

Paphos International Sailing Club

PISC

1st February 2011



What is PISC

Paphos International Sailing Club (more commonly known as PISC) was formed in the nineties by a group of sailing enthusiasts. The purpose of the club is to promote all aspects of sailing and boating within the Paphos area and provide a framework where people from all disciplines and ages can become involved.

During the past twelve years the club has grown and now boasts a regular membership of about 170 members.

History of our Dinghy Sailing



PISC members restoring a dinghy



PISC clubhouse on a typical Friday lunchtime

During the earlier years PISC was mainly focused on the larger sailing yachts. About four years ago, many members embarked on an Island wide search for old sailing dinghies. They discovered several 'rusting hulks' and after exhaustive research tracked down their owners who were only too pleased to donate them to such a worthy cause and give them a good home. Several members with well equipped workshops and specialist skills spent the winter rebuilding them. The rest is history and the club now boasts some 30 dinghies with at least another four or five to arrive at the start of the 2012 sailing season. It just four short years, PISC has come from

relative obscurity to become one of the largest sailing clubs on the Island. In fact if success is measured by 'people and boats on the water', PISC is undoubtedly now the largest sailing club on the Island and unlike all the other clubs, continues to grow and expand.

Training

It is not possible to operate a sailing club without some form of a training program and a means of improving ones skills. Within Europe, the Royal Yachting Association (known as the RYA) is the predominant body regulating all aspects of sail training and professional sailing qualifications. Many of our members are retired but have accumulated a wealth of sailing experience and knowledge over many years and are members of the RYA. Recently, some of these



PISC Race training at Coral Bay

members have renewed their old RYA training qualifications and have become actively involved in teaching members of other clubs all over the Island. PISC is a friendly club where all the members are always happy to help other members and as PISC continue to grow towards its dream of a clubhouse next to the sea with more enhanced facilities, the training side of PISC is bound to grow with it and be able to face new challenges and horizons.

Youth members

PISC has been approached by many young families, different organisations, (including local schools and a scout group) with a view to provide basic sail training and safe on the water experiences to younger people. Currently in Paphos, there is limited infra structure which allows young people to 'try their hand at sailing'. The other few clubs in and around Paphos and Limassol concentrate on either Olympic class competitive sailing or are more involved in swimming or Kyaking. At PISC we put the emphasis on having fun in a safe, well managed environment. Whilst we have no immediate plans to become a formal training school, we are always happy to help and assist the local community in any way we can. Our team of retired and experienced volunteers is ideally suited to this role, most of them having spent many years in the UK doing exactly that.



Some of our junior members having fun

Sailing Regattas

All the major sailing clubs within Cyprus stage a two or three day annual Regatta where all the clubs race against one another for trophies. During the 2009 season, PISC became a highly respected sailing club, taking away several of their coveted trophies together with a couple of 1st prizes. In a short time, PISC has become an integral part of the Cyprus Regatta scene and all of the other clubs have commented that they could no longer imagine staging a Regatta without the Paphos International Sailing Club being actively involved.



Dave, Jo and Anita, our first trophies!



Dinghies getting ready at Agios Georgios

Over the weekend of October 10th 2010, PISC staged its inaugural regatta at Agios Georgios. It was a huge success and dinghies came from all parts of the Island. Hundreds of residents and tourists alike lined the cliff top above Agios Georgios to enjoy the spectacle. The regatta was well reported on Paphos Television and other media throughout Cyprus.

Last July 2011, PISC staged another Island wide Regatta, this time at Geroskipou beach as the opening event of the Geroskipou Festival leading up to the European Beach Volleyball championships. Once again, PISC not only proved that they had the resources, knowledge and experience to stage a prominent Regatta, it proved that they could work in close co-operation with other operations and fit into the grand scheme of Island wide activity plans.



Dinghies at the Geroskipou Regatta 2011

Numerous tourists approached us after the regatta and commented on what a magnificent sight it was to see so many sailing boats. Several hotels have been involved and have assisted PISC in various ways, they have all felt that PISC have contributed to the ambiance and character of the environment and enhanced the holiday experiences of their guests. The PISC annual regatta is now an established part of the Cyprus water sports calendar, PISC having proved more than capable of hosting an event of this magnitude in a well managed, coordinated, safe and fun way. Plans are already well advanced to build on these successes and make the PISC 2012 Regatta into an even bigger and more successful event.

Boating and tourism



PISC in Paphos harbour

Cyprus is an Island with a rich boating history spanning thousands of years. A strong boating infra structure is not only expected, it is essential to the Islands long term plans. A successful, long established sailing club such as PISC plays a vital part in any boating infra structure. Many Greek Islands that our members regularly frequent in their larger yachts have built their entire tourist industry around sailing. We regularly get emails from potential tourists asking what the 'sailing is like' and whether or not their children can learn to sail whilst they are on holiday. There is no doubt that a strong sailing

infra structure is essential part of any Island in this corner of the Mediterranean. We like to think we are doing our bit for Cyprus, however, it is clear that with a little more help and guidance, we could do so much more and become an integral part of the Paphos infra structure.

PISC has started to forge an excellent relationship with the department of tourism. There has been discussions relating to staging more events together and 2012 will see PISC stage Operation Longsail, where dinghies from several clubs will sail from Agios Georgious harbor all the way to Limassol! We are already in discussions about the possibilities of extending it substantially in 2013! Over a period of time, it is becoming increasingly obvious that Cyprus, (especially Paphos), needs to think more about the future of the tourism industry, it is now probably the most expensive country to fly to within Europe and has a reputation of being the most expensive to eat out in. How can it compete with Turkey with restaurants and bars at a third of the price or Spain with 40 pound return air fares! Paphos needs *something more*, at the Paphos International Sailing Club, we like to think that we are doing 'our bit', albeit at this stage in a very small way to enhance the tourist experience and to give Paphos a little bit of the '*something more*'.

Social side

PISC has a vibrant and varied social side which works in conjunction with the sailing activities. The club regularly hosts events in local Hotels, bars and restaurants, especially in the winter when the tourism business is slack. This can only help the local community and as one of the largest clubs within Paphos, helps us to form long term relationships with the local businesses. In fact we now have strong representations in snooker, bowls, walking, diving, classic cars and a host of other activities which are forever growing.



PISC members booked half of Cosmic bowling

Management and Specialist skills



A simple reason for the clubs huge success is the fact that many of its members are retired professionals. Not only do they have vast experience and qualifications but they have the time to exercise these skills as free of charge volunteers. Amongst our midst we have Company directors, accountants, lawyers, Hoteliers, Restaurateurs, Captains, High ranking Military Officers, Builders, Paramedics, Pilots etc, in fact probably 75% of the membership is a retired professional of some description. When we set up a sub-committee and the person in charge of catering is a retired highly successful restaurateur who organised some of the largest outside catering events in the UK, the person in charge of the IT used to head up one the UKs top ten software houses, the auditor used to be the financial director of a 15 billion pound corporate... and the list goes on, it is no luck that the event is hugely successful, highly profitable and expertly organised!

On the water safety

All activities involving water carries risks, at PISC we take safety extremely seriously. Our club Principal, who is in charge of training has been a boat owner and instructor for some 30 years (including one of the largest yachts in Cyprus) and is a safety/rescue RYA instructor and examiner for the British Military.



PISC safety crew helping a junior member

We have built up an excellent working relationship with a local PADI 5-star diving operation and between us, we run government approved and EU recognised first aid courses specifically targeted at water sports. Beside numerous members' personal crafts, the club owns and operates a purpose designed and equipped rescue boat, crewed by our highly trained and qualified team of safety personnel. It is immaculately maintained by an ex Naval Officer who until his recent retirement, used to maintain warships!

In conclusion

Paphos International Sailing Club has clearly demonstrated that it is by far the most successful and well established boating organisation in the Paphos area. It can draw on a huge skill and experience volunteer resource and has a proven track record of organising highly successful prestigious, Island wide events that enhance and fit into the grand scheme of local events and plans.

We provide a safe well run environment and have a stable financial plan and future.



The very first day, in Geroskipou



The same club two years later

Much of the clubs activities can be viewed on the website www.PISC.org.cy or alternatively type in 'sailing Paphos' in any of the search engines.

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