



HIGH SCHOOL SAILING EXPLAINED

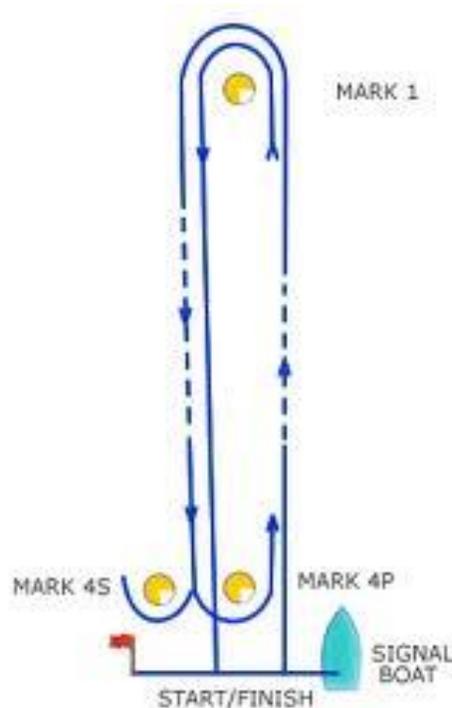
What is High School Sailing all about, and what is my child doing in it?

1. **The Boats** – most of the boats used are called “420s”; these are 14 feet long, and have a main and jib. The boats are dinghys, and do not have a keel – instead they are ballasted, or held down, by the weight of the crew. Some of the sailors will occasionally sail single person boats called “Lasers”, but these are usually the more advanced sailors, and that is only done for part of the season. Chicago Yacht Club also has a fleet of keel boats called Sonars, and these are used for additional training.
2. **The Crew** – The 420s are sailed by 2 person crews; the crews can be co-ed, but there is no requirement that they be mixed. Sailing is a sport that doesn’t rely solely on brawn, so women can compete against men at a very high level. Indeed, teenage girls often have greater attention spans than teenage boys, which gives them an advantage in races.
3. **The Coaches** – The coaches at Chicago Yacht Club are employed by the Club; they train the teams from 6 high schools: Payton; Latin, St. Ignatius, Hinsdale Central, New Trier; and, the Rickover Academy. The High School Program has approximately 100 students in it.
4. **The Yacht Club** – Chicago Yacht Club sponsors the High School Program as part of its Junior Activities. The Club provides the boats, coaches, coach boats, Sailing Center, and liability insurance. The heart of the High School Program is the Sailing Center at Belmont Harbor (the South End).
5. **Practices** - Are held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at CYC Belmont Harbor. Which days a particular sailor sails depends on whether they are on Varsity, Junior Varsity or Freshman teams.
6. **Racing** – Most of the racing takes place at Regattas (a regatta is a series of races). Regattas are generally Saturday and Sunday events, and can be either home or away. “Away” in sailing can be quite far, from Minnesota to Michigan, and occasionally to the

East or West Coast. We belong to the Midwest Interscholastic Association (MISSA), as do many other high schools around the area.

7. **Races** – Fall is the fleet racing season. Fleet races are when the boats all start at the same time (to a series of sound signals), and sail a designated course such as the one below. Spring is Team Racing, which is too complicated to explain here.

TYPICAL WINDWARD-LEEWARD COURSE



8. **Scoring** - Sailing works on low point scoring system, first place receives 1 point, second place 2 points, etc. Most fleet races use 2 Divisions, A & B, which use the same boats in rotation. So for example, the A Division will sail 2 races (a "Set"), and then the B Division will be the next boats in the rotation and sail a Set. The races are relatively short, and sometimes 4 or 5 Sets can be sailed in a day. Most crews have alternate sailors, who will rotate in for one or more of the crews. Teams win or lose based on a combination of their A Division and B Division scores for the entire Regatta. Prizes are also awarded for the top teams in each Division.
9. **Seasons** – The Fall season runs from late August to the middle of November. The Spring season starts when the ice goes off the water, and ends around Memorial Day. There is also a Winter and Summer high school season, which is not school-specific. This is run by the Yacht Club and is the CYC Race Team.

10. **How Do I Join the Team?** – High School sailing has exploded in popularity over the last 5 to 10 years. This growth has strained the resources available to provide a quality program, and we have had to cut sailors in the last couple of years. So the program is not “learn to sail”, but is “learn to race”. Tryouts are held for new sailors in August, and prior sailing experience is strongly encouraged. Many area yacht clubs, including CYC have excellent summer sailing programs, and it is unusual for sailors who do not participate in such a program to make a team.

11. **What are the benefits of Junior Membership?** – CYC allows young person under the age of 23 to join the Club at a reduced rate, and significantly lower dues. For a high school sailor the initiation is currently \$60, and the dues are \$20 per month. For this the sailor receives a substantial discount in the fees associated with the high school program, and full access to the Club.

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