How to Make Club Racing Challenging

Wyboston Race Officials Conference

2013

Dave Mellor

Making Club Racing Challenging?

Aims:

- Creative effort to find some innovative ideas

- Produce a booklet of all the ideas

The order of thinking…

"Making Club Racing Challenging…………"

White   –   Information

Green   –   Possibility

Yellow   –   Benefits

Black   –   Caution

Green   –   Possibility

Red   –   Feelings

For this to work…ALL stick to the rules:

PARALLEL – all wear the same hat at the same time

INCLUSIVE – everyone has to contribute to each Hat

DISCIPLINE – keep to time and keep each Hat separate

Warm Up…

- Think of your most memorable club race ever

- Choose one word that describes why it was memorable

- Organise yourselves into a large circle alphabetically using the word that you have chosen

What do we know…

What do I know!

- Start-Consolidate-Win (the rest follow)

- Clubs that have innovated are seeing great returns for their effort – and the opposite might be true!

Do not confuse between motion and progress – a rocking horse keeps moving but does not make any progress (Alfred Montapert)

White   –   Information, data, and facts

2mins

What are all the hard and soft facts we know about how challenging club racing is right now?

Record all points (even differences)
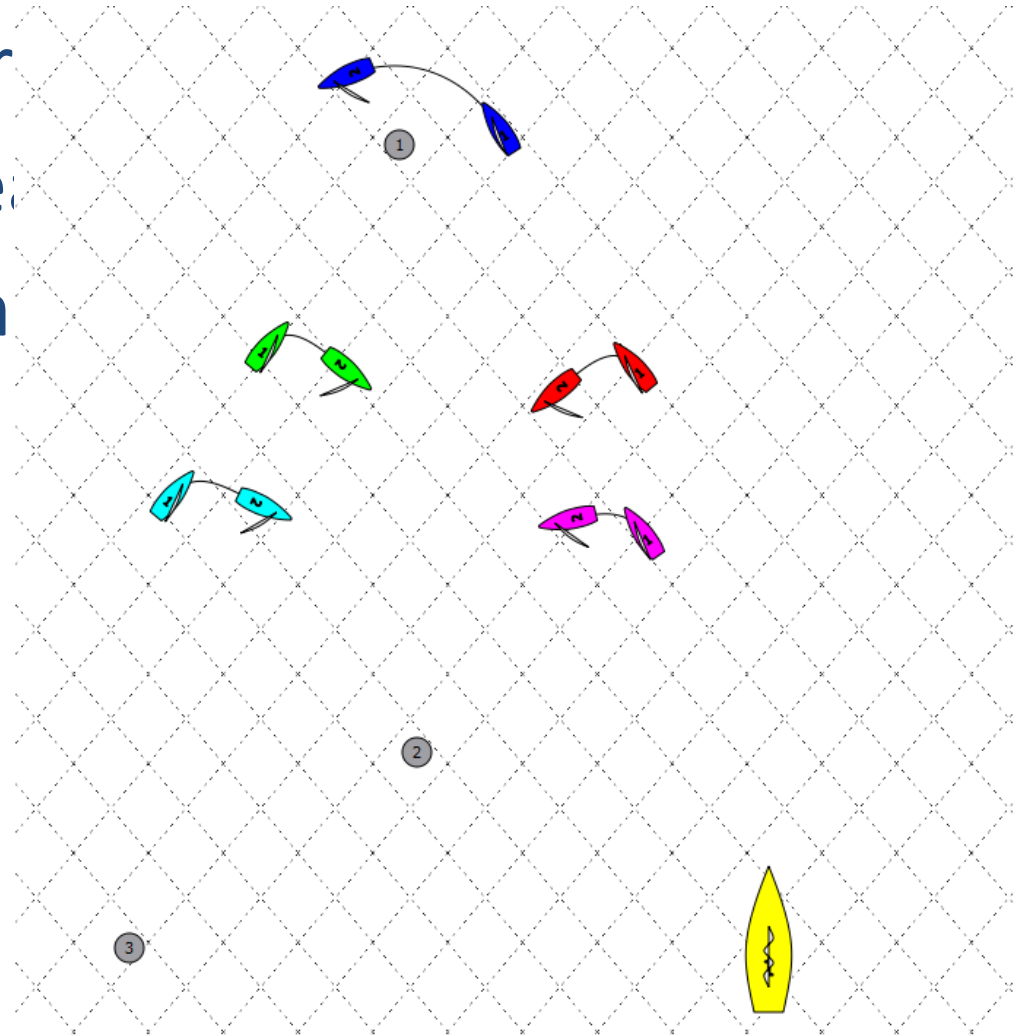More factual the better

Tips…

- What don't we know?
- What do we need to know?

🎩 **Some ideas for starters...**

- Random pairs team r
- Mix them up pairs te
- Adjusting/Personal h
- Snakes and Ladders:

Generating Ideas…

- **10mins…**
- **List 20 ways of making club racing challenging**
- Rules:
  - Do not evaluate or dwell on the ideas – fire them out quickly and keep moving

  - If you get to 20, then keep going

  - Make at least 3 ideas whacky and off-the-wall

- **Now choose one idea worthy of further exploration**

Yellow – Benefits and positives

2mins   What are all the benefits you could experience if your idea was acted on?

Each benefit needs a logical reason

Black – Caution, difficulties and problems

2mins   What are all the reasons this idea will not work?

What is the most serious difficulty that will stall this idea?

What can we do to overcome the difficulties of making the idea work? (2mins)

Red   –   Feelings, intuition, gut feel

Is this an idea worth considering:

Yes/No/Maybe

A temperature check – no justification needed

Present Back...

- Summarise your idea for the audience and camera!

    Describe the idea.

    What are the benefits.

    What are the difficulties.

    How can you overcome the difficulties.

Making Club Racing Challenging

Firstly, please can I take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone that contributed ideas and expertise during the Making Club Racing Challenging session at the 2013 Race Officials Conference. The amount of ideas you generated was staggering (109) and hope that we created the impetus to try something different at your club – perhaps you've already started!

During our session I promised that we would send out all the ideas you contributed and add some from the research I did in preparation for the session. I have divided this document into two sections:

1. A list of all the ideas that you generated in the brainstorming part of the session.
2. Further ideas from the research I did in preparation for the session.

1. **A list of all the ideas that you generated in the brainstorming part of the session.**

1. Winning boat gets yellow jumper for next race
2. Restrict to single classes
3. Expired dual handicapping
4. Give options in courses
5. W/L courses with moveable W/W mark
6. Add seamanship challenges
7. Short W/L race – leeward leg sailed backward
8. No sails; ooching and rolling allowed
9. Very short courses; many rounds
10. Timed slalom race
11. Series – top sailor paired with slowest
12. Team racing; top boat paired with bottom
13. Sail classes together (cruisers and dinghies)
14. Round the island with pit stop
15. Pursuit racing
16. Average lap racing
17. Poker race (pick up a card at each mark)
18. Bonus points for novices
19. Personal handicaps
20. Orienteering race
21. Staggered Starts for personal handicap
22. 720 race (do 720 on each leg)
23. Pro/Am racing (buddy system)
24. Rudderless racing
25. Treasure hunt
26. Crew swapping
27. Le mans start – off the beach start
28. 12 hour race (multiple crews)
29. Inter club racing
30. League racing with fleet
31. Inter club 2 boat team racing
32. Parent + child races
33. Seamanship races
34. Centenary race (crews ages = 100)
35. Bang and go back to start again
36. Navigation race/ harbour race
37. Multi series (many short races in one day)
38. Use GPS trackers
39. Grand prix start
40. Slalom courses
41. Timed laps
42. No discard
43. Snakes and ladders on the hooter
44. Sailing a leg backwards
45. Fleet swaps
46. Seamanship races – Collecting objects
47. Relay in teams
48. Team relay in fleets
49. Mixed race format or series
50. White sail racing
51. Pursuit racing series – personal handicaps
52. Match racing series
53. Speed trial
54. Crews races
55. Specified number of tacks or gybes on each leg
56. Elimination series
57. Egg and spoon race
58. Sprint race - lots of marks
59. Choose your own course
60. Sailing and running
61. Swap helms and crews at each mark
62. Random pairs (crew)
63. Gate starts
64. On water coaching (outside assistance)
65. Capsize as part of race
66. Pit stop race
67. Beat the 'Stig'
68. Open club invite the locals
69. Boat swap
70. Vary course during the race
71. Chase the rib racing
72. Relay race
73. Extra inexperienced crew members
74. Pick up races
75. Crews by ballot
76. Handicapped teams
77. Must have junior crew
78. GPS target
79. Knockout box
80. Inside out race
81. Heat racing/ playoffs
82. Tack/ gybe in front of mast
83. Conundrum racing – race to all the marks in any order
84. Obstacle course
85. Buoys scoring different points/ orienteering

86. Elasticated rudder
87. Forced separation (Bramble bank or equivalent)
88. Figure of 8 races
89. Square races
90. Riverbank – stay within the define boundaries
91. Minimum manoeuvres each leg (i.e. tack/ gybe)
92. Anchored starts
93. Invite a RO from somewhere else
94. Navigation race series
95. No spinnaker race
96. Beginners racing
97. All sails must be used
98. Standing up race
99. Turbo – 1 lap very short (under 10mins) combined times for a team prize
100. 3-2-1 starts
101. Hare and tortoise
102. Multi class teams
103. Offshore picnic races
104. Junior races
105. Jousting
106. Balloon races
107. No marks, GPS course
108. 12 hour races
109. Blindfold races (crew directs helm)

2. Further ideas from the research I did in preparation for the session.

1. Snakes and Ladders:
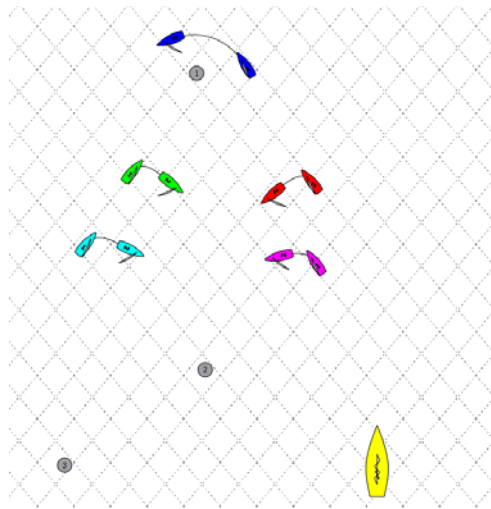
Set a startline with a windward/leeward course.

The rule is that when the leading boat gets to the windward mark, then everyone else bears away and heads to the leeward mark. This will keep mixing the fleet up and avoid a processional type of race. Three or four laps are ideal, with a downwind finish using the startline to keep it simple.

2. Buddy Race:

If you have a reasonable sized class fleet (not handicap), about ten or more boats, then you could try a Buddy race. For example, you have twenty Lasers, then using a previous set of race results divide them into the top half and bottom half (you might not tell them this to protect their egos!) Then pair them up, so number one would coach number eleven, number two would coach number twelve etc. like this:

Coaches	Sailors
1	11
2	12
3	13
4	14
5	15
6	16
7	17
8	18
9	19
10	20

It is then the responsibility of the coach to do the following:

- Discuss the conditions and forthcoming race with their sailor (buddy).
- Follow the sailor around the race course, without interfering with the race in anyway.

- Debrief the race with the sailor afterwards to help them learn from that race

You can always swap them around for the next race so that the buddies get to watch the top half race. It's advisable to keep the races short for this format.

3. Team Sailing:
   - Put 2 sailors in a singlehanded boat.
   - The sailors sit in the bottom of the boat facing each other across the boat.
   - The leeward sailor must steer the boat.
   - The windward person must make the decisions/call the tactics.

4. PAC Man
   - All the boats, except the PAC Man (a fast sailor) start in the usual way.
   - The PAC Man starts 30seconds later, or an agreed suitable time delay.
   - Each time a PAC Man passes a sailor then that sailor is out of the race.
   - Use a short course.
   - Consider a drifting windward mark if the PAC Man can't catch up very easily (Assuming there isn't strong tide this is).

5. Random or Mix-it-Up Team Racing:
   - If you have a doublehanded or singlehanded fleet then you could organise team racing, using normal fleet racing rules and last boat loses to keep it simple.
   - Draw names out of a hat for random pairings or have a rota system to mix-it-up so that during the series everyone sails with everyone.

6. Handicap Racing:
   - If you use handicap racing then review how accurate the handicaps are in practice at your club and consider changing them to level the racing.
   - Consider awarding personal handicaps, similar to golf, to make racing more challenging.