

CLUB RACING AT DRAYCOTE

The Club holds races every Sunday, one in the morning, one in the afternoon. There is also a race on Wednesday evening in the summer months. They are a great way to get out on the water and practice your skills, but if you have not done any club racing before, it may seem a bit daunting. Have no fear, here is everything you need to know...

Before you go on the water

Arrive in time. Give yourself plenty of time to rig your boat and get changed. The start sequence (more about this later) starts at 11.00am for the morning race and 1.15 for the afternoon.

Ensure you have the right kit on. Wrap up warm if it is going to be a cold day. Put on sun cream if it is sunny.

Make sure your boat is all sorted before you go out on the water- don't let a silly little tangle in a rope ruin your race!

Make sure you know where all the club race marks are. You can get a waterproof map for your boat from the shop. You can write on this with a chinagraph pencil so you do not need to remember the course. You will find out which marks you are racing round later.

***Top Tip:** If you get a new pencil, cut it in half to make 2 short pencils. Now one will fit in a pocket more easily. Sharpen both ends so if one end breaks, you still have something to write with!*

Sign On. There are signing on sheets under the balcony at the front of the club house. Find the correct sheet and sign on with:

- Class (e.g. Topper 4.2. Don't forget to say which rig you are using if there are choices for your boat)
- Sail number
- Name

Look at the lake to see where the race is starting from. The race is started from a committee boat (a white powerboat with a cabin on). The club has 2. If there is a special event on with visiting boats coming to race, both boats may be on the water. Make sure you can know which one is for club racing and where it is. Launch in plenty of time it may take a while to sail to the committee boat.

On the water

As you sail to the start, check everything is working OK. If you have a spinnaker, launch it to check it goes up and comes down OK and has no twists. Now is the time to fix a problem, not during the race!

When you arrive at the committee boat the course is displayed on a board on the starboard side of the boat. Each mark is displayed on a red or green background It might look something like this:



If it is red, pass the mark so it is to port (on your left). If it green, pass the mark so it is to starboard (on your right)

In this example:

1. sail to yellow (this is a yellow inflatable mark which is often, but not always, used as the first mark of the course. It's not on the map as it is moved for each race) and pass it on your left.
2. then sail to club mark M, pass it on your left
3. sail to D, pass it on your right
4. sail to OL, pass it on your left
5. sail to T, pass it on your left.
6. on every lap, pass through the start and finish line (the GATE)
7. Repeat!

If you arrive early, the race officer who is running the racing may still be planning the course so if the course is not displayed, it soon will be.

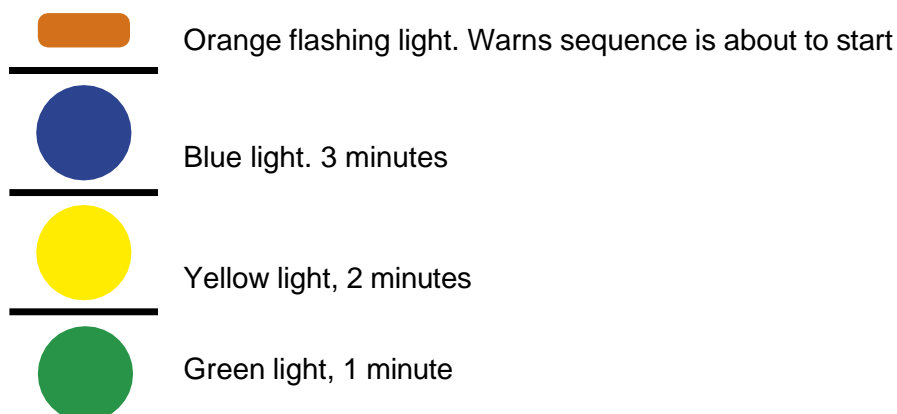
Top Tip: Write the course down! If you think you can remember it, that is OK, but it is always better to write it down. For the course above, it might look like this: **Yel M D OL T**
Note that D is underlined to show it is to starboard- different sailors may use their own system for writing down the course- whatever suits you best, there are no rules about this!

The start line will be between an orange pole on the committee boat and an orange mark with a flag on. Normally, the Committee boat will be at the starboard (right) end of the line.

The first leg of the course is normally up-wind, so you can expect to be beating to the first mark from the start line. If the first mark is Yellow, have a look for it as it is positioned by one of our rescue boats for each race. The yellow mark is a large cylinder. There are some smaller round yellow marks that are used to mark shallow areas when the water is low. Do not mistake these for the yellow race mark! Occasionally, the yellow mark may be used elsewhere in the course.

Let's get ready to race!

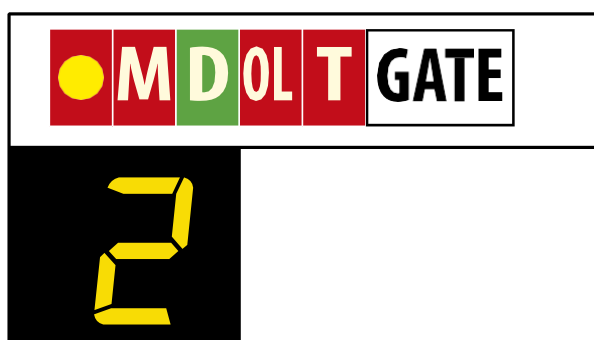
The Start Sequence. We use a system of lights and horns to start club racing. The race officer will press a button on the committee boat to start and a computer then runs the sequence. The lights are on a pole on the port side of the committee boat near the back. They look like this:



When the sequence starts, this is what happens:

- 4 minutes.** There is a horn. The orange lights at the top flash. Only shown before start 1.
- 3 minutes.** There is a horn. The Blue light comes on. Orange stops flashing.
- 2 minutes.** There is a horn. The yellow light comes on. Blue turns off.
- 1 minute.** There is a horn. The Green light comes on. Blue turns off.
- 0 Minutes. The first start.** There is a horn. Green goes off. Blue comes back on- 3 minutes for the next start.

The Blue/yellow/green sequence repeats for each start. There is a yellow digital number on the side of the committee boat underneath the course. This is the number of the next start:



Different boats go on different starts:

Sunday AM	Sunday PM	Wednesdays (summer)
1. Fireball	1. Fireball	1. PY1100 + below (Fireballs)
2. Flying Fifteen	2. Flying Fifteen	2. Flying Fifteen
3. ILCA/Laser	3. Menagerie	3. ILCA/Laser
4. Menagerie (inc Solos)	(inc Solos, ILCA, Aeros)	4. PY 1101 + above (Aeros)
5. Aeros		

Top Tip: Before your start, remember other boats are starting and make sure you do not get in their way, especially in the last minute before their start. It can be busy near the committee boat before the start, so watch out for other boats and remember the rules!

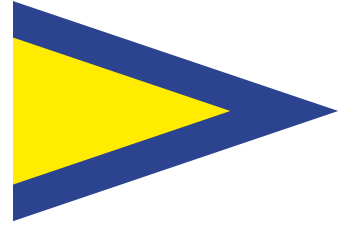
The Start

The start line is between the orange pole on the committee boat and the orange buoy with a flag on at the other end. Your boat must be behind this line at the start.

If the race officer sees a boat that is over the line at the start, there will be an **extra hoot** and a flag X will be shown on a pole:



If you think you were over, you must go back and re-cross the start line. The race officer may call your number out, but he does not have to. This is called an **individual recall**. When anyone who was over has re-crossed the line, the flag will be taken down.



If there are a lot of boats over, there will be **2 extra hoots** and a 3rd Substitute flag will be shown:

In this case the recalled fleet must be re-started. The start sequence continues, and all other starts go as they should, then the fleet that must re-start goes after everyone else.

This is called a **General Recall**

The Race

Now that you have started, sail the course that you wrote down earlier. You must follow all the rules as you sail around the racecourse. Check the Club Racing page on the website for an overview of these.

On each lap you must pass through the Gate (the start and finish line) next to the committee boat. This is where the race officer counts your laps. Keep sailing as fast as you can! You may do several laps. The race runs on time (around 1 hour), not laps, so you are not told how many laps to do before the start.

The finish

When it is time to finish the race, “**shorten course**” is signaled from the committee boat using the same lights used at the start of the race. This happens as the first boat to be finished passes the mark before the finish line so that they have some warning they are about to finish:

- There are 2 hoots on the horn,
- The letters S and C flash on the committee boat where the start number was displayed
- The blue light comes on and the yellow light flashes.

All boats that then pass through the gate are finished. The first boat gets a hoot on the horn. Other boats may not get a hoot, but if the lights are flashing, you have finished.

Top tip: *As you finish, it is always nice to say thank you to the race officers in the committee boat!*

When you have finished, return to shore

If something broke on your boat so you came ashore early, put your details on to the Retirement sheet by the signing-on sheets.

Mission accomplished. Race completed!

Some extra things to know:

If you are racing with the Menagerie start, you are sailing on handicap against every other boat on the start. The handicap makes an adjustment to your race time depending upon how fast or slow your boat is. This means that just because they may be in front of you on the water, you may actually be beating a faster boat! In handicap racing, you need to go as fast as you can all the time, so keep concentrating!

Race results are posted on the Club website. This is done by volunteers, so may take a few days to appear after a race.

Get a racing watch. There are some great sailing watches that can help you start as they count you down to the start and work with most popular start sequences, including ours. They are waterproof and have big buttons so can easily be used when wearing gloves.

Crewing for a more experienced sailor is a great way to find out about racing. Ask around, you may find someone you can crew for in a 2 person boat.

Ask a more experienced sailor for tips. Pop into the bar after racing and you'll find someone willing to help and advice.

Helping in the committee boat is another great way to learn about racing. All race officers are club members. If you race and are over 16, you will have to do a race officer duty each year.

Keep practicing! Nothing beats time on water to hone your skills. The more you sail, the faster you will be!

These instructions are specific to our club racing. Other special events at our own club may be different and if you are visiting another club, they will be different too.