



**MANLY
YACHT**
Club

Starters Guide

Edition 3.3
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2006/2007

Starters Guide

Race Committee:

Race Directors: as advised in the MYC Handbook.

Principal Race Officer (PRO): as advised in the MYC Handbook or Sailing Instructions (SI's) for specific races. May also be the RO.

Race Officer (RO): The starter in charge of the races on the water.

Other Race Officials (one person may perform multiple functions):

Timekeeper: Calls the start time sequences and finishing times.

Visual Signals Officer: Raises and lowers the flags in accordance with the time sequences and as directed by the Race Officer.

Gunner: Fires the gun (or hooter) in accordance with the time sequences and as directed by the RO.

Line Checker: Until the start, keeps checking to ensure the start line remains square to the wind and directly downwind from the top mark.

Recaller: Identifies boats crossing the start line early and initiates individual or general recalls. Larger fleets also need a recaller at the start line pin end.

Recorder(s): Identifies the boats actually starting and writes down their start and finishing times on the results sheets. Checks all boats are accounted for.

Mark Layers: Position and relocate marker buoys as directed by the Race Officer, using the Mark Laying boat.

Equipment Required

Compass and Telltales	Race docs: NOR, SI's
Windspeed Indicator	Mobile Phone, GPS
Clocks (2) (one for backup), Whiteboard and marker pens	Maritime Authority Requirements (See Safe Boating handbook)
Standard set of flags, club burgee plus any special flags required	Clip-boards, notebooks, record sheets, starting lists and handicaps
Course Indicator Numbers	Pens and pencils
Loudhailer, binoculars, tape-recorder	VHF Radio link with clubhouse and mark laying boats.

Before taking out the start boat, make sure all equipment is working, spare batteries are available for the clocks, recorder and loudhailer, and adjust all clocks to the correct time from a GPS or by calling 1194.

Assign duties and make sure all start and rescue/mark layer boat crews know their duties and responsibilities before getting out onto the water.

Information and Documentation Required

MYC Sailing Handbook and Racing Rules of Sailing 2005-2008

Notices of Race and Sailing Instructions (if not in the MYC Handbook)

Official Lists of boats starting (and handicap times for handicap starts).

Exact time and current weather forecasts

Note: The 'Outside Help' rule now allows Race Committees to communicate with competitors during the start sequence, but if starters do give information to boats, they must not give unfair advantage to any boat.

Courses (See MYC Handbook Appendix A or SI's).

Unless otherwise specified in SI's, courses should be selected according to wind direction. Use the handheld compass and telltales to determine the wind bearing.

Course Selected **Compass bearing in Degrees**

NE	11 - 55
E	56 - 100
SE	101 - 145
S	146 - 190
SW	191 - 235
W	236 - 280
NW	281 - 335
N	336 - 10

Start Line. (See Fig 1 on Page 5).

The start line should be set square (at 90 degrees) to the wind, with a slight bias allowed depending on winds and tides. The centre of the start line should be directly downwind from the first or top mark. It is acceptable for the pin end buoy to be slightly to windward. The start line length should be the length of all competing boats plus 10 to 50%, longer if windier. The start line should be at least 1 ½ times the start line length away from the shore line or moored boats.

If the wind changes and the start line is wrong, change it before the start sequence commences or else postpone the start if necessary to make major adjustments. You can:

- Ask the rescue boat to move the port end buoy or top mark or both.
- Ease or shorten the starter boat anchor line.
- Move everything, changing to another course if necessary.

Start Sequence

A five-minute start sequence is used, unless varied by the Sailing Instructions. Display the course number and fly the club burgee before the start sequence is commenced. Except for standard MYC courses, the bearing to the top mark should also be displayed using a white/blackboard and marker pen/chalk.

The start sequence is as follows (**S=Start**):

S-5 min: Raise **Division/Class** flag with one sound (or gun)

S-4 min: Raise **Preparatory** flag (**P**) with one sound

S-1 min: Lower **Preparatory** flag (**P**) with one long sound

S-0 min: Lower **Class** flag with one sound (this is the actual start - boats crossing before this time must be recalled.)

The sounds or guns are advisory only: the flag is the time-determining event. The timerkeeper should call out the time-to-go to the next flag event in a consistent manner for each start. Call out the action required and the time to go at each minute, 30, 20 and 10 secs (eg: P down, one gun, 30 seconds) then count down from 5 secs to zero.

If you need to talk to the boats for any reason before the start sequence, hoist the **L** flag with one gun. (it means come within hailing distance)

Postponements

At any time before the starting signal (**S-0**) a race may be postponed.

To postpone a race, hoist the Postponement flag (**AP**) (or **AP** over **H** or **A**) and sound two guns. Over **H** means further signals ashore, Over **A** means no more racing today.

To end a postponement, pull down the **AP** Postponement flag with one gun. One minute later start a normal five-minute flag/gun starting sequence.

The starter should postpone a race only if he considers the conditions unsuitable for a start. As a general rule, races should be postponed if:

- Sustained winds (10 sec average) exceed 20 knots (Manly Juniors) 25 knots (Lasers) or 30 knots (Yachts)
- Wind speeds are less than 5 knots for any class or division.
- Winds are variable, fluctuating more than 20 degrees.
- A sustained wind shift needs a major course adjustment and it cannot be implemented before the due start time.

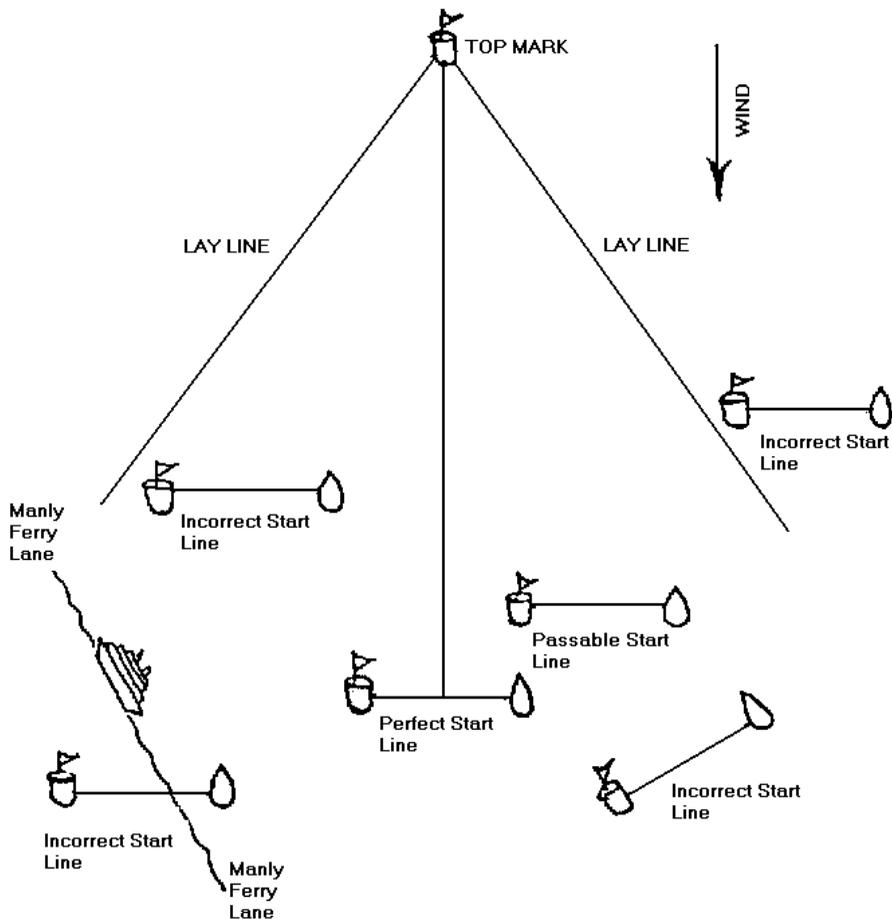


Fig 1 - Start Line Set-up

Notes:

Don't be too finicky: don't postpone a race just because of a small wind shift of 5 degrees or so. In a shifting breeze, if you try to keep following the wind too closely, you may never start the race.

Count the boats starting and tick their names on the start sheet, so that you can check that none are missing at the finish, or do a search if they are.

Recalls

Individual Recall

If any part of a boat crosses the line before the start and that boat (or boats) can be identified, those boats are subject to an individual recall and the individual recall flag (**X**) is hoisted immediately the boat crosses the start line. Immediately after the starting gun is fired, fire another single gun. The recall flag must remain up for 4 minutes or until the recalled boats have all completely recrossed the start line and restarted.

General Recall

If a significant proportion of the fleet or if a number of boats have crossed early but not all of these boats can be identified, then a general recall may be ordered. Immediately after the starting gun is fired, fire a double gun (two quick guns) and hoist the General Recall flag (**1st Sub**). When ready to restart, lower the recall flag with one gun. One minute later, restart the race with a new normal five minute flag/gun starting sequence.

I, Z or Black Flag. An **I**, **Z** or **black flag** may be substituted for the **P** in the start sequence. **I**: Rule 30.1. Boats on the course side 1 min before the start must sail around either end of the start line before starting. **Z**: Rule 30.2. Boats in the triangle between the start marks and the top mark 1 min before the start are penalized 20%. **Black Flag**: Rule 30.3. Boats crossing the line in advance of the start or in the triangle between the start marks and the top mark 1 min before the start are disqualified.

Changed Course during a Race

It may be necessary to change a course or substitute a mark during a race due to wind shifts or dragging or missing buoys. If a top mark must be moved during a multi-lap race (eg due to a wind shift), fly the **C** flag and display the new bearing to the mark. All boats must have rounded the mark on one lap before it can be moved for the next lap. If a mark other than the top mark is moved, a boat displaying the **C** flag and bearing to the moved mark from the previous mark should be positioned at the previous mark.

If a mark is lost or moved it should be replaced, but if that is not possible a boat flying the **M** flag can be used replace it. The boat should sound multiple guns (five or six short blasts on the horn) when in position and as necessary to alert all approaching boats.

Finish Line

The finish line should be set square to the last course mark, rather than square to the wind, except for an upwind finish line. The pin end buoy should be positioned to port as viewed by the finishing yachts. The length of the finish line should be about 50–60 meters in length.

When the finish line is set, raise the **On Station flag (blue square)**.

The first boat finishing is given one gun as it crosses the line. Subsequent finishers may be given a gun as a courtesy, but it is not required.

Finishing times are recorded when any part of a boat has first crossed the line. It is not necessary for all of a boat to cross the line for the boat to finish. Record finish times, DNC, DNS, DNF OCS or DSQ for all boats.

Note on the record sheet any that were not on the official start list.

Once all boats have finished (or the race time limit has expired), lower the On Station flag and Club Burgee, ensure marker buoys are recovered and return the starter boat to the North Harbour mooring

Shortened Course

A course cannot be shortened if one boat has already passed the shortened line or completed the full course before the shortened course is set. The starter should shorten course only if he considers the bulk of the fleet will not finish the full course before the time limit expires. To shorten course, set a finishing line at one of the course marks (preferably one in or near Manly Cove), and fly the **Shortened Course flag (S)** with two guns. Boats must finish between the nearby course mark and the boat flying the **S** flag. The finish line and **S** Flag must be set before the first boat reaches the shortened course mark.

Finish the race and record times as normal.

Notes:

1. Ensure the shortened course finishing line is set so that finishing boats will round the mark normally to finish correctly. Positioning the finishing boat upwind of the mark does this best.
2. For some MYC courses, to shorten course it will be necessary to set two finishing lines using a second boat as there are no suitable common marks to set a common shortened course finish line for each division. Ensure this second boat has the necessary crew, flags and equipment to act as a finishing boat.
3. To shorten only one class or division, use **S** over the class flag.

Abandonment

To abandon a race, fly the **N** flag (or **N** over **H** or **A**) with three guns.

N alone means all races in progress are abandoned: return to start area and further signals will be made 1 minute after lowering the **N** flag.

N over **H** means all races are abandoned, further signals ashore.

N over **A** means all races are abandoned, no more racing today.

Races may be abandoned because of:

- An error in the starting procedure giving some an unfair advantage,
- Foul weather and fleet safety issues,
- Insufficient wind such that it is unlikely any boat will finish in the time limit even if the course is shortened,
- A mark missing or out of position giving some an unfair advantage,
- Any other reason directly affecting fairness or safety of the race.

Races shall not be abandoned after one boat has sailed the course and finished within the time limit without considering the consequences for all boats in the race or series.

Disclaimer

These notes are intended as a general guide only and do NOT form part of any Sailing Instructions. All race officers are urged to become familiar with the MYC Handbook and the Racing Rules of Sailing which take precedence over any instructions in this guide.

If you have any suggestions on how to improve this Guide, please call or pass your comments to the MYC Principal Race Officer or to any member of the Sailing Committee