



Team Racing Concepts, Logistics and Rules

In many ways, team racing is similar to fleet racing. Generally the start has a committee boat and pin; there are upwind legs, reaches, and runs; the finishes will either be upwind or downwind between a committee boat and pin; and the boat that finishes first is scored with one point.

The rules of sailing apply, modified a bit by Part D.

But in other ways, team racing is different. This article will explore the logistics, concepts, and rules of team racing.



2511 keeps an eye on 2410 and 2569

Regatta Format and General Concepts

A race consists of two three-boat teams sailing against each other. Boats are scored 1 point for first place, 2 points for second place, and so on up to sixth place. The winning team is the team with ten points or less or a “winning combination.” For example, a team finishing 1st, 4th, and 6th, loses to a team finishing 2nd, 3rd, and 5th.

Generally, a regatta is sailed in a round robin format so that every team sails against every other team an equal number of races. Races last about 10 minutes, so several round robins can be completed during a regatta. Only completed round robins count towards the regatta standings.

A team identifier is added to each team's boat to allow for team identification by the PRO as well as other teams. These can be applied by sticker to a sail or a cover slipped over the head of the sail as shown below. It may also be a colored flag attached to the forestay. In the heat of battle remembering your opponents and team members by 4 digit sail numbers won't work.

Team Racing Starts

The starting sequence in a team race is fairly unique to all for a fair and organized starts. Before the starting sequence one team must be outside the committee boat and one team must be outside the pin. The teams may engage or enter the starting area one minute after the start of the starting sequence. After the teams engage, there are no limits or restrictions on where the boats may sail.

By having one team start on starboard and one team on port, the starboard team (the team starting outside the committee boat) is naturally favored. In order to hold a fair regatta, each team will start the same number of races on port and the same number of races on starboard. Before each race, the PRO will announce the two teams for the race and from which side (starboard or port) each team will start.

Team Racing Courses

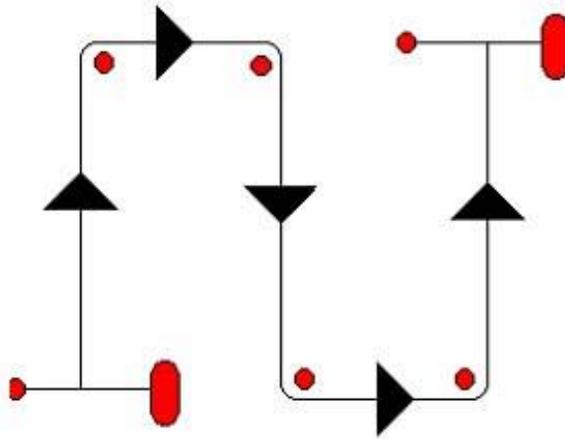
The ultimate goal when setting a team racing course is to run as many races as possible. Races should last approximately 10 minutes. Team racing generally uses two courses: windward-leeward and the digital-N, discussed below. In order to maximize the opportunities to use mark traps, all windward marks are rounded to starboard. This allows boats on the starboard lay-line to block opponents on a port lay-line.



Teams round the windward mark to **Starboard**.

Digital-N Course

This course consists of a windward leg, reach leg, downwind leg, reach leg, and upwind leg to finish, as depicted in the diagram below. Each leg should be approximately .___ miles, which allows for 10-15 minute races in the MC.



With separate start and finish lines, races may be run simultaneously. That is, after the teams round the windward mark, another race may be started without interfering with the first race. This is crucial when there are more than 4 teams at a team racing regatta in order to minimize waiting between races. The downside to this course is more buoys are required and two committee boats (start and finish) must be utilized. If the buoy requirement and the multiple committee boat logistics can be managed, the digital-N is the preferred course for team racing.

Windward-Leeward

The windward-leeward course is used when fewer teams are sailing in the regatta because the issue of waiting between races is minimized. Generally, a downwind finish is used so that only one committee boat is needed for the start and finish.

Team Racing Rules

Due to the close sailing of team racing, a thorough understanding of the rules is crucial. While avoiding contact between boats is always the number one rule, having a good understanding of the rules and how they interact with each other can give you a tactical advantage and be the difference between winning and losing a team race.

The Racing Rules of Sailing (“RRS”) apply to team racing, however Appendix D – Team Racing Rules modifies the general RRS. While a review of the RRS and Appendix D is crucial before sailing in a team racing event, the following is a list of important rules and Appendix D modifications.

The Racing Rules of Sailing	Summary	Appendix D – Team Racing Modifications
10	General port/starboard	No Modification
11	General windward/leeward	No Modification
12	Clear astern/clear ahead	No Modification
13	Keep clear while tacking	No Modification
14	Avoiding contact	No Modification
15	Acquiring right of way	No Modification
16.1	Changing course	No Modification
16.2	Changing course when crossing	No Modification
17	Luffing rights by overtaking boat	No Modification
18.1	When mark room applies	No Modification
18.2	Giving mark room	18.2(b) is modified related to a boat that passes head to wind while in the zone.
18.3	Tacking in the zone	No Modification
18.4	Gybing at a mark	18.4 is deleted
19	Room to pass at an obstruction	No Modification
20	Room to tack at an obstruction	No Modification
24	Interfering with another boat	24.3 is added that a boat finished cannot interfere with a boat that has not finished. 24.4 is added that when boats from different races meet, any change of course shall be consistent with a rule or trying to win her own race.
41	Outside help	41(e) is added that boats on the same team may not

		communicate with electronic communication.
44.1	Penalties	44.1 is modified so that only a One-Turn Penalty applies to fouls.
<i>Zone</i>	Definition of zone	This definition is modified to two boat lengths.

General Concepts

Team Racing can be a bit more rough-and-tumble than we are used to, but we still sail as Corinthian competitors and we sail by the rules at all times. You will be sailing close quarters and it puts you in positions where you can make mistakes and foul your competitor. Accept that this is true. If you foul, you do your turn. MCs have a cherished reputation of being honorable competitors. Bring that posture with you and it will be a great event.

You will be covered and blocked in ways we would consider unfriendly in fleet racing. If you are playing basketball, you fully expect to have someone try to block your shot — it's not unfriendly in the least. It is an art and your job, as well as your opponent's job, is to work within the rules to have the best outcome. In team racing we don't bully, but we do use the rules in unfamiliar circumstances.

Teams who sail as three individuals usually lose out to teams who sail cohesively.