

IN HOT PURSUIT

RETHINKING COURSE OPTIONS

Introductions

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Special thanks to Jeff Johnson, Tom Duggan and Taran Teague for sharing their experiences to improve the presentation

The Old Days



Fast Forward 100 Years!



No More Windward-Leeward!

- Racing participation is dropping in almost every venue – except:
 - Casual Wednesday nights around Government buoys
 - Pursuit racing catering to newcomers and cruisers
 - Non-traditional Windward-Leeward courses
 - Point to Point destination racing
- Looking around the boatyards there are an increasing number of “Performance Cruisers” replacing traditional racing boats
- Sailors are telling us with their feet what they want!

Course Options Beyond Windward-Leeward

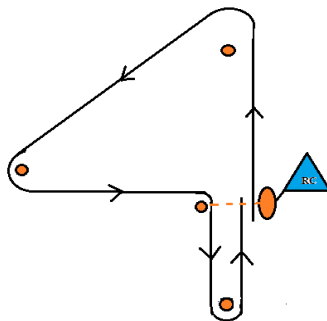
- Drop Mark Options
 - Modified Olympic
 - Harry “A”
- Government Mark Options
 - Closed Course
 - Open Course
 - “Random” Race
- Point to Point

Starting Options

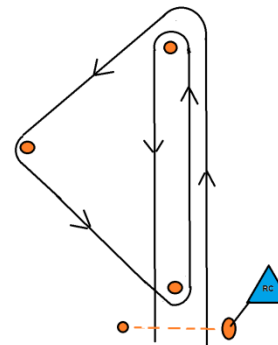
- Pursuit Starts
- “Le Mans” Starts
- Rally Races
- Downwind or Reaching Starts
- Conventional Starts

Let's Talk About Some of These Options

- Modified Olympic and Harry "A" Courses
 - Offer reaching legs
 - More passing lanes for handicap boats
 - Still requires mark boats and skill in setting course
 - Popular with racers and "serious" cruisers - not so good for the novice or first time sailors



Harry "A" Course



Modified Olympic

Government Mark Options

- Easy to run – typically need only a committee boat
- Start and finish same place (Closed Course)
- Start in open water and finish at ? (Club, Party Site, Cruising Destination, Etc.)
- Offers all points of sail - May have “offwind” start
- May require some “blue water” navigation
- Popular with cruisers and casual racers
- “Random” race has fixed start/finish and gives a list of buoys to round – racers pick their own course!

Government Mark Options (Cont.)

- A few things to remember:
 - Government marks are used to mark channels – be aware of regulations in your area about commercial traffic and “clear lanes”
 - May need USCG permit to run
 - Should provide verbiage in SI’s to remain well clear of commercial traffic

Point to Point Options

- “Destination” races have been very successful
- Typically big party at the finish
- Have proven to be popular with both racers and cruisers
- Some of the biggest races in the country with hundreds of participants:
 - FIGAWI
 - Chesapeake Bay Governor’s Cup
 - Delta Ditch Run

Starting Options

- Pursuit Start
 - Boats wait until their handicap is expired, then start – thus slower boats start first, faster boats last
 - Reduces or eliminates the stress of starting with many other competitors and complexity of start rules
 - Very popular with cruisers and sailors new to racing
 - Small boats love being in the “clear” and love to see the big guys behind – running aground, etc. - big boats love to pass little boats
 - Keeps it fun for all

Starting Options (Cont.)

- “Le Mans” start
 - Boats are anchored with all sails down behind start line
 - All crew below – or a variant, crews aboard, skippers on shore and must row dinghy to boat after start signal
 - Popular with cruisers but best for smaller fleets
- Downwind or reaching start
 - May be only option for Point to Point Race
 - Must be careful to “bias” line to prevent “pile up” at one end or the other
 - Good for “Pursuit” start – cruisers like!

Starting Options (Cont.)

- Rally Race
 - Boats sail to a predetermined time for the race. The boat closest to the predetermined time wins
 - Set times based on time median boat will sail the preset course (use experience, US Sailing Velocity predictions or Designer's prediction). Adjust all other boat times relative to median boat using PHRF handicaps and race distance. Add 20% to each time and allow 5 minutes of engine time.
 - Start boats off at 30 second or one minute intervals, slowest first.
 - Great fun to see boats stalling or motor sailing flat out at finish to try to hit exact time!

How do you set up a pursuit race?

- Several of the available scoring programs offer pursuit race options that will pre-calculate start times
- Set up your own spreadsheet
- Can do in Time on Time but much easier in Time on Distance scoring
- Use the “TIME” function in Excel with all references in hh, mm, ss functions to calculate start times
- Expression for start time is:
$$\text{First Start} + (\text{TIME}(0,0,(\text{reference rating} - \text{competitor rating})) \times \text{Distance})$$

Mixed Format Races

- Mix distance races with buoy/ drop mark races in multi-day events
- Use the same starting line for both distance and drop mark races
- Allow for drops or “lay days”, particularly in cruising classes

Have Fun!

- The key to participation is to put the “fun factor” back into racing
- New or varied formats
- Emphasize sailing and destination, not who gets there first
- Great parties
- Increased Comraderie

SUCCESSES!

- Block Island Race Week, the NYYC Annual Regatta and the STC Fall Chesapeake Regatta have used mixed format very successfully with 2 to 4 days of buoy racing plus a distance buoy or “around the island race”
- In 2013 and 2015, the Performance Cruiser classes at Block Island Race Week ran from the same start as the traditional W-L classes but only used the windward drop mark as their first mark and sailed a Government buoy course around Block Island Sound after that. This year, based on competitor feedback, the “Navigator” races at BIRW used pursuit starts with “Lay Day” and met with high praise from the competitors. One race days allow time for beach going or sightseeing!

SUCSESSES(cont.)

- The last two Annapolis to Newport races featured a “Performance Cruising” class – which is becoming the largest class and was split into two subclasses this year. ,
- The FIGWI is the “granddaddy” of all pursuit racing and typically has nearly 300 entries
- The HOT Rum Race in San Diego mixes Pursuit start, tricky tides and the overall mantra of “have fun racing and make friends afterwards” into the most successful race on the West Coast

Let's look at a successful
alternative format race in detail:

The Archipelago Rally

The Archipelago Rally

Evolution-Format-Execution



PURSUIT STYLE

“Took their Handicap at the beginning for the start.”



Addictive Work in Progress

Collaborative versus Competitive



“Come as you are and we’ll fit you in.”

HOW it works!

- No entry fee
- Volunteered food
- E-vite
- Portsmouth Yardstick modified
- Adventure and Team Work



2017 Archipelago Rally, Wickford Yacht Club, RI
October 28, 2017

FINAL Results		Finish Position	2017 Rating	Start Delay (min)	Start Time	Hour	Minute	Length (ft)	Sail Area (sq.ft)	VSA / L	J/B	Spin	Notes
1	Chuck Allen	1	126	6	12	6	9.00	48	0.77				
2	Lars + Olin Guck	2	72	22	12	22	14.00	118	0.78	X			Multi hull
3	Brad Read	3	96	15	12	15	12.00	75	0.72	X	X		
4	Ezra Smith	4	126	6	12	6	9.00	48	0.77				
5	Mark Brogard	5	105	12	12	12							
6	Andrew Gayner + kids	6	90	17	12	17							
7	Kyle + Maggie Wilson	7	105	12	12	12							
8	Mollie Rose Smith + Francis Lewis	8	145	0	12	0	8.66	41	0.74				
9	Mark Vanote	9	126	6	12	6	9.00	48	0.77				
10	Peter Eastman	10	108	11	12	11							
11	Island Starhouse	11	102	13	12	13							
12	Dejan + Tristan Redeka	12	95	15	12	15	13.92	76	0.63				no spinaker
13	Dave Mendes	13	130	5	12	5	13.92	76	0.63	X	X		
14	Annex + Abby Tutthill	14	95	15	12	15	13.92	76	0.63	X	X		
15	Rob Darling + Jon Tregenza	15	88	17	12	17	15.92	170	0.82	X	X		planing sport boat
16	Jeff Goncalves	16	72	22	12	22	14.00	118	0.78	X			Multi hull
17	Troy Zangis + Maggie Craig	17	100	14	12	14	13.83	75	0.63				
18	Pearl Latranel	18	130	5	12	5	9.00	48	0.77				
19	Mac Cooper	19	80	20	12	20							
20	Alarie family	20	96	15	12	15	14.00						
21	Larry Huff	21	121	6	12	6	10.00	48	0.77				
22	Gary Smith	22	105	12	12	12							
23	Mia, Moxie, Marley Mills	23	105	12	12	12	12.00	75	0.72	X	X		
24	Will Tutthill	24	105	12	12	12	12.00	75	0.72	X	X		
25	Woody Underwood	25	117	8	12	8	12.00	90	0.79				
26	Ross Weene	26	141	1	12	1	6.33	25	0.79				small pram
27	Dirk Kramers	27	130	5	12	5							



- 1.5-hour race or less for slowest boats
- LOTS of time to rig
- Reachy Course
- Add time to ralliers who crush the fleet
- Make PARTY longer than RACE



RALLY RECIPE

Design for success

Social Responsibility

“Use your Platform to Help others and Raise Awareness.”



A photograph of a family of four sailing on a small white boat with a green sail. The family consists of a man in a red cap and life vest, a woman in a green cap and red life vest, and two young children in yellow life vests. They are all smiling and looking towards the camera. The boat is on a body of water with other sailboats visible in the background. The text "RALLY ON!" is overlaid in large yellow letters on the left side of the image.

RALLY ON!

NOTE: All images from 2017 Archipelago Rally at Wickford YC **by Rufus Van Gruissen**

LET'S GO SAILING!

ANNAPOLIS – NEWPORT START



Downwind Point to- Point start



Leaving the Great Salt Pond at Block Island



Your Opinion Matters

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Thank you for attending this session