

Beginner's Guide to racing at PSC (2021 on)

We hope these guidance notes will encourage you to try racing.

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 a mast).

The Race programme is in the sailing section in the lobby, showing race types and approximate start times of races.

Types of race:

H+h (Fast Handicap and Slow Handicap, 3 minutes apart).

Fast boats start first, then 3 minutes later slow boats start together and you keep sailing until the finish flag is flown (see over), which will be around 30-40 minutes.

P (Pursuit)

This uses a staggered start at 1 minute intervals (slower boats start first, faster boats *Pursue*).

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

Sign on before you go racing

There are 'Sign-on' forms located in the lobby. (Make sure you enter the correct race – look for the time at the top of the sheet)

Enter your name(s), sail number and class on the entry form.

Don't worry if you forget to do this before the race, but do it asap after returning to shore so you can be recorded.

The Course

The Course to be sailed will be shown on the chalk board at the back of the Clubhouse.

Note the order of the marks and direction to be sailed around, and where the start/finish line is.

The Start/Finish line

This is the imaginary line between the Committee boat mast and a white buoy, and will be roughly at right-angles to the wind, with the first leg of the course towards the wind (see over 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 involved in the competition for the 'front row' next time.

Normally, you are expected to sail through this line each lap until the finish.

Continued over....

The Starting sequence (Handicaps)– Flags, Hooters & Timing

This is a countdown system to alert you to when the race is starting (a sound signal accompanies the flag movements). The flags are flown on the Committee boat mast.

Flag 'A' is for the Fast Handicap (**H**) group of boats and Flag 'B' is for the Slow Handicap (**h**) boats.

- 3 minutes to **H** start: Flag 'A' is hoisted,
- 2 minutes to **H** start: Flag 'P' is hoisted,
- 1 minute to **H** start: Flag 'P' is lowered,
- At the **H start**: Flag 'A' is lowered, 'B' is hoisted.
- 2 minutes to **h** start: Flag 'P' is hoisted,
- 1 minute to **h** start: Flag 'P' is lowered,
- At the **h start**: Flag 'B' is lowered.



Flag 'A'



Flag 'P'



Flag 'B'

The Starting sequence (Pursuit)

Pursuit races start with the 3 – 2 – 1 – Start as above, then count up in 1 minute intervals.

The Class starting times are shown on a chart to the right of the courseboard.

You start on the next sound signal *after* your number appears on the back of the Committee boat, e.g. 5 for a Feva, start on the next sound signal after number 5 is shown.

Finishing the race

Continue racing around the course until 'S' flag shows, accompanied by 2 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.

The 'S' flag is white with a blue square middle.



We hope you enjoy your racing and want to come back and keep trying – it all takes practice!
The race results should be published on the PSC website by the evening.

Typical example of a triangular course

