
CARLYLE YACHT CLUB

RACE COMMITTEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNALS BOAT CREW

If for any reason you cannot meet your Race Committee (RC) obligation on the assigned day, it is your responsibility to make arrangements with an alternate, competent RC.

NOTIFY THE SAIL FLEET CAPTAIN OF PERSONNEL CHANGES

A Race Committee (RC) is responsible for conducting a sailboat race, start to end. CYC is a cooperative – when it is your turn to “do Race Committee Duty”, you are expected to provide a Signals Boat (usually your sailboat), to get it anchored safely in the racing area, and at a minimum to provide a Signals Crew. The club supplies a Mark-Set boat.

CYC often splits the RC into two distinct crews: the Signals Crew, and the Marks Crew, but sometimes the same people do it all. This document is primarily aimed at the Signals Crew Chief.

RC PLANNING

The Sail Fleet Captain or his designee (hereafter called the Principal Race Officer, or PRO) is responsible for all decisions regarding race operations, with two exceptions to be covered later. The PRO is always the leader of the entire Race Committee, even when he is competing that day.

In order to do a good job for the Club on your assigned day, you’ll need to do some planning ahead of time. The first thing to do is recruit your crew. In addition to yourself, you will need three or four other adults to assist you. An experienced Signals Crew might do a good job with three people, but four is much better because it permits each to focus better on his role(s).

At a bare minimum, review this document in conjunction with CYC’s Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions for the event. To be very well-prepared, Review Part 3, Conduct of a Race, of the US Sailing *The Racing Rules of Sailing*.

Roles on the Committee or Signals Boat

Roles on the Signals Boat should be worked-out before your assigned duty date, and the crew trained. If you need help yourself, or if you need help training your crew, contact the Sail Fleet Captain for at least a week ahead of time and be sure the whole crew is available. It is assumed that you and your crew have the skills necessary to get your boat safely anchored in the racing area.

PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Some roles may be combined. For example, it may be that the Signals Crew Chief is also the PRO, the Timekeeper and the Recorder. The Gunner might also assist the Signalman. The Line Judge might also be the Gunner. How exactly these roles are filled is up to you as the Signals Crew Chief.

Signals Crew Chief

Someone has to be in charge, and occasionally leading the team will be someone’s only role. The Signals Crew Chief makes making decisions concerning the conduct of the race, and for calling out the signals to make.

The Timekeeper

The Timekeeper is chiefly responsible for watching the clock, and calling out times when needed. During the starting sequence, the Timekeeper tells the Signalman when to make the next signal.

The Line Judge

The Line Judge is responsible for watching the starting line for boats On Course Side (OCS, aka “over early”) before the start, and for spotting boats finishing. The Line Judge sits at the mast of the Signal Boat, has charge of the bullhorn, and calls out sail numbers.

Signalman

The Signalman is responsible for flying and striking the signal flags. It is helpful to have two Signalmen. The Signalmen should anticipate the signals to be made so that the Timekeeper’s orders can be promptly carried out. It is important that the Signalman understand the signaling procedures.

Gunner

The Gunner is responsible for making audible signals. CYC does not use a gun, but rather an airhorn.

Recorder

The Recorder is responsible for recordkeeping. The Recorder should have several copies of the CYC Race Time Sheet on hand, several pencils or pens, a clipboard and perhaps a light for night races.

Signals Boat Operator

The Signals Boat Operator is usually her owner/skipper. He is responsible for getting the boat to the racing area, and making it fast to the bottom. If the RC is using any of the boat’s equipment (VHF, wind instruments, etc.) he be responsible for making it ready. After the boat is made fast, the Boat Operator can usually fill another role.

Marks Crew Chief

The Marks Crew is responsible for setting the marks of the course except for the Committee Boat. These roles will not be discussed in this document.

Powers and Duties

All final decisions concerning the racing for the day are made by the PRO with two exceptions:

1. The Signals Boat Operator may of his own accord make the decision to abandon racing for the day due to weather that threatens the safety of the Signals Boat or of the competitors. This power is necessary because the Signals Boat Operator is responsible for the safety of the boat and her crew.
2. The Signals Crew Chief may of his own accord make the decision to postpone racing, for example when his crew is not ready, or when the race course is not yet set up.

In addition to the tasks outlined above, the Signals Crew is responsible for proactively watching the racecourse, the weather and the competitors to help the PRO run a smooth day of racing. During racing, the Signals Crew will have a better view of the racecourse than the PRO may have, and should be in a position to suggest a course of action which may include moving marks, choosing courses to be sailed, shortening and changing courses, and postponing or abandoning races. With the concurrence of the PRO, any of these may be executed by the Signals Crew or the Marks Crew at the appropriate time.

BEFORE THE DAY OF THE RACE

- The whole Race Committee should read and understand these instructions, the pertinent rules in the RRS, and the Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions for the event being served.
- Decide who will fill each role on the Race Committee
- Get the crews trained
- Locate the equipment in the locker and become familiar with its use
- Print a bare minimum of three Race Time Sheets and take them with you
- Take plenty of pencils & pens

THE DAY OF THE RACE

ARRIVAL

It is your responsibility to collect the RC equipment from the locker, and to replace it there at the end of the day. Please keep the locker neat – no matter how you found it.

It is important for you to arrive and get anchored in the racing area well before the scheduled time of the first warning signal of the day.

REQUIRED EQUIPMENT ON THE SIGNALS BOAT:

- Signal Flags (in jib bag)
- RC “bag” (RC Flag, clipboards, airhorn, etc.)
- Numerical fleet flags and “P” Preparatory flag
- Course Board
- Course Board numbers
- Bullhorn
- Scoresheets – print enough copies of the appropriate pages of this document
- VHF Radio (you are expected to provide this)
- Be sure you have an adequate anchor and an extra-long anchor rode. A long rode will permit you to make adjustments to the angle of the starting line to the wind by adjusting its length. It will also insure you have enough scope to hold if anchored in an unusually deep spot of the lake. A second anchor is prudent if the winds are high. If you do not have a second anchor for your boat, or if you are concerned that your anchor will not hold both your boat and the mark-set boat, CYC has a “loaner anchor” and rode in the equipment locker.

**BE SURE LOCKER DOOR IS CLOSED AND LOCKED AFTER
YOU HAVE REMOVED THE REQUIRED GEAR!**

Getting Underway

You should expect to leave the harbor about 90 minutes before the first scheduled warning signal of the day. Hoist the RC Flag on a halyard and give an airhorn blast before leaving the dock. Contact the Race Organizer to learn where he anticipates the leeward mark to be. Remember that he may not be able to hear you while underway in the Mark Set boat, so be sure to make multiple attempts. Follow the PRO’s directions as to where to drop anchor to establish the starting line.

Radio Communication

CYC Race Committees communicate on VHF Channel 69. The RC is encouraged, as a courtesy, to tell the fleets what is happening next, what start it is, what the courses are, which boats were over at the start, that the course is being shortened, if the RC is running behind schedule, etc. In short, the VHF should be used to make it clear what is going to happen next. Communication to competitors outside of the use of the VHF radio is otherwise discouraged with the exception of acknowledging boats checking in to race, boats withdrawing from a race, and specific instructions relating to changes in course or other RC actions that require a “hail” associated with that action.

On the Water Preparations

Tune your radio to VHF Channel 69 to stay in contact with the PRO and the Marks Crew.

The Mark Set boat is usually a Boston Whaler leased from Carlyle Sailing Association (CSA). The Mark Set crew will get marks and anchors from the storage shed at CSA and go out on the water to determine how to set up the racecourse. The method they use for doing this is the subject of another paper.

Often the Marks Crew will be one or two members of the crew of a boat that is racing that day. After they set up the course, they will bring the Whaler astern of the Signals Boat and tie it up. If your boat does not have a sturdy cleat astern, make some other provision. Note also that the Signal Boat’s anchor will have to hold the Signals Boat and the Marks boat. It is important to make fast to the bottom in anticipation of this. After the Marks Crew ties up, the boat they’re racing on will come alongside the Whaler and pick them up.

If at any time it becomes clear that the first warning signal of the day will not begin promptly at the scheduled time, this should be signaled by hoisting the Answering Pennant “AP” or “postpone” flag, and sounding two sounds. This should be done whatever else may be going on.

- Hang the course board from your lifelines on the port side of your boat, well aft, certainly never forward of the shrouds. This makes it most visible to the competitors. It has big holes in it – a sail tie works very well for this purpose.
- Get the compass heading from the Marks crew for the windward mark and post the heading on the board. This must be done before the start sequence begins.
- The PRO will select courses to be sailed and will instruct you to post the notices on the Course Board. For illustrative purposes, the remainder of this tutorial will presume three starting divisions.
- Get the signal flags laid out for use. The handles are marked with the name of the flag.
- After the Marks boat is secure, get your crew set. The Line Judge should sit at the mast, looking down the starting line. He should have the bullhorn at the ready. The Signalman should stand someplace on the Signal Boat where flags may be held in the “down” position and briskly raised at the appropriate time. On most boats, the stern is a great place for this. The Timekeeper should be in a position where he can communicate easily with the Signalman and see what he is doing. The Gunner should have an airhorn ready. If you have a second Signalman, he should always have the appropriate “next flag” in the sequence ready, and perhaps raise it at the proper time.
- When everyone is set, it is time to get the sequence underway.

TIME OF DAY TIMING

The easiest thing for most RC Timekeepers to do is to use Time of Day Timing. This method relies on an ordinary watch or clock that tells time to the second. You may use a GPS to get the most accurate time possible, but this is not necessary – any watch with a second hand or electronic watch will work just fine. It is recommended that the RC boat have two watches or clocks aboard in case one goes bad or is accidentally reset. The two should be synchronized as closely as possible. You might make a note of how many seconds difference there is between the two.

The way to make this work properly is to plan ahead. Some people find it easiest to have the race begin on a multiple of five minutes; 5, 10, 15 minutes after the hour, etc. but this isn't necessary. It is best to start a race exactly on a minute though: i.e. 11:02:00 is probably easier to deal with than 11:02:27. But strictly speaking, even this is not necessary so long as you time the sequence down to the second.

Pre-Start

Once the Mark Set crew is squared away, and the PRO says to proceed, signal the fleet that the sequence will start "soon". The minimum time meant by "soon" is one minute. The maximum time should be about three minutes.

The Recorder should fill out the top of the score sheet. It takes **at least** seven minutes to get a race underway in orderly and reliable fashion, so the Timekeeper should choose a starting time for the first division at least seven minutes in the future. Eight or nine minutes will usually work out better. Remember, just because you are sitting and "doing nothing" while signal flags fly, the competitors are maneuvering their boats, checking the wind, and otherwise preparing themselves. They will appreciate a deliberate pace.

If You Are On Time

The courtesy On-Station (yellow) flag should be flown for a minimum of one minute before being struck. It is OK to spend a bit longer than this, but don't fly the On-Station flag more than about five minutes or it loses its effectiveness as a signal to the fleet to get ready.

Strike the On-Station flag when you're ready to go. Announce on the bullhorn and on VHF Channel 69 that the sequence is about to start, and all divisions but the first should get clear of the line.

Then at least one minute after striking the yellow On-Station flag, you begin the five-minute starting sequence for the first fleet.

If You Are Under Postponement

The Answering Pennant or "postpone flag" takes the place of the yellow On-Station flag in this case. Presumably it has been flying for awhile.

Strike the AP, and make one sound. Announce on the bullhorn and on VHF Channel 69 that the sequence is about to start, and all divisions but the first should get clear of the line. Then at least one minute after striking the AP, you begin the five-minute starting sequence for the first fleet.

If There Will be No Racing Today

You may be advised by the PRO that there will be no racing today. This is usually due to weather. Fly code flag AP over code flag A, and make three sounds. Hail the fleet over VHF Channel 69 and the bullhorn advising of the situation. You should do this at least three times.

The Start

Besides the RRS, see the Signal Summary to understand the Starting Sequence. When a Division Flag is struck to signal its start, the Division Flag of the next division is simultaneously flown. This can be accomplished by one person, but it is very helpful to have two on the flags during the start sequence.

Unless there is some unusual circumstance, the next starting division's sequence will begin with the start of the previous division. This is not required, however. You may delay the next start for some reason; the usual case is a General Recall.

Individual Recall

An Individual Recall will be required for any boat(s) which start prematurely. The Line Judge should hail using the bullhorn or over VHF Channel 69 (or both) the sail number of each boat over early. The usual form is “123 Over Early! 456 Over Early!”

The Signaller should immediately hoist code flag “X” and make one sound. The Line Judge watches the OCS boats to see that each returns completely to the starting side of the line. As each boat returns, the Line Judge hails with the bullhorn in the form “123 Clear!” and the Signaller dips the code flag “X” to signal to her she is clear to restart, and re-raises it if there are more boats still to return. When the last boat is called clear by the Line Judge, the flag remains down.

But!!! In a rolling start sequence, Code flag “X” shall be struck one minute before the next division’s start even if there are still boats that have not restarted properly. In practice this means the Preparatory flag and the Recall flag are both struck at the same time: another good reason to have two people handling signal flags.

General Recall

If so many boats are over early that it is impossible to identify them individually, then a General Recall is required. The Line Judge makes this determination and hails with the bullhorn or over VHF Channel 69 (or both) “General Recall!” The Signaller raises the First Substitute flag, and two sounds are sounded.

This is now a bit of a fire drill. In a rolling start sequence, the First Substitute is struck one minute before the next division’s start. In practice this means the next division’s Preparatory flag and the General Recall flag are both struck at the same time: another good reason to have two people handling signal flags.

The recalled division goes “to the end of the line” – suppose that Division 1 suffers a General Recall. This means that Division 2 will start as normal, then Division 3, and so on, until the Division 1 comes up again.

At this point the RC has a choice: keep the timing sequence rolling, or postpone the recalled Division’s start. It may be wise to postpone when the recalled division is a high-performance division, and there are many boats on the racecourse. A five minute delay (in addition to the five minute starting sequence) may help prevent a traffic jam at the windward mark.

If You Choose Not To Postpone

Fly the recalled division’s Division Flag as if it were just another starting division in the rolling sequence, and proceed as normal. If there are three starting divisions and Division 1 had been recalled, then at the start of the race for Division 3, fly the Division 1 flag when you strike the Division 3 flag.

If You Choose to Postpone

Instead of flying the recalled division’s flag, fly the AP and sound two sounds. Postpone as long as seems reasonable, but five minutes should be plenty. Then pick up the starting sequence for the recalled division(s) as outlined in the Signal Summary.

In either case be sure to fly the correct Division flag, and record the actual start time for the recalled division(s) on the score sheet. This is very, very important. Make notes on the score sheet about what happened.

DURING THE RACE

The RC must be vigilant and watch that the prescribed time limits do not run out – see the sailing instructions for time limits. There are usually two time limits: time to reach the first mark, and time to complete the race. The time limit for each division is computed from *its own start time*.

- a) If the first boat of each fleet does not round the first mark within the time limit of her start, the RC shall abandon the race for that division.

- b) If the first boat of each division does not complete her course within the completion time limit, the RC shall abandon the race for that division.
- c) It may be possible to avoid abandoning a race by shortening the course. For example, if during the first lap it appears that the lead boat of a division would not complete the course within her time limit, a heads-up move would be to shorten.
- d) Although the sole and entire responsibility for the safety of each boat and crew, competitor and RC alike, belongs to each skipper, the PRO may choose to abandon a race for severe weather, or for weather otherwise unsuitable, or because some situation arose during the conduct of the race that makes it unfair, or for some other reason the PRO may have.
 - To abandon the race in progress and all further racing for the day, fly Code Flag N over Code Flag A and make three sounds. Hail the fleet over VHF Channel 69 and the bullhorn advising of the situation. You should do this at least three times.
 - To abandon the race in progress for all divisions recall the boats to the starting area for further instructions, fly Code Flag N by itself and make three sounds. Hail the fleet over VHF Channel 69 and the bullhorn advising of the situation. You should do this at least three times.
 - To abandon the race in progress for a particular division and recall only those boats to the starting area for further instructions, fly Code Flag N and the flag(s) of the affected division(s). Hail the fleet over VHF Channel 69 and the bullhorn advising of the situation. You should do this at least three times.

Shortening the Course

The course may be shortened for one or more fleets as necessary. See the Sailing Instructions for information about what it means to shorten a course for that series or regatta – it can vary depending on how the race is being managed.

A common meaning at CYC is “shorten to the finish”. This is done when the finish is downwind with the Signals Boat and the finish line just to leeward of the leeward mark. The Signals Boat will fly code flag “S” and periodically make two sounds as boats approach the leeward mark. The intent is for boats to sail across the finish line as if the whole course were sailed. If all divisions are to shorten, code flag “S” will sail by itself. If only certain divisions are to shorten, code flag “S” will fly along with the appropriate division flag(s).

This is not a “normal” procedure for shortening a racecourse but it makes race management simpler and does not require the use of a chase boat. Normally, a course change (length or direction) must be signaled before the first boat of a division to sail a changed course has begun the leg of the course to the next mark. This does require a chase boat. See the RRS to see what signals should be made by the chase boat.

FINISHING

ALWAYS RECORD FINISH TIMES FOR ALL BOATS CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

When “on station” and ready to record finishes, hoist the blue flag if it is not already up. See the Sailing Instructions for the event to understand whether or not it should be flying during the races.

The person sighting down the finish line must sit in-line with the mast of the RC boat.

When any part of a finishing boat, its rig or sails, in normal position, breaks the plane between the RC boat mast and the starting/finishing line “pin”, the Line Judge should hail with the bullhorn “Mark!” and then the finisher’s sail number.

The Timekeeper records in 24-hour format the time in hours, minutes and seconds when the word “mark” is spoken for each finishing boat. Record the boat’s sail number. It is often helpful

when finishing a tight fleet to start writing the hour and minute before the “Mark!” in order to make recording go quicker. Having more than one spotter is sometimes helpful.

- Watch for a boat flying the yellow 20% Scoring Penalty flag. Any boat taking this penalty should call it to your attention, but be on the lookout anyway, and record the fact on the score sheet. She should also inform you as to the identity of the other boat(s) involved in the incident.
- Watch for a boat flying a red protest flag. She should inform you on the water of her intent to file a protest, and the identity of the protested boat(s). Record this on the score sheet.

Subsequent Races

The Signals Chief should quickly coordinate with the PRO to start another race, or to decide that the day is done. The Sailing Instructions will specify a time after which no warning signal may be given, so this question may already be answered.

If the Signals Chief has noted a wind-shift that necessitates resetting the racecourse, he should notify the PRO and the Mark-Set Crew as soon as possible, as they may be able to begin this process prior to all the boats finishing. Follow the procedures above. Don't forget to change the course board before starting the sequence if it is to be changed!

AFTER THE RACING

If there will be no further racing that day, Display the AP over Code Flag A.

At your first convenience after docking, bring the race score sheets to John Huhn, Terry Burke or Greg Sacho. Go over the sheets to point out any protests, alternate penalties taken, or any anomalies.

Replace all the equipment in the RC storage locker in its proper place and **LOCK THE DOOR!**

Notify the Sail Fleet Captain of any missing or malfunctioning equipment.

The flags, bullhorn, course board and the rest are in the locker at WAM. If you don't know the combination, call me. The stuff seems to end up in a different place every week, so you may have to look around a bit. The bullhorn and some other stuff is supposed to be in a white canvas tote. The flags are supposed to be in a jib bag. The letters for the course board are in a metal briefcase style tool case.

I have been putting the blue shape up the main halyard to serve as the On Station flag. It has a light line attached to pull it down again. I use a couple sail ties to tie the course board to the lifelines astern. The course board should be on the starboard side of the boat and never ever the least bit forward of the shrouds. On the lifelines aft works very well.

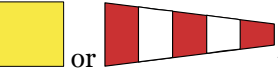
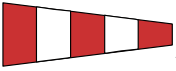

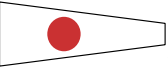
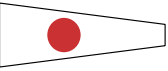

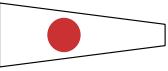
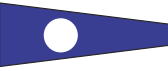
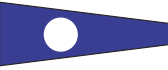

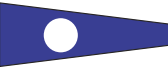
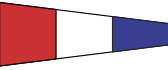
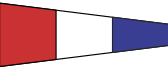

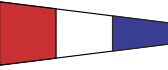
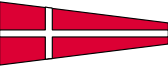
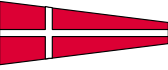

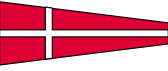

Display of the AP over Code Flag “A” at the end of a race indicates that racing is over for the day.

CARLYLE YACHT CLUB SIGNAL SUMMARY

If there is any conflict between this and the RRS in force, the RRS shall govern.


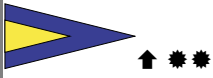
Starting Sequence

CYC starts races according to the sequence specified in RRS 26. The progress of the starting sequence is signaled to the competitors by means of flags. As a courtesy, a sound may accompany each step of the process; sounds are indicated by the * symbol. When the start of a division is signaled by striking its division flag, the next division's flag is immediately flown – it should look from a distance like the flags simply changed before our eyes. The example here covers four starting divisions. When the Around-the-Ends rule is in effect, Code Flag I will replace Code Flag P

Signal	Flags and Sounds	Meaning
On Station or AP	 or  *	The starting sequence for Division 1 will begin soon. All other boats should get clear of the starting area.
	* 	The starting sequence for Division 1 will begin in about one minute. All other boats should get clear of the starting area.
Numeral 1	 *	Division 1 will start in 5 minutes
Numeral 1 Code P	  *	Division 1 will start in 4 minutes
Numeral 1	 *	Division 1 will start in 1 minute
Numeral 2	 *	Division 1 starts, Division 2 will start in 5 minutes
Numeral 2 Code P	  *	Division 2 will start in 4 minutes
Numeral 2	 *	Division 2 will start in 1 minute
Numeral 2	 *	Division 2 starts Division 3 will start in 5 minutes
Numeral 2 Code P	  *	Division 3 will start in 4 minutes
Numeral 3	 *	Division 3 will start in 1 minute
Numeral 4	 *	Division 3 starts Division 4 will start in 5 minutes
Numeral 4 Code P	  *	Division 4 will start in 4 minutes
Numeral 4	 *	Division 4 will start in 1 minute
	* 	Division 4 starts

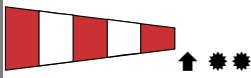
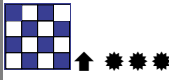
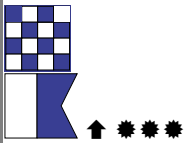
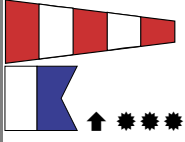
Recalls

Recall signals ought to be flow from the *front* of the Signals Boat.

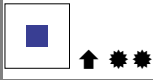

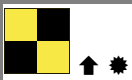

Signal	Flag and Sound	Meaning
Code Flag X		Individual Recall: one or more identifiable boats are recalled to start the race properly.
First Substitute		General Recall: all boats for this division are recalled to start the race properly.

Postponement, Abandonment, and Wrap-Up

Races may be postponed for a number of reasons. Races are usually abandoned because of poor racing conditions.

Signal	Flag and sound	Meaning
Answering Pennant		All races not yet started are postponed. The warning signal for the next division to start will be made one minute after this flag is struck.
Code flag N		All races that have been started are abandoned. Return to the starting area: there may be another race. The warning signal for the first division to start will be made one minute after this flag is struck.
Code flag N with code flag A		All races that have been started are abandoned. No more racing today.
AP with code flag A		No more racing today.

Other Signals

Signal	Flag and sound	Meaning
Code Flag S		The course has been shortened. Should be flown from the <i>front</i> of the Signals Boat.
Blue Flag		The RC is in position on the finish line. Boats not finishing must not cross the finish line.
Code Flag L		Come within hailing distance
Code Flag I		Used in place of Code Flag P when the Around-the-Ends rule is invoked

