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Three Phases of the Pre-Start...Some General Do's and Don't's

The Entry

DO

- one minute loops max in final 2:00
- tactician say "we're in"
- Blue – say your first move

DON'T

- Be Early
- Be too late (more than 5 seconds)
- Yellow – don't get stuck on anchor line
- Yellow – don't go for Blue before crossing line

First Meeting – Dial Up - Yellow

DO

- begin Dial Up 3-4 lengths from Blue
- slow down approaching Blue (jib, main, rudder)
- use steering to settle into final position (bow at Blue's mast; one length gap)
- sail on starboard if Blue goes to port with tack or gybe
- stay on same ladder rung and mirror Blue, if separating on opposite tacks

DON'T

- let Blue cross, up or down
- overrun Blue in Dial Up
- tack away before Blue is stopped
- go backwards
- tack in front of Blue if Blue tacks or gybes

First Meeting – Dial Up – Blue

DO

- try to cross (up or down)
- slow down approaching Yellow (jib, main, rudder)
- get as close to Yellow as possible without risk of foul; get parallel
- get to close-hauled quickly in medium/heavy breeze
- keep Yellow under pressure
- pick one of the four possible exits (follow Yellow on port; sail close-hauled and tack; bear off and gybe; steel balls) – be patient

DON'T

- try to cross down when close – take the Dial Up
- go into Dial Up fast, unless move is to sail close-hauled or go right into a gybe
- wait too long to turn up into Dial Up
- sail on starboard tack between close-hauled (fast) and ddw (with main pinned)

First Meeting – Downwind Cross – Yellow

DO

- keep your speed
- gybe just before Blue's centerline

DON'T

- get slow or too deep an angle
- gybe into a locked to windward position, i.e. gybe too soon

First Meeting – Downwind Cross – Blue

DO

- keep speed
- take the Dial Up if close, even if a close cross
- when Yellow gybes, stay DOWN; do not head up at all
- if Yellow gybes in close behind, gybe and circle immediately

DON'T

- try to cross if not 100% sure you will make it
- head up at all after crossing Yellow

First Meeting – Upwind Cross – Yellow

DO

- tack to leeward or astern (light air) of Blue

DON'T

- tack too soon (letting Blue bear off and get astern of you)

First Meeting – Upwind Cross – Blue

DO

- go close-hauled immediately after crossing the line
- look for Yellow to tack too soon (letting you bear off and get astern of Yellow)
- press over Yellow (put downward pressure on jib sheet)
- if under pressure, sail to windward of RC boat, go another 10 seconds, and STOP htw

DON'T

- bear off to sail astern of Yellow unless 100% sure you can make it

Middle Phase – on starboard tack – under pressure (can't tack or gybe)

DO

- STOP! (spin hard htw; main full backed, etc.)
- Be active (lots of Ups and Downs)

DON'T

- do nothing
- sail straight for more than 10 seconds MAX (unless sailing close-hauled to tack, or heading to right of RC boat)

Middle Phase – on port tack – under pressure (can't tack or gybe)

DO

- get to right of RC boat, then STOP!
- Look for exits
- Be Patient

DON'T

- continue sailing once past RC boat
- force a gybe
- PANIC

Middle Phase – neutral (both boats can tack or gybe)

DO

- get to right of RC boat and begin circling
- always get off starboard as quickly as possible, and extend and build speed on port tack
- each time on port, ask: too early to lead?
- when in doubt, lead...
- GYBE into the lead with a safe margin
- Tack into the push unless already high in the starting area

DON'T

- sail on starboard unless turning quickly to port, or leading to start
- gybe in to windward of other boat
- get too deep in starting area unless trailing other boat
- get too slow; build speed on port tack
- Push when late or deep
- Get a Penalty for gybing too close!!!

Final Approach – Pusher

DO

- Push from High in the starting area
- Push from Above to get high in the starting area
- Be an active pusher (lots of Ups and Downs) to get out of phase with Leader
- Look to go over the top of Leader if Leader gets too low
- Look to Hook (overlap Leader to leeward) when Leader is Up and you are Down
- Hook when Leader is early to line or you want Left
- Use “5 second rule” when Hooking
- Shift Right (get locked to windward of Leader) when Leader is early to Pin or you want Right
- Shift Right when Leader is Down

DON'T

- follow the Leader low into the starting area!!!
- Push when near close-hauled
- Be a static pusher
- Shift Right (get locked to windward of Leader) too soon
- Hook too late
- Let there be contact within first 5 seconds of Hooking Leader

Final Approach – Leader

DO

- Lead from Low in the starting area
- Skipper look aft at Pusher's bow at all times!
- Stay in phase with Pusher's Ups and Downs, especially Downs
- Round turn up as pass layline to Boat
- Protect from being Hooked, until happy to be hooked
- When appropriate, Shift Right, then linger past head to wind until ready to start on port tack
- Avoid Pin layline (Shift Right before getting to Pin layline)

DON'T

- Lead from High in the starting area
- Let Pusher sail over the top of you, unless you want to become the Pusher
- Get Hooked too soon (be Up when Pusher is Down)
- Get too close to Pin Layline
- Get a Penalty for delaying your luff if you get hooked!

Final Approach – Both

DO

- get off the starting line at roughly the same time as the other boat

DON'T

- start on same tack unless Windward with a Gap, or a Crush