

Blakeney Sailing Club Sailing Instructions

The decision to sail in an organised club event is the responsibility of the competitor, based on their own judgement of ability and experience for the prevailing weather conditions. However, the Race Officer (RO) or Event Organiser (EO) decision is final as to whether the competitor can join in the event or not.

Risk Statement. Sailing is by its nature an unpredictable sport and therefore inherently involves an element of risk. By taking part in the event, each competitor agrees and acknowledges that:

- a. They are aware of the risk involved and accept responsibility for the exposure of themselves, their crew and their boat whilst taking part in the event.
- b. They are responsible for the safety of themselves, their crew, their boat and their other property whether afloat or ashore.
- c. They accept responsibility for any injury, damage or loss to the extent caused by their own actions or omissions.
- d. Their boat is in good order, equipped to sail in the event and they are fit to participate.
- e. The provision of a race management team, Patrol Boats (PB) and other officials does not relieve them of their own responsibilities.
- f. The provision of PB cover is limited to such assistance, particularly in extreme weather conditions, as can be practically provided in the circumstances.

Less confident or less skilled or less able sailors (regardless of age) should make themselves known to the RO.

Competitors who are Youth Members are subject to the conditions of the Club Youth Policy.

General

1. **Rules** - Races will be sailed under the current World Sailing Racing Rules of Sailing, the RYA Prescriptions (except where stated) and the RYA Racing Charter.
2. **Decision to race** - Rule 3 of the Racing Rules of Sailing states: "The responsibility for a boat's decision to participate in a race or to continue racing is hers alone."
3. **Race entry** - Competitors should complete the 'intention to race' form with printed legible name, boat class, sail number etc. on arrival at the Club Hut before going afloat. Late entries may also be taken on the water at the RO's discretion.
4. **Minimum entries** - For any race a minimum of 3 boats is required. Boats shall return to shore if this condition is not met as advised by the RO/PB.

5. **Starting line** - For committee boat (Lapwing) starts the start line will be between the 'S' buoy outer limit mark (yellow and blue buoy) and the red transit post on the Lapwing. Boats may not pass between the inner limit mark (white buoy) and Lapwing at any time after their preparatory signal. The inner limit mark can be ignored after the start. For starts in the Cut the start line will be between either the Sim or Cooke posts as advised by the RO. Any boat starting early must re-cross the line before restarting, avoiding other boats. Failure to do this will result in disqualification.
6. **Course** – For starts at Lapwing the course will be displayed on a board displayed on the transom indicating the mark sequence and direction of rounding in white numbers on a red (port) or green (starboard) background. The number of laps will be indicated using black letters on a white background. For starts in the Cut, the course will be displayed on a board next to the Club hut (and at the Sim or Cooke Posts at the discretion of the RO).
7. **Course Marks** – Marks of the course will consist of rigid yellow buoys with black numerals in the locations indicated on the Harbour Buoy Map. A movable 'X' buoy consisting of a yellow inflatable buoy marked with a black X may also be used. In addition, navigation beacons consisting of blue/yellow top mark/drum mounted on a pole and about 3 metres above the mud are also marks of the course, which indicate shallow water, and must be rounded on the channel/harbour side. For the 2026 season, buoy 11 has been removed, and an additional buoy, designated 'P', has been laid on the north side of the channel between buoys 1 and 2.

This is a trial for 2026 and as a result the published harbour maps HAVE NOT yet been changed this year to reflect this. If this proves successful, buoys will be renumbered in the harbour, and the map will be re-issued in future.
8. **Starting signal** – The start for classes will be on a 5-minute interval in accordance with Rule 26 of the Racing Rules of Sailing, with timing signals made by flags. Sound signals will also be given to draw attention to the flags. Boats whose preparatory signal has not been made shall keep clear of the starting area and of all boats whose preparatory signal has been made. Code Flag 'P' may be substituted by a black flag (see 'Recalls' below). A summary of the sequence and the meaning of the flags is given below for reference:

Time	Action	Sound Signal	Meaning
5 minutes	Class flag hoisted	One	Warning signal
4 minutes	Code Flag 'P' hoisted	One	Preparatory signal
1 minutes	Code Flag 'P' removed	One long	
0 minutes	Class flag removed	One	Starting signal

9. **Recalls** - Rule 29 of the Racing Rules of Sailing will apply. For individual recalls the class flag will remain at half-mast and one sound signal made (alternatively, the X Flag may be flown on Lapwing). This will remain in place for 2 minutes or until all boats have started correctly. If a large number of boats are over the line a general recall will be signaled by the hoisting of the First Substitute flag and two sound signals. The race sequence will be started again as detailed above (normally one minute later). If there are several recalls the RO may use a black flag and any boat starting early will be disqualified and not allowed to participate in any restart of that race.
10. **Postponement** - If the start of a race is postponed this will be signaled by flying of the Answering Pennant 'AP' flag and 2 sound signals. The race sequence will be started again one minute after the flag has been lowered signaling the end of the postponement and a single sound signal.
11. **Abandonment** - If a race is abandoned this will be signaled by flying of the 'N' flag and three sound signals. If all races are abandoned for the day the A' flag will be flown below the N' flag. All competitors should return to Blakeney if instructed to do so by the RO/PB.
12. **Shortened course** - In the event of a shortened course competitors will be notified by the flying the 'S' flag and two sound signals. This will normally be done as the leading boat rounds the last buoy of the course, unless the finish is at a PB (see below).
13. **Finish line** – For finishes at Lapwing, the finish line will be between the red transit post on the boat and outer limit mark (yellow and blue buoy 'S'). The inner limit (white buoy) between the Lapwing may be ignored. For finishes in the Cut, the finish line will be a line between either of the two Cooke or Sim posts as advised by the RO. In some circumstances a race may be finished between a patrol boat (displaying a blue flag) and a mark of the course. A single sound signal will be given for each boat crossing the finish line provided that the correct course has been sailed.
14. **Average time** - Slower boats may be finished before completing all the laps and their time based on average lap times at the discretion of the RO. They will be notified of this on crossing the finish line or by a PB. A single sound signal will be given provided that the correct course has been sailed.
15. **Time limit** - To be classed as a finisher a boat must complete the course within 1 hour after the first boat finishes or advised by the RO that they should retire from the race. They may be deemed to have finished, with their time based on average laps, at the discretion of the RO.
16. **Retirements** - Any boats retiring should report their intentions to the RO or PB crews. If this is not practicable then they should ensure that the RO is aware of the retirement on return to shore. Failure to inform the RO/PB of the intention to retire may result in disqualification.

17. **Protests** – In the event of an incident a Protest Form must be completed and handed to the RO as soon as possible at the end of racing. If both parties agree, the RYA Arbitration process may be used, held by a Club Rules Advisor (RA) who will determine and explain any rules that may have been broken. A boat in the wrong will then be invited to accept a Post Race Penalty (PRP) of 30%. If this is not accepted a full protest may be held. Alternatively, if no party wishes to protest, but instead they wish to learn from an incident then an Advisory hearing may be held with a RA who will explain any rules that may have been broken and who is in the wrong. A boat may as a result notify the RO that she chooses to accept a PRP or retire.
18. **Insurance** - All boats are required to hold adequate insurance and in particular to hold and to continue to hold insurance against third party claims - the sum of at least £3,000,000 arising from any one incident.
19. **Signing out** - Competitors should 'sign out' on return to shore by completing the form at the Club hut. The RO may also sign out the competitor at their discretion. Any boat not completing the course or having infringed the racing rules without taking a penalty should sign out as retired.
For Blakeney Regatta sign out is not required but participants must inform a race official when they have finished/retired.
20. **Safety** - Personal Flotation Devices (Rule 1.2) -each competitor is individually responsible for wearing a personal flotation device adequate for the conditions. Wet suits and dry suits are not deemed to be adequate buoyancy. Wet or dry suits should be worn by competitors, PB helms and crews from October 1st to May 31st.
21. **Outside Help** - Rule 41 of the Racing Rules of Sailing will not apply to boats in distress, including following a capsize, which may receive outside help from a Patrol Boat and continue racing, provided no advantage has been gained.

Race Signals

1. All race signals will accord with the Racing Rules of Sailing.
2. Signals ashore will be at the Club hut at the southern end of the dinghy park (and at the Sim or Cooke Posts, at the discretion of the RO).
3. The following principal class flags will be used:
 - a. Allcomers - No. 1 Pennant
 - b. Ladies Race – ‘L’ Flag
 - c. Allcomers Senior – ‘J’ Flag
 - d. Allcomers Junior – ‘O’ Flag
 - e. Laser and singlehanded allcomers - Laser Class Flag

Other class flags will be notified by the RO prior to the race if required.

Racing Notes.

1. Handicaps for class boats are based on the numbers as published on the club website. Any classes not included will be given the National PY number published by the RYA.
2. Series qualification will be based on 50% of the total number of races plus one (rounded down) giving the corresponding discards, as follows:
1-2 races, 0 discards; 3-4 races, 1 discard; 5-6 races -2 discards; 7-8 races, 3 discards etc.
3. A helm may only qualify with a single class of boat in a series (for the boat with the highest number of races). However, Laser (ILCA) helms will be permitted to sail with a smaller rig within a series but will be scored using the lowest PY handicap number (i.e. for the largest rig they use) for the series, and the RO is to be notified of this intent.
4. Members carrying out RO/PB duties, may claim “average points” based on their individual results for the rest of the series if requested (to be recorded by the RO). A maximum of two average points scores may be claimed for a single class of boat in any series (for the boat with the highest number of races).
5. Starting times may differ from the time advertised in the Yearbook, depending on the state of the tide.

The Blakeney Regatta Course.

The Blakeney Regatta Course may be used for races other than Regatta races. The start is a push from the preferred bank at the mouth of the Cut at the Cooke posts in order of handicap as shown in the Yearbook. The start for each class will be indicated by a sound signal from the RO on the bank. Boats within a class should line up in reverse sail number (oldest first). On very high tides there will be a flying start for each class at the mouth of the cut. The finish will be at the Sim posts (or at the Cooke post at the discretion of the RO). The racing rules will not apply until boats have left the bank. The course is as follows:

Course: 4 Port; 9 Starboard; 1 Starboard; 9 Port; 4 Starboard. Finish at Sim Posts or Cooke Posts as indicated or as directed by Race Officer. Under certain conditions buoy No.1 will be passed to port -this will be shown on the course board at the start.

The RO is empowered to amend the above course on the day.

Race Types

The race type will be indicated in the club sailing schedule in the Yearbook. The following is a summary of each race type for reference:

1. Flying start from Lapwing (Committee Boat) and finish at Lapwing.
2. Bank Start at Cooke Posts and finish at Sim or Cooke Posts.
3. Flying Start and finish from Cooke or Sim Posts.
4. Start at Lapwing and finish either Cooke or Sim Posts.
5. Flying Start from Cooke or Sim Posts and finish at Lapwing.

Note: For race types 3 and 5 boats may start in a time slot rather than a mass start at the discretion of the RO.

Changes for 2026

6. *Course – colours corrected to follow current practice.*
7. *Course Marks - 2026 Buoy 11 and 'P' situation explained.*
18. *Insurance – minimum 3rd Party cover increased to £3m.*
19. *Signing Out – Blakeney Regatta – finishers/retirees to inform a race official in lieu.*

Racing Signals – minor clarification of point (2)

Racing Notes – clarification of Laser (ILCA) rig qualification