

Hints and Tips for Race officers

Overview

This document tries to provide some general information as a reminder to those of us that do not regularly carry out the race officer duty. The sailing instructions in the club calendar also provide useful info.

Two Weeks before duty

Phone round (2-3 weeks beforehand) team and make sure they know to turn up! 9am for an 11am race, it takes a surprising amount of time to get round to the harbour and get out, particularly if you hit a ferry time. Please remember to phone the people on bar duty as well.

Please note club keys are with Joe and Clive Mills-Barton 42 Belgrave Road, Seaford, BN25 2EJ, 01323893125. As a backup Chris Turner 25 Blatchington Hill, Seaford, BN252AJ, 01323898711.

Race Types

Generally the more serious racing takes place on Wednesday evenings and Sunday mornings. The Sunday afternoon race is meant to be more light hearted (Unless a specific Cup race) and also an introduction for those new to racing on the Sea.

Thus on Sunday afternoon the course should be simple, generally just a triangle (no sausages) and not too long a race, say 45 - 60 minutes.

On Sunday mornings there are often two races held back to back, and so that boats do not have to wait too long between races it is advisable not to make the course for the first race too long for the conditions and shorten course after 45 minutes finishing each boat after it crosses the line irrelevant of number of laps sailed. This allows the second race to start promptly aiming to get every one back in the club by 1:30pm at the absolute latest.

The second morning race is often a separate series so people may join the second race so watch out for extra starters and I suggest you leave out the signing on sheet.

Please be sure to liaise with the galley staff as timing the end of racing with the roast dinner is not easy!

Electronic race control system

There is a manual for this system in the race box but a quick overview follows, it uses a touch screen for all controls but don't push down on it too hard it is not indestructible and only needs light pressure to detect your finger.

The system allows you to create any of the race signals you would normally need including, start the race sequence, postpone a race, shorten course or abandon a race without the need for flags.

You can also do both individual recall and general recall for races.

It is important to make sure the loudhailer is connected up as this can be clearly heard by the competitors in most conditions, so if you do an individual recall please call out the boat and sail number with the tannoy as it can be difficult to tell on the water. (please switch Amplifier power off before connecting or disconnecting Horn)

The system uses the 5 minute sequence

Postponement is red flashing light on handrail, this is not very bright so if it's a sunny day suggest you use flag as well.

Start / Finish line

Don't forget that RYA rules state you start the race using a transit, but finish the race on a line straight to the buoy. Try to get bias on the line so that the fleet do not bunch at one end, this is difficult unless the wind is along shore but a good amount of bias can be set and it then does not disadvantage those trying to keep out of trouble too much. Transit should be set on or just behind the start mark. We can use a lane mark to split the fleet so that the squibs and Cats use the outer lane and dinghies the inner for safety. In these circumstances the outer marker is the course mark and so the lane mark is not a mark of the course for subsequent laps, it's sometimes useful to get a rescue boat to lift the lane mark after the start to avoid confusion.

If there are a lot of boats, and its windy start the fleets separately or in lanes, Cats and Squibs in the outer lane. Alternatively three starts Cats first followed by dinghies and then Squibs other wise everybody ends up bunched together early on in the race.

Courses

This is obviously down to you but things strongly recommended not to do are:-

- Don't use a single mark for two separate legs of a course it causes confusion
- Don't set a mark such that boats have to swing through more than 180 degrees
- Don't set a sausage that uses the start finish line you will get confused on number of laps sailed and shortening course with this will confuse everyone!

Both of these can be dangerous as boats can end up crossing from opposite directions and rules get a bit complicated! (A keel boat will probably win the argument!)

Things to do:-

- Make sure there is a beat
- Try and reduce bias on the start line
- If in doubt keep it simple
- Most Cats can't Beat or Run, so make sure there is a reach in the course to balance things up.

Boat Crew advice

Harbour lock code, don't forget to tell any rescue people that don't know what code is. (it should be on a tag on the boat keys).

Advise on course before they go means things get laid more quickly.

If they can lay marks from West to East then that saves them going around the bay multiple times.

Its much easier for Rib to recover marks than Ark.

If you only have one rescue boat it should always be a Rib.

Results

Don't forget to put the start time on the results sheet

Always record times for each lap, so if there is any confusion after the race, checks of previous lap times can often save you a lot of hassle. (Also allows easy estimation of times for redress)

Always concentrate the weather can change quickly and means you have to think ahead so you can gauge the finish time.

Don't race in the dark, (We can't find the marks!) Squibs do not have Navigation lights and it can take them a good 30 minutes to get back to berths.

If the wind gets less than 4Knots shorten course as it just becomes a lottery as to who wins.

Consider the tide, if its springs and mid tide time, then 5 knots is probably running so with a 5 knot wind a beat is just not going to happen. You can always shorten to a mark of the course and use a rescue boat to finish everyone.

If wind gets up and more than 2 boats are capsized at any time consider shortening the course, every one is probably exhausted.

If you see boats finishing and the winch is not unlocked get the ARO or a body to unlock it.

If in unsure ask or read sailing instructions.

When rescue boats return if there are any issues please put details in R.O's log.

Please leave completed results on results board by wet entrance before you leave.

Also ensure everything is locked up.

Chris Turner March 2010 version 2