



# FREE SAILING YACHT RACING RULES

## FUNDAMENTAL RULES

### A **Rendering Assistance**

Every crew shall render all possible assistance to another competitor in trouble, when in a position to do so.

### B **Fair Sailing**

Except to the extent permitted by team racing rules, competitors shall compete by using only the wind and water to maintain or increase her speed and by the skill of their individual effort, in compliance with the rules and in accordance with recognised principles of fair play and sportsmanship. A crew may be disqualified under this rule only in the case of a clear-cut violation of the above principles and when no other rule applies.

### C **Accepting Penalties**

A crew member who realises that he/she has infringed a rule shall retire promptly from the board in progress.

### D **Appropriate Behaviour**

A competitor shall be ready to race when called upon at any time considered reasonable by the Race Officer (RO). The RO may disqualify a competitor from further participation in the event should there occur a gross breach of good manners. This shall include the use of bad language, unnecessarily raised voices and the intimidation of competitors. In such a case the RO shall report the matter to MYA Racing Secretary. When a gross infringement of these rules or the appropriate class rules is proved against a competitor, such person may be disqualified from competing in any event held under the auspices of the MYA for any period that Council may decide.

## RACING RULES

### 1 **Rating Rules**

- 1.1 International and National class yachts shall conform to the current class rules or previous issue class rules, where a yacht is grandfathered, and the Free Sailing Class Rule Supplement.
- 1.2 Alterations, other than for routine maintenance, to a yacht which has been grandfathered and conforms to a previous issue of the class rules, are prohibited.
- 1.3 When requested, crews shall lodge their rating certificates with the race committee at any time during the event. A facsimile of the valid certificate(s) will be acceptable.

### 2 **Racing Definitions**

- 2.1 **Skipper** - an MYA member sailing the yacht, who is responsible for the actions of his/her mates.
- 2.2 **Mate** - assistant to the skipper who shall be an MYA member for multi-day events.
- 2.3 **Crew** - the skipper and/or one or two mates,
- 2.4 **Competitor** - a yacht and her crew.
- 2.5 **Pair** - two yachts drawn to race each other.
- 2.6 **Board** - a course in one direction of the lake.
- 2.7 **Heat** - two boards in which the same pair sail.
- 2.8 **Round** - number of heats necessary to ensure that each yacht sails against all other yachts in the event.
- 2.9 **Event** – one or more rounds (final round may be incomplete)
- 2.10 **Tacking** - a yacht is turned head to wind and onto the opposite tack until the headsail, or single sail in the case of a una-rig, is full.
- 2.11 **Gybing** - with the wind aft, the main boom crosses the centre line.

- 2.12 **Guying** - tacking of a yacht remote from the shore by use of a guy (an automatic tacking mechanism).
- 2.13 **Retrimming** - making a definite adjustment to one or more of the following: the sheets, steering gear, spars, rigging, sails or rudder. A gybe is a retrim.
- 2.14 **Shore** - the perimeter of the lake, beyond which a yacht cannot sail.
- 2.15 **Obstruction** - anything, excluding the other of a pair, the shore or weed, with which the yacht may collide.
- 2.16 **Foul** - when a yacht, having collided with another yacht or an obstruction is entangled, turned off her course, or has any of her gear disarranged, so as to affect her chances of winning a board.
- 2.17 **Resail** –a board that is started again.
- 2.18 **Finishing** - a yacht finishes a board when any part of her hull or equipment in normal position first crosses the line.

### 3 Race Officials and Duties

- 3.1 **Race Officer** – the RO, as appointed by the race committee, shall take charge of the racing on behalf of the MYA. The RO has the powers of an umpire. Should any point arise during the progress of the race in which the rules are silent, the RO is empowered to give a ruling for the occasion, which shall be accepted unless protested under Rule 12. Any such points shall be included in a report to the MYA Racing Secretary. The RO shall be responsible for appointing race officials and protest panel, racing schedules, the start and finishing times (as set out in 5.4), progress of racing, the positioning of the starting stations and finishing marks, defining steerage way at the start, deciding the starting tack on windward legs, the points to be scored for each board, the awarding of resails, etc. The RO shall discharge his/her responsibility by briefing crews at any time during the event.
- 3.2 **Assistant Race Officer** – as appointed by the race committee, to assist the RO in any capacity and to act as the race officer if the latter is unable to be present.
- 3.3 **Umpire** - an umpire shall disqualify a competitor for an infringement of the racing rules and shall immediately inform the crew. An umpire's decision may be subject to revision by the RO.
- 3.4 **Starter** - starts pairs from the appointed starting stations, with full authority to restart pairs should a collision occur within the area adjacent to the start.
- 3.5 **Marshal** - calls competitors to the starting stations ready for starting.
- 3.6 **Line Judge** - decides which, of a pair of yachts, first crosses the finishing line as defined in 2.18. A line judge's decision shall be final.
- 3.7 **Scorer** - records the scores on the master score sheet in accordance with the decisions of the line judges(s). The scorer shall act in the capacity of a line judge, if one is not appointed.
- 3.8 Crew as race official - the RO is empowered to co-opt any crew member not racing to act as a race official should there not be sufficient persons present to act as race officials.

### 4 Method of Racing

- 4.1 Events shall be sailed using a tournament system, whereby each competitor races all other competitors both ways of the lake. If possible, events should consist of completed rounds.
- 4.2 An approved racing schedule shall be used, with consideration being given to the avoidance of members of the same club having to race each other in the latter heats of the round.
- 4.3 The racing schedule shall denote which competitor of a pair has choice of starting station. The crew with choice shall, before the start of the heat, inform the other crew for which board it will choose the starting station. The other crew has choice of starting station for the other board.
- 4.4 The RO shall determine the starting tack on boards which are being sailed to windward. The position of the starting marks shall not be less than 9 feet (2.74 metres) apart.
- 4.5 The RO may at any time alter the position of the starting marks and the direction of the starting tack.
- 4.6 In boards which are being sailed to windward, both yachts of a pair shall start on the same tack. A yacht shall not start with a guy applied, which may tack the yacht from its starting tack.

### 5 Racing Times

- 5.1 Racing time shall be defined as the period of the day between the start and finish of racing for that day. The RO may change the racing times set in 5.4(a) for resails, exceptional circumstances or other reasons related to the overall progress of the event, with the agreement of all the crews concerned. However, the RO may only change the racing times set in 5.4(b) in exceptional circumstances.

- 5.2 The briefing at the start of the event shall be at 10.00 hours and racing shall commence shortly after the briefing's conclusion. Racing shall continue each day at such times as given in 5.4 or as announced by the RO at the day's briefing . The completion of the schedule shall remain a priority.
- 5.3 Competitors shall not sail during the racing time, unless scheduled to race.
- 5.4 Except where an announcement is made during the day's briefing or in exceptional circumstances, and where all crews agree, racing will continue until the following times:
- (a) During multi-day events, no heat shall start after 17.00 hours. Any board of that heat will be abandoned if not completed before 18.00 hours.
  - (b) At the end of the event, no heat will start after 16.00 hours which shall be the finishing time for the event. Any heat will be abandoned if the heat has not been completed before 16.30 hours. This rule is changed only when either:
    - (i) one round, or subsequent complete rounds of the schedule have been completed within 2 hours (or a shorter period set by the RO at the day's briefing for low entry events) of the finishing time, in which case the winner shall be determined at that point, or
    - (ii) only one heat remains to be sailed at the finishing time to complete a full round of the schedule, in which case the racing time shall (wind conditions permitting) be extended to complete the remaining heat.

## **6 Scoring, Resails and Ties**

- 6.1 The RO shall inform all skippers which direction of the lake shall be considered to be the windward board for scoring purposes. A win in that direction shall score 3 points, a win in the other direction shall score 2 points. The winner will be the competitor with the most points.
- 6.2 The scoring for each direction of the lake may be changed should it be necessary as a result of a change of wind direction. It shall not be changed during a heat.
- 6.3 When a pair is called to race or to resail and one competitor fails to come to the starting station within a reasonable time, or when a competitor retires after infringing a rule, the points shall be awarded to the other of the pair upon its completion of the board, provided it doesn't itself infringe any rule.
- 6.4 When a pair of yachts is called to race or to resail and both refuse to race, then neither yacht shall be awarded the points for the board.
- 6.5 Resails shall be sailed in the direction of the lake in which they occurred and shall be scored as at the time of the original board. Ideally, resails should be sailed as soon as possible after the resail is awarded.
- 6.6 When a race official awards a resail, it is compulsory and not a matter of any arrangement between competitors. If for any reason, in the opinion of the RO, a resail is impracticable, the points for the board in question shall be equally divided.
- 6.7 In the event of a dead heat the points for the board shall be divided equally.
- 6.8 A tie in the final total score between two yachts shall be resolved by sailing two windward boards. Competitors shall start once from each starting station, the first choice being decided by the spin of a coin. If this fails to produce an outright winner, the tie shall be finally resolved by sailing a leeward board, the choice of starting station being decided by the toss of a coin. A dead heat in any of the boards shall be resailed.
- 6.9 Where more than two competitors are tied in the final score, a tournament schedule shall be drawn up so that all competitors concerned shall sail each other in order to produce an outright winner.
- 6.10 If time does not allow the tie to be broken as above, it may be resolved in the following order by the yacht:
- (a) whose score was highest when it sailed against the other yacht(s),
  - (b) which won the most number of '3 point scores' when it sailed against the other yacht(s),
  - (c) which won the most number of '2 point scores' when it sailed against the other yachts(s),
  - (d) which won the toss of a coin.
- 6.11 Crews shall record their own scores on the cards provided, handing them to the RO at the end of the race or at any time required by the RO for checking. Any discrepancies shall be settled by the RO before the final results are announced. No subsequent question regarding the scores shall be entertained except under Rule 12 – protests.
- 6.12 The official scores shall not be altered for any reason except by, or at the instruction of, the RO.
- 6.13 When racing is not subject to 5.4(b)(i) or 5.4(b)(ii) and a complete round or number of rounds have not been completed at the finishing time, each competitor's score shall be expressed as a percentage of the points sailed for. The winner will be the competitor with the highest percentage score.

## **7 Disabled or Withdrawn Yachts**

- 7.1 If a yacht is disabled for any reason and cannot continue to race, the RO shall decide whether to permit the yacht to continue in the event by holding over her races for a reasonable time, or to permit the yacht to withdraw.
- 7.2 When a yacht is withdrawn as above or for any other reason, the score sheet shall be adjusted by deleting scores 'for' and 'against' the yacht in question, for that round only. The scores should stand for any rounds that have been completed.

## **8 Handling of yachts, which come to shore**

- 8.1 Except when tacking as Rule 8.2, a yacht whose hull comes to shore shall be stopped. The crew shall then either:
- (a) Tack the yacht, or
  - (b) Retrim the yacht and allow it to sail off on its course.
- 8.2 Tacking a yacht shall be achieved by:
- (a) the use of a pole, or
  - (b) hand.
- In either case the person tacking the yacht shall not move his/her feet on the shore while using the pole or hand. When using the pole the yacht shall be tacked in one continuous action. The pole or hand may remain on the windward side of the bow after completing the tack as a means of steadying the yacht on its new course.
- 8.3 When tacking a yacht, no adjustments shall be made by hand to sails, sheets, gear or other parts of the yacht, unless the yacht is stopped. The yacht's counter may touch the shore during tacking.
- 8.4 While a retrim is being made, the yacht shall not be propelled forward from the point where she was stopped.
- 8.5 When a yacht is being tacked or restarted after a retrim, she shall be released from the hand only. No pole shall be used.
- 8.6 No crew shall enter the water to turn, retrim or restart a yacht when this can be properly carried out from the shore.
- 8.7 If a yacht runs aground, the crew is permitted to use reasonable means, including the use of a pole of any length, to refloat the yacht. This does not include entering the water above that person's knee level.
- 8.8 When it is customary or necessary by low water or the nature of the shore for crews to carry out all turning, retrimming or restarting yacht while standing in the water, the yacht shall only be turned by hand. No pole shall be used. The crew shall not wade further out than is necessary to keep the yacht afloat while handling it.

## **9 Use of Poles**

- 9.1 Except as in Rule 8.7, a pole shall have a maximum length of 5 feet (1524mm).
- 9.2 A pole may be used for stopping a yacht from striking the shore. This use shall not absolve the competitor from stopping and retrimming the yacht, as required by Rule 8.1.

## **10 Collisions**

- 10.1 If a competing pair foul each other within 5 boat lengths (or distance previously indicated by the RO) of the starting station, they shall be restarted from their original positions. If the foul recurs, they shall be restarted either further apart or from reverse positions at the discretion of the RO or starter.
- 10.2 If a pair foul each other or any other yacht outside the distance defined in Rule 10.1, the board or boards shall be resailed when required by the RO except as provided by Rules 4 and 10.3.
- 10.3 If a yacht fouls an obstruction, the board shall be resailed unless the RO or umpire is of the opinion that her chance of winning was unaffected.
- 10.4 When a pair that had not previously fouled, touch each other alongside the shore the board shall be resailed.
- 10.5 Tacking or restarting a yacht which is likely to result in a collision with a yacht which is sailing shall result in a disqualification if a collision does occur.

## **11 Propulsion of yacht**

- 11.1 When starting their yachts at the beginning of a board, crew members may impart steerage way to their yachts with no greater force than required for the yacht to gain her natural sailing speed in the prevailing conditions, or as defined by the RO. Where the starter judges an unfair advantage is gained by the amount of way imparted by one of the crew members, the pair shall be restarted.
- 11.2 After a retrim the yacht may be given the minimum steerage way to prevent the yacht slipping sideways. Pushing, to give more than the minimum steerage way, will result in disqualification.
- 11.3 When using a pole the yacht may not leave the shore faster through the water than when it arrived and any alleged advantage shall be judged in line with Fundamental rule B.
- 11.4 Any complaint about excess propulsion by a crew shall only concern the actions of the opposing crew and shall be directed to the RO or race official and not directed to the opposing crew, unless the disadvantaged crew is protesting under Rule 12.
- 11.5 Should there be any difficulty from low water, high banks, blanketed starting stations or an obstruction, the RO shall issue suitable instructions at the start of the event or when required during the event.
- 11.6 A crew may draw his/her yacht astern if necessary to avoid a collision, but a yacht shall not be drawn astern once it has been tacked or re-started.

## **12 Protests**

- 12.1 Before the commencement of the race, the race committee shall appoint a panel of six, selected from skippers or other knowledgeable persons. If a protest is made a committee of three shall be selected, not more than one from any one club, to conduct the hearing.
- 12.2 Any skipper may protest against another competitor or against a decision of the RO or other appointed race official, provided that he acts in accordance with the procedure laid down for the conduct and hearing of protests as follows.
- 12.3 At the conclusion of the board in question, the protesting skipper shall inform the RO of his intention to protest. He shall confirm this with a written protest stating the rule(s) alleged infringed. The written protest shall be submitted to the RO within 20 minutes of the completion of the board.
- 12.4 On receipt of a written protest the RO shall inform all concerned that a protest has been made and appoint a protest committee. The protest shall be heard on the same day, and at the earliest convenient time. With the exception of an appeal, as in Rule - 12.9, the protest committee's decision shall be final.
- 12.5 The protest committee shall hear the evidence from the principals and any witnesses.
- 12.6 Only members of the protest committee shall be involved in the discussion at which the final decision is taken.
- 12.7 The protest committee shall make a written report of the facts found, the rules concerned and the decision made and give its decision to the competitors concerned and to the RO who shall make any adjustment to the scores or order any necessary resail(s). The RO shall forward the written report of the protest to the MYA Racing Secretary at the end of the event, together with the RO's event report.
- 12.8 Without affecting the result of an event a competitor may appeal against a decision made by a protest committee.
- 12.9 All appeals shall be sent to MYA Racing Secretary within 10 days of the completion of the event. An appeal shall include a copy of the protest committee's report, and the competitor's grounds for the appeal.

## **13 Objection to action of Race Officials**

- 13.1 If a competitor believes that the Race Officials have not complied with these free sailing yacht racing rules or acted in a manner that may affect the outcome of the event, he/she shall bring the matter to the attention of the Race Committee at the earliest opportunity.
- 13.2 If the matter persists, the competitor shall submit a written complaint to the Race Committee on the day during which the matter arose and before the end of the day's racing time.
- 13.3 If the Race Committee fails to address the complaint to the satisfaction of the competitor before the end of the event then the competitor shall refer the matter to the MYA Racing Secretary. The MYA Council will not consider any post-event complaint that does not comply with the above.

## TEAM RACING RULES - Appendix

- 1 A team shall consist of two yachts each sailed by a skipper of the same club, assisted by one or two mates who need not be from the same club.
- 2 Clubs may enter more than one team and, at the time of entry, shall nominate its yachts in the team as yacht A and yacht B. If no nomination is made, the yacht entered first on the entry form shall be designated as yacht A and the second as yacht B. If a club enters more than one team, it shall designate which is the first team and which is the second and subsequent teams.
- 3 The racing schedule shall be arranged in two parts.  
**Part 1** - Each yacht A shall race each other yacht A, and each yacht B shall race each other yacht B.  
**Part 2** - Each yacht A shall race each yacht B, except that yachts of the same team shall not race each other.  
Where there is more than one team from the same club the schedules shall be arranged so that they race each other first.
- 4 Part 1 of the racing schedule shall be completed first and, if time permits no more than this, the results shall be declared on the scores at the end of Part 1, the winning team being that with the highest score of its two yachts added together.
- 5 If, at the end of Part 1, the RO is of the opinion that there is a reasonable chance within the time available of completing at least half of Part 2, racing shall continue until a previously announced time. This decision shall not be made later than when two thirds of the available time has elapsed. The result shall be declared on the scores of each team's yachts as they stand at the end of the last completed heat, provided that more than half of Part 2 has been completed.
- 6 If less than half of Part 2 has been completed, scores for this part shall be ignored and the result declared as in Team Racing Rule 4.  
Where two or more teams tie, each team shall decide which of its yachts shall represent the team in a tie-breaker (Rules 6.8– 6.10)
- 7 Skippers and mates may handle either yacht of their team.