



Race Officer's Guide

March 2026

Document Version Control

Version Issue	Main Changes
Feb 2016	3 minute start sequence for all racing. Launch Signal Change of fleet starting order One boat makes a fleet Finish on any boat Finish Signal No need to set laps
Dec 2016	Race Officer to ensure race sheets record all race team participants and any “no shows” (Para 37)
March 2017	Light signals Errors in start starting procedure Update 2017-2020
March 2019	Additional guidance notes added
April 2024	13 remove reference to orange triangle on main mast (replaced by orange paint). 14 anchor added 31 Individual recall added and two sound signals added to general recall 41 no klaxon/hooter required to be brought in. 46 Vice-commodore added. 49 changed to inner lobby.
April 2025	3 removed year numbers and replaced with ‘latest edition’ 18 added ‘for the race start sequence’ 20 flag pictures added 24 flag picture added 25 amended per RYA instructions and flag pictures added 28.1 added: starting line 35.1 added: back to back race start 37 added ‘See Timekeeper Guidance document.’ 46 names updated 72 names updated 74 club boat loan policy – updated to include sailing members

<p>March 2026</p>	<p>11 added true beat and fair start line 16 added the emergency channel is 16 18 Fleets in SailRace 22 SailRace tally on 28 Synchronise with the SailRace prestart duration 35.1 Synchronise with the SailRace prestart duration 37.2 New clause for SailRace download to Sailwave 38 Rig changes not allowed mid series 39 Sign the results printout 39.1 added – Press Report info 74 & 75 relocated to 49 and 50 49-73 Non-Race sailing moved to end of document and renumbered from 1.</p>
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If you have any comments or feedback on the content of this Guide please pass them on to any member of the Sailing Committee.

Introduction

1. Firstly, this guide has been designed to help you through the process of being a Race Officer at Bexhill Sailing Club – and thank you for taking on the role.
2. This guide is not intended to be a substitute for more formal Race Officer Training courses but instead contains additional guidance from the Sailing Committee on issues it considers to be best practice and which reflect the views of the majority of sailing members.
3. Please do not let this deter you from running the race and use this guide in conjunction with the Club's Sailing Instructions latest edition and the Racing Rules of Sailing latest edition.

Pre-race Checklist

4. A few days prior to the race the Race Officer or Officer of the Day is recommended to check Dutyman on-line to ensure there is a complete race team. Do not forget the bar duty where applicable.
5. Check the current wind speed and direction as soon as you arrive and monitor them.
6. Check that the front, back, lounge, lounge fire escape and boat house doors have all been unlocked.
7. Check that the hot water for showers has been turned on (both tanks located in the Gents' changing room).
8. Hoist the Red Ensign on the back staff and the Club Burgee on the main mast. Hoist Training Establishment etc flags to show the public that the club is active. Starting lights are not visible to passers-by.
9. Put the signing-on sheets out in the inner porch at least an hour before the race start time.
10. Ensure a suitable weather forecast is obtained and written or pinned on the race boards. NB the course size needs to suit the wind conditions and be large enough so that the fleets do not come through the start/finish line before all the fleets have started, even for short course racing.
11. Decide on your course and starting line with reference to the course diagrams book in the upper starter's box and complete the race boards. Where appropriate ensure that a windward/leeward leg is incorporated for the Asymmetric Fleet. The number of laps does not need to be specified (SI 9.2) . Ensure there is a 'true beat' in the course and a fair start line.
12. Complete the board including setting a suitable time limit. NB For back to back racing the time limit should be one hour, aiming for 45 minute races.
13. Put the Transit Pole out making sure the solid orange side is facing the start line.

14. Ensure the safety boat coxes and crews are briefed on the course size, starting line, number and position of buoys and their responsibilities on the water. Check that there is a wind indicator on the RIB laying the beat.
- 14.1 The Sailing Committee has determined that it is the Race Officer's decision as to how many Safety Boats are required to give adequate cover for the race (refer also to Para 27). If the Race Officer decides that only one Safety Boat is to be launched then refer to the document "BSC - Racing With a Single Patrol Boat" for procedure to be adopted. If only one rib is in use, that rib to carry a spare rope and anchor.
15. Switch the main station radio on and undertake radio checks with the safety boats once they have been moved away from the clubhouse (at least to the water's edge). We operate on Channel P4. Note: the emergency channel is 16.
16. Switch on all the power switches and the two-tone klaxons/hooters. Check they are working, and check the klaxons/hooters and all the lights are working.
17. Check which code race is scheduled.
18. We do not use flags for the race start sequence.
For Code A and B, use lights for three starts, unless you decide to amend the fleet starts, e.g. if there are not many boats.
For Code C, use lights as for first start only.
Let your Timekeeper know which fleet starts you have chosen so they can amend SailRace (if using)
19. For Code X, refer to the specific sailing instructions.
20. It is usually prudent to attach flags **AP** & **N** in case they are needed unexpectedly.

AP:



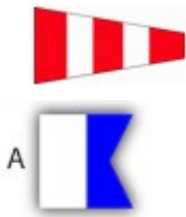
30 Minutes before the race

21. Collect signing on sheets and check the numbers of entries for each fleet. There need be only one boat entered to qualify for each fleet start. The Race Officer has discretion to combine fleet starts (SI 6.5).
22. Ensure the timekeepers transfer the competitors from the signing on sheet(s) onto the timekeeping sheet(s), putting them into fleet groups (as this makes things a lot easier).
If using SailRace, ensure the competitors and duty officers are correctly tallied on by your timekeeper.
23. Switch on the clock in the upper starter's box ready for the 3 minute count downs for all races.

24. If you are going to need to make a postponement you will need to display flag AP and make two sound signals with the klaxons/hooters. To end the postponement remove the flag and making one sound signal, exactly one minute after doing this, you must go into the start sequence.



25. If you need to abandon the race before it starts, first consider if a postponement would be more suitable. If not then you will need to display flag AP over flag A and make two sound signals which means "Races not started are postponed. No more racing today."



If a race has started and has to be abandoned, fly flag N over flag A and make three sound signals. This means "All races in progress are abandoned. No more racing today."



26. Being mindful of any sailors who may be travelling some distance to the club to sail, the abandonment decision ideally should not be made until 30 minutes before the scheduled race time, at the earliest.
27. The minimum number of boats required to justify running a race is 4 (single or double handed). Subject always to any safety or weather considerations, the Sailing Committee has decided that a race should be run if at least 4 boats have signed on and are willing to race. See also Note 21.
28. Five minutes before you want to begin the start sequence, you may make the "Launch Signal" (2 sounds and 2 red lights for 30 seconds, as in rule SI 6.5 RRS 26) or as stated in the notice of race or sailing instructions. You may wish to synchronise this with the SailRace prestart duration.

28.1 Starting Line

The starting line is the extension of an imaginary line drawn from the flagstaff of the clubhouse and a "transit pole" on the beach and bounded by an outer limit buoy and possibly an inner limit buoy. These buoys may not necessarily be on the starting line.

29. Start Procedure for all racing:-

Time	Title	Visual Signals	Sounds
3 mins before 1 st start:	Warning	Blue light on, 3 white lights	1 sound
2 min " " "	Preparatory	2 white lights	1 sound
1 min " " "	1 Minute	1 white light	1 sound
First start, and		Blue light off, and	
3 mins before 2 nd start:	Start/Warning	Amber light on, 3 white lights	1 sound
2 min " " "	Preparatory	2 white lights	1 sound
1 min " " "	1 Minute	1 white light	1 sound
Second start, and		Amber light off, and	
3 mins before 3 rd start:	Start/Warning	Green light on, 3 white lights	1 sound
2 min " " "	Preparatory	2 white lights	1 sound
1 min " " "	1 Minute	1 white light	1 sound
Third start:	Start	Green light off. 0 white lights	1 sound

30. If there are further starts then repeat Blue light on and 3 lights on and sound signal, and follow the same procedure.

If there is an error in the starting procedure, you can signal a postponement and start the whole process again one minute after lowering flag AP. After the start, if there has been an error, you can abandon the race (flag N and three sounds) and start the whole process again one minute after lowering flag N.

31. **Individual Recalls** (SI 12.1 RRS 29.1): Individual recalls will be in accordance with rule 29.1, except that the visual signal will be one red light instead of flag X with one sound. The light will be displayed until the hull of each such boat has completely crossed to the pre-start side of the line. If it applies, the red light will be displayed no later than four minutes after the starting signal or one minute before any later starting signal, whichever is the earliest.

General Recalls will be in accordance with rule 29.2 except that the visual signal will be two red lights set instead of flag "First Substitute", and two sound signals and that the **recalled class will start three minutes after the last scheduled start. Succeeding fleets will start in accordance with the original sequence.**

32. At a suitably quiet moment, the team in the box is allowed to relax with a hot drink. The Galley will serve the whole race team one hot drink each without charge.

33. During the race you need to ensure that all boats are correctly timed as they cross the start/finish line. The time keepers should record the time when you call the boat type and sail number followed by 'mark' as it crosses the line.

34. Monitor how long each fleet is taking to do each lap and use this to estimate when to end the race. Races should last about 60 minutes, or 45 minutes for back-to-back racing.

35. You may finish the race on ANY boat from the leader to the back-marker in any fleet. You can make the decision as to which boat to finish on, depending on how slow boats are being caught or lapped by faster boats. When the chosen boat is between the last mark and the

finish line you need to make the “Finish Signal” of two red lights and two sound signals (SI 14.2). Once you have made that signal, all boats in all fleets will finish irrespective of how many laps they have done. This means that the race lasts a similar length of time for all boats, no boat is left to complete a long lonely final lap. It gives a quicker re-start for back-to-back races, and allows people to be ashore sooner after the finish.

35.1 The first race in a back-to-back race is finished as para 35, then raise Flag AP and give 2 hoots. Prior to the second race, review with the Safety boat Cox whether the course requires amending. When the course is deemed suitable for the next race, lower the AP flag and give 1 hoot, then 1 minute later commence the start sequence (para 29) for the second race. You may wish to ask your Timekeeper to synchronise this with the 60 second SailRace prestart duration.

After the race:

36. All competitors have 30 minutes to sign off after the last boat in their fleet has finished.

37.1 **Paper & Pen method:** See Timekeeper Guidance document. The results need to be entered onto the Sailwave package on the computer, ensuring the corrected times (allowing for staggered starts) have first been worked out. Check that at least one member of your race team is conversant with using Sailwave; failing that seek assistance from a Flag Officer. There are laminated instructions next to the Sailwave computer. Remember that a large fleet (especially in the first race of a series) will require more time for entry. Ensure that boats are entered into their correct fleet.

37.2 **SailRace method:** The Timekeeper shall be download the results from SailRace to a CSV file on the Google Drive and import the file into Sailwave. Any amendments to times, laps or codes can be made in Sailwave before printing. There is an instructions folder with step-by-step guidance which is kept in the Lower Starters Box.

37A. Check that the race sheets correctly record the names of every participant in the race team (all RIB crews, timekeepers, race officer and any assistants) and every sailor (even any DNS or those jollyng). This is to ensure that we record all participants which helps the Club show compliance with the requirements of CASC.

37B. If there were any “no shows” - i.e. anyone who did not turn up to do a duty as scheduled in Dutyman – then send an email to dutyman@bexhillsailing.club and the “offender” will be asked to volunteer for another duty later in the season to ensure that all members do their fair share.

38. Sailing Instructions 6.1.vi. If a boat changes its' rig configuration during a series such that it races with a different PY number, then it will be scored as a separate boat.

39. Once you are satisfied with the results, sign them, then make sure two copies of the results sheets are printed off and that the result is uploaded to the Club website. One copy should be displayed in the downstairs lobby and one copy left in the Lower Starters Box.

- 39.1 Please contact the Press Officer (currently Rachel Wynn 07961 829691) by Monday lunchtime to note any interesting or unusual aspects of the race that could be included in the next press report.
40. All flags need to be put away in the correct places, including the Red Ensign and club burgee (unless there is to be further racing).
41. All switches, including the main radio, shall be switched off in the upper starter's box, and the outer door locked.
42. Bring in the transit pole and make sure that the sailors have put away winch ropes, foot switches etc. (unless there is to be further racing).
43. Once all the safety boats are ashore then check with the safety boats coxes that they have switched off the boat radios, removed fuel tanks to the Ramp Store and closed and secured the boathouse roller shutter and closed and locked the door between the boathouse and the downstairs lobby.
44. Any handheld radios that have been used should be dried off and put back on charge.
45. Check with safety boat coxes that there were no faults with the safety boats. If there were, make sure it is recorded on the faults board in the boathouse. Serious faults (e.g. radio or engine not working or boat unseaworthy then a Flag Office should be alerted).
46. If there were any issues with the upper or lower starters box and their resources, report them to the appropriate member of the sailing committee (currently Simon Ludkin and Rachel Wynn).
47. Check that the hot water for showers has been turned off (unless there is to be further racing that day).
48. Either ensure that all the doors are locked and the club house is secure before you leave or that you have arranged for someone else to be responsible for doing it (and that they have the correct keys with them).

Club Boat Loan Policy – Race Officer Responsibilities

49. Race Officers should be aware of the Club Boat Loan Policy – which states that Club boats can be signed out by authorised persons (see Club Boat Loan Book) to sail training students, Cadets and sailing members when the Wind Guru WRF9km wind speed forecast (accessible with a password) for the duration of the race is 14 mph or below and is also subject to suitable sea conditions and the competence of the helm. Please see the board by the back door. Priority shall be given to sail training students after completion of the RYA Level 1 / 2 course.
50. However, if the Windguru pro WRF9 forecast is not accurate at the time of setting the club boat board, it is blowing a force 3 or less and it is a steady or falling forecast for the sailing session, two members who can sign out club boats can agree to say “Yes” and both sign the board. They should inform the race officer of this decision and request that the Race Officer use the RIB coxes to instruct the novices in club boats to go ashore if the conditions worsen during the race.

Suggested Course Layouts

Suggested Course Layout Diagrams are available in Upper Starters Box.

Non-Race Sailing:

This is a new concept, introduced in 2013 in response to requests from sailors for sailing with safety boat cover in a non-race setting. As Officer of the Day you are responsible for the organisation and safety of the session, as you would be for a normal race.

1. Signing on sheets are put out at least half an hour before the published start time in the inner lobby.
2. 50. You should hold a briefing for sailors and the RIB crews before they go afloat as this is a new concept and there will probably be queries. Be sure to tell sailors what is expected of them with regard to the designated sailing area and that safety boat cover may not be available outside of it. Note that Non-Race sessions may be scheduled to run alongside race coaching or training events - if so check with the trainers as to an agreed segregation of sailing areas and ensure all sailors are aware.
3. The time published in the Sailing Programme should be when the safety boats are launched.
4. A suitable weather forecast is obtained and written or pinned on the race board
5. The Red Ensign is flown on the back staff and the Club Burgee is flown on the main mast.
6. The sailing time for boats should be restricted to one and a half hours.
7. Ensure the two safety boat coxes and crews are briefed on their responsibilities on the water
8. Switch the main station radio on and undertake radio checks with the safety boats
9. Switch on the two-tone klaxons/hooters and check they are working, and check all the lights are working
10. Two outer limit buoys should be laid to clearly delineate the sailing area and 2 or 3 additional buoys should be laid for boats to sail around, which is drawn on the race board to inform the helms.
11. During the session you will need to keep a watch over the sailing area, you may find it helpful to carry a hand held radio rather than have to stay in the upper starter's box.
12. Display two white lights with two sound signals on the klaxons/hooters to warn that in 30 minutes the RIBs will be coming ashore. RIBs should ensure that they approach each boat on the water to alert them of the impending end of the session.
13. 3 hoots and 2 red lights should be used to indicate the conclusion of sailing and withdrawal of safety boat cover.

14. The safety boat coxes need to remind anyone sailing a club boat that they must go ashore when the safety boats go in. Other helms may choose to stay afloat but the RIB crews should make sure that they understand that they are responsible for their own safety.
15. Once landed, check with the RIB crews that any boat not ashore has indicated their intention to stay out and free sail.
16. All others should sign-off to indicate that they have come ashore.
17. If sailing needs to be abandoned the normal procedure should be followed from the upper starter's box, which would be to display flag N over A and make three sound signals on the klaxons/hooters.

At the end of the session:

18. Remind the helms to sign off once they come ashore.
19. All flags need to be put away in the correct places, including the Red Ensign and club burgee (unless there is to be further racing).
20. The main radio needs to be switched off in the upper starter's box and all the hand held radios switched off and put back on to charge.
21. Make sure that the sailors have put away winch ropes etc. (unless there is to be further racing)
22. Once all the safety boats are ashore then check with the safety boat coxes that they have switched off the boat radios, removed fuel tanks to the Ramp Store and closed and secured the boathouse roller shutter and closed and locked the door between the boathouse and the downstairs lobby.
23. Check with safety boat coxes that there were no faults with the safety boats. If there were, make sure it is recorded on the faults board in the boathouse. Serious faults (e.g. radio or engine not working or boat unseaworthy) then a Flag Officer should be alerted.
24. If there were any issues with the upper or lower starters box and their resources, report them to the appropriate member of the Sailing Committee (currently Simon Ludkin and Rachel Wynn).
25. Either ensure that all the doors are locked and the club house is secure before you leave or that you have arranged for someone else to be responsible for doing it and that they have the correct keys with them.