

Race Management
Policies
Etchells Aust'ns
Jan 2020



RACE MANAGEMENT POLICIES for 2020 Etchells Australian Championships, Melbourne

Please note that these policies are guidelines to the Race Management Team. Failure to observe these guidelines are not grounds for redress.

1. Definitions

- 1.1 **Race Officer** – a race officer appointed by the Organizing Authority. The Race Officer is responsible for managing the race management team for an assigned course area.
- 1.2 **Race Management Team** – the Race Officer and all on-the-water volunteers responsible for managing racing.
- 1.3 “Will” means the intentions of the race management team.

2. General Principles

- 2.1 The role of the race management team is to conduct the races and to facilitate racing as directed by the organizing authority as required by the rules.
- 2.2 These policies are applicable for any course and any target time.
- 2.3 A shortage of time or completed races is not a basis for variance from these policies.
- 2.4 The operator of a race management team vessel will promptly advise the Course Race Officer if he/she believes his/her vessel has substantially affected one or more boats racing.

3. Times/Timing/Changes In Schedule

- 3.1 Times will be based on GPS time. The starting sequence will begin on an exact minute hh:mm:00
- 3.2 Starts will not be delayed for competitors to reach the race area if they could have arrived with reasonable diligence.
- 3.3 To alert boats that a race or sequence of races will start soon, the orange starting line flag(s) will be displayed (with one sound signal) at least five minutes before a warning signal is displayed.
- 3.4 The orange starting line flags(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) ten minutes after the starting signal.

- 3.5 The race management team will use the entire day if necessary, to complete the schedule.

- 3.6 If the weather forecast suggests it is unlikely that racing will be possible on an upcoming day (too much or too little wind) the schedule may be changed to sail more races in a day.

4. Decision to Race

- 4.1 The race will be started at the scheduled time if the wind conditions and visibility are within the parameters outlined in these policies. Waiting for ‘better’ conditions may be unfair and will be avoided.
- 4.2 The race management team will not wait for the wind to ‘stabilize’. Competitors can compete in “shifty” conditions.
- 4.3 The start may be postponed if a major wind shift is expected based on a known pattern or other reliable information (example: sea breeze can be seen in the distance and is expected

to fill in). Otherwise, the race management team will start the race. The wind shift may not occur, the course can be corrected, or the shift may occur after the race is completed.

- 4.4 Wind will be measured from drifting boats.
- 4.5 Average wind speed will be determined over a five-minute period.
- 4.6 Races will not be started in less than an average of 6 knots of wind established over the entire course area. This lower limit may be higher if there is strong current in the racing area.
- 4.7 Races will not be started in more than an average of 25 knots. These limits may also vary depending upon sea conditions, current and rapid changes in velocity.
- 4.8 Races will not be started if reduced visibility prevents the race management team from sighting the starting line and identifying premature starters. The fact that the first mark cannot be seen from the starting area is not, in and of itself, a reason to postpone racing.
- 4.9 Where possible the race management team will postpone ashore (AP, or AP/Numerical pennant) or send competitors ashore (AP/H) if current weather conditions that are not suitable for racing are likely to continue.
- 4.10 When racing back to back, the interval between the finish line closure and the new warning signal for that group will normally not be less than 5 minutes. This may be varied according to conditions.

5. Courses

- 5.1 The race management team will attempt to set the longest possible first leg within the constraints of the course area and the target time.
- 5.2 The course length will be laid to give the first boat the best chance of achieving the target time.
- 5.3 Gates will be approximately 10 hull lengths wide, laid square to the sailing wind. Variations in width and angle may be appropriate to adjust for current or other prevailing conditions.
- 5.4 Usually leeward gate Marks 3p/3s will be laid after the start (last start of the sequence in case of multiple fleets). In deep water or strong current Marks 3p/3s may be laid before the start.
- 5.5 When only one gate mark is laid, that mark shall be rounded to port.

6. Starting Line

- 6.1 Windward starting lines will generally be laid square to the median sailing wind. Current, favoured side of the course, expected wind shifts and other variables may justify variation from this guideline.
- 6.2 There is no fixed distance from the start line to the gate laid above the start line.
- 6.3 The formula below is a guide to the length of the starting line for fleet races. A larger multiplier may be used in strong winds or heavy seas. Starting line length = number of boats x boat length x 1.25 to 1.5
- 6.4 Laser range finders and/or GPS will be used to determine starting line lengths.

7. Starting procedure

- 7.1 RRS Rule 26 will be used for all starts.

8. Sighting the Line/Timing/Signalling/Recording

- 8.1 The race management team will sight the starting line from each end.
- 8.2 Each line sighter will use a hand-held voice recording device and record, without stopping, from at least 90 seconds before the starting signal until after anything of interest after the start. A commentary of anything of interest will be recorded (such as boats getting close to the line, bunching, etc.).

- 8.3 If tapes are used, they will be labelled and preserved until after the conclusion of the entire event. If digital recorders are used, each day's recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.
- 8.4 In no circumstances will an individual recall be signalled later than 5 seconds after the starting signal.
- 8.5 The race management team will not signal an individual recall and then a general recall.
- 8.6 Competitors who have been scored OCS, UFD or BFD, and their coaches, may listen to the voice recording(s) of the applicable start(s). A time and location for doing so each day will be posted on the Official Notice Board.

9. Calling OCS

- 9.1 The race management team will not permit a race to continue if it believes that unidentified boats were over early.
- 9.2 If the race management team is satisfied that all boats over the line have been identified, an Individual Recall will be signalled.
- 9.3 Except after a black flag general recall (when the requirements of RRS 30.4 will be met), sail number or bow number of boats recorded as OCS, UFD or BFD will be posted at Mark 1 for the first time.

10. Postponing A Race During The Starting Procedure

- 10.1 The race management team will postpone the race during the starting procedure if the mean wind shifts more than 10 degrees or in the event other influences cause boats to bunch at one end of the start line. In rapid oscillations, the race management team will endeavour to lay a starting line based on the mean oscillations expected.
- 10.2 The race management team will consider postponing the start for any of the following reasons:
 - (a) a drifting mark,
 - (b) a significant error in the timing of signals,
 - (c) other boats interfering with the competing boats,
 - (d) inappropriate starting line length or angle,
 - (e) the positions boats are taking on the starting line indicate a line bias in the minds of the competitors,
 - (f) a reduction in visibility preventing the race management team from sighting the starting line or identifying premature starters, and
 - (g) other factors that might affect the fairness of the race.
- 10.3 If the race management team considers that adjusting the starting line is unlikely to improve the chances of fair start then the start will be allowed to continue.
- 10.4 For a postponement that the race management team anticipates will be longer than ten minutes, the orange starting line flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal), and then displayed (with one sound signal) at least five minutes prior to the warning signal.

11. General Recall

- 11.1 When the race management team is not satisfied that all boats over early (or that have broken RRS 30.3 or 30.4) have been identified, a General Recall will be signalled.
- 11.2 If a race management error is discovered after the starting signal (e.g., timing), the race management team may abandon the race (by using flag N). In these circumstances, the race management team will not signal a general recall.
- 11.3 When using RRS 30.3, if a general recall would result from unidentified boats on the course side of the starting line early in the minute prior to the starting signal, a postponement will

be signalled immediately. If the race management team is satisfied that the starting line was fair then the next start will use RRS 30.4.

12. Starting Penalties (Flags U, I, Z and Black Flag)

- 12.1 Flag I (RRS 30.1) and Flag Z (RRS 30.2) will not be used.
- 12.2 Flag P will be used for the first attempt of fleet race of 10 or less entries. For fleet races of more than 10 entries RRS 30.3 (Flag U) will be used for the first start
- 12.3 In the event the start has been postponed, or a General Recall has been caused by the length or angle of the starting line, the race management team will adjust the starting line and make another attempt using the same preparatory signal.
- 12.4 If the race management team is satisfied that a General Recall was not the result of the starting line, it will use the black flag for each subsequent attempt.
- 12.5 An important principle followed by the race management team is that the black flag will only be used when general recalls are caused by the boats themselves, or rapid oscillations of the wind, and not by actions of the race management team.
- 12.6 The race management team will make every effort to signal a postponement in the event of any problems with the starting line.

13. Shortening the Course

- 13.1 Races may be shortened using RRS 32.
- 13.2 Reducing the length of a leg, even the final leg, may be done by using a minus sign as specified in RRS 33.

14. Abandonment

- 14.1 On the first half of the first leg, the race management team may abandon in the event of a major, persistent, wind shift (more than 25 degrees). After that, the race management team will let the race continue if it is able to adjust to the changed conditions.
- 14.2 Visibility: The race management team will consider abandoning a race if it is satisfied that a reduction in visibility affects its ability to safely manage racing. The fact that boats cannot see the next mark from the prior mark is not, in and of itself, reason to abandon the race.
- 14.3 Collapse of wind: The race management team may abandon the race when it is unlikely that the leading boat will complete the course within the overall time limit given the wind conditions at that point in time.
- 14.4 The race management team may abandon the race when a new wind has caused the fleet to invert.
- 14.5 Once a race has been started, the race management team will not abandon the race simply because the average wind speed increases beyond the stated limits. The race management team will consider abandoning the race if it is unable to safely manage racing.
- 14.6 The race management team will make every effort to ensure that other vessels do not interfere with racing. The race management team will consider abandoning the race if it determines that an outside influence has made the race unfair.

15. Adjusting the Course To A New Wind Speed Or Direction

- 15.1 Change in wind direction:
 - (a) With a persistent wind shift of 10° or less the course will not be changed unless necessary to adjust for current or to provide a square run.
 - (b) Between 10° and 15° consideration will be given to adjusting the course to the new wind provided that the race management team is confident that the shift is likely to persist.

- (c) With a persistent wind shift of more than 15°, the race management team will attempt to change the course to the new wind.
- (d) With a persistent wind shift of more than 45°, the race management team will consider its influence on the race. Under these circumstances, the race management team may either change the course or abandon the race.
- (e) Frequent and violent oscillations: Under these circumstances the race management team may not be able to adjust the course sufficiently or quickly enough to maintain a race of the required standard. In this case the race may be abandoned.
- (f) Changes in current or a difference in the angle of the current relative to the wind may justify variations from these guidelines.

15.2 Changes in length of legs

- (a) The race management team will attempt to minimize the number of changes in leg length to achieve target times. In general, changes in length will only be made if it appears that the time for the first finisher will be more than 20% outside the target time.
- (b) Change in leg lengths will not be made to reduce a leg to less than 50% or increase a leg to more than 150% of original leg length.
- (c) Changes in current may justify variations from these guidelines.

15.3 When changing the direction of the next leg (RRS 33) a red rectangle or a green triangle or the compass bearing to the next mark will be displayed.

16. RRS 42 – ‘Off’ and ‘Restored’

Not used.

17. Finishing Line/Finishing Procedures

- 17.1 The finishing line will be laid before the first boat begins the final leg.
- 17.2 The finishing line will be between staffs displaying blue flags when the line is between race committee boats at each end, or between a staff displaying a blue flag and the nearby finishing buoy.
- 17.3 The blue flags will be displayed (with no sound) as the first boat rounds the final mark
- 17.4 In the case of a late course change for the final leg, the blue flag will be displayed as soon as possible after the finishing line has been laid.
- 17.5 The finishing line will be approximately 70 to 100 metres in length, set square to the sailing wind for upwind or downwind finishes. Laser range finders will be used to establish the length of the finishing line.
- 17.6 The blue flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) upon the earlier of: (i) expiration of the time limit, or (ii) Immediately after the last boat finishes.
- 17.7 There will be two line-sighters on each finish boat wherever possible.
- 17.8 Each line sighter will use a hand-held recording device to record the order of finish.
- 17.9 If tapes are used, they will be labelled and kept until after the end of the entire event. If digital recorders are used, each day’s recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.
- 17.10 A written record of the finishing order will also be maintained by each finish boat.
- 17.11 Competitors and coaches may listen to the voice recording(s) and review the written records of their finishes. A time and location for doing so each day may be posted on the Official Notice Board.

18. Requests for Redress

- 18.1 If the race management team believes it may have made error affecting the outcome of the race for which redress may be available, it may request redress for the potentially affected boat(s).
- 18.2 The race management team will consider requesting redress for a boat if it is satisfied that that boat's score has been made significantly worse by the actions of an official boat.

19. Race Committee Protests

- 19.1 Since the primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules rests with Competitors, the race management team will not normally protest a boat.
- 19.2 The race management team may protest a boat in the following circumstances:
 - (a) A breach of a sailing instruction that may not be protested by another boat;
 - (b) An apparent breach of good sportsmanship (RRS 2);
 - (c) Failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark, but not protesting another boat; and
 - (d) Failing to sail the course (RRS 28)

20. GPS

- 20.1 All race management boats (signal, pin, finish and mark boats) will be equipped with a GPS.
- 20.2 All GPS units will be set up to display as follows:
 - (a) Distance in nautical miles (nm)
 - (b) Time to local time zone in 24 hour format
 - (c) Compass bearing in magnetic
 - (d) Latitude and Longitude in degrees, minutes and decimal minutes (example: 39° 27.928 North, 034° 17.464 East)
 - (e) Map Datum WGS 84

21. Hand Signals

To assist safety vessels the following signals should be used

I require assistance

Wave an open palm on an outstretched arm



I am "OK" and do not require assistance

Make an open "O" by placing hand on head



22. Using support boats to assist with safety.

The standard wording for sailing instructions to require support boats to assist with safety is: "When the race committee displays flag V with repetitive sounds, all official and support boats shall monitor the race committee radio channel for that racing area for search and rescue instructions. The race committee will announce 'Flag Victor' using the designated VHF Channel."

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