

# TYC Race Officer Guidelines 2015 (Updated 14<sup>th</sup> February)

## **Introduction**

Thank you for agreeing to be a Race Officer and please note that your role requires you to:

- decide if racing shall take place
- decide on the course to be set
- record who is racing
- start the race and ensure that all boats follow the starting rules
- record the progress of boats during the race and, if necessary, shorten the course
- record the finishing times, including seconds, of the boats
- ensure race hut is locked up and flags put away once sailing has finished

Remember that most people sailing are experienced Race Officers and Support Boat Operators. Always ask for help or advice from a member of the sailing committee if you have concerns. It is a good idea to observe and assist someone with experience before the day if possible.

## **Before the Day of the Race – read the Sailing Instructions**

Make sure you have a key to the clubhouse, Dinghy Park and race hut, one key fits all padlocks, from the bar (there is a small deposit).

You could also contact the Support Boat operator to check he/she is carrying out the duty. On the day of the race arrive at least half an hour before the start.

## **Decision to Race**

Racing is very rarely cancelled but it is the Race Officer's decision. Discuss with others if you are unsure. Likely reasons are:

- No Support Boat
- Very strong winds or other hazardous conditions (eg excessive flood water)
- Any other conditions which make sailing dangerous

If it is **windy** but racing appears to be possible the Race Officer should pay extra attention to inexperienced sailors and request a second support boat.

## **The (standard) Course**

The Support Boat operator with an assistant is responsible for placing the buoys, stored in bin at the top of the slipway, in accordance with the Race Officer's instructions. The top buoy is invariably placed about 20 metres downstream of Eel Pie Island.

The Race Officer should assess how the tide and/or flood water could affect the race and the strength of the wind. If winds are light place the second buoy at least 50 metres upstream from Hammerton's ferry, if there is a good breeze place buoy at least 50 metres below the ferry crossing (closer to Richmond).

Decide number of laps to be raced – typically five or six, and place the numbered lap card in the window of race hut where it can be seen by all participants. The race should last about one hour for Wednesday and Winter races and one and a half hours for Sunday Sessional and cup races.

**NB The number of laps should give all or as many boats as possible a reasonable chance of finishing inside the time limit or before the wind dies!**

The maximum time allowed for Wednesday and Winter races is one and a half hours.

The maximum time allowed for Sunday Sessional and cup races is two hours.

Boats finishing outside time limit are scored “did not finish”.

If there is more than one race in a day there will be a one and half hour time limit.

## **1. Record who is racing**

Record the names of helms, crews, class and sail number of each boat racing on printed forms found in the race hut. (Forms for Sunday sessional racing and Wednesday handicap racing are different.) You can use the digital clock to time starts, lap times and finishing times of each boat, including seconds. **Please ensure that all names of members using Club Boats are recorded on Race Sheet and Receipt Book.**

## **2. Starting the Race**

The start line is between the white pole outside the race hut and the white mark on Surrey bank. Boats usually start downstream towards Richmond and finish each lap and the race heading towards Twickenham, upstream. An alternative is to finish boats downstream but do take advice before making any changes to the regular course.

A boat has crossed the start line as soon as any part of it crosses. This is important when deciding if any boat is over the line at the start and has to be recalled, or when recording finishing times.

The following start sequence of flags and sound signals should be used to start the race. Sunday sailing is class racing when classes can start at different times. Wednesday evenings is handicap racing when all boats start together.

**5 minutes before any start:** Pull class flag or flags up the mast (descriptions of all flags including class flags at the end of this document), and sound warning signal.

**4 minutes:** Sound signal and hoist flag “P” (Preparatory Flag)

**1 minute:** Sound signal and lower flag “P” (Preparatory Flag)

**Start:** Sound signal and lower class flag. You can also start the sequence for the next class at this time by raising new class flag. This will be a five minute signal for that class.

If any boats are over the line or the wrong side of the line at the start, hoist flag X, sound signal and call out sail numbers of those boats over the line, using loud hailer, if possible. (Correct RYA term for this is a “recall”). They must now return to the correct side of the line in order to officially start, tell them once they have re-crossed the line.

Lower Flag X once all boats have started.

### 3. Record Progress

On the Race Sheet, record the time when each boat completes each lap. A lap is completed as soon as any part of a boat crosses the start line heading towards Twickenham (unless there is a downstream finish).

### 4. Finishing Times

When each boat completes the final lap sound signal as it crosses the start line heading towards Twickenham unless a downstream finish has been instructed, record the time including seconds, on Race Sheet.

### 5. Shorten Course

If it is clear that the race is likely to take more than an hour in winter or an hour and a half in summer the number of laps sailed should be reduced. (The correct RYA term is to “shorten course”).

Sound signal as soon as the first boat, of the class finishing comes into sight and can hear the signal. Hoist flag S and class flag. Record finishing times when boat crosses the line.

As the rest of the class cross the line, record their times. They have finished **even if they have completed fewer laps than other boats, unless it is an Open Meeting** when all boats have to complete the same number of laps if within the time limit.

For Wednesday evening racing all boats sail as one class and finishing positions are calculated according to handicap. This means that line astern finishing relates to all boats regardless of number of laps completed.

On the Race Sheet mark the positions of all boats, and if the course was shortened make sure the number of laps sailed by each boat is also recorded.

### 6. Finally...

Dismiss the Support Boat personnel when all boats have finished. If people wish to continue sailing they should be advised that support will not be available.

The Support Boat operator should collect and return the buoys to the bin. Check that the race hut and the dinghy park are locked up if last out, take Race Sheet to Clubhouse and pin on board.

**Signal Flags - stored in Race Hut in marked boxes, please return them to the correct slot and replace sliding cover.**

Enterprise class flag -	"E"		Blue over Red
Solo class pennant -	"No 1"		White flag with Red dot)
National 12 class flag -	"T"		Red, White, Blue vertical stripes
Handicap flag -	"H"		White and Red horizontal stripes (Wednesday evenings)
Preparatory Flag -	"P"		Blue - White square in middle (4 minutes)
Over the line -	"X"		White flag with a Blue cross (Recall) *
Shorten course -	"S"		White flag with Blue square in middle
Downstream finish -	"D"		Yellow, Blue, Yellow horizontal stripes
Abandon Race -	"N"		Blue and White chequered
Postponement -	"AP"		White and Red horizontal stripes
General Recall -	"1 <sup>st</sup> Sub"		Blue and Yellow triangle

Please contact any member of the Sailing Committee if you have any questions.

**TYC Sailing Committee**  
**14<sup>th</sup> February 2015**