



## More Racers More Often Chris Atherton

Supported by  Gallagher Heath Insurance Services

Principal product of majority of sailing clubs

The agenda is the same for

- Sport England
- RYA
- Clubs

Firstly the RYA does not hold all the answers!

However, we can

Help facilitate discussion for the sharing of ideas

Share Ideas of best practice

What we have learned as a National Governing Body.



## Dinghy Club Racing

The key focus of most dinghy clubs within England is Racing!

What is happening within the your clubs?

- Are numbers increasing or decreasing?
- What do you see as the challenges / Issues?

Please summaries your findings



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However, we can

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- What we have learned as a National Governing Body.

Issues

Some clubs have managed to increase numbers

Generally numbers going racing where static or had declined with the age profile of the sailors getting slightly older

Time was sighted as a general issue. Perhaps this is most evidenced by the number of clubs whose evening racing was more popular than the weekend racing.

Clubs where looking for ways to get younger people into racing

Length of races, being too long was an issue for lots of clubs.

Single handers numbers where preferred by some club members because of the issues of finding suitable crews.



## What Constrains to delivering Racing

- The location of the club.
  - Size of water
  - Lake
  - River
  - Tidal/Open Water
- Race management
- Members time



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Determined by the conditions we operate in.

Tidal vs Open Water

River

Lake and the size

Race Management (confidence and organisation)

Time of year (evening is most popular time, this informs time constraints of membership)



## Racing - What are the essential elements?

- Please discuss



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The fundamentals to running any racing.

Safe racing, patrol boats, size of course

Good Race management

Appropriate courses for the class and type

Length of time

Clear programme

Clear sailing instructions



## Essential to Racing

- Fun
- Safe racing, patrol boats, size of course
- Good Race management
- Appropriate courses for the class
- Race length
- Clear understanding of the club rules
- Rules adherence
- Accessible
- Appealing to member

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Weekend/Evening / Clearly only work in BS Time

During the workshop the groups identified all the issues on the slides.

In addition we covered the following

Race management is an issue for the following reasons

- Generally volunteers were very mixed in their ability to offer good racing.
- There were very few people who were qualified within the role.
- The RYA offer club race officer courses, but very few people have attended them.
- Clubs generally did not offer much training internally to their volunteers.
- Several people commented on how good the RYA marked layers course is.
- It was agreed that rules observance within club racing was generally poor and detracted from the quality of the racing.
- Delegates were informed of the role of the regional rules coordinator.
- Delegates agreed that a simple guide on how to get involved in club racing for each club would be exceptionally useful.



## Essentials (cont...)

### Communicating with current racers

- Si's are they simple?
- Easy to understand?
- Results
  - Publishing (systems)
  - Trophy series
  - How many sailors qualify
- Website
- Promotion
  - Social media - who's down at the club etc.



## •Communicating with Potential Racers

- Simplicity
- What do I do, how do I get involved
  
- Club Procedures (complicated?)
  - Do I sign on, do I sign off
  - What do I write
  - Where do I go
  - ETC



## Challenges to Developing More Racers More often

- Understanding membership requirements
- Conversion from Training to Racing
- The changes in National Classes
- What about the unconsciously incompetent?
- Some will not want to change!

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To move our racing on (with the essential elements) we really need to consider the following ... (points in slide)

Note: these are just some key points for people to consider when thinking about the question in the next slide.




## How do we get More Racers More often?



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**RYA**

## What racing formats does your club use?

- Discuss the different race formats used by your club.
  - List them
  - What where the pros and cons
  - Any lessons learned

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Do they encourage all? Or, do they need to encourage all?

### **TASK**

Split into groups not the same clubs in group  
What works at your club Feed back to whole



## What race formats have we got available

### Racing Formats

- Round the cans (Short vs. Long)
- Fleet
- One design
- Handicap
- Personal Handicap
- Pursuit
- Average lap
- One-day events(often the best attended)

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- In addition to the race formats the following challenges were discussed
  - The race management teams had to understand how to deliver each of the race format
  - The race format had to be clearly communicated to the sailors so that they fully understood each type of racing.
  - People felt that one day events were a good way of testing formats.
  - It was agreed that each club needed to be able to test their success of each format have racing.
    - This could be done by focus groups.
    - It was generally felt that you had to test each format a number of times, before sailors who were less informed could make a decision as to whether they preferred it.
- Offering big trophies could also be a way of engaging people whilst trying new race formats!
- It was agreed that clubs needed to offer a mix of race formats over annual programme.
- The vast majority of clubs had seen most active racing taking place on Wednesday evenings.



## What race formats have we got available (cont...)

- Turbo
- Match
- Team
- Buddy racing
- Series within a series
- Medal Races
- Shorter Series



## What race formats have we got available (cont...)

- Fun races, which could take many guises, penalties, starts.
- Random pairs.
- Long-distance
- Coached racing
- **Gold, silver, and bronze fleets**



## Different Styles of Racing

### Pros

- New / exciting
- Introducing different aspects of the sport

### Cons

- Need good race management
- Communicated



## Introducing Different Race Format

1. Race Management has to be adequately informed.
2. Clear communication to membership
3. How do you measure if successful?

Remember some will not want to change.



## Improving the conversion!

How we move sailors from training to racing?

- Clear communication, Clubs Pathway
- Intro evening
- Easy racing during training
- Novice Starts/Targets
- Buddy Racing
- Train to race
- Break Down the “Myth”

- Clear communication. It was generally agreed that clubs were poor at signposting how people should get involved in racing. It was noted that a number of clubs produced an introduction of how to get involved with racing.
- Intro evening, is essential to letting people know, that the club does offer racing, how people can get involved, but essentially it is vital to inform parents how they are sailors can get involved. Therefore if you have another series, or an open event how sailors can access these. (remember families that already race will encourage their sailors to race, however, for non sailing families it is important that the club sells the benefits of racing to the parents. Life skills, Independence, decision-making and a healthy outdoor lifestyle!
- Easy racing during training, so that racing is part of normal training.
- Novice Starts/Targets published in a programme so that people know how to access it.
- Buddy Racing
- Train to race
- Break Down the “Myth”
- Clubs Pathway, The club has to have a clear structure of where people can get involved and how they can move on to new classes.

- Crew with the race experts!
- Publicly offer the biggest prizes, for the novice racing!
- Double handers may be an alternative for some.
- Try and get groups of friends together to the same novice event.






## Coaching – is it important?

- Potential Racers
  - Coach out the myths
  - Coach during races
  - Crew Experienced Racers
  - Buddy Racing with experienced Racer
- Current Racers
  - Class sessions (Activate)
  - More skills more enjoyment



Is coaching important?

Does your club run any coaching?




## Ideas for Starting

Transit Starts  
Committee boat and pin  
Gate Starts

Practice Starts

- Rolling
- Secret
- Etc.



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Short racing increases importance of the start.

Different start lines require different starting techniques.

Clubs could alternate between or try different starts (depending on location and resources).

Gate starts possible for one design classes, but more advanced.




## The Membership/ Class Captains

- The fleet lynch pin! Communicator!
- Understanding sailors / members requirements
- Coaching/Training requirements
- Promoting the clubs racing activities
- Types of racing
- Social events

More information  
[www.rya.org.uk/go/AYF](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/AYF)



**activate YOUR FLEET**

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Fleet Captains the “lynch pin” to understanding the needs of each group of sailors

- Type of racing
- Training requirements
- Promoting the clubs racing activities



## The changes in National Classes

- Generally Races are shorter
- Series include more races
- Places a greater emphasis on starting

What about the unconsciously incompetent?

- They do not know what they do not know!

The do no



## How else can we help

- Race Management Courses
  - Club Race Officer Course
  - GPS Course
  - Club Mark Layer
- Racing Rules
  - Rules advisor
  - Basic Rules Course
  - Going by the rules
  - Rule 42 Course



<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/raceofficials/Pages/default.aspx>

Please see hand out



**The Charter promotes good rule observance and encourages good sportsmanship and good communication between competitors and organisers.**



**Objectives**

- To provide the framework for everyone to enjoy the sport of sailboat racing in whatever capacity and to whatever level the individual desires.
- To ensure that the sport of sailboat racing welcomes all people and treats them equally.
- To ensure that those who experience sailboat racing are encouraged to continue.

<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/Pages/RacingCharter.aspx>

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Not sure if we should use

FAIR RacING



**More Racers More Often**

**Summary**

- Do you have the essentials in place?
- What ideas can you use at your club?
- How will you implement any new ideas?

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We know we want more people racing more often – we don't have the answers.

We have looked at what the essentials are, ideas for new formats and what we need to do to implement any new ideas.

The key question is what ideas have you taken from this session that could be used at your club and how will you implement them?



## More Racers More Often

### Summary

### New Racers

- Understanding
- Remove the myths
- Variety
- Advice (When Necessary)







## Understanding of popular racing formats that promotes vibrant activity

### Tools

- Portsmouth Yardstick

From the Norfolk Punt to the Topper



***PYS Mission Statement: To allow sailing clubs to offer everyone fairer racing between different classes***

### Tools

Explain the Portsmouth yard stick system

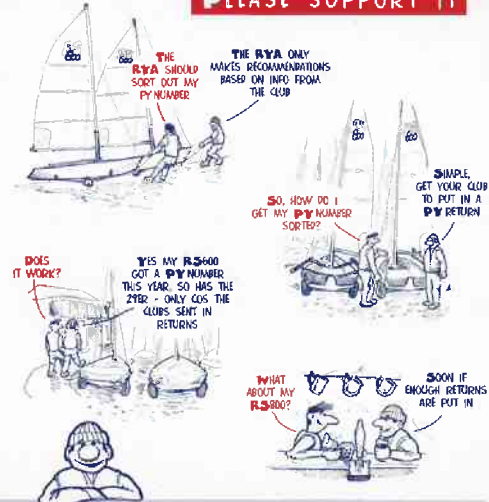
Calculation based on elapsed time to even fast and slow boats

Can cope with Norfolk Punts to Toppers but not ideal with such a spread of speed



## THE PORTSMOUTH YARDSTICK SYSTEM

**PLEASE SUPPORT IT**



THE PORTSMOUTH YARDSTICK SCHEME ONLY WORKS IF ENOUGH CLUBS SEND IN SUFFICIENT DATA. THAT'S VERY GOOD INDEED. MAKE SURE **YOUR** CLUB MAKES A RETURN.

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Changing PY numbers not the RYA but the users local differences club numbers



## Understanding of popular racing formats that promotes vibrant activity

Tools

- Pursuit Racing  
<http://www.rya.org.uk/racing/Pages/portsmouthyardstick.aspx>
- Race Management guide 2009-2012  
<http://www.rya.org.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Racing/RacingInformation/RaceOfficials/Resource%20Centre/Best%20Practice%20Guidelines%20Policies/Race%20Management%20Guide.pdf>

## How else can we help

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Explain Pursuit racing

Web site loads of other useful information

Look on both sites loads of useful resources