

# **How can racing sailors benefit from volunteering with Race Committee?**

This is targeted to the NSC Able sailors, but is applicable to all sailors interested in improving their racing performance

# Opening Comments

- I think many of us, myself included, suffer from 'head in the boat' when we race sailboats, as helm or crew.
- Roles: Race Officer, Timer, Sounds, Flags, Recorders, Line Judges, Scorers, Marksetters
- Viewpoints
  - From the Signal Boat
  - From the Pin Boat
  - From Windward Markset
  - From a Spectator Boat with Commentator

# From the Signal Boat - 1

- Course Setup
- Check-in
- Pre-Start
- Start Sequence and Flags
- Late Starters
- The Race

# From the Signal Boat – 2

- Course Setup
  - RC will read the actual wind compared to forecast and choose a signal boat location, start line length and distance to first mark
  - Current - the rate and direction of water flow (river or tide) will also be considered
    - A down current start in light air is highly likely to cause a massive general recall
  - Regular readings of wind direction and strength will be used to see if there is a pattern to the shifts

# From the Signal Boat - 3

- Check-in – you will see the importance of recording all the competitors and matching helm person name to the sail number and boat description
- Pre-Start - Competitors arriving early could be running the line, checking the time to sail the line, finding a reference landmark for the wind, and sizing up the competition

# From the Signal Boat - 4

- Start Sequence and Flags -
  - The first flag signal could be AP with 2 sounds if there is any reason for delay such as significant wind shift, marks not ready, etc.
  - If AP has been used, when it comes down with one sound there will be exactly 1 minute to the warning signal
  - If AP has not been used, the warning signal will be the first signal
  - Listen to the Timer instructing the team, get to know the sounds as well as the flags so that when racing you will know where in the sequence even if you don't see the flag

# From the Signal Boat - 5

- Start Sequence and Flags - cont.
  - I won't go through the entire sequence, but if you are lucky in your Signal Boat visit you may get the opportunity to observe the rapid sequence of signals possible around the time of Warning down (Start)
  - The RO may choose to abort the start with AP up a few seconds before Warning down
  - Or Individual recall seconds after Warning down
  - Or General recall seconds after Warning down

# From the Pin Boat or Spectator Boat

## - 1

- The Start
  - The Pin Boat is a better place to watch the starters
  - This is because when on the Signal Boat, most of the starters (on starboard) will be coming from behind you as you look down the start line.
  - When on the pin boat, those starters will be coming toward you!



# From the Signal Boat - 6

- Late Starters
  - Immediately after the start, leaders will be across the line or about to cross
  - Others may be still approaching and on a good line to cross
  - However there may be some who are still some distance BELOW (downwind of) the start line!
  - You can help count the boats which start before the time limit

# From the Signal Boat - 7

- The Race – first upwind leg
  - Listen for possible RC commentary
  - Watch the fleet tend to spread out
  - Who goes left? who goes right?
  - Anyone heading to a wind shadow (shore effect)?
  - Anyone fighting the current?
  - Anyone best playing the shifts?
  - Good approach to mark versus pinching?

# From the Windward Markset or Spectator Boat - 1

- The Race
  - Watch the roundings
  - Watch for the Port Tack approachers looking for a hole
  - If there is an offset mark, watch the approach to it
  - As they start the downwind leg, do they all stay on starboard?
  - If the course is square to the wind, you should see both starboard and those gybed to port.

# From the Signal Boat - 8

- The Race – downwind leg
  - As with the previous slide, watch the split of starboard versus port
  - The RO's delight is to see a mix of boats on each gybe :-)
  - Watch the approach to the rounding
    - If no gate, do they stay on port after rounding?
    - If a gate, do they tend to split evenly on rounding to port or starboard?
    - Did they round correctly (string rule) ?

# From any boat near the Finish

- Is it a parade with no changes of position ?
- Are there some close races?
- Who has the best combination of boat speed and strategy?
  
- Analyze the scoring results – how do they compare with the observations which you made during the race?

# Wrap Up

Unfortunately, the current lockdown is forecast through June 2020.

The probability of making this learning opportunity happen for weeknight racing may be low for other than on Spectator Boats

I am open to questions; answers can be sent individually, or posted for all

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