



## WOMEN ON WATER

Females represent slightly more of the country's population but a much smaller percentage of yacht club membership. On average, females count for only 17-19% of the sailing population.

In order to grow female participation, clubs need to be mindful of creating an environment that is welcoming to everybody and equally promoting sailing and volunteering opportunities.

A great example of a group that is boosting their local female participation is the Women on Water Committee of the Tauranga Yacht and Power Boat Club. The committee organises regular womens only training and racing events on the harbour and often call on the YNZ Regional Support Officers for help.

Here are some suggestions, in no particular order, about what your club can do to promote female participation at the club.

- If your club has a website, have a separate Women's section.
- Publish articles about sailing from a woman's perspective in the club's newsletter, local newspapers and magazines.
- Encourage the male club members to bring their partners.
- Promote the sport by engaging in associated fun activities such as swimming, snorkelling, diving and fishing off the boat.
- Paint a pathway. This week your club. Next year the Nationals and after that international competition and maybe the Olympics!
- Appeal to your target market. There are plenty of women with an inclination to try sailing, so consider your marketing channels and imagery to attract them in.
- Make the after match function attractive to women. For example, one club offers champagne and beauty product prizes for the ladies division of racing instead of rum.
- Encourage corporate functions at your club for a variety of business types.
- Ask your high performing female sailors to help you market the club by being a role model. Have fundraising events for them in return for them speaking or helping learn to sail classes.
- Invite clothing retailers to demonstrate that sailing apparel is increasingly offered in women's styles and can be quite fashionable!



- Clearly set out the pathways that females (like all sailors) can choose from to get from complete beginner to successful sailors.
- Utilise commercial sailing schools. Some community women's groups may enjoy an organized group outing and a group environment on the water.
- Encourage Mums off the beach and out of the kitchen and give them a chance to have a go!
- Try to have a fair representation of women on your club committees.
- Run courses on boat maintenance and similar topics that may encourage more women to be up skilled with traditionally male tasks.
- Encourage education such as YNZ Learn to Sail courses and Sea Survival.
- Organise a 'ladies only' Have a Go Day.
- Consider having separate recognition for Males and Females at your annual prize giving (ie youth girl sailor of the year, youth boy sailor of the year)
- Collect and track statistics on your club membership breakdown, monitor to see which methods of attracting growth have been successful.
- Establish a sailing women's network or group in the club.
- Organise female only sailing events whether that's racing or cruising.

**Remember collect and track statistics on your club membership and monitor to see which methods of attracting growth have been successful... then let Yachting New Zealand know about your successes so that the word may be spread to help other clubs!**