

TACKERS

Tackers is a junior development program aiming to provide every Australian junior school student the opportunity to *go sailing* in a professional, safe and fun environment.

Tackers, has entered an agreement with Yachting Victoria, under the auspices of Yachting Australia, to introduce a pilot program in Victoria in the summer of 2006/07 for a national roll-out in the following years to around sixty YA Training Centres and mobile services to deliver the opportunity to children in regional areas.

Tackers will work with yacht clubs to make the program affordable, utilising existing yacht club assets and introducing a purpose built trailing vessel that can be funded by the clubs and or a combination of local business and government's sponsorship. Tackers is designed to deliver a positive first time experience for the school child at a fee that is affordable to all Australian families, \$25 per ½ day.

The business plan provides for each Tackers centre to introduce 1,000 grade five and six students, on average, per year and deliver a syllabus based on the existing 'Get into Small Boat Sailing' which will be adapted to provide three levels of certification, published in the Tackers Log Book; a ½ Day introductory course, five ½ day *basic sailing* and an advanced five ½ day *better sailing* that is designed to improve retention rates and lead to more kids choosing to sail and joining yacht clubs. There is scope to introduce a Water Safety certificate to the Log Book at grade 4 or earlier as well as theory lessons .

In addition to the Schools Program, Tackers will also operate *Out of School Hours* to deliver after school and holiday programmes enhancing the viability of the program for all stakeholders and importantly the employment prospects of instructors, whom it is envisaged will hail from tertiary ranks, to be trained in both the YA and the Tackers curriculums.

Local business sponsorship is a key element to the success of Tackers and the introduction of sailing to the wider community, clubs will provide honorary membership to sponsoring companies and provide access to functions, social sailing, club facilities and highlight their support of junior sailing in all print and electronic communications. Sponsors will also receive advertising in the Tackers Log Book which will be delivered locally and distributed to all club members to increase awareness of the supporting companies.

Tackers is the foundation of the yachting pyramid and will benefit all stakeholders in the long term by introducing more people to sailing with the cost efficiencies, central co-ordination and reduced reliance on volunteers. Retention rates will improve because of the experience, leading to more club members, boats, berths and industry viability.

Tackers will help to improve the perception of our sport by involving a broader base, enhancing the industry relationships with all levels of government due to the benefits availed to the community.

Steven Bond. July 2006.
www.theboatyard.com.au.

