

Gosford Sailing

Academy Report

July 2025 – June 2026

Summary

The 2025–26 season represented a period of growth, program development and strengthened capability for the Gosford Sailing Academy. The Academy continued to expand its program portfolio, strengthen strategic partnerships and reinforce structured participation and performance pathways. Over the past three seasons, the Academy has developed into a coordinated sailing development system spanning introductory participation, junior racing, adult education and competitive sailing pathways. This progression has been supported by sustained participation growth, expanded community engagement and the successful delivery of major regattas, demonstrating increasing capability, operational capacity and long-term sustainability.

A defining achievement during the reporting period was the continued growth and success of junior sailing. The successful delivery of the Sail Gosford Open Skiff New South Wales State Championships marked the first occasion Gosford Sailing Club has hosted a regatta for the class and the return of junior state championship racing to the Club. The event attracted 43 competitors from across New South Wales and Queensland and demonstrated the Club's capacity to deliver major youth sailing events to a high standard. This was complemented by strong performances from junior sailors at State, National and International competitions, and the establishment of an Open Skiff fleet, which has grown to eleven privately owned boats within the season. This growth reflects the successful transition of participants into club racing and the strong commitment of families to ongoing training and competition.

Participation remained strong across all Academy activities. During the 2025–26 season, the Academy recorded 583 program registrations, comprising 201 in children's and youth programs, 133 in adult programs, 86 in Discover Sailing experiences and 163 in other introductory pathway initiatives. Continued investment in structured participation pathways has strengthened progression from introductory sailing through to club racing, adult development and competitive sailing pathways. The introduction and expansion of initiatives including the Adult Dinghy Learn to Sail Program, the Remote-Controlled Yacht STEM Program and the Interschool Sailing Program has further diversified the Academy's offering and broadened engagement across new participant groups.

Program retention and participant progression continued to improve through subsidised after-school training, coaching support at major regattas and structured class transition opportunities. Collectively, these initiatives have strengthened the Academy's integrated development pathway and contributed to increased participation, improved retention and greater engagement across all programs.

Junior Sailing

The Junior Sailing Pathway continued to focus on retaining sailors aged 10–17 years through accessible, engaging and development-focused programs supporting progression into competitive club and regional racing.

To support this, the Academy delivered a range of initiatives including weekly fleet racing coaching, class trial days, access to association boats for transitioning sailors, subsidised after-school training, and structured social sailing activities. A collaborative Fun Sail with Saratoga Sailing Club strengthened relationships between the two clubs while providing sailors with the opportunity to explore new sailing environments and build connections with their peers. These initiatives were complemented by the successful delivery of the NSW Open Skiff State Championships at Gosford, with standout results from junior sailor Phoenix Oppedisano who placed 1st in the Silver Fleet.

Academy junior sailors achieved strong results at the Open Skiff Class National Championships at Manly Yacht Club, including:

- 1st Intermediate Fleet – Hugo Fergus
- 6th Intermediate Fleet – Miles Chadwick
- 13th Intermediate Fleet – Phoenix Oppedisano
- 21st Intermediate Fleet – Evan Wood
- 23rd Intermediate Fleet and Sportsmanship Award – Finn

Walker Additional recognition included:

- Junior Fleet Open Skiff Champion – Miles Chadwick
- Junior Mixed Fleet Champion – Elizabeth Fergus
- Junior Fleet Encouragement Award – Madeleine Puth
- 12 sailors representing Gosford at the NSW Youth Sail Regatta and Australian Sailing Training Clinic
- 2 sailors, Hugo Fergus and Finn Walker representing Gosford internationally at the Open Skiff Class Nationals in New Zealand

Special acknowledgement is given to Junior Fleet Captain Andrew Fergus and Junior Fleet Coach Sam Grilk for their leadership and commitment to junior fleet development and weekly racing throughout the season.

School Programs

The Academy continued to strengthen long-standing school partnerships and expand engagement through structured education-based sailing programs.

- 38 students completed the St Joseph's Marine Studies sailing and powerboat program, reflecting a six-year partnership with St Joseph's Catholic College
- 12 University of Sydney exchange students participated in a Discover Sailing Experience session
- 32 students participated in the Interschool Sailing Program across Central Coast schools. These programs continue to connect classroom learning with practical on-water experience.

Adult Learn to Sail Programs

Adult participation remained strong, with 219 registrations across Adult Learn to Sail and Discover Sailing Experience programs.

A key development was the expansion of adult pathways to include both dinghy and keelboat training streams, providing structured progression into ILCA dinghy and yacht fleet racing.

Investment in training resources included the acquisition of four ILCA dinghies for Academy programs and the ongoing refurbishment of the Club's Magic 25 fleet. These developments will enhance training capacity and strengthen pathways into club racing.

SheSails Program

The SheSails program continued to expand opportunities for women and girls through targeted participation and development initiatives. Across May-June, 22 women and girls participated in training and racing activities designed to build skills, confidence and engagement in sailing.

A highlight was the Try Sailing Day in the Waszp class, introducing young female sailors aged 12–17 to foiling under the guidance of Gosford Sailing Club representative Bridget Conrad, supported by the Waszp Class Association.

The annual SheSails Regatta was also conducted during this period, with 14 competitors participating across Magic 25 and ILCA classes. The introduction of a second ILCA division reflected continued growth in participation and capability. The event also featured Under-21 World Championship bronze medalist Frances Beebe and Olympian Carolijn Brouwer, who provided coaching and mentoring support as well as Local of Parliament Liesl Tesch who attended the awards ceremony.

The Academy acknowledges the contribution of volunteers, coaches and the SheSails organising team, with special thanks to Minkang Kim Sankey, Peter Walsh and Charles Hill.

Community Engagement and Program Development

Community engagement initiatives continued to broaden participation pathways across all age groups.

The Remote-Controlled Yacht STEM Program continued to expand in partnership with the Remote-Controlled Yacht Group, integrating sailing and STEM-based learning and providing a pathway into Junior Tackers and Interschool Sailing programs. Fleet Captain Mark Ferguson is acknowledged for his efforts in supporting the program's delivery.

The Academy also continued its partnership with Saltwater Veterans, providing introductory sailing experiences and structured participation opportunities, with further development planned for the 2026–27 season.

The Academy was also recognised nationally through inclusion in Australian Sailing's *Discover Sailing Centre in Focus* series, highlighting its contribution to participation and community engagement.

The article is available to read here:
<https://www.sailing.org.au/news/discover-sailing-centre-in-focus-gosford-sailing-club?noskin=1>

Acknowledgements

The Academy's achievements throughout the reporting period have been made possible through the professionalism, expertise and commitment of its instructors, coaches and volunteers. Their dedication has ensured the consistent delivery of high-quality programs, safe operating practices and an inclusive environment supporting participation, skill development and performance at every level.

Their ongoing contribution remains fundamental to the continued success of the Academy and the future growth of sailing at Gosford Sailing Club.

Sophie McIntosh

Sailing Academy Manager

GSC ILCA Fleet – 2025/26 Season Wrap-Up

We had a successful 2025/26 season, with active club racing and strong participation in ILCA Association events when they were able to proceed. The fleet held steady with 35 members, and most Saturdays saw on average 26 boats out on the water — a healthy turnout that brought energy and competition to the season.

Throughout the year, we completed 25 races – 20 pointscore races along with 5 Club Championships. Unfortunately, we did have a record number of races postponed due to – too much wind, no wind, too hot & a bush fire day.

Championship heats, which formed the backbone of our racing calendar.

Congratulations to our Club Champions: Jack Sprague in the ILCA 7, Leslie Druyf in the ILCA 6, and Amelia Thorne in the ILCA 4.

The overall Season Pointscore was taken out by John Payne who showed consistent practice and participation reflects a successful handicap result.

Special mention goes to David Edmiston, who was the standout sailor in this year's Ron Thompson Sprint Series, and to Alan Downes, who took home the Charlie Clark Trophy after achieving the most handicap wins during the Club Championship series. Championship runners-up included Chales Dorron in the ILCA 7, Justine Gowland-Ella in the ILCA 6, and Jane Humphris in the ILCA 4 — each showing consistent and competitive form across the series.

Another significant trophy recipient this season was Teresa Michell, who was awarded the John Rigg Trophy. Meanwhile, the Wally Cook Memorial Trophy for Most Improved Sailor went to Eddie Cleverly, in recognition of the steady progress and dedication he demonstrated throughout the year.

It was great to see many of our sailors travelling to events around the country, representing GSC with pride. A particular highlight was seeing our junior sailors take part in the ILCA Nationals in Hobart. The club was pleased to support their involvement by covering the race entry costs. Congratulations to Amelia Thorne, Eddie Cleverly & Jonnie Luther for making the trip and competing at that level.

The Australian Masters was held in Port Stephens this year. Over 12 of our members make the trip to represent the club. Well done to Les Druyf with our best result at 16th.

A sincere thank you goes to our Board of Directors for ensuring we had the equipment and infrastructure in place to support racing at GSC. Your support plays a crucial role in making each season possible.

Thanks as well to Commodore Stephen Luther and President Greg Humphries for your steady leadership and commitment to the club. I'd also like to acknowledge Charlie, our Principal Race Officer, for handling the many decisions and responsibilities throughout the season, and to our dedicated club race officials who volunteered their time and helped keep things running smoothly.

A big thank you to Kevin Phillips for another year of service as our scorer and Secretary.

Yours in sailing,

Mark Greenwood

Laser Fleet Delegate

International Contender Fleet – Season Report 2025/2026

Gosford Sailing Club

The 2025/26 season was an outstanding year for the Gosford Sailing Club's International Contender fleet, marked by strong representation at major championships, consistent club racing, and continued growth within the class. Our sailors competed with distinction at state, national, and world level events, showcasing both depth and dedication across the fleet.

2025 World Championship

Fraglia Vela Malcesine – Lake Garda, Italy

168 competitors

Gosford Results:

5th – Sam Ellis

33rd – John Humphries

44th – James Ellis

96th – Brian Pike

A remarkable performance on the world stage, highlighted by Sam Ellis securing a top-five finish against a highly competitive international fleet.

2025 NSW State Titles - Hosted by Gosford Sailing Club

Gosford Results:

2nd – Sam Ellis

6th – John Humphries

7th – James Ellis

10th – Brian Pike

14th – Ross Hansen

15th – David Law

A strong home-ground showing with Sam on the podium.

2026 Australian Championships - LMASC – Sunshine, Lake Macquarie

Gosford Results:

3rd – Sam Ellis

14th – John Humphries

16th – Tony Arends

18th – Brian Pike

21st – Ross Hansen

24th – James Ellis

Another excellent national regatta for the club, with Sam Ellis once again finishing on the podium.

Gosford Sailing Club – Season Results

Club Pointscore

1st – Sam Ellis

2nd – John Humphries

3rd – David Law

Club Championship

1st – Sam Ellis

2nd – Brian Pike

3rd – John Humphries

Season Highlights

This season saw consistently competitive racing across the fleet, with close results and strong participation throughout the year.

A special mention goes to Sam Ellis, who delivered an exceptional season across all levels of competition, achieving podium finishes at state, national, and world events.

We were also pleased to welcome Grant Robson, a highly competitive sailor and multi-club champion, who joined our fleet late in the season and has already contributed positively to the strength of our racing group.

Acknowledgements

The International Contender fleet extends its sincere thanks to all club staff, race officials, volunteers, and support crews. Your ongoing commitment and hard work make it possible for us to enjoy high-quality racing every weekend. Your efforts are appreciated by every sailor in the fleet.

John Humphries

Contender Fleet Representative



Gosford Sailing Club

Central Coast Etchells Fleet

Fleet Captains Report - Season 2025-26

July 2026

The Gosford fleets season started once more with the hard stand full with 10 Etchells. Sailing commenced with the opening Sprint series won by AUS1392 Tally Ho. The spring series opened with light and variable weather leading to two abandoned races. The season continued in this way with a total of six abandoned races for light air or high temperatures (>38DEG forecasted 40Deg +) which is unusual. The season was closely contested with 4 different boats winning races, average race fleet of 6 -7 and a 100% fleet turn out for a few races. The Most Fastest times for the season was taken out by AUS970 Pointless. For next season the calendar will feature additional 2 race days to bring the number of races in each series to the target 8 races bring discards into play to closeup the scoring.

The overall series scoring system for this season summed the finishing positions in the individual Spring, Summer, Autumn series. The season point score on scratch results: 1st AUS1392 Tally Ho, 2nd AUS950 Valsheda, 3rd AUS970 Pointless. The season handicap point score results: 1st AUS869 Dianne, 2nd AUS950 Valsheda, 3rd AUS1291 The Don. Perpetual Club championship winning boat AUS 970 Pointless was steered to victory in the club championship by Peter Rivers, crewed by Brent Conner and David Poole. 2nd AUS1392 Tally Ho, 3rd AUS869 Dianne.

The NSW championships were held at Gosford fleet greatly supported by the club and the assistance of the Laser fleet. Boat travelled from Victoria, QLD and Sydney fleets to join the regatta resulting in a solid fleet of 27 boats. The regatta was won by the international entry AUS1482 Racer CC, Mark Thornburrow with now World Champion "team Magpie" in second. Top placed Gosford boat was AUS970 Pointless taking 10th. Don Wilson travelled to Perth flying the GSC flag, leasing a boat for the WA champs and national championships. Don and his crew of Peter McNeil and Andrew Smith were 5th and 6th overall respectively, with multiple podiums and a race win in the WA champs.

Thanks to the GSC sailing management and volunteers for their ongoing support of our sport and the Etchells fleet.

Best wishes to all fleets for an uninterrupted season from the Central Coast Etchells Fleet.

George Johnstone

Gosford Fleet Captain

GSC Yacht Fleet 2025/26 Season Report

The Yacht Fleet continues to be one of the Club's most diverse and well-supported fleets.

This season marked the committee's first under its new management structure, developed with the guidance and support of Past Commodore Tony Clarke. The restructure was designed to create a more efficient, inclusive, and transparent management model. We believe these objectives have been achieved through a smaller management committee, supported by the fleet's Technical Committee, which operates independently while reporting to the Management Committee. I would like to sincerely thank Tony Clarke for his guidance during the transition, and Commodore Steve Luther for his ongoing support of the fleet.

Off the water, the committee successfully managed an extensive sailing program comprising 27 events, 62 races over 55 sailing days, and more than 210 competitors. During the season, we placed a strong focus on improving compliance and safety. My thanks go to Geoff Dillworth for his work in compliance, and to David and Sonia Dougherty for their commitment to improving safety across the fleet.

One of the most significant improvements this season has been our communication. Tim Wheeler and Rob Hook have done an outstanding job in this area, greatly improving the way we communicate with members and competitors. Thank you both for your dedication and effort.

On the water, our events have been exceptionally well run thanks to the efforts of Rob Hook, Charlie, Varun, and John Walton. Our successful Twilight Series was once again expertly overseen by David and Sonia Dougherty, and I thank them for their continued commitment. The social gatherings following the Twilight races continue to be well attended and remain an important part of the fleet's camaraderie.

One disappointment this season was the delay in publishing Sunday race results. The issue was not with the results software itself, but rather the timely transfer of the raw race data to the person responsible for processing the results. Pleasingly, there were no handicap issues or complaints throughout the season.

Feedback received through the Sailing Forum has led to several programming improvements for the coming season. The Twilight Series will now consist of a single 20-race competition, with seven discard races, eliminating the confusion caused by the previous fortnightly handicap system. The Club Championship will continue to be sailed across two divisions and will consist of 10 races—six windward/leeward races and four triangular passage races.

Finally, I would like to thank all members of the Yacht Fleet Committee for their commitment and contribution throughout the season. Your support has been instrumental in the fleet's continued success. I would also like to thank Paul Gulliksen for his ongoing support of the fleet.

After 35 years of involvement in sailing management, I will be stepping back from the role at the conclusion of this season. It has been a rewarding journey and a privilege to serve the Yacht Fleet. I believe that over the past few years we have established a strong foundation for the future, and I wish the incoming committee every success in the years ahead.

Peter Walsh

Yacht Fleet Captain

Gosford Sailing Club – RC Division – AGM Update

I am pleased to update the club on the progress the RC Division has made in becoming a more integrated part of the sailing division at Gosford Sailing Club.

We implemented several changes during the 2025/26 season in how our racing was being conducted, the focus on communication within the Division and an expansion of our fleet to include the DF 95 Class.

We are fortunate to be part of an ever-growing Sailing cohort that is now attracting a lot of interest and support.

The RC division sails one design – out of the box RC yachts - DF 65 and DF 95 – the numbers indicate the length of each yacht.

The growth of the DF sailing community and the Australian DF Radio Sailing Association Inc.

@April 26

- The growth of the DF class is heading towards 2550 + registered sailors and by comparison, double that of all other RC classes in Blue ..it should be noted that the DF class is principally a social sailing class, as only 12% attend the sanctioned racing events.
- Globally there are over 80k registered boats
- Class development includes:
 - Youth inspire program by Sail GP
 - Aus Sailing in school program
 - 2028 Aus bid for Global DF 65 class regatta – Qld

GSC – RC Division

Our number of skippers has increased slightly with the introduction of the DF 95 class with 10-14 skippers joining us weekly. Our group's core principles are:

- Connecting with the community
- Conducting competitions
- Encouraging companionship and social engagement.

Community -Open days and TRY RC days

Competitions – Regular club and inter-club competitions to improve skills and recognise achievements.

Companionship – Offer low-risk, low-cost activities akin to “**Men’s Shed on the Water**”, fostering social support.

Our activities for the year included:

1. **Inter-club competitions** – Compete against local clubs.
2. School holidays, **learn to sail RC program** supported by ADFRS Association.
SailLAB: Bringing sailing to the classroom, utilising the DF 65 Class
3. **Father/Grandfather sailing events** where family members sail as teams.
4. Continue to expand RC sailing to include the DF 95 class.
5. Assign volunteers specific responsibilities to aid in the smooth running of events

Activities within 2025/26

Our interclub competitions have now become a regular part of our racing fixtures, growing to be 4 events per year. (35 skippers registered to sail at the next event)

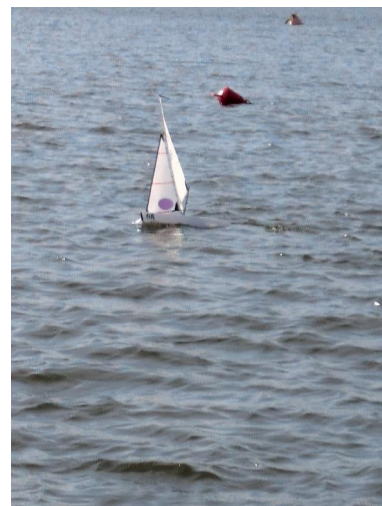
The Interclub competition has been expanded to include other clubs along the Central Coast – Port Hunter – North Sydney clubs



Junior Sailing Events

Supported by the Gosford Sailing Academy, the RC division organised three additional events for junior sailors as a continuation of the program initiated in 2023/24.

The objective of the events was to augment the junior sailing courses offered by the club, providing an opportunity for junior skippers to apply their newly acquired skills in a series of competitive racing events



RC Yachts STEM Program

KIDS & TEENS



Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics
in SAILING

STEM PROGRAM CERTIFICATE

This certificate is proudly presented to

Liam McEvoy

This certificate recognizes your participation in the
Level 1 RC Yacht STEM Program at Gosford Sailing Club.
Congratulations!



Our Plans for 2026/27

We will focus on:

- Connecting with the community
- Conducting competitions
- Social engagement for all participants

Our junior sailing program is now a key feature, linking in with the Australian Sailing Schools Program – **SailLAB**: Bringing sailing to the classroom, utilising the DF 65 Class.

[Home](#) [About SailLAB](#) [Primary Modules](#) [Secondary Modules](#) [SailLAB Experience Day](#) [Contact Us](#) [FAQs](#)

SailLAB
AUSTRALIAN SAILING STEM EDUCATION

Bringing sailing to the classroom!

SailLAB is a new initiative that brings the sport of sailing to the classroom through a custom 'built-by-teachers' STEM education program, linked to the Australian Curriculum.

By integrating Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic concepts into the classroom, we aim to inspire the next generation of sailors, innovators and leaders. Our program offers engaging experiences and challenges designed to spark curiosity, foster critical thinking and open doors to exciting STEM careers connected to the world of sailing!

Continue to expand the Interclub competitions featuring both DF 65 and DF 95 classes, and a TRI-club event with Gosford, Wangi, and Port Hunter clubs, where we can expect over 30 + competitors on the water.

We will expand our club events to include skills sessions with a focus on:

- Match Racing
- Boat setup and tuning
- Family and friends' program
- Sailing tactics and rules

Thanks, **Mark Ferguson**

RC Division Coordinator.

