

2021 VIODA PRESIDENT'S REPORT

We have had an unprecedented year at VIODA in 2020 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. For most of our members, our sailing calendars went from the familiar busy schedules to mostly cancelled events.

We had a very successful VIC OPTI states at SSCBC with 81 sailors competing in March 2020. What we did not know at the time was that for most families this would be the final sailing regatta they would attend for the entire year due to COVID. It was a great event, the SSCBC always put on a great regatta for the Optis.

AOST & AOSDS TEAMS

The AOST and AOSDS teams that qualified at the 2020 Nationals to travel to regattas all over the world were devastatingly cancelled but we were lucky the first Adelaide training camp for the AOST Teams went ahead the weekend following the states at The Adelaide Sailing Club but by the following weekend the AOSDS Adelaide training camp had to be cancelled due to COVID.

FIRST COVID LOCKDOWN

The first lockdown in Victoria prevented any sailing training or events happening from 31st March to the 14th of May 2020. That was a total of 44 days out of OPTI's for most families... probably more for many Victorian Melbourne Metro families.

As Victoria suffered through the toughest COVID restrictions in the country, we simply had to adapt and adapt we did. The way the VIODA community supported one another through this unprecedented COVID pandemic is something to be extremely proud of.

Our VIODA members stayed connected throughout this time via:

- *VIRTUAL SAILING REGATTAS (Many Clubs including SSCBC, RGYC and SYC)*
- *'INTERVIEW WITH THE STARS' Hosted by Dave White was a great success and excellent initiative*
- *VIODA GIRLS ZOOM TALK with Sophie Jackson was also a great success. Thank you to all of those involved but special thanks to Rachel Griffiths and Dave White for making this happen.*

VOST TRAINING

When the first lockdown restrictions eased, we were grateful to get back on the water at the RYCV. The RYCV welcomed the VOST Team and siblings back to the club to train for some weekends in May and June. We had a great training program for the VOST Team sailors led by Dave White:

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|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| • <i>Aidan Simmons</i> | • <i>Riley Cantwell</i> |
| • <i>Callum Simmons</i> | • <i>Dmitri Sorokin</i> |
| • <i>Jorja Mahoney</i> | • <i>Liam Stevens</i> |
| • <i>Sarah Goss</i> | • <i>Sam Henderson</i> |

WINTER TRAINING

After the training at Williamstown we were able to get back to the Albert Park Lake for some winter training. We decided that planning 2 block sessions was a better way of getting both the sailors and coaches to commit to the set blocks. It also assists in streamlining the payments process.

We also scheduled 2 school holiday training camps to be run mid-week in the June school holidays.

The first block dates went ahead with the first school holiday program, but due to dramatic increase in COVID numbers in Metro Melbourne the second school holiday program and block were cancelled.

CANCELLED EVENTS

The list of cancelled events our VIODA sailors usually attend was extensive with some of the following examples:

- *NSW States - RPAYC*
- *Vic Youth Coaching - BYS*
- *Wintersail APYC*
- *CitySail - APYC*
- *Springsail RGYC*
- *NSW Youth Championships – Point Wolstoncroft*
- *Sail Country - AWYC*
- *Nationals in Perth – FSC*
- *Sail Melbourne Next Gen - RBYC*

Once the COVID restrictions were lifted there was a lot of excitement to get back to a regatta and the George Mac Regatta at RBYC was scheduled for the 5-6th December 2020. Unfortunately the regatta wasn't to be as it was cancelled at the last minute due to strong winds predicted for the weekend. I'm sure there were a lot of disappointed Opti sailors and families that weekend.

2021 – FIRST REGATTA BACK

The Buxton Cup at SSCBC over the Australia Day Long weekend in January 2021 was the first regatta back that most families attended by since the last OPTI States. We had 43 Sailors compete and was really enjoyed by all. We have a new appreciation after numerous COVID lockdowns to be able to get out and enjoy this hectic sailing life again!

2021 OPTI STATES

The RYCV have been very accommodating in their hosting of the 2021 Optimist Victorian Championships. We have had 49 sailors in total with 31 Open, 11 Intermediate and 7 Green Fleet. The club have excellent facilities and are eager to work with us for future events.

LOOKING AHEAD

- *The re-scheduled Schnapper Point Regatta at MYC next weekend should be supported by our sailors.*
- *The pseudo nationals in Adelaide will hopefully provide some great racing and will be a good regatta for the next round of team selections.*

- *We are planning 15 weeks of Winter Training to go ahead at Albert Park Yacht Club again, as this is a great way for our sailors from all over the bay to get some good coaching and training in over winter in a somewhat controlled environment.*
- *2022 Opti States – talks are in progress with SYC to host.*
- *Significant drop in entry numbers from last year's State titles to this year (39.5% decrease) I believe this figure is representative across the board in all classes of sailing.*
- *Would like to work with Australian Sailing to invite all the Tackers graduates to participate at the next State Titles so those families can see the pathway in the Opti class.*
- *April Vic Youths – clashes with Adelaide pseudo-Nationals event. VIODA are supporting both events but understand many families will be attending the Adelaide event.*

SPONSORSHIP

We have had some great partners come on board with the help of VIODA committee members.

Thanks to Michael Cantwell for the CYGNETT sponsorship for the OPTI States, the prizes and entry registration packs caused a lot of excitement in the boat park. We hope to maintain a working relationship with them moving forward.

Thanks to Leah for the Cobram Olive Oil tasting session also held at the OPTI States, this was a unique opportunity for our members to spend some time engaging in this company and was well received by all of those who attended.

VIODA COMMITTEE

Thank you to the entire VIODA committee for the great commitment to our community over the past extremely challenging 12 months, we are looking forward to a better 2021.

Your assistance throughout the year is greatly appreciated.

VIODA Committee members: Xavier Vandame (P), Christian Cantwell (VP), Michelle Levenspiel (S), Peter Laverty (T), Michael Cantwell (T), Cathy Trudinger (OM), Leah Keah (OM), Rachel Griffith (OM), Cameron Stevens (OM).

Christian Cantwell