

Duty Officer Guide

The job of the Duty Team, and the responsibilities of the Duty/Race Officer seem simple at first sight, and indeed the aims are simple, but a recent meeting revealed many small details that can quickly affect the smooth running of your Duty day at the club. As an aid to Duty Officers, young and old, here is a digest of items to remember and consider when it is your turn.

Before the Day

- Remind your team members some days before – phone &/or email. Get a reply so you know.
- Read the Safety Brief and familiarise yourself with the procedures.

On the Day

- Bring some milk for everyone's tea and coffee – it's a nice gesture
- Check the printed or online calendar for start times, handicap type, any notes, before you come.
- Bring a suitable watch and a pen or pencil and maybe a small notebook in case race sheets get wet.
- Check the forecast wind and weather. Know the course you will set before you arrive
- Arrive early – 9.30am is really necessary. 10am will be too late
- Know your clubhouse entry code, and make sure you have your container keys.
- Ask someone to disarm container alarm if you do not know the code.

Safety & Security

- Launch a safety boat (all powerboats should be moored on the windward side of the main pontoon when on the water)
- Familiarise yourself with the safety checklist attached to each powerboat (first aid kits etc).
- Don't forget to use the Radios – kept in the green container, on charge.
- Remember that we have an accident book and an incident/near miss book if necessary.
- Club buoyancy aids – please reserve these for newcomers and new Wing Cadets only.
- Security - close the gates using the combination padlock. Ensure clubhouse is either manned or locked when you're afloat.
- Remember – your responsibility continues, including safety cover and clearing away.

Before Racing

- Don't drag buoys around, use the Yellow marks A, B, and C as needed to keep windward marks out of the wind shadow.
- Encourage Signing-On first – it helps the newer team members get to know members' names.
- Flags – you could fly the postponement with a hoot (red/white pennant) to chivy up laggards. Drop it one minute before the five with a hoot. It has an amazing effect.
- Put the course up at least 15 minutes before the start. Take advice but work out your own course.
- Make the start line at least 1.5 boats lengths per starter – this helps more nervous starters find a space.
Give it a slight port end bias if possible.
- Carry the start order for Fleet and Personal pursuits – pinned to the Race Board.

- Back to back races – remind sailors as they launch and prepare for the first start. Second race not before 12 noon.
- Start on time – this encourages punctuality.
- Complete a new race sheet for each race start. (Not necessary for sprints)
- Use the race guides to set good courses and keep races to appropriate times.

Racing Notes – The Types of Races & Other notes

- See 'A quick guide to races'.
- Pursuit start numbers – go when it shows now, counting minutes like a clock.
- Pursuit duration – 50 mins
- Pursuit finishes – if possible follow the lead boat to finish on 50 minutes, and retrace back through the fleet recording positions.
- Novice races – help and teach after the start from committee and safety boats
- You really only need to record:
 - boat class
 - sail number
 - finish time and number of laps.
- Enter sail number and the computer in the clubhouse will automatically fill in boat class helm name if it knows it.

However:

- It does not know crew name, so you must fill that in.
- It will not know helm and crew name for a club boat, it will prompt you for these.
- Get the configuration correct for boats like Visions and 2000s (spinnaker or not)?
- If someone shows up with a new boat you will have to fill in manually on computer.

General Notes & Points to Consider

- Familiarise yourself with the engines periodically so you are not taken by surprise with any changes.
- Race sheets – full completion – name, date, course, wind, start times, assistants, safety, assistant
- Lunch duration – minimum 45 minutes
- Actively teach your assistants
- Swap your assistants between safety and committee boat for practice

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