

# Wednesday Night Racing Information Session and Competitors' Meeting



Bonnie Sylwester, SCOW Racing Director  
Updated March 2024

# Introduction to Wednesday Night Racing

## What?

- Fun, informal racing practice
- Small-boats racing around buoys on the Potomac



## Why?

- Excellent way to learn to sail, whether you're a competitive racer or not
- Expand your sailing network - Find people to sail with on the weekend
- Skippers - Great way to find and build crew
- New skippers – Great way to try out racing before the more formal regattas
- Experienced skippers – Refresh and fine tune your skills
- It's fun!
- It's free to club members



<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Dates</b>
SCOW	St Brendan's Day Regatta	11 May
SCOW	The Magellan	8 June
SCOW	Directors Cup	5 October
PRSA	Spring Regatta	25-26 May
PRSA	Presidents Cup	21-22 September
DISC	Mount Vernon Chase	18 May
DISC	Summer Regatta	15-16 June
DISC	3 Bridges Fiasco	13 June
DISC	Mt Vernon Boomerang	21 September
SCOW – Sailing Club of Washington PRSA – Potomac River Sailing Association DISC – Daingerfield Island Sailing Association		

# Back to Wednesday Night Racing

## When?

Every Wednesday from April 6<sup>th</sup> to September 28<sup>th</sup>. The first Wednesday in April through the last Wednesday in September, weather permitting.

Race time: Around 5:30 pm

(Crew and skippers tend to gather around 4:30pm to rig the boats.)

## Who?

- 6 Club-owned Flying Scots
- FS Fleet 203 (Privately owned Flying Scots)
- A few other small boats – Lasers & Bucs

All skippers must be SCOW (or PRSA) members

All crew on club-owned boats must be SCOW members.

**Experience?** No racing experience needed. But you should be comfortable on a small boat and be able to follow the skipper's instructions.



## How?

### Skippers:

- No reservations are necessary. No pre-organization of crew is necessary. Club boats become available at 4:00pm and may be taken on a first-come-first-serve basis at the Marina.
- Please check in with Dick Kerr near the cranes. Let him know which boat you are taking and how many crew you can take.
- Please take extra crew when necessary. Remember the new crew member you take this year, could become a skipper, boat owner, or racing director next year.

### Potential Crew:

- Gather near the cranes around 4:30.
- Dick Kerr takes names of potential crew and matches them to skippers. Crew are assigned on a first-come-first-serve basis with some consideration for experience. The earlier you arrive the better your chances of getting on a boat.  
(Usually we are able to get everyone on a boat, but we cannot guarantee it.)



# Weather

- Weather updates on Monday or Tuesday (Dick Kerr sends out his weather analysis on Friends of SCOW (Unofficial Google groups))
- Cancellations: Bonnie sends out an email to all SCOW members (usually early Wednesday afternoon)  
'Organized racing is cancelled' or 'We'll call it at the docks'  
No announcement means that we plan to race.
- Occasionally we will reschedule for a Friday. If you would like to organize the Friday night race, please contact me.



## Remember:

- Each boat must make their own decision whether to race or not. (RRS. 3)
- If organized racing is cancelled, boats may still sail and race on their own.

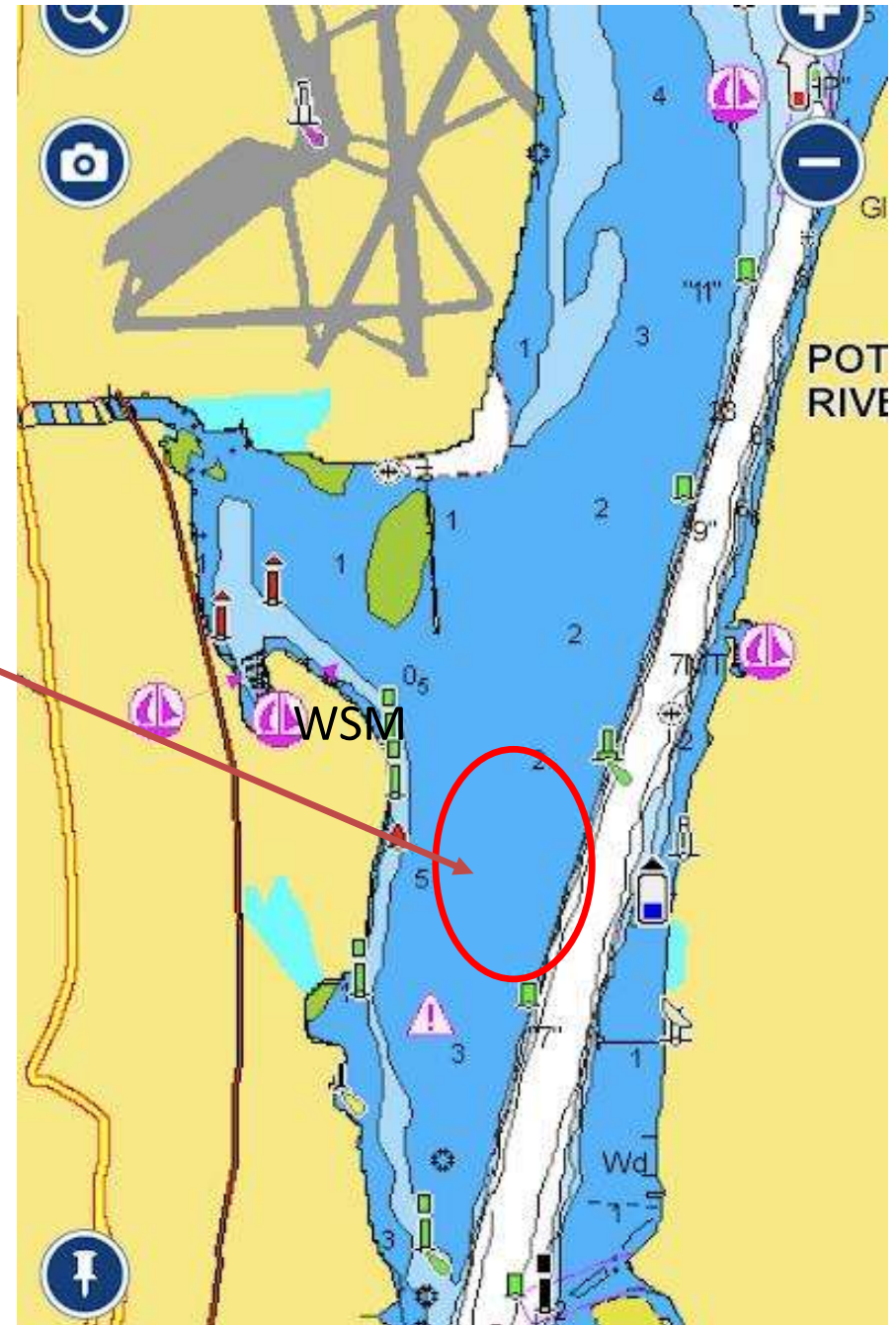
*It's better to be on the shore wishing you were on the water than to be on the water wishing you were on the shore. (Dave Beckett)*

# Race Organization

## Location

- 1<sup>st</sup> Choice – The river between G7 and G7A (across from the old powerplant)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Choice – The WSM lagoon

Don't forget about hazards – shallow areas, vortexes, and day marker 10. (If you are new to WSM ask a local.)



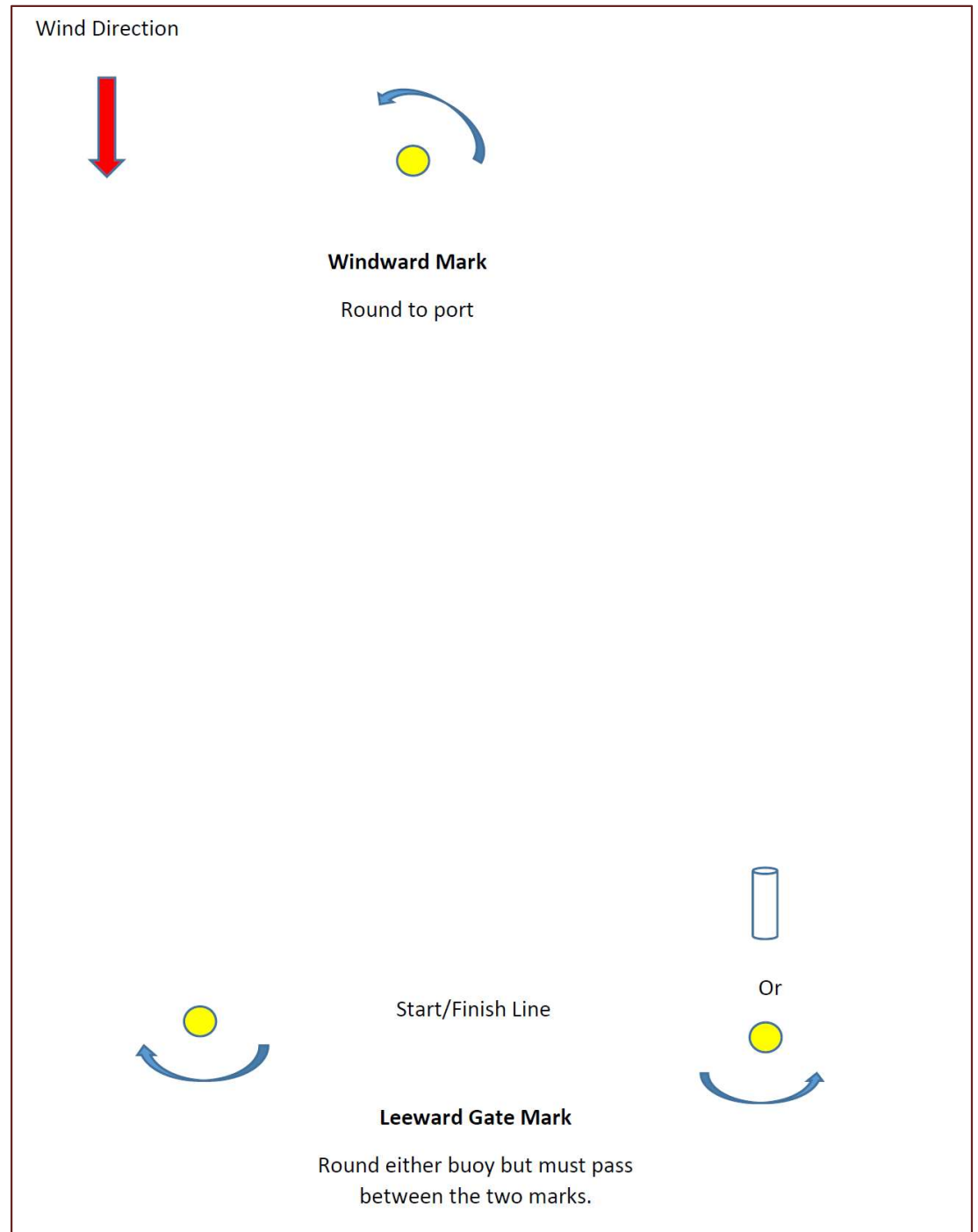


## Course

Usually Windward-leeward  
Start-Finish line is also the  
leeward gate mark.

- Round the windward mark to port
- - Take the gate from the inside-out.

W2 = Windward-Leeward, 2 laps.



## Marks

- - Yellow drop marks
- - Green navigational buoys, white no wake buoys



(C) 2018 Alice M. Starcke

## Communication

- VHF Radio Channel 68

## Starting Sequence

- **3 Minute sequence** using a whistle blown over the radio
- Several quick short blasts – Attention, we're about to start the start sequence
- Three blasts – 3 minutes
- Two blasts – 2 minutes
- One blast – 1 minute
- One long blast – start



Boats over the starting line early at the start signal must return and re-cross the start line, during which time they must keep clear of all other boats.

## Rules

- Wednesday Night Racing is governed by the World Sailing's Racing Rules of Sailing 2021-2024 (There's a copy on the Race with SCOW page.)
- There is no referee on the race course.
- All racers are expected to **self-referee** and show good **sportsmanship**.
- If you foul another boat, take a penalty turn(s). If another boat fouls you, hail the other boat and call "Protest" or let it go.

## Penalties

- A boat that fouls another boat shall take a **one turn penalty**, which includes one tack and one gybe in the same direction. This changes RRS 44.1.
- A boat that fouls another boat **within the zone** of any mark except a starting mark is required to take a **two turns penalty** to clear the foul.

## Post-Race Discussion

- There is no protest committee for WNR.
- If you think there was a misunderstanding on the race course, talk about it at the picnic table after the race. *Friendly* discussion of the rules is a great way to help everyone learn. It's a lot easier to talk about these situations in person than to explain it on email.



## **A few other notes:**

- If your boat arrives after racing has started, either join in the back of the fleet or hang out near the start line until the next race. (Try not to interfere with any boats that are racing.)
- If you retire early from racing, please radio race committee and let us know.
- If you want to keep sailing after racing has been ended, you can. Each boat makes their own decision about when to head in.



## After racing

- Help pick up marks.
- Help put the boats away.
- Gather around the picnic table to talk about the night's racing and other topics. Let me know who won. Talk out any rules confusion.
- Share good photos





Be kind to your race committee.

