

Upgrade for Parry Sound sailing

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North Star photo

Sail Parry Sound recently received a new designation as a development training centre from the Ontario Sailing Association.

PARRY SOUND – A new designation for Sail Parry Sound by the Ontario Sailing Association (OSA) will help young athletes pursue higher levels of competitive sailing.

Recently, the sailing centre learned that OSA designated it as a development training centre for competitive sailing athletes.

Sail Parry Sound president Larry Woolner said this role places the facility among the top ranked sailing clubs in Ontario.

“We will be hosting training regattas with local and high-performance racers, with support from top Canadian coaches,” said Mr. Woolner. “For the Sail Parry Sound racing team, visiting teams and their coaches, this will provide a rich exchange of training and experience. We can now give athletes the best opportunity possible for Olympic gold.”

The new sailing centre, which opened last summer, combined with Sail Parry Sound’s reputation as a national award-winning sail training centre and its success hosting international regattas and a world championship, were all factors in it receiving the designation.

“The training development centre designation bestowed on Sail Parry Sound is a perfect match for our organization’s long term goals,” said Larry Barnes, Sail Parry Sound chief financial officer, on Monday morning. “We will see immediate access to high performance athletes and coaches that participate competitively at the national level. This will enhance skill development of local coaches, athletes, volunteers and even recreational sailors and patrons. We will also have the opportunity to influence how training development centres evolve over time.”

The Ontario Sailing Association created the program to provide development opportunities for athletes and future coaches.

“We initially learned the Ontario Sailing Association was looking to establish training development centres late last fall,” Mr. Barnes said. “Interested organizations were to apply, provided they met a considerable list of minimum requirements. When we first inquired, the reception by OSA was extremely positive, as it seemed the whole concept was developed with us in mind and our interest was overwhelmingly welcomed. Needless to say, our group was excited just learning about the opportunity, even though this was a competitive situation. This designation is truly a testament to the professionalism of our volunteers and the support of the community.”

Marianne King-Wilson, Sail Parry Sound past president, said more than 10 years ago the organization set goals that included bringing the world’s sailors to the area and training youth to compete internationally.

“We hosted our first world championship regatta here in 2000, and other regattas, including the Albacore regatta in 2007, attracted international sailors,” said Ms King-Wilson. “From 1999 onward, we were strong contenders to be the Olympic sailing venue, part of the Toronto bid for 2008. In 2003, the CYA chose the Sail Parry Sound sailing School as the William Abbott Sr. award winner as Canada’s best sailing school. As a development training centre, we are right on course to develop future Olympic sailors.”

Sail Parry Sound is a not-for-profit volunteer-managed community improvement organization founded in 1997 to restore the sailing heritage of Parry Sound through excellence in regatta management and sail training.