

ROYAL GEELONG YACHT CLUB NAMED BEST IN VICTORIA – WINNING TWO MAJOR AWARDS

Victorian Yacht Club of the Year and Discover Sailing Centre of the Year

Royal Geelong Yacht Club has been crowned Victoria's best after winning not one – but two major categories at the annual Victorian Sailing Awards.

The Club won the prestigious major prize of 'Yacht Club of the Year' and the RGYC's sailing school was also crowned the best in the State, winning the 2017 'Discover Sailing' Centre of the Year.

The awards recognised RGYC as being the best of 90 yacht clubs right across Victoria and the sailing school as the best of forty Discover Sailing centres.

Yachting Victoria President, Cherry Birch, presented the awards which noted that RGYC as Club of the Year had attracted more than 4000 competitors over a broad series of championships and events – including the historic Festival of Sails – while the RGYC Discover Sailing Centre had demonstrated 'outstanding growth' over the past three seasons.

Commodore, Chris Williams says the Club was delighted with both wins.

"To be recognized by your peers and fellow yachting enthusiasts as a club that stands out above all others is high praise and I know all of our members will be very proud of that accolade. It is a credit to all our Members, volunteers and our staff.

Sailing is a wonderful sport and we've really concentrated on trying to get more people of all ages to come and give it a go. The recognition for our Discover Sailing Centre is also particularly rewarding, as we've seen participation in our courses has nearly quadrupled over the last three seasons and we expect it will continue to grow."

The club has also worked hard to address the perception of sailing being a male only sport by introducing four new women's programs this year which have been enthusiastically received.

We also introduced a new Tiny Tackers program over the March long weekend for children aged four to seven and that was a success. Feedback about the sailing training is overwhelmingly positive and retention rates are strong, with fifty per cent of students retained from course to course.

We have simplified the transition from Tackers to the next level Green Fleet program by creating a cost effective bundle that puts club membership, tuition, race fees and boat hire all together. That streamlined approach has seen our retention increase from 25% last season to 75% this season.

The commendation for RGYC's Discover Sailing program was even more appreciated because the entire crew of more than 25 instructors were all young RGYC members who had completed the training themselves. Our young sailors not only appreciate the training they've received with us, but also want to contribute to their sport and our club.

Our junior sailors were also recognised at the Victorian Sailing Awards, with the following honours received by RGYC Members:

49er Youth Champions

Ollie Manton and Billy Goodfellow

International Cadet Youth Champions

Dominic Randall and Elliott Hughes

International Cadet Youth 3rd Place

Peter Allen

Laser Radial Youth Champion

Will Townson

Victorian Sailing Team

Olivia Neilson

