



REGATTAS and MAJOR EVENTS

Please note that these policies and guidelines are for Race Management Teams conducting regattas and other major events on behalf of the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron. Failure to observe these policies and guidelines are not grounds for redress.

1. Race Committee and its role

- 1.1 The Organizing Authority (OA), Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron (RSYS,) shall appoint a Race Committee (RC) who is responsible for conducting races as directed by the OA and as required by the rules. These responsibilities include regattas and major events conducted throughout the year. by the RSYS.
- 1.2 The OA is responsible for issuing the notices of race that conform to Appendix J1 of the Racing Rules of Sailing. The Race Committee is responsible for issuing written sailing instructions that conform to Appendix J2 of the Racing Rules of Sailing.
- 1.3 The RSYS Race Committee shall be appointed by the Sailing Committee and shall comprise the Race Officer and two suitably qualified and experienced RSYS members who have no conflict of interest as set out in RRS definitions.
- 1.4 The Race Officer will be appointed by the OA and will be responsible for managing the race management team.
- 1.5 The Race management Team will consist of the Race Officer and all on-water volunteers responsible for managing racing.

2. General Instructions for the Race Committee

- 2.1 Note the guidance in RRS 60.2
- 2.2 Safety of competitors is a prime concern.
- 2.3 Times will be based on GPS time.
- 2.4 Compass bearings will be magnetic.
- 2.5 Laser range finders will be used to determine the lengths of starting and finishing lines and the width of gates.

3. Weather Conditions for Racing

- 3.1 Racing should be abandoned if a Gale Warning from the BOM is extant during the forecast racing duration.
- 3.2 When forecast wind over the racetrack is likely to exceed 20kts the following should be considered.
 - Crew experience
 - Impact of deteriorating weather
 - Visibility
 - Sea state
- 3.3 The race will be started at the scheduled time if the wind conditions and visibility are within the parameters outlined in these policies. Waiting for 'better' conditions may be unfair and will be avoided.
- 3.4 The race management team will not wait for the wind to 'stabilise'. Competitors can compete in 'shifty' conditions.
- 3.5 The start may be postponed if a major wind shift is expected based on a known pattern or other reliable information (e.g., evidence of a sea breeze which is expected to fill in), otherwise the RC will start the race. The wind shift may not occur, the course can be corrected, or the shift may occur after the race is completed.
- 3.6 The average wind speed will be determined over a 5 minute period.

- 3.7 Races will not be started in less than an average of 5 knots established over the entire course area.
- 3.8 Races will not be started in more than an average of 25 knots or gusts of wind over 30 knots. These limits may also vary depending on sea conditions, current and rapid changes in velocity. .
- 3.9 Races will not be started if reduced visibility prevents the race management team from sighting the starting line and identifying any OCS boats. The fact that the first mark cannot be seen from the starting area is not, in and of itself, a reason to postpone racing.
- 3.10 Where possible, the RC will postpone ashore.
- 3.11 The RC will display flag Y, ashore or afloat, if the wind speed is expected above 20 knots.

4 Timing

- 4.1 Starts will not be delayed for competitors to reach the race area if they could have arrived with reasonable diligence.
- 4.2 To alert boats that a race or sequence of races will start soon, the orange starting line flag(s) will be displayed (with one sound signal) at least five minutes before a warning signal is displayed.
- 4.3 The orange starting line flags(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) four minutes after the starting signal.
- 4.4 If it is unlikely that racing will be possible on an upcoming day, the schedule may be changed to sail more races in a day. The number of races sailed will not become more than one race ahead of schedule, and any change will be notified on the day before it is to take effect.

5 Courses

- 5.1 Races may only be shortened, RRS 32, for safety reasons or to ensure the first boat finishes within the stated time limit. The intention is to have courses of four legs with a downwind finish. The final race each day may be five legs, finishing on an upwind leg.
- 5.2 The leeward gate may be laid after the start, usually 50 metres to windward of the Committee Vessel.
- 5.3 The leeward gate marks will be approximately 10 hull lengths (90 metres) wide, laid square to the sailing wind. Variations in width and angle may be appropriate to adjust for current or other prevailing conditions.

6 Starting Line

- 6.1 Starting lines will generally be laid square to the mean sailing wind direction. Current, favoured side of the course, expected wind shifts and other variables may justify variation from this guideline.
- 6.2 The race management team will use the following guide to lay the length of the starting line. Boat Length Multiplying factor will be a 1.2 – 1.4. Starting line length = number of boats x boat length x Multiplying factor. A larger multiplier may be used in strong winds.

7 Starting Preparatory Flags

- 7.1 Flags I and Z preparatory signals will not be used.
- 7.2 For the first start attempt flag P preparatory signal will be used.
- 7.3 In the event the start has been postponed, or a General Recall has been caused by the length or angle of the starting line, the race management team will adjust the starting line and make another attempt using the same preparatory signal.
- 7.4 If the race management team is satisfied that a General Recall was not the result of the starting line, it may use the flag U preparatory signal for the second attempt.
- 7.5 If the race management team is satisfied that a subsequent General Recall was not the result of the starting line, it may use the Black flag preparatory signal for each subsequent attempt.
- 7.6 An important principle followed by the race management team is that the U and Black flag preparatory signals will only be used when general recalls are caused by the boats themselves, or rapid oscillations of the wind, and not by actions of the race management team.
- 7.7 When using the U or Black flag preparatory signal, the race management team will make every effort to signal a postponement in the event of any problems with the starting line.

8 Postponing a Race During the Starting Procedure

- 8.1 The race management team will postpone a race during the starting procedure in response to adverse outside effects depriving boats of an equal chance of a good start.
- 8.2 The race management team will postpone the race during the starting procedure if the mean wind shifts more than 10 degrees or in the event other influences cause boats to bunch at one end of the start line. In rapid oscillations the race management team will endeavour to lay a starting line based on the mean oscillations expected.
- 8.3 If a wind shift occurs before the starting signal - even in the last minute before the start - such that it significantly increases the risk of a general recall, a postponement will be considered.
- 8.4 If the positions boats are taking on the starting line indicate a line bias in the minds of the competitors, a postponement will be considered.
- 8.5 In the circumstances described in clauses 8.1 to 8.4, if the race management team determines that adjusting the starting line is likely to improve the chances of fair start without a general recall, then a very late postponement will be considered.
- 8.6 The race management team will also consider postponing the start for any of the following reasons: a drifting mark, a significant error in the timing of signals, other boats interfering with the competing boats, inappropriate starting line length or angle, a reduction in visibility preventing the race management team from sighting the starting line or identifying premature starters, and other factors that might affect the fairness of the race.
- 8.7 For a postponement that the race management team anticipates will be longer than ten minutes, the orange starting line flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal), and then displayed (with one sound signal) at least five minutes prior to the warning signal.

9 Sighting the Line and Recording

- 9.1 The race management team will sight the starting line from each end.
- 9.2 Each line sighter will use a hand-held voice recording device and record, without stopping, from at least 90 seconds before the starting signal until after anything of interest after the start. A commentary of anything of interest will be recorded (such as boats getting close to the line, bunching, etc.).
- 9.3 Each day's recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.
- 9.4 Competitors who have been scored OCS, UFD or BFD may listen to the voice recording(s) of the applicable start(s).

10 Recalls

- 10.1 The race management team will not permit a race to continue if it is satisfied that unidentified boats were over early.
- 10.2 When using flag P, if the RC is satisfied that all boats on the course side of the line have been identified, an individual recall will be signalled. In no circumstances will an individual recall be signalled later than 5 seconds after the starting signal.
- 10.3 The RC will signal a general recall if it believes that unidentified boats were on the course side of the line.
- 10.4 When using flag U, if a general recall is going to be necessary due to unidentified boats on the course side of the starting line in the minute prior to the starting signal, a postponement will be signalled immediately. If the RC is satisfied that the starting line was fair, the next start will use the Black flag.
- 10.5 Except after a Black flag general recall (when the requirements of rule 30.4 will be met), bow or sail numbers of boats recorded as OCS, UFD or BFD will be advised by VHF radio. Any error or omission in this advice will not be grounds for protest or redress.
- 10.6 If a race management error is discovered after the starting signal (e.g. timing), the RC may abandon the race, using flag N.

11 Abandonment

- 11.1 On the first 75% of the first leg, the race management team may abandon in the event of a major, persistent, wind shift (more than 25 degrees). After that, the race management team will let the race continue if it is able to adjust to the changed conditions.
- 11.2 The race management team will consider abandoning a race if it is satisfied that a reduction in visibility affects its ability to safely manage racing. The fact that boats cannot see the next mark from the prior mark is not, in and of itself, reason to abandon the race.
- 11.3 The race management team may abandon the race when it is unlikely that the leading boat will complete the course within the overall time limit, even if a new wind were to arrive.
- 11.4 The further into the race, the less likely it is that the race management team will abandon the race.
- 11.5 The race management team may abandon the race when a new wind causes the fleet to invert.
- 11.6 Once a race has been started, the race management team will not abandon the race simply because the average wind speed increases beyond the stated limits. The race management team will consider abandoning the race if it is unable to safely manage racing.
- 11.7 The race management team will make every effort to ensure that other vessels do not interfere with racing. The race management team will consider abandoning the race if it determines that an outside influence has made the race unfair.
- 11.8 Where there are frequent and violent wind shifts, the race management team may not be able to adjust the course sufficiently or quickly enough to maintain a race of the required standard. In that case, the race may be abandoned.

12 Adjusting the Course to a New Wind Speed or Direction

- 12.1 Change in wind direction:
 - (a) With a persistent wind shift of 10° or less, the course will not be changed unless it is necessary to provide a true downwind leg.
 - (b) Between 10° and 15° consideration will be given to adjusting the course to the new wind provided that the race management team is confident that the shift is likely to persist.
 - (c) With a persistent wind shift in excess of 15°, the race management team will attempt to change the course to the new wind.
 - (d) With a persistent wind shift in excess of 45°, the race management team will consider its influence on the race. Under these circumstances, the race management team may either change the course or abandon the race.
- 12.2 Changes in length of legs
 - (a) Change in leg lengths will not be made to reduce a leg to less than 50% or increase a leg to more than 150% of original leg length.
 - (b) The race management team will attempt to minimize the number of changes in leg length to achieve target times.
 - (c) Changes in current may justify variations from these guidelines.

13 Finishing Line and Finishing Procedure

- 13.1 The finishing line will be laid before the first boat begins the final leg.
- 13.2 The blue flag(s) will be displayed (with no sound signal) as the first boat rounds the final rounding mark.
- 13.3 In the case of a late course change for the final leg, the blue flag(s) will be displayed as soon as possible after the finishing line has been laid.
- 13.4 The finishing line will be approximately 90 metres in length, set square to the wind direction.
- 13.5 The blue flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) upon the earlier of: (i) expiration of the time limit, or (ii) Immediately after the last boat finishes.
- 13.6 There will be a minimum of two line sighters on each finish vessel.
- 13.7 Each line sighter will use a hand-held recording device to record the order of finish.

- 13.8 A written record (reconciled master copy) of the finishing order will be maintained on the main committee vessel. This record will be reconciled with the published results once the race team arrives ashore.
- 13.9 When races are back-to-back, the interval between when the last boat finishes and the warning signal for the following race should be not less than five (5) minutes. After the last boat has finished, the race committee will advise competitors of its intended time for the next warning signal.

14 Requests for Redress

- 14.1 The race management team will adjust posted finishing places if it is satisfied that, based upon its records or observation, it has made a scoring error.
- 14.2 If the race management team believes it may have made any other error affecting the outcome of the race for which redress may be available, it may request redress on behalf of the potentially affected boat(s).
- 14.3 The race management team will consider requesting redress on behalf of a boat if it is satisfied that that boat's score has been made substantially worse by the actions of an official boat.

15 Race Committee Protests

- 15.1 Since the primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules rests with competitors, the race management team will not normally protest a boat.
- 15.2 The race management team may protest a boat in the following circumstances:
- (a) A breach of a sailing instruction that may not be protested (NP) by another boat;
 - (b) An apparent breach of good sportsmanship (Rule 2);
 - (c) Failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark, but not protesting another boat;
 - (d) A breach of rule 31 (touching a mark) resulting in damage to the mark/RC vessel.

16 General Principles and Safety

- 16.1 A shortage of time or completed races is not a basis for variance from these policies.
- 16.2 All members of the race management team and all volunteers involved in on- water activities are to have a complete knowledge and understating of the RSYS Emergency Management Plan.
- 16.3 Competitors are reminded that the decision to race, or to continue to race, is their sole responsibility.
- 16.4 The operator of a race management team vessel will promptly advise the Race Officer if he/she believes his/her vessel has substantially affected one or more boats racing.
- 16.5 The race management team will coordinate any emergency and use all available assets, equipment, and emergency safety procedures, as appropriate, to assist all competitors, any support boats or those afloat that are helping manage the event. It is important that competitors, support persons and the race management team are adequately briefed daily before going afloat.
- 16.6 All race management vessels (main committee, pin start/finish and mark laying) will be equipped with a GPS.