

Windycrest

SAILING CLUB, INC.



**Information for
Principle Race Officer Race
and Race Committee**

Windycrest SC Race Committee Help Sheet

I. BEFORE RACE DAY

a. ~~The Crew.~~ The minimum number of race committee members is SIX. SFVFN is advised. Two people for each chase boat (the Sea Arks), and three people on the committee boat.

Begin recruiting your crew two weeks ahead of race day. Avoid last minute stress and risk of not finding enough crew members at the last minute.

Use the club directory to find crew. Send emails, or, better still, call on the phone.

b. Check the weather forecast for race day. Alert your crew to bring the appropriate stuff: water, food, phone, bug spray, etc.

II. FLAGS

See attached chart for additional explanation of flags. Commonly used flags are these:

1. Warning Signal/Class flags. We generally use the number flags: 1, 2, and 3 to designate the classes racing.
2. Preparatory signal = "P" flag.
3. Postponement = "answering pennant" (red/white vertical stripes).
4. Individual recall = "X" flag.
5. General recall = "first substitute" pennant.
6. Shorten course = "S" flag.
7. Change of course = "C" flag.
8. Abandonment of race = "N" flag.
9. PFDs required = "Y" flag.
10. Come within hail or follow me = "L" flag.

III. HOW TO SET THE COURSE

a. Initial considerations: wind direction, wind speed, type of boats competing (centerboards or keelboats), how long a course to set in order to complete the race(s) in the right amount of time.

b. Select an area of the lake with adequate open water that will accommodate the race course.

c. The various courses that we use: almost always, Windycrest uses either an "I" or a "W" course. Both run straight windward and leeward. The difference is where the start and finish lines are set on the course. Courses may be run any number of laps.

Courses are designated by means of signs placed on the sides or stern of the committee boat.

d. Setting the course:

- i. determine which course form will be used (i.e., I or W most often).
- ii. position the committee boat in the location required by the course, set the anchor.
- iii. set the starting line pin (yellow buoy) subject to adjustment later.
- iv. set the windward mark subject to adjustment later.
- v. set the leeward mark subject to adjustment later.
- vi. setting a mark so that it is in the right place:
 1. go to the desired position for the mark, head the boat into the wind, and stop way.
 2. lower the anchor weight until it hits bottom (the line could be too short!),
 3. back up the boat and roll the buoy off,
 4. return to windward side of windward mark or leeward side of leeward mark and sight up the course to confirm correct placement of the buoy,
 5. advise PRO that mark is set,
 6. stand by awaiting further instructions from the PRO.

IV. CONDUCTING THE RACE.

- a. The race is managed by those on the committee boat.
- b. Jobs of people on the committee boat, some tasks may be performed by the same person:
 - flag handler
 - time keeper
 - horn operator
 - start/finish line sighter
 - recorder of check-ins and finishes
- c. Check boats in before the courtesy sound by recording boats and sail numbers on score sheet.
- d. Start the race on time! If you cannot start on time, postpone the start (answering pennant + one sound). Use the on-board electronic starting horn to start the race sequence. Someone must watch for OCS (on course side, aka over early) boats. Signal OCS boats with "X" flag and one sound; verbal notice is not required but is

permitted. Lower the flag once all OCS boats have returned to the prestart side of the line or after 4 minutes. If "too many" are OCS, signal a general recall with "first substitute" flag and two sounds. Time keeper records the starting time (e.g., 2:00 pm) and insures the timer is running.

e. Use of the electronic starting horn: (explanation here).

f. Constantly monitor the race. Have the marks moved if the wind changes. Note: marks cannot be moved after a boat rounds the previous mark. Follow proper procedure for signaling and moving a mark.

g. Finishes. Someone must watch the finish line notify the timer/recorder as each boat finishes. Competitors appreciate a horn, but is not required. A boat finishes when any part of it crosses the line from the direction of the previous mark. Someone must record the finishing time. The recorder and time keeper work together (or may be the same person if possible). Write down the time of finish or the elapsed time.

h. How to record finishes.

i. Prepare for next race once all boats have finished.

V. Safety and Emergencies.

Be prepared to render assistance as needed to any boat in trouble. Chase boats should monitor the racers, especially in strong winds. Centerboard boats are most susceptible to capsize and difficulties. Safety is a primary concern of the race committee.

VI. Use of VHF Radios.

Turn on radios upon leaving the dock. Check transmission and reception. Keep radios on Channel 71.

VII. Completion of Races.

a. pick up the marks.

b. make sure that other race committee boats are able to return (motors sometimes fail).

- c. make sure that competitors are able to return. Provide assistance as needed.
- d. When committee boat returns to the dock, blow the horn and write down the time (this is necessary to alert any protesters of the time for protests to be lodged).
- e. Turn in score sheets to the appropriate scorer, the fleet captain, or make sure that one of them receives the score sheet.
- f. Open the rehash with key from committee boat. Rehash time must be respected – beer tap is not open forever. PRO or designee must not leave without locking the beer tap and the refrigerator.

ALL ABOUT THOSE RACE COMMITTEE FLAGS






by Morgan Stinemetz, [Bubba Whartz'](#) dad.

Here it is race day. You've polished up your boat. Polished up your good manners so you won't abuse you crew. And you are ready to race. But are you?

Do you know that the start sequence for sailboat races has been a five-minute countdown series since 2001? If your club is still using the old 10-minute system, someone needs to take the 21st century by the horns and get things modified.

So, here's how the sequence goes.

If everything is on schedule, when you get out to the committee boat you will see an **RC** flag and an orange flag that delineates the committee boat end of the start line. If things are running late, you will see the previous two flags and the  **AP** signal. That's a red and white pennant, which is also called the  **Answering Pennant**.

When the  **AP** comes down, it signifies one minute until the class flag is raised. The class flag is the one which is so designated by the Sailing Instructions. So, at this point, there are six minutes until the start.

The **Class Flag** goes up at five minutes before the start and remains up until the start. This is a warning flag only. The Rules of Racing (RRS) don't kick in for another minute. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.**



The **P** (Preparatory) flag goes up at four (4) minutes before the start. The P flag is blue with a white, square center. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** This flag will remain up for three minutes.



The **P** flag comes **down** at one minute before the start. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** The only flag still up is the **Class Flag**.

START: The Class Flag comes down. **It is accompanied by a sound signal.** You should be at or very near the starting line going fast.

OTHER FLAGS YOU NEED TO KNOW



X: Blue cross on a white background. It means that one or more boats have started prematurely. The race committee may, but is not obligated to, inform the guilty boat(s). This flag will be lowered when all premature boats have returned or after 4 minutes, whichever comes first.



FIRST SUBSTITUTE: This is a triangular flag with blue edges top and bottom and a yellow center. This flag indicates a **General Recall**. Everybody starts over. New start sequence, etc.



I: Yellow flag with solid black circle at center. This indicates that Rule 30.1 (the around-the-ends rule) is in effect at the start.



BLACK FLAG: This flag is all black. It means that any boat on the course side of the start line within a minute prior to the start is disqualified. *NOT USED AT WSC*



Y: Diagonal red and yellow stripes. This flag means that all competitors are **required** to wear personal buoyancy.



L: Diagonal yellow and black squares, two each. Ashore, it means that a notice to competitors has been posted. Afloat, it means come within hail or follow me.



M: Blue flag with white X. This flag means, "The mark is missing. Round me instead of the missing mark."



S: White with blue square. This flag means, "The course has been shortened. The finish is between this flag and the nearby rounding mark,"



C: Red, white and blue horizontal stripes. This flag means, "The course has been changed." Look for compass heading to new mark and/or + or - sign indicating leg will be longer or shorter.



N: Blue and white checkers. This flag means, "The race has been abandoned." It should be accompanied by 3 sound signals.



N over A: This combination means, "Races have been abandoned. Further signals will be made

ashore

Windycrest SC Race Day Time Line and Schedule

TIME	ACTION
11:30am-12:00pm	Arrive at club.
Not later than 12:00	Have everyone else on the RC arrive. Check RC boat equipment, marks and ground tackle, flags, whistle, course board, flags, fuel. Start engines. Check radios. Mount Starting Horn. Correct Problems.
12:00-12:30	Observe conditions. Check weather forecast.
12:30-12:55	Observe potential participants. Develop overall daily strategy.
12:58 Approx	Ring gathering bell.
1:00	Begin Competitors' Meeting. If a small number competitors appear to be trying to arrive, give them no more than 2 or 3 minutes. If something is preventing a significant number from attending, consider postponing the Competitors' Meeting.
1:10 Approx	Upon conclusion of Competitors' Meeting, assemble all RC personnel, make final boat assignments, Inform Mark Boats of initial area to be deployed. Make RC Signal Boat task assignments. Declare departure time. Consider the implications of your proximity to the restroom and how that will change very shortly.
1:20	Leave dock for the racing area. At all times, be aware of possible vessels in distress, and be prepared to render assistance.
1:20-1:30	Check radios, correct problems.
1:40-1:45	Select position of RC Signal Boat. Make anchor and monitor drag. Check in boats. Direct Windward Mark Set boat and Starting Mark Set boat to approximate positions.
1:45-1:50	Assign a person to be dedicated clock watcher (Timer) with ability to report time remaining until the Courtesy Signal (1:54pm). Reaffirm persons for positions of Flag handler, Horn control operator. Decide on Course to be sailed and prepare course boards.
1:50-1:54	Finalize Starting Mark position. Monitor Windward Mark's position.
1:53	Have Timer announce One minute to Courtesy Signal, and count down to 1:54pm.

Windycrest SC Race Day Time Line and Schedule

1:54	Sound Courtesy signal if all is going to plan. No Flags. If there looks to be an unavoidable delay, prepare to signal Postpone (AP Flag, 2 Horns), but do not signal it until you are sure a delay is required. Place Orange Flag for Starting Line.
1:55	Make the Warning Signal(Class Flag). Insure that Course to be sailed is posted. The Starting Line may still be adjusted until the Preparatory Signal.
1:56	Make Preparatory Signal (P Flag), then finalize position of Windward Mark. The position of the Windward Mark may be changed until the Starting Signal.
1:59	Lower P Flag and prepare to start the race. Make sure of assigning a line sighter, sound signaler, and recall flag person.
1:59:40	Write down Sail Numbers of boats that look like they may be OCS
2:00	Lower Class Flag. Signal recalls if needed. Measure and record wind speed.
2:00-2:01	If no recall, decide if line is still square enough and proper length, and if so, ready the Warning Signal for the next Class. Send Starting Mark Set boat to set the Leeward Mark, if needed.
2:01	Make the Warning Signal for the next Class. Repeat starting procedure for subsequent Classes if needed.
After All Classes Started	Monitor wind direction and speed for possible necessity of Changing The Position Of Marks or Shortening The Course. Continue to be watchful for boats or people in distress, and be able to provide assistance.
About Halfway Through Race	Measure and Record Wind Speed
As lead boats round final mark	Consider moving Finish Line flag to staff near horn control. Make clear assignments of line sight/horn controller, recorder/ time reader.
Finish	Record boats' elapsed time and sail number as they cross the finish line. Measure and Record Wind Speed.

Windycrest SC Race Day Time Line and Schedule

When last boat rounds the Windward Mark for last time in the race	Begin to evaluate the position of the Windward Mark and if it should be repositioned for the next race.
Once all boats are finished	Check to see if there are any boats unaccounted for and resolve any issues. If more races are scheduled, check starting line for length and angle to the wind. Adjust if needed. Prepare to sound Courtesy Signal.
Courtesy Signal	Repeat procedures from previous race
Final boat finishes last race of the day	Have Mark Set boats recover all marks. Secure equipment on RC Signal Boat except horn, raise anchor and return to Club. All RC boats should ensure no one needs assistance. Escort boats returning to the Club.
Dock RC Boats	Sound horn to begin protest filing period, record time on score sheet. Secure all gear in proper places. Turn off all radios. Raise engines. Secure keys.
REHASH	Post RC Docking Time. Unlock beverages. Distribute score sheets. Accept any Protests and record time of submission.
RC Dock +30 Min.	End Protest Filing Period. Continue to accept Protests and record time submitted.
Rehash +1 Hour	End REHASH. Lock beverages. Turn of the lights and fans if no one remains. Forward any Protests to Fleet Captain. Go your own way.