



Royal Dart Yacht Club

Race Officer Manual Summary

1. **Confirm** with Melinda Smallwood 01 803 752 496, office@royaldart.co.uk) the previous week that you are able to do the duty and recruit assistants to help run the race (RO, Timekeeper, Sail No. Spotter, Recorder). One will need to be an approved *Bravo* driver.
2. **Be at the club** 1½ hours before the start of the race (17:00 at the latest on Wednesday)
3. **Safety:** The Race Officer represents the RDYC in the running of races. and has complete authority to ensure that all sailing activities are carried out safely and in the best interests everyone sailing. The sailing programme includes a Notice to Competitors making it clear that it is the skipper's responsibility to decide whether to start or continue to race. **See advice on wind strength (page 4) and the risk statement in the NoR.**
4. **Communications:** take 2 VHF Radios and a mobile phone. If no one has a VHF licence only use in emergency. Do not take calls/answer radio during the starting sequence except in an emergency. Broadcast course, countdown and sound signals on Ch 37 (M1).
5. **In circumstances where racing is inadvisable** cancel or abandon racing. Advice may be sought from the Flag Officers, Racing Secretary, fleet captains or experienced skippers. You may decide to cancel racing at the club, or out in the Committee Boat.
6. **Cancellation.** Cancel by flying flag N and making 3 sound signals at the clubhouse, or at the start, or during a race, or after postponing the start. The results sheet should still be completed with date, time, race and series, your name, and as much detail about weather and course as is relevant.
7. **Personal Buoyancy.** You should fly Flag Y (Personal Buoyancy must be worn) in Force 5 and above. Even if you do not it is up to skippers to ensure their crew and boat is handled in a safe and seamanlike manner. Keelboat sailors are required to wear personal buoyancy at all times and it is required in *Bravo* whenever going out to sea.
8. **Select the course** from the choice in the current Sailing Programme. Advice on choice of courses is in the Race Officer Manual.
9. **Start the race** using the Starting Sequence on p3. Record all starters and any OCS.
10. **Decide whether to Shorten** the race, see p4.
11. **Finish the race and record finishing times** on the Recorder Sheet provided. Include date, race officers name, start times, wind speed and direction, course, and for each boat sail number and Class , name if known, finish time. Add notes if over the line at start, sailed wrong course, or anything else that might affect result.
12. **Return the results sheets** to the Sailing Office. Complete and return a result sheet even if the race is abandoned, cancelled or there are no finishers (see 6 above).
13. **Calculate the results** on the computer with the help of one of the Racing Committee. (Normally either Rear Commodore Sailing or Racing Secretary.)
14. **Announce the results** in the main bar as soon as possible after the race.
15. **Return the equipment** to the Sailing Office. Replace VHF radios in their chargers. If there are any defects or missing items please leave a note with the results sheet, reset the alarm and lock the sailing office door (coded door lock). Door Code is ***1, alarm code ***0 to unset, ***0FULL to set. Melinda RCS or RS will tell you what numbers *** represent.

Equipment List

Toolbox, check has the following	You will also need
Race Officer Handbook	Timer (kept near window to update)
<i>Changes to the Sailing Instructions, if any</i>	Battery Hooter on bosun's worktop on charge
Sailing Programme with courses,	Two Portable VHF radio, Set to Ch 37 (M1)
Racing Rules of Sailing,	Committee Boat Flag Roll
Results Recording Sheets and Pens,	Course Board (on top of cupboard).
Spare Gas Hooter	Flag Mast
Binoculars (essential for sail numbers)	Orange Tetra Buoy + ground tackle
Course Cards to display courses	

Before the Start

Check the electric hooter, and have the air horn to hand. If a sound signal is not made, then the visual signal counts.

Choose courses from the Sailing Programme. First check whether all the buoys are in position. Courses are in Sailing Instructions 2017 p30-33 with help on wind direction and advice in the Race Officer Manual. Aim for at least one good beat, but don't overdo it in light winds against a strong spring tide.

Position the CB with a mark (or tetrahedral) to give a start square to the wind and a length of 150-200 metres. That is longer than you think.

Allocate Jobs: Timer and VHF caller, recorder, flags, line judge (usually RO). Minimise chatter.

Prepare Flags: Find and identify them and hank them on to the halyards ready to hoist.

To start the race you will need: **Orange Flag, Club Burgee, P, NP1, NP2, NN9, X** (On course side at start), **AP** (postponement).

Later you may need: **S Flag** (Shorten Course everyone), **N Flag** (Abandonment).

Signal the Course. Fit the course boards into the course board before the 5 minute Preparatory signal (preferably at least 10 minutes before the first start) and put on the side AWAY from the start line. Announce Course on VHF.

Starting Sequence

Prepare results sheet with sail numbers of all boats sailing in the area with a racing pennant flying. If using a prepared listing tick the boats entering. Use sail numbers as well as boat names.

Checking Use the time from 10 minutes before the first gun (18:20 to 18:24 on a Wednesday Evening) until 6 minutes before the gun to check everything: Flags and Halliards, hooter, OCS flag, course board, boats over line, clock, weather, other vessels.

VHF Radio: it is good practice to give a time check at 18:15 and announce the course over VHF. Warn everyone 1 minute before each announcement so they are ready. Count down last minute to the start. During this period, warn potential OCS boats that they are over the line.

Errors: time from the 4 minute signal. If you get it badly wrong, then fly Postponement with 2 hoots ●●. Drop the AP 1 with one hoot ● one minute before the new warning signal. A minor error can be corrected, perhaps with a call over VHF Radio.

Starting Sequence:

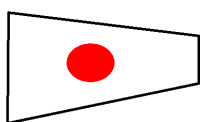
Also broadcast on VHF with a countdown to each signal. Hold transmit button until after hoot. At each start call 'all clear' or 'call OCS numbers'

Clock Time on Wednesdays	Class	Race Timing	Flags	Sounds	VHF Ch 37 (M1)
18:15	Time check	15 minutes to start	Orange Flag (CB on station)	None	Countdown to timecheck
Circa 18:15	All	Display Course(s) Announce over VHF	None	None	Announce Course
18:25	Class 1	5 mins to start Warning	IRC Class Flag (NP1)	●	Warn 1 minute before, then countdown to signa
18:26	Class 1	4 mins to start Preparatory	Preparatory Flag (P)	●	countdown to signal
18:29	Class 1	1 mins to start	Preparatory Flag (P)	1 long sound signal	countdown to signal
18:30	Class 1 Class 2	Start Class 1 Warning 5 mins to start	IRC Class Flag (NP1) and NP2 Class 2 Flag	●	countdown last minute to signal
18:31	Class 2	4 mins to start	Preparatory Flag (P)	●	countdown to signal
18:34	Class 2	1 mins to start	Preparatory Flag (P)	1 long sound signal	countdown to signal
18:35	Class 2 Class 3	Start Class 2 5 mins to start	NN9 Class 3 Flag and NP2 Class 2 Flag	●	countdown last minute to signal
18:36	Class 3	4 mins to start Preparatory	Preparatory Flag (P)	●	countdown to signal
18:39	Class 3	1 mins to start	Preparatory Flag (P)	1 long sound signal	countdown to signal
18:40	Class 3	Start Class 3	Squib Class Flag	●	countdown last minute to signal
OCS, Immediately after start gun	At any start.	If one or more boats are over the line	On Course Side (X)	● Immediately after start gun (5 seconds)	Call any OCS sail numbers on Ch 37 Lower after 4 mins

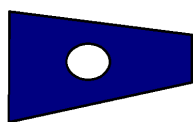
Flags you will need



P Preparatory Flag



NP1 Class 1 Flag



NP2 Class 2 Flag



NN9 Class 3 Flag

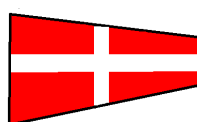


X On Course Side

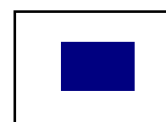


CB on station at Start

Flags you may need



NP4 Corinthian Class 4



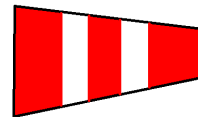
S Shorten Course



Y Personal Buoyancy Fl



N Abandonment Flag



AP1 Postponement Flag



Protest Flag (note if flown by a competitor)

The Finish

Shorten Course: The aim on Wednesday evening is to race for about 75 minutes, finishing around 20:00. You can shorten course by motoring out to any mark and anchoring (watch depth). Don't be late for the first boat finishing. Check the direction that the boats will approach from and try and get the line as square on as possible. This could be impossible if one Class is shortened and the other is not, so may involve a compromise or a move.

Time Limits. See *Time Limits* are on page 25 of the sailing programme. If no boat has finished by 20:15, or no boat is likely to finish by that time, you should abandon the race. If one boat of the Class finishes within the time limit all boats finishing within the next 30 minutes should be counted. If weather conditions deteriorate you may need to abandon earlier on safety grounds.

Fly the S Flag (*Blue centre and White surround*) with the appropriate Class flags (or just S flag if all Classes shortened) with two hoots ●● as the leading boat begins the last leg.

The start and finish is between the mainmast of the committee boat and the adjacent mark and from the direction of the last mark (ie NEVER a hook finish).

Abandoning a race. Lower all flags, hoist flag N (*blue and white chequered*), three hoots ●●● and broadcast the abandonment on VHF Channel M1 (Ch 37)

Lap time. It is worth recording lap times which may be used if no one in a Class then finishes a second (or third) lap. Signal shorten course (do NOT abandon) and on VHF tell everyone who has completed one (or two) laps to go home.

Do not return to the river until ALL boats are known to be safely across the finish and under power into the river. *"Count them all out and count them all back in."*

Problems

Poor Visibility and Approaching Weather. Cancel all racing if visibility is less than the width of the river at the start line. Take a look to windward to see what is coming before making your decisions.

Strong Winds. The shipping forecast and inshore waters forecast will be available from the Sailing Office computer as will Froward Point Live Weather (usually).

If you have any doubts at all please contact the Racing Secretary or Rear Commodore Sailing who will make an overall decision.

An approximate guide (based on mean wind) would be:

- **Force 5 (17-21 knots)** Personal Buoyancy to be worn (Flag Y). Consider abandoning Class 3 and/or Class 2.
- **Force 6 (22-27 knots)** Consider abandoning all racing.
- **Force 7 (27-33 knots)** General advice is not to start a race above 25 knots of wind.
- **Force 8 (32-40 knots)** Abandon all racing.
- **1-2 forces lower** if wind S to SE, weather unsettled or deteriorating, early or late season.

Communication when a boat is in trouble. If a boat appears to be in trouble Use the VHF (Ch 37 or 16) to contact the boat if possible and other boats that may be able to assist. If appropriate alert the coastguard (VHF Ch 16 or 67, Pan Pan Pan if urgent, Mayday Relay if life in danger) or mobile phone (dial 999 and ask for Coastguard). Keep the club informed as they may be able to help or coordinate reception of any casualty.

Useful Telephone Numbers

Rear Commodore Sailing (Mike Webster)	01 626 821 831	07 973 739 224	
Racing Secretary (Mike Mackie)	01 803 782 463	07 740 022 602	
RDYC Main Office	01 803 752 496	RDYC Sailing Office	01 803 752 704
RDYC Bar	01 803 752 272	Froward Point NCI VHF Ch 65)	07 976 505 649
Brixham Coastguard	01 803 882 704 or 999		