

Guide to Pursuiting at the Sussex Yacht Club

We run a very successful and established form of Pursuit racing at SYC, with 3 series of 7 races (Spring, Summer, and Autumn). These notes are intended to give skippers enough information to join us for friendly competition on the water.

To compete, you need to be a member of SYC, own, or have access to a keelboat and be available for a few hours on a Saturday.

All the administration is conducted on the “**SYC Pursuiting**” WhatsApp group. If you and or your boat is not already known to us, then please use the contact details at the end of this guide.

The weekly routine:

- Early in the week before the race a notice will be posted on **SYC Pursuiting**. You need to check that your boat is on the Competitor list and then register that you intend entering the upcoming race.
- The group is intended for signing on, recording any later withdrawal, and declaring your finish. If you have a query, please “private message” the Race Officer.
- Most boats will go out through the locks and you should listen on CH14, this will avoid unnecessary calls to the Lockkeeper.

Understanding the Course:

- You will need to get a copy of the Race Chart and consult the Mark Status from the Keelboat Handbook, both on the SYC website.
- The course is usually posted to the WhatsApp group before we go into the lock.
- Starting and finishing lines are compass bearings from one of our race marks.
 - The course is written in a shorthand style. An example could be “Start E180, Wp, 1p, 3p, 1p, 3p, 4p, 2s, 6s, 2s, Ws, then Es, 6s, Ws until told to finish. Listen on VHF77 for instructions.”
 - “E180” means the starting line is a bearing of 180 degrees from the E mark and heading towards the next mark, in this case W.
 - “Wp” means mark W to port, “1p” mark 1 to port etc. and “Ws” is mark W to starboard etc.
 - The initial course is open ended, so “then Es, 6s, Ws until told to finish”, means carry on with that lap(s) until you reach the finish mark.
 - At about 100 minutes from the nominal start time, the Race Officer, using Ch77 (from 2024), will identify the lead boat and announce the finish. This will be the next mark ahead of the lead boat(s) e.g., mark 6 to starboard and the line bearing 360 degrees.

Sailing the Course:

- Because boats have individual starting times, it is important to keep the starting line clear until it is your turn to start.
- It is the responsibility of each skipper to start at (or not before) their start time for the day. The correct time is as stated in that week’s Competitor list.
- The usual Rules of Sailing apply on the course, but please be aware that some boats and their crews may be new to racing.
- When you finish, the skipper needs to note the name (or sail number) of the boat ahead and the boat behind. (We do not record finish times.)
- All boats must make a declaration on the WhatsApp group along the following lines: - “my boat name” finished, “boat name1” ahead, “boat name2” behind.
- A listening watch must be kept for the duration of the race on Ch77 (with Ch16 on dual as a minimum, for safety).
- Any boat retiring should inform the Race Officer on Ch77. Retirements must also be made on the WhatsApp group.

The Results:

- Basically, your finish is as you see it on the water. When all the declarations are received, the Race Officer will review them and post the results to the SYC website.
- Before the next race, adjustments will be made to competitor's start time according to a simple rule. The winning boat will have 6 minutes added on, second 5 minutes etc, the last boat will have 6 minutes taken off, second to last 5 minutes etc. If more than 12 boats finish, then boats between the first and last 6 will not be adjusted.
- These adjustments will then be reflected in the Competitors List for the next race.
- The best 4 race results (out of a possible 7) count towards the overall series result.

FAQs:

- Competing boats should fly the international numeral 2 code flag from their backstay.



- All boats will be given an initial "SYC Pursuit" handicap, this applies to the named boat and not the skipper. It will be adjusted according to the rule and the revised number will apply from then on. It will roll over into the next series and the next year etc.
- VHF Ch77, is the preferred channel for 2024 on a trial basis.
- All SYC sailing dates are available on the website.

Contacts:

Race Officer – David Nunn (Escape) 07979 700216

You can also use either the Contact form on the SYC website or call the Office on 01273 464868.

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