

Plimmerton Boating Club (PLBC) - Sailing Academy



What is the purpose of PLBC Sailing Academy?

- The purpose of the PLBC Sailing Academy is to teach and develop center board sailing skills and techniques, and provide opportunities to race, socialise and have fun together.

Who can join the Academy?

- The Academy is primarily aimed at junior/youth sailors (8 – 17 years old), however sailors of all ages are welcome to join.
- We encourage sailors who want to join the Academy to have completed a Learn to Sail course first - PLBC provides kids and adult Learn to Sail coaching opportunities see: <https://www.plimmertonboatingclub.org.nz/sailing-academy>
- You will need to become a member of the PLBC if you decide to join the Sailing Academy.

Who runs and coaches the Academy?

- Todd Olson heads up the Academy and has significant experience as a sailor and in the sailing industry – sailing@plimmertonboatingclub.org.nz or 021 612 004
- We have a number of Yachting New Zealand qualified coaches who will teach sailors in groups and individually.
- Parent help is also vital in helping ensure the smooth operation of the Academy (see below for more detail on how you can help as a parent).

What do we do?

- We provide both shore-based ‘class room’ and on-water teaching and coaching.
- Some of the key things we teach and coach are:
 - How to be safe on and off the water
 - What each part of the boat does and how to rig it up properly
 - How wind, water and weight affects the boat
 - Reading the wind and water

- Boat handling skills on all points of sail and in different conditions
- Tacking and gybing skills
- How to sail balanced and fast
- Rules of racing
- Racing starts, finishes and course tactics
- Sailors will be grouped according to boat class and abilities and a suitable number of coaches allocated to each sailing group.
- Not all sailors want to compete so we tie in fun activities such as destination/adventure sails to local beaches and games on and off the water.

When do we coach?

- Academy coaching occurs on Wednesday afternoons from during school terms 4 and 1 4.30pm – 6.30pm
- Ad-hoc casual/fun sailing sessions for Academy members may be arranged on Fridays 4.30-6.30 pm subject to weather conditions, still with supervision, but with no structured coaching.
- If the conditions are not suitable or safe for sailing we will usually run shore based activities and 'class room' sessions.
- We will try to provide prior notification if a shore based session is planned, however it is always advisable to bring both sailing gear and PE gear to all sessions in case a decision can not be made until 4.30pm.
- The Academy may from time to time also organise additional coaching days with top national coaches which will be available to Academy sailors at an additional cost.

When do we race?

- Practice races with Academy sailors will occur during coaching sessions on Wednesdays (and Fridays if a casual sailing is on).
- The PLBC holds club racing on Sundays during the sailing season, which Academy sailors are encouraged to participate in.
- There will also be opportunities to race in local, regional and national sailing regattas throughout the year.
- The season sailing calendar is available on the PLBC website see: <https://www.plimmertonboatingclub.org.nz/sailing-resources-and-docs>

What progression pathways are available to sailors?

- Kids will start sailing in an Optimist dinghy and then progress to other classes depending on their size, ability and preferences.

What boats and equipment does the PLBC/Academy have?

- The PLBC owns a number of sailing dinghies, including Optimists, Open skiffs, Lasers and Phase II's.
- These boats are available to Academy members to use and/or charter for the season, which Todd will manage use of club boats depending on demand and availability.
- There are usually plenty of learner (plastic) Optimists available, and we have some fiberglass Optimists which sailors can try out for a period of time (subject to availability).
- The PLBC also has a number of sailing buoyancy vests, spray jackets and tops available for use, at no additional cost, which Todd will manage depending on demand and availability.
- The Academy also has road trailers which are available for transporting boats and gear to regattas etc.
- Sailor and parent responsibilities when using club boats and gear will be explained at the time it is leant.
- The club has a number of safety/support boats (RIBs) which are used during coaching and regattas – skippers for these boats will need to go through appropriate training.

What will you need to provide yourself?

- The Academy will do whatever it can to assist sailors with boats and gear to get them started, however there is not an unlimited supply of either unfortunately!
- When starting out, and assuming club buoyancy vests and spray jackets are available to borrow (see above), sailors will as a minimum need their own:
 - wetsuit
 - booties
 - thermals
 - sun hat and beanie
 - sunglasses
- Once sailors are committed and want to continue sailing with the Academy they will need their own boat, associated rigging and equipment, beach trolley, buoyancy vest, spray jacket and any other sailing gear they need (such as a starting watch for racing).
- It will be necessary to purchase the right boat and equipment as soon as possible (and

definitely before the following sailing season) to ensure club boats and gear remains available for other sailors coming up through the ranks.

- When purchasing an Optimist, we suggest that you find a fibreglass one as they are usually more competitive than a wooden boat (and can be easier to repair!).
- The first Optimist you buy is likely to sustain damaged as children hone their sailing skills, so it is not advised to over-invest in the first boat.
- A reasonable boat will get your child through to open fleet, having raced in green fleet for one or two years, at which time you may decide to upgrade.
- Investing in good gear is important to keep sailors comfortable and keen; the following provides some guidance on purchasing key sailing equipment:
 - Sailing buoyancy vest – should not have a collar at the back of the head as these can get caught on the boom.
 - Spray jacket – should have rubber cuffs, waist and neck.
 - Hiking pants – these have rubber pads at the back of the thigh to ease the pain on the back of the legs and to extend the gunwhales when hiking out.
 - Starting watch – any of the commonly used sailing watches, for example the Ronstan Clear Start series, will do the trick.
 - Sailing gloves – many sailors just use gardening type gloves which work, you can also buy purpose made sailing gloves which will be more durable and provide better feeling.
- If you are looking for a boat and/or gear, or need advice on either, let Todd know.

Can I store my boat and gear at the Club?

- Unfortunately there is a limit on how many boats can be stored at the club, and the availability of storage space varies over time, so you will need to discuss your requirements with Todd to see what space is available.
- There is an annual cost associated with storing a boat at the club which can be advised at the time but is likely to be in the order of \$200/annum. See sign up for rates
- Sailors will need to take all sailing clothing/equipment home to rinse and dry after each session as no storage is available at the club for this.


What's it all going to cost?!

- It's important to go into sailing with your eye's wide open that there will be ongoing

costs associated with buying, maintaining, repairing and replacing boats, sails, rigs and sailing gear, as well as associated with travel, regatta entry fees etc.

- There will be the cost of club membership and boat storage costs if you store the boat in one of the club sheds.
- Some approximate/estimated costs are set out below:
 - First Optimist - \$1000 - \$2000 (used)
 - Optimist sail - \$600 – \$800 new, \$100 – \$500 used
 - General boat maintenance/repairs - \$0 – unlimited!
 - Sailing buoyancy vest - \$130 - \$200 (new)
 - Wetsuit (full length) - \$100 - \$200 (new)
 - Spray jacket - \$100 - \$200
 - Sailing gloves - \$40 - \$60
 - Start watch - \$120
 - Club membership – refer to PLBC website
 - Boat storage at PLBC - from \$200/year
 - Coaching additional to that provided by Academy - \$50 - \$200 per coaching event
 - Regatta entry costs - \$10 – \$200 per regatta
 - New Zealand International Optimist Dinghy Association (NZIODA) membership - \$50 - \$100/year

What communication platforms do we use?

- PLBC website (www.plimmertonboatingclub.org.nz/sailing-academy) - News, sailing calendar, events, forms, results, photos etc
- Facebook (www.facebook.com/plimmertonsailingacademy) – For events and regattas, results, photos etc
- WhatsApp  - General communications such as cancellations, confirming shore-based sessions etc
- We will also send emails as needed

What do we need from parents?

- Sailing is a family sport and requires a lot of parent help and involvement.
- There are plenty of things for parents to do, such as:
 - Helping set up boats and equipment
 - Shore duty for safety
 - Organising and helping launch and retrieval of boats
 - Skippering/crewing support boats (once appropriately trained)
 - Repairs and maintenance

- Helping organise events and regattas
- Transporting boats to/from regattas
- Parents will be responsible for launching and retrieving their own child, so come prepared to get wet!
- If a parent needs to leave the club while their child is on the water, they will need to ensure that another adult can take care of their child should they return to shore earlier than expected.
- When the sea is rough we expect all parents to remain at the club and to be available to assist at all times.
- For club racing and interclub regattas if your child is racing you will need to help out.
- In general, if unsure please ask how you can best assist so that you can 'learn the ropes' and spread the load.
- The whole sailing experience, including going to regattas, is a huge amount of fun if everybody chips in and helps out!

What are the safety and health hazard risks?

- There are inherent safety risks with sailing all sizes and types of craft and it is important that both sailors and parents are well aware of and acknowledge the potential risks that come with sailing.
- Some potential sailing injuries and health risks are:
 - Head injuries from boom knocks
 - Cut feet when launching/retrieving
 - Hypothermia
 - Sunburn
 - Damage to hands due to rope burn and crushing between hulls/trolleys
- Certain precautions can be taken to minimise the risk of sailing related injuries and health hazards, including wearing appropriate clothing for the conditions/season, ensuring boats and equipment are well maintained and always wearing a buoyancy vest.
- It is always a good idea to include a (waterproofed) snack in the buoyancy vest pocket.
- The Academy will always ensure that the conditions are safe to sail in and that there are sufficient support/safety boats and trained skippers/crew on the water at any one time.
- All parents and sailors should review the weather forecast prior to sailing and ensure that they are prepared for the conditions – good forecast websites to use are www.predictwind.com and Metservice.

