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Race Management Newsletter

Issue No. 37
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Contents

| | <u>Page</u> |
|---|--------------|
| RYA Race Management Group | 3 |
| Services | 3 |
| RYA Regional Race Management Co-ordinators | 4 |
| Editor's Comments | 5 |
| Input by Race Management Group Chairman | 5 |
| Attracting and Retaining Racers | 6–8 |
| How Can Race Officers influence Culture | 8 |
| Fixed Time Racing | 9–10 |
| No Discards! Good or Bad for Race Management | 11–12 |
| Dinghy Handicap Racing | 12-13 |
| National Race Officer Training | 13-15 |
| Does Racing need Revitalising? | 15-16 |
| Behaviour at Events | 16-17 |
| Revitalising Club Racing (Also see page 16) | 17 |
| Pre-race Briefing of Competitors | 17-18 |
| Start Lines!!! | 18-19 |
| Legibility of Sail Numbers | 20 |
| Attachments to the Committee Boat | 21 |
| Guidance on Rule 69 | 22 |
| Risk Assessment Template/Example | 23-30 |

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Services

If you would like to receive this Newsletter regularly, then let Joanne Moulton at the RYA know, and she will put your name on the mailing list. (If you are a qualified RRO or NRO you will automatically be e-mailed a copy from your Race Management Co-ordinator. Please keep him informed of your current e-mail address.

The Race Management Group is always available to give you help and advice on any aspect of Race Management, from helping you to check your Club or Open Meeting Sailing Instructions or advising you on what you need to do to run a major event.

Do not hesitate to ask for help. Contact John Derbyshire at the RYA or any of the Committee members listed on page 1 or the Race Management Co-ordinators listed below.

Your Regional Race Management Co-ordinator is listed below. They arrange training seminars for your region. Contact them for dates and times.

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EDITORS'S COMMENTS

With the amount of material that I have been collecting, the RMG decided that I should bring this edition forward and allow you all to catch up on the Race Management scene before the 2004 season really gets underway. For those of you that attended the NRO Conference in January at Holme Pierrepont the notes of the discussions will come as no surprise, but allow you to reflect upon our discussions. It should be of interest to those of you who were unable to attend.

If any of you wish to read through the full draft 7 of the RYA Guidance on Rule 69, Allegations of Gross Misconduct – a 9 page document, please contact Trevor Lewis on Email: TrevorLewis@trevorlewisnorich.freeseve.co.uk
It really is a very useful document to have around the Yacht Club.

Another Computer starting system has been brought to my knowledge and a great deal of thought has gone into it. It is written in Visual Basic Professional Version 6 that can be loaded on a lap-top computer and fully controlled by the Race Officer. For those with interest, please contact Tony Paul email: tony.paul@btinternet.com or Tel: 02392 643038

I will publish my next Newsletter for Christmas reading. It will allow me to generate notes from the discussion at a Racing Group meeting we are holding at Wyboston in early December. So if you have anything that you wish to be published, please email me during the Autumn.

Mike Pearson. **Letters, comments and articles for publication should be sent to Mike Pearson, 9 Baylys Road, Oreston PL9 7NQ, or e-mailed to: Mike@baylys.freeseve.co.uk**

INPUT BY THE RACE MANAGEMENT GROUP CHAIRMAN

In early 2004 some 73 senior Race Officers sat down at the National Water sports Centre, Holme Pierrepont, Nottingham, and debated topics of interest to the future of the sport of racing boats. The outcome of several hours work by each of the eight groups is recorded in the following notes.

An apology to some who have seen the results already but the inclusion in the Race Management Newsletter allows a wider audience to view the papers via the RYA web site.

The Groups were set up with distinguished chairmen and secretaries to allow the topics, which support the aims of the RYA Racing Committee to increase not only the amount of racing but also the quality of the events in the sport.

The scope of the debate is from the smallest boats and the youngest competitors to the largest racing keelboats and the mature sailor.

Thank you to all those who contributed to the discussions.

Roger Palmer

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING RACERS.

Group Chairman: Peter Bateson

What do we mean

- Get past racers out racing
- Get new entrants into racing.

The competitor wants a quality focus, the quality of race day must be improved to cause racers to continue and increase their racing.

Quality comes at all levels

- The Welcome. The club the car park sets the tone.
- The Notice of Race and Si's these must be immaculately prepared. Use standard Si so there are no surprises, as the competitors tend not read them.
- Briefings are terribly important, should what to say be taught? In one Etchells championship the OOD gave a letter to the competitors on his policies. This was given out at the briefing
- Rapport is needed between the race officer and racers, Socialise with sailors, avoid Ivory Towers.
- Whole year is important for the dissemination of information. Enquiries must be dealt with quickly.
- Get the course right. XOD class captain discusses courses with OOD.
- The standard of Club events is not up to open meeting standard. Standards need improving.
- Inform competitors on OCS procedure. Tell people if they are over the line. Communication is Key.
- The social program is important
- Instead of OCS on long distance races give a time penalty. Do not put boats out.
- Get results out quickly. Give out copied and post to web sites
- Racing dates should be published in good time
- Try to make racing this week better than last; does the race officer know enough? Were the courses good enough?
- Have the class secretary meet with clubs; beware of part time jockey race officers with little input.
- Race organising committees should have a competitor representative to ensure the racers get the racing they require.

Get the offering right!

- Entry fees and prizes need to be right. People seem prepared to pay proportionately more for short regattas than long ones.
- Dual Scoring for IRC/PY. To add interest to races
- Co ordination of fixtures.
- Person Handicaps can be run alongside the regular results. First up is the personal handicap winner.
- Supper after racing is popular.
- Spot prizes can be used. Given to a place at random. Or set place say 20% + 1
- People happy to start off a beach, they do not want a long sail to the start area.
- Have an expert mentoring a novice or a buddy scheme.

- Make it easy to go sailing, not pulling boats far.
- Video links can be used at marks linked to the club.
- Gifts / freebies caps event logo's on clothing

The problems

- People will not return if they do not feel safe "I will not go there they only had one rib".
- If competitors do not know race dates early they cannot book accommodation.
- Notice of race often issued late. Pre notice of race posters can help.
- Bad behaviour
- Bad race management; if this is bad it leads to bad behaviour off the water.
- Entry fees. Explain in detail what you are getting for your money. Berthing, reception, entertainment. Charge only what the market will bear. Explain the facilities
- When boats are based in Marinas it is hard to get them into one clubhouse in one place.
- Club or Class open meetings, which do, I attend.
- All the best young sailors are at Youth Squads not available to the clubs.
- When youth sailors return to their clubs they are dissatisfied at the quality of racing.

Other factors

- Look to class rules to restrict cost e.g. sail purchases.
- Other members of the sailing family (those ashore) need to be looked after.
- Manufacturers classes' lack of measurement rules assists competitors. Make it easy!
- No facilities to store or work on boats at home on modern estates.
- Average lap racing a must so the slowest boats are not penalised/ run out of wind. This is a far more friendly system.
- The strength of the class association helps participation. Dragons get money from sail labels.
- E Mail. Collect the crews e-mail addresses as they can be contacted and chase the helm into entering.

New Racers

Make it easy!

- Racing Rules generally are not known by newcomers this is an impediment.
- Popular races can grow from a poster. Off beach race at Tenby grown to 100 per day these are holidaymakers.
- Class Associations have a role in attracting owners and sailors.
- Multiple boat ownership helps turnout, and gets new crews.
- Membership, do you need to be a member of a club to compete in your first race? A difficulty for new cruisers.
- Get TV and paper coverage
- International success enhances participation.
- Open days take people onto the water. If they join then no entry fee.
- Give people a taster; make it easy, so they do not think it hard.
- Non-spinnaker races can sometimes be popular for newcomers.
- Some people do not want to own the will pay to rent. Pay to play.
- Advertise at Sailing Schools.

Action Points

- Prepare a starter Rules lecture.
- Add the importance of Race Briefings to the Race officer syllabus.
- Do clubs need training on Race management? The consensus is that more racers would appear if the offering from Clubs were improved. Do we need an article, booklet or web advice?
- Remind clubs that the race experience stretches from the enquiry, notice of race to the posting of results.
- The correct handling of OCS calls has a bearing on race quality. Prioritise in lectures.

Peter Bateson

HOW CAN RACE OFFICERS INFLUENCE CULTURE? Group Chairman: Philip Gage. Secretary David Lees

We defined our brief as being asked to consider how race officers should relate to the competitors. We acknowledged that the race management team should look at the competitors as their customers. They should be seen as approachable, identifiable, and friendly and above all fair and unbiased.

It is important to be involved with the planning of the event from early on. They should be responsible for the Notice of Race and the Sailing Instructions, following the requirements of the class, but trying to modify any that are out of date or irrelevant. A website discussion on some issues can be useful. At that stage they should find out the requirements of the class as to the racing, e.g. the length of the courses, time for each race, etc.

The briefings both to the competitors and the race management team are vital.

So far as the competitors' briefing is concerned the race officer should be friendly but make it clear that he is in charge. There is a great divergence on what is said. Every race officer seems to have a different agenda. It was suggested that a 'crib-sheet' should be supplied by the RYA to get standardisation.

The race management team's briefing should set out the team's objectives. It should also stress that the event is meant to be fun for the team as well as the competitors.

The race officer should be approachable and available throughout the regatta. It is important that the competitors should know who he is and know that they can talk to him if they want to.

If there are acts of indiscipline or cheating by competitors it is important to stamp on it by the use of Rule 69 or Rule 2. This can help the relationship between the class and the race officer and can be popular with the other competitors.

FIXED TIME RACING. **AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH THAT LETS EVERYONE GET TO THE PARTY.**

Chairman: Malcolm Mckeag

Traditional, conventional racing for mixed fleets of offshore boats racing on handicap requires all the boats to sail the same, fixed, distance, and calculates the results on the basis of the variations in the time that it has taken. A boat that, for whatever reason, does not or cannot complete the fixed distance (often within a time limit) does not get a result.

Fixed Time Racing reverses the process and requires all boats to race for the same, fixed, time and calculates the results on the variations in the distance they have covered. No matter what distance has been covered, all boats that have raced for the fixed time get a result.

FTR is not intended to replace conventional offshore racing - but it can provide a useful alternative that has some advantages both in convenience and, indeed, in fairness - if anyone believes that fairness has any place in offshore racing in the first place.

Convenience

All participants, from competitors through race committee to party organisers to those driving the pick-up cars, know not only when the race will start, but when it will finish and thus plan their day or weekend accordingly.

Fairness

Some, at least, of the lottery element - especially in the matter of tidal gates - is if not eliminated then at least ameliorated. This is especially true for those races that traditionally finish some way up a tidal estuary or river. Too often those results are simply the entry list in rating order (when the big boats get in before the ebb sets in, leaving the smaller boats to struggle against an increasing adverse stream) or the entry list in reverse rating order, when the opposite has happened.

Everyone can have a result, no matter what the wind does. There is no need for anyone (usually the smaller boats) to give up and retire because they will never finish the course in time.

How It Works

Every boat is set the same course, as is normal. At the prescribed fixed finish time each boat logs its position: this can either be done by self-observation and declaration, or by using a tamper-proof automatic device called a Course-Logger either interfaced with the boat's own gps or using a built-in gps. Self-declaration is the easier and simpler of the two methods and requires no special equipment other than gps, which virtually all boats likely to take part will already have. The automated route requires special equipment and need be taken only for events where the stakes are too high to rely on uncorroborated evidence to find the winner.

At the end of the fixed time boats head for their preferred destination by whichever route and under whatever power suits them best. This can be home or - more usually, since this is a large part of the point in running a fixed time race in the first place - to the agreed destination, in time for the party.

The position logs or declarations are handed in, and the race navigator plots the position of each boat. This can be done simply on a paper chart, or is more conveniently done using a Yeoman plotter. Whatever means is used, the distance to go to along the rhumb line course to the destination

(including any turning marks and course legs not yet completed) is calculated, and subtracted from the overall rhumb-line course distance. This gives the rhumb-line distance sailed. This is divided by the time taken to achieve the distance, which gives average speed made good.

(Speed made good is used rather than simply using the distance sailed so as to give a result for boats that have sailed the entire course within the fixed time.) The average speed made good is divided by the boat's normal time correction factor, multiplier, co-efficient or whatever the handicapping system being used calls it, to find the corrected average speed. The boat with the highest corrected average speed is the winner.

The Course

Clearly, a straight-line course from start to finish is the simplest on which to calculate the winner, but it is no less possible to use a course with as many turning marks and legs as is desired. Indeed, such a course can reap the most benefit if the marks are chosen so that, once the time is up, all boats will have about the same distance to motor-sail to the destination no matter how far round the race track they got before Time was called.

When the course is published, the official rhumb-line distance for each leg should also be published. Each mark becomes a waypoint for the purposes of finding the distance still to be sailed, then doing the subtraction. In theory it should be no more difficult to measure the distance back to the start, and find the distance made good that way. For some reason, most courses used by this fixed time race organiser have leant themselves to doing it the other way.

Plotting the positions at Time

Strictly, one should plot the position then take it across to the rhumb line before producing the dividers. In practice (and using a Yeoman) it seems just as easy to measure the distance direct to the next charted destination (finish or intermediate way-point) and use that. It doesn't really matter,

so long as all positions are treated the same way. The beauty of being able to use a Yeoman to do this is that as well as making the plotting easy, and providing the waypoint is put into the Yeoman first, simply pressing the little button with the protractor on it produces the course and distance from that point to the waypoint.

Variable start times

For the annual Routes des Moules rally organised by the Royal Thames with Alderney Yacht Club, which takes a wide variety of racers and cruisers from The Solent to Alderney and wants them there for a dinner (featuring, of course, the eponymous Moules) we use a fixed time of 12 hours, but allow

boats to start any time they choose between 2000 Friday and 0800 Saturday. This adds a nice little weather-forecasting/ navigational conundrum to the contest, but is done primarily because little boats want 24 hours to be sure of getting from The Solent to Alderney, even under motor for part of the

time, and big boats are comfortable with 12 hours for the 86-mile course. Each boat declares its start time, and position after 12 hours sailing. One or two actually do the whole course in less than 12 hours, and declare not their position after 12 hours (which might well be in the bar) but their

finish time. When fixed distance racing was used for the event, we never got the entire fleet to Alderney in time for the party. Now, no one has had to miss it.

Malcolm McKeag

Royal Thames Yacht Club: e-mail malcolm@royalthames.com for more information or advice on using Fixed Time scoring.

NO DISCARDS GOOD OR BAD FOR RACE MANAGEMENT

Chairman: Jonathon Peel

The group addressed the following 10 listed items.

1. The competitor's position and views
 2. The effect on Club races
 3. The effect of gear failures
 4. The effect of tactical disqualification
 5. Comparison to other sports
 6. Abuse of discards
 7. The effect on the Race Officer's job
 8. Implications to sponsorship
 9. Effect on results production
 10. The effect of morale
-
1. It was the groups' opinion that the competitors would prefer to have discards and from the reaction within Scuttlebut this seems to be the majority decision and we should listen to our customers.
 2. Whilst the group felt that a very short series of two possibly three races could well benefit from no discards certainly a longer series, particularly in club racing, it was vital to have discards to allow for the possibility of non-attendance to some races.
 3. If a boat suffered gear failure, particularly in the first race, without a discard the series would end for that competitor.
 4. No discard could encourage the practice of tactical disqualification, i.e. by forcing an opponent into an impossible situation, i.e. forcing a boat over the line in a black flag situation would encourage the practice of tactical disqualification and as a result would be an unfair method of racing.
 5. It was felt that sailing did not directly compare to any other sport, but it was noted that some sports, which did not offer the opportunity of discard i.e. motor racing, their scoring system was very different to compensate for the lack of discard.
 6. An abuse of discards can occur as a result of boats failing to protest or declare their infringement of the rules in fear of losing the protest or retirement.
 7. It was considered that the Race Officer's job would become harder, the Race Officer would be under more pressure to get fairer starts and would probably consider avoiding the use of alternative penalties. It was likely that competitors would question the OCS call at every opportunity and would lead to a change in attitude of a competitor towards the Race Officer if there were no discard situation creating more redress hearings.
 8. Sponsorship was considered together with the effect on spectators. It was considered that there were few spectators expecting the result to come from a final race together with

sponsors who felt it was exposure of their name and not the final race that gave them the advertising.

9. It was considered that there would be no effect on the production of results as these were generally computer generated, it was therefore immaterial whether there was or was not a discard.
10. One considered whether there was an effect on morale, particularly to younger sailors, the group felt that if they found themselves disqualified or removed from a series by gear failure particularly in the first race of a series, then this may have an effect on morale.

The conclusion of the group was that no discards would have a detrimental effect on the ethos of the sport.

It should be noted that following the groups' conclusions it was found that in the Bacardi Cup Series, which had no discards, many rule infringements occurred from which neither boats retired nor protested for fear of ending their series there and then. We consider this point further upholds the groups' decision.

Jonathan Peel

Dinghy Handicap Racing Chairman: Peter Taylor

- Handicap operates best over a series – evens out tide / wind-strength differences
- Recommended for club racing only – apart from novelty events like Bloody Mary, Tiger Trophy
- Personal Handicaps – recommended even for One Designs run in parallel
- Large fleets – split into Fast / Medium / Slow / possibly Asym/ Possibly multihulls
- Good balance of legs – handicap system designed around beating running AND reaching.

Average Lap Racing

Small fleets - wide range possibly small race area - consider avg lap racing

1. Must be short laps – high lap count
2. Must be small fleets to keep accurate track of lap counts
3. Can have multiple starts - split on either skill or speed.
4. Technology helps
 - a. Personal handicaps
 - b. Lap Counts

Pursuit racing

Drawbacks

- long start sequence
- Resource intensive – too many race officers required?
-

3 levels

1. single line
2. sweepback finish
3. Multiple finishes for large events
4. Good fun – should be considered for variety. Consider personal handicap for a series.

Decision Tree to drive choice

- Race Committee Programming issue – needs training in handicap type

Keelboat Handicap Racing

Handicap is best over a series – evens out tide, wind influence.

Split fleets to minimise range

Think about tidal influence on windward leeward legs – need to achieve balance between reaching, running and beating

Tide (generally) determines which type of boat wins.

Ideally

- Keep legs short – more social
- Keep range down
- Short race first – then longer race last.

Personal Handicaps at club level – run in parallel with base rating system – e.g. IRC.

NATIONAL RACE OFFICER TRAINING IS TOO TECHNICAL AND CULTURE – WHAT CAN RACE OFFICERS DO TO AFFECT THIS

Chairman: William Jeffcoate

What are the requirements of a NRO ?

The technical skills and knowledge of a race officer are the same for club racing, open meetings and at national events. Indeed, it can be much harder running racing on a busy club Sunday than at a national championship.

The special requirements for NRO (as opposed to a CRO or RRO) are, therefore:

- Competence, which requires experience
- Ability to work away in an unfamiliar environment (away from home club)
- Ability to run races on the sea

However, the NRO must also have other skills, and to consider these we considered the second of our two set questions (How the RO can affect the culture of the race), and concluded that they needed *person management skills* necessary to help people have an enjoyable day's racing, including:

- Being firm, but friendly – having authority without being authoritarian
- Respected, efficient
- Exercising common sense

- Good communication with competitors and others before, during and after racing

Thus, our vision of the requirements of an NRO encompassed all of the above.

Training

We then considered the training necessary, but referred the term, *coaching*. The word was chosen to emphasise that people needed more than just teaching at a one-off course: it was a longitudinal process, requiring support and encouragement from mentors.

Selection

The opportunities for race officer training (RRO as much as NRO) needed to be much better advertised. People needed to know that the option was available to them, and encouraged to train. It was currently very difficult for RROs to get the experience necessary to qualify as NROs (just as for regional judges to become national judges) – mainly because they were not aware of ARO jobs that might be available. A message board for AROs wanted/available should be created on the RYA website (or a list emailed regularly to RROs) as soon as possible.

Other aspects of coaching

All the necessary skills and knowledge needed to be covered, and training needed to be more clearly structured – possibly by the use of a curriculum or a log book. ROs should also be given more feedback and thanks. We suggested the adoption of RO feedback forms for some events – with competitors or class organisations being asked *at the event* to complete a simple (eg 5 point) questionnaire on RO performance: efficiency, communication, star lines, course setting in the conditions etc

Assessment

None of the above requirements could be tested in an examination. The ability to determine whether someone had the

- person management skills
- technical ability
- competence away from home, and
- ability to run races on the sea

could only be assessed while they were running races. Hence the process required

- 1 Submission of CV
- 2 Personal endorsement by an appropriate supervisor
- 3 Possibly, the submission of class feedback forms

Summary

We did not feel that training was inappropriately technical, although understood the points behind the email which led to the topic being selected for debate. There were points of emphasis which might be improved. We felt that the points we'd made covered the issues which the writer of that email had raised. We wanted to emphasise the need to encourage people to train as ROs, and to make it both easier and more rewarding for them, and made the following specific recommendations:

- Better advertisement of training opportunities
- Creation of an ARO available/wanted message board – possibly emailed regularly (eg monthly) to all RROs
- More structured training
- Consideration of class feedback forms for Open Meetings

William Jeffcoate
 1st February 2004
jeffcoate@bigfoot.com

Editors Note: The RMG are currently reviewing all aspects of the current RM structure and hope to publish the new requirements for the RRO and NRO in the Autumn and to come into practise January 2005.

DOES RACING NEED REVITALISING (RESUSCITATING)
Group Chairman: Frank Newton

| | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------|
| Group size: | Two Staff + eight | |
| Breakdown: | Four IROs, Six RROs. Five Tidal, Five Inland | |
| Problems at Club | Four-Yes, | Four- No |
| Waiting list | Seven-No, | One-Yes |
| Sailability | Four-Yes, | Four-No |
| Sailboards | Four-Yes, | Four-No |
| Personal Watercraft | No | |

Conclusions

1. Run Adult & Youth Race Training. The trained Youth move on at University age & put little back into Club. Most of Junior/Youth squad members race away from Club
2. In areas where there is a lot of small Clubs, they must combine to produce a good strong structured Club that has a better ability to put on good racing.
3. Attempt to encourage fleet racing, but success can be produced by a well run varied programme with Average Lap timed races, Pursuit races, and Handicap races
4. Attempt shorter races and more of them., keep them well managed.
5. Promote fleet racing from within a Handicap fleet, all start together, but with four or more in a class give them their Class result as well as their Handicap corrected result.
6. Talk to competitors by a PA system on the water.
7. Post the Wind Frequency chart after the race.

8. Allow an end of season 'feed-back' meeting and build constructive ideas into the next programme.

Frank Newton/ Mike Pearson

BEHAVIOUR AT EVENTS

Chairman: Roger Wilson

Problems (On Power Point presentation by Roger Wilson)

- Bullying on the water – especially towards girls.
Puts new youngsters to the sport off
- Protesting – Creates bad feeling
 - Bullied
 - Ostracised
- Causes of bad behaviour – Lying is 'Part of the Game' at protest hearings etc.
- Pressure to win at all costs.

Solutions

- Umpiring – On the water arbitrator
- Have Charter – Good Behaviour
- Guide lines for Best Practice
- Mentors – In clubs and group
- Mediators – In clubs and groups, discuss rule infringements between the two parties before considering an official protest.

Coming Soon – New Appendix in Racing Rules, Arbitration System (Judging on the water) Tribunal

Rule 69 – Same interpretation throughout the country. - Guide Lines to all clubs.

Advisory Service (RYA) – R.O. advisory service is it practical.
Works in other areas i.e. Judges.

Discussion Groups – Good but could be flooded with E-mails. Better to have one person as chief mentor.

Effects

Less numbers sailing.

Punishment

Rule 2 – a bit too drastic.

Conclusion

RM Charter – Fair Course
Fair Start lines

Rules Observance by Sailing Committee
No Bullying

Appendix X - Arbitration
could be used in place of protests.

Best Practice - Good Planning
(RO Environment) Two way communication
Provide Fun, Fair racing
Honesty, openness
Short time on the water
Continued skill development.

2nd Topic – REVITALISING CLUB RACING

1. Provide FUN, FAIR, SAFE Sailing
2. Encouraging New Racers by:
 - a. Improving skills
 - b. Introduction to racing courses
 - c. Personal handicap systems
 - d. Equipment rental
 - e. Mentor newcomers or Buddy system
- 3 Retaining present racers
 - a. Skill improvement
 - b. Mentor Boat/Class
 - c. Mentor transition from Junior/Youth groups to Club scene
 - d. Support one design racing
 - e. Adjust PY numbers!

Pre-Race Briefing of Competitors

Is first opportunity to make an impression, and needs to be 'competitor friendly'. It can be anything from an informal chat, to a Power Point presentation with pictorial slides. It should not repeat the SIs, but can draw out key points.

Safety issues need to be emphasised, particularly for youth events, and in light of likely weather/tidal conditions.

The following points might be included in the briefing.

Welcome to Club & Event by Chairman (of Organising Committee or Race Committee) Once briefing goes to sailing matters the Race Officer takes over.

- Introduce key people in race team, Race Officer ,Asst RO , Course layer, beachmaster & club staff etc – some of these may need to say a few words.
- Introduce Jury/Protest Committee Chairman– who may need to say a few special words of welcome- and who introduces the members of the Jury/protest committee.
- Domestic arrangements – boat parking, food, entertainment, etc.

- Location of Official Notice Board and Flag Signals.
- Signing on/off or Tallying
- Advise time for launching.
- Launching restrictions (if any)
- Directions/distance/time to race area (chart)
- Introduce safety officer
- Local Dangers – eg. Wrecks, rocks, shoal water..
- Describe committee boat (photograph) and other race committee boats
- Need to pass close to CB on arrival for number registering
- Need to notify retirement
- Invite questions.
- Enjoy the event!

HOW LONG SHOULD BE OUR PIECE OF STRING?

Increasingly I am beginning to ponder on the length of start line that I should provide at events. Circumstances seem to have changed. Input from fellow PROs is invited.

In former years, at a major Championship, the courses provided were long. In the Finn Class I raced the old 'triangle, sausage, triangle' with a two mile windward leg. Yet in the late sixties I recall at the Gold Cup there was never a start line long enough for all to fit in. We had two rows, and the less experienced and less confident (and less able) like myself were even on a third row. Indeed this led to the 'Patrick Pym' affair where, in desperation at being repeatedly man handled upon the line, Patrick lifted his paddle in anger. The years passed and the formula devised for start line length became *Number of boats X Length of boat X 1.2 or 1.3 whatever*. The '1.something' being designed to provide a little bit extra for good measure.

The result could be a very long line. At the Contender Worlds at Weymouth in 1996 with an entry of 120 boats the starting line became 700 yards, which presented difficulties in identifying premature starters. A start time, scheduled for 12.00 hours, which is just when the sea breeze kicked in each day, in SE winds this resulted in competitors selecting the Committee Boat end of the line in a wind that was veering rapidly. 10 or 15 degrees of port end line bias was of no interest to competitors!

In recent years many classes have seen numbers at events fall. However the current vogue for short 'wham / bam / sorry Sam' courses brings its own problems. The ratio of the length of the start line to the length of the first windward leg becomes more significant. A long line with a short

first leg makes for more concentration at the favoured end of the line. This is demonstrated by there being gaps at one or other end of the line. Often the bias will change just in time for the competitors to spot it when the wind chart for the past hour has seemed reliable. With only one class involved there will be the opportunity to change line bias and windward mark positions.

However with sequential starts of a number of classes it is Sod's Law that the change will come after the first start is away. If timing average laps with fast, medium and slow groups starting at intervals the course has to remain the same, but how long should the line be? In events with several Olympic classes on a trapezoid course starting at five minutes intervals the line length remains the same, since there is no time to change it between classes. But does the length of the line have to be to the '*number of boats X length X 1.something*' factor for the class, or h'cap group' with the biggest entry Or can the RO select a shorter line that will be ideal for the classes with less entries, but crowded for those with more competitors?

Indeed does it matter? It's the same for everyone. So if I select a start line length based upon '*number of boats X length X 0.5*' is that unfair? Indeed does providing a long line not spoil the chances of a competitor with the skill and rules knowledge to secure a prime front row position, and thus be ahead of at least half of the fleet at the start?

There are some classes where the starting tactics are dictated by the characteristics of the boat. 18ft. Skiffs can be guaranteed (provided the windward mark is to windward, and any tidal allowance has been made) to line up on stbd at the CB end.

Catamaran classes tend to be way off the line until the last moment, stacked up off the CB's starboard quarter. Optimists spread along the line going ahead, or astern (!) as required. However for many classes there has still to be made a decision as to what is a 'proper' line length.

I may be becoming less confident in old age. But on the basis of becoming also sadder and wiser I would welcome feedback from fellow RO's. I had hoped to raise this matter and listen to the opinion of colleagues at the Forum at Holme Pierrepont but this was not to be. If you would like to write me, or E-mail, or phone to the addresses below I would be most interested to have your views upon line length in relation to various types of courses and events. Maybe the RMG will provide a questionnaire to which we can respond to provide some sort of consensus of opinion?

For the time being at Championship events I will continue with the '*number of boats X length X one for the pot*'. I had thought that line length would not be a problem during Burton Week this year in Weymouth for the National 12's, then I remembered that in a 'Gate Start' I shall still have to decide how many minutes to post on Sorebones to indicate when the Pathfinder RIB comes to a halt.

You can't win!

Frank Newton
frank@sorebones.freeseve.co.uk

LEGALITY OF SAIL NUMBERS

There is an increasing problem, particularly in keelboat fleets with unreadable sail numbers on modern sailcloths. Dinghy fleets are not immune from this, and there are also a number of asymmetric classes that do not legislate in class rules to put sail numbers on their kites. Both these problems create major difficulties for Race Officers, and it is time to act to improve the situation.

In keelboat fleets, there is a growing tendency for sailmakers to use grey or red sail numbers on dark grey cloth, white numbers on grey cloth, or (the worst I have so far seen), dark purple sail numbers on near black cloth - unreadable even at 10 boat lengths.

With modern materials, looking at the sail on the floor does not give a good idea of how it will look when flown. Either white or black has actually proven to be most legible. Generally if the sail is opaque white is best and if translucent black is best, even on a carbon sail, although almost unreadable on the loft floor.

A boat that is not correctly identified on a finish line because of difficult-to-read sail numbers is not entitled to redress, as a valid claim for redress depends on there being no fault on the part of the competitor. Particularly where a competitor has been warned that his sail numbers are insufficiently readable, there would certainly be no grounds for redress. To help things along, a number of clubs organising Solent events (lead by the R.O.R.C.) are now warning competitors after each event that they will be protested at the next event run by the same club if they fail to improve the legibility of their sail numbers. Competitors should not be disqualified – yet, but they should be warned and given time to comply. And they should be informed in the warning that they will not be entitled to redress if their numbers are unreadable.

For dinghies, a similar clause in the Notice of Race to the effect that redress will not be given in the event of misidentification on the finish line if the sail numbers are not sufficiently readable is all that is required to set the ball rolling. Again competitors can be individually warned if their sail numbers are not a standard colour which makes them less readable than normal.

A number of Asymmetric classes such as the 49er and 29er do not have numbers on their spinnakers as it is not a requirement of the class rules. At the same time these classes insist on courses finishing downwind with asymmetric flying. This make life nearly impossible for the Race Officer, and it is time to act unilaterally to force the classes to legislate – however even if they decline we can override the class rules. All that is required is to put a clause in the Notice of Race for major events requiring sail numbers on both sides of the Asymmetric in the same size as the mainsail numbers. This is not too onerous a requirement, as many classes ink in their spinnaker numbers using indelible marker pens, and it would be advisable to have some of these available at event registration just in case.

In a short time, the sailmakers and classes will have learnt what is and what is not acceptable to Race Officers, and the problem will disappear. Can I ask you all to help your fellow Race Officers by implementing these simple steps.

Jamie Wilkinson : RMG

ATTACHMENTS TO STARTING MARKS

The case is to be found on the RYA website in the 'rules' section as 2003/2. It was our best attempt at a compromise between the definitions in the RRS, the views of ISAF RRC and the wishes of RYA RMG.

The summary says:

(An object attached to the starting or finishing mark) shall be considered as part of the mark provided that, for the duration of the starting or finishing period, it is secured to the committee vessel to minimise its movement.

Question 3 asks:

Does (the general acceptance of an object attached to the committee boat for that time as being part of the mark) apply to a dinghy tied to the stern of a committee vessel by a painter so that it is separated from the committee boat by some distance?

Answer:

No. Any object to be included in the description of the mark, whether expressedly or by implication, must be close enough to the committee boat for it to be considered as part of the same entity.

If you take Q&A in isolation, I don't think it justifies an interpretation that a rib can be secured to a CV only athwartships. It was intended to retain the validity of a long-standing RYA case that said you were not considered to have touched a mark if you touched a dinghy attached to the CV on a longish painter. The summary is meant to reflect that, and not to say anything further. We will review the summary when the Case Book is revised for 2005.

While it might seem odd for the status of the attachment to depend on the length of a piece of string, the alternative would be that any dinghy/rib, so attached, and regardless of the length of painter, would rank as part of the mark. That struck RRG as pushing the definition of a mark too far.

The main problem is that the real solution would be a rule change, which the RYA tried, and ISAF turned down.

Trevor Lewis
Chairman, Racing Rules Group

RYA RACING CHARTER **GUIDANCE ON RULE 69 (April 2004)**

Rule 69 is used by the sport of sailboat racing to control and penalise unacceptable behaviour at an event. It covers on and off-the-water behaviour.

Protest committees may receive reports from other competitors, officials, and spectators, or may initiate action of their own accord. If proceeding with a rule 69 hearing, the protest committee must promptly inform the competitor in writing of the alleged misconduct.

Allegations have to be proven “beyond reasonable doubt” under rule 69. Sailors are entitled, and encouraged, to have a parent, coach or friend accompany them at the hearing.

If the protest committee decides that the competitor did commit the alleged misconduct, it may issue a warning, or may penalise the sailor. If it does penalise the sailor, this penalty is reported to the RYA which, in the most serious cases, may further penalise the sailor.

The following levels of penalties are available to protest committees following receipt of a rule 69 report (levels 1 to 5 follow a hearing):

- 0: Interview with competitor, but no hearing
- 1: Warning but no penalty
- 2: Increase competitor’s points score
- 3: Disqualify competitor from race or races
- 4: Disqualify competitor from event
- 5: Disqualify competitor from event and recommend further action by RYA.

The table below illustrates the types of alleged behaviour that will lead to a rule 69 hearing, and the likely penalty if the allegation is proven. The range of penalty allows the seriousness of the offence, and the attitude of the competitor, to be taken into account.

| Report allegation liable to lead to rule 69 hearing | <i>Range of penalty</i> |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Knowingly breaking a rule with intent to gain, and not taking a penalty | 0 – 4 |
| Knowingly breaking a rule when another competitor is aggrieved, and not taking a penalty | 0 – 4 |
| Repeating the same measurement offence with intent | 3 – 5 |
| Bullying, intimidating, and discriminatory behaviour against another competitor | 3 – 5 |
| Lying in a protest hearing | 3 – 5 |
| Foul language: intended to offend, or inappropriate for the occasion or location | 0 – 4 |
| Fighting and assaults | 3 – 5 |
| Intentionally disobeying reasonable request of the organising authority or its officials | 0 – 5 |
| Abuse of officials | 0 – 5 |
| Theft | 4 – 5 |
| Damage or abuse of property | 3 – 5 |

An EXAMPLE OF A GOOD RISK ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE by Jamie Jameson

2003 HAYLING ISLAND INTERNATIONAL 420 WORLDS Risk Assessment

| Hazard affecting PMS | No | Description of Hazard affecting PMS | Areas of maximum risk | Estimated Risk Level Before Measures # | Equivalent Numeric Before Measures N | Likely Impact M | Risk Factor N x M | Control Measures and Assets | Final Risk Assessment |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Launch / Recovery | 1.1 | Lee shore | LR | L | 1 | 1 | 1 | Launch from non lee shore ramps | L |
| | 1.2 | Transit of ramp | LR | L | 1 | 1 | 1 | Beachmaster control | L |
| 2. Collision | 2.1 | Racing boat with racing boat | S | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | RRS | M |
| | | | OC | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | | |
| | | | W | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | | |
| | | | L | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | | |
| | | | G | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | | |
| | | | F | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | | |
| 2.2 | Racing boat with official committee or safety boat | S | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | SI and RRS penalties | L | |
| | | OC | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | |
| 2.3 | Racing boat with spectator boat | CB | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | Briefing of Competitors and known spectator boats | L | |
| | | T | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | |
| | | OC | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | | | |
| 2.4 | Racing boat with other vessel underway | CB | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | Briefing of competitors on local danger areas | M | |
| | | T | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | |
| | | OC | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | | | |
| 2.5 | Racing boat with other vessel on moorings | LR | L | 1 | 1 | 1 | | L | |

| Hazard affecting PMS | No | Description of Hazard affecting PMS | Areas of maximum risk | Estimated Risk Level Before Measures # | Equivalent Numeric Before Measures N | Likely Impact M | Risk Factor N x M | Control Measures and Assets | Final Risk Assessment |
|-----------------------|-----|--|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | 3.1 | In transit to/from race area | CB | H | 3 | 2 | 6 | Provision of safety boats on Chichester Bar Schedule of races to avoid transit of Bar at max tidal flow times | M |
| | 3.2 | During Race | W G L OC | M H H M | 2 3 3 2 | 1 1 1 1 | 2 3 3 2 | Adequate safety cover commensurate with experience of fleet | M |
| | 3.3 | During tow | T | L | 1 | 1 | 1 | Briefing of tow boats | L |
| | 3.4 | During transit to from race area when boat has arrived late or has retired early | CB T | H M | 3 2 | 2 2 | 6 4 | Club Race Box to watch boat across the bar and to alert if capsizes. Nominated patrol boat to escort to harbour entrance. Advise competitors at briefing of times when most dangerous to cross the bar. | M |
| | 4.1 | Mast breakage | CB T OC | H L M | 3 1 2 | 3 1 2 | 9 1 4 | Avoidance of crossing Bar in known adverse conditions Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots Use of racing areas in depth of water greater than mast length | M L L |
| 3. Capsize | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. Boat Damage | | | | | | | | | |

| Hazard affecting PMS | No | Description of Hazard affecting PMS | Areas of maximum risk | Estimated Risk Level Before Measures # | Equivalent Numeric Before Measures N | Likely Impact M | Risk Factor N x M | Control Measures and Assets | Final Risk Assessment |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--|------------------------------|---|---|------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| | 4.2 | Equipment failure | CB T OC | M M M | 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 | 4 4 4 | Inspection of boats at measurement Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots | L L L |
| 5. Personal Injury | 5.2 | Entrapment after capsize | CB T OC | L L L | 1 1 1 | 3 3 3 | 3 3 3 | Adequate safety cover commensurate with experience of fleet Avoidance of crossing Bar in known adverse conditions Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots RV with Ambulance at HISC Southern Launch Ramp Helo landing area kept clear by Beachmaster First aid equipment in patrol boats | L L L |
| | | | | | | | | Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots First Aid equipment in patrol boats RV with Ambulance at HISC Southern Launch Ramp | L L L |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | 5.2 | Hit by boom | G L | L L | 1 1 | 2 2 | 2 2 | Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots First Aid equipment in patrol boats RV with Ambulance at HISC Southern Launch Ramp | L |

| Hazard affecting PMS | No | Description of Hazard affecting PMS | Areas of maximum risk | Estimated Risk Level Before Measures # | Equivalent Numeric Before Measures N | Likely Impact M | Risk Factor N x M | Control Measures and Assets | Final Risk Assessment |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--|------------------------------|---|---|------------------------|--------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| | 5.3 | Man overboard | CB T OC | M L M | 2 1 2 | 1 1 1 | 2 1 2 | Adequate safety cover commensurate with experience of fleet Curtailment of racing in wind over 25 knots First Aid equipment in patrol boats RV with Ambulance at HISC Southern Launch Ramp | L |
| | 5.4 | During rescue | CB T OC | L L L | 1 1 1 | 2 2 2 | 2 2 2 | Trained patrol boat coxn's First aid equipment in patrol boats | L |
| 6. Weather / Tide | 6.1 | Wind greater than 25 knots | ALL | M | 3 | 2 | 6 | Abandon racing and return to harbour | L |
| | 6.2 | Becalmed | ALL | L | 1 | 1 | 1 | Abandon racing Tow boats to/from race area Secure boats to mother vessels | L |
| | 6.3 | Fog | ALL | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | Study and heed weather forecast | M |
| | 6.4 | Wind against tide on Chichester Bar | CB | H | 3 | 2 | 6 | Time races to avoid boats crossing bar in worst of adverse conditions Provide adequate patrol boats on the Bar during fleet transit | M |

| Hazard affecting PMS | No | Description of Hazard affecting PMS | Areas of maximum risk | Estimated Risk Level Before Measures # | Equivalent Numeric Before Measures N | Likely Impact M | Risk Factor N x M | Control Measures and Assets | Final Risk Assessment |
|----------------------|-----|---|-----------------------|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---|-----------------------|
| | 6.2 | Rising wind causing abandonment when conditions on Chichester Bar are adverse | CB | H | 3 | 2 | 6 | Careful monitoring of weather actual / forecast | M |
| 7. Medical | 7.1 | Fatigue | CB T OC | L L L | 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 | 1 1 1 | Monitor time on water and race length in high energy conditions Remove person to patrol boat and then to shore. Tow in boat | L |
| | 7.2 | Dehydration | ALL | M | 2 | 2 | 4 | Competitor briefing re carriage of liquids | L |
| | 7.3 | Hypothermia | ALL | L | 1 | 2 | 2 | Sl's to make wearing of suitable clothing mandatory Alertness of patrol boat crews First aid equipment in patrol boats | L |

Estimate

H = High

M = Medium

L = Low Risk

N: Equivalent Numeric

H = 3

M = 2

L = 1

W = Windward Mark

OC = On course

S = Start

T = Transit
F = Finish

CB = Chichester Bar
G = Gybe Mark

LR = Launch/recovery
L = Leeward Mark

Areas of Maximum Risk:

M = Medium Risk
H = High Risk

Risk Level Consequence:

L = Low Risk
1 = First Aid only
2 = Paramedic or Ambulance
3 = Serious Injury or Death

Impact - Life - M:

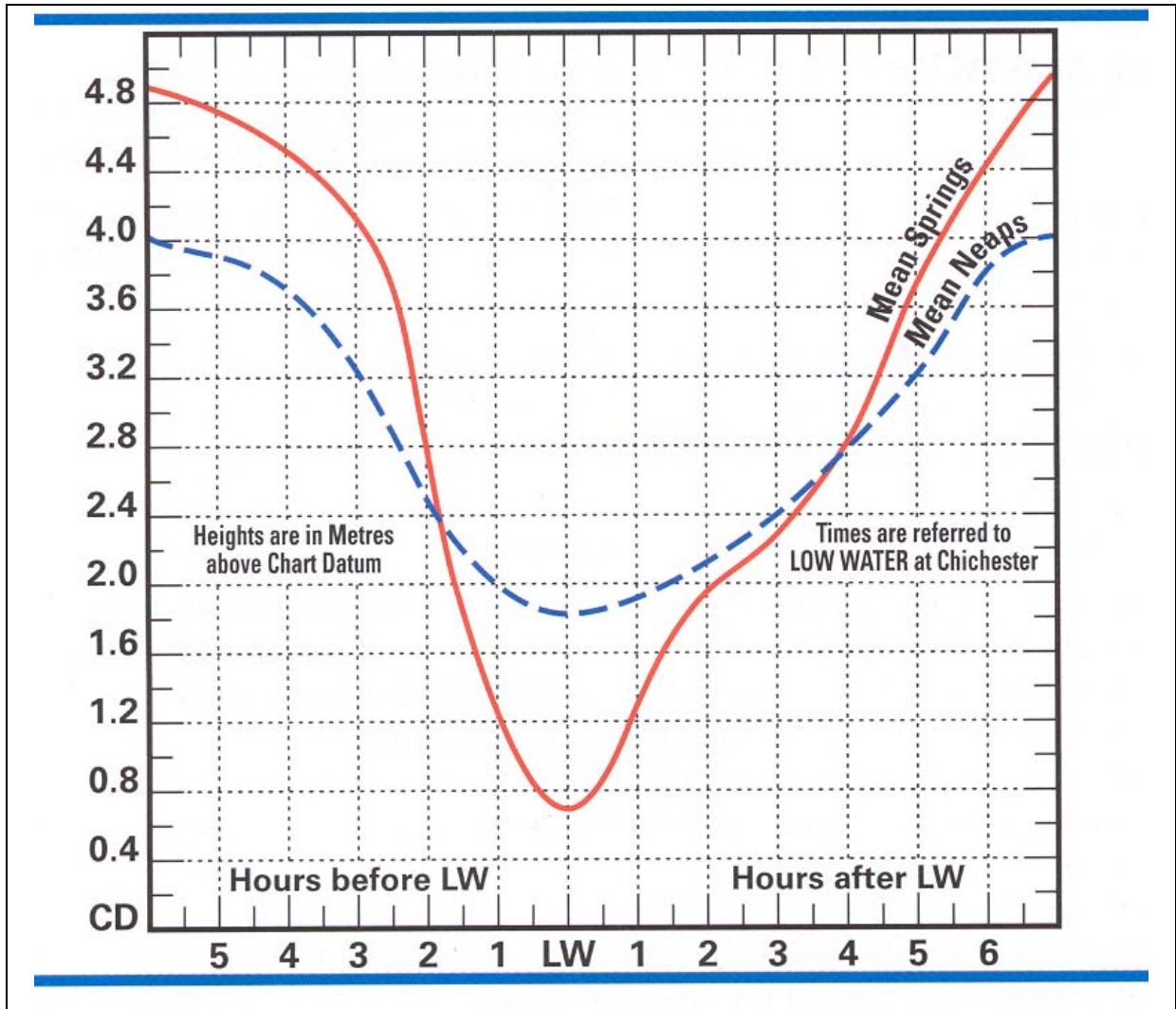
1 = Minor Damage
2 = Repairable Damage
3 = Total Write-Off

Impact - Property - M:

Tide times for pow week

| Date Race Start | | Time | Height | Comments | Risk |
|--|------------|------|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Fri 18 th 1430 | Low Water | 0837 | 1.1 | Out on flood tide Return on flood | Out – Low Back – Low |
| | High Water | 1546 | 4.5 | | |
| Sat 19 th 1300 | Low Water | 0922 | 1.2 | Out on flood tide Return on flood | Out – Low Back – Low |
| | High Water | 1626 | 4.4 | | |
| Sun 20 th 1200 / c1400 | Low Water | 1009 | 1.4 | Out on end of Ebb Return on flood | Out – Medium Back – Low |
| | High Water | 1708 | 4.3 | | |
| Mon 21 st 1300 | Low Water | 1101 | 1.7 | Out on end of Ebb Return on flood | Out – Medium Back – Low |
| | High Water | 1753 | 4.1 | | |
| Tues 22 nd 1200 / c1400 | Low Water | 1159 | 1.8 | Out on Ebb Return on flood | Out – High Back – Low |
| | High Water | 1643 | 4.0 | | |
| Wed 23 rd 1300 | Low Water | 1303 | 2.0 | Out on Ebb Return on end of Ebb | Out – High Back – Medium |
| | High Water | 1945 | 3.9 | | |
| Thurs 24 th 1300 | Low Water | 1417 | 2.0 | Out on start of Ebb Return on Ebb | Out – Medium Back – High |
| | High Water | 0824 | 3.9 | | |

| | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|------|-----|--|--|
| Fri 25 th | Low Water | 1528 | 1.9 | | |
| | High Water | 0936 | 3.8 | | |



| Risk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Saturday | | | | | | █ | █ |
| Sunday | | | | | █ | █ | |
| Monday | | | | █ | █ | █ | |
| Tuesday | | | | █ | █ | █ | |
| Wednes | | █ | █ | █ | █ | █ | |
| Thursda | | | █ | █ | █ | | |
| Friday | | █ | █ | █ | | | |