**National Sailing Authority should do more - this is a top down problem**

I was in the Golf industry for twenty years. The National groups there spend enormous energy / money bringing kids and women into the sport. The national authorities should be energizing the boat owners to recruit all groups and not just kids. Sailing can be the cheapest sport in the world. To crew all you need is the clothes you arrive in, pretty much, and the owner might even buy you lunch. We should be reaching out to underprivileged to expand their sporting options. There are many benefits being co-ed, and mentoring for youth by owners.

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In addition to US Sailing's Jr Olympics perhaps they could come up with a more inclusive event for the less competitive sailors - a FUN event held in every area of the country-- a Good Time on the water event-- for Kids.

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My kid is still doing the Opti thing, but I think she will grow bored before she ages out-- she will never go to the Worlds, although she can beat many local kids- that isn't enough to retain sailors-- the kids need to have FUN on the water without the intensity of Always worrying about results.

Create an Annual retention event that is so much fun no one wants to quit and miss out on the Best Day on the Water--- Sponsored by U.S. Sailing.

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Multi pronged solution is appropriate although I've selected national organization to provide leadership. It seems high school sailing numbers are increasing, college numbers should follow. Build on the numbers, broad based programs. Multiple tracks should be available, not just the top.

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There needs to be more interest driven by local middle and high schools. Having the sailing team as part of the athletics program would entice more districts to the possibility of competing locally. I know that some high schools in land-locked states would struggle to find adequate facilities or locations, but the states that have ample access to reservoirs and lakes would probably find regional competition a major success. An opportunity for scholarships and such would also provide more motivation for the youth to continue the sport. Case and point, I've lived in Colorado for 24 years since I was 5 years old. The winds are constant (not consistent, great training for shifting winds) and there are plenty of reservoirs in Colorado for sailing, but are there any youth sailing programs? None that I've seen and none offered by any high school that I've heard of.

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I believe US Sailing should consider a program such as Discover Sailing (http://www.discoversailing.org.au/) which the Australian national authority champions. US Sailing should serve as a resource center which gives programs the blueprint/template to be successful. Clubs and sailing organizations need US Sailing produced materials (videos, advertisements, promo pieces) which can be used to recruit new sailors and engage current ones. We also need to promote sailing as a lifelong multi-generational activity not just a sport.

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As President and a member of the Executive Committee of the International Lightning Class Association, we are always looking on how we can attract the post collegiate crowd (20-35 year olds). Our innovative Boat Grant program has helped, but we agree that many alums of highly organized junior programs and collegiate programs just disappear. I think a study to look at the % of people that continue to sail or race post college would be useful. It would also be useful to see the same study done for youth that have aged out of the USODA. The results of these studies might help to initiate new programs to keep this age group engaged in sailing. - John Faus

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While US Sailing should do more, I am fortunate to come from Larchmont and have a club that is busy year round with many active classes of boats supporting a wide age range. This is a widespread problem so it needs all of the three groups mentioned to do more.

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National Authority has made their national events very expensive and discourages many. When my son and his buddies were in the youth competitive mode they were constantly hunting for events to participate in. A bunch of Laser sailors that could compete against one another and then jump into a triple handed boat and win the Sears Cup. No coaches, a clinic wherever they could find one and continued participation everywhere else. Today the National Authority prices the good upcoming sailor out of participation, kids take a look at the fee's and say "are you serious". Take a look at Canada and CORK, entry fees are half, the venue is world class, measurement of one's abilities is a true measure, housing can be had at University for a very reasonable rate. They say you can't go back to yesteryear, well perhaps some thoughts should be given to that concept, make it fun again for everyone. If my gang had had to face those fees they would have never applied for or gone to elims.

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Everyone needs to step up but a national development program needs to come from the top. Most sports have a recreational and competitive development pathway"