

SEDGEMOOR MODEL BOAT CLUB

SMALL YACHT SECTION (SYS) - RACING RULES

(Amended May 2021)

Aim:

To offer a broader and more open class of yacht racing in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere with the minimum of rules.

This section is not intended to provide full competition racing as the IOM yacht section provides that.

RACING RULES

The Small Yacht Section will race only to the minimum set of racing rules. The basic rules we use are easy to remember and must be applied at all times:

1. STARTING A RACE (including Handicap starts)

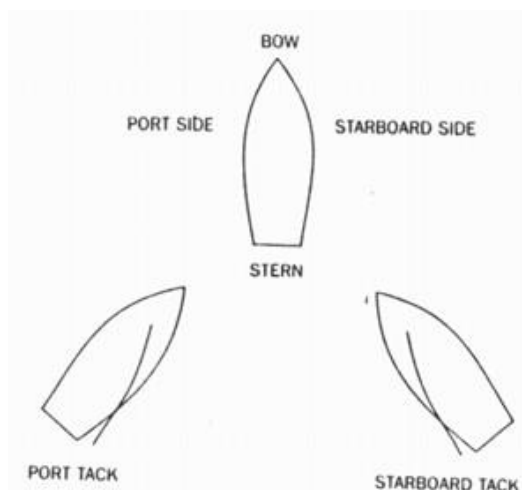
- a) All yachts start together at the start line/gate, a 60 second countdown will begin, the countdown ends with the claxon, and then the race begins. If a yacht passes the start line/gate before the end of the claxon then this is a penalty and must therefore return to start line/gate and commence race without interfering with other yachts.
- b) ALL yachts are expected to keep clear of others and avoid collisions whenever possible, the port/starboard rule applies and any offending yacht must do a penalty turn (see rule 2).
- c) A handicap system will sometimes be applied to enable inexperienced skippers to have a fair chance of racing alongside/with other skippers. Handicaps will allow a skipper(s) to start sailing with their own countdown a minute before the main fleet. Once the handicap start has finished the main fleet countdown will begin (see 1a).
- d) Skippers will forfeit their handicap if they finish a race in first place in any round of the SYS Series. However, a skipper's handicap will be retained (regardless of when a race is won) until the end of that particular meet.

2. PORT TACK/STARBOARD TACK RULE

When looking forward to the bow of the boat, the starboard side is the right side of the boat and the port side is the left side of the boat. A boat in motion is either on a port or starboard tack. When both sails are on the left (port) the boat is sailing on a starboard tack. When both or one of the sails are on the right of centre, the boat it is considered to be sailing on a port tack.

- a) When sailing on a collision course, boats sailing on starboard tack have the right of way over boats sailing on port tack. Boats on port tack **MUST** yield to boats on starboard tack. Skippers on starboard tack must call 'STARBOARD' and the sail number of the yacht who is on a collision course, e.g. **"Starboard 88 please."**

- b) If a yacht (on port tack) makes contact with, or forces a yacht on starboard tack to change direction (**to avoid a collision**), then the offending yacht **MUST** sail clear and complete a full 360-degree penalty turn.



3. ROUNDING BUOYS

a) During a race, a boat should always pass on the proper side of the buoy and in the correct direction for the course in use. If a boat passes on the wrong side of a buoy it must re-round on the correct side but must keep clear of any approaching boats at all times. (rule 2 applies)

There is no penalty should any part of a yacht make contact with a buoy, (including the start line markers) providing it has passed them on the correct side.

b) If one or two boats are rounding a buoy together, the boat(s) on the OUTSIDE must give clear room for the inside boat(s) to round the buoy unimpeded. The INSIDE boat must call for “**WATER**” and then indicate the boat(s) required to make space to round the buoy, ie; “WATER number 7 please.” ALL skippers should avoid any contact whenever possible.

c) A boat on the inside may not tack OR change direction while calling for “WATER” to round the buoy if this action impedes other boats.
(See rule 4)

4. IMPEDING OTHER BOATS BY A SUDDEN TACK OR CHANGE OF COURSE

A boat may not tack or change course directly in front of another boat while on port or starboard unless they are doing so to avoid a collision. A skipper must hold his/her course if other boats are near (even if the skipper does not want to sail in the direction). If contact is made then the boat that made the sudden change of course must do a complete 360-degree penalty turn.

5. AGREEMENT BETWEEN SKIPPERS

If there is contact between two or more boats and all skippers involved agree at the time it was an accident and NO advantage was gained, they may continue to sail their course without anyone being penalised. This may happen if a boat stalls or is overpowered in stronger winds.

6. FINISHING A RACE

The race ends back at the start line/gate or nominated gate. Each yacht must finish between the markers to end the race from the appropriate direction. The finish/start line is always the course side of the buoy.

7. CHANGING YACHTS DURING A MEET

a) A skipper may change their boat at any time during a meeting if they wish.

b) It is the skipper’s responsibility to record their new sail number on the score sheet NOT the OOD, RO or Section Secretary.