

# SCALING DAM SAILING CLUB SAILING COMMITTEE

## RACING AT SCALING DAM

### SUMMARY & INTRODUCTION

This document has been put together with those who are new to racing in mind. It can be a bit daunting to enter your boat in your first race, but then to realise there are lots of requirements to be fulfilled any of which might result in your being disqualified – not the sort of encouragement you need. So it is intended to demystify racing – if it misses the mark let me know and we will change it to ensure your racing is as enjoyable as possible right from the start. (It has become rather a long document – apologies for that but hopefully helpful in spite of that).

### 1.0 RULES

The Club's racing is governed by two or three sets of rules which are designed to make the racing fair and enjoyable. At the highest level the RYA issues rules every 4 years (to coincide with the Olympic games). They embody all the rules a club needs to operate its programmes. If in doubt these rules apply\*.

The club is entitled to modify the RYA rules if necessary – eg we use a different start sequence from the RYA rule. These modifications are embodied in the Club's Sailing Instructions (SI's) to be found in the Club's Year Book. Read through the Club's SI's and buy either the full Racing Rules of Sailing or the simplified set in the booklet issued by the RYA – and then if you have a question – ask someone – or attend the Club's Rules Clinics. Don't be shy – many experienced sailors will acknowledge they don't know them all off by heart or how they all apply.

\* Strictly the International Sailing Federation (ISAF) issue the governing rules but in the UK the RYA manages things.

\*\* Also remember these notes have no status as rules – they are guidance notes which are hopefully accurate but cannot be quoted in a protest meeting (see below).

### 2.0 TYPES OF RACING

Club races fall into four types – Class Racing, Handicap Racing, Pursuit Racing and occasionally Team Racing.

2.1 **Class Racing** - Under these rules the same types of boat eg RS200's race together off scratch – ie the first over the line wins. Not many race series are organised in this way because the Club has too many types of boat for this to involve many members. However some classes extract their results from handicap races to produce a class race result.

2.2 **Handicap Racing** – This type of race allows many classes of boat to sail against each other. Each class has a handicap number called a Portsmouth Yardstick Number (PY Number) which represents the relative speed each class is capable of. The result of the race is calculated from the time each boat takes to complete the course by the formula

$$\text{Corrected time} = \frac{\text{Race time}}{\text{PYN}}$$

and the finish order based on lowest corrected time wins

- 2.3 **Pursuit Racing** – This is a type of handicap racing where the starting time of each class of boat is calculated from the PYN so that theoretically all boats will finish together. The finish is the order of the boats after a fixed race time usually about an hour – a committee boat will motor back through the fleet to get the finishing order so keep sailing until you are sure your position has been noted (note your position at the finish time too). Pursuit races can produce very exciting finishes.
- 2.4 **Team Races** – SDSC only runs one team race event – the Northumbrian Rosebowl series – when entries are put into teams of three and the results of all three count to the team result. The clever bit is that the teams are selected on the day so that each team is as equal to the others as possible – a trick made possible by means of personal handicaps which the Sailing Secretary produces from all racers previous results. A very popular series – especially when the weather obliges.
- 2.5 **Personal Handicaps** – Most of the club's races are handicap races which allows us to make use of the results of each race to establish and update each helm's personal handicap number (PHN). As helms improve their PHN gets lower. PHN's are used to calculate personal handicap results using a similar formula to the class handicap – viz

$$\text{Personal time} = \frac{\text{Corrected time}}{\text{PHN}}$$

The personal handicap results are assembled into personal handicap series results which are pretty good at rewarding the best improver in the series.

### 3.0 GETTING STARTED

At first being in a race seems quite daunting, especially if you start to worry about all the rules. Here's how to keep it really simple;

- a) At the start hang back a bit and let the experts fight to be first over the line. You can follow behind them
- b) Keep clear of 'packs' of boats jockeying for position
- c) Concentrate on a few simple rules
  - Overtaking boat keep clear
  - Starboard tack has priority
  - Upwind boat keeps clear.
- d) At the 'marks' there are special rules about who has priority. If in doubt hang back a little and give everyone space.
- e) Sail cautiously, eg leave plenty of space going round the mark, and try and avoid capsizing.
- e) Watch what other better sailors do, and learn from them

Later you can try improving each of these areas as you get more confident.

#### 4.0 SERIES AND QUALIFICATION

Races are organised into race series which run for either a weekend, half or all the season – as follows:

<b>Series</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Races to Qualify</b>
March Series	Two races each Sunday in March	50% of the races sailed
Novice Series	This series comprises two groups – Novices up to 3 years racing experience, Novices with more than 3 years experience. A Novice hasn't won any club trophy. The races are held at 1200hrs Sunday.	40% of races sailed.
Junior / Youth Series	Also held at 1200hrs Sunday for Juniors and Youths	40% of races sailed
Class Series	The clubs fleet is split into 3 starts for the Class Races – starting at 1400hrs most Sundays through the season. The starts are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fast Handicap – PYN <math>\geq</math> 1130</li> <li>• Lasers</li> <li>• Slow Handicap – PYN <math>&gt;</math> 1130</li> </ul> The GP14 results are extracted from the Fast Handicap results to produce a GP fleet result. Similarly the Streaker results are extracted from the Slow Handicap results.	Overall results – 40% of races sailed through the season. Spring and Autumn Series – 50% of the first and last half season's results
Millennium Series	A mass start for all classes of boat – start about 1545hrs most Sundays	40% of races sailed. Personal Handicap results also produced.
Wednesday Series	A mass start for all classes of boat – start about 1900hrs most Wednesdays	40% of races sailed. Personal Handicap results also produced.
Weekend Short Series	Anniversary Trophy Easter Egg Series Huntcliffe Trophy Regatta Series	2 out of 3 to count
Northumbrian Water Rosebowl Series	A Team event – 3 races held one Sunday. Teams selected on the day from those turning up using personal handicaps to ensure the performance of each team is as near the same as possible.	2 out of 3

<b>Series</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Races to Qualify</b>
Shell Trophy	A 5 race series held the last weekend of the season.	3 to count. The winner is the best result of those who have never won a major Club trophy.

The above is a summary – the detail is in the Sailing Instructions in the Year Book.

## 5.0 TROPHIES & PRIZES

In the back of the Year Book you will find a table detailing the Club's trophies and what they are awarded for. That table is repeated here.

<b>Trophy</b>	<b>In 2006 - to be awarded for:</b>
Thornton Trophy	Winner - Wednesday Night Handicap Series
Walworth Trophy	Winner - Wednesday Night Personal Handicap Series
Ellis Rosebowl	Leading Youth / Junior – Wednesday Night Series
Turner Townsend Rosebowl	Overall Winner - Fast Handicap Series
Scaling Bell	Overall Winner – Laser
Shuttleworth Wheel	Overall Winner - GP14/Enterprise
Aphrodite Trophy	Overall Winner – Streaker
Evening Gazette Cup	Overall Winner - Slow Handicap
Millennium Rosebowl	Overall Winner – Millennium Series
Anniversary Trophy	Winner - Anniversary Trophy
Colin Harrison Cup (RNLI Pennant)	Winner - RNLI Series
Commodore's Cup	Regatta - Overall Winner
Sport for All – Student	Regatta - Leading Youth
Walter Danby Cup	Regatta – Leading Junior
David Wright Master's Trophy	Regatta - Leading Master (over 50 years old)
Northumbrian Water Rosebowl	Northumbrian Water Ltd Team Racing Event. First three boat team (teams selected on the day)
Sport for All	Overall Winner in "Select" Series
Ladies Trophy	Leading Lady in "Select" Series

<b>Trophy</b>	<b>In 2006 - to be awarded for:</b>
Junior Plate	Leading Junior in Sunday 12 O'clock Series
Youth Plate	Leading Youth in Sunday 12 O'clock Series
Shell Trophy	Series Winner - First Major Trophy
Capsize Trophy	Nomination by Sailing Committee
Sailors' Sailor of the Year	Nomination arranged by the Sailing Committee
Commodore's Award	Commodore's Nomination

**NB** The "Select Series" combines all the results of the Sunday Short Series – Anniversary Trophy, Regatta, RNLI Series and Shell Trophy.

Prizes are also awarded to runners up in each of the series – the number of prizes depending on the number of qualifiers in the series – check out the Year Book Sailing Instructions for details.

#### **6.0 JOINING IN A RACE SERIES**

You don't have to sail in every race in a series to qualify – usually the hurdle is less than half of the races sailed. Furthermore probably less than half the entries in a series actually qualify – therefore simply by turning up and starting regularly you will beat half of the series entries! It also allows you to take your family holiday without penalising your sailing. The other benefit of turning up and sailing regularly is you will improve your sailing skills and your enjoyment of the sport increases in proportion too.

#### **7.0 SIGNING ON & OFF**

To signify you intend to sail in a race you **MUST** sign on the sheet pinned on the notice board before each race. You must give the boat class, number and helm's name – this allows the Race Officer to record your result of the race and include it in the appropriate series. **PLEASE WRITE CLEARLY** - failure to do so may jeopardise your results. After the race you **MUST** sign off to signify you have completed the course without infringing any rules, or have carried out your penalty for any rule infringements. The Race Officer is entitled to disqualify your results if you fail to comply with these requirements.

#### **8.0 STARTING SEQUENCES AND SIGNALS**

Races are controlled from the Race Office by the Race Officer operating the race computer which makes the lights and horn signals. Now remember that a signal is made by sight – ie the lights make the signal which is accompanied by a sound. The sound is **NOT** the signal because at a distance there can be a delay.

A single race is started by the following sequence:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Signal</b>	<b>Light</b>	<b>Sound</b>
Start minus 5 mins	Warning Signal	2 lights on	1 sound
Start minus 4 mins	Preparatory Signal	2 lights off (one light will come on about 5 seconds after the preparatory signal)	1 sound
Start Minus 1 min	One Minute Signal	A second light on (During the minute before the start you must return to the pre-start side of the line across one of the extensions of the start line – not through the start line)	1 sound
Start	Start Signal	2 lights off	1 sound

If there is a problem with the start a General Recall will be signalled – A blue and yellow triangular flag waved from the rescue boat plus 2 sound signals from the Race Office. After a short delay the above sequence starts again so watch the Race Office lights to restart the 5 minute count-down.

If only one or two boats are over the line at the start an Individual Restart will be signalled with a whistle and a blue cross flag – the numbers of offending boats will be called and they must return to restart round the end of the line.

**Multiple Starts** – On Sundays three starts are run consecutively. The One Minute Signal of the previous start is the Warning Signal for the next start – so:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Signal</b>	<b>Light</b>	<b>Sound</b>
Fast Handicap Start minus 5 mins	Warning Signal	2 lights on	1 sound
Fast Handicap Start minus 4 mins	Preparatory Signal	2 lights off (one light will come on about 5 seconds after the preparatory signal)	1 sound
Fast Handicap Start Minus 1 min	Start 1 One Minute Signal Start 2 Warning Signal	A second light on (During the minute before the start you must return to the pre-start side of the line across one of the extensions of the start line – not through the start line)	1 sound
Fast Handicap Start Laser Start minus 4 mins	Start 1 Start Signal Start 2 Preparatory Signal	2 lights off (one light will come on about 5 seconds after the preparatory signal)	1 sound
Laser Start Minus 1 min Slow Handicap Start minus 5 mins	Start 2 One Minute Signal Start 3 Warning Signal	A second light on (During the minute before the start you must return to the pre-start side of the line across one of the extensions of the start line – not through the start line)	1 sound

<b>Time</b>	<b>Signal</b>	<b>Light</b>	<b>Sound</b>
Laser Start Slow Handicap Start minus 4 mins	Start 2 Start Signal Start 3 Preparatory Signal	2 lights off (one light will come on about 5 seconds after the preparatory signal)	1 sound
Slow Handicap Start Minus 1 min	Start 3 One Minute Signal	A second light on (During the minute before the start you must return to the pre-start side of the line across one of the extensions of the start line – not through the start line)	1 sound
Slow Handicap Start	Start 3 Start Signal	2 lights off	1 sound

There are other signals – Postponement, Clear the water – I will leave you to read about those in the year book.

## **9.0 FISHERMAN**

We share the water with the fishermen and ask that you are considerate toward them. To help avoid conflict try to avoid sailing through lines, keep outside about 25m from the bank and don't engage in abusive interactions. We are entitled to the similar consideration. If you are not so treated let a committee member know together with as much detail about the incident as possible. Be aware that they are entitled to make similar reports to the warden. Attempts will be made to resolve the reported issues.

## **10.0 FINISHING & CLEARING THE LINE**

The race finishes when you cross the finishing line. Help the Race Officer by showing your sail number (if possible) and avoid sailing back through the line to the beach – avoid boats that are still racing and don't obstruct the Race Officers' view of the line by sailing between the Race Office and the Line.

## **11.0 SIGNING OFF**

When you come ashore remember to sign off on the race sheet – failure to do so will result in disqualification. You are signing to say you have completed the race without infringement, or having completed any penalties incurred. You have about 15 minutes after the last boat finishes to sign off. If you do not finish the race, e.g. give-up halfway through, you are deemed to have retired – you should help the race officer by signing-off with the word 'retired' or 'RTD' on the sign-on/off sheet

## **12.0 PARKING YOUR BOAT**

Try not to park on the beach with your sails up obstructing the finish line – have consideration for the Race Officers who are still managing the race for other sailors and they must have a clear view of the water to do so. The other reason for dropping your sails is the wind may change and blow it over while you are enjoying a cup of tea and a chat.

### **13.0 RACE OFFICE AND RESULTS**

Running the races requires concentration and disturbance really does not help. Try to contain your interest and let them do their work in peace – ie don't go in and ask for the results or anything else for that matter. The Race Office will calculate the results and post them as soon as they can.

### **14.0 INCIDENTS AND PROTESTS**

Racing in sailboats is a sport which is policed by the participants. The sort of incidents which occur quite often are:

- Port & Starboard – a starboard tack boat is obstructed by a port tack boat – port tack boat exonerates itself by doing a 720° turn (2 circles)
- Hitting a mark – the offender takes a 360° penalty (1 circle)
- Leaving insufficient room for the inside boat at a mark
- All efforts possible must be exercised to avoid hitting another boat.
- Penalty turns should be taken away from other boats to avoid further obstruction.

Disputes are, in the first instance, resolved by the interested parties, and one of those accepting they infringed a rule and taking a penalty voluntarily. The basis for resolving disputes is the rules so get to know them by getting a copy, attending Rules Clinics, talking to other sailors.

We have adopted the RYA's Racing Charter which allows entries to raise a query with the Race Committee to get an opinion on a situation which could not be resolved on the water. Therefore if you are not sure about the outcome of a dispute ask someone on the Sailing Committee to help you resolve the question.

If the parties cannot agree on the rights and wrongs either one can lodge a protest with the Race Officer and a committee will hear evidence and make a decision. The process is intended to resolve disputes without the players getting over-excited – so if you feel you are being denied justice fill in a protest form.

### **15.0 QUESTIONS**

If you have any further questions ask the author or anyone on the Sailing Committee for clarification. If you have a question – almost certainly others will also want to know the answer to the same question - so speak up.

Ian Holden  
Scaling Dam Sailing Club Sailing Secretary