

The Wednesday Night Series

Committee Boat Procedures Guide

- **Before Race Day**, review this document, the Notice of Race, and the OYC Race Committee Procedures Manual found at the website (www.outriggeryachtclub.org - follow the link to Committee Boat Help Guides in the index on the left side of the screen) as well as those documents suggested in that Manual. Also review the Suggested Race Courses Guide and Race Signal Flags Guide found on the website. **Plan to use one of the courses suggested.** These courses have already been thought through and are effective. We've learned from many mistakes already made over the years. The # 1 problem RC has is getting too creative with racecourses that either simply do not work or are in fact against the rules.
- **HAVE AT LEAST ONE ADDITIONAL PERSON WITH YOU ON COMMITTEE BOAT**
- **Plan to meet the Race Chairperson** at the Committee Boat at 4:30PM on the day of your duty. He/she will go over the procedures for running the boat, be able to answer any questions you might have and give last minute instructions for running the race. The boat will be gassed up and fully stocked with all the equipment and supplies necessary for you to do your job. If you determine to use your own boat, you must arrange to meet with the Chairperson early enough to obtain the necessary equipment and supplies and you must then return them in good order to the Committee Boat ASAP after the race.
- **Check the weather ahead of time.** It is best to check the hourly forecast on weather.com and/or accuweather.com for thunderstorms, forecasted wind direction and strength for the duration of the race period. Use this information to begin planning a racecourse well ahead of time, keeping in mind that all competitors must be given an opportunity to finish the race. *If at all possible*, ask your spouse or a friend to be available to the TV and/or a computer to keep an eye on the weather radar and to keep in touch via cell phone to alert you of any impending thunderstorms.
- **Be sure to bring a digital watch.** A backup digital watch is a good idea. There may be another watch and/or stopwatches on the Committee boat – If possible, synchronize your watch with the time shown on the Weather Channel.
- **Bring a cell phone.** You might also consider sail gloves (for working with anchor lines), a cooler with something to eat and/or drink, a hat, sunscreen, bug spray, a jacket, foul weather gear, reading material, etc. If you have one, please bring a digital camera and take pictures of the fleet and individual boats for us.

Turn the VHF radio on to channel 71 as you leave the dock to head to the starting area. The WNS starting area is in the vicinity of Marker 2. It is more shallow and easier to anchor the boat and the pin in the area towards the shoal marker directly across the channel slightly to the WNW from Marker 2. Watch to not get too close to the shoal or to put the shoal into a position where it becomes a problem for the competitors. There is also a shallow area in the middle of the channel to the WSW of Marker 2. Use the Committee Boat depth finder.

Your goal is to establish a windward start. If the wind does not allow for a windward start to an established race mark such as "R" or "X", then use a weather mark (orange inflatable tetrahedron), being sure that it is directly ahead of the middle of the starting line you intend to set...your goal is to provide a triangle with two equal sides. Set the Weather Mark ¼ mile or more (a minimum of 250 yards) to windward of the starting line. The Wed Night Series is scored using a time-on-time format, so you do not need to measure the distance to the Mark for scoring purposes. Use plenty of scope in order to insure that the mark holds and be sure that the anchor is on the bottom and there is slack in the line before letting loose of the mark.

Anchor the pin far to port (as the boat faces into the wind) of where you intend to anchor the boat **unless you intend to use a W-P-W or any other Mark-Pin-Mark course and want to allow for shortening the course at the pin. In such cases, anchor the pin to the starboard side of where you intend to anchor the boat.**

The line between the pin and the boat when both are anchored should be perpendicular to the wind. **Set a longer starting line vs. a shorter one.** There is no shame in having too long a line. **If you think the starting line is too long, it is probably isn't.** Allow plenty of scope so that there is slack in the anchor line before you let loose of the pin itself.

Anchor the Committee Boat with plenty of scope as well, meaning that you will anchor upwind of where you intend to set your end of the starting line and let out the scope to drop you back into place. You have 250 feet of anchor line to work with. Ideally, set the starting line to slightly favor the pin. If you have let out enough scope, you can adjust the anchor line in an attempt to achieve this goal. To favor the pin, you want the bow of the Committee boat, as it points into the wind at anchor, pointing just ever so slightly towards the pin side of the line, maybe 15 degrees or less off perpendicular.

The starting line itself lies between the pin and the "RC" Flagstaff. Set the "RC" Flagstaff in a location where you can sight down the line between it and the pin. Once you are in place, set the #3/Check-in Flag and begin to check in the fleet as you finalize plans for and signal the racecourse. **You should have the pin and any weather or temporary marks set and be anchored and checking in the fleet before 6PM.**

NOTE: When setting any Flags ("RC", Check-in, course flags, starting signal flags), always do so where the competitors can see them. The higher the better. Use the tools provided to do so.

Refer to the Suggested Race Courses Guide. If the wind is agreeable, set a course to one of the Lake Race Marks such as "R" or "X". Keep in mind when the sun is to set and that all races, no matter when sunset occurs, end at 8:30PM. Do not attempt overly long courses for the Wednesday Night Series. Every competitor in both the Spinnaker and Non-Spinnaker fleets, must be allowed time to complete the race. Separate courses may be set for the Spin vs. Non-spin fleets, but this is very tricky and should be well thought out ahead of time. It is suggested that you do not try this unless you are well experienced on Committee Boat.

Keep an eye for the weather. Stay in touch with your weather watcher if things look dicey. If you see lighting coming from the windward direction, do not hesitate to abandon the race by raising the "N" flag over the "A" flag with three sound signals. We do not abandon due merely to rain...sorry.

As competitors cross your stern and call out their sail numbers and fleet designations to check in, call back to them "(Sail #) _____ acknowledged" and put a small checkmark next to their sail number on the score sheet to confirm for the scorer that they arrived in the starting area. If a boat checks in that is not on the sheet, mark it's sail number and fleet designation in a blank space to check them in. If possible, ask them for their PHRF rating and make a note of it as well as the boat's name. Keep an eye on the time... **The #3/Check-in flag is to come down with one sound signal at exactly 6:29.** See the Wed Night Series Starting Sequence outline below for more detail.

If there is no breeze, or if there is any other reason to postpone the start, lower the #3/Check-in flag with one sound signal at 6:29, then at exactly 6:30, raise the "AP" flag with two sound signals. Deal with whatever issue has caused you to postpone or allow up to thirty minutes for the breeze to fill in. You then begin the starting sequence by lowering the "AP" flag with one sound signal one minute before the warning signal just as you would have with the #3/Check-in flag. If you need to abandon due to lack of wind do so by raising the "N" over "A" flags with three sound signals.

Run the starting sequence as outlined in the Wednesday Night Series Starting Sequence Guide. As you complete the final 20 or so seconds of the starting sequence, sight down the line from the "RC" flagstaff to the pin to watch for any over early offenders. After you drop the class flag with one sound signal to start the race, use the "X" and "First Substitute" flags and sound signals appropriately. Carefully read the detail on the use of the "X" and the "First Substitute" signals in the provided Committee Boat Race Signal and Course Marks Guide.

After the start and the fleet has cleared the area, STAY PUT. The finish line for the Wed Night Series is the same as the starting line. Raise the blue flag to show you are on station and ready to finish the fleet.

If you need to shorten the course for any reason including dwindling wind conditions or impending weather or darkness, do so as outlined in the Committee Boat Race Signal and Course Marks Guide. You must anchor the **Committee Boat in order to shorten course**...a running or floating Committee Boat does not give all competitors the same finish line.

The finish line lies between the "RC" flag and the pin. Competitors are finished when any part of their boat crosses this line. As soon as any part of the boat crosses the finish line, make note of the time. If you wish to, you may sound a courtesy horn to let them know they have finished. Use regular clock time to record the start and finish times...10:35, 6:35, 12:26, 8:14, etc. Make note of any boats that claim to have a protest.

After the fleet is completed, pick up the pin and any inflatables you have set. If you are uncomfortable docking the boat back in it's slip, tie her up on the end of the dock and inform the Race Chairman of the location. Be sure to store everything, including keys, as you found them and to lock up the cabin and the inflatables storage box. Turn off the battery switch. Return the score sheet(s) to the Race Chairman. Have a drink and pat yourself on the back.