TOWNSVILLE YACHT CLUB Sailing

Officer of the Day Procedures Manual

Version	Date	Note
1.0	10/08/2020	Initial release
1.1	14/10/2020	Various minor updates to text
1.2	16/11/2020	Added note on avoiding submarine cables
1.3	22/02/2021	Added note about advising handicapper of last boat's finish time. Removed references to 2020 requirements. Some changes for new RRS.
1.4	17/08/2021	Added requirement for radio announcement before starting procedure commences (see page 12).
1.5	07/03/2022	Updated for current RRS and procedures.
1.6	28/02/2024	Minor updates

Contents

Abbreviations

Officer of the Day	OOD
Race Management Team	RMT
Racing Rules of Sailing	RRS
Notice of Race	NOR
Sailing Instructions	SIs
Visual signal displayed	↑
Visual signal removed	↓
Sound signal	●
Repetitive sounds	- - - - -
VHF radio frequency for on-course communication, typically 77	Race Channel

Roles

The TYC roles referred to in this manual are as follows:

Race Director	Mark Vickers	markvickers@optusnet.com.au	0412 342 043
Race Administrator / Handicapper			

Introduction

Boats registered to race at TYC may be required to provide crew to carry out race management duties in one race during a season. This includes one crew member acting as the Officer of the Day (OOD). The duty crew are referred to as the Race Management Team (RMT) in this manual.

The RMT's duties will vary depending on the type of race being conducted, e.g. buoy race versus Magnetic Island race.

The OOD is responsible for managing the race but the TYC Race Director (or delegate) is available to provide advice to the OOD.

The OOD is also the team leader for the Incident Management Team should an emergency incident occur involving one or more boats on water to compete in the race (see page 5).

This procedures manual will describe the duties of the OOD and his/her team, as well as providing basic race management guidance.

The manual includes procedures for all aspects of race management. Some procedures will be required only rarely. The title for each procedure is followed by a guide to how likely it is you will need it, as follows:

(A) You will **A**lways need to do this.

(S) You will **S**ometimes need to do this.

(R) You will **R**arely need to do this.

Some images are reproduced (with permission) from the Australian Sailing 2017-2020 Club Race Officer training package.

World Sailing's Race Management Manual dated July 2019 has been referred to in preparing these procedures.

Safety (A)

Whilst the boats are entirely responsible for their own safety, as set out in RRS 1, RRS 3 and the SIs, the OOD has ultimate responsibility whilst on the water for the duty of care held by TYC. This duty of care extends to competitors and volunteers.

At a minimum, the RMT needs to carry out the following actions to help to ensure the safety of boats:

- Record the name of each boat declaring its intention to race, their sail number, and the number of people on board (POB) as reported on the Race Channel. Boats which start without this declaration will be scored DNS.
- Record the people acting as the RMT using the SailSys Crew List for the duty boat.
- Ensure safety requirements have been met, e.g. the SIs require boats to sail or motor past the race committee vessel with each crew member wearing a life jacket before the boat starts its first race of the season.
- Monitor VHF channel 77 for announcements from competitors, e.g. retirements.
- At the end of the race, ensure that all starters have been accounted for.

Remember that the race committee vessel is a safety boat, so you may need to suspend race management duties to assist a yacht in difficulty by coordinating external support. If so, advise competitors over the Race Channel.

The OOD needs to be aware of the TYC Incident Management Plan and to implement its procedures (acting as Incident Management Team Leader) in the event of an emergency incident. The roles / key actions of the Incident Management Team (IMT) are as follows:

IMT Leader

- Receives and responds when notified of an incident from any boat within the participating fleet. Notification may be made by radio (VHF) telephone, media report or other source/s.
- Assesses the situation to define the level of response required.
- Coordinates and communicates with support agencies - particularly Volunteer Coast Guard (AVCGA) and Emergency Services.
- Communicates with Race Director/ TYC Manager.
- Directs other members of the team as needed.
- Coordinates other boats in the fleet to respond to the incident as needed.
- Provides completed incident report forms to TYC Manager on return to shore.

If an emergency incident occurs during a scheduled sailing race, the IMT Leader (who is also OOD) has full authority to abandon the race if s/he judges this is necessary.

Alternately, if s/he judges it is safe to continue the race, the IMT Leader and a delegate on board should divide the two roles between them: deciding who coordinates the incident and who manages the race is based on severity of the incident and relevant experience of those available.

IMT / RMT

- Record all details of the incident and notifications received until the event is deemed closed or when directed by Emergency Services.
- Maintain a communications log. Include time, date, name of person reporting, contact details and details about the issue.
- Perform all activities directed by the IMT Leader.
- Maintain a listening watch on VHF (and domestic radio if appropriate).

Before Race Day (A)

As the nominated yacht on start boat duty, make sure you are available on the allocated day.

Decide who will be the Officer of the Day (this doesn't have to be the yacht owner/skipper). Ideally, four people are recommended in addition to the OOD. You will probably need to start organising the crew a few days prior to the race.

Consider the length of the day and discuss with your crew what to bring (e.g. water / food / wet weather gear).

If something comes up, arrange to swap your duty with someone else and advise the Race Administrator. The sailing committee or TYC office is available for help in swapping if necessary.

Confirm which boat is being used as the race committee vessel and whether you need to provide a skipper/driver. If the race committee vessel skipper is being provided by TYC, you need to contact that person to arrange times, expectations, what your roles are.

The race committee vessel skipper will need a boat licence and VHF licence. If the TYC race committee vessel is being used, the skipper will also need to have completed an appropriate induction.

On Race Day (A)

Arrive at TYC at least 2 hours before the race start time. You will need long enough to check that all the required equipment is on the race committee vessel (see below).

Allocate specific jobs to crew members.

Check you have required equipment on the race committee vessel:

- Buoy(s) – orange starting pin and a barging boy (as a minimum) plus yellow rounding marks (if required). You will need to inflate the starting pin and any rounding marks.
- Flags – on station (orange for the start, blue for the finish), course, preparatory (P), postponement (AP), X (RRS 29.1), 1st substitute (RRS 29.2), S (RRS 32.1), C (RRS 33), abandonment (N).
- Air horn(s).
- Operational VHF radio (source a handheld if necessary)
- List of yacht entries plus pencils to write down finish times, POBs
- Sailing instructions
- Computer/tablet to run Boat Beacon (if necessary) and SailSys
- Incident Management Plan

Deliver race committee vessel induction and safety briefing to your crew.

Liaise with Race Director and race committee vessel skipper regarding times, proposed course.

Allocate duties among the RMT:

- Handling anchors and buoys.
- Timekeeper.
- Flag hoist and drop.
- Sound signal.
- Line monitor (yachts breaking the start).
- Radio operator
- Photographer

Head out to the start area, leaving yourselves plenty of time to get set up. You should arrive at the start area about an hour before the scheduled start time. Monitor weather conditions, observing average wind over five-minute periods, then set up any buoys required and the start line (see page 8).

Setting Up the Start (A)

Suggested start areas are shown in Appendix E of the SIs. The Race Director may provide additional advice on the location of the start.

For most races, the first mark will be F, allowing a short first leg to windward. The starting line should be located about a quarter of a mile (450m) downwind from F. When deciding where to anchor the race committee vessel, be aware of the submarine cables running between the mainland and Magnetic Island; zoom in on the chart plotter to make sure you are in clear water.

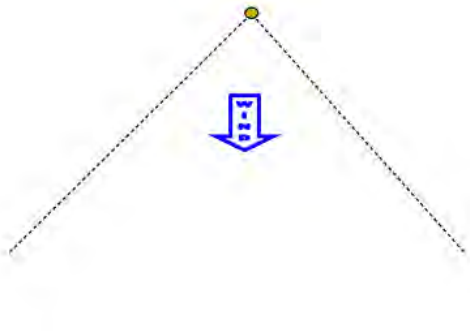
The start line will be between the race committee vessel's signal mast displaying the orange flag at the starboard end and the course side of the starting pin buoy at the port end.

As we don't have a support vessel to lay the pin end mark it is up to the RMT.

Check that adequate water depth is available for yachts to manoeuvre.

Determine wind direction and if it may change dramatically over the next hour or so – compare the observed wind to the forecast wind. You might need to postpone the start if there is a big difference (see page 14).

Use the flags to work out the wind direction (e.g. hold flag on windward side of race committee vessel). Move the race committee vessel so that it is directly downwind of the first mark and drop the pin buoy. Keep the buoy's anchor line as short as possible to prevent keels from dragging the buoy. Also, make sure the weight on the anchor rope is about 1m below the buoy so that the anchor rope hangs vertically below the buoy.



Now move the race committee vessel 90 degrees to the wind to approximately 120m - 150m away from the pin buoy to starboard - this is the approximate location for the race committee vessel. Move the race committee vessel 40m - 50m upwind, drop the anchor and adjust the anchor chain/rope length until you have the desired angle to the pin buoy. You may continue to adjust the position of the race committee vessel up to the preparatory signal.

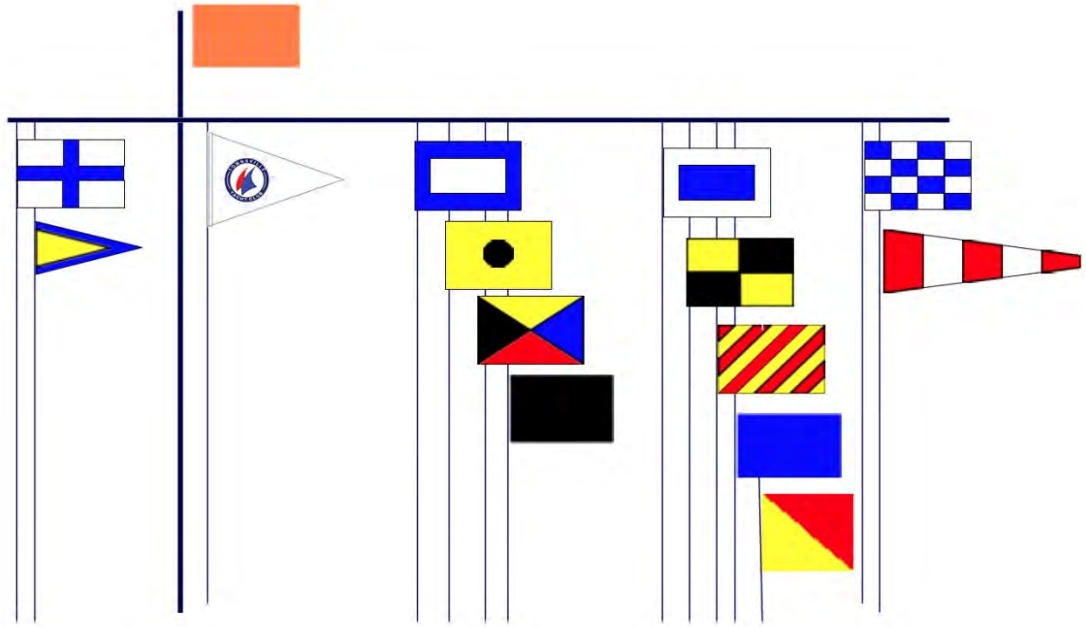
Advice from Australian Sailing is that the line should be set at 90 degrees to the wind angle. However, you may set the line with a small bias (up to 10 degrees) towards the pin end to prevent crowding at the race committee vessel.

Don't be concerned if at first the line is not correct, reset the line even if it means a short postponement (see page 14).

Once you are happy that the line is set correctly, display the orange "on station" flag. The staff displaying this flag is one end of the starting line. This should be done no later than 10 minutes before the scheduled start time.

Place or hold the flags as high as possible to make them easier to see.

The layout of flags recommended by Australian Sailing is as follows:



Setting A Buoy Course (S)

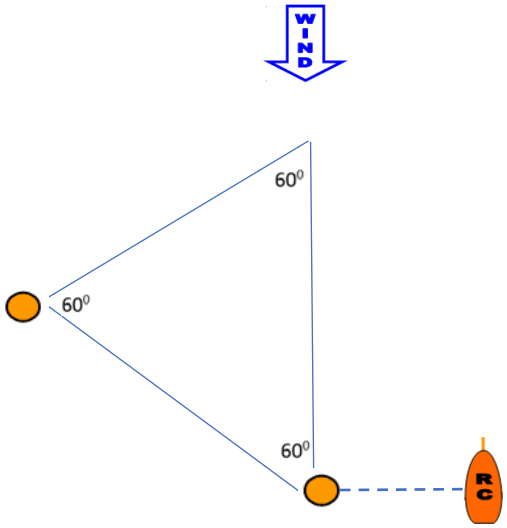
As we don't have a support vessel to lay the rounding marks it is up to the RMT to lay any buoys required, before setting up the start line.

The Race Director will advise the approximate length of the windward leg, which will be determined based on the expected wind conditions.

The courses used most often are the windward/leeward course and the triangular course. In both cases, the leeward mark is the starting pin buoy (see SIs Appendix F).

For the windward/leeward course, the windward mark may be a permanent mark (e.g. G, the Wednesday night mark) or a mark laid by the race committee vessel.

For a triangular course, Australian Sailing recommends a course angle of around 60 degrees for keelboats, i.e. each leg will be the same length.



The Race Director will advise the course angles to be set. This may be less than the 60° shown above to encourage use of spinnakers on the reaches.

Start Procedure (A)

In light wind conditions, make sure the wind will give a fair start. Usually this will be 4 knots or more in strength and no extreme changes in direction. If the wind is not suitable as the start time approaches, postpone the start (see page 14).

Races are started in accordance with RRS 26.

Minutes before starting signal	Visual signal	Sound signal	Means
5	Class flag displayed	One	Warning signal
4	Preparatory flag displayed	One	Preparatory signal
1	Preparatory flag removed	One long	One minute
0	Class flag removed	One	Starting signal

For races which involve notification to competitors of port or starboard rounding, the appropriate flag (red for port rounding, green for starboard rounding) should be displayed prior to the warning signal.

Times are based on GPS time. An app on the TYC tablet displays a countdown in GPS time, or you can use the boat's chartplotter. It is helpful to start the countdown 6 minutes before the start so that everyone in the RMT is ready at 5 minutes.

A standard sound signal should be around one second in duration; a long sound signal should be around two seconds in duration.

Around 30 seconds to a minute before the warning signal, announce to the fleet on the Race Channel that the warning signal will be in [x] seconds.

The warning signal should be displayed precisely at the time stated in the Sailing Instructions (unless the start is postponed, see page 14). Competitors will start their stopwatches on this signal. Remember that visual signals govern, and they must therefore be displayed and removed at the correct time.

For TYC races with only one division, the class flag is the TYC burgee. Flags required if there is more than one division are defined in the SIs.

For TYC races, the standard preparatory flag is P (blue peter).

Alternative preparatory flags (I, Z, Z with I, U, or black flag) are unlikely to be used in normal TYC fleet racing.

The timekeeper should call out the countdown to the next event, e.g. "2 minutes to prep down" so that the rest of the RMT know where they are in the sequence. As a courtesy to competitors, the RMT may give a countdown on the Race Channel to the preparatory signal, one-minute signal, and/or the starting signal.

Position one RMT member 1m or so behind the flag mast with the on-station flag, sighting along the line to the pin. This person will identify any yachts which are on the course side of the start line at the starting signal. They should be prepared with flags X and First Substitute in case of an individual recall (see page 18) or a general recall (see page 19).

One RMT member should photograph or (preferably) video the approach to the start and the first minute or so after the start. Not only do the competitors enjoy watching the video after the race, it may prove useful if there is a protest or request for redress.

After the starting signal:

- (Optionally) Notify clear start over VHF, or
- Signal individual recall (see page 18), record premature starter(s), optionally - notify yacht(s) over the Race Channel, or
- Signal general recall (see page 19).

If boats are on the course side of the line at the starting signal, record when they return and re-start correctly.

The orange “on station” flag is removed four minutes after the last start (with no sound signal).

Note: All communications over the Race Channel must be clear, concise, and courteous.

Postponing the Start (S)

There are several reasons why a start might need to be postponed (see RRS 27), including:

1. Insufficient wind to start.
2. Wind shifting too much. Note: The RMT should not wait for the wind to stabilise if shifts are small; boats can compete in “shifty” conditions.
3. A major change in wind direction means the line is too biased.
4. The RMT is not ready in time.
5. The start boat or a mark starts drifting.
6. The RMT realises they have made an error in the start sequence, e.g. got the timing wrong.
7. A cruising yacht sails through the start area.

In summary, if the RMT feels anything is wrong BEFORE the starting signal, even if it is during the start sequence, they should immediately postpone the start. (Note: If the RMT feels anything is wrong AFTER the starting signal, they should immediately abandon the race – see page 16).

It is much better to postpone a start and get things right the next time than to go ahead with a problematic start, risking upsetting the competitors and creating a situation for protests.

Indefinite Postponement

The type of postponement used in the situations listed above is called an Indefinite Postponement, i.e. a postponement for an unknown length of time (until the problem that caused the postponement is resolved).

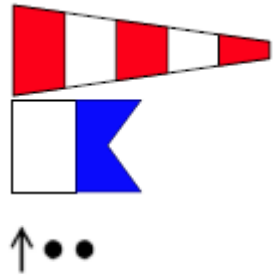
The postponement is signalled by displaying the Answering Pennant (AP) accompanied by two sound signals.

When the AP is displayed, any other flags related to the start sequence should be removed. This includes the orange “on station” flag if the postponement is expected to be longer than 10 minutes.

As a courtesy, notify competitors on the Race Channel of the reason for the postponement and, if possible, advise them of the likely delay.

Postponement (No More Racing Today)

If it is not possible to start the race, e.g. there is no wind and no chance of sailing a course before the time limit, signal that there will be no more racing today by displaying the AP over A accompanied by two sound signals.



Re-Starting After an Indefinite Postponement (S)

Once the problem(s) that made an indefinite postponement necessary have been resolved, the RMT can recommence the start sequence.

As a courtesy, notify competitors on the Race Channel that the AP will be lowered at the chosen time, giving them a few minutes notice so they can prepare for the re-start.

If the orange “on station” flag was removed, it should be displayed at least five minutes prior to the commencement of the new start sequence.

To terminate the postponement, the AP is removed accompanied by one sound signal.

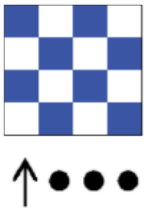
The new start sequence commences one minute after the AP is removed. In other words, the AP is removed 6 minutes before the new start time.

Abandoning the Race (R)

Once a race has been started, the method for stopping it is to abandon the race. A race may need to be abandoned because:

1. The RMT realise they have made a mistake during the start sequence which adversely affects some competitors.
2. The weather conditions deteriorate significantly, making it unsafe to continue racing.
3. The wind drops or shifts dramatically, making the set course unsuitable for the new conditions.
4. A mark is missing or out of position.

The abandonment is signalled by displaying the class flag and flag N, accompanied by three sound signals.



As a courtesy to competitors, notify them on the Race Channel that the race has been abandoned and whether there is an intention to re-start.

Note: If it is not intended to re-start the race that day, e.g. due to foul weather, the abandonment should be signalled using flag N over flag A, accompanied by three sound signals.

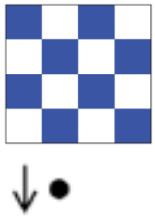
Note: RRS 32.1 states that if one boat has sailed the course and finished within the time limit, if any, the Race Committee shall not abandon the race without considering the consequences for all boats in the race or series.

Re-Starting After an Abandonment (R)

Once all boats have returned to the pre-start side of the starting line, the RMT can recommence the start sequence.

As a courtesy, notify competitors on the Race Channel that flag N will be lowered at the chosen time, giving them a few minutes notice so they can prepare for the re-start.

To terminate the general recall, flag N is removed accompanied by one sound signal.



The new start sequence commences one minute after flag N is removed. In other words, flag N is removed 6 minutes before the new start time.

Individual Recall (S)

An individual recall is used if one or a small number of boats are on the course side of the starting line (OCS) at the starting signal.

The individual recall is signalled by displaying flag X accompanied by one sound signal.

The flag should be displayed promptly after the start, within about 4 seconds. Hence the RMT needs to have the flag easily available leading up to the start.

Note World Sailing Case 79: *When a boat has no reason to know that she crossed the starting line early and the race committee fails to promptly signal "Individual recall" and scores her OCS, this is an error that significantly worsens the boat's score through no fault of her own, and therefore entitles her to redress.* This emphasises the need for prompt action to display flag X accompanied by one sound signal. It may also be useful to contact the OCS boat(s) over the Race Channel to advise them.

The flag is displayed until:

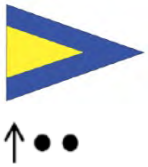
1. all boats which were OCS have sailed completely to the pre-start side of the starting line, or
2. for a maximum of 4 minutes, even if not all OCS boats have returned.

The flag is removed without a sound signal.

General Recall (R)

When at the starting signal the RMT is unable to identify boats that are on the course side of the starting line, the RMT may signal a general recall.

A general recall is signalled by displaying the First Substitute with two sound signals.



The flag should be displayed promptly after the start, within about 4 seconds. Hence the RMT needs to have the flag easily available leading up to the start.

The RMT should try to avoid needing a general recall, which penalises boats which were not in the wrong. This can be helped by setting a line which is not overly long (so competitors find it easier to judge where they are relative to the line).

Re-Starting After A General Recall (R)

Once all boats have returned to the pre-start side of the starting line, the RMT can recommence the start sequence.

As a courtesy, notify competitors on the Race Channel that the First Substitute will be lowered at the chosen time, giving them a few minutes notice so they can prepare for the re-start.

To terminate the general recall, the First Substitute is removed with one sound signal.

The new start sequence commences one minute after the First Substitute is removed. In other words, the First Substitute is removed 6 minutes before the new start time.

Race Control After the Start (A)

The RMT should count the starters (boats visible sailing) and cross-check against the POB list to ensure all competing boats have called in.

The RMT needs to monitor the weather conditions:

- Is the wind speed dropping? May need to shorten the course (see page 22).
- Is it still safe to race? May need to abandon the race (see page 16).
- Are the time limits being met? May need to shorten the course (see page 22).
- Has the wind moved left or right? May need to change the course (see page 23).
- Are all the marks still in place? May need to replace a mark (see page 25).

It can be helpful to record the positions of boats at each mark or at the end of each lap. For example, if there is a protest or request for redress, this information will demonstrate the relative positions of the boats.

The RMT may score a boat NSC (Not Sailed Course) if they observe the boat to sail an incorrect course, e.g. pass a mark on the wrong side. If this occurs:

a) Apply the NSC penalty to that boat in SailSys and leave its finish time blank.
b) Record the boat's finish time on paper in case there is a protest or request for redress resulting in the boat being reinstated.

The RMT may leave the start area to follow the fleet and/or check weather conditions ahead of the fleet. This is also a good opportunity to take some action photos.

Shortening the Course (S)

RRS 32.1 states:

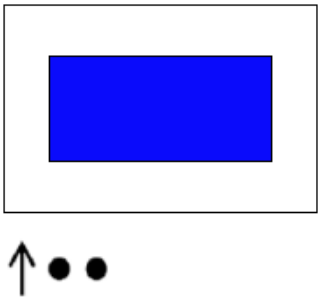
After the starting signal, the race committee may shorten the course (display flag S with two sounds) or abandon the race (display flag N, N over H, or N over A, with three sounds),

- *a) because of foul weather,*
- *b) because of insufficient wind making it unlikely that any boat will finish within the time limit,*
- *c) because a mark is missing or out of position, or*
- *d) for any other reason directly affecting the safety or fairness of the competition.*

In addition, the race committee may shorten the course so that other scheduled races can be sailed…

Shortening the course cuts off one or more legs from the course that was displayed at the warning signal and/or advised to competitors prior to the start. The decision to shorten the course may be made by the OOD, possibly with input from the Race Director.

A shortened course is signalled by displaying flag S accompanied by two sound signals.



The race committee vessel moves to the position of the shortened course finish line and signals the shortened course as boats commence the leg towards it.

When the course is shortened, the finish line becomes a line between the S flag and the mark at which the course is shortened. At this time, the race committee vessel is likely to be further away from the fleet than at any other time a signal is displayed; hence it is worthwhile notifying competitors of the shortened course over the Race Channel.

Obviously, it is not possible to shorten the course once a boat has sailed further than the planned shortened course finish line.

Changing the Course (R)

If sailing a buoy course, it is possible for the RMT to change the next leg of the course by moving a buoy. The change may be required because of a change in wind direction (in which case the bearing of the next leg will be different) or because of a need to shorten or lengthen the course (in which case the length of the next leg will be different).

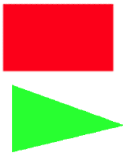
Given that TYC is operating with only one race committee vessel for most if not all its races, it is very unlikely that a course can be changed; the procedure is included here for completeness.

Change of Bearing of the Next Mark

The course may be adjusted if there is a persistent wind shift of more than 15^0. A change of bearing to the next mark is signalled by displaying flag 'C' accompanied by a repetitive sound signal.

The flag must be displayed with one or both of:

- A new bearing for the next mark; and/or
- A red rectangle when the new position is to port of the original; or
- A green triangle when the new position is to starboard of the original.



Change the Length of the Next Leg

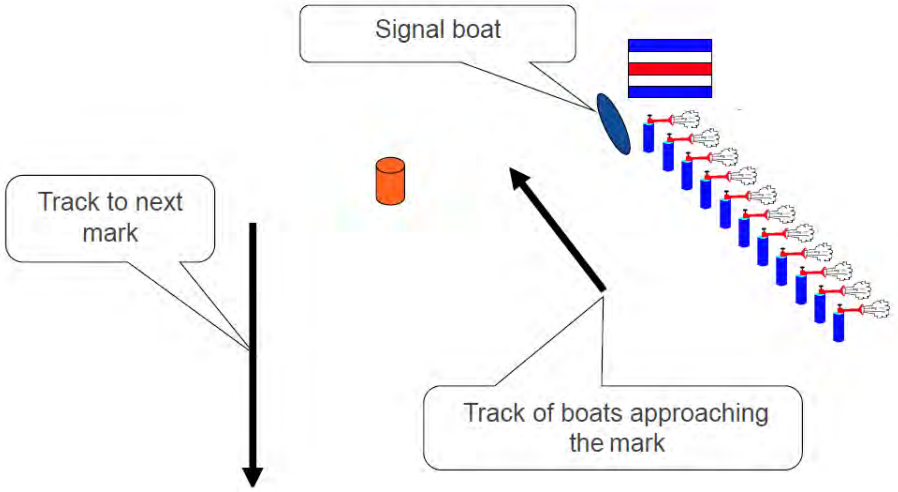
A change of length of the next leg is signalled by displaying flag 'C' accompanied by a repetitive sound signal (as above).

The flag must be displayed with either:

- A plus sign if the leg is to be significantly increased in length; or
- A minus sign if the leg is to be significantly reduced in length.

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.

The signal boat should be positioned outside the track of boats approaching the mark at which the course is to be changed.



Replacing a Mark (R)

A mark may go missing during a race. Possible causes are an anchor line breaking or the buoy deflating.

Given that TYC is operating with only one race committee vessel for most if not all its races, it is very unlikely that a mark can be replaced; the procedure is included here for completeness.

If possible, the RMT should put the mark back in its original position or replace it with one of similar appearance.

If this is not possible, a replacement object (which may be a buoy or a boat) displaying flag M can take the place of the missing mark. The flag should be accompanied by a repeated sound signal.

↑ - - - - - - -

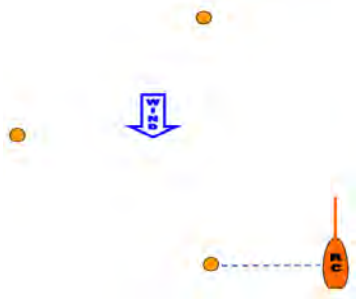
The Finish (A)

Unless pre-arranged with the Race Director, our races usually require the race committee vessel to double as a finish boat. If yachts are required to take their own finish times the finish line is a transit using two prominent beacons.

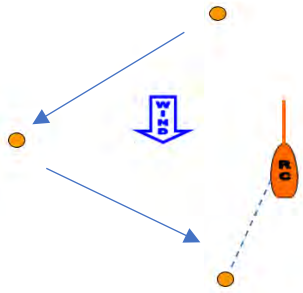
Move the race committee vessel to the area shows as X in Appendix E of the SIs. Note: In bad weather, the race committee vessel can be anchored inside the Duck Pond.

Ensure there is sufficient water depth for all yachts to reach the finish line.

Lay a finish line perpendicular to the direction from the last mark of the course. The finish line can be shorter than the starting line. Note: It may be necessary to move the race committee vessel from its position at the start line to make sure that the finish line is perpendicular to the direction from the last mark of the course (**not** perpendicular to the wind).



Layout for start



Layout for finish

In races where boats are required to use Boat Beacon or a similar method for indicating their position, use Boat Beacon on the race committee vessel as well so that boats can see where the finish is.

Display the blue on-station flag when the leading boat starts the last leg to the finish line. The staff displaying the blue flag is one end of the finishing line. In the case of a late course change for the final leg, the blue flag will be displayed as soon as possible after the finishing line has been laid.

↑ (no sound)

Monitor VHF channels 77 and 16 for yachts announcing they are approaching the finish.

It is useful to have four people taking part in recording the finish:

(a) One person calls out the time each second.
(b) One calls out “Now” as the boat finishes.
(c) One writes down the finish time.
(d) One taps the boat’s tile in SailSys to record the time (see separate document SailSys for the OOD).

Make a long sound signal as the first boat finishes. (Optionally, make a short sound signal for later finishers.)

Remove the blue flag (with no sound signal) when (1) the time limit expires, or (2) the last boat finishes.

Take extra care with the finish – races can be started multiple times if there are problems, but they can be finished only once!

After the Race (A)

Double-check that all starters have been accounted for.

Double-check all results (paper vs SailSys).

Notify the handicapper by phone or SMS at what time the last boat finished, so that presentations can be scheduled.

Retrieve start / finish buoy(s).

Return to TYC.

Pack away equipment.

Record any losses, breakages or problems in the start boat checklist and report them to a Sailing Committee member.

Give the race committee vessel a wash down and take off rubbish.

Head to the bar for a well-earned drink and thanks from the competitors for a job well done.

Hand the gear bag (including the tablet) to the Race Director (or a Sailing Committee member) or leave it behind the bar for collection later.

Redress and Protests (R)

Redress

If the race management team believes it may have made an error affecting the outcome of the race for which redress may be available, it may request redress for the potentially affected boat(s).

The race management team will consider requesting redress for a boat if it is satisfied that that boat's score has been made significantly worse by the actions of an official boat.

Protests

Since the primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules rests with competitors, the race management team will not normally protest a boat.

The race management team may protest a boat in the following circumstances:

a) A breach of a sailing instruction that may not be protested by another boat;
b) An apparent breach of good sportsmanship (RRS 2);