



NOCKAMIXON SAIL CLUB

Portsmouth Fleet *Racing 101 the Basics*

Sailboat Racing

Sailing can be more fun when you race. The basics for racing can be broken down into sailing itself, the start, the race course, the finish and sailing rules. The Nockamixon Sail Club holds races on Lake Nockamixon and uses the area in front of the marina for most races. Some races use larger areas of the lake. The Coves Challenge use the lake from the Haycock area to the Lake House Point. Races are conducted by the club following two documents - Notice of Race and Sailing Instructions. These documents are made available for a skipper to review prior to an event.

Sailing - Points of Sail

Because we can only sail within 45 degrees of the true wind, reaching a windward mark will involve a series of tacks to get to the mark. Other points of sailing are needed to sail a race course. Basic sailing skills are needed for a skipper to navigate around the race course. Review the points of sail before starting to learn racing.

The Start

All races use a starting line to mark the beginning of the race course. A starting line will be bounded by two marks. NSC uses a Race Committee boat for the starboard end of the line and a red/orange buoy for the port end of the line. The idea is to cross the starting line right at the gun, usually on starboard tack to preserve right of way.

Race Course

The basic race course is bound by a starting line, rounding buoys and a finish line. Most races involve rounding marks in a triangular course or by doing a windward-leeward course. Triangular courses will use a windward buoy, a jibe buoy and a leeward buoy. A leeward-windward course drops out the jibe buoy and just uses the windward and leeward buoys.

The Finish

A finish line marks the end of the race course. It, like the starting line is bounded by two marks. The Race Committee boat will be positioned on the port end of the line and another red/orange buoy will be placed on the starboard end of the line. The finish line is not the starting line. NSC uses a separate finish line for all races.

Sailing Rules

The sailing rules of racing are very similar to the rules of the road. US Sailing issues racing rules every four years for the sport. Books can be purchased to help sailors understand the rules and how to apply them during a race. US Sailing has a very good website to help, www.sailingcourse.com/racing_rules.htm

Here are some basic rules:

- 1 - A boat has right of way when another boat is required to keep clear
- 2 - A boat on port tack shall keep clear of a boat on starboard tack
- 3 - Boats on the same tack and overlap each other, the windward boat shall keep clear of the leeward boat
- 4 - When you are tacking, you must keep clear of all other boats
- 5 - You must avoid contact with other boats, if possible
- 6 - If you cross the starting line too soon before the start, you have to go back behind the line and start again.
- 7 - If you hit a mark while racing, you must take a penalty turn as soon as possible by making one turn, including one tack and one jibe.
- 8 - If you foul another boat while racing, you must take a penalty as soon as possible by making two turns in the same direction, including two tacks and two jibes.

Course Guides

The Start Sequence

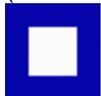
“Attention” – Lower Postponement flag (Red/White) w/ One Horn 6:00 min



“Warning” – Hoist class/fleet flag (Orange)w/ One Horn 5:00 min



“Preparatory” – Hoist Preparatory flag (Blue/White) w/ One Horn 4:00 min



“One minute” – Lower Preparatory flag (Blue/White) w/ One Horn 1:00 min



“Start” – Lower class/fleet flag (Orange)w/ One Horn 0:00 min



The Start and Finish Line

▲ Starting Line - ▲ Finishing

