

Sport is Great Part 2

I've come to Weymouth and Portland Bay where you'll find some of the best natural sailing waters in the UK. During the Olympics this incredible coastline will host 10 exciting sailing events from dinghy racing to windsurfing. The area is a natural open-air venue, which means there are plenty of places to watch the sailing from – like here.

This is the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy and, thanks to the Olympics, it's become a state-of-the-art facility for professional training, competitions and the local community... so everyone will benefit from the Olympics – even when it's gone.

Peter Allam works for LOCOG, the Olympic Organisers.

Richard: Peter, why has this stretch of coastline been chosen for Olympic Sailing?

Peter: One thing we can always rely on at Weymouth and Portland is the wind... and you can probably just hear it whistling in the background so we get good wind. We also have fantastic waters here to which we can set the race courses, the good sea conditions are favourable, and the shape of the bay and the harbour here, within Portland Harbour, gives us plenty of opportunities to sail whatever the conditions.

Richard: And you're an Olympian yourself.

Peter: I've been lucky. Twice, I've been to the Olympics. The first time was in 1984, the second time was in '92, and I was very fortunate in '84 to win a bronze medal, although we were favourites for the gold, I'm very happy to have come away with a medal.

Richard: So what makes this facility so state of the art?

Peter: The great thing about this academy is that it caters for all ability levels, from the elite athletes to the first-time sailor. It also has plenty of space. You need space for lots of boats and lots of people.

Richard: All this sea air and talk of sailing has given me an idea!

Snug! This is the Official Test Centre, next to the sailing academy. It offers something for everyone from professionals to beginners – like me. So, let's see what this coastline has to offer.

Windsurfing instructor Tris Best is taking me out on the water.

Tris: That's it. Lovely job. And then hand over hand nice and gently when you're ready. No rush. Lovely job. And then just grab in the mast below the boom. Perfect! Well done.

Richard: Got it.

Tris. OK. Keep your knees nice and bent, back straight. That's how, nice and upright. Perfect. That's it. Perfect. Here we go. Too easy!

Oh, this is it! I'm getting there. Yes! A carve gybe! Oh, and a flare gybe! I'm all over it! Just flip a 180! Yes, that's a beautiful gust. Yeah, all right, OK, I admit it. I've a little way to go when it comes to windsurfing... but Great Britain is so passionate about sport I think I'm going to try a few more of them. Now, where did I put my cricket bat?