

# Introduction to local club racing

At Largs Sailing Club we normally race on Wednesday evenings and Sunday Afternoons. Information about the racing can be found on the club website. [www.largssc.co.uk](http://www.largssc.co.uk)

## Before The Race

Before the race you need to find out the details about this race or series, and enter. There are a few documents that are used, these are normally in the format specified by World Sailing, and would be basically the same layout and information for a club race, or a regatta like Cumbraes or a world championship.

### Notice of Race

This is like a brochure published before the event. It will say when and where the racing will be, what boat types are eligible, what people are eligible (i.e under 18, club members etc), how much it costs to enter and other information to let you decide if you want to enter.

- [LSC Club Sunday Notice of Race \(NOR\)](#)

### Sailing Instructions

These give the detail of how to race at the event; it will include a description or diagram of the course, details of the start line and finish line, how you know when to start and when you have finished. Plus all other details of how the racing will be run including what prizes there might be.

- [LSC Club Sunday Sailing Instructions \(SI\)](#)
- [LSC Club Course Chart](#)

### Entry Form

Where you put in your details to say you are entering. For LSC club racing this is just a sign on sheet where you put in your name, boat type and sail number.

- [LSC Sign On Template](#)

### Insurance

To enter a race you need to have third party racing risks insurance for your boat for a minimum amount normally this will be 3 or 5 million pounds. This will be specified in the NOR or SI Most dinghy insurance will include this already, but you can get it for around £20-£30 per year for the third party only.

## The Race

The race is run by a *Race Officer* who will set out the course and manage the starting signals. For club racing this is a volunteer who does this from the Lookout Lounge at the clubhouse. They will put out a number and letter showing what course from the course chart will be used for that race, and then will time the start using lights and a horn.

Before the race please go up to the lounge and sign in with your name and sail number. At this point you can ask about the plans for the days race. Many racers who have been sailing for years can't remember the courses or starting details and have to ask each time. So please ask questions if you have any.

## Starting

For the starting sequence at Largs we use lights instead of flags. The class light is either Yellow, Green or Red. The blue light represents the preparatory flag. We use a 5, 4, 1 go sequence with an additional early warning signal where all the lights are turned on. Each time the lights change there will be a sound on the horn to get your attention.

Time to Start		Yellow	Green	Red	Blue
-6	Early Warning	On	On	On	On
-5	Warning	On			
-4	Preparatory	On			On
-1	One Minute	On			Off
0	Start	Off			

If there are two separate classes (Typically on a Wednesday evening) then the sequence will repeat with *Start* for the first class being the 5 minute for the second start. The first start will use a yellow light, the second a green and the third a red.

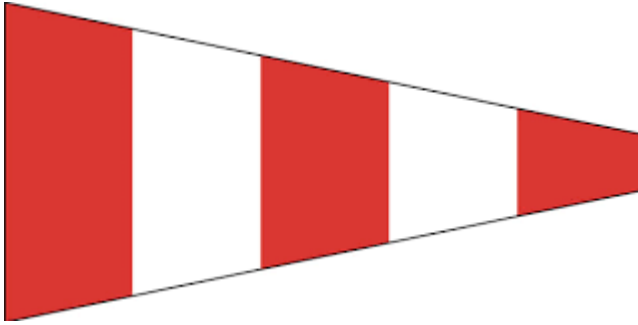
It helps to use a watch to time the start, you can use a stopwatch to count up or a timer that counts down. Many sailing oriented watches have timers that match the starting sequence this helps but isn't necessary.

If you don't have a watch then you can still get an OK start by watching for the other boats forming up at the start line.

## When things go wrong at the start

### Postponement

If the race organisers aren't ready, at the published start time they will postpone the racing. To let you know about the postponement they will make two sound signals and put the red and white AP flag up.



When they have got things sorted out they will take the postponement down with one sound signal. After one minute the normal start sequence will begin.

### Individual Recall

If a small number of boats are over the line at the start you will hear two hoots. One for the start and one for the individual recall. The class light will be made to flash.

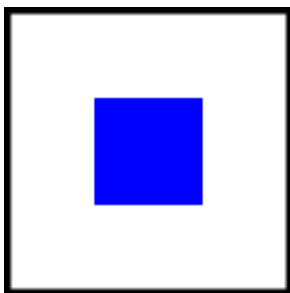
- If you are sure you were behind the line then keep going
- If you were over then you should head back to the other side of the line to start again.
- If you are over and don't go back you will be scored as On Course Side (OCS) basically last place.

### General Recall

If there are so many boats over the line at the start that the race officer can't work out who is over and who is OK then they may do a general recall. They will display the class light with a flashing blue light and you will hear three sound signals. One for the start then two more for the general recall. Once everyone stops and gets back to the start area the start sequence will begin again.

### Finishing

Keep sailing around the course till you see the shortened course signal, which is a flashing blue light and Flag S banner put on the balcony. Flag S is a white flag with a blue square in the middle.



When you sail through the finish line after the shortened course signal then you will have finished, you will probably get a horn as you sail through.

### After the Race

The race officer will check the timings and publish the results. If you are all sailing the same type of boat then the first boat across the line is the winner. However if you are in different

types this doesn't work as different types go at different speeds. For this we use a handicap system called the Portsmouth Yardstick (PY) with a correction factor based on the type of boat.

Each boat sails the same course and a time is taken. We then multiply the number of seconds taken to finish by the handicap and divide by 1,000. Or we type the times into software and let it worry about the maths. The handicaps are published by the RYA and we have a list on the results computer, so you don't need to know what your boat's handicap is when you enter a race. However it is important that you get the correct class of boat, particularly with something like an ILCA (LASER) which has different sized sails and different handicaps for each sail.

There are a few different ways you can race using handicaps

- **Fixed Laps**  
Everyone sails the same length course or the same number of laps. The finish times are recalculated using the handicap.
- **Average Lap (What we do at Largs)**  
Everyone starts together and sails around the course, once a target time is reached, the race is shortened, and you finish the race next time you go through the finish. The finish times are recalculated based on the handicap and number of laps.
  - [Understanding Average Lap Racing](#)
- **Pursuit Racing**  
The slowest boat starts first and then each faster boat type starts after a specific interval depending on the handicap. After a certain time the race is finished at a finish line on the course and everyone's positions are noted. Rarely done at Largs

At Largs we do average lap racing and the results are published on the club website in the racing section. <https://largssc.co.uk/racing>