



JUNIOR GUIDE

Dear Junior Sailor & Parent:

Enclosed are many of the details you will need to participate in junior sailing events in Eastern Connecticut this summer. This guide is for you, and we want it to be as useful as possible. Please let us know what we are missing, so we can make it better for next year.

Have a great summer!

Brandon Flack
ECSA Interim Junior Chairperson
bflack@amconet.com
860.501.0576

A Note About Age Limits

The general purpose of this guide is to distribute information about the Junior events scheduled in this area. The term Junior has a very specific meaning, as outlined below. Unless the regatta announcements that follow specify otherwise, expect that Junior sailors only will be attending.

The International Optimist Dinghy class (IOD) has its own set of age limits, also outlined below. The official IOD Class Association age groups and restrictions are shown. Most ECSA member clubs use the IOD class age groups for IOD regattas.

Also listed below are age restrictions for a number of US Sailing sponsored events.

<i>US Sailing/ECSA/Frostbite Age Groups</i>	
ECSA Midgets	Can not reach 16 in current year (420'S) & 15 (Optimists)
<i>US Sailing Juniors</i>	Must reach 13, but not 19 in current year
<i>US Sailing Youths</i>	Cannot reach 20 in current year
<i>US Sailing O'Day Trophy</i>	Must be 17 or older in current year
Essex Frostbite Yacht Club	Skipper (need not be helmsman) must be 15, second sailor has no age limit
ECSA All Star & Team Racing	Can not reach 19 in current year

International Optimist Class Association Age Groups	
White Fleet	10 and under
Blue Fleet	11 and 12
Red Fleet	13, 14 & 15
Green Fleet	15 and under/see below
IOD Class Association determining age is the skipper's age on the first day of the regatta.	

Special Information about Green Fleet Regattas

Green fleet regattas are where it all starts for the new racer. These regattas are just for beginners. Remember when you go to a Green Fleet regatta that all the other sailors are in the same boat as you, everything is new to them as well. And just as important remember that many of the parents are new too. Most have not been to a regatta before. Actually, USODA reports that, on average, 50% of the parents of Optimist sailors have no background in sailing.

Green Fleet has two purposes: 1) To encourage novices to attend their first Optimist Regatta, and 2) To encourage their continued participation in Optimist racing. To achieve these underlying goals, each regatta with a green fleet division may make up their own rules. Here are some useful guidelines to consider about green fleet divisions from USODA:

- Skippers must be age 15 or under on day of the regatta.
- Clubs are encouraged to give all sailors participation awards rather than placement trophies. “Winning” is not as important as encouraging novice sailors.
- Coaching of the bottom half of the fleet during racing may or may not be permitted (it should be spelled out in the sailing instructions). Coaches should use due caution when coaching to not cause wash or other actions to interfere with other racers. Coaches should coach all participants that need it, not just their own sailors.
- A separate skippers meeting for the green fleet sailors is highly recommended.
- Green fleet races should be held on a separate course so as not to delay the more efficient racing on the Red-White-Blue course.

[Green Fleet Tips Article](#)

Is my child ready for green fleet?

Consider the following questions when deciding if your son or daughter should try their hand at racing in green fleet. The goal is to have a good time, make new friends, and try to do well racing sailboats. And it should be pretty much in that order. The fact that a regatta organizer has a green fleet indicates that they will try to provide an environment that engenders this spirit. If you can answer yes to most or all of these questions, then your sailor is ready to give it a try. Remember the goal is to have a good time. So if a half day is all that remains fun, stop sailing at lunch and come back another day for more fun!

- Can sail upwind, reaching, and downwind

- Understands the basic rule (no crashing) and can do his/her part to avoid crashing
- Can identify the race course (usually a triangle marked by orange floating balls)
- Can hear and figure out (even if it means following directions and other sailors) the starting signals.
- Wants to have fun
- Knows how to smile and have a good time!

If you think it is time to give it a try, or if you are not certain, give your sailing instructor a couple of minutes of your time, and ask. They know your sailor's skills, and are familiar with Optimist regattas. They can give you lots of help.

US Sailing Junior Championships

The Sears (triple handed), Bemis (double handed), and Smythe (single handed) championships are open to young men and women who qualify as “Junior” Sailors (see the age chart). The skipper and crew for any event must be members of *US Sailing* and all members of ECSA clubs or programs, but no longer have to be from the same club. See the “Conditions” on the US Sailing website for all entry details and requirements.

Entry for the Bemis and Smythe Area B Championships is done by contacting Brandon Flack bflack@amconet.com by July 7th. This early deadline is necessary to arrange for borrowed boats and eliminations on the 11th.

Sears Information

The Sears Championship is the *US Sailing* triple handed National Junior Championship. **The entry deadline is July 7th.** All sailors must be members of US Sailing. The club the skipper is representing must also be a member of US Sailing. Only the winning team from the ECSA eliminations will go on to the Area B's.

All sailors competing in the ECSA Sears Elimination should be available and prepared to compete in the Area B Elimination, should they win the ECSA Elimination. If you can't go on to the Area B's, do not enter. You will receive further information about the Area B competition when you win the ECSA elimination. Contact Brandon Flack bflack@amconet.com by **July 7th** if you intend to enter.

Bemis Information

The Bemis Championship is the *US Sailing* double handed National Junior Championship. The Area B's are normally in 420's with trap and spinnakers. Bring your own and sail your own boat. The sailors must be members of *US Sailing* and the Skippers club must also be a member of US Sailing. The top two finishers from Area B clubs qualify for the USSA Finals competing in provided 420's. The ECSA will host our eliminations at a local event. Please check our calendar to see which event it will be this year. ECSA will sponsor the top two teams, but anyone can enter the Area B's if they choose.

Smythe Information

The Smythe Championship is the *US Sailing* single handed National Junior Championship. This year there will be no ECSA Smythe Eliminations, but everyone can enter directly to the Area B's to try and qualify for the finals. The Sailor must be a member of US Sailing. Their club must also be a member of US Sailing. ECSA will sponsor two ECSA entries to the Area B's. If more than two choose to enter, we may have an elimination or make other arrangements for sponsorship. Contact Brandon Flack for details.

ECSA Junior Championships

ECSA Team Racing Championship

The racing schedule is posted online. Monday afternoons are reserved for team racing. Flexibility to change schedules is encouraged but if mutual agreement between the host and visitor clubs is not achieved, then a forfeit by the club not meeting the scheduled competition is recorded. Results of each match must be e-mailed to Brandon Flack bflack@amconet.com immediately. The Championship Regatta is scheduled in August at Yale. The top TWO East Division and top TWO West Division clubs will be invited to attend. See the regatta announcement in the details of the calendar for specifics. Trophies will be awarded to the top three teams at the ECSA Annual Awards.

If agreed upon by both teams in advance, protests may be done on the water at the RC boat with the Race Committee as the Protest Committee. Both boats will come alongside the RC boat and hold the hearing.

Team Racing Eligibility

Once a Sailor enters the ECSA team racing series for one program, s/he may not sail for any other program in Team Racing even if s/he is a member of both programs. A sailor may represent any program s/he chooses for individual regattas. Full time paid sailing instructors may not sail in the Team Racing or All Star events. Junior Instructors (typically not paid, paid very little, or working part time) may sail in Team Racing and All Star Regattas provided they are legitimate members of the program they represent.

ECSA All Star Regatta

Each club within ECSA is invited to send a team consisting of two junior skippers and two crew to compete in a collegiate style, A/B fleet type regatta at USCGA. Each club determines for itself what selection process it will use but theoretically the competitors represent an “All Star” group. Normal Intercollegiate racing rules apply as A competitors and B competitors race within their own fleets, alternating boats as determined by the rotation schedule. As many races as possible are run and the overall winners are determined by adding together the A and B totals. No throw-outs are permitted. Trophies will be awarded to the top three teams at the ECSA Annual Awards.

ECSA Midget Regattas/Championships

The ECSA Midget regattas are open to those sailors who qualify as Midgets (see age chart). These eliminations are open to all ECSA Midgets, with no restriction as to one per club. These eliminations will be sailed concurrently with the **420 fleet** at the ECSA qualifier regatta noted on the schedule. The top two finishers of the midget elimination qualify for the Mid-Atlantic Midget Championships. The top 7 ECSA finishers become the team that represents ECSA at the Midget Challenge Regatta held at. The #4, 5, 6 & 7 qualifiers will share two boats at the USCGA. If a winner cannot go to the Mid-Atlantics or Coast Guard, then the next lowest point total will be invited.

The Midget Challenge regatta at USCGA is held in USCGA Flying Junior’s (FJ’s), using normal fleet racing rules. No team racing is allowed. Teams from Western Long Island Sound, Great South Bay and Eastern Long Island are invited. A total of 20 (more if available) boats race. “Team” scores are totaled to determine the winning team. Trophies are awarded to the top 3 skippers and crews.

The selection process for the two **ECSA Optimist** entries in the Mid-Atlantic Midget Championship is as follows: The skippers compiling the lowest point total in five of the eleven following regattas will be selected: Watch Hill, Weekapaug, Sachem’s Head, Fishers Island, Niantic Bay, Thames, Pine Orchard, Ram Island, Madison Beach, Groton Long Point and NESS/Wadawanuck. Scoring is based on overall fleet finishes, with 1 for first, 2 for second, etc. A third in a small fleet counts the same as a third in a large fleet. Ties will be broken by the most first, seconds, thirds, etc. If a tie still remains, then who beat who in the last regatta both sailed in will be the tie breaker. If a winner cannot go to the Mid-Atlantics, then the next lowest point total will be invited.

SUNY Challenge Regatta

The SUNY (State University of New York) Challenge Regatta was new in 2010. It is held at SUNY Maritime, also referred to as Fort Schuyler, located under the Throggs Neck Bridge in New York. Six teams of three boats, from ECSA, JSA, GSB, PGJSA, Barnegat Bay NJ and Hudson River will compete, similar to the Midget Challenge at the Coast Guard Academy. Age limits are US Sailing limits, 18 and under. It is the intent that the entrants are no longer Midgets, as they have their regatta at Coast Guard. This is for the older sailors. However, a midget will not be excluded if he/she is the normal crew for the sailor qualifying. These eliminations are open to all ECSA sailors, with no restriction as to one per club. These eliminations will be sailed concurrently with the 420 fleet at the ECSA qualifier regatta noted on the schedule. The top three age appropriate finishers will qualify for the SUNY Regatta. SUNY Maritime will provide their fleet of 420's, sailed without spinnakers or traps. Skippers meeting will be about 12:00, with racing until about 6:00. This allows travel to and from SUNY avoiding rush hours. Food afterwards.