

## “Once a Year RACE OFFICER” updated spring 2009

**These notes are aimed at all of us who race at the Club.**

... particularly those who are responsible for organising club racing, primarily, the Race Officer and team who may be called on to do **a duty once or twice a year** only. However it should also be of interest to all who compete in or help run races as it is only with the understanding of rules, signals and the intentions of the race officer that enjoyable racing will result.

The first thing to realise is that if racing is going to be run successfully a certain amount of preparation is essential.

- For the sailing committee this means making sure the club has the appropriate equipment, Sailing Instructions and Guidance Notes for the race officer and team.
- For the Race Officer this means being familiar with the club's procedures and local conditions, weather forecast etc.
- Likewise the competitors must know the start times, flag signals and course signals etc.

Nothing is more frustrating for competitors than to lose a race due to some procedural error (wrong flags, inaccurate timing etc) by the Race Officer. This puts a heavy responsibility on the race officer who may have very little experience of the job.

### **So What To Do for an interesting and well run day ?**

A little bit of preparation always helps –

- **Make sure you have an assistant or two, AROs** – and if you can, encourage a “new member to come and help so that they can see what happens”

- **Read the Sailing Instructions**

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- **Check the weather forecast before you come**, just to get an idea of what you are going to contend with when you get to the Sailing Club (although the reservoir does seem to have it's own weather pattern sometimes)

- **You will need a watch that displays seconds** – to time the starts - and it's easier to use one you know (a back up is also advised in case one stops) **This season it is hoped that all ROs will continue to time ALL the boats from the last scheduled start in each set of races so that the Handicap Class Captain can work out a set of results.** It will be easier in the long run if you time all these boats through every lap! It is also useful to have an idea of timings for each fleet, to give an indication of how long it is taking to complete one lap. Remember races are expected to last around 50 minutes.

You may need to drive the committee boat to where you want to start the racing from, so go and have a look at the boat and controls, ask the Safety Team to give you a run down if you need to, likewise you will be given a radio, just check you know how to use it and that it's working

### **Obtain the equipment you will need from garage 2**

- Two boxes of course letters in metal cases. A -- Z + “Gate” + 1. 2. 3. in case extra marks are used.
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- Crate containing flags, recording sheets, flag chart etc etc
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- Wooden individual recall flag on a stick

**If you have any concerns ask** the Safety Team or Sailing Committee members, they'll be pleased to help.!

- ***Again there is emphasis this year – not the number of laps but the length (duration in minutes) of the race AND the finishing procedure allows slower dinghies, in any fleet, to finish a lap early. Use a “gate” about a third of the way up the beat to make your job even easier.***
- ***The second race will not start before 2pm***

## On the Day

**Arrive at the Club with time to spare**, probably no later than 10.30am just to give yourself time to plan what to do and get a cup of coffee !!

**Decide on the Race Area** – if unsure, ask experienced sailors who may be around on the day and they will be more than happy to help – it's for their benefit!

If there is an Open Meeting, or other activity, on at the same time, liase with the person in charge about respective course areas. **Open Meetings have preference.**

**Try to start the races at 12.00pm** – otherwise the day starts running late before it begins – it is best to advise sailors, via the PA system, of your intended start area and that you intend to start at 12 prompt.

Place a **signing on/retirement** sheet on the shelf in the porch, spares in the holder above.

Board the Committee boat with your equipment and head off to your selected area, or climb up into the Crow's nest and start from there.

### When to use/not use the Crow's Nest

**It's ALWAYS preferable to have boat starts so that the most can be made of clear wind and true beats!**

If there is a strong south westerly/westerly wind and there are several windsurfers it is recommended not to use the Crows Nest for safety reasons. (The sailboards tend to reach across the lake from the clubhouse.)

**Setting the Course** – if you have any questions, there are bound to be members of the sailing committee or experienced sailors around - **ASK**

### All Races

Try to ensure you get a true first beat – ie the first mark is directly upwind and at 90 degrees to the starting line that you are setting – use the wind indicator on top of the committee boat to check angles.

You have 2 courses to set

a **long course**, display on top line of course board on committee boat

a **short course**, display on bottom line of course board on committee boat

ensure you do not have fleets going in opposite directions round a mark,

Individual fleets will have decided which course they are sailing. The boats from the last scheduled start will ALL sail the short course

One or even two lap courses tend to be boring. Try to have at least four laps sailed in the time available.

## Notes on course setting

Set the first leg as a true windward beat

broad reaches will compact the fleets, close reaches tends to spread the fleets

an ideal reach for dinghies should be 135-150 degrees to the wind

avoid setting a hook finish. See definitions of "Finish" inside front cover of Racing Rules of Sailing.

using a gate in the course, ie the committee boat and the start buoy/finish buoy, is the most convenient as it means you do not have to move the committee boat, nor do you have to pull the anchor up, you just need to place the committee boat some where on the first beat – there is a "letter" with a gate on for the course board to indicate a gate is being used **and** remember to organise a "pin" mark if you are not going to use a mark of the reservoir - the safety crew will help to set this mark, if requested, (ie the line between committee boat and pin mark should be at 90' to the wind and between the windward and leeward marks.

**Races 2 & 3** – first race after lunch will not start before 2pm

Use a gate – this means you are on station to finish, and on station, (unless wind changes direction) to start the next one. **A quick turn around between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> race is very important**, to ensure sailors do not have to hang around, **(finishing slower boats, in any fleet, a lap early also helps this turn around)**

**NOTE. Boats must not go through the gate on a down wind leg.**

## Length of Races

**Races should be governed by how long they run for – not the number of laps.**

Race 1 – to last approx 50-60 mins for leading boat, the Galley expect to feed folk about 1.15 – 1.30

Race 2 – to last 50-60 mins for leading boat – with a **very quick turn around for the next race** – keep "hanging around" time between races to a minimum.

Race 3 – see how the day is going, shorter laps are more interesting than long drawn out ones.

## Starting the Race.

1. Count the numbers in classes as they are milling around before the start, if you can!

Prepare your flags -

- check the **orange flag** is up (you are on station to start)
- have individual wooden recall flag and general recall flag ready – for early starters
- clip on the blue peter – it stays up most of the time
- then clip on the fleet flags, in order of starts; they are in order in the crate

2. Show the courses on the board

3. Have some-one ready, watch in hand, to shout out the count down to each hoot.

4. There is hooter on each committee boat, usually reliable, and a whistle tied to the crate, in case it doesn't work.

5. Start the race in accordance with the Sailing Instructions – see flag sequence attached to email, and on laminated sheet in crate, check the numbers of boats that have started and add any that you might have missed.

6. Note the real start time, so that you know how long the race has been running.

7. **PLEASE set a watch going, from zero, at the last scheduled start. It is hoped that all ROs will record all these boats through the finish line.** It will actually be easier in the long run if you do this every lap!

8. As soon as the race is underway, list each fleet boat in order on each lap and time all boats from the last scheduled start.

## Finishing the Race

When you are almost ready to finish the race, put up the **BLUE flag** – this shows you are on station to finish the race, the finishing line should be at 90 degrees to the wind. The pin mark can be easily moved.

When you intend to finish the racing, hoist the **S Flag with 2 hoots** (shorten course), all boats coming through the finishing line, irrespective of the number of laps sailed, will be deemed to finish. Slower boats can be finished a lap, or even two, early.

List the finishing position of each boat in each class legibly and PLEASE record the times of all the boats from the last scheduled start. These boats are keen to have a result!

## After the day's racing.

- a) Leave the committee boat moored to the jetty. Bring all equipment ashore and replace. Please make sure all flags are returned to the correct slot in the box and **the course letters in alphabetical order in the correct box.**
- b) Check retirement sheet, compile final results, apart from Handicap which the Class Captain will do, sign them, & place the results in the plastic container above the signing on sheet in the entrance hall.
- c) Write down any defects of equipment etc in a book which is hanging on a hook in the cupboard in garage 2 so that the Sailing Committee can ensure problems are sorted, or tell one of them.
- d) **Any safety aspect must be notified immediately, to any Council member.**

## Conclusion

In summary, like most things in life, a little preparation will lead to things going much more smoothly. A clear allocation of the jobs that must be done on board will help towards an easy day. Remember to keep checking that things are happening to plan - the correct flags - the correct sound signals etc. Ask for help at any time. We are all still learning.

**Remember; if it all goes wrong – don't worry, it's someone else's turn next week !!!**

Even the most experienced ROs get it wrong sometimes!

# RECALLS

## INDIVIDUAL RECALLS

If any boat is on the course side of the Start Line (OCS) it should be recalled.

Make one sound signal and display code flag X.

The Race Officer may hail the offender(s) and call out sail numbers but is in no way obliged to do so.

The onus is on the competitor to respond to the signal and to return and start again.

The code flag X may be hoisted or alternatively the hand held painted board X may be used. The latter has the advantage that it is quickly displayed and can be held to face the offending competitors and be more visible than a flag on the mast.

Display the flag until affected competitors are seen to be responding. To avoid confusion with subsequent starts lower the X flag before the next start.

Any OCS starter who fails to come back will be disqualified.

## GENERAL RECALL

If any start is unfair or many boats are OCS and sail numbers cannot be easily recorded a General recall may be signalled.

Note..... If a number of boats start correctly and they can be readily identified, an individual recall can be signalled and all boats that were OCS can be disqualified by exception.

However if the decision to make a General Recall is made then:-

Make Two sound signals

Hoist 1<sup>st</sup> Substitute Flag

**The Club Sailing Instructions state that any recalled fleet goes to the end of the Start Sequence before being restarted.**

Continue with subsequent fleet starts but remove 1st Substitute flag before the next start (to avoid confusion). This is a variation of ISAF Rule 29.2

The recalled Class Start may follow immediately after the last scheduled start by raising the relevant class flag at the same time as the penultimate start signal. i.e. when the GP flag comes down the relevant class flag goes up!

Alternatively, a further delay may be imposed and the full start procedure begun when convenient. I.e. Class flag up at zero, blue peter up at 2mins, then both down at 4 mins.