

I am a member of an organization called GoSailingSF (GoSailingSF.org). Its goal is to promote sailing, particularly in the Bay Area. I am involved in the Youth Sailing Initiative as a sub-group. Our focus is to try to introduce sailing to children in the Elementary/Middle School age. The big picture is to take sailing to the school, literally. We are looking for donations of stout, heavy El Toros that we can convert to land-sailers. We will need hulls, masts, booms, tillers and rudders, but we do not need centerboards. We will bolt on two wheels forward, outboard of the mast. We will have to modify the rudder so we can bolt on two wheels on each side. The regular tiller will be used to steer the boat. With a Toro mast, boom and sail, the plan is to let the kids sail the Toros around the school yard.

A spontaneous list of what the kids can learn on the very first day:

- \* you can move something using only the wind for fuel
- \* you can only sail in directions the wind will let you go
- \* you have to tack and gybe to get to different destinations
- \* you can't see the wind, so you have to figure out which way it is blowing
- \* changing the trim of the sail changes how fast the Toro goes
- \* the boat steers just like a real boat (from the back)
- \* it matters where you sit
- \* you can do it all by yourself
- \* you are responsible for everything that happens to the boat because you are the only one there
- \* you don't want to fall out of the boat on asphalt, just like you don't want to fall out of the boat in the water, but if you have to, the water would be better...
- \* in a real boat, there is no fence around the school yard

Related subjects:

- \* wind is energy: turbines make electricity from the wind; Eagles and hawks can fly without flapping their wings; Kites can fly and lift the weight of the kite and the string; sailboats can sail around the world
- \* begin to learn about the shape of foils that use the wind: wind turbine blades; bird's wings; different styles of kites; different types of sails
- \* what happens when the wind blows hard, and when there is only a little wind; how does this impact the size and shape of a sail/wing/kite/wind turbine blade?

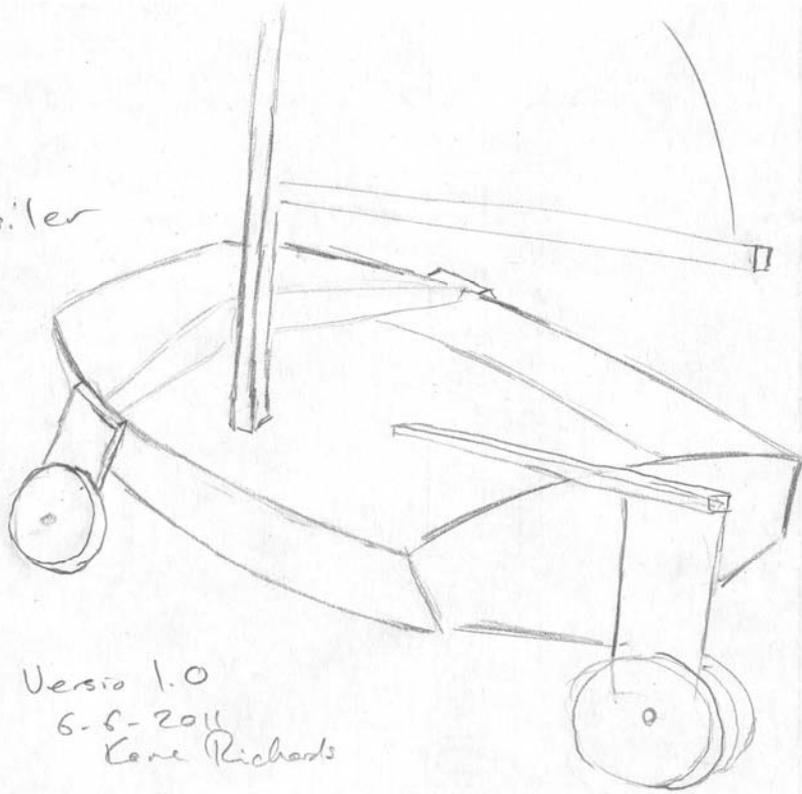
So that is the plan. Expose the children to sailing, by taking sailing to them. Get them to start thinking about the wind. Some of the kids will be so excited they will want to sail again-- for real! I know of more than one parent who felt so left out standing on the dock at a junior program, they started sailing too...

Please email me with any questions you may have, and include your phone number.

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E Toru  
Land Sailer



Version 1.0  
6-6-2011  
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