



# Goring Thames Sailing Club

## SAILING INSTRUCTIONS 2024

### **1 General**

- 1.1 All races will be governed by the 'rules' as defined in the Racing Rules of Sailing 2021 - 2024.
- 1.2 All boats are to be covered by third party insurance for claims up to £2,000,000.
- 1.3 All boats must have a valid river licence and this must be prominently displayed on the boat.
- 1.4 Boat buoyancy chambers or other buoyancy equipment and their fastenings must be maintained in good and effective condition.
- 1.5 Personal buoyancy aids or life jackets must be worn.
- 1.6 All competitors are personally responsible for any accident, financial or physical, whether to their boats or themselves. They must appraise the capabilities of their boat and themselves and only start or remain in race, giving due consideration to the wind and state of the water, if they estimate that they are able to do so safely.
- 1.7 The OOD has the right to stop a boat racing, if he/she considers that the boat or crew is not up to the prevailing conditions.
- 1.8 While assisting other boats the Safety Boat has right of way. This applies both to assisting sailing dinghies and escorting other river traffic through the sailing fleet.

### **2 Race Formats**

- 2.1 One day cups and Class championships will be decided over two races.
- 2.2 Series are scored on 50% of the total number of races sailed (rounded to the nearest integer), except for the Wednesday evening, Laser and Potter Points series which are scored of 33.3% of the total number of races (rounded up if necessary). The Laser and Potter Points series results are extracted from all the races sailed in Spring, Summer (Pursuit and Points) and Autumn Series races.
- 2.3 Points races will be raced on an average lap basis unless otherwise stated.
- 2.4 Pursuit races will finish when a sound signal is made indicating the end of the race.
- 2.5 The Moulsoford Cup will be sailed as a long distance race of a minimum of 2 hours duration
- 2.6 The KGFS Plaque will be sailed to a format to be chosen by the organizer, who will be the winner from the previous year.
- 2.7 The Junior Cup is open to anyone under 18 years on 1 January.
- 2.8 The Junior Cup Under 15 is open to anyone under 15 years on 1 January.
- 2.9 Eligible boats may be entered by signing the RACE ENTRY form sheet, normally displayed on the side of the OOD hut.

- 2.10 There is no minimum number of starters to constitute a race *in any series*. If there is only one starter, and it starts the course, it shall be awarded points for first place.
- 2.11 There must be 2 or more starters to constitute a cup, championship or fleet race.
- 2.12 Signing off at the end of a race is not required, unless otherwise modified by the OOD under point 4.1 below.
- 2.13 Personal Handicaps. For the Summer Pursuit and Wednesday evening series a personal handicap is applied. The winner of each race starts an additional one minute later than their standard boat start time in the next race. The effect is cumulative and reset at the end of the year, e.g. a helm who has won 3 races will start 3 minutes later than the standard boat start time in the next race that he or she competes in. It is the responsibility of the helm to ensure they start at the correct time. The personal handicaps for the two series are completely independent and accumulate separately.

### **3 Course Instructions**

- 3.1. The course will be displayed on the OOD hut showing the order in which marks are to be passed, the side on which each mark is to be left and the maximum number of rounds.
- 3.2. Races will be scored as low points system as specified in Racing Rules of Sailing 2021 – 2024.
- 3.3. Handicap racing shall be run using the RYA Portsmouth Yardstick (PY) Scheme with local variations at the discretion of the Committee. Where boats have completed differing numbers of laps, time will be based on the average time to complete a lap.

### **4 Changes in sailing instructions**

- 4.1 These Sailing Instructions may be modified by the OOD up to 10 minutes before the first signal for any boat race.
- 4.2 Outside Assistance: Competitors who receive assistance from a safety patrol boat may continue to race provided that it is safe for them to do so. No penalty will be applied unless a significant advantage has been gained, in which case a place or time penalty may be applied by the OOD. This modifies rule 41

### **5 Signals made ashore**

- 5.1 Sound signals only (without the use of flags) may be used provided all competitors have been informed at least 10 minutes before the first signal is made.
- 5.2 Signals made ashore will be displayed on the flagstaff adjacent to the OOD hut.
- 5.3 Flag AP with two sound signals (one sound signal when lowered) means "The race is postponed". The warning signal will be made not less than five minutes after AP is lowered. (Flag colours-red/white vertical stripes).

## 6 Schedule of races

- 6.1 Races are scheduled as shown on the annual Racing Programme.
- 6.2 In the event of the cancellation of a race, the committee may arrange for the race to be re-run at a later date.

## 7 Class flags

- 7.1 First (or only) start - F Flag - Red diamond on white background  
Second start (if required) - Q Flag - Yellow
- 7.2 Pursuit race - 2 Flag - White spot on blue background.

## 8 Racing area

- 8.1 The racing area will be on the Cleeve Reach of the Thames, between Cleeve lock and Moulsoford Railway Bridge

## 9 The Course

- 9.1 The course can be made up of any of the Club marks, together with any additional ones laid by the Officer of the Day (OOD).
- 9.2 An outer distance mark may be used to limit the length of the start line to ensure free passage for cruisers. (See 12.5)
- 9.3 The First Mark will be to windward of the start line
- 9.4 If the OOD sets a gate instead of a windward mark or leeward mark, boats shall sail between relevant marks and round either to port or to starboard as shown in the OOD book.
- 9.5 The course should be of sufficient length where possible so that three to four laps can be sailed in the normal duration of the race, usually one hour
- 9.6 Courses may be shortened. Two sound signals accompanying the raising of flag S (blue square white background) will signify the shortening of the course. The leading boat will finish the race on the next crossing of the start/finish line in the direction of the course from the last mark of the course. Following boats will **normally** finish on their next crossing of the finish line in the direction of the course from the last mark of the course. **However if the leading boat is about to lap another competitor (a "tail-ender") within 20 boat lengths or 3 minutes sailing time, then that competitor may be finished before the leading boat. In the event that the tail-ender wishes to race a further lap they can communicate it to the race officer who will then finish them on the following lap."**

## 10 Marks

Four marks are usually used to mark the course and are normally coloured floating cylinders.

## 11 **The Start**

- 11.1 Points races will be started using rule 26. Flags need not be used if all competitors have been informed (see 6.1)

<b>Signal</b>	<b>Flag &amp; Sound</b>	<b>Minutes before start signal</b>
Warning	Class flag, and sound	5
Preparatory	P, Z or black flag	4
One-minute	Preparatory flag removed. And long sound	1
Starting	Class flag removed, and sound	0

Where there is to be more than one fleet starting, the start signal for one fleet shall be the warning signal for the next.

- 12.2 Boats whose warning signal has not been made shall avoid the starting area.

- 12.3 Pursuit race start times will be in accordance with the schedule in the OOD manual (Based on the RYA Portsmouth Yardstick Scheme - Pursuit Racing). adjusted for personal handicaps if necessary as described in 2.1.4

- 12.4 The starting line will be one of the following:

- 12.4.1 The extension of a line painted on the window of the OOD hut, through a post on the river bank and where the line touches the far shore.

Length may be bounded by a red outer distance mark. (See 12.5)

- 12.4.2 The extension of a line from a post positioned at least 3m from the river bank, through a post on the river and where the line touches the far shore.

Length may be bounded by a red outer distance mark (See 12.5)

- 12.4.3 A line from a mast on the committee boat to a floating buoy.

- 12.5 A red floating buoy may be used as a limit mark of the start line. No boat shall sail between the limit mark and the furthest bank after her preparatory (5 minute) signal and until the start. On subsequent laps the limit mark shall be ignored

- 12.6 Up river sailing will be denoted by an orange flag flown from the flagstaff. All up river sailing will commence a minimum of 30 minutes after the stated times in the annual calendar.

## 12 **Change of course after the start.**

A change of course after the start will be signalled before the leading boat has begun the leg, although the new mark may not then be in position. Any mark to be rounded after rounding the new mark may be relocated to maintain the original course configuration. When in a subsequent change of course a new mark is replaced, it will be replaced with an original mark.

## 13 **The finish**

- 13.1 The finish line will be one of the lines defined in 12.4 above, as for the start line. (Note outer distance mark does not apply when finishing)

- 13.2 The start and finish lines will be the same for races sailed on an average lap basis, but may be different for others.

13.3 In points races a boat that has been lapped at the end of the race will finish next time it crosses the finish line and the elapsed time calculated based on average lap times.

#### 14 **Penalty system**

14.1 For penalties taken at the time of the incident the One-Turn and Two-Turn penalties as specified in rule 44.1 and 44.2 will be used.

14.2 The Post-Race Penalty and the Advisory Hearing and RYA Arbitration of the RYA Rules Disputes Procedures will also be available as detailed in the RYA Racing Rules Guidance Booklet. The Post-Race Penalty shall be 20% of the number of boats starting the race or 2 places, whichever is greater.

#### 15 **Time limit**

Boats failing to finish within 30 minutes of the first finisher will be scored as Did Not Finish except for the Moulsoford Cup when the time limit will be 60 minutes.

#### 16 **Protests**

16.1 Protests shall be written on forms available from the OOD and delivered there within 30 minutes after the last boat's finish.

16.2 Protests will be heard in approximately the order of receipt and on the day of the race.

16.3 Protest notices will be posted within 30 minutes of the protest time to inform competitors where and when the hearing in which they are parties or named as witnesses, will take place.

16.4 Decisions of the protest committee will be final.

The Protest committee will ideally be comprised of minimum of 3 people, chaired by the OOD and comprising AOD, SO and any other club officers available. Where other committee members cannot be appointed the OOD alone should provide a decision.

### **RIVER CONDITIONS**

How do I know if it's safe to go out on the river?

Our lovely stretch of the river is a delight to be on and generally very safe. But consideration always needs to be given to how fast the river is flowing and no one should go out on the water if the stream is particularly strong. This is most likely to be the case after long periods of heavy rain as the water makes its way to the sea. This causes the flow rate to increase, usually 2-3 days after the rain.

So how can I tell if it's safe to go out on the river?

The first place to check is the Environment Agency's website (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-thames-current-river-conditions>) Look for the section that refers to where we are – the Benson Lock to Cleve Lock reach.

If under "Current conditions" it says "Caution strong stream" with a red background then club equipment must not be used (sailing dinghies, SUPs or kayaks). All organised club events will be cancelled. This is generally referred to as "Red boards" and if you pass a lock you will see a red board hanging from lock gate. This means the Environment Agency advises all boats (powered or unpowered) not to navigate.

There are two further levels of warning you may see, both referred to as "Yellow boards" which are "Caution stream increasing" and "Caution stream decreasing". For both of these the Environment Agency advise all unpowered boats not to navigate.

So, if you see either of these then the same rule generally applies, club equipment must not be used (sailing dinghies, SUPs or kayaks) and better to come back another day!

There is an exception if safety boat cover is available and the conditions are otherwise good. In this case the organiser of an event may use their discretion to run an event, taking into account the stream status, weather and wind conditions and the experience level of those taking part.

Note when the stream is increasing it is generally not considered safe to run an event, especially for junior or inexperienced sailors.

Even if no warnings are showing please always take a few minutes to assess the river conditions before going out on the water. A northerly wind coupled with visible water flow can be particularly challenging for a beginner to make progress upstream in any craft. It's always worth heading upstream initially so you can judge how easily you can make progress against the stream.