

The TPYC Youth Sailing Ad Hoc Committee met several times to discuss the following topics:

The results of a membership survey regarding the sailing program
The history of boat ownership with regards to sailing instruction
Individual boat ownership vs. club owned boats
Continued use of Turnabouts vs. another class of beginner boat

These topics lent themselves to further discussion on the subjects of minimum age for participation, fees, adult programs and ways to drive parental involvement and grow the program. The following is a summary of both discussion points and recommendations for the Executive Board.

Survey results- Very few members returned surveys on the youth sailing program. Of those, five currently own Turnabouts which are used in lessons (slightly more than half the respondents, which suggests that most were completed by parents of children currently in the program.) Interestingly, while most respondents said they were in favor of the club owning the lesson boats, most comments referenced maintenance, liability, potential abuse, etc as reasons for NOT having club owned boats.

Respondents seemed largely indifferent to which boat was used for lessons (more on that below) and most were aware that club rules require the provision of a Turnabout after the first year of lessons.

History- For many years, the Club has required participants in lessons to provide boats after the first year of classes. The failure to enforce this rule has led to shrinkage of the fleet. As a result, we may experience difficulty in providing enough boats for beginner classes and for interclub competitions. The Committee was unanimous in its recommendation that if the Board continues the existing policy, that this requirement be included on all lesson literature and posted on the TPYC website. (Purchase is not necessary; leasing or borrowing another's boat are viable alternatives, as long as the boat is not being used by a child already in lessons.)

Private vs. TPYC ownership of boats for lessons- There are only two choices; have the club buy and maintain boats, or have the participants in the program continue to provide them. Considerations were as follows:

Cost: Sailboats appropriate for beginning sailing instruction cost \$5,000 to \$10,000 new, depending on the class and quantity discounts. 10% of purchase price per year is a prudent reserve for maintenance including periodic replacement of sails and running rigging. Purchase of 5 new boats at app. \$6500 each would require a one time capital investment of \$32,500 and an estimated ongoing maintenance cost of \$3,250 per year. Those are large costs in light of our small annual budget and family dues of \$450. The capital cost, but not the maintenance could be reduced by buying used boats which might be obtained for an estimated \$500-1000 per boat (based on recent prices of used Turnabouts).

Our investigation of the cost of programs **that provide boats** yielded the following information:

BBHYC- 1 four week session, 4 hours per day, \$247 for members, \$888 for non-members (\$13-\$44 per day)

Camden YC- \$145 per week, 4 hours per day (\$29 per day)

Portland YC- 1 three week session, 7 hours per day, \$600-1250 for members, \$740

-1510 for non-members (\$40-\$101 per day)

Harraseeket YC- 1 four week session, 4 hours per day \$495 for members, \$595 for non-members (\$25-30 per day)

Our lessons, by comparison, are 1 seven week sessions of 4 hours for \$130 for members, and \$260 for non-members. (\$6-\$12 per day!)

Administration: Because volunteers do much of the work at TPYC, our dues are substantially lower than comparable clubs. Our club doesn't have the volunteer capacity at this time to maintain a fleet of boats. (We were given 6 used FJ's by Bates College, and have not yet identified a reliable system to maintain them. **The Board should consider an annual reserve to fund maintenance for the FJ's, which needs either to be paid out of lesson fees, or dues, or some combination of both.**)

The committee recommends that the Club continue and enforce its policy of requiring that participants provide boats by the second year of the sailing program because it is the least costly and fairest way to defray the cost of acquiring and maintaining the necessary boats. For families with multiple children in the program, it is only necessary to provide ONE boat. It was agreed that this information needs to be included in lesson literature and on the club website. ***(It is also recommended that the Board send correspondence to past participants outlining the need to provide a boat for lessons after the first year.)***

What should be the beginning instruction boat for TPYC?

There are many one-design sailboats that could be used for basic instruction. Each potential choice involves compromise of considerations of safety, cost, availability, durability, stability, load carrying capability, performance and suitability for interclub or regional competition for the student sailors.

The Turnabout was chosen for TPYC in 1958. It is relatively inexpensive – used fiberglass boats run from \$500 to \$2000. It is simple to rig and sail. It will carry a substantial load for a boat so small, making it popular with adults as well as children. It is stable and forgiving for the beginner. If well maintained, the boat won't sink. It performs well enough to provide good intermediate training, and can be fitted with a spinnaker which makes for a job for a second crew, and teaches teamwork (not to mention giving the kids something to brag about).

The Turnabout is durable and relatively inexpensive to maintain, and there are, at least for now, used Turnabouts available in northern New England. If we look hard we can probably find several in local barns.

TPYC's choice of the Turnabout was affirmed by the choice of at least half a dozen Maine Yacht Clubs to use this class over the years. Some have switched to the Optimist (a one person boat) but a number continue to teach in Turnabouts.

It is logical to ask why not switch to the FJ's or the Optis currently owned by the Club. The short answer is that the FJ's are a lot of boat for a beginning sailor, and the Optis are not enough boat for multiple crew or for adults to comfortably sail. Additionally, we only have two Optis, and though many clubs use them for beginner lessons, the committee does not feel they meet the all around benefits of the Turnabouts as outlined above. **It is recommended that the Club continue to use the FJ's for advanced sailors, and the Optis be used to provide additional sailing experience in another class to beginner and intermediate sailors, where possible.**

In short, we found no good reason to change the decision that was made 51 years ago. The Turnabouts work, and they are our least costly alternative, because we already have half a dozen among the membership and are confident more can be found at attractive prices. **We recommend that the Board continue the use of the Turnabout class for the Club fleet.**

At what age should children be eligible to participate in the lesson program? Most other comparable clubs allow children as young as eight years old at the start of the season to participate in sailing lessons. As TPYC requires a swim test, it is recommended that the age for lessons be dropped to eight years old as long as the child can pass the swim test and the child is able to follow instructions.

How can we help families find appropriate boats to participate in the sailing program? How can we help resolve members concerns about maintenance?

We recommend that TPYC create a non-voting board position (or positions) of Fleet Captain for the Turnabouts and FJs. The fleet captain(s) should, if at all possible, be adults with experience sailing. The Fleet Captain's duties should be:

Promote boat ownership by informing members, especially new members of the rules concerning boats ownership in the sailing program.

Maintain and publicize an inventory of boats owned by members and advertise and actively seek member buyers for boats that are for sale.

Protect the investment of members who buy boats by maintaining a market for their resale within the club when they wish to sell the boat.

Collect literature on the class, its maintenance, rigging and sailing and make that literature available to interested members.

Identify vendors and tradesmen who can supply parts and maintenance beyond the ability or interest of boat owners and publicize this information to members.

Encourage participation in sailing by adults as well as children by explaining the concept of one-design sailing, being an advocate to the Board and membership for more sailing programs, regattas and events outside the instruction program as well as within.

There was also much discussion of the need for greater adult involvement in sailing at TPYC to drive success in the sailing program. Many more parents today are non-sailors than in the past, and all agreed that this has negatively impacted boat ownership and use outside of lessons, fleet maintenance and even program participation. More adult lessons, more parent-child events (both serious competition and "fun" races a la the annual balloon race), and more adult sailing/social opportunities may drive sailboat ownership of Taylor Pond and may also provide the impetus to return sailing to the position it once held as the raison d'être of TPYC.

To summarize the committee's recommendations:

The committee recommends that the Club continue and enforce its policy of requiring that participants provide boats by the second year of the sailing program

That participants be notified of this requirement via correspondence this spring and on all lesson literature and on the TPYC website

That TPYC continue the use of Turnabouts as the official club fleet for beginner sailors, with additional training on the 2 club owned Optis where possible

That TPYC develop a separate reserve fund for maintenance of the FJ's and the Optis to ensure they are maintained into the future

That the Board create a non-voting position (or positions) of Fleet Captain for the purpose promoting recreational sailing and ASSISTING with fleet maintenance. It should be noted that this position will not be responsible for maintaining the fleet, but rather will be a liaison between the Board and members to aid in fleet maintenance.

Respectfully submitted, February, 2011 by the Ad Hoc Youth Sailing Committee:

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