

Building a Successful Junior Program: Curriculum to Class Offerings



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Wayzata Community Sailing Center



Accredited US Sailing Basic Keelboat Certification and Community Sailing Center



- Located in Wayzata, MN, on the waters of Lake Minnetonka
- 501 (c) 3 not for profit, 100% open to the public
- Current enrollment of over 750 students
- Instructional fleet of sailboats: 18 - Z420s, 18 – Club 420s, 14 – Optimist, 9 – Prams, 6 – Lasers, 2 – Flying Juniors, 3 – J-22s, 2 – Sonars
- Spring and Fall High School/College Sailing
- 11 weeks of Summer Camps
- 8 weeks of summer Race programs
- Adult Basic Keelboat Certification
- Adaptive Program
- Outreach for disadvantaged youth
- Scholarships available (10K awarded in 2013)



American Yacht Club



- Located in Rye, NY
- Located on 12 acres with access to a sheltered harbor
- Membership 1,000+
- 250+ moorings
- Boats are mostly member owned
- AYC programs are almost entirely for members and their guests
- Club owns and maintains 10 Ideal 18s, 10 optimists and a few other fleet charter boats
- Fleet of 20 coach boats
- 8 week junior program
 - Approx. 75 – Jr. JAYCers aged 6 -9
 - Approx. 150 – Junior AYCers aged 9 to 17
- After school sailing
- Sailing opportunities 52 weeks per year
- Host 5 big clinics per year



Balboa Yacht Club



- Located in Newport Beach, CA
- Junior Program for Members and Non-Members (70/30 split)
- BYC has 140+ Member-owned Naples Sabots
- Club owned boats: 12 CFJ's, 4 C420's, 2 Governor's Cup 21's (as well as access to a fleet of 12 additional GC21's)
- Host of annual Governor's Cup International Youth Match Race Regatta
- 130+ Participants in 6 week Summer Program
- 50+ Sailors in Fall/Winter/Spring after-school programs
- Regattas locally/regionally every weekend throughout the year
- Top Ranked Jr. Match Racing Program in the United States
- Host of Balboa Advanced Sabot Clinic (BASC)



Program Structure and Set-up



- A good foundation is very important: support from community, members, parents and staff
- Knowledge of the following: facility (any limitations), fleet – sailboats and coach boats, staffing needs, liability, budget
- Goal Setting: What are the short and long term goals you want to achieve moving forward. Have realistic expectations – strong junior programs aren't built overnight.
- Organization and delegation are key: having a clear knowledge of who is in what role and what the responsibilities are for that position



What steps do I take to grow my program?



Advertise

- Flyers
- Open houses
- Brochures
- Social media
- Word of mouth
- Outreach to club fairs at local schools

- Partner up
 - Other organizations may be looking for activities
 - Recruit local high school, middle school or college to start a sailing team
- Social events that include friends and families of sailors
 - Exposure to non-sailing facets of the program to increase involvement
- Send out surveys at the conclusion of programs
 - Feedback will improve upon your program for the future
 - Surveymonkey.com is a favorite free service
 - Google Docs



How do I develop a curriculum that works for my program?

- Map objectives for each class based upon overall ability level, age level, length of class, and the overall goals of the program (ie: basic learn to sail, cruising, or racing)
- Have a daily lesson plan for each class, based on the objectives and student outcomes set for that class. Plan back-up activities for stormy or no-wind days. It's better to have a few extra ideas than not have enough.
- Poll sailors to see what drills they enjoy, or if they have had a favorite practice. Try to incorporate what they like into your planning.
- Where do I go for resources?



Curriculum – Tips and Tricks

- Work backwards!
 - Where do should sailors to be at the end of
 - Session
 - Halfway
 - Week 1
 - Day 1
- Build off of what works for other programs
 - Your own or others
 - Share and share alike



Lesson Plans – Tips and Tricks

- Know your staff; some need creativity opportunities, some need more rigidity
 - Experiment a little during week 2
- Poll certain sailors! Different groups have different decision makers and group influencers
 - Smiles on sailors faces are a good sign
 - Learning sailing is supposed to be fun
- Change things up – keep ‘em guessing
 - Some successful Jr. Programs have a 20 minute rule
 - Most sailors like to have an idea of what is next
 - Age, experience and group dynamic are factors
 - Team and established group practices can be a little more spontaneous



Hiring – where do I start?

- Identify your needs
 - Where are your holes?
 - What areas of your program do you want to enhance?
 - Balance
 - Age and experience
 - Racing vs. recreation
 - Gender
 - Personality
- Post accurate job descriptions
 - Candidates should know specific duties of a position
- Hiring Pool
 - Within locale
 - Local knowledge, oral history & maintaining certain traditions
 - Outside
 - Mix it up, fresh perspective & larger applicant pool.
 - Sail1design job bank
 - Local sailing area websites



Hiring – Tricks of the Trade

- Diversity can create strength
 - Conversations can lead to stronger methods
 - Be realistic when creating staffing teams
- Find a balance between “softies” and “hard cores”
- Energy, drive and personality often should come before certain H2O skills.
- Always interview candidates (face to face)
- Check with references ahead of time
- Get others in your organization involved
 - particularly if it’s a big hire.



Hiring – Tricks of the Trade

- Create a form, ask all same ?s
- Helps get the interview going in the direction that you want
 - The same questions can help compare apples to apples later on
 - Take notes!
 - Multiple interviews can run together in one's mind
- Start early, save a spot or two
 - Some talent may appear later





F.A.Q.s

What does WCSC do particularly well?

- Hire highest qualified staff
 - All Instructors and coaches must be US Sailing certified, minimum of 18 years old , Excellence in racing doesn't always equal excellence in teaching
 - Commitment to continuing education for staff and volunteers
- Inclusive programming
 - High school and college train together
 - Lessons for age 5 years and up, racing and recreational
 - Adaptive and Outreach
- Host high quality events
 - Excellent location, equipment, race management





F.A.Q.s

Lessons learned from WCSC?

- **Keep your eye on the ball. Setting goals and expectations for the sailors, parents, board members, the community and staying the course**
- **The need to balance safety and challenging the students**
- **Income needs to be balanced between affordable tuition, regatta income, and fund raising**

What do you do in the winter?

- **Plan, plan, and more planning**





F.A.Q.s

What has BYC taught you?

- Over-communicating is better than under-communicating.
- Document everything (accident, injury, damage, employee incidents, student misbehavior)
- Strong programs take years to build
- Bond between younger and older students is priceless
- Not everyone will be happy with your decisions all of the time – always remember that what you are doing is for the good of the program.



F.A.Q.s

What does BYC do particularly well?

- Word of mouth about the success of our program is great – high fun factor in the learning process keeps the retention rate for students very high.
- Social activities – Family sailing night/talent show/awards dinner.
- Everyone pitches in – Strong participation in regattas means a lot of logistics. On any given weekend we could have 6-10 trailers headed in different directions to regattas. Every parent with the ability to tow, does...and those who can't provide snacks and drinks for the sailors.

What exactly is a leeboard?

- A tricky piece of equipment...





F.A.Q.s



What does American do particularly well?

- Awesome staff
 - Resumes get them in the door, personalities are why they are hired
 - Retaining staff year to year is critical
- Time management for programming
 - Parking lot to sailing in under 10 minutes for renters
 - Optimist tent – we keep beginner opti sails rigged
 - Coach boats – all facing out on the dock ready to go and pre-lessons, coaches position boats closest to their fleets to minimize downtime
- Working coach boats
 - Try to have uniformity between engines and boats – less spare parts
 - Coach/es assigned to particular boats so they are familiar with quirks



F.A.Q.s



Does American have any unique classes?

- JR JAYCers (6-9)
 - Camp type setting, mix of art, shore activities with sailing in:
 - Parent keelboats -- Ideal 18s
 - Optimists -- Stand Up Paddle Boards
 - Sailing = Fun!!!
- JAYCers (9-17)
 - Windsurfing
 - Stand Up Paddle boarding
 - Adventure Sailing
- Big Boat Program (14 – 17)
 - Open to all AYC sailors, not just “Junior Program”
 - Expanded to shoulder seasons





F.A.Q.s



Do you have different staff for different programs?

Yes, for the most part. Some of our all stars are asked if they want to take on more responsibilities. We try to reward good work with the opportunity for more hours.

I hear Long Island Sound occasionally has light breeze...

Does that count as a question? Credit goes to our staff here for their creativity and our prep week for our “back up boxes of resources.” We are also very good at chasing our “harbor hurricanes.”



F.A.Q.s



What have you learned from working at American?

- People skills
 - Balancing personalities
 - 100 staff with parents and kids, 200 kids in the program with siblings and parents = 1,000s of people in and out of daily AYC life
 - Realize that many people have invested resources into our various programs
 - Respect the past, but realize when its time to change things up
 - Staying out of politics whenever possible
 - Learn the key players in the organization and work towards a common solution

- Problem solving
 - Big programs have a lot of moving parts things will go wrong
 - Take a deep breath and get to work making things better than they were
 - Having a back up plan to the back up plan

- Keeping things fresh
 - Just because a lesson has been taught something 50 times doesn't mean it needs to be the exact same
 - Keeping things slightly different can be fair to all



Additional Questions?



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