

Blakeney Sailing Club Guidance notes for Race Officer (RO) and Event Organiser (EO)

These notes provide guidance for those concerned in the running of BSC Club Races, Open Meetings and Regattas. These notes are not a replacement for informed decisions made “on the day”, but will assist in the safe and orderly conduct of activities. The RO will have the final decision on the day. ROs & EOs should acquaint themselves with the BSC Sailing Instructions and Flotilla Sailing Rules.

1. PATROL CRAFT & COMMUNICATIONS

1.1 The use of Patrol Craft is Strongly Advised! There is no legal requirement to have a safety boat on the water. However, the club has a legal duty of care towards its members and race/event entrants, especially younger, less experienced and vulnerable participants. If provided, the Patrol Boat (PB) must have at least one competent person on board, preferably qualified to RYA Safety Boat standard but not essential. A list of approved PB helms will be kept in the Club Hut for inspection. There is no club requirement to have a second person on board a PB but this is best practice if numbers allow. The RO/EO has to decide if the crew is providing an adequate level of care, e.g. can they deal with an emergency capsized situation and get an injured party on board the PB.

1.2 The RO/EO must decide if the number of PB available and their competence is adequate to deal with the prevailing conditions on the day and the level of competence of the race/event entrants. If you consider that the PB cover is inadequate then ask for volunteers from the competitors or consider abandoning the event. It is good practice to use two craft if available. However, if you consider conditions are suitable you may decide that the launch to the Committee Boat (Lapwing) can also act as the PB. Where the Club employs a third party to provide a PB and helm it will be for the RO/EO to determine if the helm is sufficient on his/her own. Be aware if Youth Members or less experienced sailors are taking part that a second PB may be essential.

1.3 The prime purpose of the PB is to ensure, as much as possible, the safety of our Members. The RO has the overall control of PBs on the day and is therefore responsible for deciding if conditions are such that racing should be abandoned. However, they should base any decisions on discussion with PB crews. If more than one dinghy is in trouble, the PB crew will gather the crew aboard first before recovering the dinghies. The RO should coordinate rescue activities using Lapwing as the control centre. Similarly, a BSC PB would be expected to assist non-Members if they are in difficulty - and who may be taken to Lapwing until the event is over. Only use PB to take crews/boats ashore as a last resort as this reduces overall rescue capability.

1.4 RO/EOs are encouraged to hold the Short Range Certificate required for a VHF Radio. The PB crew carry portable club VHF Radios. Check with them that they are working before leaving shore and call them on the agreed channel on arriving at Lapwing. Ensure all users are familiar with the operating method and range of the radios. Consider carrying out a radio

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check with Humber Coastguard using one of the "open " channels 68, 69, 71, 72 & 78A and not 16 (enter the date/time of the radio check in the Log). If the radios are not working, either postpone/abandon the race, or if conditions are suitable, set a Course where the boats remain in sight, with the PB crew maintaining a visual watch from Lapwing.

1.5 RO/EO should carry a mobile phone as back-up to call the Emergency Services. Note that mobile phones may also have a better range than VHF radios.

1.6 The use of VHF radios should be restricted to essential communications only. Their primary use should be for communications between the ROs and PB crews. The use of radios during a race may also be interpreted as an infringement of Rule 41 (Outside Help). Notifying the PB/RO of retirement from an event is a valid use.

1.7 If anyone who is not a BSC member assists in organizing the racing (eg as assistant to the RO or patrol boat helm) the RO must ensure the non member(s) have completed a Temporary Membership Form. In this case it is acceptable to tick the "Honorary Day Member" box and waive payment.

2. WEATHER CONDITIONS

2.1 RO/EOs are advised to use their discretion and be prepared to abandon the race/event if the wind speed registered at the Carnser is close to or exceeding 25 mph. Do not be afraid to abandon an event from the Carnser - remember a Force 5 measured at the Dinghy Park is invariably a Force 6 in the Harbour!

2.2 Take into account the level of competence of the sailors, the type of dinghies in use, the wind strength, wind direction, sea state and tide to determine the type of course to set and whether to advise an individual(s) to take part or not. If in any doubt take the advice of other more experienced ROs. When Youth Members and less experienced are present set a course where competitors can be seen at all times from the Committee Boat.

2.3 A Risk Assessment form is available to assist RO/EOs in decision making on the day taking into account the above, which has been developed by experienced RO/ROs. Use is not mandatory but is recommended for less experienced RO/EOs. See appendix A

3. PERSONAL INJURY/EMERGENCIES

3.1 First Aid kits are kept on the PBs and Lapwing (as well as at the Club Hut). A thermal survival bag is kept on Lapwing and should be used if any person is believed to be exhibiting symptoms of shock or hypothermia. See appendix B

3.2 If a serious incident occurs where it becomes necessary to call Emergency Services using either a mobile phone should be used to contact the coastguard via 999 or 112 or VHF radio channel 16 (instructions for use of are kept in the hut, Lapwing and Patrol Boats). The Coastguard Radio Operator at Humber will take control of the situation and may instruct you

to move to another vhf channel to continue radio communications with them. The Race/Event should be abandoned as soon as communication has been established with the Coastguard.

3.3 Ensure a Club Officer is made aware of the situation as soon as is practicable. Refer any questions to a Club Officer. Contact next of kin – list kept in Club Hut for members and visitor’s details on Temporary membership/Open Meeting and Regatta entry forms.

4. DINGHIES & CREWS

4.1 Ensure you know how many dinghies commence a Race or Event and keep a Lap-by-Lap record - this will enable you to quickly spot a missing craft. If you are unable to account for a dinghy get a PB to locate it or determine if has retired and returned to Blakeney.

4.2 All dinghy crews, PB crews and those on Lapwing should wear an appropriate flotation device at all times. If you see a crew without one and about to leave the Carnser, politely insist they should wear one. DO NOT allow any dinghy to enter the race not complying.

4.3 If you consider a dinghy to be inappropriate for the conditions, for any reason, suggest that it may be better if they did not race. Leave the final decision to the dinghy crew themselves but make the PB crew aware of the situation.

4.4 Only BSC Members may enter BSC Events as helms and crews (except Open Events and Regattas). The RO Case holds an up-to-date list of members (extract from Year Book and update sheet). If necessary, a Temporary Membership Form must be completed.

4.5 Be especially vigilant if Youth Members or less experienced members are taking part. Know which boat(s) they are in and pay them frequent attention, before, during and after the race(s).

5. AT THE DINGHY PARK

5.1 On arrival check the following:

- Make sure the hut is opened, or you have a key/password.
- Hoist the Club burgee on the flagpole (and at the Cooke Posts for Bank Starts).
- Display new ‘Intention to Race Entry Form’ on Hut
- Find and check RO’s case and ensure Lapwing’s key is there.
- Ensure PB(s) crew are available, liaise with them.
- Complete Race Entry Sheets if possible before leaving the slip.

5.2 Youth Members (under 18 years of age) are subject to certain conditions before they are allowed to compete. The BSC Youth Policy published in the Yearbook lists the conditions. Youth Members are not permitted to race unless the parental consent form has been signed (check the list in RO case). Youth Members and less experienced helms are expected to

possess the skills (equivalent to RYA Youth Scheme level 3) necessary to be able to launch and sail a dinghy around a triangular course and to recover after a capsize, all in moderate conditions.

5.3 CARRY OUT RO/EO BRIEFING. Ideally this should take place for every event. It is not possible to do so for the Regattas but is essential for Open Events and where less skilled, less experienced or Youth Members are present. If the RO/EO is familiar with the entrants and their abilities, he/she may take the view a briefing is not necessary.

5.4 Before leaving shore check the following:

- Check the “Intention to Race”, “Intention to flotilla Sail” form to see if any helms have declared themselves to be less skilled or less experienced.
- Allow entrants sufficient time to get to Lapwing in time for the race to start at the scheduled time. Make sure boats start to leave as soon as there is sufficient water.
- Patrol boat(s) to be in the water and prepared to assist before the members set sail.
- Plan to be at Start (Lapwing/Posts) at least 20 minutes before scheduled start time.

6. LAPWING START

Summary of main duties/check list as follows:

- Hoist Club burgee.
- Check sound signals and radios.
- Work out Course - consult PB crews for advice if doubtful.
- Put up Course and number of laps, agree PB patrol areas and communications required.
- Use PB to lay Start Line/additional buoys - put up Orange Transit disc.
- Get all flags required ready, ensure helpers are aware of what is required (flags, sounds, dinghies over line etc.)
- Check timing clocks and back-ups work.
- Check boats starting against list - recheck each lap. Advise PBs of numbers.
- During the race, if conditions allow - check and if required pump Lapwings’ bilges.

7. LAPWING FINISH

Summary of main duties/check list as follows:

- At the end of the first (and subsequent) laps it helps to list the dinghies in the order of probable finish and their lap times. If possible split responsibilities for timing and recording.

- For the actual finish concentrate on recording the times. (If you miss a boat make as a last resort estimate time based on the closest finishers).
- After the race ends ensure all dinghies that started are accounted for – finished or retired.
- Take up all buoys you laid, including those for the start line.
- Stow all flags, Burgee, Transits, and Course Boards neatly.
- Place everything (including any rubbish etc.!) to be returned to the Dinghy Park in the PB.
- TURN RADIO OFF AND LOCK LAPWING.
- Check if any dinghies require a tow.

8. ON RETURN TO DINGHY PARK

Summary of main duties/check list as follows:

- Ensure all competitors have 'signed off' or are accounted for. Record retirements/disqualifications on the results sheet.
- Inform the Rear Commodore Sailing (or senior officer if not available) if any protests have been made. Only accept on a formal form within the required timescale (copies in hut).
- Work out provisional results if you are able and post in the Club hut noticeboard (optional).
- Give a copy of results sheet to the Rear Commodore Sailing (or the member responsible for results) for posting them on Sailwave to enable the final results to be produced. Ensure that the boat type (inc. rig for Lasers), numbers and finish times are legible.
- Make a note in Log of any equipment faults and inform Bosun. Ensure the log is also available to competitors and PB crew for their comments.
- Complete the PB Log/Accident Book after consulting with the PB helms. The RO/EO is responsible for investigating any accidents that did or could have resulted in injury.
- Take down the Club Burgee, ensure all equipment is in hut and lock door.

9. POST STARTS (Sim or Cooke Posts)/BANK STARTS (Regatta)

As SECTION 6 LAPWING START, ignoring Committee boat specific items. But note that for the Regatta the course is normally fixed - but decide rounding of Mark 1 (Port or Starboard). However, the RO may amend the course on the day.

10. POST FINISHES (Sim or Cooke Posts)

As SECTION 7 LAPWING FINISH, ignoring Committee boat specific items. The order dinghies cross the finish line for the Regatta events is the actual result.

11. OPEN RACES/REGATTAS

For all races where non-members are participating, ROs need to be particularly well briefed. The RO should have copies of BSC Sailing Instructions and appropriate entry forms available for visitors if required. Ensure that copies of Harbour Maps are also available. ROs must insist that all visitors sign-in on the entry form as it is essential that they accept the Sailing Instructions and comply with the insurance requirements. The requirements of the Youth Policy also need to be enforced.

12. RO TRAINING

ROs are encouraged to have attended the club training session when available and to have read this document. In the absence of any formal courses, members wishing to be ROs are encouraged to assist an experienced RO by performing the ARO (Assistant Race Officer) role. Please contact the club Principal Race Officer or Rear Commodore Sailing if you need training or would like to carry out the ARO role. First Aid training should also be considered for ROs.

13. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

RO/EOs should familiarise themselves with the Club Safeguarding Policy and ensure it is complied with by the Race Team and competitors/participants.

14. AND FINALLY

All organisers of Racing and other events to be aware that no matter how well drafted an exclusion clause may be, there are many circumstances in which it will be of little or no legal effect. There is no substitute for proper care and attention on the part of the organiser at all times, nor for proper insurance cover.

Appendix A

		BSC RACE RISK ASSESSMENT					
		UNCONTROLLABLE FACTORS					
ITEM	RISK VALUE	1 LOW RISK	5 LOW / MEDIUM	10 MEDIUM / HIGH	15 HIGH RISK	TODAY'S SCORES	GUIDE RISK SCORE
A	WIND SPEED MPH (Including Gusting)	0 - 9	10 - 16	17 - 24	25 - 30		
B	WATER TEMPERATURE	Warm Sep/Oct	Cool Jul/Aug	Chilly May/Jun	Cold Mar/Apr		
		SEMI-CONTROLLABLE FACTORS					
	RISK VALUE	1 LOW RISK	3 LOW / MEDIUM	5 MEDIUM / HIGH	7 HIGH RISK		
C	STANDARD OF SAILORS	Helm & Crew Competent	Helm - Competent Crew - Some Experience	Helm & Crew Some Experience	Helm & Crew Little Experience		VERY HIGH RISK 55 to 72
D	TYPE OF DINGHY/RIG	Slow & Stable	Medium Fast, but Stable	Fast, but Adjustable Sail Area	Fast & Large Sail Area		HIGH RISK 46 to 55
E	LOCAL KNOWLEDGE	Regular BSC Racers More than 2 Years	BSC Racing Members	Occasional Racers at Blakeney	Inexperienced Racers at Blakeney		MEDIUM HIGH RISK 36 to 45
		CONTROLLABLE FACTORS					
	RISK VALUE	1 LOW RISK	3 LOW / MEDIUM	5 MEDIUM / HIGH	7 HIGH RISK		
F	SAILING AREA	AROUND LAPWING	INNER HARBOUR AREA EXCLUDING PIT	INNER HARBOUR AREA INCLUDING PIT AREA	HARBOUR AREA TO BEYOND PIT		MEDIUM RISK 26 to 35
	(BUOY NUMBERING)	4 - 9	3 - 10	2 - 11	1 - 15		LOW MEDIUM RISK 16 to 25
G	RATIO OF PATROL BOATS TO DINGHIES	1 to 6	1 to 12	1 to 15	1 to 20+		LOW RISK 8 to 15
H	SAILING DURATION	1 Race up to 60 mins or 2 Races of 30 mins each	1st Race up to 45 mins and 2nd Race up to 30 mins	1st Race 45 to 60 mins and 2nd Race 30 to 45 mins	1st Race 60+ mins and 2nd Race 45+ mins		
	NB	Sailors can retire after Race 1	Sailors can retire after Race 1	Sailors can retire after Race 1	Sailors can retire after Race 1		
					TOTAL SCORE		
PLEASE REFER THE TOTAL SCORE TO THE RIGHT-HAND COLOUR CHART TO ASCERTAIN OVERALL RISK LEVEL							

NB WIND SPEED READING OF OVER 30mph SHOULD INDICATE THAT THE RACE BE CANCELLED, WITHOUT REFERRING TO ANY OTHER RISK FACTORS

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Appendix B

Sudden, unexpected immersion in cold water below 15°C is potentially dangerous. The coastal and inland waters of the UK remain cold all year round and a peak of drowning deaths often occurs in the summer, as the hot weather tempts people into the cold water. The effects of the cold water mean that even healthy individuals, who are good swimmers, can still drown within a short period of time, often only a few feet from the shore. Be aware of one minute – one degree rule. If the water is 10°C you can assume you have 10 minutes to get the individual out of the water. Rough handling of the individual in the rescue is dangerous, handle carefully, lift them out horizontally, wrap in space blankets to prevent further heat loss. Shield individual from cooling effect from wind, e.g. returning to shore in speeding Patrol Boats.