

May 1, 2007

Dear Skipper,

This guide is provided to assist you in the event that you have volunteered to perform Race Committee Duty. Doing race committee can be fun, but realistically, there is no getting around the fact that it's an anxiety producer for most crews doing it! There is usually an average of 60 boats with up to 350 people out there. They are counting on you to run a successful event.

While there is a generic formula common to doing race committee, there are also a great number of features particular to the EBYRA Wednesday night Series. **This season we are fortunate enough to have a permanent PRO, Primary Race Officer, Eben Hansmire.**

We hope this EBYRA Race Committee reference will help you anticipate your role in performing committee duty with the PRO. We appreciate your comments on the race committee experience. In the weeks preceding your committee duty, you are invited and encouraged to contact either PRO or club representative with any questions.. Don't wait until the committee boat is casting off the dock line to ask!

Lastly, no manual on the topic could ever be extensive and inclusive enough to cover every Race Committee situation or problem. **It is essential that you follow all directions from the PRO. Any race committee that refuses to follow instructions will not receive credit and may even be penalized with a DSQ.** On a positive note we have had many inexperienced committees, on the verge of making some errors, be coached through the problem and pull off a successful committee and a great night's racing.

All of us are sincerely optimistic that we can take a positive step forward in what is already recognized as a premier weekday night event in the Northeast.

Sincerely,

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RACE COMMITTEE STANDING POLICIES

The following is Committee Procedure Outline that has proven to produce the most successful committee. In addition to this guide it is essential that **all** of the Race Committee crew be familiar with the 2007 EBYRA Wednesday Night Circular.

WHO/WHEN/WHERE/WHAT

At least **FOUR** people and no more than **FIVE** are to be at Stuyvesant dock by 6:10. It is proper etiquette to bring food and drink for your crew and the PRO. Under no circumstances should you expect the skipper to provide food and drink!

You should bring:

- pencils rather than pens
- binoculars
- back up, portable VHF, if you have one
- Two synchronized digital watches set to the correct time. The watches' display should be easy to read in subdued light. Synchronize the watches **before** you come out. You may need help doing this. Do not wait until the last minute to do this!.

Take following from dock & locker box at Stuyvesant and return into the box after the boat docks.

- ◆ Halyard cross-piece holder.
- ◆ Blue bag with flags.
- ◆ "X" flag and "First Substitute" flag tied to poles.
- ◆ Course Board
- ◆ 2 milk crates with code letters.

The PRO will meet you at the dock with a white, canvas bag containing the following:

- ◆ Scratch sheet by sail number to check off boats before the start
- ◆ Scratch sheet by division to check off boats at their start
- ◆ Time sheets to record start and finish times and courses
- ◆ Course selection matrix for the evening
- ◆ Course circular
- ◆ Portable VHF
- ◆ Bag with Wind-O-Meter, Tape Recorder, Clipboard, watch, etc. Return this bag to scorer at CIYC

DEPARTURE

The committee boat must leave Stuyvesant Dock no later than 6:25 PM.

FIRST THINGS

On the ride out to the starting area, do the following:

- ◆ Have the boat's radio, or your portable VHF, or EBYRA's portable VHF handy and tuned to channel 72.
- ◆ Dump the bag containing the flags on deck. Find the "AP" Flag. Have it so you're ready, so if need be, you can quickly and smoothly postpone.
- ◆ Hook your Class flag and "prep" shape to the halyard standard, and check that they go up and down easily.

STARTING LINE LENGTH

The starting line length needs to be long enough so that:

- ◆ it is possible for all starters to have a reasonably good start
- ◆ It is easier, rather than harder, for racers to start clean without bumps and resulting protests
- ◆ There are greater odds of the committee boat remaining unscathed, and the owner sticking with us for the season

The line should be long enough so that the average boat, in the **fastest** division (Div 6), takes **no less** than a minute to reach from the committee boat to the pin. That means, that taking the wind at the start of the race into consideration, it should take a boat in division 6, that rates 90 to 100, sixty seconds to sail the line. On most nights, this translates into a line that is between 150 to 200 yards long. That's one-and-one-half to two football fields long. This is also dependent on weather and visibility at the time you set the line. You will not be setting a 200 yard line on Race 18 and 19 if it's dark and overcast. Also on light nights, lines can be a little shorter, but never less than the old standard of total length at least equal to the sum of the boat lengths in the largest division.

SQUARENESS OF LINE

As racers, we know that a line not square to the wind will create a favored end, which in turn results in a lead for certain boats as soon as the gun goes off;

- ◆ Strive to set a square line to the wind. It is a common mistake to think that the line has to, somehow, be square to the first mark. This is a mistake!
- ◆ Under no circumstances should the Committee boat be favored after the anchor is set. You would be increasing the odds of a collision with one of the starters
- ◆ Site the pin so that it is 90 degrees to your left when sighting a wooley held aloft. The wooley seldom lines up with the direction that the boat is pointing. Site 90 degrees from the wooley, NOT the boat. When using the stick with yarn-string to help determine wind direction, be careful of the up wash from the boats cabin or dodger bending the wind and giving a false woolly direction. If necessary, ask nearby boats to shoot the line to determine if the line is acceptable
- ◆ Be prepared to re-anchor if necessary. Sometimes the squareness of the line cannot be adjusted by letting line in or out. This is because the current set does not allow the boat to drift directly downwind
- ◆ Ultimately, it's the PRO's call on setting the line.

HANDOUTS

Absolutely no handouts of any kind are to be given out from the Committee boat. Do not allow boats to attempt to pass anything to the committee boat

COURSE SELECTION

Course selection is solely the responsibility of the PRO. A lot of time has gone into creating the course grids for different wind direction. These courses are based on wind direction, strength, and characteristics of each Division.

- ◆ Select the appropriate course grid based on the true wind direction, not necessarily where the boat is pointing.
- ◆ Determine the wind strength using the enclosed Wind-O-Meter.

- ◆ Look at the grid sheet, and find the wind strength range that best matches your readings from the Wind-O-Meter. Pick courses from the choices given. Refer to the sample Grid and explanation page on how to do this.
- ◆ Unfortunately, patterns in Eastchester Bay often result in substantial changes between 6:30 PM & 7:30 PM. Resist the temptation to load the cards early, and get it out of the way. **Once you load the cards, you are obligated to signal a postponement and course change if you change anything.** Instead, load course code letters into slots **when your about to start the sequence.**

POSTPONEMENT

Why would you have to postpone? There are some good reasons. Postpone if it's 7:00 and:

- ◆ There is less than 5 knots of wind
- ◆ The wind is not filled on the race course where you're sending the fleet. On some nights, it is very common to be able to sail all around the committee boat for a distance of a quarter mile, but yet have calm on the rest of the would be course. Don't even think of trying to start the divisions.
- ◆ There are hazardous conditions or commercial traffic on the start line
- ◆ You feel that you need to re-anchor or reset the line
- ◆ There is imminent possibility of a thunder storm & you want to give it time to pass
- ◆ You see a wind shift and are waiting for it to fill or stabilize so you can select proper courses.
- ◆ A postponement AFTER the Warning signal to effect a course change MUST be accompanied by a 'C' Flag, which is left flying until all Divisions have started.
- ◆ The wind has drastically changed direction and it would be a downwind start for the rest of the divisions. You cannot start subsequent divisions if you have had a wind shift greater than 40° You need to wait and see if it goes back or consider abandonment for the rest of the divisions
- ◆ You don't have it together and are not ready or organized; better to be correct & late than on time & wrong

How do you Postpone?

Blow **two horns**, and simultaneously raise the **Answering Pennant**. See rule book for other variations of Postponement.

How do I end a postponement period? This is a little tricky

- ◆ Drop the Answering Pennant and blow the horn, **BUT**
- ◆ You must end the postponement and restore the sequence on an **even minute** interval (e.g. 7:26:00 not 7:26:20)
- ◆ The division flag for the next starting division must go up exactly **1 minute** after the drop of the AP (e.g. 7:27:00), resuming timing sequence.

ABANDONMENT

What does it mean? It means you abandon all races started and any not started. This is an easy one. **Three horns and the "N" Flag over "A" flag does it!**

When will the PRO consider abandonment?

- ◆ It's 7:45 & there is not enough wind to start the sequence
- ◆ Lightning is in the immediate area of Race Course (Eastchester Bay, Little neck Bay or Hart island). Abandon if you feel Committee and boat are in danger.
- ◆ It is shortly after the start and the wind has shifted more than 40° and the beat is no longer a beat.

Can I abandon only the races that haven't started? Yes.

- ◆ To abandon all races not yet started, sound two horns and raise the Answering Pennant over the "A" flag

STARTS

- ◆ Check off boats before Warning on Sail Number List. See sample included
- ◆ Flag signals prevail. Refer to sailing instructions
- ◆ Record actual times divisions start from one of the two synchronized watches you intend to finish boats with
- ◆ Announce '**Division __ ALL CLEAR**' over channel 72, if there are no boats over early.
- ◆ Remember the 4 Minute rule that all yachts in a division must start within 4 minutes of their starting signal. Make a note of any boats that don't.

RECALLS

Use the **Individual recall** procedure if you can identify and announce all the PMS (premature starter) boats within 10 seconds. Flags & horns are mandatory in this procedure.

- ◆ **Prominently** display the 'X' flag, and sound one horn. Do not make the mistake of sounding a horn for each boat over. They will mistake this for a postponement or abandonment.
- ◆ Immediately hail on channel 72, the sail numbers or boat names of the PMS boats. In our event, boat names are less confusing than sail numbers, but use what's easiest and fastest. Keep repeating the "over-early's" until they return or until 4 minutes of the start of the next division.
- ◆ Announce "**sail # or boat name, clear**" when boats return fully across the line and are free to restart
- ◆ 'X' flag down after **all boats are clear** or when 4 minutes after the start has passed

Use the **General recall** procedure if you can't identify all the boats over early, **or more than 15 seconds has gone by before you are able to identify or announce the PMS boats.** Sometimes you have to use this when an error occurs, like realizing your way off on the timing. It goes like this:

- ◆ Raise the 'First Repeater' and sound two horns. Lower all division flags. Announce repeatedly on channel 72 that the division is recalled
- ◆ after the boats have returned or once 4 minutes have elapsed, drop the 'First Repeater'
- ◆ at 4 minutes, drop recalled 'start' shape and the 'First Repeater'
- ◆ at an even minute interval, raise the division flag for the recalled division. They are in their prep again and you will continue the sequence, starting them on their proper division flag
- ◆ Remember to record the new start time for this division and the revised start times for subsequent divisions. If you fail to do this the time-on-time results will be incorrect.

BEFORE THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Take a deep breath. You can relax and have a drink **after** you address the following three items:

Help the PRO reset the finish line

Organize crew and boat to facilitate recording the finishers

Consider if shortening the course is necessary because the wind is shutting down

FINISH LINE

Shorten line to 50 yards for finishing **as soon as the last division starts**. Do NOT switch sides with the pin.

SHORTEN COURSE

Only consider doing this, if none of the boats can finish and have **not** finished yet, and ALL OF THE DIVISIONS HAVE THE **SAME LAST TURNING MARK**. If this is necessary, fly the 'S' Flag and Finish signal - Shorten according to USSA Rules.

FINISHES

This can be intense. Use a pair of binoculars with a boat light. You'll be surprised how far away you can pick up the sail numbers

Designate who the spotter will be and who are the finish time recorders (you should have 2 recorders, both reading off the same watch in a comfortable space where they can hear the spotter but preferably **NOT** see the boats finishing

- ◆ START the TAPE RECORDER and have it near the person calling boats
- ◆ Record finishes with same starting watch
- ◆ Use regular time, not military and definitely NOT elapsed time
- ◆ Accurate finish times are of prime importance.
- ◆ **Missed yacht numbers can be corrected - missed times cannot be 'created'**
- ◆ Refer to the sample finish sheet

AFTER THE RACE

The PRO may need persons responsible for recording the times to help enter scores with scorer at City Island Yacht Club.

Lastly, without you this event could not take place. The EBYRA Board hopes you and your crew have enjoyed doing committee and have gained another perspective of the Racing Event.