

Race Committee - Conducting Racing

(for Kingston Yacht Club keelboat racing)

(Last Revised 1-Jun-2022)

The race committee boat should be prepared to leave the dock at 1730 (5:30pm) at the latest, in order to have time to prepare properly for the race.

Before departing

- Determine a rough outline of wind direction and strength for the evening's racing, in order to determine where to start setting up the course.
- Check available weather reports to determine if there are any weather developments that may cause concern.

Once out of the harbour

- Use a flag to determine the compass direction of the wind for the evening. Multiple readings over a period of 5 or 10 minutes will indicate any trends, or variations.
- Determine which mark(s) you intend to use for the initial windward mark(s), and anchor in an appropriate position with the mark at the indicated compass direction.

Example:

In southwest winds, Marks X and G are standard windward marks, and the race committee can set up north of mark R. For races with a north, or a northeast wind, the race committee should attempt to use mark R or mark C for windward marks, requiring that the race committee be setup at the southern extreme of the harbour.

To set the line

- Check the wind direction with a compass. Subtracting 90° from the wind angle will give the desired angle to the start pin. Advise the mark boat as to the direction or bearing to head, and have them set the mark.
- In most cases, it is easier if they set the mark slightly below the intended location, so the race committee boat can use their anchor line to fine-tune their location, and ensure a square start line.

Throughout the remaining time before the start sequence

- Continue to monitor the wind speed and direction for any changes, while making the final decision as to the length and orientation of the course.

Course Discussion

- **All starts should be upwind** for the safety of the competitors, and to encourage fair competition.
- All Shark courses for weeknight racing should be a combination of windward and leeward legs only.
- Shark fleets prefer courses that are of moderate leg length, and use a leeward "gate" consisting of the start boat and the start pin.
- In the interest of safety, it is intended that all windward marks for weeknight racing will be left to port. Further, courses for weeknight racing will include a windward leg as the first leg.
- Offshore boats vary in their preference, with some preferring reaching legs, and some preferring windward-leeward courses.
- Race committees should take into account the available sunlight, time of sunset, and the wind strength and trend for the evening when considering the course. Legs that are approximately 15 to 20 minutes long are ideal, with the entire race running between 60 and 90 minutes. Provided is a table that gives an example of course layouts for given wind strengths:

Wind Strength	Course Length	Offshore example	Sharks Example
0 to 5	2-3 Legs	G-R-0	X-R-0
5 to 10	3-4 Legs	G-0-2	X-0-2
10 to 15	4-5 Legs	G-S-X-S-0	X-S-2-0
15 to 20+ Daylight permitting	5-6 Legs	G-S-2-R-0	X-0-3

(Courses based on a wind dir. of approximately 260°)

Once all boats have been checked in

- Establish jobs for all on board to perform during the start sequence. If the course is changed, flying the "L" flag as a courtesy helps to inform the racers.
- Jobs include: Timing, Sound Signals, Visual Signals, Sighting the line, Radio Broadcasting and recording.
- It is important that everyone involved be aware of their jobs, and how they will be done during the start sequence. In an ideal world, the start sequence would look like this: (see next page)

Time	Signal	Flag	Sound
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1800 hours	PHRF I Warning Signal	UP - Numeral Pennant 1	1 sound
1801 hours	PHRF I Prep Signal	UP - Code Flag P, I, or Z	1 sound
1804 hours	PHRF I Prep Signal Down	DOWN - Code Flag P, I or Z	Long sound
1805 hours	PHRF I Start	DOWN - Numeral Pennant 1	1 sound
1806 hours	Shark Warning Signal	UP - Numeral Pennant 2	1 sound
1807 hours	Shark Prep Signal	UP - Code Flag P, I, or Z	1 sound
1810 hours	Shark Prep Signal Down	DOWN - Code Flag P, I or Z	Long sound
1811 hours	Shark Start Signal	DOWN – Numeral Pennant 2	1 sound
1812 hours	PHRF II Warning Signal	UP – Numeral Pennant 3	1 sound
1813 hours	PHRF II Prep Signal	UP – Code Flag P, I, or Z	1 sound
1816 hours	PHRF II Prep Signal Down	DOWN – Code Flag P, I, or Z	Long sound
1817 hours	PHRF II Start	DOWN – Numeral Pennant 3	1 sound

Subsequent starts will use this same timing format

If at any time there is an error in starting procedure, or a severe wind shift or weather situation, the race committee may at any time hoist the AP signal with 2 horns to postpone the race and solve the problem. This postponement can be as short as a single minute, allowing the race committee to start the sequence over again.

If, at the start, there is a boat or boats over early, the race committee should display either Code flag X for an individual recall, or the First Substitute pennant for a general recall. They should also broadcast the sail number of the boat or boats that were over early on VHF channel 71.

After the start of the races

- Monitor the progress of the fleets throughout the race, keeping track of the time it takes the first and last boats to complete each leg, and for any changes in wind strength or direction.
- Identify any boats showing signs of distress and ensure that assistance is provided if necessary.

In the event of a major wind shift

- The race committee may change the course by posting a boat at the next mark of the course that has not yet been rounded, flying Code Flag C, making repeated sound signals, and displaying the sequence of marks from that point in the race, to the finish.

In the event that the wind dies, or the original course was too long,

- The race committee may decide to end the race at a given mark, by posting a boat beside the next mark so that a boat approaching from the direction of the previous mark will have to leave the mark on their port side, and the boat on their starboard side. This boat must display Code Flag S, with two signals when hoisted, and record the finish times for Offshore boats, and the finish position for the Shark fleet. Race committees should be aware that PHRF fleets depend on a consistent level of wind throughout the race for their handicap system to work.

In a case where the wind has died completely, or there is clearly no option for continuing the race, a race that has been started may be abandoned by hoisting Code Flag N, with three sound signals.