



Finding Sailors

Sailing takes many forms; you can cruise, race or simply potter around in all kinds of boats, on the sea or inland water. You can do it alone or in company, and you don't have to be able to swim!

Potential sailors may have sailed before or never, they may regularly participate in other sports or still be looking for a sport that they enjoy and are able to participate in.

Whatever your background, sailing can be a lot of fun. One newly disabled woman with no experience in sport said *'I decided to be positive and took up fishing, swimming and sailing. Sailing's my favourite!'*

Another sailor said *'I've wasted 20 years of my life; I gave up sailing after becoming disabled. I was sailing at national level and thought I could never be good enough again. I hope others will not make the same mistake.'* They have now found the right boats, and with a little help, are enjoying all aspects of sailing, including open international competition.

Many sailors speak of feeling much less disabled and more self-sufficient when afloat: a sense of being in control, and FREEDOM. Another sailor was heard to say...*'when you're out sailing you can't actually tell who is disabled, we can all do the same thing.'*

Support services provide potential networking opportunities to connect with sailors. These groups will provide a starting point when wanting to connect with people with disabilities in your community and share information about sailing at your club with them:

- Sailors at your club who will have friends and family with disabilities
- Halberg Disability Sport Foundation- find your local contact www.halberg.co.nz
- Parafed Associations- there is a directory online www.paralympics.org.nz
- Special Schools
- Local branch of Royal NZ Foundation of the Blind
- Local branch of Group Special Education (Ministry of Education)
- Idea services/IHC (support service for children and adults with intellectual disability)
- Local branch of CCS Disability Action
- Local branch of Brain Injury Association
- Spinal Units and other medical / disability based organizations

These are just some ideas. These organisations will be able to suggest/connect you with others. Think outside the box for how you might connect with them. Pay them a visit? Pick up the phone? Do a direct mail out? Attend an expo? Through their website? On their Facebook page?