

RAYC Academy Pathway Progression Guidelines

This progression pathway guideline document is designed to ensure that all of our sailors can follow a positive, encouraging, and sustainable journey through different sailing classes as they develop their skills and grow older.

Before each sailor progresses to the next stage in their sailing path, or transitions to a new class of boat, they will need to be assessed and guided by our RAYC Academy coaching team. This is to help ensure that the sailors are ready for the next step and they have the necessary skills to move into a more advanced level or class of boat. Our number one priority is to make sure that all of the sailors in the RAYC enjoy their sailing as much as possible, keeping sailors at the best level for them is the best way for them to continue learning at the right pace for them and helps us to create an environment in which sailors can love the sport and enjoy sailing for their whole life. Once sailors have been given the go-ahead from their coaches they can progress to a new class of boat!

Each class of boat offers a slightly different experience and allows sailors to work on slightly different skills while out sailing. There are options for everyone within the RAYC Academy, regardless of where sailors want to go with the sport – some sailors are very race focussed and will follow the competitive pathway, others just enjoy being out on the water and practicing their skills, going on destination sails and maximising their fun on the water. There are also some health & safety factors that will impact any sailors' pathway, for example we need to ensure that sailors are an appropriate size to progress to a boat with bigger sails to make sure that they can control the boat if it gets windy or being able to right the boat after a capsize! Some of our boats have age/weight guidelines to make sure of this, if you have any questions at all just ask your coach or a senior member of the RAYC Academy team for some answers.

Boat Class Information

Opti Level 1, 2 & 3 (Learn to Sail)

Most sailors start their journey in the sport here, with their Opti Level 1 course and then progressing when they are ready to their Level 2 and Level 3 course. All three of these levels are able to be completed across either an 8-week block during a term, or a 'Fast-Track' format of 4 days in a school holiday programme week. The Opti is a great boat for learning in, it is stable, spacious and loads of fun for beginners! The boats can take one or two sailors and through the levels sailors will learn to handle the Opti all by themselves in a range of conditions. Once sailors complete all the important learning objectives in their level 1, they can progress on to level 2 and level 3 to keep working on their boat handling skills.

Opti Green Fleet (Learn to Race)

Once sailors are ready to move on from Opti Level 3, they generally move on to 'Green Fleet'. This is where sailors learn the basics of how to race their boats in a fun and friendly environment! Green Fleet also uses the Opti class, but sailors transition into an Opti made of fibreglass so it is important that the sailors are confident in how to handle their boats and look after them. Sailors are still able to use club boats at this stage, but they also have the option to use their own boats and start to take

pride in their own boat. Sailors may also start to go to regattas at this stage and start travelling with our RAYC race team!

Opti Open Fleet

The Opti is a great class if your sailors love racing and has enjoyed their time in green fleet! The Opti class has a large fleet, great competition and there is a very active racing circuit of regattas all over New Zealand. To progress into the Opti Open fleet sailors will need to have their own boat to use and race with as well as having the all-clear from their coach to progress into the Open fleet, as well as competing in at least three off-site regattas and getting some good results in green fleet racing.

We provide high-level race coaching from international race coaches for this class and will travel with the race team to regattas. The class is also run by the NZ Opti Association which can offer opportunities for sailors to attend development camps overseas and possibly representing New Zealand at international regattas for the NZ Race Team.

Open Skiff

The Open Skiff is an alternative single-handed pathway for sailors once they have learned some basic skills from the Opti. The Open Skiff is a fast, fun, and exciting class of boat that also offers a competitive pathway but with a greater emphasis on fun. When sailors move into the Open Skiff, they will learn how to sail this type of boat and some different skills from the Opti pathway. Once they have mastered some boat handling, the larger sail area and the more tippy skiff-style boat they will begin racing in this class too. This can be a good pathway for sailors that have outgrown the Opti or just want to go a bit faster!

RS Feva Development & Race

The RS Feva is the worlds most popular double-handed dinghy for youth sailors, it is an established international class with an active global race circuit and a traveller circuit around NZ. RAYC even has had world champions in this class! As well as this, it offers a great platform for learning how to sail double-handed boats and new skills like learning how to use a jib, a spinnaker and working as a team. Sailors tend to progress into the Feva after finishing with Opti Green/Open, Open Skiffs or if sailors start learning how to sail in their teenage years. Once your coach has given the go-ahead to move into the Feva Development class, even though the boat is sailed in pairs there is no need to come to the session with a partner, we can pair up sailors on the session too! Once sailors have mastered the boat handling basics of the Feva class they can look at progressing into the Feva Race class.

The Feva Race groups are working towards getting involved in club racing and/or racing at regattas, working on using racing skills learned in previous classes and travelling with our Feva Race Team. For sailors to move into the Race group they need to be cleared with the coach and the sailors need to be working towards racing in the class.

ILCA Development & Race

Originally known as the Laser, the ILCA dinghy is the worlds' most popular single-handed dinghy and is an Olympic class for both men and women. RAYC owns the largest club fleet of ILCA boats in NZ and we have 15 boats that sailors are able to use on our courses. It is a challenging boat that rewards a comprehensive knowledge of sailing skills, boat handling and tactical knowledge. The boats are expensive and require a good amount of care to look after them, so the sailors that move into the group need to have a good level of proficiency and only sailors fully assessed by our coaches can transition into this class.

Our ILCA Race groups are similar to the Feva Race groups, the sailors in these groups are working towards representing the RAYC Race Team at regattas and sailing for the club.

Starling

The Starling is an awesome class to follow on from sailors racing Optis, it has been the single-handed boat of choice for most of NZ's top sailors across the generations and top sailors like Peter Burling, Simon Cooke and many more grew up racing Starlings. It has a very active racing circuit and is a great performance boat that sailors will learn a lot of new skills from. Sailors are required to have their own Starling to get involved in this class.

29er/Nacra 15

The 29er is the next step up from the RS Feva in the double-handed pathway, it is a high performance, double-handed skiff with a single trapeze and a big asymmetric spinnaker that can get the boat up to high speed which is heaps of fun for sailors racing them. It requires a high level of skill and is a feeder class through the Yachting New Zealand pathway to the Olympic 49er class. We have multiple coaches at RAYC who have achieved top rankings at international 29er regattas so are able to provide top-level coaching within this class. Sailors do need to have their own 29er to get involved in this class.

The Nacra-15 is another option for the double-handed pathway and is a catamaran type boat that is capable of some awesome top speeds and is another class that is heaps of fun. We have some of the Olympic Nacra-17 boats training off the ramp at RAYC and the Nacra-15 is the youth boat that feeds into that class.

Sailors are able to represent New Zealand at the Youth World Championships in the ILCA 6, 29er and Nacra 15.

Progression Guidelines

Outlined below is a rough overview of our RAYC Academy Sailing Pathway and how sailors can move between all of the classes that we offer. Sailors' size, weight, skill level and personal preference will all have an impact on their personal progression. There is no set time for being in each class, it is all about maximising the opportunities for learning for each sailor.

Opti Green Fleet:

- Coach approval to advance from Opti Level 3.



Opti Open Fleet:

- Achieved Top-15 results in Green Fleet Regattas
- Completed at one Optimist National Championships
- Completed one season of RAYC Club Racing
- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach
- Sailor has their own boat

Open Skiff Class:

- At least 11 years old
- Over 40kg
- Competed at a number of green fleet regattas
- Competed at an Optimist National Championships
- Completed one season of RAYC club racing
- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach



RS Feva Development:

- At least 12 years old
- Over 45kg
- Physically able to right a Feva from capsized

RS Feva Race:

- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach
- Strong understanding of spinnaker skills
- Willing and able to start to compete at regattas
- Comfortable sailing in conditions up to 20-25 knots



Starling:

- At least 12 years old
- Over 45kg
- Competed at a range of regattas in previous classes (Opti/Skiff/RS Feva)
- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach.
- Sailor has their own boat.



ILCA (Laser):

- At least 14 years old
- Over 50kg
- Competed at a range of regattas up to and including National Championships.
- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach.

Minimum weights for the ILCA sails are:

- ILCA 4: 50kg
- ILCA 6: 60kg
- ILCA 7: 75kg



29er/Nacra 15:

- At least 15 years old
- Over 50kg
- Achieved good results at major regattas in junior classes.
- Assessed as having the right skills by their coach.
- Sailors have their own boat.



Sailing Program for Schools

The RAYC Academy offers complete sailing program packages for schools, all the way from our learn-to-sail through to secondary school team racing coaching. Our coaching team assesses the needs of each school group and works closely with the school and teachers to make sure we deliver a successful programme, whether it is performance or participation focussed.

Our 420 Team Racing Program is designed to coach how to race the 420 dinghies most efficiently and learning about the specific tactics around team racing. The goal of the program is to compete in either the regional championships, the national championships or both. Lots of our coaching team are highly proficient in teams racing and coaching school teams so that they are ready to compete and represent their school!

For any further information or questions please contact one of the RAYC Academy Team below and we'll be happy to help.

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