

Guidance on restarting racing and COVID-19

Northern Ireland Version

Northern Ireland Version	1
Introduction	2
RYA Guiding Principles	2
Contact	2
Socially Distanced Competitive Sailing	2
Risk Assessments	3

Version Control

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1	20/05/20	All	None – first issue
1 - NI	20/05/20		Phases on return to racing – NI version
<u>2 - NI</u>	<u>10/07/20</u>		<u>NI Exec 'Steps' no longer relevant in indication of club racing status. 'Phases of return to racing' table has been amended.</u>
<u>3 - NI</u>	<u>12/08/20</u>	<u>All</u>	<u>Amendment to RYA Guiding principals</u> <u>Removal of sections not relevant to current situation</u>

Introduction

The COVID-19 outbreak continues to be a rapidly evolving situation. This document has been provided by the RYA Racing Department as a supplement to the [Club Guidance Document](#), and therefore only addresses the issues specific to racing.

The RYA is aware that clubs & classes will have different challenges to manage in terms of pressure from members; local authority, landlord or harbour authority requirements; and insurance issues. It is therefore to be expected that approaches will vary from club to club and at the RYA we see that our role is to provide advice and guidance to clubs & classes and help you to make your own informed choices. With a return to pre-Covid style racing unlikely for a significant time clubs will need to adapt their offering to members and stakeholders to ensure as much engagement as is safe and practicable.

The suggestions provided in this document may be appropriate for different organisations at different phases of the government's recovery strategy. Each organisation should consider their own circumstances as part of their risk assessments.

It is intended that this document will continue to be updated as the situation develops, and more organised activity becomes more appropriate. Any feedback should be provided to racing@rya.org.uk and will be considered for future revisions.

RYA Guiding Principles

The RYA's guiding principles will underpin all guidance across the boating community.

1. Our Guidance Covid-19 preventative measures are vital in keeping you, your family and others safe and to minimise pressure on frontline services. The RYA will continue to support the National effort to control the spread of Covid-19 and assist members of the RYA family with any variations that might develop at a local level. We support the Government's desire to return to normality in a measured way and we recognise that we have a role to play by providing guidance to the RYA community on the application of the 2020 Regulations.

2. Our approach is considerate and conservative

Considerate: be mindful of the potential impact that you could have on other water users and do not place unnecessary extra strain on the RNLI and emergency services

Conservative: help to minimise risk by taking an extra conservative approach to your boating

Contact

The RYA offer affiliated clubs & classes access to a number of highly experienced volunteers who may be able to provide further advice on specific technical aspects should that be required.

Any clubs or classes requiring further guidance or advice are requested to contact racing@rya.org.uk.

Socially Distanced Competitive Sailing

Racing is by its nature generally socially distanced and it is likely that the main challenge that will be faced by those wishing to run racing will be preventing or minimising gatherings onshore before launching and following recovery.

In particular fixed start times and similar finishing times will likely lead to congestion on launching and recovery.

The guidance to keep a distance of two metres, or one metre plus with additional mitigations, from those from outside your household means that it may now be possible to sail in some boats where it was not previously possible to maintain 2m separation. Additionally, those from two separate households are now allowed by the guidance to meet indoors meaning that it may now be possible for two individuals to be in a race hut provided social distancing can be maintained.

RYA have agreed and published [Covid-19 Guidance on sailing & racing with different households](#) which sets out how multi household sailing may be carried out safely.

There are a number of ways in which clubs could consider mitigating this risk and different means may be appropriate at different phases of the Covid-19 recover process.

- Offering opportunities for competitive sailing that allows people to sail at a time to suit;
- Running multiple racing sessions with reduced numbers i.e. Mon – Fri night racing instead of just Thurs night racing;
- Staggered start times

Further guidance on considerations for reducing the risk of shoreside gatherings and managing boat parks is given in [Club Guidance Document..](#)

Risk Assessments

Guidance on the considerations for 'On the water safety' are contained in the [Club Guidance Document..](#)

An increasing number of clubs & event organisers use some form of daily risk assessment before delivering racing (or other organised activity) as a supplement to their higher level safety plans and club risk assessments. More details can be downloaded from a recent presentation [here](#).

Those considering offering racing activity, should give consideration to changes from standard or additional items as a result of Covid-19. Further guidance is provided below on the additional risks that may need consideration which are specific to racing rather than general club activity.

Criteria	Covid-19 considerations?
RC vessel or hut manning	Is there a process for cleaning? Can we use household groups to crew? Can we use technology or different systems to help reduce requirements for personnel on RC vessels?
Social distancing of competitors	Do our necessary communication processes comply with current social distancing requirements? Consider processes for entering, viewing notice board, handling disputes, seeing results etc. If there is a need for briefing can it be done through digital channels or social media? How do sailors remain distant whilst rigging? How do sailors remain distant whilst launching and recovery? Will the racing format lead to congestion or 'pinch points'?

Race management equipment	Is there a cleaning process for race marks, course boards etc.?
Entanglement when mark-laying (<i>higher risk if single manning</i>)	Where possible use fixed marks Consider requiring wearing of lifejacket (150N) rather than buoyancy aid Consider requiring carriage of easily accessible safety knife Consider reducing weight of ground tackle Consider using smaller marks requiring lighter ground tackle

Further guidance on some of the specific risks associated with running sailing events and Covid-19 has been provided by World Sailing. This includes a document titled Guidance for Event Organizers for the Protection of the Health of Sailing Communities.

This can be accessed via their [Medical page](#).

Further resources

Additional resources for clubs etc, including checklists and templates can be found through the Sport NI Return to [SportNI Toolkit page](#).