Club Structure and Activities

The club's organizational structure is based on the members who are not expected to be boat owners. The members run most of the club activities on a voluntary basis. The only exception to voluntarism consists in hiring paid CYA certified instructors for our sailing classes. This needs to be done for the reasons of safety, insurance, consistent teaching, and recognition of our sailing courses by CYA.

Our boats belong to the club. A large part of the club budget goes towards the scheduled fleet replacement. Boats in our club and in the adjacent community clubs are maintained significantly better than boats owned by most other clubs. This results from the organizational structure of the club developed to satisfy the needs of both the novice sailors and the accomplished racers. Maintenance of the boats is performed by members who have an interest in having fast, well maintained boats for racing. Without these members giving a lot of volunteer time the club could not operate. Still, all our boats are used for teaching, pleasure sailing, and racing. Club house, grounds, docks, and power boats which are used to provide safety, to teach sailing, and to assist in running races are also maintained by volunteer members.

Sailing activities of our members include pleasure sailing. It is very unusual to be able to pleasure sail regularly without owning a boat and at a fraction of the cost of boat ownership. When you add sailing a well maintained boat rather than a regular rental craft the experience is not significantly different from the pleasures of boat ownership, but is available to members of the public who would not be able to afford sailing otherwise. All members with the skill level equivalent of White Sail 3 have an unlimited access to boats, except for Hobie Cats, where additional qualification is needed. There are no additional fees or waiting lists for pleasure sailing. Our club provides enough boats for pleasure sailing needs most of the time. Safety on the water is provided by three power boats, which are always rigged to leave immediately whenever there is any one sailing. The club organizes pleasure sailing activities regularly.

The teaching activities of the club comprise at least three White Sail 3 courses for adults every sailing season. St James Town Sailing Club and other community clubs provide a rare opportunity for adults to learn to sail dinghies. For insurance reasons the club admits only members over the age of 19. In the interest of developing sailing in the community, the club subsidizes White Sail 3 courses. The instructors are always CYA certified to

insure the standard of teaching. The club provides a number of other sailing courses such as Bronze 4, Bronze 5, skills building course, Spring Tune up, etc. From time to time (most years) in conjunction with Cabbagetown Youth Centre, the club organizes a sailing camp for underprivileged children.

The Outer Harbour is not only the best dinghy pleasure sailing venue in Toronto, but the dinghy clubs make it into a thriving racing community. All the sailors are welcome to events organised by each club. Thus, on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week, Outer Harbour Centreboard Club runs multi-class races attended also by the community club sailors. Water Rat Sailing Club runs Laser races on the same days. Community club sailors participate in these races too. Every Friday night of the season, the Albacore fleet runs races for Albacores and Lasers (with separate starts). These Albacore races are probably the best attended weekly one-design races in North America with a multiple year average of 50 boats participating weekly. Annually, the fleet organizes at least 6 regattas in Toronto every season. In addition to Friday Night Races and regattas, the fleet organizes races on 8 Sundays of the sailing season. Our Albacore fleet is not only big, but also highly competitive. There are former Olympians as well as former and present Canadian Champions sailing in our fleet. Among others, our club members have considerable racing achievements. Last year, for example, the teams composed of our club members finished 1st and 3rd in Canadian Albacore Championships.

Most of the club members race in the same boats we use for teaching and pleasure sailing (for an additional fee, the club allows members to keep private boats on the grounds, subject to the club's needs and priorities). In exchange for boat maintenance, boat captains have a priority to use specific boats for racing. However, only a specified number of boats can be used for any racing event, so that there are enough boats available for pleasure sailors and racing sign-up lists are independent of the boat captain function (i. e. any member can sign up). Thus all the members, regardless of their volunteer function in the club, can participate in racing. Moreover, sign-up for Friday Night Races is individual, rather than as teams (people sign up as either crew or skippers) and is followed by a draw of sailing teams, thus allowing helping new members to improve their skills and to learn from other club members.