

TYPES OF RACE – A GUIDE FOR OODs and DOODs.

There are three types of races – Pursuit, Average lap time and Elapsed time.

Pursuit races. These are run for a fixed period of time, either 90 or 60 minutes. Start times for each Class are predetermined on the basis of PY numbers. The course does not have to be the same for each lap. However, it is often easier to determine places at the end of the race if each lap is the same. The important thing is that pursuit races cannot be shortened.

Average lap time races. Our fleet encompasses boats with a wide variation in speed. In the *Combined and Handicap Series* we race as one fleet but because of the speed variation it would be very difficult to set a satisfactory course where each lap is different – fast boats would finish too quickly and slow boats would take too long to complete the same course. The solution is to set a course which is the same for everyone on each lap and then calculate results on the basis of average lap times. Setting a time limit of 75 minutes, with boats finishing the lap they are on, gives a race where the majority sail for about 90 minutes. However, the timing is not critical. For example, if the weather deteriorates or a significant number of boats are approaching the line just before the time limit then the race can be finished early. The downside of average lap races is that because each lap must be the same they are inherently less interesting than Elapsed time races. (A similar logic applies to the *Ladies, Novices and Cadets Series* which should be run as average lap time races but on a different course to the Handicap races.)

Elapsed time races. In the *Spring, Summer, Autumn and Evening A & B Series* races the Fleet is split into Fast and Slow groups. This makes the speed variation less significant and allows OODs to set different courses for the fast and slow fleets, and each lap may be different. This has the potential advantage of providing more interesting (challenging?) courses than the single course demanded by the average lap system. It also allows the Fast and Slow fleets to be separated early in the race so that they don't get in each other's way. Results are calculated on the time taken for each boat to complete the assigned course. Elapsed time races can be shortened if necessary.

Recording. It is very helpful for the Sailing Sec. who calculates the results, to have a complete record of each race. This means recording the time when each boat passes through the start/finish line at the end of every lap regardless of how many laps are sailed. For obvious reasons, in Average lap time races, it is absolutely vital that the number of laps completed by each boat is properly recorded.

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