

## SAILING COMMITTEE

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### Introduction to being a Race Officer

at

### Bough Beech Sailing Club.

#### Introduction

Bough Beech Sailing Club can be proud of the sailors that have sailed here and there are many famous sailors who have been club members.

It is because we have good quality racing, racing which is not a lottery and thus rewards good technique. We achieve this because we endeavour to set good courses, we use a committee boat which enables us to have proper beats and we try to ensure square start line. It is these criteria that the Race Officer should keep in mind if he wants to be good at his job.

- It is important to have a start line square to the wind because if it is not there is only one boat that can get the best start.
- It is important to have a good long beat which requires tacking to reach the windward mark because that is what sorts the good sailors from the not so good.
- Usual race times are: in summer 11:30 and 13:45; in winter 11:00 and 13:30.
- For short course racing (standard course, fewer laps) we use the same start times but run two races in the morning session and two in the afternoon.

#### 1. Setting a good course.

Setting a good course is what most RO fail to get right. There are a many other tasks which go to make up the role, but there is normally help on hand for these. This guide therefore concentrates on course setting.

Appendix A provides a set of standard courses which are tried and tested. They are derived so as to maximise the chance of getting a good beat, since this is an important part of a good race.

For many experienced sailors reaches can be processional, since it is very hard to get past another boat. However at Junior levels they offer opportunities for the sailors to rehearse

techniques for both defending their position and attacking other boats.

Runs can be very interesting. Boats at the back can attack those just ahead. For boats with asymmetric spinnakers this is a very demanding leg with many opportunities to overtake or be overtaken.

At Bough Beech we do not often have a wind direction which gives enough room to for a windward/leeward course and we therefore generally make do with triangles and “figure of 8s”. Such courses are satisfactory providing the gate is not in the middle of the beat.

The beat is a part of the course in which tactics pay a large part. It can pay to go one side or the other and good racing sailors will try to find the favoured side. This is an important aspect which will be restricted if the boats have to pass through a narrow line half way up the beat.

The example courses each have the line well down-wind near the leeward mark. This can only be achieved if the committee boat is moved off its mooring. This is frequently ignored and yet is often the most important thing a RO must do. **Move the committee boat.**

Having moved the committee boat, having it on an anchor means it can be eased back or forward on its anchor warp, which makes it easier to achieve the other important factor to a good race - a square line.

In the examples provided the race officer only has to tweak the angles to match the wind direction.

## 2. The Timer

The race timer is called “AcuSail” and requires just two connections.

- Plug the external horn into the “Horn Output”
- Plug the battery into the “12V DC Input”.

AcuSail will power-up as soon as the battery is connected.

In addition to the two main connections you may have ancillary devices (a remote horn switch for example), which should be connected to the Remote Control socket. This connection is optional. AcuSail is fully functional without these extra additions.

Once AcuSail is connected to a battery it will display a sign-on message for three seconds, followed by the software version for a second.

## 3. Flags & Timing.

To help time the start there is a timer which is simple to use.

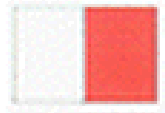
- Set the time by stepping through the hours and minutes and seconds and start just as you would with a digital watch.
- In the minute leading up to your chosen start time press the go button - you will then get sound signals at the appropriate time to hoist and lower the flags.
- Note, the digital clock in the boat house is synchronised by radio to a reference which is always correct.

## 4. The Start

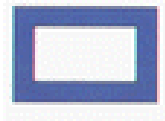
Timing the start is simple;

- At 5 minutes to the start raise the class flag.

*Example.*



- At 4 raise the Blue Peter.



- At 1 minute take the Blue Peter down.
- At the start take the class flag down.

Second Starts.

If there is a second start, say for juniors, it follows directly so as the class flag comes down the next class flag goes up.

## 5. Average Lap Racing.

At Bough beech we sail using the Portsmouth Yardstick handicapping system whereby each class of boat has a factor which corrects its time to equalise the differences in performance.

Races generally last for 90 minutes and boats are finished as they pass through the line. The faster boats may do more laps than the slower but this is allowed for by the "Race Management System" on the desktop in the office.

The Race Officer has merely to record the start time of the race and the finish time and number of laps of each boat after 90 minutes.

Whilst afloat

- Record start time of race.
- Record each boats sail number.
- Record each boats number of laps. Lap times are often useful as a cross check.
- At 90 minutes (or thereabouts) hoist the "S flag" and finish the boats as they cross the line. Do not wait for the leader to come round before you finish.
- Record the finish time for each boat and number of laps.

The computer will establish the elapsed time.

## 6. Race Management System, "RMS".

At the computer;

- Select the race by double clicking on it.
- A window will open inviting you to adjust the start time. Do so and save.
- A window will ask for a sail no. Enter this and press the tab key.
- The owner and boat name and class will appear for you \*
- Enter the time in HHMMSS. Do not bother with colons between the units.
- Enter the number of laps and press return.

Each boat is entered in this way and with practice it takes very little time

\* RMS will automatically default to the last recorded helm of any previously entered sail number. Please check using the sign on sheet or event entry form. If no owner appears, there is no record of that particular boat on the system and this will have to be entered separately, by using the side menu tabs.

Finally

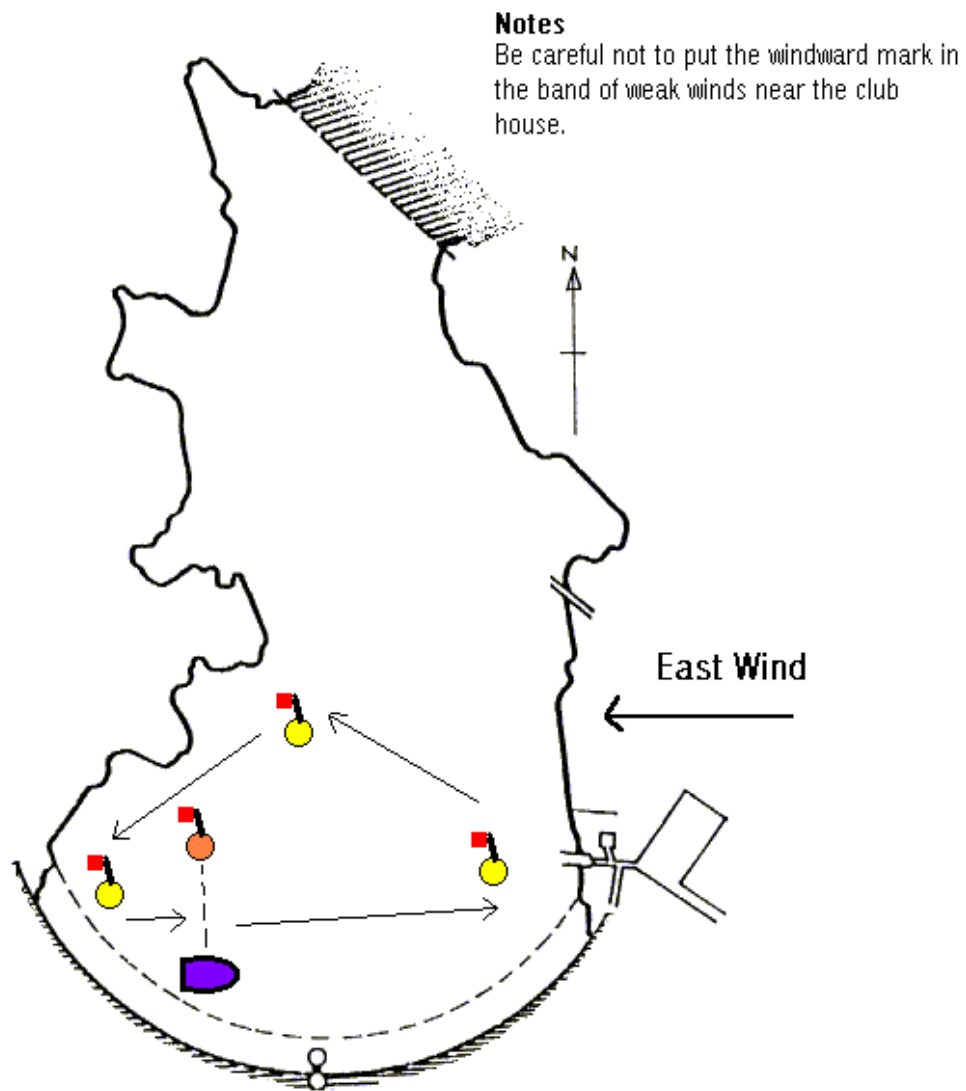
- click on the calculate button
- Click on the print button.

If you have any problems, ask, there are always plenty of people around who are willing to help.

## Appendix A.

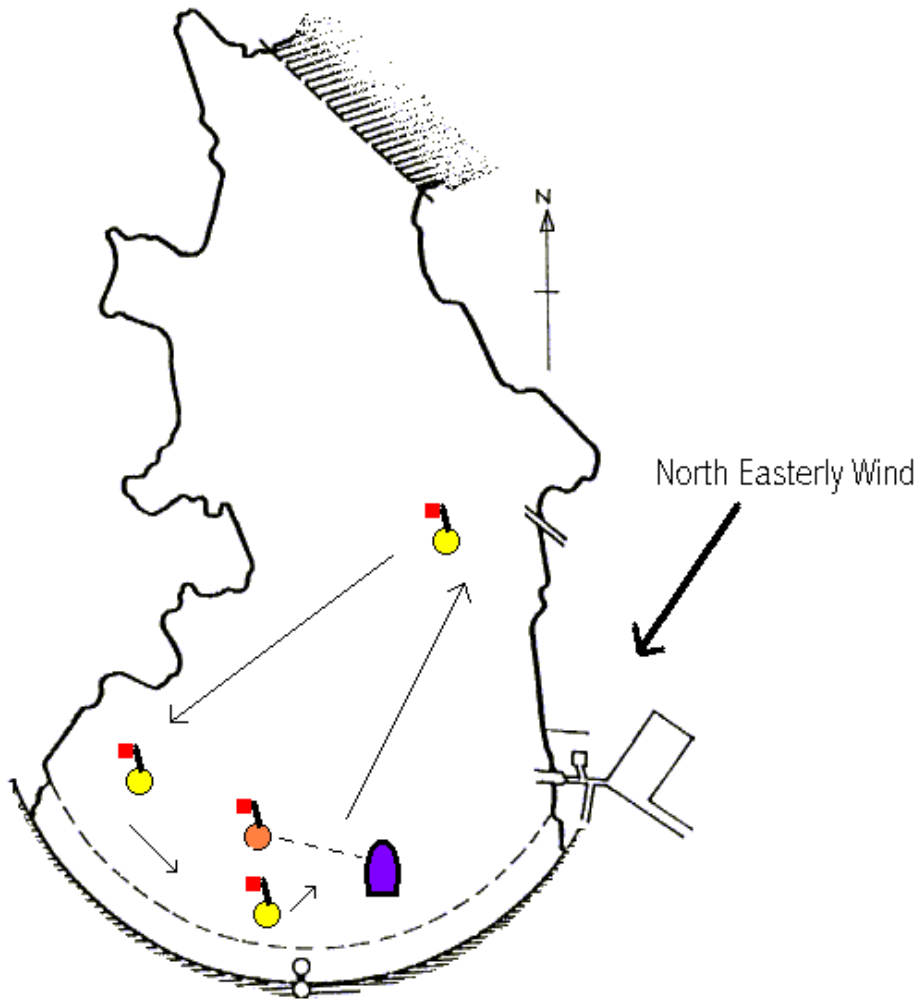
### Courses.

#### 1. Easterly Wind

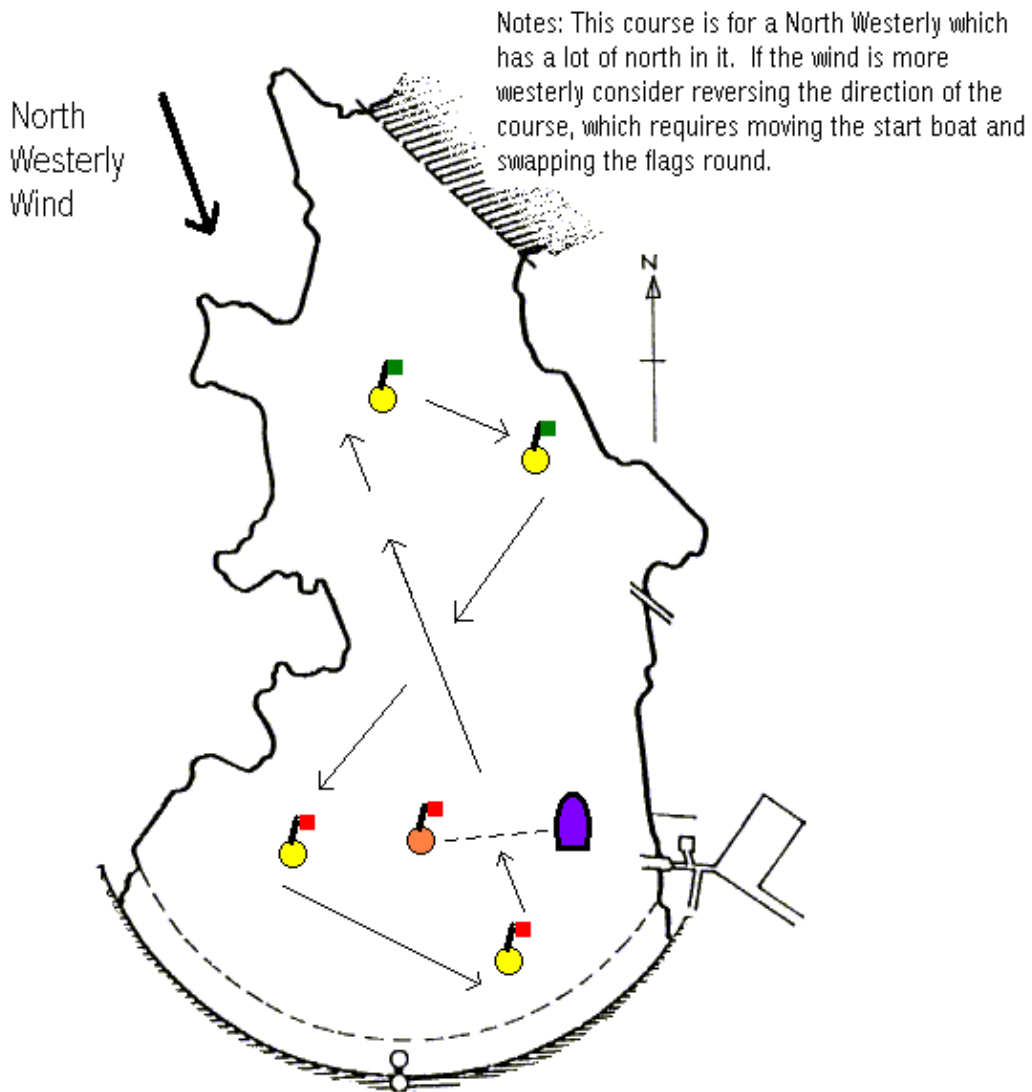


## 2. North Easterly Wind

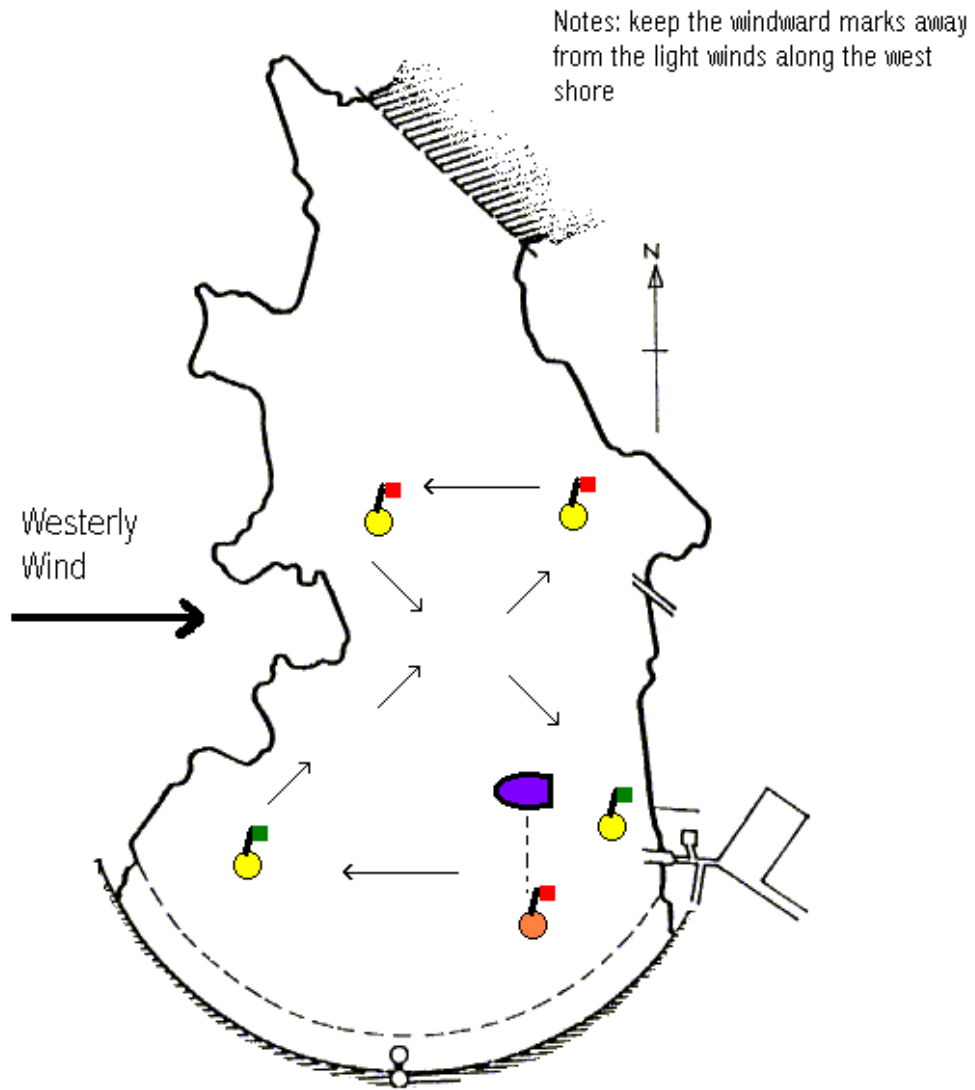
Notes: Be careful not to put the windward mark in the band of weak winds close to the easterly shore.



### 3. North Westerly Wind



#### 4. Westerly Wind





## Appendix B.

### “AcuSail”

#### 1. The Timer.

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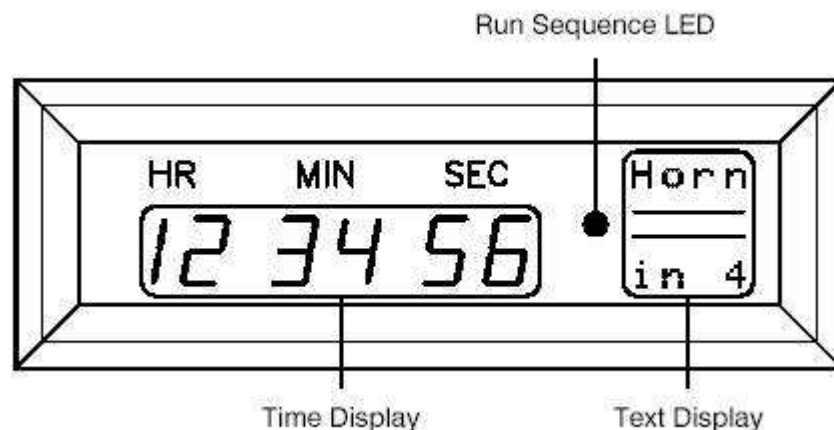
AcuSail will power-up as soon as the battery is connected.

In addition to the two main connections you may have ancillary devices (a remote horn switch for example), which should be connected to the Remote Control socket. This connection is optional. AcuSail is fully functional without these extra additions. Once AcuSail is connected to a battery it will display a sign-on message for three seconds, followed by the software version for a second.

#### 2. Understanding the Display

The display has three main parts.

- Times are always shown in the *Time Display* area although occasionally (whilst setting the date for example), this area is used for other functions.
- The *Run Sequence LED* illuminates whenever a sequence is running.
- The *Text Display* area is used for user prompts and general messages.



### 3. Setting the Time

Setting the time requires you to set three, two-digit values.

- You will first be prompted to 'Set Hrs'. The relevant digits will flash to indicate the current value. Use the Up and/or Down button to set the desired value. Holding either button will cause the value to change repeatedly. Holding both buttons will increase the repeat rate (the first held button determines the direction of change).
- Once you have set the desired hour value, press the Select button to move to 'Set Min'. Repeat the setting procedure to set the desired minute.
- Press the Select button again to move to 'Set Sec' and set the desired value for seconds. If you now press the Select button once more, you will move back to 'Set Hrs'. (Allowing you to loop around the entire setting procedure until you are happy with the displayed value).

When the time you have set matches the real time, press the Save Time button to start the clock running. The clock starts immediately.

This graphic summarises the time setting procedure:



To repeat the setting procedure hold the "Save Time" button for at least three seconds and repeat the three stage process for setting the time.

### 4. Running a Sequence (to Start a Race)

Once the clock is running, you can choose to start a sequence at any time.

Sequences always start with a ten-second beep count and are synchronised with the next whole minute.

In order to start a sequence at exactly the required minute, there is a 'window' during which you need to press the *Run Sequence* button. This is best illustrated by a specific example;

Example.

To start a sequence at 13:00.00.

- Press the *Run Sequence* button between 12:58.50 and 12:59.49. Any earlier would start the sequence at 12:59.00, whilst any later would result in a start at 13:01.00.
- the *Run Sequence LED* will light and AcuSail will start counting down.
- Ten seconds prior to the next whole minute, AcuSail will display a countdown to

the first sequence event.

- In addition to the visual countdown, each second is punctuated with an audible beep.

The easiest way to visualise this is to remember that you will start a timing sequence on the next minute if you press the *Run Sequence* button at least 11 seconds before that minute.

## 5. Stopping a Sequence

AcuSail will run the sequence infinitely (where, once started, it repeats continually until the user intervenes). It is possible to manually stop a sequence at any time.

- Hold the *Run Sequence* button for at least three seconds.
- AcuSail will cancel the sequence and confirm this by displaying 'STOP'. The *Run Sequence LED* will turn off immediately.

## 6. Sounding Manual Horns

You can sound a manual horn at any point by pressing the *Horn* button. If you have an external *Horn* button (which is connected via the *Remote Control* socket) it will function in an identical manner to the one on the main unit.