

Women in Sailing Forum 24th February 2020 - Key points raised in discussion

- SYC has two key Women in Sailing Events- WISC and Commodores Trophy
- Numbers participating in WISC have decreased in recent years and it has been difficult to put together a crew for Commodores Trophy team (note- it emerged some attendees were unsure about the communication and selection process for this event)
- Increase in female participation at SYC due to Season Pass and the camaraderie that develops between participants in this programme
- Australian Sailing just launched quarterly report- Victoria rates well for female participation compared with other states. Average 65:35 male:female across Australia
- Data from End of Season Review (2019) and SYC Women in Sailing Survey were shared- note that there were only 15 respondents to the survey
- It was acknowledged that Women in Sailing has changed a lot and there are increased numbers. At a Junior and Youth Level participation is approx 50/50
- Some issues are not gender specific eg desire for coaching opportunities, youth transition programmes including High Performance sailors. Club has endeavoured to support youth transition and membership through the changes to age of Youth Membership and nomination fee for Intermediate Membership
- Opportunities to reimagine WISC were discussed as well as possible incentives to encourage skippers to support female sailors to develop their skills and experience
- There are two J24s available for Youth crews. These could possibly be available to female crews also.
- A 'Girls' Regatta' was suggested along similar lines to the Girls' Camp at Albert Park organised by Ollie Tweddell.
- Australian Women's Keelboat Regatta (RMYS) was discussed as an example of a successful, long standing event that we might learn from.
- Value of networks and role models amongst female sailors- an important resource of mentors for women new to the sport, and more female coaches in OTB programmes
- Training (on and off water) prior to WISC would raise confidence of participants- it was noted that WISC training opportunities have been available each year in the club Beneteaus – some members not aware of this. The Off Water training sessions offered as part of WISC in previous years have been well attended by male and female sailors.
- Need to consider what do we want for Women in Sailing moving forward. The demographic has changed over the past 10 years. It was noted that there were many very experienced women in the room as well as those who are new and with enthusiasm- they are the future that we need to support.
- New format for SYC WISC – incorporate the Doris Little Trophy into a WISC format within an existing series ie Twilight or Sunday Sailors?
- Communication is key. There is currently an SYC Women in Sailing Facebook Group (some members were unaware of this). It would be worthwhile to talk further with females in the club to identify what their needs are in terms of sailing pathways.
- There are also opportunities for females to be involved in Race Management- training is offered by the club over the winter months
- A Women In Sailing Committee is needed (ideally 5-6 members) to drive the next phase of Women's Sailing at SYC. The Chair of the committee will sit on Sail Committee. A member of the committee will also attend the SheSail meetings. Expressions of interest to be submitted to Sue Bowes by email.