

Race Management Policy for OK Dinghy World Championships 2024

Please note that these policies are guidelines to the Race Committee. These guidelines do not change the rules that apply at an event. Failure to observe these guidelines are not grounds for redress.

1. Definitions

- 1.1. **Race Officer** – a race officer appointed by the Organising Authority. The Race Officer will be responsible for managing the race management team.
- 1.2. **Race Management Team** – the race officer and all on the water personnel responsible for managing racing.

2. Timing/Changes in Schedule

- 2.1. Times will be based on GPS time.
- 2.2. Starts will not be delayed for competitors to reach the race area if they could have arrived with reasonable diligence.
- 2.3. The orange starting line flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) when the time limit for starting expires unless the race committee intends to make the warning signal for the next fleet to start within ten minutes of the previous start.
- 2.4. When racing back-to-back, the interval between the finish line closure and the new warning signal for that group will not normally be less than 5 minutes.
- 2.5. If it is unlikely that racing will be possible on an upcoming day, the schedule may be changed to sail more races in a day. The number of races sailed will not become more than one race ahead of schedule and any change will be notified on the day before it is to take effect.

3. Weather Conditions for Racing

- 3.1. The race will be started at the scheduled time if the wind conditions and visibility are within the parameters outlined in these policies. Waiting for 'better' conditions may be unfair and will be avoided.
- 3.2. The race committee may not wait for the wind to 'stabilise'. Competitors can compete in 'shifty' conditions.
- 3.3. The start may be postponed if a major wind shift is expected based on a known pattern or other reliable information (example: sea breeze can be seen in the distance and is expected to fill in). Otherwise, the race committee will start the race. The wind shift may not occur, the course can be corrected, or the shift may occur after the race is completed.
- 3.4. The average wind speed will be determined over a five minute period.
- 3.5. Races will not be started in less than an average of 4 knots of wind established over the entire course area. This lower limit may be higher if there is a strong current in the racing area.
- 3.6. Races will not be started in more than an average of 27 knots. Once a race has been started and winds exceed 27 knots the race may continue unless there is a danger to life. This limit may also vary depending upon sea conditions, current and rapid changes in velocity.
- 3.7. Races will not be started if reduced visibility prevents the race committee from sighting the starting line and identifying boats on the course side of the starting line. The fact that the first mark cannot be seen from the starting area is not, in and of itself a reason to postpone racing.

4. Courses

- 4.1. The race committee will attempt to set the longest possible first leg within the constraints of the course area and the target time.
- 4.2. The course length will be laid to give the first boat of each fleet the best chance of achieving the target time.

- 4.3. The length of the reaching leg between Marks 1 & 2 will be approximately two-thirds of the length of the first windward leg.
- 4.4. The reaching leg angle is approximately 130° off the wind.
- 4.5. Gates will be approximately 10 hull lengths wide and laid square to the wind.
- 4.6. The leeward gate Marks 5p/5s will be laid approximately 0.1NM above the starting line.

5. Starting Line

- 5.1. The starting line will generally be laid square to the mean sailing wind. Current, favoured side of the course, expected wind shifts and other variables may justify variation from this guideline in order to achieve an even spread on the starting line.
- 5.2. The starting line length shall be equivalent to approximately 1.5 times the length of the OK Dinghy (4m) times the number of starting boats.

6. Starting Procedure

- 6.1. Flag P will be used for the first attempt to start racing.
- 6.2. In the event of a postponement or a general recall that has been caused by the length or angle of the starting line, the race committee will adjust the starting line and make another attempt using the same preparatory signal.
- 6.3. If the race committee is satisfied that a postponement or a general recall was not the result of the starting line, it will use the U flag (RRS 30.3) for all subsequent starts.
- 6.4. The black flag (RRS 30.4) will only be used when general recalls are caused by the boats themselves, or rapid oscillations of the wind, and not by actions of the race committee.

7. Sighting the Line

- 7.1. The race committee will sight the starting line from each end.
- 7.2. Each line sighter will use a hand-held voice recording device and record without stopping from at least 90 seconds before the starting signal until after anything of interest after the start. A commentary of anything of interest will be recorded.
- 7.3. Competitors who have been scored UFD or BFD, and their support persons, may review the recordings of the applicable start(s).

8. Postponing a Race During the Starting Procedure

- 8.1. The race committee will postpone the race during the starting procedure if the mean wind shifts more than 10 degrees or in the event other influences cause boats to bunch at one end of the start line. In rapid oscillations, the race committee will endeavour to lay a starting line based on the mean oscillations expected.
- 8.2. The race committee will also consider postponing the start for any of the following reasons:
 - (a) a drifting mark,
 - (b) a significant error in the timing of signals,
 - (c) other boats interfering with the competing boats,
 - (d) inappropriate starting line length or angle,
 - (e) a reduction in visibility preventing the race committee from sighting the starting line or identifying premature starters,
 - (f) other factors that might affect the fairness of the race.
- 8.3. If the race committee considers that adjusting the starting line is unlikely to improve the chances of a fair start, then the starting procedure will be allowed to continue.
- 8.4. For a postponement that the race committee anticipates will be longer than ten minutes, the orange starting line flag(s) will be removed (with no sound signal).

9. Recalls

- 9.1. The race committee will signal a general recall if it believes that unidentified boats were on the course side of the line.

- 9.2. Except after a black flag general recall (when the requirements of RRS 30.4 will be met), the bow numbers of boats recorded UFD or BFD will be posted on the start and finish vessels after the last fleet of that sequence of starts has started.
- 9.3. If a race management error is discovered after the starting signal (e.g. timing), the race committee may abandon the race (by using flag N). In these circumstances the race committee will not signal a general recall.

10. Abandonment

- 10.1. On the first half of the first leg, the race committee may abandon in the event of a persistent wind shift of more than 25 degrees. After that the race committee will let the race continue if it is able to adjust the course to the changed conditions.
- 10.2. Visibility: The race committee will consider abandoning a race if it is satisfied that a reduction in visibility affects its ability to safely manage racing. The fact that boats cannot see the next mark from the prior mark is not, in and of itself, a reason to abandon the race.
- 10.3. Collapse of wind: The race committee may abandon the race when it is unlikely that the leading boat will complete the course within the overall time limit given the wind conditions at that point in time.
- 10.4. Collapse of wind: The race committee shall abandon the race if the wind drops below 4 knots for more than 5 minutes.
- 10.5. Once a race has been started, the race committee will not abandon the race simply because the average speed increases beyond the stated limits. The race committee will consider abandoning the race if it is unable to safely manage racing.
- 10.6. The race committee may abandon the race when a new wind has caused the fleet to invert.

11. Adjusting the Course to a New Wind Speed or Direction

- 11.1. Change in wind direction:
 - (a) With a persistent wind shift of 10° or less the course will not be changed unless necessary to adjust for current or to provide a true downwind leg.
 - (b) Between 10° and 15° consideration will be given to adjusting the course to the new wind provided that the race committee is confident that the shift is likely to persist.
 - (c) With a persistent wind shift of more than 15°, the race committee will attempt to change the course to the new wind.
 - (d) With a persistent wind shift of more than 45° after the first leg, the race committee will consider its influence of the race. Under these circumstances, the race committee may either change the course or abandon the race.
 - (e) Frequent and violent oscillations: Under these circumstances, the race committee may not be able to adjust the course sufficiently or quickly enough to maintain the fairness of the race. In this case, the race may be abandoned.
- 11.2. Changes in length of legs
 - (a) The race committee will attempt to minimise the number of changes in leg length to achieve target times. In general, changes in length will only be made if it appears that the time for the first finisher will be more than 20% outside the target time.
 - (b) Changes in leg lengths will not be made to reduce a leg to less than 50% or increase a leg to more than 150% of the original leg length.
 - (c) Changes in current may justify variations from these guidelines.

12. Finishing Line/Finishing Procedures

- 12.1. The finishing line will be set about 0.1NM below the starting line.
- 12.2. The finishing line will be laid before the first boat begins the final leg.
- 12.3. The blue flag on the finish vessel(s) will be displayed (with no sound signal) as the first boat rounds Mark 3.

- 12.4. In the case of a late course change for the final leg, the blue flag will be displayed as soon as possible after the finishing line has been laid.
- 12.5. The finishing line will be approximately 50 meters in length and set square to the mean sailing wind.
- 12.6. The blue flag on the finish vessels(s) will be removed (with no sound signal) upon the earlier of:
 - (a) Expiration of the time limit, or
 - (b) Immediately after the last boat finishes.
- 12.7. There will be a line sighter on each end of the finishing line.
- 12.8. Each line sighter will use a hand-held recording device to record the order of finish
- 12.9. Each day's recording will be saved and indexed for easy retrieval.
- 12.10. A written record of the finishing order will also be maintained by each finish vessel.
- 12.11. Competitors and support persons may listen to the voice recording(s) and review the written records of their finishes.

13. Requests for Redress

- 13.1. If the race committee believes it may have made an error affecting the outcome of the race for which redress may be available, it will request redress for the potentially affected boat(s).

14. Race Committee Protests

- 14.1. Since the primary responsibility for protesting breaches of the rules rests with competitors, the race committee will not normally protest a boat.
- 14.2. The race committee may protest a boat in the following circumstances:
 - (a) A breach of a sailing instruction that may not be protested by another boat,
 - (b) An apparent breach of good sportsmanship (RRS2),
 - (c) Failing to take a penalty after knowingly touching a mark, but not protesting another boat.