SAILING INSTRUCTIONS

1 RULES
Racing will take place under the Racing Rules of Sailing (RRS) 2017-2020, the prescriptions of the RYA, these Sailing Instructions and the class rules of each boat entered except as any of these are changed by these sailing instructions.

2 SAFETY RULES FOR ALL YACHTS
2.1 Enforcement
Competitors may be disqualified for failing to observe these safety rules. The onus of proof of compliance shall be on the competing yacht.

2.2 Commercial Traffic
Competitors are reminded of their obligations to other vessels under the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea and in particular to large commercial vessels in the main channel under Rules 8 and 9. Any yacht which finds herself on a collision or near collision course with such vessels shall alter course to pass astern of them. Where this is not possible a yacht may use any available means of propulsion to avoid collision without being deemed to have infringed this rule, provided that the yacht returns to the point at which use of such propulsion commenced before continuing to race.

2.3 Jetties and Obstructions
All yachts shall pass to seawards of any jetty or similar structure projecting from the shore, and shall under no circumstances sail beneath such structures.

3 SAFETY RULES FOR DINGHIES
3.1 Personal Buoyancy
Personal buoyancy aids will be worn at all times when racing. Neither a wetsuit nor drysuit constitutes adequate buoyancy.

3.2 Boat Buoyancy
All dinghy owners and competitors shall pay careful attention to boat buoyancy.
Dinghies belonging to recognized classes shall comply with class rules in respect of buoyancy. The approval of the sailing committee shall be obtained before entering and racing non-class dinghies.

3.3 Equipment
All dinghies shall carry suitable paddles or oars, anchors and warps, and bailing equipment.

4 NOTICES TO COMPETITORS
Notices to competitors will be posted on the race notice board located in the main clubhouse.

5 CHANGES TO SAILING INSTRUCTIONS
Any supplementary sailing instructions shall be displayed on the Race Notice Board before the Warning Signal. Sailing Instructions may be changed as in RRS 90.2(c). On the water, such changes may be communicated by the giving of oral instructions ONLY if exceptional circumstances apply, and ONLY from a vessel flying code flag ‘L’.

6 SIGNALS MADE ASHORE
Signals made ashore will be White lights on Race Box or Flags hoisted on the Mast located in front of the clubhouse.

7 SCHEDULE OF RACES
The schedule of races, classes to start and start times shall be as shown in the Sailing & Events Program.

8 CLASS FLAGS
ANY GENERAL HANDICAP CLASS DINGHIES Num 1
ANY GENERAL HANDICAP CLASS CRUISERS Num 2
Mirror Dinghy Class Num 6
Wayfarer and Wanderer Classes ‘W’
YW 14ft Dayboat Class ‘Y’
‘A’ Class Cruisers (PY 1139 or less) ‘A’
‘B’ Class Cruisers (PY 1140 or more) ‘B’

9 THE COURSE
9.1 Course Sheet
The GSC course sheet shall form a part of these instructions and be displayed on the race notice board. It shall define various start and finish lines, course and limit marks, and standard club courses which may be used.
9.2 Indicating Courses
Lines and line limits, course marks, the direction and order of rounding, shortened courses and any other course details shall be indicated in the supplementary sailing instructions. Courses may also be indicated to boats on the water by boards displayed from the race office, a committee boat or any other starting position as indicated.

10 MARKS
Marks shall be mooring/navigation buoys or club laid marks. If a mooring buoy is used as a Mark any vessel attached to it is deemed part of that Mark.

11 THE START
11.1 Starting Procedure for Dinghies Lights
The races will be started with the following signals:
5 min before start THREE White Lights 1 sound
4 min before start TWO White Lights 1 sound
1 min before start ONE White Light 1 long sound
START NO White Lights 1 sound

11.2 Starting Procedure for Dinghies Flags
The races will be started with the following signals:
5 min before start Warning up (Class Flag) 1 sound
4 min before start Preparatory (either Flag “P”, “I”, or Black) 1 sound
1 min before start Prep flag down (either “P”, “I”, or Black) 1 long sound
START Warning down (Class Flag) 1 sound

11.3 Starting Procedure for Cruisers Lights
The races will be started with the following signals:
10 min before start THREE White Lights 1 sound
4 min before start TWO White Lights 1 sound
1 min before start ONE White Light 1 long sound
START NO White Lights 1 sound

11.4 Starting Procedure for Cruisers Flags
The races will be started with the following signals:
10 min before start Warning up (Class Flag) 1 sound
4 min before start Preparatory (either Flag “P”, “I”, or Black) 1 sound
1 min before start Prep flag down (either “P”, “I”, or Black) 1 long sound
START Warning down (Class Flag) 1 sound

Times shall be taken from the visual signals. When races are sailed ‘back to back’ the postponement signal shall be used for at least 4 minutes before commencing the second or subsequent start procedures.
11.5 The Start Line
The start line will be either a line between the mast of a committee boat and a laid outer distance mark (an inner distance mark may be laid on the course side of the line close by the committee boat) or Gravesend Sailing Club’s Line which is the transit of two posts with orange top marks at the western end of the club house. The outer limit mark will be as specified in the appropriate course sheet unless otherwise specified by the Race Officer.

12 CHANGE OF COURSE
A change of course after the start will be signalled before the leading boat has begun the leg affected, although the new mark may not be in position. Any mark rounded after rounding the new mark may be relocated to maintain the original course configuration.

13 THE FINISH
The finishing line will be the GSC club line (as defined previously) or between the mast aboard a finishing boat flying a blue flag and a laid finishing mark.

14 TIME LIMITS
Any time limits shall be shown in the supplementary sailing instructions. One boat finishing within the time limit shall extend it by one hour for other competitors, unless otherwise stated.

15 PROTESTS
Protests shall be written on forms available at the race office and delivered there within one hour of the last race of the day. The time and place of the protest hearing will be posted on the race notice board.

16 SCORING SYSTEM
The ‘Low Point Scoring System’, RRS Appendix A4 shall be used, with the number of races and discards to count as shown in the schedule of races.

17 FLAGS WHILE RACING
The wearing of a rectangular racing flag shall be optional. An ensign shall not be worn while racing. It is recommended that on retirement an ensign is worn.