



RACE COMMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

SETTING THE COURSE

Judge the wind conditions and set a course that can be accomplished in the time allowed. If you think that the wind will die, set a course that can be shortened to one of the marks you are using in the course. The course should start, whenever possible, with a windward leg (going from the start line to windward). However, it is not necessary to arrange this first leg to be exactly to windward. If setting a course within the Ile Perrot section of the lake, the best course is a triangle. If entering the main lake, a course with several different angles will give the best competition. Long sections do not need intermediate marks – just use the most leeward and the most windward two marks unless you want to add a mark that allows you to shorten the course. Use the map board and run the string around the nails to form your course.

It is preferable to set a course with roundings to PORT where possible. That is, the string turns left at each mark. This reduces port-starboard clashes near the marks and simplifies rounding, especially at the windward mark. Even if the angle around the mark is more than 180 degrees, remember that boats will be coming from a 45 degree angle when they reach the mark, and therefore they will turn less than 180 degrees. Port rounding marks are indicated by red markers and starboard marks by green markers. If you want to make a long course within the Ile Perrot section of lake, use the “2X” or “3X” tiles to make everyone go around the course set by the preceding tiles twice or 3 times, e.g. starting from 28, course 20 – 39 – 28 - 2X means go to 20 then 39 then 28 then 20 then 39 and finish at 28. These tiles will be red for port roundings.

Changing a course once set – this is not recommended, since boats are recording the course as soon as you place it on the board and might not see it later. If you realize a mistake has been made or the wind has changed, making the first leg different, our suggestions are to either move the start line to a better mark or place the new course tiles on the board and sound 2 guns to indicate “General Recall” or “Shortened Course”, which alerts all skippers that something has changed. It is not possible to change a course once the 5 minute starting sequence has been started. In this case, re-start by sounding 2 guns followed by 1 gun (see General Recall below).

THE START LINE

Choose a mark that is approximately downwind from the first course marker on your course list, e.g. if wind is from southwest, using the course example above, start the race from 28 which is downwind and to northeast of 20. Position the Race Committee (RC) boat at either side of the starting mark and far enough from the mark to allow all boats to pass very easily through the gap. Try to make your line exactly square (at right angles) to the WIND direction – it does NOT have to be square to the direction of

the first mark. Look at the wind indicator on the committee boat and move slowly forward until you see that the indicator is at right angles to the mark you are using for the line. Go a little further to allow for the anchor rope.

If you have to start with a reach or downwind (not recommended) position your boat to make a line at right angles to the first mark of the course.

STARTING THE RACE

Make sure you have a digital watch with minutes and seconds. Plan to start the race at a known time e.g. 1:00 pm exactly, so that it is easy to record the elapsed times later. Test the gun/horn before leaving the harbour and check the shapes so that you know how to raise and lower them. Raise the Race Committee (RC) flag before anchoring at the start line.

Before you start, record the names or number of all the boats starting the race so that at the end of the race you will know whether everyone has returned safely, and you can return to the club after the last boat arrives.

Starting sequence:

SIGNAL	FLAG/SHAPE AND SOUND	MINUTES BEFORE START
Warning	Yellow shape goes up, 1 gun	5
Preparatory	Yellow shape goes down Blue shape goes up, 1 gun	4
One minute	Blue shape down, 1 long horn or sound	1
Start	Red shape goes up, 1 gun	0

The shape or flag is the official timing signal. The gun or sound is an aid for the boats but these are not the official signals. Remember that you should trigger the gun 3 seconds prior to the shape to allow for its delay.

At the Start time, have your assistant check the line from the race committee flag to the starting mark. Any boat with its bow across this line is “over early”. Hail these boats “OVER EARLY BOAT NUMBER ---” and raise flag “X” with one sound. Ensure they return around either end of the line and start correctly, then lower the “X” flag. If they do not, mark them DNS (did not start). Record the starting time for use in calculating the elapsed time later.

General Recall - If too many boats are early or if you have made a mistake in the starting sequence, raise the “First Substitute” flag if you have one and make 2 guns or sounds. Once you have re-organized your process, sound 1 gun or sound and lower all flags/shapes except RC flag. Repeat the starting sequence (5 minute countdown) one minute after this 1 gun signal.

When starting multiple classes, our convention is to start the next 5 minute sequence one minute after the preceding start. Each class will have a different identifying flag, as specified in the Sailing Instructions.

You do not have to answer questions or listen to “advice” from racers. Concentrate on your job and do the best you possibly can.

SHORTENING THE COURSE

Evening races have a time limit depending on the time of year. Plan to have all boats finished before sunset if no time is set in the Sailing Instructions. If you see the wind dying or a dangerous storm is approaching, plan to finish the race earlier, to ensure all boats can finish in a reasonable time, considering the type of race and the starting time. The course can be shortened at any time during the race, even when one or more boats have started the new final leg of the race, as long as these boats would not have to alter their tactics, considering their competitors and their positions. You should position the RC boat so that the mark will be rounded in the same way as on the initial course markers.

To indicate “Shortened Course”, sound 2 guns and raise flag “S” if you have one.

ABANDONING RACE

Abandon the race if the weather becomes dangerous or the wind has died to the point where some boats will not be able to finish within the time limit. If one or more boats have finished, try not to abandon the race since it is not fair to the other competitors. Safety must be the first priority however.

To indicate “Abandoned”, sound 3 guns and raise flag “N” if you have one.

FINISHING THE RACE

If the final leg is a windward leg, position your boat to make a line square (at right angles) to the wind. If the final leg is downwind or a reach, position your boat to make a line at right angles to the previous mark of the course. You can position the RC boat so that the mark will be rounded in the same way as on the initial course markers or on the opposite side if you see that this would be better, regarding convenience or other traffic etc. The length of the line can be shorter than the start line but make it long enough to allow several boats to cross it when side by side. Raise the blue shape to indicate that you are on station.

The finishing time is taken as the most forward part of the boat crosses the line. This may be the bow but can be the spinnaker or part of the equipment, provided that this piece is in its normal position. As the first boat crosses the line, sound 1 gun and record the finishing time. The first boat in each class should be signified with a gun. All others can be called “Over” or a sound given, and their finishing time recorded. The elapsed time is the finish time minus the start time.

A boat has finished when its foremost part crosses the line. It does not have to sail completely over the line, although this is preferable. If any boat does not finish correctly between the RC boat and the mark, mark it “DNF” and do not record the time. If a boat hails you to indicate that they did not sail the course correctly, or if you see this happen, (missed a mark or similar), mark it “DNF”.

Verify that all the boats seen at the start have been accounted for. If any boat is missing, immediately try to find out why or call the coastguard in an emergency.

If a boat passing through the finish line is flying a red protest flag and hails to indicate that they are protesting, try to record the nature of the protest with the name or number of the protesting boat. After the race, contact the skipper and issue protest forms to this and the offending boat. Protests are governed by the Racing Rules of Sailing which covers the procedure in detail.

Remove all the race equipment from the RC boat and lock it up. Hand your results sheet to the Rear Commodore.

SAFETY AND RESCUES

Safety of the race fleet is your primary responsibility. Safety takes precedence over all other activities, including starting and finishing the race. If you have to abandon your finishing duty, try to call someone else to take over, but attend to the emergency if you need to do so. Boats with motors that do not start do not normally qualify as emergencies and can be left until you have finished all boats in the fleet.

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