

Safety: See advice on wind strength (p 2), the risk statement in the NoR and the Safety Briefing page.

- 1. In circumstances where racing is inadvisable** cancel or abandon racing. Advice may be sought from the Flag Officers, Racing Secretary, fleet captains or experienced skippers. You may decide to cancel racing at the club, or out in the Committee Boat.
- 2. If there is a cruise ship in harbour ring the Harbour Office before 1700 to enquire when leaving. Follow appendix 4.** Dart Harbour Navigation Authority 07968 839846 or VHF Ch11
- 3. Personal Buoyancy.** In Force 5 and above fly Flag Y (Personal Buoyancy must be worn). Keelboat sailors and BRAVO crew are required to wear personal buoyancy at all times. All crews are encouraged to wear Personal Buoyancy at all times.
- 4. Select the course** from the choice in the Courses section of the Sailing Programme. **The only change for 2026 is the introduction of a GATE (always at Homestone) to make shortening course easier. It may mean moving the CB soon after the start.** Follow the wind and class advice. Go out and check wind/tide. Only make up a course if really necessary, keep it simple, write it down, check it, allow for shorten course, broadcast several times over VHF always reading it.
- 5. Contact Froward Point on VHF 65** if manned (flag flying) to inform we are racing.
- 6. Start the race** using the Starting Sequence on the sheet supplied. Record all starters and any OCS. **If you are shorthanded flag signals may be omitted.**
- 7. Finish the race and record finishing times** on the Recorder Sheet provided. Recording lap times to use if no one finishes is wise.
- 8. Return the results sheets** to the Sailing Office. Complete and return a result sheet even if the race is abandoned, cancelled or there are no finishers (see 7 above).
- 9. Calculate the results** on the computer. Help is available if needed from John Milsom, Mike Mackie or Norman DoidgeSee appendix 3
- 10. Announce the results** in the main bar as soon as possible after the race.
- 11. Return the equipment** to the Sailing Office. Replace VHF radios in their chargers. If there are any defects or missing items please leave a note with the results sheet, reset the alarm and lock the sailing office door (coded door lock). Door Code is ****5, alarm code ***0 to unset, ***0FULL to set. Melinda, RCS or RS will tell you what numbers *** represent.

Before the Start

Check the electric hooter and have the air horn to hand. If a sound signal is not made, then the visual signal counts. Remember to keep the radio ON TRANSMIT as you sound the hooter.

Position the CB with a mark (or tetrahedral) to give a start, square to the wind and a length of 150-200 metres. That is longer than you think. Give bias if one end is favoured by the tide.

Allocate Jobs - Prepare Flags: - on poles (may omit if short-handed).

Signal the Course. Announce the course on VHF preferably at least 15 minutes before the first start and, at the absolute latest, before the Preparatory signal.

Starting Sequence

Prepare Start sheet – and then cross off each minute.

Use the time from 18:00 (on a Wednesday Evening) until 1826 to check everything: Flags and hooter, OCS flag, boats over line, clock, weather, other vessels. Write down adjusted times if racing deferred for any reason.

VHF Radio: Give a time check at 18:10 and announce the course over VHF. So - **Warn everyone 1 minute before announcements so they are ready.** Give VHF countdown before each signal.

Standard timing is 1 min, 30 secs, 20 secs. 10, 5,4,3,2,1 Go

During the last minute, warn potential OCS boats that they may be over the line.

Errors: time -If you get it badly wrong, then fly AP with 2 hoots. Rewrite times on start sheet. Remove the AP with one hoot one minute before the new warning signal. A minor error can be corrected, perhaps with a call over VHF Radio.

The Finish

The start and finish is between the mainmast of the committee boat and the adjacent mark and from the direction of the last mark (ie NEVER a hook finish).

Move the CB soon after the start if needed. (Ledge to Homestone, angle it to allow for boats coming from different marks, or simply to shorten the line (not too much if it is a gate).

Record both lap times and finishing times for all yachts as a sequential list as they round and as they cross the finish line.

Shortening Course: Target race length is approx. 55 mins for the first boat, 75 mins for the last. If first lap is slow, the fleet has spread out too much or the wind is fading, consider shortening.

Fly the S Flag with the appropriate Class flags (or just S flag if all Classes shortened) with two hoots as the leading boat begins the last leg. You can shorten course by motoring out to any mark and anchoring (watch depth). Don't be late for the first boat finishing. Check the direction that the boats will approach from and try and get the line as square on as possible. If only one Class is shortened this may involve a compromise or a move. **Better than losing a race is to tell boats to take their time at a specified mark.**
Time Limits. See *Time Limits* in the sailing programme.

Abandoning a race. Hoist flag N, three hoots and broadcast on VHF Channel M1 (Ch 37)

Do not return to the river until ALL boats are known to be safely across the finish and under power into the river. *"Count them all out and count them all back in."*

Problems

Poor Visibility and Approaching Weather. Cancel all racing if visibility is less than the width of the river at the start line. Take a look to windward to see what is coming before making your decisions.

Strong Winds. Check the shipping forecast and inshore waters forecast (weather.metoffice.gov.uk or app/website of your choice) and NCI Froward Point Live Weather. Froward Point tel: 07976 505649.

If you have any doubts at all, please contact the Racing Secretary or Rear Commodore Sailing who will make an overall decision.

An approximate guide (based on wind **gust** forecast) would be:

- **Above 17kn** Personal Buoyancy must be worn (Flag Y).
- **17kn to 22kn** Consider moving Class 3 and/or Class 2 to the river.
- **22-30kn** Class 2 & 3 in the river, Class 1 at sea using E/F courses with self-timing.

Communication for Class 1 is transferred to VHF Ch 77.

- **30 to 33kn** All classes in the river
- **Above 33kn** Abandon all racing.
- **Sea Condition** Offshore winds may allow racing at sea in stronger winds, onshore conditions may require the opposite

Communication when a boat is in trouble. If a boat appears to be in trouble, contact on VHF (Ch 37 or 16) if possible and other boats that may be able to assist. If appropriate alert the coastguard (VHF Ch 16 or 67, Pan Pan if urgent, Mayday Relay if life in danger) or mobile phone (dial 999 and ask for Coastguard). Keep the club informed as they may be able to help or coordinate reception of any casualty.

Appendix 1 Equipment List

Toolbox, check has the following:	You will also need
Race Officer Summary	2 clocks (kept near office window to update)
<i>Changes to the Sailing Instructions, if any</i>	Battery Hooter on bosun's worktop on charge
Sailing Programme, Courses Sheet	Two Portable VHF radio, Set to Ch 37 (M1)
Racing Rules of Sailing,	Committee Boat Flag Poles (Orange, 1,2,3,X, P, S, AP, 1 st Sub)
Results Recording Sheets and Pens	Flag Mast
Spare Air Hooter and pump (test it)	Orange Tetra Buoy and ground tackle
Binoculars (essential for sail numbers)	Safety Briefing card
Note: Course boards no longer used	A mobile phone

Appendix 2 Team Organisation

Role	Responsibilities at Start	Responsibilities at Finish
Race Officer	Overall controller Makes VHF announcements Calls OCS boats on Start Line	Overall controller Makes VHF announcements Calls 'Now' as boats finish Operates hooter
Time Keeper	Initiates all time-critical activities Operates hooter	Initiates all time-critical activities Backup recorder Reads time as boats finish
Recorders	Completes Start and Finish Sheets Records all boats on racecourse Records any Did not starts, OCS, Retirements	Records all finish times against sail numbers
Sail No. Spotter	In charge of flags	Feeds sail numbers of finishing boats to recorders

Useful Telephone Numbers

Rear Commodore Sailing (Rosemary Tomison)	07976 687921	
Race Office/Committee Boat	VHF 37 (M1 on some sets)	
Corinthian Racing	VHF 72	
Class 1 on separate courses	VHF 77	
RDYC Main Office	01803 752496	
RDYC Bar	01803 752272	
Falmouth Coastguard	01326 317575 or 999	VHF 16 (Usually answered by Solent)
RDYC Sailing Office	01803 752704	
Froward Point NCI	07976 505649	VHF 65

Appendix 3 Racing in the river

Racing in the river is appropriate when there is wind (usually a southerly sea breeze) in the lower part of the river and no wind in the Range or at sea. It may also be appropriate in heavy weather and rough seas for Class 2 and 3, sometimes for all classes.

1. The following has been agreed with the HM.
2. **Ferries**
No racing thorough the ferry tracks. Boats must keep clear of the ferries at all times. This is especially important prior to the start.
3. **River Officer** Dart Harbour Navigation Authority 07968 839846 or VHF Ch11
Contact the duty River Officer to inform him and agree that racing will take place in the river. If there is a ship movement scheduled, reconsider racing outside (NOT in The Range), cancel racing, or postpone the start but do not lay any marks until the ship has sailed.
4. **Fog**
No racing in restricted visibility (if you cannot see clearly across the river then cancel or abandon).
5. **Heavy Weather**
If conditions are suitable Class 1 may race in the range. The RO nominates a boat to choose a course fair to all entrants starting and finishing on the BP line. The chosen CB should inform the Class 1 fleet on VHF 37 of an alternative channel (usually VHF 77) to be used for Class 1. Boats self-time their finish and report it on the Racing WhatsApp.
6. **Light Weather, Spinnakers**
In light weather (wind less than 10 knots) all classes may use spinnakers. In heavy winds only Squibs may use spinnakers. The Race Officer will inform the fleet and his word is final.
7. **No Wind**
If the wind proves too light for boats to stem the tide the RO should abandon (if started, checkerboard flag N, 3 hoots) or postpone the race. (AP (before the start, red and white stripes) and 2 hoots. It may be restarted.
8. **Start Line**
Start Line is the Club Line, the transit of the Southerly side of the Flagpole on the terrace and the southernmost Pile supporting the pontoon. In some situations, a Committee Boat may be used.
9. **Windward and Leeward Marks**
The Windward (southerly) mark should be laid well North of the Castles and out of the main fairway. The leeward mark should be South of the start line and on the edge of the fairway. An EMPTY mooring buoy may be used, and carefully identified to the fleet.
10. **On Course Side at start**
Boats OCS at the start or in the last minute before their start shall not return to the prestart side of the course. A 2 minute should be applied to her finish time without a hearing (NoR 1.2).

If you think a boat was deliberately OCS to gain advantage d/w a member of racing committee and consider DSQ (boat is able to claim redress, which results in a hearing)
11. **IRPCS**
Racers should give way to vessels under power entering the river on the East side of the river. This in effect means tacking clear of the trots leaving about a 10m gap to allow a motor boat to pass. Room to tack at an obstruction is legitimate to achieve this.

Appendix 4 Racing when Cruise Ship movements are taking place. (New)

The number of cruise ships and super yachts mooring in the River Dart is increasing

When a cruise ship is moored in the river:

Ring the harbour office to check if it is leaving and what time.

Dart Harbour Navigation Authority 07968 839846 or VHF Ch11

Cruise ships leaving at 18:00

Remind yachts by VHF Ch37 to keep clear of the fairway until the ship has cleared to river and take care crossing the fairway.

Do not anchor the CB in the fairway, or wait until the ship has left.

Plan for a possible delay in sailing (only 15 minutes would change the situation).

Cruise Ships leaving 18:15 or later.

The RO should consider setting a course to the west of the entrance. The set of courses below offer courses for all wind direction using only Buoys H, RDYC1, RDYC2, Y and in some cases Tetrahedral laid mark. Not all courses offer a decent first windward beat. Have a backup course in mind if ship does leave in time.

Courses out of the Fairway

For use on the (increasing) occasions when Cruise ships leave at 19:00 on a Wednesday.

Of current A & B courses only A6, B6, and A9 courses using H, 1 and 2 can be used.

Z1 SW Start at H 1p 2p [Hp] 1p finish at H

Z2 S Start at H 2s 1s [Hp] 2s finish at H

Z3 SE Start at Y Hs 1p 2p [Hp] 1p2p finish at H
v short semi windward beat after start

Z4 E Start at H 2s 1s Hs 1s [Hs] 1s finish at H

reaching start

OR Z4a E Start T 1p 2p Tp 1p Tp 1p Finish at H

T laid due S of H and due E of 1. Extra line needed.

Z5 NE Start at H Ys Hs 2s 1s [Hs] 1s finish at H

v short semi windward beat after start

In heavy swell any course could be altered to leave Hp and finish (self timed) on BP Line assuming ship has left by then.

Z6 N Start at H Yp 1p 2p [Hp] 2p finish at H Same as B6

Z7 NW Start at H 2s 1s 2s 1s finish at H Same as B7

Z8 W Start at H 1p 2p [Hp] 1p finish at H reaching start but at least on starboard tack

These courses are not great, but preferable to delaying the start until the ship has left and the wind dies.

River Courses with Cruise ships leaving between 18:15 and 19:00

Impossible, so postpone, cancel or try a Z course at sea.