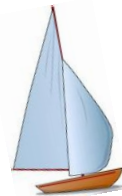




Women and Girls in Sailing

A Survey of Non Sailors



Prepared by Market Solutions Pty Ltd on behalf of Yachting Victoria

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Executive Summary

Yachting Victoria's *Women and Girls in Sailing* project surveyed both female sailors and non sailors on their participation, interests and perceptions on female sailing using an online survey tool.

This report presents findings from a survey of 167 non sailing females (results for current female sailors will be presented in a separate report).

The non sailing females who responded to the survey were predominantly aged 20-59 years and typically live within 20km of the ocean/ bay/ lake.

The following presents some key survey results:

- 98% currently engage in some form of exercise
- 76% believe that they need to be fit and healthy to sail
- 64% indicated the outdoors attracts them to sailing
- 58% are interested in doing a learn to sail course whilst 54% are interested in discovering sailing
- 56% are interested in club roles
- 43% indicated time commitments prevent them from taking up sailing whilst 34% indicated lack of skill

Interest in sailing

Interest in discovering sailing and/or undertaking a learn to sail course was relatively divided with around 1 in 2 expressing interest in one or both. Female only learn to sail courses appear to be more appealing to older non sailors (40 years and over), with the overall preference for a female only course also divided.

Sailing attractions

The outdoors appears to be the main drawcard, cited by 64% as a sailing attraction. The social aspects were also quite appealing, particularly to young people, as were health/ exercise, living close to water and skills development.

Sailing barriers

A number of barriers to sailing were identified, first and foremost time commitments, followed by lack of skills. These barriers were identified by at least 1 in 3 people surveyed. Not knowing how to start, not having someone to go with and other issues such as cost were also commonly cited barriers to sailing.

Executive Summary

Interest in clubs roles

There was a moderate level of interest in club roles, with almost 1 in 3 interested in helping to organise social events. Being on the rescue boat, greeting new members, or an administrator role were also of interest, albeit slightly less so. Notably, older respondents reported more interested in management and administration type roles whereas younger respondents showed more interest in instructing or being on the rescue boat.

Perceptions of fitness

The survey revealed there is a prevailing perception (76%) that you need to be fit and healthy to sail, especially among older non sailors.

Additional comments

Comments revealed some common thoughts and feelings towards the sport and interest in getting involved. Some suggestions were also offered on how to make sailing more appealing and accessible to women.

1.0 Background

Yachting Victoria, supported by VicHealth, conducted research into female participation as part of their *Women and Girls in Sailing* project.

Two surveys were conducted with the following groups to gauge their current perceptions of sailing:

- Female (current) sailors
- Non-sailing females

The questionnaires were developed by Yachting Victoria and administered as online surveys using the “Survey Monkey” online tool.

Female sailors were approached to participate via email whereas non-sailing females were recruited to the survey via a referral process.

A total of 424 responded to the current sailor survey, whilst a total of 167 responded to the non-sailing survey.

Following completion of the surveys, the survey data was provided to Market Solutions, a market research organisation, for analysis and reporting.

This report presents the results from the **Non Sailors** survey.

2.0 The Questionnaire

The non sailors survey questionnaire contained a mix of closed and open ended questions and covered the following key themes:

Non Sailing Females

- Demographics (e.g. age, proximity to water, current forms of exercise engaged in)
- Interest in sailing/ learning how to sail
- Attractions and barriers to sailing
- Interest in yachting club volunteer work
- Additional comments/ suggestions

A copy of the questionnaire can be found at Appendix 1.

3.0 Data Interpretation

For this survey, it is important to note that the design of the questionnaire and the method of survey delivery has had an effect on the way the data was collected and consequently how it should be interpreted.

Specifically, some questions were not answered by all respondents as an answer was not required in order to move onto the next question.

These respondents have been marked as “not answered”. The results to each question need to be carefully interpreted in light of the amount of non-response to each question.

Additionally, some questions did not provide an essential response category, which is the likely reason for the high proportion of non-response to these questions.

For example: Q.4 of the current sailors questionnaire asks: “*Are you interested in training?*” but did not provide an option to tick “No”. This question was answered by only 309 respondents out of the 423 who participated in the survey. It would seem then those who did not answer are likely not interested in training. Interpretation of the results to these questions must be considered in light of the high number of missing responses.

For further discussion on questionnaire design and online survey delivery, please refer to Appendix 3 on Research Design Considerations.

4.0 Research Findings

4.1 Sample Profile

The majority (89%) of non sailors who responded to the survey were aged between 20 and 59 years of age. Few were in the youngest or oldest age groups.

Most (86%) non sailors who responded to the survey also reported that they live within 20km of the ocean, bay or a lake.

➡ It is important to note that these results may not be representative of the female non sailing community as a whole, just the people who responded to the survey. This key point should be kept this in mind when reviewing other results from the survey.



Further analysis identified non sailors aged 40-59 years are more likely to live within 20km of water (87%) whereas non sailors aged 20-39 years are less likely in comparison (82%).

Figure 1: Age Profile of Respondents

Q.1 Which category below indicates your age?

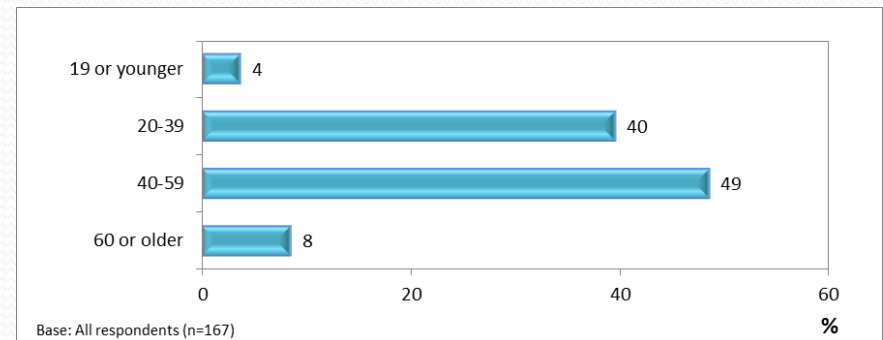
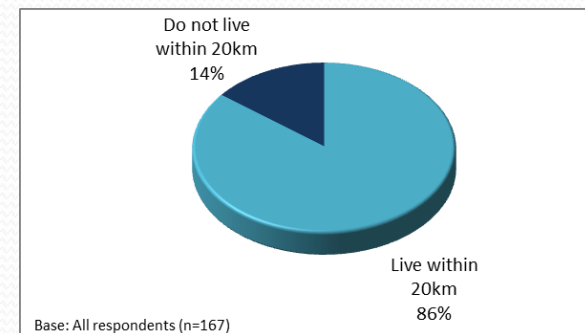


Figure 2: Residential Profile of Respondents Near Water

Q.2 Do you live within 20km of the ocean/ bay / lake?



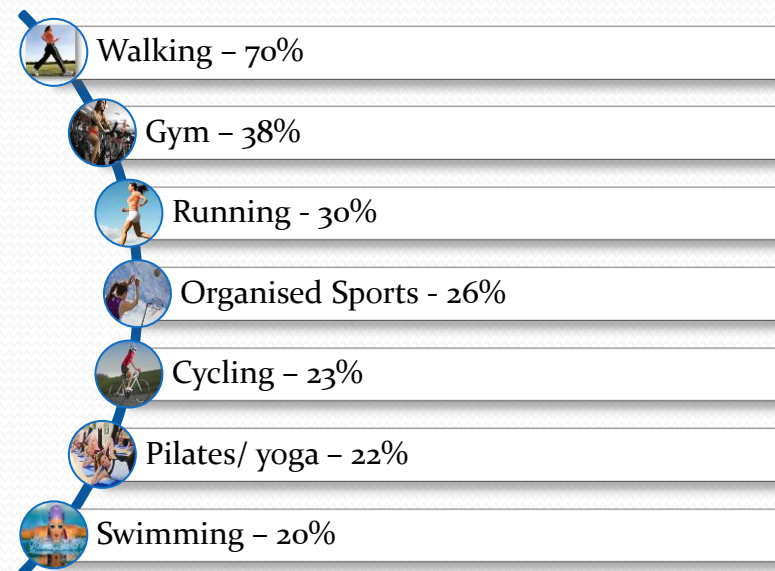
4.1 Sample Profile Continued

Respondents were also asked to indicate what they do for exercise, including any other types of exercise not listed in the questionnaire. Results to this question are shown in Figure 3 opposite.

Overall, almost all (98%) non sailors surveyed reported that they do some form of exercise (as only 2% said that they do not exercise). The most common form of exercise was walking, followed by the gym and running. Around 1 in 4 engage in organised sports such as tennis, netball or golf.

Cycling, pilates/ yoga and swimming were also relatively common sports non sailors are involved in.

Figure 3: Types of Exercise
Q.3 What do you do for exercise?



Base: All respondents (n=167)

Note: Multiple responses accepted, results add to more than 100%

Other results:

Dancing – 8%

Hiking – 7%

Aerobics – 5%

Horse riding – 5%

Other – 5%

Don't exercise – 2%



Further analysis identified participation in walking was much more common among non sailors aged 40 years or older (78%). In contrast younger non sailors more often reported that they engage in gym, running, cycling, or organised sports.

Those who live within 20km of water were more likely to report engaging in gym, running, pilates/ yoga, and in particular swimming compared to those who live further away.

4.2 Interest in Sailing

Just over half (54%) of non sailing respondents surveyed indicated that they are interested in discovering sailing, with a slightly higher number (58%) interested in doing a learn to sail course.

Those who would consider doing a learn to sail course were further asked if they would prefer the course to be run for females only.

Opinions were somewhat divided, although a slightly higher proportion (58%) reported that they did not have a preference for a female only course.



Further analysis revealed a female only learn to sail course was more likely to be preferred by older respondents (46%) compared with younger respondents (36%).

Figure 4: Interest in Sailing

Q.4 Are you interested in discovering sailing?

Q.5 Would you consider doing a learn to sail course?

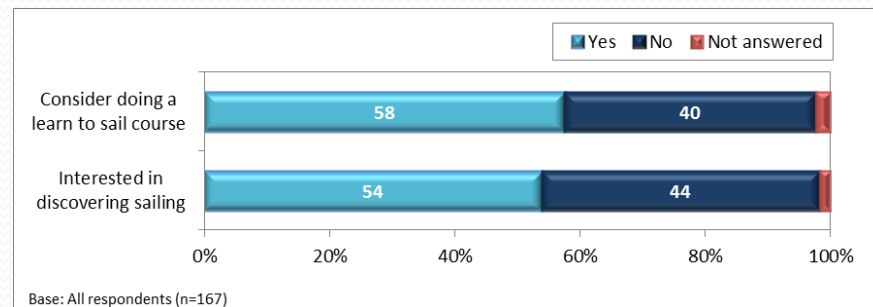
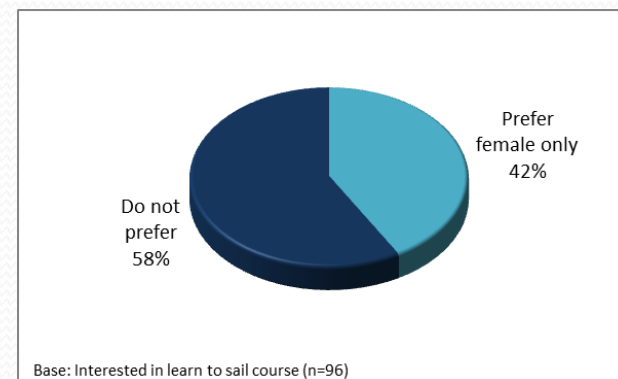


Figure 5: Interest in Female Only Learn to Sail Course

Q.6 If yes, would you prefer the course to be run for females only?



4.3 Sailing Attractions

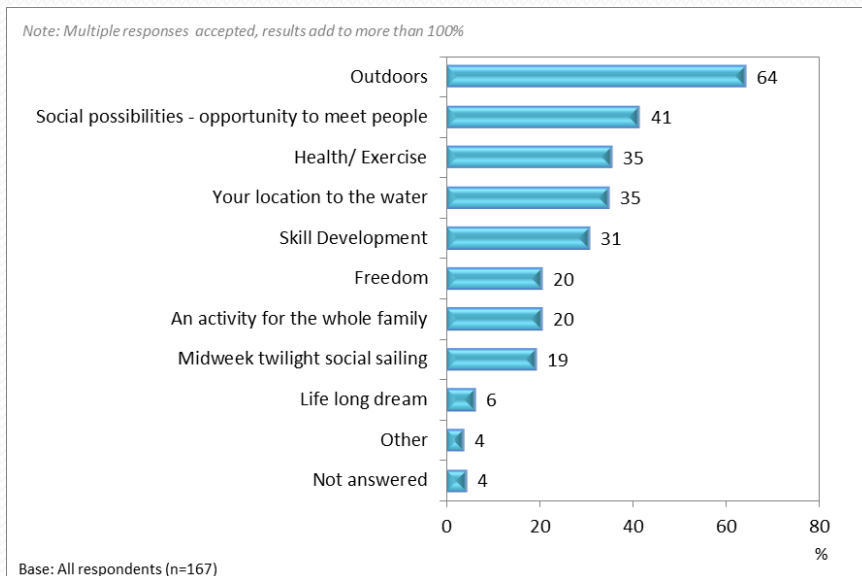
There were many reasons non sailors might be attracted to sailing, the main one being the outdoors (64%).

Other key attractions (cited by at least one third of non sailors) included the social aspects, health/ exercise benefits and skill development. Living close to the water was a similarly attractive drawcard.

Whilst less attractive in comparison, the sense of freedom, being an activity for the whole family, and the idea of midweek twilight social sailing each appealed to 1 in 5 non sailors.

Figure 6: Key Sailing Attractions

Q.7 If you think about sailing, what may attract you to it?



Further analysis revealed the outdoors was the greatest attraction to sailing among younger respondents, whereas older respondents would be attracted to sailing more so for reasons linked with health/ exercise, skill development and being a family activity.

4.4 Sailing Barriers

The two most commonly cited barriers that prevent female non sailors from getting into sailing were time commitments and lack of skill.

1 in 4 said that they would feel out of place and/or do not know how to get started and this is why they haven't gotten into sailing.

Other barriers related to the perceived cost (sailing gear, memberships, owning a boat etc.) or not having someone they could go with or that they knew was already involved and could introduce them to the sailing community.

Safety concerns or a fear of being seasick appear to be minor barriers.

Other barriers captured in verbatim comments related to age, medical issues, dislike of the cold/ wet, and family commitments.



Further analysis revealed lack of skill was more likely to be cited by older non sailors (40 years +) as a reason preventing them for getting into sailing. These individuals were also more likely to have expressed a fear of being seasick as a barrier to sailing.

Figure 7: Sailing Barriers

Q.8 What is preventing you from getting into sailing?

Base: All respondents	Total (n=167)
<i>Note: Multiple responses accepted, results add to more than 100%</i>	
	%
Time commitments	43
Lack of skills	34
Believe you would feel out of place	25
Not knowing how to get started	25
Cost of buying the right sailing gear	22
No one to go with	21
Cost of membership	20
Lack of contacts	16
You feel you need to own your own boat	15
Lack of interest in the past	15
Fear of being seasick	15
Concern for safety	11
Believe there is training required	10
Not interested/ boring	3
Weather	2
Other	10
Not answered	1



4.5 Interest in Club Roles

Respondents were asked to indicate if they were interested in any of the listed yacht/ sailing club roles.

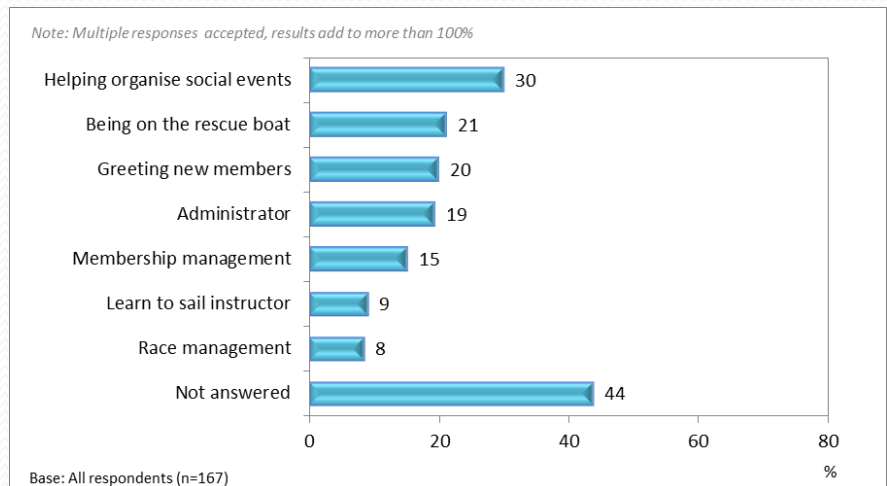
It would seem there is a moderate level of interest, with 56% indicating interest in one or more roles (as 44% did not answer, likely because they are not interested).

Almost 1 in 3 non sailors expressed interest in helping to organise social events. Being on the rescue boat, greeting new members, or an administrator role was each of interest to 1 in 4 non sailors respectively.

Interest in race management or being a learn to sail instructor was less common in comparison.

Figure 8: Interest in Club Roles

Q.9 Most Yacht/ Sailing clubs are looking for both on water/ off water volunteers and some clubs provide skills training. Are you interested in any of the listed roles?



Further analysis identified younger non sailors (40 years or under) were more interested in roles related to helping to organise social events whereas older people were more interested in membership management, race management or administration type roles.

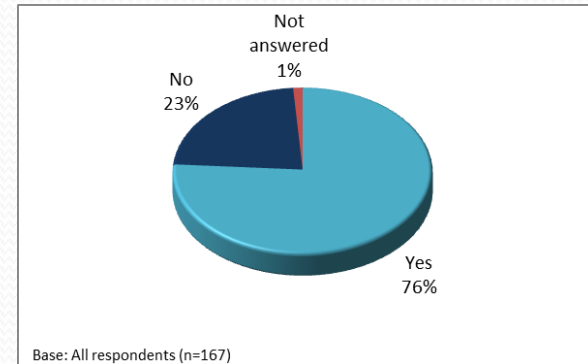
4.6 Perceptions of Fitness

Most non sailors surveyed (76%) reported that they believe that they need to be fit and healthy to sail.

If this is not necessarily the case, then it appears to be a common misperception among female non sailors.

Figure 9: Perceptions of Fitness and Health to Sail

Q.10 Do you believe you need to be fit and healthy to sail?



Further analysis revealed this view prevailed much more among older respondents (82%) and those who live more than 20km away from water (83%). However this was not the case among those who are not interested in discovering sailing, suggesting that this perceptions does not have a bearing on whether someone is interested in discovering sailing or not.

4.7 Additional Comments

Q.11 Do you have any other comments?

Around 1 in 4 (25%) provided comments in response to the above question. Comments related to a variety of issues.

There was mention of some of the key sailing barriers such as:

- the time commitment, especially among women with family duties/ responsibilities;
- the openness of the sport to newcomers and to females particularly in what can be perceived as a male dominated sport; and
- the expense.

Additionally, some offered suggestions to make sailing more appealing or accessible to women.

A summary of comments has been provided on the right but a full list of comments can be found in the Detailed Tables at Appendix 2.

Summary comments

"Sailing is something I have been considering for a long time, but much like every other hobby I've wanted to try - I keep putting it off! I'd love some feedback on how to get started!"

"My work, exercise and social activities are currently occupying most of my time but I'd be interested in learning to sail in the future when I reduce my regular work hours."

"Most sailing requires huge slabs of time commitment which is very often open ended thus making it hard to arrange childcare and commit to getting children to places they need to be on weekends. Many women I know who sailed in younger days gave up once they had children. Few have the financial resources to pay for long periods of childcare."

"Prefer to learn in small boats. Wish the weather was warmer and something that was mid week for mums to take part in. Can you organise child care?!"

"It is hard to feel included with sailors who have sailed for years."

"There is a need to remove the stigma that it is predominantly a man's sport and that you need to be wealthy to engage in this beautiful sport."

"My experience with sailing clubs in the past is that they are "cliquey". I also have the perception that it is something you are born into - not a sport you take up later in life. I have limited time and I enjoy the exercise I do so there is no compelling reason (i.e. friends who live really close to beach etc.) that would make me change what I do now to take up sailing."

"Sailing is something I have wanted to do but not knowing anyone who sails. I had always thought that I would need very expensive equipment to start. I love hiring sail boats whenever possible."