



RACE OFFICER SUMMARY GUIDE – 2024

This document provides guidance for all race officers but is written assuming a club line start. For committee boat starts, please read in conjunction with the additional guidance contained in the documents *Saturday and Summer Series – Race Officer Guidance* and *Committee Boat User Guide (Bruce)*.

Key points to remember:

- Accuracy is essential, for the timings of the start sequence and recording lap and race times
- Clear communication is very important. This includes notifying racers of the course, ensuring everyone is signed on and communicating with the patrol boat(s)
- You have oversight of the race so keep a close eye on the boats at all times

Before the day

You will have been advised of your duties via Dutyman and should have confirmed your ability to do them. It is your responsibility to re-arrange any that are no longer convenient through Dutyman, and if you are unable to arrange a swap or have an emergency at short notice, contact a member of the Sailing Committee as soon as possible.

Familiarise yourself with the requirements for your role, race / event by referring to the Dinghy Racing and Race Officer documents on the club website: <https://www.tudorsailing.org.uk/> under the 'Useful Documents' tab, and any relevant information on Tidal Diamonds or event specific Sailing Instructions.

Consider taking refresher training if you are not a regular Race Officer, or ask the Training Officer if you are unsure of any aspect of the role. Contact training@tudorsailing.org.uk for information.

Check you have the up-to-date codes for the Race Box. Ask a member of the Dinghy Committee to confirm the code if you have not yet undertaken a Race Officer duty this year.

On the day

Obtain a good local weather forecast – it is useful to gather weather forecasts from several sources (eg Met Office, XC Weather) and also inspect local conditions at the club and on nearby weather beacons such as Chimet and Bramblemet.

Arrive at the club in plenty of time. For a club-line start, this should be a minimum of an hour before race start, for committee boat start this should be a minimum of 90 minutes. The more time you have the better prepared you are to start on time and deal effectively with any matters arising.

At the club

- Start to consider if the weather conditions will be suitable for sailing (wind strength, visibility, forecast)
- Obtain the race box key from the key safe in the entrance hall of the club.
- Unlock the Race Box, following the instructions on the door in relation to the LED.
- Unlock the cupboard under the desk and the middle metal cupboard on the wall.
- Switch on the PC screen. The PC tower should already be on
- Hoist Red Ensign (on gaff) and Club Burgee (at top of mast).
- Check the patrol boat driver(s) and crew have arrived. If missing then try and contact, make racers aware as early as possible and advise that the race cannot go ahead without a patrol boat.



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Locate and check the following equipment:

- Horn – test it early (this is normally left switched on, but may have been turned off at the mains). In the event of a problem, there is a manually operated air-horn in the box used for committee boat start races.
- Base radio – this is built into a cupboard and should already be connected to the aerial. Turn on and set to channel 37 (M1 on display) “Low” for in-harbour, “High” for an out of harbour race
- Tudor weather station (also built into the cupboard)
- Yellow triangles on the race box and lawn, and the outer distance mark (yellow ball) on the water (transit of the two triangles is the club line)
- Clock – found in the cupboard. Check there are batteries in the clock and the time is correct. There is a re-set button on the back if needed.
- Flags – You will need the following to be in place before the start:
 - G (5 minute)
 - Any other class flags being used (e.g. F);
 - P (4 minute)
 - X (over the line)
 - AP (postponement)
 - First Substitute (general recall)
- During the race you may need D (shorten course for slow fleet), S (shorten course for all competitors) so check these are available.
- Attach flags to halyards ensuring class flags and P are not next to each other as they may be difficult to see from the water. There is a reference guide in the red folder.
- Only fly relevant race flags during the race process (including prior to the start) to ensure clarity for racers.
- Binoculars
- Open the left-hand window and pass the hooter pedal and clock out. Set these up to allow you to stand on the balcony in line with the yellow triangles

Take the red lever arch file labelled “Race Officer” from the shelf to the side of the computer and keep it to hand. This contains all the information you may need for the duty. Copies of quick reference documents are also pinned up on the two notice boards within the race box. There should be fresh sign on sheets on the desk and a race results book on the top shelf.

Computer

On the basic desktop there are three key icons:

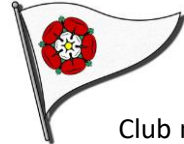
- Internet Browser) – click on this for a web browser with pre-set tabs for the Tudor Sailing Club website (scroll to the footer for a link to Dutyman), a live clock, CHIMET and Portsmouth weather information
- Results Calculation spreadsheet (Excel) COOG HH:MM. This allows you to calculate the corrected time for an individual boat/PY rating, including allowing for boats to have completed different numbers of laps

Identify your participants

Place a new Sign On Sheet and a pen in the workshop on the bench or with a clipboard by the whiteboard for competitors to complete their details. Check PY details, helm and crew details and any relevant matters to risk assessment considerations. Double check your boat types and numbers prior to the start and confirm with the patrol boat.

Leave the sign on sheet in the workshop on the bench by the door until the start sequence has begun to ensure all participants have signed in.

For members with private dinghies, the helm needs to be consistent to qualify for a series result.



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Club members that race in a club dinghy are eligible for a series result if the helm is consistent, regardless of whether they race in the same boat each time.

Assess the risks.

Assess the risks affecting your event by considering the nature of the event and situational considerations such as:

- The type of event, such as long distance, out of harbour, interclub, regatta or open
- If the event is designated higher risk or family friendly
- Actual and forecast weather conditions including any current club guidance on wind limits.
- Visibility including current and forecasted.
- State of tide and likely changes during the race programme and while competitors may be on the water.
- Sea state including wind over tide.
- Availability of working patrol boats, and availability and competencies of helms and crew
- Availability of equipment (first aid and safety equipment)
- Means of communication (radios and other) and the ability of people to use them.
- The proposed sailing area for the event
- The volume, age, skills and experience of participants and range of vessels involved.
- Age specific health and safety considerations (e.g. children become cold more quickly than adults. Children or novice sailors may not be suited to longer events or more challenging conditions)
- Local risks such as expected dredger movements and Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre activity <https://www.vesselfinder.com/> search for 'Ai Avocet' and click on the map to find the location of the dredger

A higher risk race may be one that would take place for example in gusty or particularly strong wind or tidal conditions, choppy water, reduced visibility, where there may be additional hazards or novice, young or older sailors that may need extra support from the Patrol Boat. A higher risk race may also be one that involves a diverse fleet that could quickly spread out. For such circumstances a more restricted course or a cap on entries may be sensible to consider and a participant briefing should take place highlighting the current risks and ensuring knowledge of safe landing places etc.

Check for signs of arrival or departure of the dredger or other restricted vessels that may cross paths with the race course. Consider a postponement if the dredger is likely to enter the start area during the starting sequence or if competitors may be in the way.

Risk assessment – proceed to race?

Before making this decision, discuss the conditions and circumstances and any considerations with the Patrol Boat Helm and Crew. It is also encouraged to discuss the relevant matters with the racers in attendance, to understand the appetite and competencies of the racers to participate and identify any additional potential risks that may not otherwise be apparent.

Once you have gathered all the relevant information as identified above, make a decision on whether the race is to go ahead. This decision should take place on the day unless in exceptional circumstances. Continue to monitor circumstances during the race programme and act accordingly.

For Race Management matters, the Race Officer makes the final decision. Where decisions are being taken that relate to safety on water, the Patrol Boat Helm makes the final call. All competitors decide for themselves whether they have the competency, equipment, and willingness to participate.

Ensure you and the patrol boat helm are familiar with the content of the latest General Risk Assessment and Dinghy Sailing Risk Assessment documents.

Keep potential risks in mind during the race event and take appropriate actions to minimise these during your duty time.



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Set the course

Firstly check the particular requirements and procedures for the specific race you are managing. These can be found in such documents as Dinghy Events and Trophies Race Officer Guidance, Saturday and Summer Series Guidance, or in the case of special events this information may have been communicated to you directly.

Suggested courses and course setting notes can be found in the Course Setting Guidelines document in the Red Folder and on the notice board. Some series have specific guidance and formats, check the relevant guidance before considering your course options.

You are welcome to modify these courses. Ask for advice from others if you wish. Do not be overly cautious; courses can be shortened if required.

Take into account the weather forecast plus current conditions. Use the readings on the Tudor weather monitor but beware it will under-report wind conditions during a westerly because of its location. Check current conditions

on Chimet, Cambermet and Bramblemet, and consider what these tell you about approaching weather.

If the course needs club marks, e.g a round buoy or inflatable racing mark, ensure these are available and ask the patrol boat team to check they are in a usable condition. Coordinate with the Patrol Boat crew and check the tide heights if you wish to lay marks especially on the west side of the channel. Buoys can be laid in the area south of the club towards the Harvester when the tide height is 4.3m as a minimum. Tide curves are available via the Tudor Website weather page. Check that all needed harbour marks are in their identified positions.

Double check the course, mark rounding's, and laps, write it on the course board (or write on a piece of paper and attach to the board). The course should be displayed in the workshop only, do not duplicate the course display elsewhere including the sign on sheet.

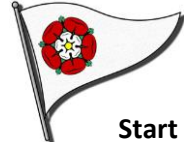
Display the course at least 30 minutes before the start. If you intend to set a different or shorter course for slow handicap boats, make this clear. Ensure there is an up-to-date harbour map available to view.

Liaise with patrol boats

- Check which patrol boat(s) are to be used.
- Ensure the patrol boat team understands the course and number of laps, the start time, and the marks required.
- Discuss any risks identified during your assessment and agreed actions to minimise risks.
- If multiple patrol boats are to be used, confirm the roles and responsibilities of each boat. For some events, this may include patrol boats supplied by other clubs.
- Conduct a radio check with each patrol boat.
- Give the patrol boat instructions on where laid marks are to be placed. Furthest marks should be laid first.
- Ensure marks are laid as required and the patrol boat(s) are on station prior to the first class warning flag.
- Notify the patrol boats if there is likely to be any delay to the start, and confirm how many boats are racing

Manage the Race

All the likely signals and procedures to use are covered in the Race Procedures and Signals document.



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Start the Races

Follow the instructions to start the races. Tudor races typically use a 5-4-1-go sequence.

Use the AP postponement flag (and two hoots) in the lead-up to the start time if starting on time is unlikely. This should be lowered with a hoot sounded at one minute before the start sequence begins.

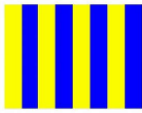
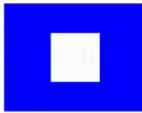

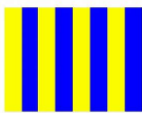
Be ready to hoist the G flag and sound the hooter 5 minutes before the scheduled start time.

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THE START SEQUENCE TIMINGS ARE ACCURATE.

You may find it useful to write the intended split times on a blank piece of paper for reference, i.e.

12:55 G flag up
12:56 P flag up
12:59 P flag down
13:00 G flag down – start

Feel free to ask for assistance to help with the start sequence from members that are not entered into the race. They could hoist the flags at the appropriate times while you carefully monitor the timings and sound the hooter.

5 minutes to go	Hoot	Hoist G	
4 minutes to go	Hoot	Hoist P	
1 minute to go	Long Hoot	Drop P	
Start	Hoot	Drop G	

If you make any error in the start sequence, including errors with timing, postpone (or general recall if the race has started) and begin again.

In all circumstances, make sure to record the actual start time as it is needed for correct elapsed time calculations. Use the same clock for all race timings.

Radio etiquette

We use channel 37A to communicate with the patrol boat(s). Please be aware that this is a public channel, and any messages sent or received will block the channel for other users in the area while the message is being communicated. Messages must therefore be clear and concise.



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The race box is identified as Tudor Base. When racing from Bruce, use “Bruce”. Each Patrol Boat is identified by name (i.e. Nemo/Marlin/Gurgle/ Dory)

It is good practice when using the radio to...

- keep all communications relative to the racing going on,
- do not use people’s names in the event of emergency.,
- listen before broadcasting so you don’t talk over someone.
- Conduct a radio check before the patrol boat leaves the slipway

While the race is in progress

- Confirm the number of race entrants to the patrol boats. Refer to the Radio Best Practice Guide.
- Monitor radio at all times – keep a hand-held radio with you if you are not sitting at the race box desk, for example if you are using the balcony or if you leave the race box at any time. Please be aware that the patrol boat may not hear you if you are using a handheld but you will be able to hear them.
- Keep in regular contact with the patrol boat(s)
- Ensure instructions to the patrol boat(s) are clear and confirmed as understood
- In case of course change or other notifications, clearly instruct that necessary information is relayed accurately and in a timely manner to the racers to ensure the race is fair
- Communicate any known retirements
- Transfer signing on details from the Sign On Sheet into the Sailing Log
- Look up handicap numbers and check the specific requirements for the race/series you are officiating for.
- Races other than open series races and the Regatta use Tudor handicaps rather than standard Portsmouth Yardsticks; Gould has personal handicaps for qualifying sailors
- Monitor progress and log the boats each time they cross the line – **record all lap times precisely.**
- It is recommended that you write the sail numbers and times in order of completing lap 1 on a piece of blank paper, then later transfer the information to the sign on sheet and later the race record book. This will be easier than trying to find each boat on the sign in sheet and squeeze the numbers in the small boxes, particularly when multiple boats are likely to be close together on the line
- Keep an overview watch on the boats by eye or binoculars where practical. Where boats are out of sight clear and regular communications with the patrol boat(s) become more important.
- Consider shortening the course if conditions deteriorate using the ‘S’ flag for all participants or the ‘D’ flag for slow handicaps only. Ensure the flag and associated hoots are timed appropriately for clarity.
- If managing the race from a powered craft on the water, consider setting a new finish line if it seems unlikely boats will be able to complete the current lap.
- If changes to the course are being made (other than reducing the number of laps), you must communicate the details to the patrol boat(s) in good time and ask them to notify all race participants in order starting with the first boat on the water and confirm that they have done so. The information must be communicated clearly to each boat before they begin the leg.

Finish the race

- Stand on the balcony (or sit within the race box) in line with the yellow triangles in good time before each boat crosses the line
- Hoot when boats cross the line and record finish times precisely as HH:MM:SS. Use the same clock as you used for the race start
- Record actual finish times in the Sign On Sheet
- Note any competitors who did not finish or retired

When all boats have come ashore, please sound 5 blasts of the horn to signal to competitors that the Patrol Boat needs recovering.



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- Work out corrected times using the Excel spreadsheet or race calculator. Multiply up any slow handicap corrected times if the 'D' flag was used (e.g. if 2 laps sailed instead of 3 then multiply corrected times by 1.5 on the calculator. The Excel sheet works this out itself with correct inputs). Enter details onto Signing on Sheet
- Note any protests and refer to Protest Guidance for resolution.
- Be aware of the implications of rounding for corrected seconds and check actual boat order to confirm
- Produce provisional results for the race
- Copy actual finish times, corrected times and provisional results onto the Sailing Log
- Place the Sign On Sheet in the orange "dinghies" folder and leave the Sailing Log on display in the window
- Take a clear photograph of the results (or ask a racer to do this if you don't have access to a camera phone) and email it to results@tudorsailing.org.uk for the Race Results volunteer to review and publish

Before you leave

Check with patrol boat crew if there were any issues that need to be noted.

Contact the Sailing Committee (sailing_committee@tudorsailing.org.uk) if there were any problems with equipment.

Take in all flags and put away in the flag store (unless wet, in which case drape over chairs to dry). Make sure all the halyards are secure.

Turn off the base station radio. Make sure the hand-held radios and all patrol boat equipment has been returned. Ensure hand held radios have been rinsed, dried and put back on charge.

Tidy up and put everything back in the cupboard. Please do not leave any food waste in the race box or bin, and empty the bin if it needs it.

Ensure all windows are closed. Lock cupboard and Race Box (following instructions regarding the LED). Return race box key to the combination safe in the club entrance hall.

If you are listed as doing this duty on Dutyman there is no need to leave a maintenance log, as duties will be confirmed directly from Dutyman.

Many thanks for doing this – we could not race without you.