





Race Committee Checklist




















By the
Oregon Corinthian Sailing Association (OCSA)
With commentary from the
Small Yacht Sailing Club of Oregon (SYSCO)

This checklist is not only for race captains but also for all other participants who want to increase their knowledge of race management.

1. PRE-RACE PREPARATION

- 1.1 Get organized. Call and confirm participation by committee members. Arrange a place for meeting and a time for departure. Allow sufficient time to arrive on course, establish Committee Boat station, and set race marks at least 20 minutes before the first warning signal.
- 1.2 Read and become familiar with all of Part 3 (Conduct of a Race), Part 5 (Rules 60.2 and 61.1b), and Part 7, (Rule 88) of the Racing Rules of Sailing. In addition, understand the OCSA Sailing Instructions and the Race Notice and supplemental instructions. Note any special protest procedures.
- 1.3 Review and determine the class starting order well before the race. Discretionary changes may be made prior to the first race in a series, but once established, the starting order may not be changed for remaining races of the series.
- 1.4 Confirm that the committee and mark boats are prepared and in compliance with Coast Guard regulations. Check the operational readiness of the stopwatch, horn, loudhailer, course board, and tape/video recorder. The Committee Boat should have at least 200 feet of anchor rode to adjust its position on station and a drogue to maintain position. Have the following flags available:

Class Flags		[SYSCO] Class Flags are not typically used. Classes or Fleets are assigned to a numeral flag.
RC		Distinguishes Race Committee Signal Boat from all other auxiliary race committee boats.
L	L 	Come within hail
Blue		Indicates that the race committee boat is on station at the finish line.
Orange		Line Flag: Used to define the starting and finishing line defined by the sailing instructions.



AP	AP 	Postponement: All races not started are postponed. AP over a numeral pennant 1 – 6: Postponement of 1 – 6 hours from the scheduled starting time.
P	P 	Preparatory Signal: This class will start in four minutes.
I	I 	Preparatory Signal: This call will start in four minutes. Rule (30.1) is in effect for this start. 30.1 Round-an-End Rule If flag “I” has been displayed, and any part of a boat’s hull, crew or equipment is on the course side of the starting line or its extensions during the minute before her starting signal, she shall thereafter sail from the course side across an extension to the pre-start side before starting.
X	X 	Individual Recall: one or more boats are recalled because they were on the course side of the starting line at the starting signal or during the one minute period of rule 30.1.
First Substitute	1st Sub 	General Recall: The class is recalled for a new start because there were unidentified boat on the course side at the starting signal or there are boats to which rule 30 applies, or there was an error in the start procedure.
S	S 	Shortened Course: Finish between the nearby mark and the staff displaying this flag.
M	M 	Mark Replacement: The object displaying this signal replaces a missing mark.
N	N 	Abandonment: All races not started are abandoned.
A	A 	Used in conjunction with the “N” to abandon all races for the day.
Y	Y 	All competitors are required to wear personal buoyancy.
Numerals 1 through 9	        	

- 1.x **[SYSCO]** It is recommended to have at least five people on board the race committee boat (RC) to help with setup and manage the race. SYSCO encourages the RC boat to be on station **30 minutes** before the first signal.

Roles include:

- Principal Race Officer (PRO). Chief executive of the race committee team. Makes the major race management decisions.
- Recorder. Identifies and records all boats starting and finishing, including competitors who do not complete the race.
- Line Sighter. Sights starting line to identify boats over early and tracks boats returning for a proper start. Sights finish line to determine order and moment of finish.
- Sounder. In charge of sound signals
- Timer. Calls the time sequence aloud so the start and finish can be properly run.
- Signaler. Signals information to competitors through visual signals from the race committee boat (flag handler, two people work well in this role).

2. RACE COMMITTEE BOAT PREPARATION

- 2.1 Note prevailing wind and river conditions on the way to the course. Consider preliminary courses and starting marks.
- 2.2 Establish Committee Boat station at the starting line. Set the starting line length equal to at least 1/2 boat length per boat in the largest class. Avoid stationing the Committee Boat in a navigation channel or directly downstream from the starting mark. Adjust the starting line to be perpendicular (square) to the prevailing wind direction.
- 2.3 Monitor VHF channel 16 and VHF channel 13 for traffic.
- 2.4 Raise an "RC" flag and position an "Orange" flag or marker on a staff or the mast. Set up the course board opposite the starting line for unrestricted visibility.  
- 2.5 Assign tasks: a scorer, timekeeper, flag handler, & line caller.
- 2.6 Minimize conversations with race participants. Most questions are addressed in the Racing Rules of Sailing, the OCSA Course Chart and Sailing Instructions, and the Race Notice & supplemental instructions. The Race Committee may be protested for providing information not available to all participants.
- [SYSCO]** Don't answer questions from a boat about the course or start sequences. If they do ask a question, tell them to stop by after the race and you can discuss it then. If the race committee gives information to one boat and not another, that can be grounds for a protest. We all have a tendency to want to be helpful; the RC just can't do that in fairness to all competitors.
- 2.7 Identify and keep an accurate record of all participating boats. Most boats will be pre-registered. Unregistered boats may start only upon submitting a completed race entry form and any required registration and late entry fees.
- [SYSCO]** No on-the-water entries will be accepted. Last-minute notification to the Race Captain by email or phone is acceptable.
- 2.8 Strive to make racing competitive and enjoyable for all. Recognize the Race Committee responsibilities and limit party activities.



3. RACE COURSE PREPARATION

- 3.1 Select courses consistent with prevailing wind direction, wind speed, performance capability of the competing boats, and available daylight hours. Consider setting separate courses for fast and slow classes to ensure timely completion. If wind conditions are not reliable, select a course easily shortened. Avoid courses where the leaders may cross the path of later starters.
- 3.2 Create an appropriate course using the marks or course identifiers designated on the OCSA Course Chart.
- 3.3 Coordinate course selection with the mark boat. Set the marks in the positions indicated on the OCSA Course Chart adjusted for wind & current conditions. Check each mark to ensure the anchor is set.
- 3.4 Display the course(s) and class starting order at least fifteen minutes before the scheduled first warning signal. Use numbers and letters at least 3 inches high with strokes at least 3/8 inches thick. Separate mark designations with bold dashes.



SYSCO Course Board	
1	23
2	22
3	22
4	22

SYSCO Course Board	
1	(S) 3
2	(S) 4
3	(S) 4
4	(S) 4



An (S) before a displayed course indicates that all marks shall be left to starboard.

- 3.5 Raise "L" (**Come within Hail**) flag to notify all participants of course(s) selected and starting order. L 
- 3.6 In case of a lost mark, display the "M" (**Mark**) flag on the mark boat. The mark boat shall remain in the position of the lost mark. M 

4. STARTING SEQUENCE

- 4.1 Observe the wind and commercial traffic conditions before the scheduled starting time. Be prepared to display either the Class flag (Warning) with one horn or the "AP" (Postponement) flag with two horns at the time indicated by the Race Notice. The "AP" flag must be lowered with one horn exactly one minute before displaying the next flag. 
- 4.2 Position the flag handler at the bow of the Committee Boat with unrestricted visibility. Avoid wearing apparel of the same color as the flags. Keep the recall flags available for immediate use.
- 4.3 Position the line caller under the "Orange" flag or marker at the staff or mast of the Committee Boat. Provide an unobstructed view of the starting mark. 
- 4.4 Position the scorer to confirm the number of starters and to record "DNS" and "OCS" boats.
- 4.5 Starting sequence events should occur as follows:

[SYSCO] With one minute to go before the first warning flag, bring down the "Come within Hail" flag with multiple short sounds of the horn. Sound is a courtesy, but it's considered a good practice locally. Racers key on that sound for one minute to get ready for the starting sequence to begin.

MINUTES TO GO	FLAG	HORN	EVENT
5	1  Up	1 blast	Warning, 1 sound
4	P  Up	1 blast	Preparatory, 1 sound
1	P  Down	1 blast	Prep flag down, 1 sound
0	1  Down	1 blast	Start, 1 sound
5	2  Up		Warning for 2nd start
4	P  Up	1 blast	Preparatory, 1 sound
1	P  Down	1 blast	Prep flag down, 1 sound
0	2  Down	1 blast	Start, 1 sound
5	3  Up		Warning for 3rd start
4	P  Up	1 blast	Preparatory, 1 sound
1	P  Down	1 blast	Prep flag down, 1 sound
0	3  Down	1 blast	Start, 1 sound

The warning signal for each succeeding class shall be made with or after the starting signal of the preceding class. Time between starts can be used to fix problems such as start lines, wind shifts, commercial traffic, etc. or you can do rolling starts or back to back starts.

5. RECALLS, POSTPONEMENTS AND ABANDONMENT

- 5.1 Raise the "X" (**Individual Recall**) flag with one horn when all premature starters are identifiable. Lower the flag after all premature starters have returned to the pre-start side of the line, or after 4 minutes from the starting signal, or one minute before any later starting signal, whichever is earlier. Boats that do not respond correctly shall be scored "OCS".



[SYSCO] OCS (On Course Side – Over Early)

- A boat has started when its sail or piece of equipment breaks the start line plane.
- Have the line sighter looking down the line to identify boats that might be over early.
- When you can individually identify all that start prematurely then hoist the **Individual Recall**.
- The Race Committee is not required, nor should the RC call out to the boat(s) that are over early.
- The **Individual Recall** flag stays up until the offending boat(s) have crossed back over the starting line completely or until the Prep Flag comes down for the next start.
- When an **OCS** boat(s) that did not restart correctly crosses the finish line, you do not acknowledge them. You score them as **OCS**.

- 5.2 Raise the "First Substitute" (**General Recall**) flag with two horns when you are not able to identify all premature starters, or when river traffic conditions would interfere with a fair start. Starting classes given a general recall are started following the last scheduled start.



[SYSCO] If you cannot identify the boats **OCS**, then consider a **General Recall**.

- If a General Recall is called, the fleet goes to the end of the starting sequence. For example, Fleet 2 has a General Recall and Fleet 5 is the last scheduled fleet to start. Fleet 2 will start after Fleet 5 has started.
- If everyone but one boat is over early, DO NOT hoist a General Recall. Don't penalize one boat because all the others got it wrong.
- DO NOT call a General Recall because only one boat was over early.

- 5.3 Raise the "AP" (**Postponement**) flag with two horns for the following conditions:



- Prevailing wind dies or makes a major shift in direction
- Timing sequence is lost
- Traffic interferes with the starting area
- Anything that would prevent safe, fair starting conditions

Boats that have started are not affected by the postponement. A postponement must be followed by a full starting sequence.

[SYSCO] Postponement



- If the RC gets confused with the time or flag movement, then hoist the postponement flag!! Most racers will know before the RC does that a mistake has occurred. The racers will grumble a lot less if the RC abandons and restarts the sequence, than if they continue on with a flawed start. If the RC continues, racers can protest the race committee over the offense.
- When you restart the sequence, it is the fleet that was being started at the time that begins the sequence. For example, if Fleet 3 was in their starting sequence when the postponement was called, then Fleet 3 will be first to start when the race committee is ready to restart.
- If you think commercial traffic may be in the start area at the start, POSTPONE the start. If you see commercial traffic closing in on the start area, contact them on Channel 13. Let them know what's going on. That may help you make your decision to proceed with or postpone the start.
- To restart the sequence, sound a horn with the drop of the postponement flag. One minute later the sequence begins with the hoisting of the appropriate class flag. The duration between the postponement and the start is up to the RC. Although not required, some like to start on the 5/10 minute mark (i.e. 6:40 or 6:45, and not 6:37 or 6:42, etc.).

- 5.4 Raise the "N" (**Abandonment**) flag over the "A" flag with three horns to abandon all races for the day. Generally, wait at least one and one-half hours before abandonment of races due to insufficient wind.



[SYSCO] If the wind dies, and there is little chance of the fleet finishing, consider abandoning the race. If one boat in a fleet finishes, the RC has to wait up to 2.5 hours for the rest of the fleet to attempt to finish.

6. RECORDING PROGRESS AND SHORTENED COURSES

- 6.1 Record every starting time. Keep track of starting times for starting classes given general recalls or postponements. Time limits are measured from the starting signal for each class.
- 6.2 Score registered boats that did not compete "**DNC**" or failed to start "**DNS**".
- 6.3 Observe the progress of all classes. Consider shortening the course(s) to any mark of the course(s) where it is necessary to provide enough time for a fair finish to each class.

7. FINISH LINE PREPARATION AND FINISHING

- 7.1 Set the finish line perpendicular (square) to the course from the previous mark. Position the Committee Boat with the "Orange" flag or marker on the course side of the finish mark (side of mark that would be rounded if race were to continue). The finish line should be at least half the length of the starting line. Be prepared to set dual finish lines if necessary for multiple or shortened courses.
- 7.2 To shorten the course, station the committee or mark boat on the course side of the selected mark. Set the finish line perpendicular to the course from the previous mark. Raise the "S" (**Shorten Course**) flag with two horns by itself for all remaining classes or over the start number flag for each designated class.



[SYSCO] Hoist the shorten course flag before any boat in the fleet has finished. If no class flags are hoisted with the shorten course flag, then it applies to all fleets. To shorten the course for starts

3, 4, and 5, the class flags for those starts and the shorten course flag must be flown together with the shorten course flag on top.

- 7.3 Assign someone to answer any questions, accept protest forms and record protest notifications.
- 7.4 Turn on the tape or video recorder before the first finish and leave it on until the last finish is complete. Position it to record times and boat numbers.
- 7.5 Record, in order, the sail number, boat name and exact time of each boat's finish. A boat finishes when any part of it (in normal position) crosses the finish line. Hail each boat by sail number as they finish. The Race Committee may calculate actual elapsed time and any handicaps later.
- 7.6 Recognize the first place boat in each class with one horn.
- 7.7 If one boat in a class finishes within the prescribed time limit, all boats in the class shall be scored. Score starting boats that retired before finishing or boats that failed to finish within the prescribed time limit "DNF".

7.x **[SYSCO] Finishing the Race**

- Have the "Timer" countdown times as boats near the finish. For example: 7:22:01, 02, 03, 04, etc.
- Have the "Line Sighter" identify boats finishing and in order of finish in advance if possible. This will help the "Recorder" documenting the finish.
- Have the "Line Sighter" on the loud hailer to call boats over (sail number or boat name).
- The first boat to finish in each fleet gets a horn blast.
- When a finish gets hectic, use boat name, number, owner or whatever works to get the order down. Since these are level fleets, time is less important than order.
- You want to capture the finish time in case there is a dispute regarding the order of finish. Knowing the finish time of each boat will be helpful.
- Review finish results as soon as possible to confirm that the finish order is correct.
- Fleet A and B MUST have times captured.
- A boat has finished when its sail or piece of equipment in its proper position breaks the finish line plane.

8. COMMERCIAL TRAFFIC

- 8.1 It is recommended that the Race Committee hail any commercial traffic on Channel 13 to inform them of the race in progress, and that the Race Committee monitors channel 13 for any communication from commercial traffic.