

Buoy Racing Guidelines

The close quarters and large number of boat interactions make for a lot of fun and excitement, but it does increase the chance for mishaps. So, it is very important to keep in mind some basic stuff.

Starting

We should use a 10 minute countdown, at least until we have more experience racing in tight quarters. There will be a committee boat on one end of the line, and a ball on the other end. Prior to the start, boats may sail around either side of the line, but

“A boat starts when, having been entirely on the pre-start side of the starting line at or after her starting signal, and having complied with rule 30.1 if it applies, any part of her hull, crew or equipment crosses the starting line in the direction of the first mark.”

This means that if any part of the boat is on the course side of the starting line at the starting gun, it must get its entire hull on the pre-start side of the line. And when maneuvering to get back on the pre-start side, they must KEEP CLEAR of boats who are not attempting to get back on the pre-start side.

** NOTE: It is a very good idea to start on the starboard tack, as there are a lot of boats at the starting line, and port tack boats will not have right-of-way.

When Boats Meet

- **BOATS MUST AVOID CONTACT (This is more nuanced in the rules, but c'mon.....don't do it)**
- Starboard tack boats (boats whose wind is coming over the right side of the boat) have right of way over Port tack boats
- If boats are on the same tack, and overlapped the windward boat keeps clear of the leeward boat.
- While tacking, the boat tacking has to keep clear of the other boats until she is back close hauled.
- If a boat that is clear astern establishes an overlap to leeward of a boat on the same tack, she cannot sail above her proper course (this is the course a boat would sail to finish as soon as possible with no other boats)

Mark Roundings

- When at least one of two boats enter the zone (within three boat lengths of the mark of the nearest boat), the outside boat shall give the inside boat room to round the mark except:
 - o If the boats are overlapped when one of them enters the zone, the outside boat shall give the inside boat room.
 - o If a boat is clear ahead when she enters the zone, the clear astern boat at that moment shall give the inside boat room.

- When the boats are on opposite tacks on a windward leg, mark room does not apply.
- When one boat is leaving the zone and another is entering no room must be given.

If you hit a mark you can get clear and take a one turn penalty. (one tack and one gybe)

Obstructions

For our case, just assume you always have to give room.

Finish

The boat finishes when any part of the boat crosses the finish line in its normal configuration. The finish line is a line between the committee boat and the ball, in our case it will be the same as the start line.

Protests

A boat may take a two-turn penalty (two tacks and two gybes) when she may have broken a rule, and must do so as soon as possible. A boat taking a penalty must keep clear of other boats. If they do not take the penalty, and another boat protests them, a protest committee will be formed.

A protest can be signified by immediately flying a red flag. Since we have no umpires, the offending boat can take a two turn penalty or take their chances with a protest committee.

Collisions

If there is a collision in these races, both boats should retire. (this is not a rule, but again...c'mon)

Finally

Always help someone in distress.

Hit the committee boat and you are done.

Hit another boat and you are done.

Otherwise, have fun, this will be awesome.