The group ranged in sailing experience from 40 years to one hour! Regardless of previous experience, each participant was absolutely thrilled with the insights, techniques, fun and camaraderie on the water throughout the day. It was, quite literally, pure magic.



In the later afternoon, the on-the-water team was joined for dinner by Heather, Nick, Daria, Simone, Jeffrey, Lawrie and Aileen, who swapped sailing stories over appetizers, Nick's famous chili, and potluck food for every palate.

This friendly beginning flowed into Jenny's evening seminar in the Clubhouse. Jenny's inspiring personal presentation was a

perfect ending to a perfect day. Her experiences racing locally and internationally, the sharing of her insights into the culture of sailing, the fun and the camaraderie were all part of a peek into another world of adventure. Her final photo of two sailboats rounding a mark on a really windy day, side by side, one with the spinnaker flailing out of control onto Jenny's boat...just one of many incredible sailing stories that were shared.

Thanks to Ruth Riddell for the dinner arrangements, Wendy Vine for event communications, Trevor Bishop for the kitchen usage, and Stewart Reid for managing the registrations. (*Editor's note...and a big thanks to Jill Oakes for spearheading this event!*)



*Stay tuned for more news about four F15s arriving on Salt Spring from Australia, in a container, in June. Watch for notice of an unloading party and details about how you, too, can become involved with sailing F15s!*

