

CYCE race committee and racer tips

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Race Committee Priorities

Safe

Radio always on and monitored – Channel 72.

Set a nice easy long start line, especially longer than six 40 foot cruisers in summer division.

Square to wind so that the whole line is favored, and boats can cross line close-hauled on both tacks instead of all boats crossing line on the same tack.

Setting the pin slightly closer to the wind makes it less likely that boats will bunch up by the RC.

Don't start a race in what you feel are unsafe conditions (includes RC safety) or sustained winds of 23 knots or more as per the CYCE General Sailing Instructions. If you do decide to start the race, each boat makes their own call about whether or not they feel safe enough to race. Same for race abandonment.

Make sure all boats finish race or call/hail DNF to the CB so they are all accounted for.

2021: Follow COVID-19 protocols. Be careful about gathering down below.

Fair

Evaluate currents and weather forecast and try to pick a course that all boats have a fair chance to finish and aren't disproportionately affected by conditions.

- Course distances are in the SIs. Assume boat speed of 1-5 kt based on wind.
- Frostbite/Halloween series time limit is 5 hours with a ½ hour extension possible.
- Summer series time limit is 2 hours with a ½ hour extension possible.
- Adverse currents will affect slower boats more, especially in very light air.

There are known persistent issues that park boats or slow them down significantly:

- Wind holes
- Mark Z
- Kingston north of ferry terminal, behind the bluff
- Whidbey Island marks
- North of Edmonds ferry terminal close to shore

Strong currents

- Close to Edmonds breakwater – put race mark further south in current
- Whidbey Island marks - tide sweeps around southern tip of Whidbey Island over shallow shelf

Ensure start line and marks are in at least 10-15 feet depth for a radius of 300 feet or so.

Sailing in shallows is part of the strategy of the race, except the start and the temporary marks should have plenty of room to maneuver around them since crew are busy during maneuvers.

Shallow spots are common off dog park down to the scar on the bluff, especially at low tide. The bottom shallow spots migrate, and Karma and Kiwi Express usually find them.

Have the buoys set and RC boat in position and settled well before the race begins. This allows all boats to run the starting line and develop strategy. It also gives the RC time to practice the starting sequence and start the race on time.

Announce any course changes over the radio and by hail, if possible. You can change and announce the course up until you begin the start sequence. Course board goes on the starting line side so boats can see it as they cross the line.

While the RC doesn't traditionally give individual advice, there is no such thing as too much communication with this club. Some of our courses can be a bit confusing, like the rounding mark at Kingston Cove.

Use GPS time on your VHF radio or similar.

Per RRS 2021: Start and finish now occur when any part of the hull is over the line; the boat's crew and equipment were removed from the definition.

Ask more experienced sailors for help in picking course well beforehand, or before the start.

Fun

It's unfun when boats are unable to finish a race and don't get scored. When deciding on the course, err on the side of making sure slower boats/newer sailors can finish, especially if there have been a lot of cancelled races or DNFs. Remember that courses 26 and 41 have option to shorten course after first lap, so are safe for light winds or tough forecasts (and good for practicing roundings.)

If it's raining or cold, it's nice to set a shorter course and/or an upwind/downwind out and back.

The next priority is variety if possible. Some courses are more technical with more roundings, some favor the cruisers more. The Kingston reaching courses are quite popular, if wind forecast to be steady or building at more than 12-15 kt.

If the wind conditions change to too much or too little wind, keep an eye on the boats if possible, or ask reach out to the fleet via VHF to the fleet for course reports if not. Don't be afraid to shorten course. You can pull anchor and shorten course at any mark if no one has passed it yet. Use the shorten course flag and announce it on VHF.

And here are tips for your own enjoyment.

- Take pictures if you can and send them to the webmaster!
- Invite others along, sailors or not. Bring a picnic.
- Or go sailing too if it'll be a while before the racers finish - tie an extra buoy to your anchor.
- Rabbit starts for when there are few boats racing (shoulder seasons.)

New Racer Tips

If you don't want to "get in the way" because you don't know where to go or know the racing rules yet:

- Stay downwind the other boats at the start. Also stay away from the sides of the starting line.
- Watch other boats. And know the start sequence, but this will be tough with no flags due to covid, so don't worry too much about it until we get our normal starts back.
- Do try to start pretty soon after other boats in your start so you are not in the way of any boats starting after you. But don't worry too much about it. We're friendly and want you to keep coming back.
- Pick a boat your speed to follow. If you catch the boat, stay well clear of it and pick another boat.
- If you are headed for another boat, when in doubt, tack/gybe, or point below the boat dramatically so the other boat understands your intention. Feel free to hail them too, saying they can go and you will avoid them.
- At the end of the race, find something that you did well/improved on and congratulate yourselves. Also talk about the other boats, especially the ones that did well. Also congratulate yourselves for getting out there. Also don't be shy to reach out to any of us. You can find our contact info on the website.