

RACE OFFICER DUTIES **(The race officer is “king”)**

A race officer is responsible for conducting a race in accordance with the conditions set out in the **notice of the race** and the club's **Sailing Instructions**. Two race officers are required to run a race. More than two makes life easier. Race officers are selected so that at least one officer on duty is experienced and can then help and instruct others with less experience when required.

The notice for club races, giving the conditions and type of each race, is contained in the Club's **Calendar**. The Sailing Instructions are in the **Club Racing Handbook, Section 03**.

The **Club Racing Handbook** contains all the information required for club races and is kept with the racing equipment in the clubhouse wet training room (the room under the balcony). The Handbook is divided into sections and the relevant section number (e.g. Section 03 for the Sailing Instructions) is quoted where relevant in these notes.

The officers must decide if it is safe to race. If it is they must plan the course, give a briefing, start the race, count or time the laps completed, note the time for each craft to finish and complete the race result sheet.

The race officer is not responsible for disqualifying helms that infringe the rules other than certain rules at the start and the finish. A race officer can make a protest if he observes gross infringement of the rules or action that compromises safety and he may be called as a witness to a protest.

The day before the race, check the weather forecast so that you can be prepared for the weather expected during the race. Is the weather expected to remain the same or improve or deteriorate during the race period?

On the day of the race observe the actual weather and compare with forecast. Is there a risk of lightening or poor visibility (fog), and what is the wind strength? Do not race when lightening is imminent, the boats or course cannot be seen because of fog or the wind strength is too great for the ability of the helms, taking into account whether a rescue boat service is in attendance. Do not be afraid to postpone or cancel a race. If in doubt, discuss with the helms. If you decide that the race may go ahead, it is the responsibility of each helm to decide whether to race or not.

If it is safe to race, check safety requirements of **Section 04** and note the type of race and its duration from the **calendar** (a copy is in the Club Racing Handbook). The duration of all club handicap and pursuit races are based on time, not the number of laps.

First put the electric horn on charge whilst you locate and assemble the equipment for the shore based start and finish of the races.

Plan a suitable course for the type of race, as described below, and mark it on the lake plan and on the land based transit course board, **Section 06a**, showing the marks in the order that they are to be rounded or passed – red when rounded or passed to port and green when rounded or passed to starboard – and the duration of the race in minutes. If an inner mark is used on the start line show this on the plan and course board, and make it clear in the briefing that all boats must pass between the outer and inner marks on every lap. Give briefing and warn if rescue boat is not available. Ensure that all helms have signed on and you have the race result sheet prepared, **Section 12**. Have the novices, **Section 08**, ticked the appropriate column when signing on, **Section 14**?

Select the type of race record sheet you prefer for recording the race results, **Section 15** for new style or **Section 16** for old style. The instructions for completing a sheet are contained on the sheet.

PLANNING A COURSE FOR CLUB RACES WITH A SHORE BASED START AND FINISH

A – The Course

Plan a course so that it contains at least one beat, and if possible two beats, to windward, **Section 05**. Use extra temporary marks if necessary. The start for handicap races should if possible be a beat to windward. When this is not possible (on shore or off shore winds) then a reaching start is acceptable. Avoid gybes and runs in very heavy weather, particularly if inexperienced helms are racing and no rescue boat service is in attendance. Do not use a “hooked” finish.

B - Handicap Races: The Start Line

The length of navigable water on the start line should be not less than 1.1 x (the total of the lengths of all the boats starting), and should have a 5⁰ – 10⁰ bias to port, **Section 05**. The line runs from the point of the triangle on the transit course board, **Section 06a**, to the tangent on the course side of the outer mark. When an inner mark is in use the boats must pass between the out and inner marks to start and on all subsequent laps.

C - Handicap Races: Starting Signals

Starting signals, **Section 03** and **Section 07**, are given at 10 minutes (special pre-warning signal devised by PSC) and then at 5, 4, 1 and 0 minutes before the start (according to RRS 2009 – 20012 Rule 26). The flags used by PSC are class flag No.1 and flag P. It is the display of the flags that should indicate the timing and the sound is only to attract attention to the flags.

A boat starts when after her starting signal any part of her hull, crew or equipment in normal position first crosses the line and she has complied with rule 29.1 (premature start).

No “round the ends”, rule 30.1, or “for bidden triangle”, rules 30.2 and 30.3 are used at PSC.

Individual and general recalls must be used when appropriate, **Section 06b**.

D - Handicap Races: Recording Lap Times

Every time a boat comes through the finishing line it is countered as a lap. Record the time to the nearest second. A boat does not complete a lap when it passes outside the finishing line (outside the outer mark, or shore side of the inner mark if one is in use) and no time must be recorded. If the boat redeems itself by going back, such that line representing its wake when pulled tight would pass round the marks in the correct direction, then when it reaches the finish line the lap has been completed and the time is recorded.

When a number of boats are about to cross the line together it is best to make a separate list of the order and times through the line and later transfer the results to the result sheet. This requires two people, but more makes this task easier.

If a race needs to be shortened after it has been started, then the shortened course signal should be shown just before the lead boat reaches the mark before the finish line, **Section 06b**.

E – Handicap Races: The Finish Line and Finishing

The finish line runs from the point of the triangle on the transit course board **Section 06a**, to the tangent on the course side of the outer mark, but when an inner mark is in use the boats must pass between the out and inner marks to finish. If, as is usually the case, the finish mark is the same mark that was used for the start, the tangent on the course side is on the opposite side of the mark to that when it was used for the start line.

The finish of a handicap race should be judged so that it occurs a few minutes before or soon after the set time of the race and does not split a group of boats that are in close combat with each other. This judgement is made by using gaps in the fleet and taking account of the lap times of the fastest (most completed laps) and the slowest (least completed laps) of the boats in the group, to estimate whether they could complete another lap and be nearer to the set time of the race. This will often, but not exclusively, require that the first boat to be finished will cross the finish line before the set time of the race.

The boat that is finished is not necessarily the fleet lead boat, although it should be the lead boat of a group, if a group is approaching the line near to the set time for the race. Once a boat is finished, all the boats following it are finished when they reach the finish line.

A boat finishes when any part of her hull, crew or equipment in normal position crosses the finishing line in the direction of the course from the last mark for the first time or after taking a penalty under rule 31.2 or 44.2 or, under rule 28.1, after correcting an error made at the finishing line. The requirement “crosses the finishing line in the direction of the course from the last mark” is why a hooked finish must be avoided.

Record the finishing time to the nearest second for each boat.

After finishing a boat need not cross the finishing line completely, but she must not touch the finishing marks. If she does she has not finished and should complete a 360^o turn and return to the course side of the finishing line and then finish. This is then her finishing time and over rides her first “finish”.

F – Handicap races: Signing Off

Helms should sign off when they come ashore to declare that they have sailed by the rules and finished, or that they have sailed by the rules and finished but are protesting another boat, or to signify that they have retired.

H - Pursuit Races: Starting Signals

Because pursuit races are started from the shore of the dinghy launching area with the boats leaving at pre-determined intervals after the starting signal, **Section 11**, the 10 minute pre-warning signal used for handicap races (see C above) is omitted and only the 5, 4, 1 and 0 minutes before the start (according to RRS 2009 – 20012 Rule 26) are used with flags No.1 and flag P. After the starting signal the actual start time for each class of boat, **Section 11**, is then announced and counted down to one blast of the horn to signify the start for that class.

Whilst still starting boats with the longer delayed starting times, an eye must be kept on all the boats that have started to ensure that their first lap and position or time is recorded.

I - Pursuit Races: Recording Lap Positions or Times

Every time a boat comes through the finishing line it is countered as a lap. The order that the boats complete each lap is the order that the boats are in the race. This order, or the actual time to the nearest second, from which the order can be deduced, needs to be recorded. It is useful to record times because as the race progresses the faster boats can overtake the slower boats making it difficult to count positions, but these can be calculated later if the times are recorded

A boat does not complete a lap when it passes outside the finishing line (outside the outer mark, or shore side of the inner mark if one is in use) and no position or time must be recorded. If it redeems itself by going back, such that line representing its wake when pulled tight would pass round the marks in the correct direction, then when it reaches the finish line the lap has been completed and the time is recorded.

When a number of boats are about to cross the line together it is best to make a separate list of the order or times through the line and later transfer the results to the result sheet. This requires two people, but more makes this task easier.

Pursuit races cannot be shortened because the delayed start times are based on the original race time.

J – Pursuit Races: The Finish Line and Finishing

The same as **E above**

K - Pursuit Races: Signing Off

Same as **F above**.

L - Pursuit Races: Protests

Same as **G above**.

M – Calculation of Results

If the Officers have time after any protests have been resolved, then they may calculate the results for handicap races by following **Section 10**, and enter the final positions for pursuit races. If this is not done then the results and positions will be calculated by the person responsible for dinghy races (see job list).

All competed signing on, record and results sheets must be left in **Section 17** unless instructed otherwise.