

# College Sailing 101

Fundamentals of College Sailing



# Meet the Panel



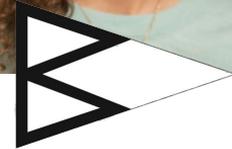
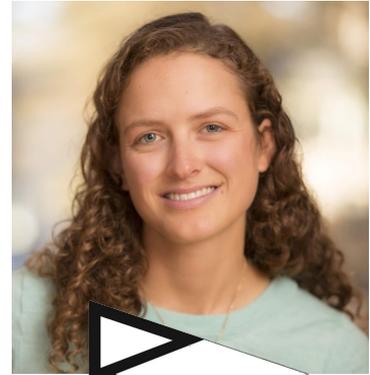
**Charles Higgins**  
Tulane University  
Head Coach  
ODU '06



**Ben Chafee**  
Rollins College  
Head Coach  
Eckerd '16



**Katherine 'KJ' Jones**  
New York Maritime  
Assistant Coach  
Fordham '18



**Cori Radtke**  
Bowdoin College  
Assistant Coach  
ODU '15



# Meet the Panel



**Fred Strammer**

Brown '11

3 Time All American and Team Captain  
Owner, Sailing Performance Training  
Olympic Development Program Coach  
Olympic Team Member



**Greg Fisher**

VP of Intercollegiate Sailing

College of Charleston Sailing Director,  
2010-2018  
Multitime World, National, and NA  
Champion in Numerous Classes  
COO of Olympic Sailing, 2019



**Clay Johnson**

Harvard '07

3 Time All American and Team Captain  
US Laser National and North American  
Champion  
Pan American Team Member  
Owner, Colie Sails

# What college sailing is not...



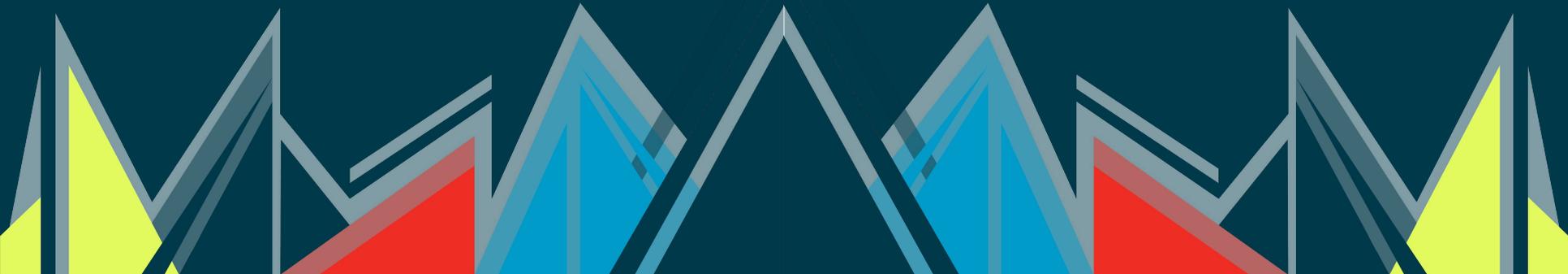
**College Sailing is:**





# College Sailing is:

- The most fun you can have in four years.
- The most accessible version of our sport.
- The easiest opportunity for focused, high-level training with a critical mass of like-minded individuals.
- The ability to practice with and compete against people who will be your friends for a lifetime.



# College Sailing is:

- ICSA National Body
- 7 Regional Conferences
- 220 Schools
- 5600 Student-Athletes
  - 46% of athletes identify as female
  - 56% of varsity athletes identify as female



# College Sailing: The Big Picture

## Team Championship Disciplines

- Coed Fleet Racing
- Women's Fleet Racing
- Coed Team Racing
- Women's Team Racing (2022)

## Individual Championship Disciplines

- Men's Singlehanded
- Women's Singlehanded
- Match Racing

## Fowle Trophy

- Aggregate performance in all seven disciplines.



# Who are the players?

## 4 Primary Positions:

- Skipper
- Light Wind Crew
- Medium Wind Crew
- Strong Wind Crew

In coed sailing these positions may be filled by any gender, but in women's sailing they must identify as women.

With good lines of communication, sailors can transition between these roles depending on personal goals and team needs.



# Equipment

- Collegiate 420s and FJs are the most common double-handed dinghies, though others exist.
- Main disciplines sailed in small two person dinghies
- Singlehanded events in Laser Standard (Men) and Laser Radial (Women)
- Match Racing in a variety of small keelboats



# Team Formats of Racing:

- Fleet Racing



- Team Racing



# Fleet Racing



- 18 Boat Fleets are most common
- Two Divisions (or more)
- Boats provided by host team in most conferences
- Low Point Scoring

A Division score

B Division score

Aggregate score is team score

# 2019 Sperry Women's National Championship

## Scores for Division A

		Team	Total	Sailors
1		Brown University Bears	84	Ragna Agerup '20 Madeleine McGrath '22 1-4 Maxine De Havenon '19 5-10 Emma Montgomery '22 11-16
2		Harvard University Crimson	100	Emma Kaneti '22 Emma Jakobson '21 1-8 Jessica Williams '20 9-10,15-16 Liliana Cunningham '22 11-14
3		Yale University Bulldogs	106	Louisa Nordstrom '20 Claudia Lolocono '21 1-4 Graceann Nicolosi '20 5-10 Kathryn Clulo '21 11-16
4		Boston University Terriers	115	Maia Agerup '20 Emily Croteau '19 1-10 Gabriella Schmidt '22 11-14 Lexi Pline '19 15-16
5		College of Charleston Cougars	117	Alie Toppa '20 Annabel Carrington '19 1-15 Emily Essi '21 16
6		Boston College Eagles	124	Isabella Loosbrock '19 Emma Perry '19
7		George Washington University Colonials	126	Riley Legault '19 Alexandra Fayer '19 1-8 Sarah Noyes '20 9-12,15-16 Marie Line '19 13-14
8		St. Mary's College of Maryland Seahawks	140	Ellie Ungar '19 Ashley Wagner '20 1-4 Jessica Bennett '20 5-8,13-16 Dyson Lord '19 9-12
9		University of Pennsylvania Quakers	145	Ava Esquier '20 Dana Hackett '20 1-10 Kelly Hanlon '21 11-16
10		Georgetown University Hoyas	156	Haddon Hughes '19 Annabelle Ayer '22 1-2 Macey McCann '20 3-10,15-16 Celine Bennett '20 11-14
11		Dartmouth College Big Green	157	Audrey Giblin '20 1-8,11-16 Kathryn Hall '21 9-10 Mary Amis '19 1-8 Aisling Sullivan '22 9-10 Carlota Hopkins Guerra '22 11-16

## Scores for Division B

		Team	Total	Sailors
1		Harvard University Crimson	99	Taylor Gavula '19 Emily Wang '21 1-10,15-16 Tess Avery '21 11-14
2		Brown University Bears	100	Hannah Steadman '20 1-15 Sophie Hibben '19 16 Annabelle Hutchinson '21 1-6 Emma Montgomery '22 7-10 Maxine De Havenon '19 11-16
3		Dartmouth College Big Green	103	Emma White '19 Paige Clarke '20 1-10,15-16 Aisling Sullivan '22 11-14
4		George Washington University Colonials	105	Altana Mendiguren '20 Sarah Noyes '20 1-8 Emma Mendenhall '19 9-16
5		Yale University Bulldogs	108	Christine Klingler '20 Kira Woods '19 1-10,15-16 Catherine Mollerus '21 11-14
6		Boston College Eagles	110	Sophia Reineke '21 Tara Ferraris '19
7		University of Pennsylvania Quakers	137	Lenox Butcher '20 Amanda Majernik '22 1-2,5-14 Jenna Weiner '21 3-4,15-16 Emily Haig '21
8		Massachusetts Institute of Technology Engineers	152	Brooke McGoldrick '20 1-12 Maile Jim '22 13-14 Sarah Caso '19 15-16
9		Stanford University Cardinal	159	Sophia Sole '21 Cassie Obel '19 1-8 Taylor Kirkpatrick '20 9-10,15-16 Camille White '22 11-14
10		Cornell University Big Red	165	Daisy Holthus '21 1-4 Sebby Turner '20 5-16 Kimberly Wong '19 1-2 Adeline Sutton '21 3-6 Miranda Sannino '20 7-10 Halle Buescher '21 11-16
11		St. Mary's College of Maryland Seahawks	167	Katherine Bennett '22 1-6 Gloria Kevliclute '21 7-16 Kate Bjerregaard '19

# 2019 Sperry Women's National Championship

## Race by race

		Team	Div.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	TOT
1		<a href="#">Brown</a>	A	1	17	8	1	DSQ	8	5	8	1	3	3	2	1	1	4	2	84
		Bears	B	6	7	11	16	3	5	10	2	11	1	2	3	5	7	2	9	100
				7	31	50	67	89	102	117	127	139	143	148	153	159	167	173	184	184
2		<a href="#">Harvard</a>	A	5	9	1	4	7	4	7	15	6	4	5	4	13	2	3	11	100
		Crimson	B	2	14	1	17	2	10	3	7	4	3	9	8	6	11	1	1	99
				7	30	32	53	62	76	86	108	118	125	139	151	170	183	187	199	199
3		<a href="#">Yale</a>	A	12	4	9	8	10	5	16	4	5	12	2	1	3	3	11	1	106
		Bulldogs	B	14	10	4	14	6	4	15	6	7	2	1	4	7	3	7	4	108
				26	40	53	75	91	100	131	141	153	167	170	175	185	191	209	214	214
4		<a href="#">George Washington</a>	A	8	11	3	9	3	3	9	13	18	7	7	8	8	7	7	5	126
		Colonials	B	8	3	3	3	4	7	2	5	10	9	5	6	4	15	16	5	105
				16	30	36	48	55	65	76	94	122	138	150	164	176	198	221	231	231
5		<a href="#">Boston College</a>	A	11	13	10	14	4	6	8	2	11	1	4	15	9	5	8	3	124
		Eagles	B	4	16	2	5	10	16	7	1	1	7	4	11	3	12	8	3	110
				15	44	56	75	89	111	126	129	141	149	157	183	195	212	228	234	234
6		<a href="#">Dartmouth</a>	A	13	2	6	16	13	15	18	3	15	15	15	5	2	4	5	10	157
		Big Green	B	10	15	7	2	1	2	1	8	2	11	8	1	12	13	4	6	103
				23	40	53	71	85	102	121	132	149	175	198	204	218	235	244	260	260
7		<a href="#">Pennsylvania</a>	A	6	6	18	7	2	12	6	6	16	13	9	7	6	8	10	13	145
		Quakers	B	9	12	5	7	5	11	12	14	12	8	10	7	9	9	5	2	137
				15	33	56	70	77	100	118	138	166	187	206	220	235	252	267	282	282

# Team Racing

- 3 vs. 3
- Format:
  - Round Robin
  - After the big round robin, fleet is divided into some sort of finals/consolation groups for another round robin.
  - All race scores/results are carried through the event.



# Individual Formats of Championship Racing:

- Men's and Women's Singlehanded
- Match Racing



# What to expect when you arrive on campus





# What is your first year like?

- Once you have mailed in your deposit, during Senior spring, be sure to communicate with the team if you are interested in joining. This will get you in the loop for any preseason practice. Include coaches, and student-leaders if appropriate.
- While a few teams have a try-out process with cuts, the vast majority of teams allow walk-ons with nearly any level of sailing experience, including no experience.
  - This is important to ask about during your college visits.





# What is your first year like?

- You will meet people that share your interests right away but expanding and diversifying your friends on campus will allow you to find other interests that you may not have expected.
- Learning collegiate dinghy techniques, how to practice, lifting in the gym, a different position or discipline can all be a steep learning curve, but your teammates are there to help you climb it.





# What is your first year like?

- Use experienced teammates as resources for advice on classes, majors, and anything else that could help with time management during your first semester on campus (like the best time to do laundry or the fastest path to the dining hall from your particular dorm).
- Establishing efficient time management skills early will be crucial to your later success academically and athletically.



What kind of sailing should I be doing before college?



# What kind of sailing should I be doing before college?

1. Sailing the most competitive options to which you have access.
2. Typically Dinghy sailing experience is most relevant.
3. High School Sailing is helpful if you have access to it, and it is in an organized fashion. This is not crucial for success at the collegiate level.
4. Other team sports are always a plus!
5. Clinics can be just as valuable as regattas.



# Successful College Sailors come from these backgrounds:



## If you are making sailing decisions based on perceived likelihood of being a recruited athlete, you are doing it wrong!

- Successful college sailors come from many different classes.
- While the 420, Laser, and High School Sailing are the most similar, prospective college athletes should not overlook the value of competing at a high level in other classes - or the value of competing at a high level as a crew when, based on body size, you may ultimately be a skipper at the collegiate level.
- Your objective should be progression and excellence in your chosen class, not college recruiting. If you achieve those objectives, you will be in the best position to be attractive to a college team.



# Similarities and Differences Between Club and Varsity Teams





# Similarities and Differences Between Club and Varsity Teams

This mainly indicates a team's recognition from the institution.

**“Varsity”** typically indicates an institutional standard of support for the team. The amount of support provided varies from institution to institution, but there is normally solid support and funding for training, travel, and competition.

**“Club”** typically means the team may function under Athletics or under Student Government. The amount of support varies by institution, and may include significant support like the Varsity teams mentioned above, but also may include minimal support.



# Similarities and Differences Between Club and Varsity Teams

**“Club”** does not necessarily mean these student-athletes have to fund their experience completely out of pocket!

If you are considering club teams, these are the sort of things you should be asking:

- What boats does the team own and what kind of shape are they in? What is the practice facility set up?
- Is there a full time coach? Are there assistant coaches?
- How many boats are on the water at a typical practice?
- What support is provided by the school for travel and competition?

**\*\*You need to ask these same questions of Varsity Programs.\*\***

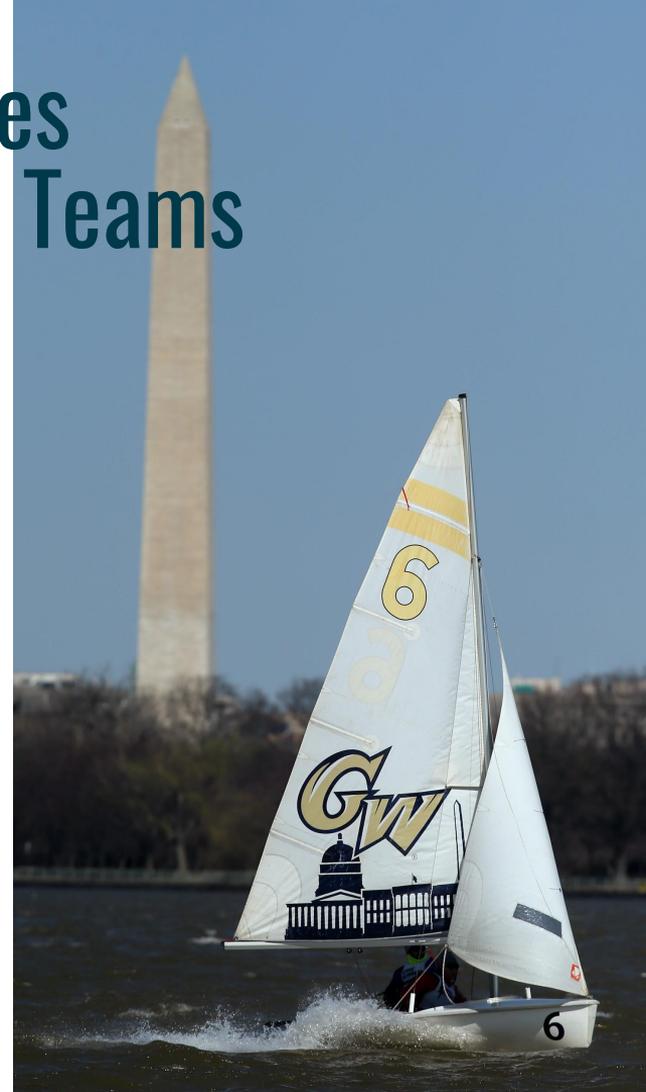
# Don't Judge a Team by Their Classification

- A few club teams have strong funding and are competitive with the best teams in the country.
- Some Prospective Athletes think they want a Varsity Team until they are actually living the commitment it takes to be part of a Varsity Team.
- Varsity teams often live under a stricter set of rules that sometimes limits what they can do in comparison to club teams. With these stricter rules typically comes significantly more support for the individual student-athlete.
- However, some varsity teams have similar or less support than strong club teams.
- There are great leadership opportunities and there is great value for the student-athlete and for the ICSA in both classifications of team.



# Similarities and Differences Between Club and Varsity Teams

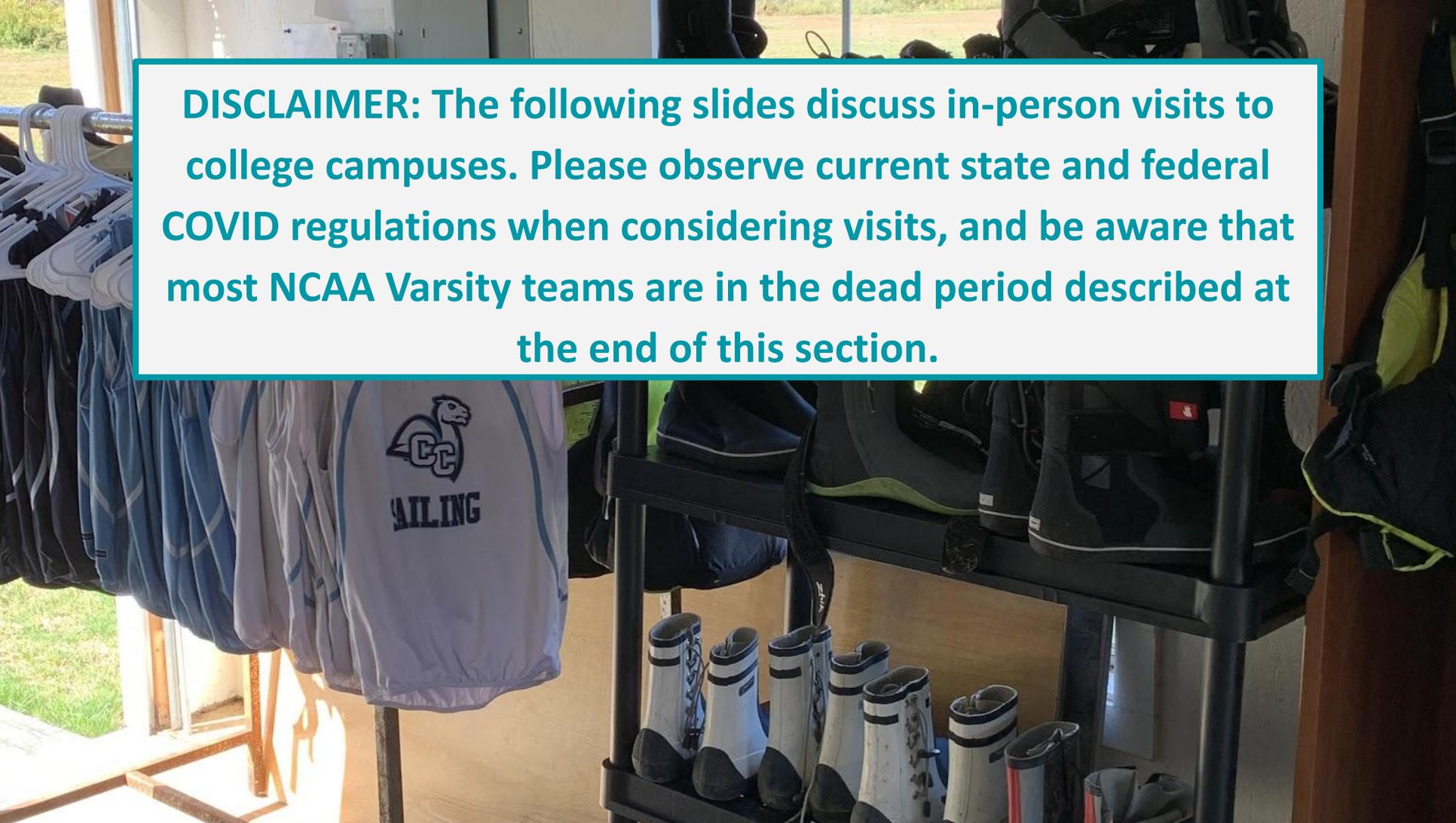
At the end of the day, visits are really important. This allows you to see the program in action, get a sense of what the team really looks like, and whether you might be a good fit.



A photograph of a person on a sailboat, wearing a blue life vest with the letters 'CC' on the back and a red jacket. The person is seen from behind, looking towards the water. The sailboat is white with blue accents and is moving through the water, creating a large splash. In the background, another sailboat is visible with the word 'GUARD' and 'T2A03' on its sail. The text 'CC' is also visible on the sail of the boat in the foreground. The overall scene is dynamic and captures the intensity of sailing.

# The Recruiting Timeline, Communicating with Coaches, and Navigating Admissions Support

**DISCLAIMER:** The following slides discuss in-person visits to college campuses. Please observe current state and federal COVID regulations when considering visits, and be aware that most NCAA Varsity teams are in the dead period described at the end of this section.



**For now, much of your exploration can be done via virtual visits and virtual meetings with coaches and current students.**





## Recruiting Timeline

- **Prior to Junior Year:**
  - This can be a good time to visit colleges without seeing the sailing program, to get a sense whether you are looking for-
    - Urban vs. Rural
    - Big School vs. Small School
    - Classic Campus vs. City Campus



## Junior Year

- Coaches can have recruiting conversations after July 1.
- Contact schools you are interested in and set up visits. Currently, it is common to have Juniors visit and watch a practice and meet with the coaches.
- If coaches don't respond, follow up a week or two later, and make plans to visit on your own. Often once you have a date, the coach will make the time to meet with you or welcome you to practice.
- It is important to read between the lines. If the coach hasn't responded after multiple outreaches, it may mean the coach is not interested.
- *Many, but not all, schools require standardized tests as part of the application process. The best way to excel on these exams is to take them **early and often**, beginning Junior Year.*



# First Contact Email and Resume

\*recommended  
screenshot slide

## DO

- **DO** write a thoughtful email to the coach or team leader expressing your interest.
- **DO** emphasize aspects of the school that interest you aside from the sailing program
  - le, academic programs offered, setting or region of the country, student-body size
- **DO** include your academic information in your first email, including Transcript and Test Scores.
- **DO** include your sailing resume.
  - **DO** include height and weight on your sailing resume
  - **DO** include the results you are most proud of on your resume.
  - **DO** include clinics you have attended and an overview of your training regimen.
  - **DO** include any superlative recognition including Sailor of the Year, Sportsmanship, and Leadership, from local yacht clubs, HS sailing teams, or private sailing teams.
  - **DO** include any other sports you play, particularly at the High School Varsity level, and any leadership roles in HS sports or other HS activities.
  - **DO** provide personal references including current coaches with whom you are working.



# First Contact Email and Resume

\*recommended  
screenshot slide

## DON'T

- **DON'T** write an epic poem detailing your sailing history since you were five years old, or how you've always known this school was perfect for you even though you haven't visited yet. Keep your **tl;dr** in mind.
- **DON'T** copy and paste your email without thoroughly editing the Proper Nouns! You don't want to become a meme among coaches (ie, "Hi Coach Higgins, I have always been excited about Bowdoin College").
- **DON'T** include every sailing result you have ever achieved. Try to paint a broad overview of your sailing with results, but we don't need to see how you finished in blue fleet in your yacht club summer series seven years ago, or every regatta you have competed in for the past eleven years.
- **DON'T** include US Sailing Instructor Certification information. We are not hiring you to teach sailing.
- **DON'T** lie about results or be deliberately misleading, or selectively omit information. We all have google and can see results, and most coaches will talk to the coaches you work with and learn about you as a person and as an athlete. If there is a result that you hope to improve on, just be upfront about it in conversation with the coaches.



## Senior Year

- If you haven't found your fit yet, continue visiting schools and communicating with their coaches.
  - ED Deadline: varies by school, typically Nov 1.
  - RD Deadline: varies by school, typically Jan 3.
- Remember the **“broken leg test”**
  - If you break your leg and cannot sail for an entire spring, how will you feel about the college and campus? If you are still thrilled about being at that school, then it is the right place for you.
  - Most coaches care more about you being a good fit on campus and on the team than your sailing ability.

## Admissions Support

- No level of admissions support is 100% guaranteed. Only the admissions department can offer admission to the school. Many *varsity* and some *club* programs have a small number of “admissions support opportunities” in which applicants that meet strict criteria *MAY* have their applications formally supported by the head coach.
- This level of support is typically used with prospects finishing at the top of their fleets on a national or international level.
- The criteria, timeline, and process differs from school to school; particularly at Federal Service Academies and Ivy League institutions.



## Admissions Support

- The number of prospective student-athletes receiving formal admissions support across the ICSA is incredibly small. The vast majority of Sailing student-athletes do not receive any form of admissions support.
- Support exists throughout the academic tiers of colleges, and sailing ability can sometimes open doors at the next level. However, it is crucial that students are able to meet the academic demands at that level, and have demonstrated the work ethic to do so.
- This system is not uniform, so be prepared to ask coaches exactly what it looks like for their institution. The parameters vary greatly from school to school.





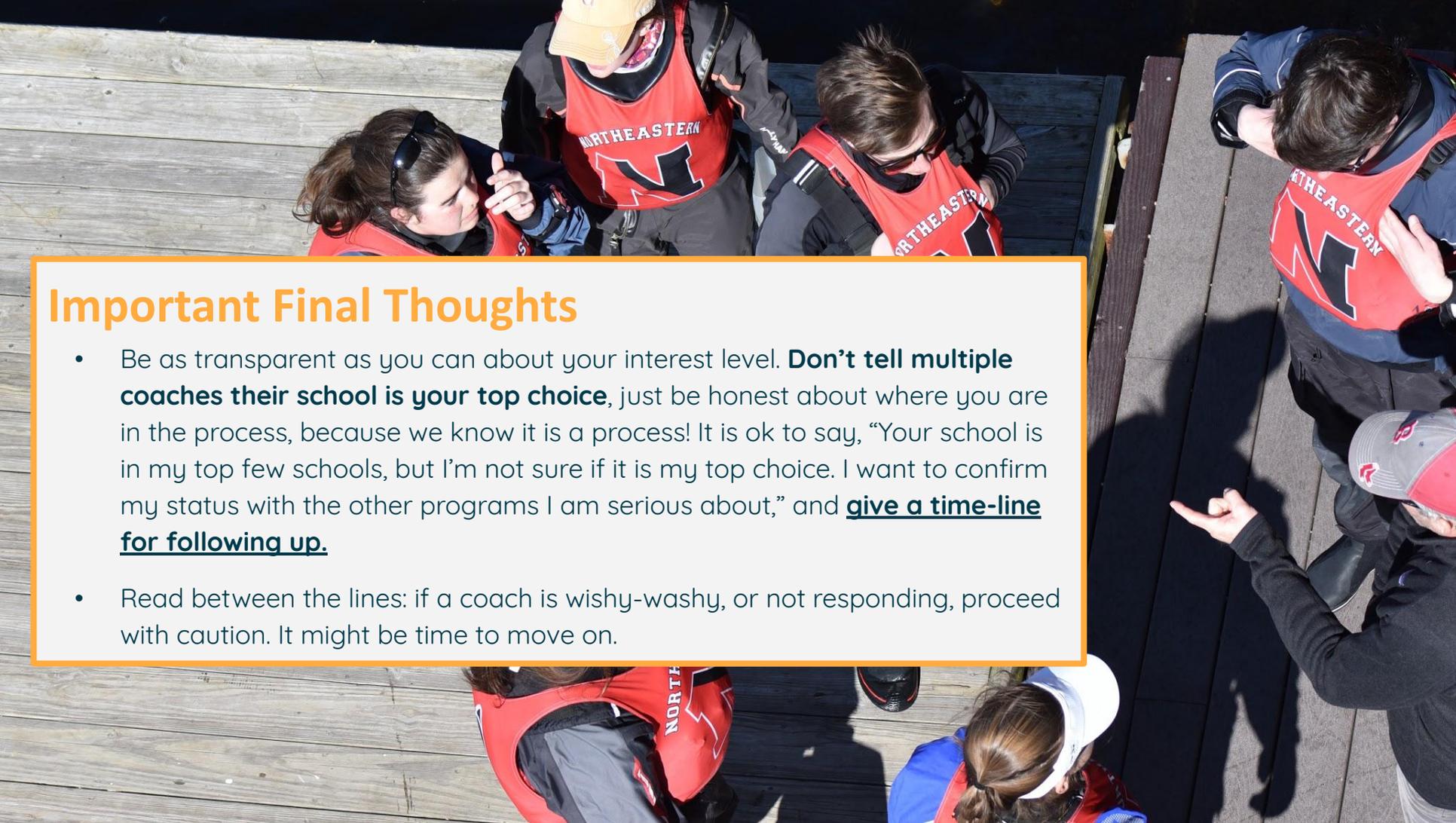
## Commitment

- In general, coaches begin committing to support students in the admissions process in the late spring and early summer of junior year, and continue through February of senior year.
- A coach's support is usually contingent on a "verbal commitment" to attend that school.
- Many schools have an admissions review process for viable candidates, which typically begins on July 1 before senior year.
- Candidates are encouraged to ask coaches directly about the coach's level of interest in them as potential athletic recruits, and should be prepared for coaches to inquire about the candidate's level of interest as well.



## Important Final Thoughts

- Don't just visit your top choice schools. Be sure to visit likely-admits and even safety schools. You want to have a likely and safety that you love equally as much as your top choice.
- Ask direct questions about the recruiting process (“What level of support can you provide for my application, and how will that impact the admissions decision?”). Be ready for honest answers, which may not be the ones you want to hear.

A group of people, likely a rowing team, are gathered on a wooden deck. They are wearing red life jackets with the Northeastern University logo (a large 'N' with a lightning bolt) and the word 'NORTHEASTERN' printed on them. Some are also wearing blue jackets and caps. The scene is outdoors, and the people appear to be in conversation.

## Important Final Thoughts

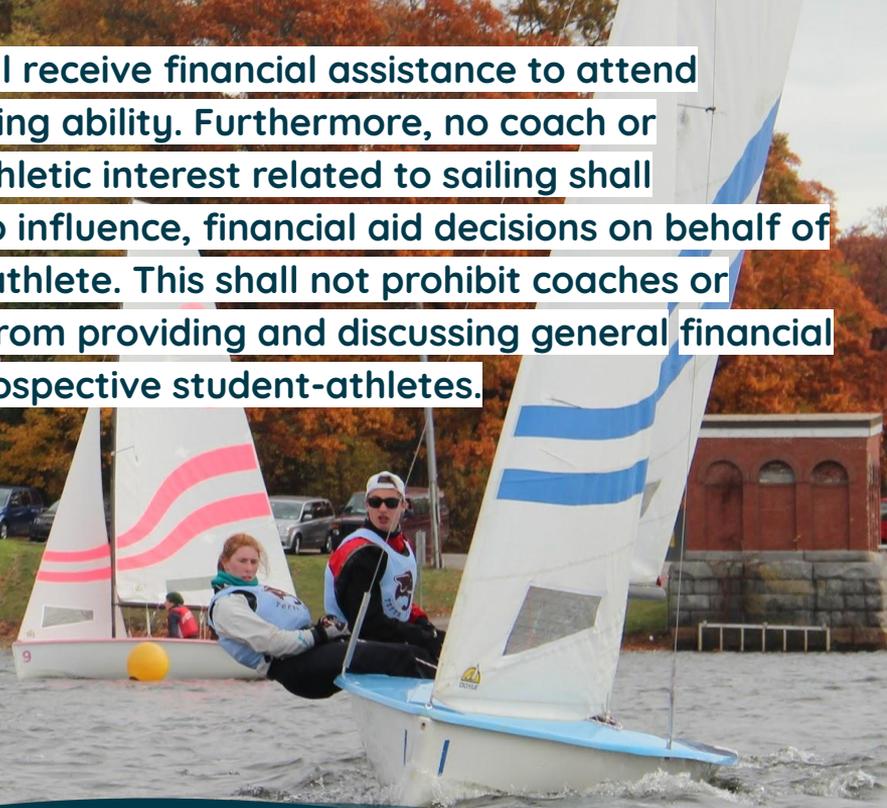
- Be as transparent as you can about your interest level. **Don't tell multiple coaches their school is your top choice**, just be honest about where you are in the process, because we know it is a process! It is ok to say, "Your school is in my top few schools, but I'm not sure if it is my top choice. I want to confirm my status with the other programs I am serious about," and **give a time-line for following up.**
- Read between the lines: if a coach is wishy-washy, or not responding, proceed with caution. It might be time to move on.



# Scholarships and Financial Aid

## ICSA Procedural Rule 12(f)

No student-athlete shall receive financial assistance to attend college based upon sailing ability. Furthermore, no coach or representative of an athletic interest related to sailing shall influence, or attempt to influence, financial aid decisions on behalf of a prospective student-athlete. This shall not prohibit coaches or other representatives from providing and discussing general financial aid information with prospective student-athletes.





# Dos & Don'ts of Recruiting by ICSA Guidelines

\*recommended  
screenshot slide

## SCHEDULING VISITS

- **DO** contact after July 1 prior to Junior Year
- **DO** ask questions about travel expenses, meals, and hosting.
- **DON'T** assume you will be able to stay overnight; for a variety of reasons a team may not be able to host you overnight.

## CONDUCT

- **DON'T** contact coaches or teams when visiting prior to July 1 prior to your Junior year.
  - You can communicate with friends who are currently athletes; these rules govern institutional representatives, not current athletes.
- **DO** attend workouts and/or practice, but **DON'T** participate in either; this is considered a try-out and is not permissible.
- **DO** avoid Alcohol and Illegal Substances when staying overnight; using these substances puts your host in a terrible position, and will nearly ensure you are not a candidate for admission if you get in trouble.



# Dos & Don'ts of Recruiting by ICSA Guidelines

## CONSEQUENCES

Failure to comply with ICSA Recruiting regulations may result in the loss of eligibility for the student athlete and the lost of postseason opportunities for the institution implicated.

You can find the full regulations in the ICSA Procedural Rules.



# NCAA Dead Period

If YOU are a high school Prospective Student Athlete:

- The dead period means no in-person recruiting is allowed and any unofficial and official visits are prohibited. According to the NCAA's official definition, a dead period is described as a period of time when "a college coach may not have face-to-face contact with college-bound student-athletes or their parents and may not watch student-athletes compete or visit their high schools."
- Coaches are still allowed to communicate with recruits and prospects as long as it's not done in person. Electronic communication, such as calls, texts, emails, social media messages and FaceTime, are permissible.
- This primarily applies to Varsity Teams.
- This is temporary, and a result of the current Pandemic.



# Time Line Summary

\*You should screenshot this slide\*

Prior to Junior Year: Visit Schools to get a sense of what you are looking for besides sailing

Junior Year:

- Recruiting Conversations begin **July 1**.
- Contact coaches of school you may be interested.
- Visit Schools you are interested in, including reach schools and safeties (and everything in between)
- Begin Standardized Testing, and take your tests early and often.
- “Commitment Phase” typically begins Junior Spring and continues through senior year for any given class.

Senior Year:

- Have honest and transparent conversations about your interest in a college and a coach’s interest in you.
- ED Deadlines typically around Nov 1
- RD Deadlines typically around Jan 3
- Make sure you finish strong academically senior year!





## Remember, Control What you can Control

- Do the very best you can academically, and remember that this will have the most significant impact on your college options.
- It is important to be a well-rounded person, and not just so you can be admitted to college! Explore your interests outside of sailing in leadership and serving others for the intrinsic benefit they provide you, not any extrinsic benefit.
- Don't hyperfocus on your first choice school. Only a few applicants in every class gain admissions support, so keep your options open, and remember that...



## There are many paths to a successful college sailing career!

- From New Orleans to Wisconsin and from California to Maine, you will find college sailing programs that provide an incredible student-athlete experience!
- It is easy to have tunnel-vision on one school or one academic tier of colleges, but, wherever you end up, your college experience is what you make of it.
- At every academic tier there are colleges offering varied fields of study that also feature fantastic college sailing teams, in a variety of different regions and settings throughout the country.
- So get out there and see it! Most of the time the process works out the way it is supposed to, and you end up at a school that is a great fit for you athletically and academically. And if you don't, you can always transfer!



# THAT'S ALL!

