

How to be a club race officer

Prepare for the duty.....

What day am I RO and what time is the first race and how many races are there?

What are the races for that day that I will RO for?

Are they two series races?

Eg Salisbury, Chamber of Trade

Are they a trophy race with **TWO** races ?

Eg Peter Robinson, UKOBA

Are they the long distance races, i.e. Constable and Boucher

What format are they, straight handicap racing or pursuit races.

I will come to reason why you need to know that information later.

What state is the tide for my duty?

What is the weather forecast?

Try

www.xcweather.com for the wind direction and force

Inshore forecast

Local weather ...BBC is good for that

Let's arrive at the club nice and early, you will be on your own for a while, sailors are not renowned for arriving early.

Have a look at the conditions from the promenade, do they tally with your expected forecast. What state is sea, the tide and the waves? Is it safe to go sailing?

Come prepared to go to sea, your race duty will be in a boat, when you are on the water the sailors can give you constructive advice.

And what do I need????

Must haves;-

Pencil with a piece of cotton on the end,
(to see the direction of the wind)

A good time piece (with a back up). Ideally a watch/stopwatch that will count up after the start sequence.

Time sheets, enough for each race and spare. Located at the top of the stairs in a red folder.

Whistle or a horn there is a box on the Dory, back up is good.

Clipboard with pen/pencil

Binoculars

VHF radio

Mobile phone

Could haves :

Hand bearing compass

Wind speed indicator

Hand held tape recorder

Before leaving the club check you have the following on board
Flags on sticks (will come to those essential items as we go through)

Orange (afloat)

Y

AP

P

Blue

X

1st Sub

Course boards

Anchor with spare line

Make sure mark layer has right number of marks

Make sure you have enough fuel, that you have a paddle, the sound box, baling bucket, tub of goodies and the white limit mark.

Be familiar with the engine, it has quirks, lowering, binging up, shut off. Wear kill cord when going to and from the race area.

So we are armed and extremely prepared!!

Next find a member of the sailing committee, discuss with them what you would like to do

What course you propose.

Where the race area is going to be within the bay

Before you commence your RO duty make sure you know how many competitors you have, if you are going afloat you will be at the slipway, have the race sheet with you and make sure competitors are signed on. If time have a wander around the dinghy park. This number should be checked when afloat.

This important because if a rescue is required the services will need to know numbers and type of boats.

BRIEF THE COMPETITORS BEFORE GOING AFLOAT.

Let's go afloat.

Where the start going to be?

As soon as afloat take a wind bearing.

Where can you fit the course in?

The safety crew should be able to lay the course you have agreed on.

Decided on the size of the course according to the wind strength and the sea conditions.

Let's look at courses

1. Triangle with downwind leg (sausage)
2. Triangle
3. Trapezoid with outer loop
4. Trapezoid

Whatever course you decide on make sure the competitors know, nothing worse to see boats heading in different directions to one you are expecting!!

Decide where you want the course to be.

Whichever course you are going to use, lay the CB and limit mark first, how do we do that?

Lay the limit mark.

Position the CB so that the limit mark is on the port side and the CB is a good distance from the limit, to give you an idea, imagine all the competitors' boats lined up on the prom, bow to stern, that's how long the line should be.

1. Triangle with downwind leg

Get the rescue to lay the BLUE mark behind the committee boat mid line about 500 yds downwind first.

Let's get the rest of the course laid.

Your mark laying boat will need four racing marks.

Position mark 1 (red) directly into the wind, easy

Mark 2 (green) directly downwind of Mark1, say at least half way down the beat. Easy

Mark 3 (white) at an angle of between 45 and 60 degrees from mark 1.

Mark 4 which is already laid should be just downwind of start/finish line, dissecting the line. That will ensure a beat up through the start finish line.

2. Triangle

As course 1 but without the downwind leg.

3. Trapezoid with outer loop

This course is a little bit more complicated to organise, but your mark layer will be up to it. This course gives much better racing with more boat to boat contact.

Lay M1 into the wind, M2 70 degrees from M1, M3 directly downwind of M2 and M4 behind the CB. Start/Finish in the same place as for the others, and off you go.

Keep an eye on the competitors because one or two may forget to do the loop!

4. Trapezoid without the loop

Ok, so far so good. We have a course laid, competitors on the water, rescue craft ready, all we need to do now is start the race. Don't panic its easy.

You should have the following flags with you on the CB

Orange (afloat)

Y

AP

P

Blue

X

1st Sub

I will go through what happens on the CB.

The start sequence is 5,4,1 GO and all fleets are starting together.

When you are ready, set your time piece for 6 min start. You should be flying the ORANGE flag with either PORT (red) or STARBOARD (green). This tells competitors that you are ready to get the racing underway.

The course to be sailed must be displayed with or before the warning signal

Set your watch and wait for the 5 minute to come.

Warning Signal On the 5 min make one sound signal and hoist Y .

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Preparatory Signal On the 4 min, one sound signal and hoist P

The competitors are now under Racing Rules, the start line must not be moved after the display of the P.

On the 1 min one sound signal and the P is lowered

On the 0/start one sound signal and lower Y.

Piece of cake! That was easy. All boats right side of the line, perfect start.

So what could possibly go wrong!!

Well, in the start sequence, your watch stopped and you have no idea how long to go....

Hit the panic button,

two sound signals and hoist the AP.

Lower any other flags.

This cancels the start sequence

This signals to competitors an indefinite postponement.

The AP is removed one min before the next signal is made.

When you ready, set your watch to 7 mins

On the 6 mins lower AP with 1 sound signal

5 mins go into a start sequence.

What else can go wrong, Oh yes, the wind its changed direction, time to reset the course

Hit the AP

Reset the course and start again.

If at the lowering of the class flag you identify boats that are on course side (over the line) make 1 sound signal and out X flag up.

When the all of the offending boats have all returned to the right side of the starting line lower X. If they do not return make the sheet as OCS. There finish will not count.

You are not obliged to inform the OCS boat that they were OCS.

If all competitors want to start at one end of the start line look to see how you can avoid that by resetting the line.

The race is under way, you want the leading boat to sail for about at least 50 mins, so make the judgement.

Time each competitor through the line which will give you how many laps it will take to make a good length race.

When the time is right hoist the blue flag with a sound signal and record the finish times as the boats cross the line.

What if it's the Constable or Boucher Trophy? New SI's on these two races. If it is the Constable we always take the Constable to port when rounding and the same with the Boucher when we round the wreck buoy off Rhos Point.

Before we set off make sure ashore that the race is going ahead. For the dinghies that are not permitted to enter, a course is laid in the bay.

Make sure everyone is off the water before you or the rescue comes ashore.

When the racing has finished and you come ashore leave all the paperwork at the top of the stairs properly filled in. Don't forget people have to look at these results later that may not have been racing themselves.