

Saturday and Summer Series – Race Officer Guidance

This document contains additional guidance for race officers operating the Saturday and Summer Series races.

These race series to have a different format to the 'normal' races operated from a club line start. Races will usually start from a committee boat (Bruce) and use a system of 'grand prix' finishes. Normally 2 races will be scheduled on a particular race day (e.g. Saturday 1 and Saturday 2). The emphasis for this type of racing is to keep the fleet together, with lots of boat on boat action. Our aim is to keep the racing interesting and test people's knowledge of the rules. The aim is to finish the whole fleet within a few minutes of the lead boat to ensure all competitors complete the race in similar tide / wind conditions.

The key to making this successful is good race management.

Set up takes more time than a club line start; you will need to be on the water at least 30 minutes before the scheduled start. You cannot be certain what the course will be until you are actually on the water.

This guidance can be used for other races following a similar format, for example the Interclub Series.

It assumes race officers are familiar with the basic guidance set out in the Dinghy Race Officer Summary Guide.

Overview of short course racing, with 'grand prix' finishes

A Grand Prix finish means the lead boat completes either the total number of laps set, or whenever you wish to shorten the course to achieve a 30-45 minute race. The lead boat is the first boat to finish, then every boat thereafter needs to be rung across the line, regardless of their lap in relation to the lead boat.

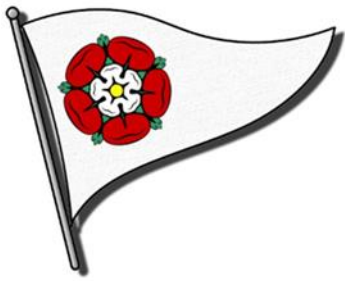
This means that you need to record the number of laps completed by each boat using a tally system. Then just record the finish time for each boat. The result is based on calculating the corrected average lap time for each boat. This system only works if the courses are very small; little triangle/sausage type courses that only take 10-20 minutes per lap.

Preparing the Committee Boat (Bruce)

Bruce has all the flags and equipment on board to run races (except racing marks), however taking a back up clock from the race box is a sensible precaution in case of flat batteries. Bruce is located on a down harbour mooring on the edge of the main channel north of East Milton Buoy.

On board is the following

- A rack for holding flags
- A display board for the mark identifiers to define the course.
- Race Clock
- VHF Radio
- Set of flags on poles



- Sounding Horn – pedal / button operated
- Set of mark indicator boards (Corrugated Plastic rectangles)
 - o Starboard (Green) and Port (Red) versions of the likely marks you will use +
 - o Line
 - o Lap indicators – 2 up to 6

Brief the competitors

A briefing is normally required before you leave for the water. Explain the following:

- Short triangle / sausage course in either a clockwise or anticlockwise direction – no need to write the course down.
- Course will be displayed on the side of the committee boat.
- You must pass through the start line at the end of every lap.
- Describe a 'Grand Prix' finish
- Two races of 30-45 minutes each – with possible course change

Brief the Patrol Boat Crew

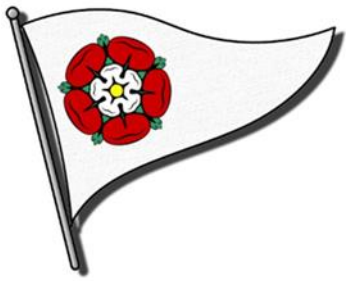
It is really useful to brief the PBC before going on the water so they understand what they need to do.

- The patrol boat will need to take the orange inflatable and pencil buoy as a minimum.
- The patrol boat crew need to ferry the race officer to the committee boat in good time before the scheduled start.
- Once launched the patrol boats first role is to marshal the fleet down to the start area.
- Once the boats are out of the main channel (sailing in the shallows) and away from any risk of the dredger etc, the patrol boat needs to overtake the dinghies and meet the committee boat, ready to lay the marks.
- The patrol boat crew need to lay marks carefully, with clear instruction from the race officer as to their position via the radios.

Course Setting

The course is not different from any other course in so far as it must follow the standard rules for setting i.e.

1. All boats must be passing the one mark in the same direction irrespective of which course they are following (if there are multiple fleets)
2. Do not "cross" paths causing the fleets to intermingle
3. Ensure there is a decent beat into the wind and the committee boat line is perpendicular to the wind.



4. The start line needs to be set to create a windward (upwind) start. Therefore the first and last marks of the course need to be in line with the wind direction. Your start line needs to be between these two marks. If the wind direction is favourable, you may be able to set the start line between two existing navigation buoys. However, this is unlikely and so it is usually necessary to set the first mark or last mark of the course using the orange inflatable (OR1).

If winds are very light, avoid setting a course in either the main channel or in the Russell's Lake channel. The running tide and lack of wind will make sailing difficult.

The course will be either a simple 'sausage' (windward / leeward) or a triangle style Olympic course.

It is important to keep it simple; with only two – four marks and keep the total distance to be sailed short.

Get the patrol boat to help lay the course – good radio communication is really important.

Finally, before the race can begin, get the patrol boat to position the 'pin' end of the line using the pencil buoy. This needs to be perpendicular to the last and first marks of the course, and long enough so that the whole fleet can sail alongside each other.

Fly the Tudor Pennant flag on Bruce to mark the "Committee boat end" of the start line.

Display the chosen course on the side of Bruce using the course board displaying from left to right.

Give plenty of time for competitors to read and understand the course before the start. Display the number of laps you want them to sail. Using 6 laps gives the most flexibility – remember, you can always shorten a course, but never extend it.

The Race

There is no need to start the race until all the competitors have arrived at the committee boat. It is better to take your time and get the course set correctly, rather than try to rush the start to make the published start time.

Start the race as per the normal 5-4-1-0 sequence, using the air horn. It is very important to record the exact time each race starts.

As each boat completes a lap thereafter; use a tally system to record how many laps they have sailed.

The race is finished when one of the following two circumstances occurs:

1. The lead boat completes the total number of laps
2. You reach 30-45 minutes and you chose to shorten the course. Remember to raise the shorten course flag as the lead boat approaches the final mark for the last time and give the correct sound signal.

Once the lead boat has been finished – finish all boats when they next pass through the line, regardless of the lap they are on. Make sure you record their finish times as you would do normally.

When all competitors have finished – either pack up and go home, or if there is to be a second race, reassess the conditions, perhaps change the course (change direction?) and start the next race.