



An international group of eleven members of Szczecin-based Multinational Corps Northeast, along with two wives, completed a sailing course in their garrison city these days. Nearly all participants managed to pass on the first go the theoretical and practical exam required for acquiring the sailing license.

Early Organisation

There had been intensive consultations early this year already between the "Sailing" sports group, one of thirteen sports groups in the Corps, and the Szczecin "Yacht Club AZS". The course included twenty lessons in theory, followed by eighty practical lessons on the water. Added to these were theoretical and practical instructions to acquire a license for handling a motorboat. As a matter of fact, all training activities took place outside the soldiers' duty hours, which means on weekends and after work.

Challenge Overcome

The mostly duty-related, differing availability of the students was an organizational challenge

that could be overcome in the same way as the issue of the language of instruction. "It was the first time for our club to conduct such a course for acquiring the sailing and motorboat license in English", said Anna Gniadek, the Polish chief instructor. She made sure that teaching materials and examination papers were available in English and did the theoretical lessons herself.

Good Conditions

Two additional instructors assisted her during the practical portions on the water. So, up to two small sailing yachts set sail simultaneously in the club's marina to conduct the maritime training during the course's practical portion in April and May. The instructor aboard taught several students at a time. While one student acted as helmsman, the others formed the crew. The practical training focused on maneuvers relevant to the examinations like "Landing and Casting off with Sails Set" and "Man-over-Board". Sailing was done on the southern parts of the Szczecin Haff with mostly good wind and weather conditions.

Important Integration

Something else was important to the course participants as well on top of acquiring the license to handle sailing and motorboats. Many of them live with their families in the Polish big city situated in the country's northwest, and they have found neighbors and friends, as a matter of fact. Being "fixed-term Szczecin citizens", though, they take any opportunity available, like the course, to deliberately integrate themselves more intensively into the community. The fact that someone or other among the participants in the course has plans to join the yacht club as a member underlines the serious nature of this intention.

In addition, this confirms once more that Multinational Corps Northeast with its soldiers and their relatives represents an integral part of the city and that they feel at home in Szczecin together with their families.