

Different types of races at FOSSC

This is an introduction for new racers so they can understand how our different series of races are run. It may seem a little complicated at first, but variety is the spice of life and you will soon get the hang of it!

See the table at the end of this article for details of which type of race takes place in which series.

Series which are good for newer racers are highlighted below like this!

Handicap Races:

- The start and finish lines are in the same place.
- All boats start at the same time.
- Each boat will complete a whole number of laps, but not necessarily the same number of laps, e.g. the winning boat might do 7 laps and another boat might only do 5 laps. As long as you complete one lap you will get a result 😊
- You will know you have finished because when you go through the start / finish line there will be a 'hoot' and probably a 'well done!' from the Officer of the Day, (OOD). (And if you look closely, the Committee boat will probably be flying a white flag with a blue square in the middle – officially the 'shortened course' flag.)
- Each boat's "elapsed time" (the time between the race start and your finish) is then altered to a "corrected time" according to the boat class's handicap and the number of laps completed.
- There is one set of results for everyone who took part in the race.
- If you want to know how the results are calculated, read on; otherwise skip to the next page, "Variation on a Handicap Race."
- *Example handicap calculation:*
 - A laser completes 7 laps in 54 minutes and 33 seconds.
 - A topper completes 6 laps in 56 minutes and 26 seconds.

Who has won?? We all know lasers are faster than toppers so we'd expect them to do more laps, or the same number of laps in a shorter time, but it is not obvious who has had the better race.

- *Laser class handicap is 1100*; Topper class handicap is 1365*. (You don't need to know the handicap for your boat class – the results program, Sailwave, is programmed with it.)*
- *In this example, the Laser's average lap time is $((54 \times 60) + 33) / 7 = 468$ seconds per lap*
- *The Topper's average lap time is $((56 \times 60) + 26) / 6 = 564$ seconds per lap*
- *The Laser's corrected lap time is $468 \times 1000/1100 = 425$ seconds per lap*
- *The Topper's corrected lap time is $564 \times 1000/1365 = 413$ seconds per lap*
- *So the Topper won because on average, and after boat handicaps are taken into consideration, it was 12 seconds faster per lap! (phew, that was a close race 😊)*

(The handicap numbers are published annually by the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) and are known as 'Portsmouth Yardstick' number. At FOSSC, we refer to them as 'Club*

numbers' because we adjust some of them to be more appropriate for our small, inland water area. They are issued annually at the end of March.)

Variation on a Handicap Race:

- A **Beginner and Rookie Race** will run alongside some Club Races, but with a start 2 minutes after the club race starts so the start line will be much less frantic but you will still be able to follow other racers. It will be run as a handicap race, with on-the-water coaching encouraged. There will be separate results for Juniors and for Rookies. There is no strict definition of a Rookie, but if we ask you to join the Club Race instead of the Rookie race, that means you are making good progress!
- **The 'Gold / Silver' series is good to target for newer racers.** It is scheduled on Wednesday evenings in August / September and is run as a 'Handicap' race, but there are two starts.
- More experienced racers will be allocated to the 'Gold Fleet' and they will start first. Other racers will be allocated to the 'Silver Fleet' and they will start 2 minutes after the Gold Fleet. The reasons for doing this is to make the start line less congested for the potentially less confident racers, and to give those who are not usually at the top of a fleet the chance to race for their own prizes!
- The Sailing Secretary will allocate people to either the Gold or Silver series, and the OOD will have a list which will be displayed prior to each race. You will stay in the same fleet (Gold or Silver) for the whole series.
- There will be 2 sets of results (and 2 different prizes), one for the Gold Fleet and one for the Silver Fleet.
- Everything else is the same as a Handicap race.
- **Short Handicap** series on will comprise either 2 or 4 very short races on each day. The races will only be 20-25 minutes long so if you get in a bit of a pickle, it won't be long until it is forgotten and you are starting a new race.

Class Race:

- At FOSSC, we currently run 2 'classes' – Solo Class and a 'Handicap' class for everyone else.
- The start and finish lines are in the same place.
- In a 'Class Race' each class starts at a different time and sail their own race, but with everyone on the same course. The 'Handicap' class starts first; the Solos start 2 minutes later.
- You will know you have finished because when you go through the start / finish line there will be a 'hoot' and probably a 'well done!' from the Officer of the Day, (OOD).
- You do not have to have done the same number of laps as the lead boat in your fleet, e.g. if the leading laser completes 5 laps but you only complete 3 laps in your laser, you still get a result. As long as you complete one lap, you will get a result 😊.
- There is a set of results for each class, i.e. if you are in a Laser or a Topper it does not matter how many Solos are faster than you as you will get a result in the Handicap class.
- The results for the 'Handicap' class are worked out as per the 'Handicap' races detailed above.

Pursuit Race:

- In these races, the slower classes of boat start first and the faster classes try to catch them.
- There is a start line as per the other race types, but no finish line.....read on for how the race finishes!
- Each boat starts at its allocated class start time, known at FOSSC as a 'Start Number.' These are displayed in the wet bar / in the window of the wet bar near the back door to the club house. They may change at the start of each racing season (end March), but will stay the same for the next 12 months.
- You need to know your start number before you go on the water!
- The Pursuit Board (big black box on the Committee Boat / Jetty) will display the Start Number which will reduce by 1 every 30 seconds. Your race starts when your number disappears from the board.
- For example, if you sail a Byte, your Pursuit number is 114. (It is the 'Club Number' of 1135 divided by 10 and rounded up.) The Pursuit Board will display 114 for 30 seconds and when it changes to 113, that is when you aim to cross the start line.
- The race is for a predefined length of time, dependent on the slowest class of boat competing. If a topper is sailing, its Start Number will be 137 (1365 divided by 10 and rounded up) so the total race length will be $137/2 = 68.5$ minutes, but if you sail a Byte you will only sail for $114/2 = 57$ minutes. If the slowest boat is a Byte, the total race length will be 57 minutes.
- When the race finishes, each boat's result is determined by its position in the race at that time. You will know that the race has finished by one of 3 different ways: a long sound signal and flashing orange lights from the Pursuit Box; seeing the number on the Pursuit Box changing from '0' to 'End'; hearing everyone else who is sailing, or on a rescue boat shouting and telling you that the race has finished! As long as you are still racing when the race finishes, you will get a result.
- The OOD has the difficult job of noting down who is where when the race finishes, so if possible, take a note of who is directly in front and/or behind you and keep sailing until it is obvious that the positions are known.

Variation on a Pursuit Race:

- The 'Personal Pursuit' series runs on Sundays 10, 24, 31, July and 14, 21 August is another good series for newer racers.
- It is run in the same manner as a Pursuit Race described above, but each helm's Start Number is adjusted according to their personal ability.
- The Sailing Secretary allocates the personal adjustment and informs the OOD who will ensure they are on display before each race starts. They will adjust from week to week depending on how well you have been doing.
- For example, if you sail a Byte, the class Start Number is 114. If you are new to racing, you might be allocated a personal adjustment of '+8' which would mean you actually start when 122 disappears from the Pursuit Box display. An expert Byte racer might be given a personal adjustment of '-12' which means they would start when 102 disappears, i.e. you have a 10 minute head start on them 😊 😊 !

Series	Race Schedule	Race Type	Notes on Race Format
Club Championships	3 races per series/day 9 series scheduled	Handicap; pursuit; handicap	All series except RNLI comprise 3 races on one Sunday, with a break between each race. Race 1 - Handicap; race 2 - pursuit race; 3 - handicap. RNLI - 3 races over 3 consecutive Wednesdays, one each day, i.e. handicap in week 1, pursuit in week 2, handicap in week 3.
Sunday Icicle Pursuit	One race per day	Informal Pursuit	Start line between ends of jetties. Pursuit box on jetty will show countdown for starts. Rescue boat on water, but not manned. No formal OOD.
Sunday Spring Class	One race per day (Sequentially with pursuit race)	Class	Normal Class racing
Sunday Spring Pursuit	One race per day (sequentially with Class race)	Pursuit	Normal Pursuit racing
Rookie Race	One race per day, concurrently with Spring Class race	Handicap	Rookie racers will start 2 minutes after solo class, and may finish before the main race. Aim for 30 minute race.
Sunday Short Handicap	Two or four short races per day	Handicap	Normal Handicap races, each of duration 20-25 minutes. If it is a ProAm day, the ProAm will run first, followed (after a break) by 2 short handicap races back to back. If there is no ProAm racing, there will be 4 short handicap races; 2 back to back, break, then another 2 back to back. On the water coaching and assistance by rescue / OOD is allowed.
Sunday Summer Handicap	One race per day	Handicap	Normal Handicap racing
Sunday 'Personal Handicap' Pursuit	One race per day	Pursuit	Pursuit race where each helm is given an individual start time based on their expertise and the boat they are sailing. On the water coaching and assistance by rescue / OOD is allowed.
Team Racing	One day only 4 short races	Handicap	2 races back to back; break; 2 races back to back Each race approx 20-30 minutes All races count; overall position of top 3 boats in each Team will be added together and the Team with the lowest total will win. In the event of a draw, 4 th place in each team will be taken into account.
Sunday Autumn Class	One race per day (Sequentially with pursuit race)	Class	Normal Class racing

Sunday Autumn Pursuit	One race per day (sequentially with Class race)	Pursuit	Normal Pursuit racing
Sunday Winter Pursuit	One race per day (sequential with Winter Handicap)	Pursuit	Pursuit race run first; followed by handicap race after a short (e.g. 25 mins) break (quick loo stop, hot drink, but don't get cold). Second race start time 'TBC' by OOD on the day.
Sunday Winter Handicap	One race per day (sequential with Winter Pursuit)	Handicap	Pursuit race run first; followed by handicap race after a short (e.g. 25 mins) break (quick loo stop, hot drink, but don't get cold). Second race start time 'TBC' by OOD on the day.
Wed Evening Spring Handicap	One race each evening	Handicap	Normal handicap racing.
Wed Evening Summer Class	One race each evening	Class	Series will be run as handicap (i.e. one start), with prizes awarded to the highest boat in each class (handicap, Laser, Solo)
Wed Evening Gold / Silver	One race each evening	Handicap	Helms allocated to either gold or silver fleet for duration of the series. Gold fleet start first, followed 2 minutes later by silver fleet. On the water coaching and assistance by rescue / OOD is allowed.
Wednesday Afternoon Pursuit - Icicle, Spring, Summer, Autumn, Winter	One race each day	Informal Pursuit	Start line between ends of jetties. Pursuit box on jetty will show countdown for starts. Rescue boat on water, but not manned. No formal OOD.
Boxing Day John Sanguin and New Year's Day True Grit	One race each day	Informal Pursuit	Start line between ends of jetties. Pursuit box on jetty will show countdown for starts. Rescue boat on water, and will be manned. No formal OOD.