

YMCA OF CANBERRA SAILING CLUB
CREWED BOATS FOR JUNIORS COMPARISON
(AND USEFUL COMMENTS FOR SENIORS)

On Owning a Boat

If you have never owned a boat before here are some consider points.

Hulls

Modern fibre glass hulls are normally fairly rugged and are also easy to repair. However, the hulls of high performance classes are built as lightly as possible and in some classes can be fragile. Timber hulls can be very strong, but need more maintenance.

Sails

Sails wear out. However, a new sail should remain competitive for 2-3 seasons or more, depending on usage. Many second-hand boats come with more than one set of sails. This allows older sails to be used for training. A new set of sails for a 125 (Jib, Main and Spinnaker) would be \$1200 to \$1500. Note that sails can be bought separately or as a set.

Masts and Shrouds

Should last for a long time. Masts can break. Frequency depends on the class, with some classes (such as Pacers) having robust masts, with breakages rare. Mast of higher performance boats are designed to be as light as possible and may need to be replaced more frequently. Typical mast lives are more than 5 years.

If a mast breaks, the usual action is to purchase a new mast blank and transfer the mast fittings from the old mast. This can reduce the cost of a replacement.

Depreciation

Some classes of boats are development classes. That is, within some overall limits, individual boats can be designed to optimise performance. To be competitive in a development class you will need a fairly modern boat. Older hulls may be fun to sail and cheap but are not competitive. An example is the NS14 class. These type of boats depreciate quickly.

Other classes are rigidly controlled. With some classes hulls and fittings can only be purchased from manufacturers licensed by the Class Association (e.g. Lasers). Older hulls fitted with modern masts and sails can be very competitive.

With some classes the design is strictly controlled, but as long as boats and equipment measure (meet design requirements) you have choice of suppliers. Again older hulls with good masts and sails can be very competitive.

Boats from controlled classes tend to hold their value. Older and cheap boats can be competitive. Once values get below \$3000 a well maintained boat will have little depreciation.

Boat Selection Criteria

We believe that a first boat should meet the following criteria:

1. It should be a 2 person boat (our Club focus is on crewed boats);
2. It should have a full range of sail controls (to allow sailors to develop their skills);
3. The forward hand should be on a trapeze (to lead into Sharpies and the Australian Sailing Junior High Performance Pathway);
4. It should be sailed in sufficient numbers to offer good competition;
5. It should not be too large for smaller juniors;
6. It should not cost a fortune; and
7. It should be easy to maintain.

Comparison Table

Class	AS Pathway	Minimum Price	Competitive Price	Selection Criteria Met	Comments
420	Yes	\$3500	\$7000	All except 6	Hulls can get soft with age, making them uncompetitive.
29er	Yes	\$3000	\$8000	All except 6	Not an entry level boat. Requires prior experience on boats such 420s or 125s.
125	No				
Timber		\$1500	Same	All except 7	Timber boats must be maintained in good condition. If not they can deteriorate quickly.
Fibreglass		\$3200	Same	All	Significantly more expensive than a timber boat. Easier to maintain.
MG14	No	\$3500	Same	All except 5	Quite a bit larger than a 125. A handful for a couple of 14 year olds.
Sharpie	No			All except 5	Juniors can crew or skipper a Sharpie. However, a minimum age of 16 is recommended.

If you would like further advice please contact the Club. We will arrange for you to talk to someone with experience in the class you are interested in.