



The Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy Media Information 2011

The Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy www.wpnsa.org.uk

Venue

The Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy (WPNSA) is a world class sailing venue and effectively promotes the sport of sailing to all levels of competence and ability, through courses, training and events, whilst supporting and working closely with the local community. The WPNSA will be the venue for the sailing competition at the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.



Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy
© Dorset Media Services

The WPNSA was developed to take advantage of what are recognised as some of the best small boat sailing waters on the planet. The combination of clean winds, sheltered waters and weak tides in the area is unique and this new World Class facility set in the centre of the Jurassic Coast, the only Natural World Heritage Site on the UK mainland, provides an unrivalled venue for training / sailing competitions and is committed to protecting the local environment.

Development

The RYA had been looking to set up a Sailing Academy in the Dorset area for 30 years when the former Royal Naval Air Station site became available.

With a strong backing from a group of local people, including the late Chairman Bill Ludlow and the RYA, The Academy was developed through a strong partnership with the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), Sport England Lottery Fund and the local authorities, working together to bring a strong vision into an exciting reality.

While the WPNSA began operating immediately using former naval buildings, the board focused on raising funds to redevelop the site, with an eye on London's Olympic bid. Renowned sports architects Faulkner Browns were signed up with construction work on the new buildings beginning in 2003, around the same time the venue secured its nomination to host the sailing events in the event that London won the Games bid.

The £8m project (jointly funded by the Sports England Lottery Fund, SWRDA and local authorities) was opened in June 2005 by the Princess Royal and a month later London's Olympic destiny was confirmed.

There was still much to be done to complete the venue, "We knew we had the most fantastic field of play and the sailing waters were very special, but we also knew the centre would need further development to bring it completely up to Olympic specification", John Tweed, Chief Executive, WPNSA.

Working closely with the Olympic Development Authority (ODA), John Tweed and the Sailing Academy board of directors oversaw a major project of additional works at the site, including significant marine civil engineering works to reclaim part of the harbour, new slipways, pontoons, berths and breakwater. The works came in both under budget and ahead of schedule at £7m. This was largely funded by the ODA with a small further contribution by SWRDA.

The WPNSA was the first 2012 venue to be completed 3 years in advance; completed November 2008.



Gold Medallists Jonathan Edwards and Paul Goodison with local boy Adam Greaves at the completion of the ODA development works © Getty Images

Sebastian Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games. 'We will stage a world-class Olympic and Paralympic Games and the ODA's completion of construction work on our world-class sailing venue, three and a half years before the event, is a major milestone on our journey to 2012. We have put athletes at the heart of the 2012 Games and the facilities at Weymouth and Portland will provide competitors from all round the world the best possible arena for medal-winning performances.'



John Tweed Chief Executive of the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy reflects on its success with Seb Coe © Dorset Media Service

Aims

WPNSA effectively promotes the sport of sailing to all levels of competence and ability, through courses, training and events, whilst supporting and working closely with the local community.

Multi layered vision

- To host major international events
- To offer world class facilities and training opportunities at all levels of the sport
- To bring real social and economic benefits to the surrounding area

Local Economy

The multisport venue is already making a significant contribution to the economy of the area with Dorset County Council calculating that, annually, over £11 million is being generated in the local economy, along with over 190 full time equivalent jobs.

One of the positive legacies of the Games is that Weymouth and Portland will be left with a long-term legacy of infrastructure improvements, including new roads and high-speed broadband connectivity, all of which will contribute to the business competitiveness and the general prosperity of the area in the future.

Operations

The Academy is a not for profit company and has a management agreement with WPNSA Ltd.

Chief Executive:
John Tweed

Board of Directors:
Edward Leask (Chairman)
Jeremy Pope OBE (Vice-Chairman)
Tom Grainger
Miles Butler
Natalie Jobling
David Clarke

Christopher Langham
Keith Musto
Ben Ainslie CBE
Rod Carr CBE
John Derbyshire OBE



John Tweed Chief Executive, Edward Leask Chairman
and Ben Ainslie Director © Dorset Media 2010

In addition to a current Olympian, Ben Ainslie CBE, who regularly trains and sails at the venue, the Academy is fortunate to have a wealth of sailing experience including two former Olympic sailors, Edward Leask and Keith Musto and Rod Carr CBE, former CEO of the Royal Yachting Association and John Derbyshire OBE, Performance Director of the RYA.

Awards

- The venue was shortlisted for the Sport Industry Awards 2011 in the category 'Sport Participation Event of the Year'
- The Academy is a Guinness World Record holder for 'largest parade of boats'
- The WPNSA was shortlisted for the 2010 Sport Industry Award, Sport Venue of the Year. The awards are dubbed 'Oscars of the sports world', other shortlisted entries included; SWALEC Stadium, the Brit Insurance Oval, the O2, Twickenham Stadium and Wembley Stadium.

- In 2010 the WPNSA was certified by the British Standards (BSI) for Sustainable Event Management 'BS 8901' being the first sailing venue in the World to meet the standard.
- In 2009 the WPNSA won the International Olympic Committee/ International Paralympic Committee recognised architectural award 'the IPC/IAKS Distinction for Accessibility' for excellent disabled access.
- The venue also won the 2008 Sport Industry Award for 'Environmental Concern in Sport'.



Largest parade of boats achieving a Guinness World Record
© Dorset Media Service

Events

Annually the Academy hosts local, national, European and World dinghy and windsurfing events.

The venue is capable of hosting over 1000 competitors at a time racing across a number of different disciplines.

The 2011 season kicked off this Spring with the UK Windsurfing Association's National Championships over the weekend March 30 – April 2. Over this same weekend the waters of Weymouth and Portland were crowded with the much loved Sigma 38 yacht racing class, crews of 9 people competed for their National title.



Techno fleet © RYA Paul Wyeth

The J109 yacht racing fraternity, now renowned internationally for big fleet racing, then headed to the Academy for their annual National Championship Event from the 28 – 30 May. The Academy is fast becoming the international yacht racing destination of choice due to the re-developed marina facility and deep water race course in easy access of Portland Harbour out to Weymouth Bay. The new development works include a mini marina with a total capacity for 125 boats.



Farr 45 National Championships © www.fotoboat.com

Moving into the summer month of June, Sail for Gold returned to the 2012 sailing venue with 62 nations being represented and running from 5 – 11 June. This was the 6th leg of the International Sailing Federation World Cup and was the largest event ever held at the Academy

The Laser Performance World Open Regatta on June 18 – 19 attracted starter sailors right through to the professionals in seven different dinghy models.

The award winning disabled facilities at the Academy will be put to excellent use when the International Federation for Disabled Sailing (IFDS) hosts their World Cup from the 1 - 8 of July. This features as the most prestigious event in the disabled sailing calendar outside of the Paralympic Games that will subsequently be based from the Academy.

A more traditional class takes over the venue towards the end of July, with the Contender World Championships running 17 – 22. Dubbed as the World's most popular single handed trapeze sailing dinghy, this class is steeped in history and routinely generates a following of hundreds.

The Test Games then fall from the 31 July to 13 August, where only 1 competitor per class from each nation will be eligible to enter.

The serious racing continues in the latter half of August with the RS Games. Nine different RS fleets will race over a period of just under two weeks from 16 – 26 August. The Academy will host nine UK National Championships, one World Championship and one European Championship as well as RS racing for those wanting to enjoy some friendly competition.

September starts with the Laser National Championships from August 27 – September 2 followed by the International 14 World Championships 3 – 18 September. Incredibly this skiff style of boat dates back to the late 1800s but is constantly re-vamped to thrill the latest racing generation. It is a tough boat to master and is an addictive World Championship to win.

The Academy also regularly a variety of multi sports including Big Bay Swimming, triathlons and rowing.

Round Britain 2012

Dubbed Britain's biggest multi-faceted land, sea and air event - RB12 is predicted to involve 75 powerboats, 100 super and vintage cars, as well as 50 aircraft with over 1000 contestants and 1,500 supporting crew. Entry is open for the RB12 event which will run during the month of June, 2012 starting and finishing from the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy.



Round Britain 2012 – Land, Sea and Air - to start and finish from WPNSA
© Dorset Media Service 2010

Offshore Racing

The Artemis Offshore Academy uses the world class facilities at the WPNSA as one of the venues for the UK excellence training programme. The Artemis Offshore Academy aims to help the best of British short-handed sailing talent win major offshore solo and short-handed races by creating the conditions that will foster the emergence of a stronger British force on the international short-handed scene. The Academy will be working closely with the Artemis Offshore Academy supporting a UK training programme of excellence for British short-handed sailors, providing a structure to bring talented sailors up through the ranks.

John Tweed, Chief Executive, WPNSA, "Looking across the channel, it is clear that French sailors' success in short-handed sailing is backed by a strong network of training centres. I have no doubt the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy has the world-class training facilities in place to harness the talent of the Artemis Offshore Academy sailors."



Artemis training at WPNSA © John Thorne 2010

International Teams

The centre has taken the step of inviting foreign Olympic teams to train at the site and contracts have been signed with several teams including Italy, USA, Canada and Australia.

Conferences

The Academy has hosted conferences with business leaders and senior people from the sailing world to try and secure long term interest in attracting international sailing events to the location.

"We don't want the Games to be a one off, we need to work very hard to ensure there is a continuing and lasting legacy", John Tweed, Chief Executive, WPNSA.



International Yachting Conference at WPNSA
© Dorset Media Services 2010

Active Sustainable Legacy

Through an associated charity called the Chesil Trust, WPNSA is running a scheme called 'Sail for a Fiver' which enables schools in Dorset and neighboring counties to bring classes of children aged 10-11 on half day training courses at the venue for just £5 per child. "So far, over 7,500 young people have got on the water for the first time through the scheme and we're currently hosting about 1,600 a year", John Tweed, Chief Executive, WPNSA.



Seb Coe spends time with Sail for a Fiver Legacy Children at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy © Dorset Media Service

Ben Ainslie CBE, WPNSA Director and Triple Gold Medalist

‘The legacy programme is a key element to Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy’s philosophy, we are committed to helping less privileged Dorset children try water sports at the venue and continue to support them through to racing events. A Sail for a Fiver child today may be a medal winner by 2016 and it is our job to ensure this opportunity is given to the young people and people with disabilities’.

The Chesil Trust is also working with underprivileged children from East London schools and are also welcoming children with disabilities from across the nation – as the site for the Paralympic sailing events, the Academy has some of the best disabled water sports facilities in the UK.



Local children Sail for £5 at WPNSA © WPNSA

For the youngsters who show talent there is also ongoing support from the Chesil Trust through a talent development scheme. Taking a child to a different dinghy regatta every weekend can be costly so the scheme is essential, so far it has helped 7 individuals who have gone on to win 3 Youth World Championships, a great record.

Environment

WPNSA has a commitment to stewardship of the environment and has been described by Natural England as ‘an example of best practice’. John Tweed, Chief Executive, WPNSA, “We recognized from the outset that we were proposing development in a very environmentally sensitive area, adjacent to a World Heritage site. Sailing itself is a pretty benign activity, but we do use powered craft as safety boats and so on, therefore we wanted to make sure we were making a positive contribution to the environment rather than a negative one”.

The building was designed to be energy efficient, working closely with Scottish and Southern Energy, the Academy has built on this, with about 20% of its energy needs currently generated by photovoltaic cells, which harness solar power.



Photovoltaic cells on the roof the WPNSA (c) WPNSA 10

There is also the recovery of 'grey water' from the roof for boat washing, an active recycling programme, recently extended to include old sails and batteries as well as the installation of motion-sensitive lights throughout the complex.

Marine litter is also taken seriously, the Academy has hosted a Marine Litter Summit in conjunction with the Dorset Coast Forum to highlight the issue and enforce strict policies at the site.

In April, 2011, the Academy also hosted a conference promoting clean and sustainable seas and oceans with a number of very prominent national and international figures.

Venue Volunteer Programme

The WPNSA has launched their Volunteer Programme (this is in addition to the official LOCOG 'Games Maker' Volunteer Programme). Uniquely registration does not require previous marine based experience; instead the Academy is valuing the individuals' desire and commitment to learn with the extra merit of gaining globally recognised qualifications during their time at the Academy.

The WPNSA is aiming to create a structure that will foster and sustain local volunteerism in Dorset that will continue into the post Games years. It will provide experiences that many people would not have had the opportunity to be offered and provide foundation skills to those looking to start new career paths within the marine and events industries.



Volunteers at the WPNSA will experience powerboat training
© WPNSA 10

John Tweed, Chief Executive of the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy is looking forward to interacting with the motivated volunteers, 'it will be interesting to have a new group of proactive individuals on site at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy. I am keen to be able to watch the group all progress through their land based winter month training weekends and then onwards to put this knowledge into practical use during the warmer summer period out on the water where they will all experience their own taste of the action'.

Endorsement

Royal endorsement – Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness Prince Philip visited the WPNSA during June 2009.



WPNSA Chairman Edward Leask escorts Her Majesty the Queen from the WPNSA building near local well wishers © Dorset Media Services 09

Jeremy Hunt, the newly appointed Secretary of State for Culture, the Olympics, Media and Sport attended the Academy during June 2010 to give his first keynote speech – this included information on tourism in the UK and the potential of the Games to enhance that tourism offer. He held a lunch reception in association with WPNSA and Visit Britain to address any questions or concerns that the local SW community have regarding the change in government.

Sarah Dempsey, Double Olympic Gold Medallist

'In my mind, Weymouth Bay and Portland Harbour are the finest sailing areas in the UK. With the development of the new purpose built, on-shore facilities at the Academy, it's in an unbeatable place to train, whatever your level'.



Helena Lucas Paralympic Sailing Star in action during 2010
©Skandia Team GBR

Helena Lucas, Paralympic Sailor

'I love training in Weymouth Bay and Portland Harbour as they offer a wide range of sailing conditions. The Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy is an unbeatable venue for disabled sailors with new, purpose built, facilities. For example, there are disabled access hoists on the pontoons, providing the safest access to tidal waters for people with disabilities anywhere in the UK. I don't know of any other sailing venue where the needs of sailors of all abilities are so well catered for'.

Paul Goodison, Olympic Gold Medalist

'Winning gold in Qingdao was an amazing experience - I am now looking forward to training and competing out of the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy on my home waters'.

Facilities



- 150 metres of slipway accessible at all states of wind and tide
- 3 cranes – yacht hoist facilities
- Dinghy parking for 600 dinghies
- In house race management team
- 125 protected marina berths for ribs / yachts
- On site dinghy sailing, yachting and windsurfing schools (run by third party operators)
- Full on water event support
- Campervan site for visitors to events



Spinnakers Restaurant at the Academy © WPNSA

Shore side

- VIP Meeting Rooms, formal function room overlooking Weymouth Bay (capacity 150 people)
- 3 Fully licensed lounge bars (up to 150 people)
- Balcony and uninterrupted views across Portland Harbour
- Large bar and carvery
- Wet Cafeteria and bar (approximately 200 people)
- 6 Lecture/meeting rooms (approximately 30 people each)
- Event Hall suitable for measuring sails/dinghies, indoor training/sports and large functions/weddings
- Balcony overlooking the Event Hall
- First Aid/Medical Suite
- Male/Female disabled changing rooms/showers
- Large briefing/lecture room (80 people)
- Physiotherapy room providing access to a full range of sports therapists



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