



Shoestring Group New Member Information 2020



Shoestring Tres Racing off CTD

The Shoestring Group

Welcome to the [Shoestring Group](#); we are a shared ownership, dinghy sailing group, with welcoming and friendly members. Formed in March 2007 within the organisation “Sailing Association Mar Menor”, ‘SAMM’ for short, with ten members and one dinghy; we have now grown, and currently at January 2020, have four dinghies, and 43 members. Our boats are located in the boat yard of the CTD Infanta Cristina (CAR) Centre (see [SAMM website](#)), right on the beach at Los Narejos in Los Alcázares – just off the N332 at the roundabout with the large sail in the centre - and the boats are available for use by members 365 days per year subject to weather, slipway accessibility and the opening times of CTD.

The CTD Sports Centre (CAR)

“[CTD Infanta Cristina](#)” popularly known under its original name as “CAR”, is a Spanish (Murcia) state funded sports school teaching a range of sports, not just water sports, to children and adults many of whom board for the duration of their course. It has 24-hour cctv and guard security, making our boats safe from theft and vandalism, and has a good concrete slipway for launching and recovery. It also has a café area which serves cheap beer, coffee and Tapas! In the



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boatyard, there are water 'posts' with hoses provided for washing down after a sail. These accept only Water Tokens available from Reception, which can be exchanged for a Euro coin.

Our use of this excellent facility was negotiated by SAMM and continued use is dependant on our good behaviour. The Group must provide a list of all members (name, local address, NIE or passport number, contact phone number and email address) to the management and all Members **must** wear their yellow SAMM identity lanyard at all times whilst within the grounds. Instructions from guards and staff **must** be obeyed without argument, and other users and their boats respected at all times. Staff at Reception may speak English and there is WiFi available on request of the current Password.

Please do not put bags or other items onto non-Shoestring boats. The access gates to the beach are often closed at lunchtime (2 -3pm), so if you need access during this time **do not** climb the fence, just walk round to the main entrance (press the buzzer and, if asked, say you are with "SAMM" and they will allow entry) and request Reception to open the slipway gates, which are remotely controlled. Please remember that CTD is not the equivalent of an English sailing club; it is basically a student's and children's boarding school for sporting activity, and should be respected as such.

The Mar Menor

The name translates to "Small Sea" and is an almost land-locked salt water lagoon (the largest in Europe), some 11 nautical miles long and 8 nautical miles wide and no more than 6 meters deep. CTD is situated roughly half way along its western shore-line very close to Murcia San Javier airport. The eastern shore, the 'La Manga strip', separates it from the Mediterranean Sea. There are two large islands; La Perdiguera, locally known as "Sardine Island" which boasts a small sandy beach, and which can be reached in an hour or less in a moderate breeze, is ideal for a picnic lunch; and Isla Mayor o Del Baron which is private and you should not land here. To sail around Isla Mayor requires an awareness of a very long submerged causeway at the east side of the south end, which does not allow a dinghy to cross over – it must be sailed around so beware! Slightly south of this, there are also a number of smaller islets; Isla del Sujeto and Isla Rondella o Redonda, situated more towards La Manga.

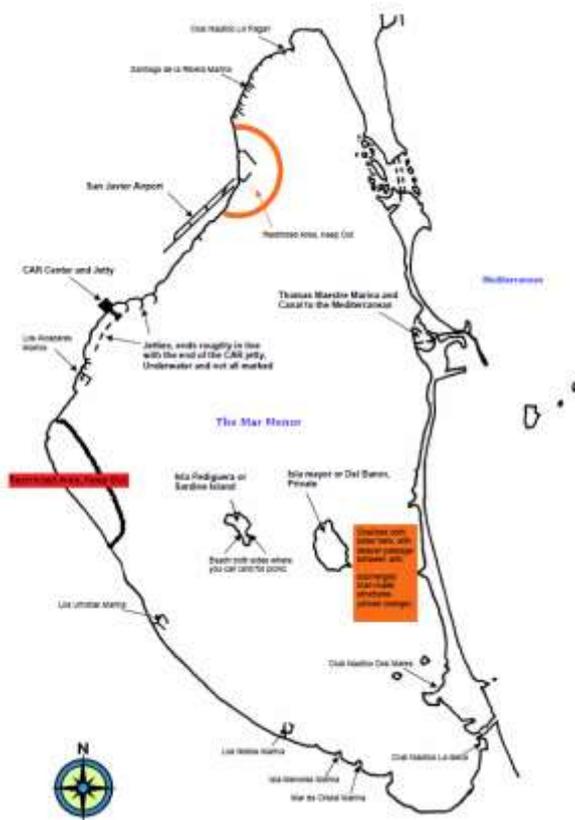
There are few hazards in the Mar Menor and those that do exist are mostly submerged breakwaters close to CAR (visible on Google Maps satellite view at:

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Mar+Menor,+Spain/@37.7480304,->



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[0.82961,1665m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0xd6311abff23d0ad:0xdf77037fc953369a](https://www.sailing.org.uk/0.82961,1665m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m2!3m1!1s0xd6311abff23d0ad:0xdf77037fc953369a)) which date from the time when San Javier was a military seaplane base. There are also some very shallow areas, especially at the Northern end of the La Manga strip and a Military exclusion zone marked with buoys at the Northern end of the airport. Note that there is also an exclusion zone around the Military base at the south end of Los Alcázares and this should not be entered! The charts below give a guide to the above and there is a good A3 size chart kept in our locker at CTD.



Charts showing the Mar Menor and its important areas and places

The water has a slightly higher salt content than the Mediterranean and gets quite warm (up to 28°C) during the summer but can be chilly (only 10°C) in the winter.

Safety

The Shoestring Group takes no direct responsibility for the safety of its members, so you sail at your own risk in the knowledge that your competence and training in dinghy sailing will ensure your safety. We do have fully comprehensive insurance including third party risks and member to member indemnity, in addition to a SAMM cover for Members, for general liability. Please take time to read the RNLI Dinghy Sailing Safety Guide on their [website page](#) before you start out and



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always remember to ensure you can contact someone quickly (CTD Reception - 968334500, Emergency - 112, or a Group contact, who can help (see Shoestring Agreement): ***always take your phone with you in a waterproof pouch***)

That said, sailing is a reasonably safe sport provided some simple precautions are taken and some simple rules followed. A life jacket or suitable buoyancy aid must be worn by everybody in the boat when afloat. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Scuba diving shoes/boots are ideal but old trainers will suffice (our biggest risk is slipping on the algae covered concrete slipway at CTD so ensure you are careful when launching or landing the boat). Short or trunks with a T-shirt are fine in the summer but a wet suit is recommended for the winter, being cold and wet is no fun and will be dangerous if hypothermia sets in.

There are no safety boats provided by the Group, except during the SAMM organised racing and the local rescue facilities (112 - Guardia Civil and Protection Civil) can take some time to respond. You should therefore ensure that a contact ashore locally (not just your family at home) knows where you are sailing to and when you expect to return.

The boats have both standing and running rigging set up to the manufacturer's specification plus some additions made for increased safety. They are similar but differ in detail and you should familiarise yourself with each. **Do not** change or modify the rigging in any circumstances as it could be dangerous for both yourself and other members. Check all the rigging before launching the boat, looking out for frayed wires or ropes, tangles, bad knots etc. - problems are easier to correct ashore. Learn how to reef the sails before going out or if the wind increases. Our Training and Safety Officer is the expert so ask her to show you the ropes, but other long-term members can also help.

Check the weather forecast before setting out so you can plan your sail accordingly. The Mar Menor is generally benign with a predominantly north-easterly breeze (the Levanté), light in the morning and stronger in the afternoon. But, due to its location and geography conditions can change rapidly. The wind direction can swing 180° in seconds and can increase from virtually nothing to 15 – 20 knots (that's high for dinghy sailing) in just a few minutes. Because it is shallow, there is never much swell but waves can be short and steep making boat control much more difficult and the weather can change very quickly so vigilance is a prerequisite!



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Training

You would not expect to drive a car without first having lessons and passing your test, so neither should novice members or those with limited experience expect to sail our boats without training.

Shoestring Group does not offer formal sailing training and although experienced members will always help with tips and advice, you are strongly advised to undertake formal training to RYA Level 2 standard. To learn to sail properly, will greatly enhance your enjoyment and the safety of both yourself and the other people in the boat. Our group does, however, undertake regular man-overboard and capsizing training to keep us all in practice.

For non-residents there are numerous RYA training centres throughout the UK (see www.rya.org for a list). For residents, the facility is right here on your doorstep in the CAR Centre via the Pro Vela sailing school and boat hire business located in the boat park very close to our dinghies. The school is a registered RYA Instructor/Assessor centre and can be contacted on (UK 0044 7917 678299 or Spain 0034 699488111) and details of their services to be found at www.pro-vela.com. There may also be other schools nearer your home in Spain and there are some other links on the SAMM website under "[Useful Links](#)".

Boat Usage

Use of our boats is controlled by a Booking Calendar. Members can only book one sail at a time and only make a subsequent booking after the first has taken place (i.e. if you want to go sailing on Wednesday and the following Saturday, you book Wednesday first and then book for Saturday on Wednesday night). Novices can only book if they have a competent member to helm for them. The booking calendar is part of our [Shoestring Website](#) and access is given on joining. Our 'Rules' are important too and members are advised to understand these before using a boat – they can be found on the website under 'Documents' and 'Shoestring Agreement'

Insurance, Care and Maintenance

Our four boats are insured fully comprehensive, with a small excess which will be paid out of club funds as required. We have an extension to cover racing. The insurance also includes third party cover for both other vessels and people, up to the amounts specified under Spanish law, plus member to member liability. A copy of the insurance policy is on our website; however, we do expect all members to sail sensibly and not to indulge in actions that could cause damage. For example, when coming ashore after a sail **do not** beach the boats on the concrete slipway! If you must beach aim for the sandy area to the left of the slipway as you approach. At CTD



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Centre, the jetty cannot be used for boarding or alighting as it is considered unsafe by the Coastal Authorities and out of bounds by order of CTD, so should it be necessary to come alongside a jetty at any other location, please use the fenders provided on Uno to avoid collision. If you are in one of the other boats, make sure you fend-off before impacting the hull and causing damage to the GRP.

If you have an incident and cause any damage, do not try to hide the problem but report the damage to our Maintenance Manager via the website, so he can plan to fix it as soon as possible. You will not be held to account as it could happen to any of us. Similarly, if something breaks or you notice something broken or damaged, report it a.s.a.p. If our Maintenance Manager has to take a boat out of use for repair, you will be sent an email.

Our Boats

We have four dinghies of GRP construction with in-built buoyancy chambers and Bermuda rig. All have similar standing and running rigging but which differs in detail. For example, it is possible to reef the mainsail on all boats but the manner and method of reefing is different on them all. The rigging is set-up to the manufacturer's specification plus helpful additions made by our Maintenance Manager. **Do not under any circumstances change or modify the rigging in any way**, as you could create problems for both yourself and other Group members. Study and learn the different rigging for all boats and do not be afraid to ask for explanations or advice.

Shoestring Uno - A locally built Gamba purchased new in 2008 and insured for five people. It has a roller furling jib, reefing mainsail, a topping lift and trapezes for the adventurous (we do not have trapeze harnesses). It is provided with an automatic mast-head buoyancy device to help prevent total immersion in the event of a capsize. If necessary, ensure the bag is attached to the halyard and hoist it to the top of the mast, and cleat it off securely. Two additional items have been added to aid righting and re-boarding after a capsize. A "Righting Line" is fitted to the base of the mast and a "Rope Ladder" is attached to the transom to help re-boarding.

Shoestring Dos – A Laser 2000, purchased second hand in 2013, insured for three with a roller furling jib, reefing main and the addition of a "Righting Line" the same as Uno. This is a fast, lively boat for the more experienced sailor, especially if the conditions are a little demanding. Make sure the rubber drain bung at the rear hull is in place and rear transom drain bung is



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screwed home before sailing. Both should be removed on return to the boatyard, after washing down.

Shoestring Tres – A Topper Omega Topaz, purchased in 2018. She's only about 15 ins or 400mm shorter than the gambas and at 1880 mm wide there is plenty of room for four people and on a calm day possibly 5 but we think 7 as stated in the spec sheet would be pushing it.

Shoestring Cuatro – A Gamba, almost identical to Shoestring Uno, purchased new in June 2015 and insured for five people.

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