

# LOCKS SAILING CLUB

## High Water Race start procedure

**These are simplified rules to suit two fleets racing at the Locks Sailing Club for High Water Races.**

### INTRODUCTION

Arrive at least half an hour before the start of the race and open up the clubhouse and Mercer Bridge with your club key.

1. In the club entrance you will find a signing on sheet in the filing box, the courses on the wall, the course board and the desktop where you leave the signing on sheet. Fill in the sheet and leave for the competitors to sign on.
2. Open Mercer Bridge. Decide what direction the wind is coming from with the aid of the compass rose on the deck and choose your courses. Write the courses on the board in the club entrance. You want a windward start if possible. An average race time of 100 minutes and an opportunity to shorten one or both fleets. Both fleets start together. Usually a large round followed by two or three smaller rounds will suffice as it ensures that they regularly pass through the line, which allows you to shorten the course. Remember, you can always shorten a race but you cannot make it longer. The course for the fast fleet needs to be longer than the course for the slow fleet. An extra round, a larger first round, or both, will do. **Be bold**, or take advice from a senior member. **Please ensure that both fleets have the same course outside of the harbour but the fast may carry out a longer one inside. This is for safety cover purposes**

**The time limit for a Locks SC Race is 3 hrs.**

3. On the bridge, familiarise yourself with the start line (triangle and inner distance mark) and the outer distance mark, which is not necessarily on the line. The boats must pass through the inner and outer distant marks whenever they pass through the line. Remember, if windy corner is used at the start, boats **need not** go through the line on their way out of the lake, at other times when line buoy is used as at the end of subsequent rounds then as above all boats must pass through the line on entering or leaving the lake.
4. Put the foot-operated hooter adjacent to the mast, check that it works. The switch is located in Mercer Bridge under the worktop on the right hand side. Turn on the radio to channel 37.M. You should hear other traffic. The instructions are on a card alongside the radio.

5. In Mercer Bridge you will find the flags. Hoist the Club burgee to the masthead. Identify the flags you will need.  
 Q (Yellow- Fast Fleet), B (Red- Medium Fleet), P (Blue Peter- Blue & White), A.P (Red & White). 1<sup>st</sup> Substitute ( Yellow & Blue Triangle) , X-Ray, ( White with a Blue X). Bend on to their halyards in this order.  
 Extreme left: Q over B (joined together), 'Blue Peter' and A.P. (answering pennant).  
 Extreme right: 1<sup>st</sup> Substitute and X-Ray.  
 Have to hand: N (November), L (Lima), Y (Yankee) and S (Sierra).
6. Ensure Saturn or Apache, the rescue boat and **both** crew have arrived and are preparing the boat. Check radio contact when they are ready, usually when they are on the water. **NO RESCUE BOAT - NO RACE.**
7. As the start time approaches keep an eye on the clock. Weather permitting; place it by the mast adjacent to the hooter operator, if not, place inside, visible through the glass. Try to familiarise yourself with the fleet as they take to the water. Number of boats, sail numbers and helmsmen etc.
- 8 **START.** Do not be distracted by casual observers on the bridge. An informed helper is very useful.

**The procedure - Nice long hoots about 4 seconds**

Hoot	5 - minutes	Hoist	Q & B	Warning
Hoot	4 - minutes	Hoist	P	Preparatory
Hoot	1 - minute	Drop	P	Preparatory
Hoot	Zero	Drop	Q & B	START

**Boats over the line.** If you can recognise them give one hoot and hoist X-Ray. Drop when they return. If the boat does not return, leave up until they turn the 1<sup>st</sup> mark and then disqualify.

**General Recall.** If you cannot recognise the number of boats over the line, remain calm, blow three hoots and hoist 1<sup>st</sup> Substitute. After the general recall, wait a few minutes for the boats to return to the start position. You might ask the rescue boat to help; bearing in mind they have other duties. One minute before you start the five-minute sequence again, give a long hoot and drop the 1<sup>st</sup> Substitute.  
 You cannot recall one fleet; it has to be a **general recall.**

**Other Signals:** - Postponement A.P. You can postpone the start for various reasons. You can postpone one fleet; hoist A.P. over the class flag, allowing the other fleet to carry on. Normally it would be both fleets  
 The rescue boat is not ready.  
 You are not ready.  
 You mess up the start sequence.

**Do not be afraid of a postponement, it is quite in order.**

After a postponement, give one long hoot and drop the A.P. one minute before you start the five-minute start sequence again.

**Race Abandoned.** If you need to abandon the racing for whatever reason, e.g. Fog, wind too strong, no wind, no rescue boat, outside reasons, hoist N. Leave it up and stay on the bridge until you are sure everyone concerned is OK. In most circumstances, the main responsibility is with you and the rescue boat. USE THE RADIO.

You can abandon one fleet, leaving the other to carry on. Hoist N over the class flag.

9. **AFTER THE START.** Retrieve the signing on sheet and neatly fill in the form in readiness for the finish of the races.

During the racing, tick off the boats as they round line buoy to start another lap. This keeps a check of their positions. If any are missing or you see anyone in trouble, call the rescue boat.

**Shorten course.** If you have any reason to shorten course, e.g. race too long, weather deteriorates, Hoist flag S (Sierra). If you want to shorten one fleet, hoist S over the class flag. On a fixed line like ours, hoist the flag on the end of the yardarm pointing in the direction the fleet are coming from.

Example: - North yard if the fleet are coming from the North. South Yard if the fleet are coming from the south i.e. having rounded Line Buoy.










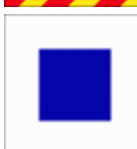
10. **FINISHING THE RACE.** You can sit in Mercer Bridge and still comfortably use the line.

Time in all the boats that cross the finish line and also enter any disqualifications (disq) and retirements (Rtd). If possible, use the '24 hour clock'.

**Do not forget: always enter the actual start time on the sheet.**

11. Pack away the flags and hooter. Turn off the radio. Lock Mercer Bridge, lift handle up and lock it. Take the time sheet and pin it in the bottom right hand corner of the glass cabinet in the club entrance.

12. **FLAGS**

<b>Q</b>	Fast Class and Start Warning	
<b>B</b>	Medium Class and Start Warning	
<b>P</b>	Preparatory	
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Sub</b>	General Recall	
<b>X</b>	Over the Line	
<b>A.P.</b>	Postponement	
<b>N</b>	Race Abandoned	
<b>L</b>	Come ashore, Change in Instructions	
<b>Y</b>	Life Jackets must be worn	
<b>S</b>	Shorten Course	

**N.B.** “Over” means above, joined together and on the same halyard.

B.Holden March 2004  
Amended J.Miller March 2006  
Reviewed J Miller March 2008  
Reviewed G. Cadmore June 2013