

SHYC – Guidelines for duty Race Officers

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for duty Race Officers to carry out their day's duty with confidence and to provide the basis of an enjoyable days racing for the SHYC club racers on the day.

1. Read the 'Notice of Race' carefully to familiarise yourself with the format of the days racing. These can be found on the club notice board, in the race briefcase or on the SHYC website. Note particularly:
 - What time do the IRC and PY start. Is it a combined start or do they start separately at different times and if so, which class starts first? The Race Officer must adhere to the rules in the 'N.o.R.'
 - When are HW and LW? Consider the effect on boats sailing your course in the prevailing wind conditions.
 - During the race what will be the effect of the tidal stream in the current wind conditions?
 - Is this a race designated 'Short, Medium or Long' and calculate a typical race time based on an estimated average boat speed from a yacht in the middle of the fleet. As a general rule, Short races and 'normal' Sunday races should be approximately 2 hours minimum. Assess the tides, whether 'Springs' or 'Neaps' and direction in the prevailing wind strength when considering the race length.
 - Check the documents on the SHYC website under 'Reference' within the racing section. Particularly the very useful 'Race Officers course'
 - Remember that the race should start at the 'N.o.R.' time stated, unless a postponement is announced. If the wind is too light or for any other reason, the Race Officer should postpone the start using the correct sequence of sounds and flags. The Race officer's primary responsibility is to the fleet and the fair and successful running of the days racing.
 - Finally, if you are unsure or require support, do ask the Series Officer or one of the experienced skippers for advice.
2. Prepare the signing on sheet with the Race details, HW times, etc, using separate sheets for IRC and PY classes.
3. Collect the Race entry fee from each participating boat, ideally before the race, but if not then immediately after in the bar.. remember, **'no fee, no result'!!!**
4. Allocate the laying and collecting of the inflatable buoys to two separate participating boats if possible. Alternatively allocate a boat to lay the inflatable mark and say you will ask a boat from the front of the fleet, over the radio to collect the mark once the last boat has passed it for the final time.

5. If at all unsure of the wind direction and strength which in turn gives concern over the setting of the course, advise that the course will be given over the radio approximately 15 minutes before the first start signal. Consider asking a yacht to sail close-hauled on both tacks before the course is set if there is doubt as to the winds direction. It is often different on the water to how it may appear on the beach.
6. After the permitted signing on period as stipulated in the 'N.o.R.', take the triangles, horn, flags, radios, race briefcase, stopwatches and binoculars if available to the beach starting line. It is often easier to use radios and stopwatches etc with which you are familiar so do bring your own if possible. Note that if your car is parked by the Water Works you will need to pay to park at all times throughout the year!
7. Once on the start line for beach starts set up the transit triangles and horn, etc., plus get the flags ready for use.
8. Allocate specific jobs to your assistants such as: horn, flags, stop watch, so that **you** can concentrate on the transit line and radio communications. A minimum of two assistants is ideal. Remember you are the Race Officer and it is your responsibility to make the decisions on the day!
9. Before setting the course, consider that despite the wind direction and the use of our 'fixed' marks, the course must endeavour to provide a 'beat', a 'reach' and a 'run'. Of these a true 'directly into the prevailing wind beat' is the most essential to provide a fair and challenging race for all boat types. Ideally the first leg from the start line will be into the wind if possible.
10. Advise the course over the radio, even if you gave it out in the Race Office. Be clear in which direction the start is, which direction the buoys are to be passed, if the starting line – ODM is a 'gate' on the course, how many laps, whether IRC and PY fleets have the same or different courses, and take care that the finish line is directly ahead of the final mark thus avoiding a 'hook finish'. Advise the fleet that the ODM is only an 'Outer Distance Mark' not a transit on the triangles.
11. All Race Officer communications must be made to the fleet and not for the individual benefit of any one yacht.
12. The start line is an extension of the transit of the two triangles and not necessarily a line to the Outfall buoy which should only be used as an Outer Distance Mark. The Race Officer should stand behind the rear triangle and sight down the line. If any yacht is over the transit line, sound an individual or fleet general recall and show the appropriate flags. Individual yachts should be named over the radio if possible.

- 13.** Should it be necessary to shorten the course, try to do so before the leading boat passes the final mark before the revised finish line.
- 14.** On light wind races, do make a note of the times the yachts pass a known mark during the race in case the race needs to be abandoned before the finish. This will allow a result to be calculated rather than none.
- 15.** The finish line is not the starting line transit! It is a line between the lower triangle and the ODM. To assist in this, it is useful to remove the rear triangle once all starts are complete. The Race Officer should stand behind the triangle and sight down the line to the ODM and as the foremost part of each yacht crosses the line, sound the horn and record their elapsed time since their starting signal (bearing mind this may be different for PY and IRC if starting separately), in Hours, Minutes and Seconds on the Signing On Sheet. Any yacht which the Race Officer judged to be 'On Course Side – OCS' at the start and who did not comply with the recall, should not be given a finishing horn or time.
- 16.** As the last yacht passes the inflatable mark, advise the chosen yacht to collect the mark.
- 17.** Collect the triangles, flags, horn etc and return these to the Race Office, remembering to leave the club radios plugged in and recharging.
- 18.** If possible enter the elapsed times in the Race Programme on the laptop in the SHYC bar. Otherwise, using the formula in the SHYC Racing Rules (edition 7), calculate the 'corrected' times and enter these on the Signing on Sheet. Photocopy the form and post a copy on the SHYC Race Noticeboard, leave a copy in the Race briefcase and if possible leave copies in the bar. Pay all Race Fees into the bar till under 'race fees' and obtain a receipt which should be placed in the race briefcase.
- 19.** If there are protests, ask the yachts to complete and hand in a protest form. If it isn't possible to organise a Protest Committee immediately, advise the Series officer or Race Captain asap and mark any results as "provisional only subject to protest" until after the Protest is heard.
- 20.** Relax and enjoy a beer!