



Standard Sailing Instructions for Club racing
Version 3 – August 2026

1. Risk and Safety

- a. Everyone afloat shall wear adequate personal buoyancy. Wet suits and dry suits are not 'adequate buoyancy'. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
- b. Competitors are entirely responsible for their own safety, whether afloat or ashore. Nothing in Notice of Race or Sailing Instructions reduces this responsibility.
- c. It is for competitors to decide whether the boat they intend to sail is fit for the conditions. By launching or going afloat, competitors confirm the boat is fit for those conditions, and they are competent to sail and compete in those conditions.
- d. The provision of rescue patrol boats does not relieve sailors of their responsibilities.
- e. Insurance. All boats sailing on the river must hold adequate marine insurance, including insurance against third party claims of at least £2 million.
- f. Racing will be governed by the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS), the prescriptions of the RYA and local Bantham SC rules/protocols.
- g. Nothing done by the organisers can reduce the responsibilities of owners and/or competitors, nor will it make the organisers responsible for any loss or damage, death or personal injury, however it may have occurred, as a result of the boat taking part in racing. The organisers encompass everyone helping run the races, and include Bantham Sailing Club, the race committee, race officer, rescue boat patrols and beachmasters.
- h. Non racing craft
 - i. Non-racing boats are welcome to sail when there is racing, but they must try to keep clear of racing boats, and the start line especially.
 - ii. Those racing should be aware and courteous toward perhaps less experienced recreational sailors.
 - iii. Before the start and if not racing, boats shall navigate according to the International Regulation for Preventing Collisions at Sea,

2. Entering the race and retiring;

- a. Please report to the Quay before racing to sign-on, letting the organisers know you are racing and importantly which boat you are using.
- b. Retiring from the race. If possible please try to let the Quay know if you are not finishing and have retired.

3. Starting

a. **Launching and leaving your mooring – the five minute gun**

- i. Competitors planning to race must leave their mooring before the five minute sound signal. Similarly, boats launching from the beach must also be afloat by this time. The ten minute sound signal is your prompt to get ready to launch or leave your mooring.

b. **Start and finish line**

- i. The start and finish line is the line created when the two flag-poles on the far shore are lined up. The flag-pole on the Quay is aligned and forms part of the start and finish line.
- ii. A start line 'outer distance mark' will also be used close to the Cockleridge shore. Competitors must not sail between this (round white buoy) mark and the far shore/beach. (see diagram later on).

c. **How many starts?**

- i. For all Points Series racing and the Gala weekend, there will be only one start for all classes. This is the norm. If on rare occasions there are too many boats wishing to race, the decision will be made on the day to have a second start for Bantham Boats and Toppers/Cadets together. This will be ten minutes after the first start. The race team will ensure everyone is told about the second start.
- ii. For the Regatta, there will be two starts..
 1. First start – Fast handicap (G)
 2. Second start (ten minutes after) the first start for Bantham Boats (H), Toppers and Cadets (T)

d. **Sound signals and flags before the start..**

- i. IF ONE START ONLY – all sound signals at five minute intervals...
 1. Ten minute horn – warning first start
 - a. Class flags B  G  and T  are flown
 2. Five minute horn – preparatory – P flag also hoisted.
 - a. Class flags still up B  G  and T  and also P 
 3. Start horn.
 - a. All flags down.
- ii. IF THERE ARE TWO STARTS –all sound signals at five minute intervals...
 1. Ten minute horn – warning Fast Handicap.
 - a. Class flags G  flown – Fast handicap
 2. Five minute horn – preparatory first start– P flag also hoisted.
 - a. Class flags still up G  and now also P 
 3. Start horn. – Start for Handicap and also the 10 minute warning for Bantham Boats and Toppers/Cadets
 - a. G  and P  come down, and
 - b. Class flags B  and T  are flown – warning signal for Bantham Boats and Toppers
 4. Five minute horn for second start – Preparatory flag flown - P

- a. Class flags still up B  and T  and also P 
- 5. Start horn – second start
 - a. All flags down

- e. **The Class letters.** Different classes may sail different courses even if starting at the same time. Faster classes may be asked to sail a longer course or complete more laps. The class letters displayed on the wall at the Quay are as follows:
 - i. H = Bantham Boats
 - ii. G =fast handicap, Lasers, Yawls etc
 - iii. T =Toppers and cadets
- f. **The Course letters.** We use different courses in the river. The course your class is to sail is displayed on the wall alongside your class letter (see d above):
 - i. B - denotes the short course
 - ii. A - denotes the long course, which includes sailing down to Villa Crusoe.
 - iii. Diagram later in this document shows the two courses.
 - iv. **NEW FOR 2023 – Course C.** We have a new racing mark which will sit between the Cockleridge mark and Jenkin's Quay. This race mark is called 'Jenkins'. Course C is like course B (ie short course) but uses the new Jenkins mark and does not use Cockleridge. Eg - If the wind is coming from the sea, one lap of this new course is Jenkins-Aunemouth-Hexdown-start-line.
- g. **Lap direction.** You should sail the courses anti-clockwise, leaving all marks to Port.
- h. **Laps.** The number of laps to be done is show by numbers on the wall on the Quay alongside your class letter and the course. Examples;
 - i. H A2B1 – means Bantham Boats, sail two laps of long course A then one lap of short course B.
 - ii. T B2 – Toppers sail two laps of short course B
- i. **Direction of start arrow.** A BSC unique feature, but most helpful. On the wall on the Quay, you will also see an arrow indicating the direction of the start, up-river or down-river. This is decided based on the wind direction, with all races starting into the wind (beating) if possible.

4. Qualifying for a race series.

- i. Points races. To qualify for this series requires six races to be completed. In the event of a tie, then results from any seventh or subsequent races will be used to tie-break.
- ii. Gala weekend races count as part of the Points Series.
- iii. Gala weekend is a also a race series in its own right. Four races planned, with the best three results count.
- iv. Regatta. Four races, the best three results count.

Shortening course if needed

If it is necessary to shorten the course during the race, you may hear two blasts on the start line hooter combined with the flag S being hoisted .

The course is usually shortened as the lead boat rounds the final race mark before the Race team finish the race.

Abandoning the race if needed

We can abandon a race if the wind disappears and is unlikely to return OR of course if conditions become too windy.

You will hear three blasts on the start line hooter combined with flag N being flown.



If a race is abandoned, all competitors must return to their mooring or the beach as a matter of priority.

Associated with section 3 above, a schematic of the river showing the rough positions of the racing marks and the courses to be sailed....

