



RICHMOND YACHT CLUB

RICHMOND YACHT CLUB – VICTORIA FRIDAY NIGHT SPECIAL

(Link to RYC Friday Night Special Page: <http://richmondyc.org.nz/racing/info/friday-night-special>)

“The series provides an opportunity for people that have little or no sailing experience to race on keel boats around the buoys in the beautiful Waitemata Harbour in a supportive, low-key environment. Experienced sailors that wish to get more sailing in or wish to try out a number of new boats are also encouraged to join.

Each race you are allocated to a different boat, which can range in size from 26ft to 44ft. After each race there is a social evening for participants in the RYC clubrooms with the bar open and a meal available. The series is great for networking – we encourage crew members to let skippers know if they are available to crew for races outside of the Friday Night Special series.”

It is not a learn to sail programme but more an experience for people that are interested in sailing. It’s a social, low commitment way to introduce them to the sport.

All boats have a skipper and at least one experienced crew member on board. Over the season participants are encouraged to swap between boats to get a variety of experience with different boats and skippers.

Initially, the programme was promoted solely through word of mouth then later club members and participants promoted it at their workplaces.

Richmond found that about 50% of participants re-joined the programme for the next season and have had some great cases where participants have gone on to purchase boats and become full club members. They also noticed there is particular



interest from new immigrants who see sailing as a 'kiwi' activity and a good way to meet people.

This has been successful and Richmond has had really good numbers going through this programme. However the numbers you can sign up is dependent on members providing their time and their boats, though a Friday evening sailing isn't too much of a chore.

The programme has many benefits

- Attracts people to the sport
- Generates new club members
- Source of crew members for boat owners
- Helps build the social side of the club
- More people into the bar and restaurant