



Papercourt Sailing Club

Guide to racing at PSC



We hope these guidance notes will encourage you to try racing at Papercourt (and elsewhere).

If you are unsure of anything, do ask anyone who looks like they know what they are doing.

The PRO is the 'Principal Race Officer', an experienced member who is responsible for the racing.

The races are started and finished from the committee boat (white motor boat with mast).

The race programme is displayed in the lobby (kitchen side), showing race types (see below) and intended start times of races. It is also on the Club's website.

Sign on before you go racing

A4 size sign-on sheets are located in the lobby. (Make sure you enter the correct race - look for the time at the top of the sheet)

Enter your name, sail number and type of boat on the form. Don't worry if you forget to do this before the race, but do it immediately after returning to shore or you may find the PRO has taken it away to do the results!

Course

The course to be sailed will be shown on the course board at the back of the Clubhouse at least 20 minutes before the start.

Note the order of the marks and the direction to be sailed around, and where the start/finish line is (usually the same place for both). You may find it useful to write it down - the back of your hand or your leg are often used.

You may notice that the buoys are numbered 1-6, and positioned clockwise (or should be).

Start/Finish line

This is the imaginary line between the committee boat and a white buoy (or 'outer distance mark'), and should be roughly perpendicular to the wind, with the first leg of the course towards the wind (see below for an example).

At the start signal, you must be 'behind' the line, which means not on the course side.

You may like to keep a little way behind the line to allow the more competitive racers space to start, and allow yourself time to observe before getting more involved in the competition for the 'front row' next time.

Normally, you are expected to sail through this line on each lap.

The Start - Flags and Timing

There is a countdown system to alert you to when the race is starting (a sound signal accompanied the flag movements). The flags are flown on the committee boat.

- 5 minutes to go: Flag letter 'A' is hoisted (blue/white),
- 4 minutes to go: Flag letter 'P' is hoisted (white rectangle on a blue background),
- 1 minute to go: Flag letter 'P' is lowered,
- At start: Flag letter 'A' is lowered.

Types of race:

GH (General Handicap)

All boats start together, and you keep sailing until the finish (see below), which will be around 40-50 minutes.

P (Pursuit)

Staggered start (slower boats start first and the faster boats pursue).

The class starting times (and number of your start) are shown on a chart to the right of the course board. The first start is Topper 4.2 on 0. Other classes follow, usually at one minute intervals.

You can either take note of the time of your start after the first start time (Topper 4.2), or from the numbers that appear on the back of the committee boat that correspond to your class, e.g. 7 for a Feva, and start on the next sound signal after number 7 is shown (ie: the committee boat will display the number of the next class to start).

For an Open Meeting (all boats of the same class), it will be a mass start.

Finish

Continue racing around the course until flag letter 'S' shows (blue rectangle on a white background), accompanied by two sound signals (signifying that the course has been shortened), then finish your lap. You should get a sound signal when you cross the line, but this is not obligatory.

Typical example of a triangular course

