

Sail PASS – possible use and pricing

Why Sail PASS?

Under the new RRS 2021-24, Rule 46 changes commence Jan 1, 2022 (deferred for one year from previous AS advice). This requires that in any race, all crew must be members of an AS affiliated club. Boats who breach this rule are potentially open to protest.

Sailing is currently the only organised sport where it is possible to participate at zero financial cost. However, there are significant ongoing infrastructure and operating costs incurred by the BSC (ie it's members) to enable racing to be conducted safely and efficiently.

It is only fair that all participants, including non-members, make some financial contribution to support the cost to race at BSC. It is also recognised that some sailors will participate on an irregular basis where they cannot justify the cost of full membership to BSC.

Sail PASS provides a means of addressing the above membership challenges and supports the growth in 'pay to play' pricing being adopted in many organised sports. It also provides personal injury insurance benefits for new and casual sailors. Sail PASS take-up may also provide a database of potential future members for BSC follow-up.

What is happening at other sailing clubs?

The early adopters of Sail PASS among Sydney sailing clubs include SASC and MHYC. Some Melbourne clubs piloted Sail PASS a couple of years ago including Sandringham YC, Elwood SC and Mornington YC. A summary of their Sail PASS (and full membership) pricing and/or experience is summarised below:

MHYC

<https://www.mhyc.com.au/sailing/sailpass>

- \$10 per day, max 15 per season = \$150
- Full membership = \$799.00
- Social = \$135.00
- Spouse/partner = \$220.00

SASC

<https://sasc.com.au/membership/sailpass/>

- Season Sail PASS = \$95.00
- Day Sail PASS = First 3 free, each additional = \$5.00
- Annual full membership = \$640 + \$670 joining fee (new members)
- Crew membership = \$269
- Associate membership = \$269

Sandringham YC

<https://syc.com.au/membership/>

- Maximum 30 Sail PASS are offered to each non-member over 2 years, then participants must apply for full membership
- 1st 6 cost \$15 each / 2nd 6 cost \$35 each = \$300
The \$300 is credited against full membership fees
- SYC membership pricing is sophisticated – various levels of membership packages, all paid monthly – full membership = \$119 / month, crew membership = \$65 / month
- SYC has on average 800 Sail PASS users annually and accounts for 40% of new members
- Viewed favourably by existing members
- Sail PASS users value it as an 'incredible opportunity' to participate at a low cost
- Skippers sign each crew member on before each race
- Membership (full or Sail PASS) is mandatory for sailors, penalty provisions for non-compliance (now seen as a boat / skipper / crew issue)

Elwood SC

<https://www.elwoodsc.com/blog/>

- SailPASS has been highly successful at ESC, used mainly to attract new members
- Participants get 4 free passes a year / then offered membership and/or learn to sail course at a reduced rate
- Membership has grown from 175 to 373 over the last two seasons
- Boats actively sailing have grown from 24 to 54 over the last two seasons
- Female membership has trebled (combined with a paddleboard membership category)
- Members give Sail Passes to family & friends and proudly showcase ESC

Mornington YC

<https://www.morningtonyc.net.au/sail-pass---temporary-membership.html>

- The Club provides a Sail Pass Membership at a minimal cost that enables guests to sail at the club and then to use the clubhouse facilities after the race
- The first six (1-6) day passes \$15 for each day pass
- The second six day passes (6-12) \$30 for each day pass
- The online SailPass functionality through RevSport has reduced the administrative burden on the club
- SailPass users love the ability to sign up via their home/office computer and mobile phones
- It has provided a positive pathway for potential new members to try sailing and experience club life

BSC Sail PASS Pricing

The basic objectives of BSC adopting Sail PASS include:

- Ensure that casual sailors contribute to the cost of racing
- Encourage casual sailors to register and become Rule 46 compliant
- Increase BSC membership
- Encourage conversion of casual sailors to full membership

In reviewing the pricing of other Sail PASS clubs, there is a mixture of how it has been adopted, some using free passes initially, some using tiered pricing, flat pricing, and annual limits to Sail PASS issues.

In reference to the Sydney clubs, the SASC approach of a seasonal Sail PASS would appear to undermine their 'crew membership' pricing. MHYC has avoided this by limiting the number of passes issued, encouraging uptake of other membership options for those who wish to sail more than ten races per year. It should be noted that the cost of full membership at these clubs is significantly higher than BSC.

From a BSC perspective, a tiered pricing and limited issue approach could provide a low-cost incentive for crew to purchase passes initially, with a step up in pricing for crew who wish to continue racing on a casual basis. The pricing model adopted by both Sandringham and Mornington equates to the cost of a full membership at BSC for a maximum number of 12 passes purchased. This is the equivalent of one twilight series raced.

The possible advantage of offering free passes initially might be to encourage Sail PASS adoption. However, there will be some admin cost to BSC and if it is free it devalues participation in club racing. A preferred approach is to offer a 'no cost' offset of Sail PASS purchases against the price of full membership.

It should also be noted that a few of the clubs have adopted a monthly subscription model for membership pricing, more of a 'pay-to-play' approach. This may be worth considering for BSC as a way of defraying the annual 'lump sum' barrier for some members or those who only wish to race in a few series. Obviously, this requires more sophisticated on-line income management systems.

Suggested Sail PASS Pricing – new & casual sailors

- Limit Sail Pass issues per person to 12 per season (equivalent of one twilight series)
- Passes 1-6 @ \$15 = \$90
- Passes 7-12 @ \$30 = \$180
- Total = \$270
- Sail pass fees offset against cost of full membership

Rationale

- Low initial cost to participate
- Slightly less cost than full membership, but there is an incentive to join if you wish to sail more than one twilight series
- Safety - participants will be insured, if injured, and the club will know who to contact if serious
- If sailors wish to keep sailing, their Sail Pass costs are offset against full membership

Suggested Sail PASS Offer to Sailing School Graduates

Currently, BSC offers membership to graduates of the sailing school valid for the remainder of the sailing year. The value of this membership is dependent on at what time of the sailing year graduation occurs. The intention of the offer has been to encourage graduates to continue their membership as regular sailors and / or to undertake further BSS courses. Sail PASS provides an opportunity for a more consistent casual membership offer to graduates.

- Limit Sail Pass issues per graduate to 12 per season (equivalent of one twilight series)
- Passes 1-6 are free as part of any course completion.
- Passes must be used within 6 months of course completion
- Passes 7-12 @ \$30 = \$180
- Any Sail PASS fees offset against cost of full membership or enrolment in further training
- The above process re-starts at completion of additional training courses

Rationale

- No cost to participate in racing for first 6 races
- Graduates who are racing are registered and insured
- Incentive to continue further training

Further info at Australian Sailing

There is a lot of additional Sail PASS info on the AS website, including the Melbourne case studies summarised above

<https://www.sailingresources.org.au/sailpass-home/>